



**Faculty Senate
Minutes
Monday, December 16, 2024
3:00 – 4:30 PM, Microsoft Teams**

The meeting was called to order by Faculty Senate President Thomas Borchert at 3:01 PM

Senators in Attendance: 63

Absent: 14 Senators: CAC Chair (Everse), Counseling, Human Development & Family Science (Maianu), Engineering Electrical and Biomedical (Duffaut Espinosa), English Rep1 (vacant), Orthopaedics & Rehabilitation (vacant), Physics (White), Psychiatry Rep 1 (Hall), Psychological Science Rep1 (vacant), Radiology Rep1 (vacant), Radiology Rep 2 (Brennan), Retired Faculty (Saule), School of the Arts Rep1 (vacant), School of World Languages (Scollins), Surgery (vacant)

1. Faculty Senate President's Welcome Remarks – Thomas Borchert made the following remarks:

- Thanks to the ad hoc Nominating Committee for their service and for facilitating the process that resulted in the election of Abby McGowan as our President-Elect.
- Reminder that grades are due by noon December 17th.
- Reminder that the deadline is today for notifying the Registrar's office if faculty are opting out of holding an in-person exam in the Spring of 2025.
- Acting Provost Schadler will present agenda item 3 for Interim President Prelock

2. Consent Agenda

- A. Minutes of the November 2024 Senate meeting.
- B. Curricular Affairs
 - 1) No-Contest Termination Master of Science in Teaching in Biology
 - 2) No-Contest Termination Bachelor of Science major in Agroecology and Landscape Design
 - 3) New Bachelor of Science in Ecological Landscape Planning and Design
 - 4) New Bachelor of Science in Agroecology
 - 5) Name Change Minor in Sustainable Landscape Horticulture to Ecological Landscape Horticulture
 - 6) Name Change M.Ed. in Interdisciplinary Studies in Education to M.Ed. in Interdisciplinary Educational Studies
 - 7) Name Change Master of Science in Geology to MS in Geosciences

Motion: Thomas Borchert stated that the consent agenda came to the Senate moved and seconded by the Executive Council. No requests were made to pull items from the consent agenda.

Vote: 47 approve, 0 oppose, 0 abstain.

- 3. Waterman Manor and Commencement Update** - Linda Schadler, Acting Provost announced that the Waterman Manor will open February 3rd for lunch. The options being considered are a self-serve salad bar and panini station, or a full service, sit-down restaurant with soup and salad bar. Faculty are encouraged to utilize the Manor during this trial. The Manor will continue to be open if it makes money. Reminder from Sodexo that there is a 10% discount available for those joining a retail points dining plan. The plan is a declining balance account linked to your UVM ID (CATcard), usable at all UVM Dining retail locations or dining halls.

Commencement 2025 update – After much discussion, feedback, and a survey of students, the decision has been made to hold the main commencement ceremony on the University Green on Sunday, May 18, 2025. The college and school ceremonies, except for the Honors College, and the Larner College of Medicine, will be held at the Champlain Valley Expo Center in Essex on Saturday and Sunday, May 17th and 18th. This plan allows the college and school ceremonies to continue if the main ceremony is cancelled due to weather and addresses the constraints on space and need for accommodations. The proposed Friday events will not be held, as it is too costly to hold both the main ceremony and the Friday campus events. Information will be sent out to families and the University community very soon.

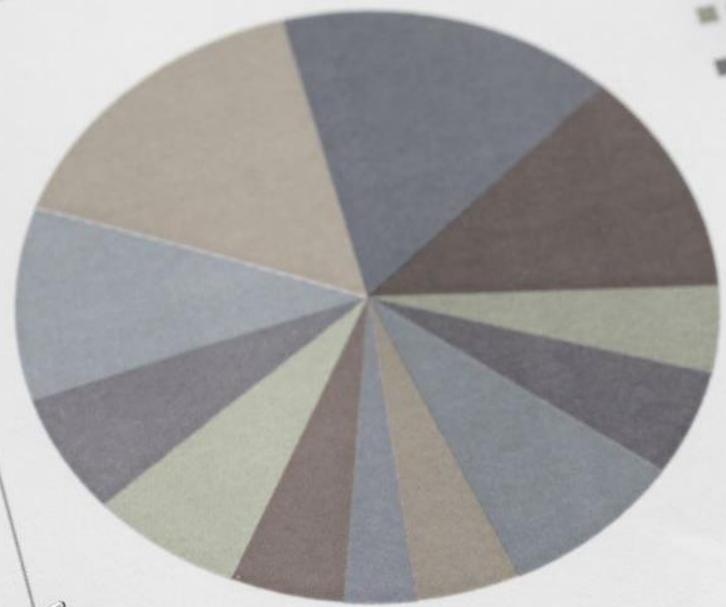
- 4. UVM Financial Update** – Richard Cate, Vice President of Finance provided information about FY26 Budget Planning. The presentation slides are attached to these minutes. Health care costs continue to have significant impact and reductions in the base budget will be needed. Units will be asked to submit three plans for reductions of 1%, 2% and 3%, and to explore opportunities to leverage other funding sources. The fringe rate will be 55.5% - a 6% increase over FY25. Human Resources is actively working to reduce the growth of healthcare costs and has been given a target to reduce the projected growth by \$3 million through partnerships with the hospital and reducing cost of services and prescription drugs. Enrollment Management, the Graduate College, and PACE are collectively working to investigate areas of opportunity to generate revenue. The presentation includes the FY26 budget timeline. Tom Borchert opened the floor for questions. The discussion included the expectation that the State appropriation may increase 3%, confirmation that there is no plan for putting incentives in place for people to retire, and examples of models to optimize the net tuition revenue.
- 5. Faculty Senate Constitution and Bylaws** – Thomas Borchert presented a summary of proposed changes made to the CBL draft based on recommendations received after the November 18th Senate meeting. The Executive Council is forwarding an updated version of the CBL with the following changes:

- a. Took out “Catamount Core” from 1.1.b (redundant; Keith Burt, Psychological Science)
- b. 1.2.d modified Faculty affairs – to include “welfare” (to match language in committee descriptions) and “DEI” to “inclusive excellence” (request of Pres and Provost to match name of Division of Inclusive Excellence).
- c. Added “review” to 1.7 about calendar from Provost (Nicole Pheps, History)
- d. 1.8 – took out language about “Common Board of Trustees” (no one knows what this is/was)
- e. 5.2.d modified language of the “acknowledgement by President” – to clarify what the Pres doesn’t need to respond to (Phelps and TB concerns)
- f. Modified language of 7.1.3.c so that it’s about inclusive excellence rather than DEI (same as #3 above).
- g. Change charge/description of 7.1.5.8 Faculty Affairs Committee – language of “working conditions” “workplace environment and safety”; also linked to appropriate admin offices (like SAC language) and called to regular communications with UA (Keith Burt and President and Provost)

Next steps: senators review the CBL draft with units, send questions and comments to faculty.senate@uvm.edu, by January 10th. At the January Faculty Senate meeting, senators will be asked to vote to make a recommendation to the full faculty to approve the amended CBL. A ballot will be distributed to the full faculty for vote in February. Tom Borchert opened the floor for discussion. No comments or questions were received.

6. **Center for Community News** – Meg Little Reilly, Managing Director and Richard Watts, Director of the Center for Community News at UVM presented an overview of the proposal for the Center for Community News to move from its current home within the College of Arts and Sciences, to become a university-wide center, under the supervision of the Provost’s office. The presentation slides are attached to these minutes. Tom Borchert opened the floor for questions. Discussion included confirmation that the administration would not control what is published, journalistic integrity requires that decisions are made by editors and reporters, and examples were provided regarding how students, including graduate students, across the University can become involved. The next step in the process is a review and recommendation by the Faculty Senate Research, Scholarship and the Creative Arts Committee (RSCA). The Faculty Senate will be asked to vote on the proposal at the January meeting.
7. **Reports that do not require a Senate vote:**
Curricular Affairs Committee (CAC) – 1) Revisions to MS in Biology, 2) Revisions to the minor in CRES, 3) Subject code MRAD for CNHS
8. **New Business** – none at this time.
9. **Adjourn** –Joan Rosebush moved to adjourn at 4:22 PM. The motion was seconded and carried.

FY26 Budget Planning



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FY26 Budget Planning

- All units will be asked to submit three plans for F100 base budget reductions of 1%, 2%, and 3%.

GOAL: reduce unit base budget expenditures by ~\$7M in aggregate.

- Units must explore opportunities to leverage other funding sources, and in particular, gifts and endowments where appropriate.

- Human Resources is actively working on reducing the growth of healthcare costs.

GOAL: Reduce projected growth in healthcare costs by \$3M in FY26.

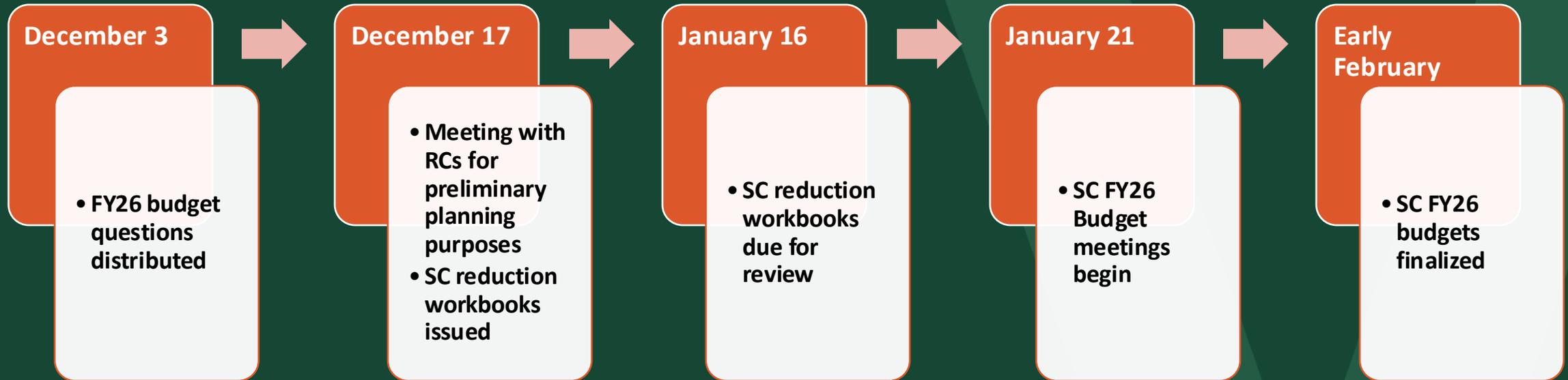
- The full-time active employee fringe rate will be 55.5% - a 6% increase over FY25's fringe rate.

FY26 Budget Planning

- Enrollment Management, The Graduate College, and PACE are collectively working together to investigate areas of opportunity.
GOAL: In FY26, generate \$11M over FY25.
- The remaining fringe rate mitigation funds (\$8.4M) will be distributed to Responsibility Centers (RCs) in FY26.
- Proposed use of additional reserves will need President's approval and may not be used at all in FY27 and FY28 projections (RCs only).

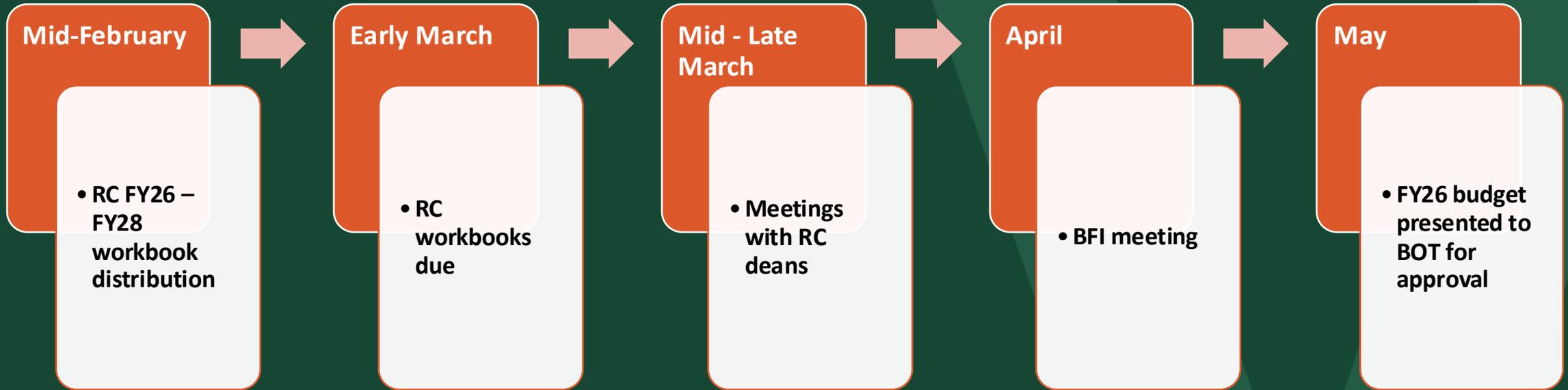
FY26 Budget Timeline

December through May



FY26 Budget Timeline

December through May



Questions?

THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT
CENTER FOR
COMMUNITY NEWS

WHO WE ARE



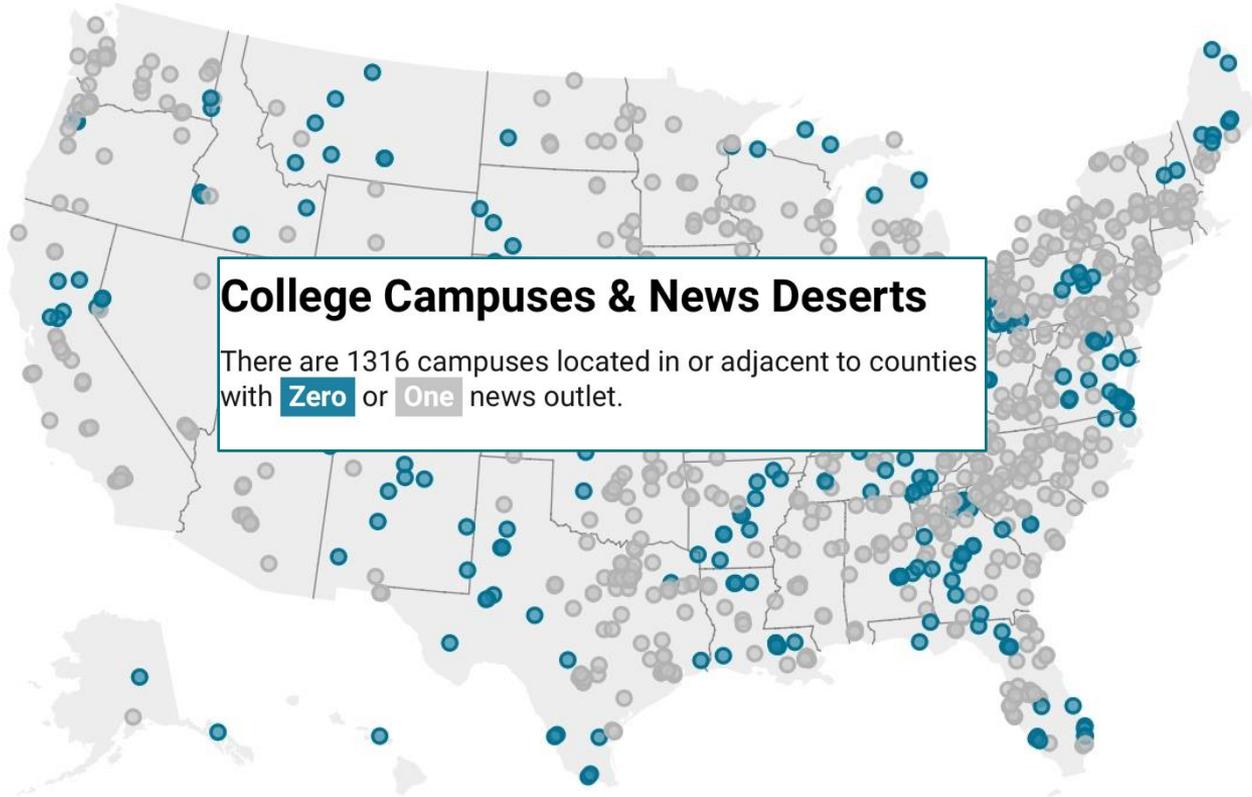
Our mission is to strengthen and grow the field of university-led student reporting across the country and here in Vermont.

WHY IT MATTERS: DEMOCRACY NEEDS LOCAL NEWS

Local news cultivates high civic engagement and low polarization:

- High voter turnout ([Pew Research](#))
- Strong civic attachment ([Pew Research](#))
- Robust and competitive elections ([Urban Affairs Review](#))
- Less partisanship and straight ticket voting ([MIT Sloan School](#))

THE OPPORTUNITY BEFORE US



LEADERS IN A NATIONAL MOVEMENT

- News organizations of every size have diminished over the past 20 years and today, more than half of U.S. counties have no access or very limited access to local news.
- The trend has profound implications for **community identity, social cohesion** and **problem-solving**.
- University-led reporting is one promising solution to this urgent civic challenge.
- The Center for Community News at UVM is strengthening the axis of university reporting and local newsrooms across the country. We are the **only organization dedicated to this mission.**



OUR LABORATORY: THE COMMUNITY NEWS SERVICE



Established in 2019, the Community News Service is a student-powered partnership between UVM and community newspapers across Vermont.

This year alone, **more than 75 CNS students** have contributed to **hundreds of print, digital, broadcast, and visual news stories** throughout the state.



HOW WE LEAD UNIVERSITIES ACROSS THE U.S.

Five Year Strategy For Growing News-Academic Partnerships

Research and Report

Conduct timely, original research on the emerging challenges and opportunities for news-academic partnerships. Produce actionable reports to inform program leaders and strengthen the field.

Organize and Connect

Forge and facilitate collaborations across reporting programs

Seed and Grow

Jumpstart new programs and grow existing ones

Sustain

Empower program leaders to create sustainable systems

HOW WE SERVE UVM

- UVM students of **every major** and college take our reporting classes.
- We partnered with the **Complex Systems Institute** to jointly hire a data visualization engineer to create innovative graphic social storytelling tools.
- We are developing faculty media training workshops for the **Rubenstein School**.
- Through a new partnership with **Larner College of Medicine**, we are helping public health writing students get their work published.
- We are in the early stages of developing initiatives with the **College of Education and Social Services** and the **College of Engineering and Mathematical Sciences**.
- CCN has been **featured in more than 40 national and regional news stories** across the U.S. in the past year alone, advancing UVM's visibility as a civic leader

ONE EXAMPLE OF OUR PROGRAMMING: THE ELECTIONS & DEMOCRACY INITIATIVE



Data Journalism: Using voter data in your pre- and post-election coverage

Join Our Cohort

Trial by fire: local student journalists cover the 2024 elections

Vermont Edition



Journalism Faculty: Tell Us Your Election Plans!

Assignments and Resources

CCN Guide on Student-Led Political Reporting (doc)



Assignment 1: Profiling first-time and/or young voter attitudes on campus (doc)



Assignment 2: Profiling voter attitudes in underserved communities off-campus (doc)



Assignment 3: How do I cast my vote? A how-to guide for first-time voters in the 2024 election (doc)



National Community News Wire

Reporting from across the U.S. from the next generation of great journalists

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Election Hub

These stories were collected through the CCN Elections & Democracy Reporting Initiative, which brings together news-academic partnerships at colleges across the country to facilitate reliable and impactful reporting during the 2024 election cycle and beyond.



HOW WE ARE FUNDED

Thus far, CCN has secured:

- \$5 million from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation
- \$500,000 from the MacArthur Foundation
- \$150,000 from the Lumina Foundation (to expand the SUNY Institute for Local News)
- More than \$150,000 from generous UVM donors
- Significant investments from the UVM College of Arts and Sciences
- *We are tireless fundraisers and expect these numbers to continue to grow.*

ANNUAL BUDGET

Annual CCN Budget (next five years)

FY25 Budget - Proposed Expense	Proposed Knight Funds	Proposed Matching Funds	Proposed Total
Salaries, Benefits Total (w/ 3% Inc. Buffer)	\$ 576,047.62	\$ 186,256.83	\$ 762,304.45
Students, Temps, Contractors Total	\$ 228,436.38	\$ 135,459.17	\$ 363,895.55
Other Total	\$ 129,516.00	\$ 50,284.00	\$ 179,800.00
FY25 Total Budget	\$ 934,000.00	\$ 372,000.00	\$ 1,306,000.00

ADVANCING UVM VALUES AND LEADERSHIP

- Providing **experiential** opportunities for UVM students
- Developing **transferable skills** for the workforce
- Delivering on our **land grant mission** to strengthen Vermont communities
- Distilling complex **planetary health** challenges into stories that are proximate and actionable at the local level
- Providing students with an opportunity to engage with the most **urgent challenges** in public life
- We are at the forefront of new solutions in **civic information, civil discourse** and **combatting disinformation**

Democracies need quality local news to thrive.

UVM is a natural leader in this field.

THANK YOU

Richard Watts

Director

Center for Community News at UVM



Meg Little Reilly

Managing Director

Center for Community News at UVM



<https://www.uvm.edu/ccn>