July 23, 2019

To: UVM Community

Re: Office of Community-University Partnerships and Service-Learning (CUPS) renamed Office of Community-Engaged Learning (CELO)

Effective August 1, the “Office of Community-University Partnerships and Service-Learning” will change its name to the “Office of Community-Engaged Learning” (abbreviated as CELO). The name change will clarify our mission and support the launch of our new dual course designation system, as approved by the Faculty Senate in April 2019.

History and Context
UVM has a strong history of academic service-learning, with a Faculty Fellows in Service Learning program since 1999, and officially designated Service Learning (SL) courses since 2009. UVM was among the first institutions to apply for and receive the Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement in 2006, and we currently are among 361 institutions nationwide who have earned this prestigious classification. At present, over 40% of graduating seniors have taken and passed at least one service-learning course. Academic service-learning is integral to many departments and units at UVM, and community engagement more broadly is at the heart of the institution’s mission.

Our Mission
The mission of CELO is to support and promote academic service-learning across all departments and units at UVM. Our office is positioned as a faculty development unit, complemented by our second major constituency: community partners in Burlington and beyond. Our name change is intended to clarify the academic, teaching and faculty development aspects of our work, recognizing the full breadth of learning that falls under our purview. In tandem with our name change, we recently won approval for a new, additional course designation that expands the spectrum of community engagement that we support (see below). Our new name functions as an umbrella term to include these multiple levels of academic community engagement. We remain within the Provost’s Office, reporting to the Associate Provost for Academic Affairs, Jennifer Dickinson.

Dual Designation
Beginning in the Fall of 2019, faculty will now have two distinct options for designating community-engaged courses:

- The existing required "service-learning" (SL) designation, which will now have more rigorous designation criteria; and
- A new optional "civic learning" (CL) designation, for courses that prepare students to work on community-based issues with community partners
The new designation is intended to both incentivize and recognize the broad range of community-engaged and preparatory coursework being offered, while also making SL a more rigorous designation. This change will expand the range of courses we can support and encourage best practices in community-engaged pedagogy.

For more information about the new designation system, please visit our current website: www.uvm.edu/partnerships.