

2025 FAMILY AND SUPPORTER ORIENTATION



UVM Common Ground Values: Respect. Integrity. Innovation. Openness. Justice. Responsibility.

Wednesday, August 20 and Thursday, August 21, 2025

Plan to attend the day your student begins their New Student Orientation program

3:00 PM

Family and Supporter Welcome

Davis Center, Sugar Maple Ballroom (4th Floor)

Welcome to Family and Supporter Orientation! We're excited you're here. Before your first session begins, join us for a special greeting from Dr. Marlene Tromp, President of the University of Vermont.

3:15 - 3:45 PM

Session Block I

Academic Life at UVM: What Families Need to Know

Presented by Sarah Helmer (she/her), Assistant Dean, College of Arts and Sciences / Student Services

Davis Center, Livak Ballroom (4th Floor)

This session will cover topics around academic advising (accessing and making the most of advising), the Catamount Core curriculum, understanding degree progression and credits, and general tips for academic success.

Families in Transition: When to Step In and When to Step Back

Presented by Heather Pena (she/her), Assistant Dean of Students

Davis Center, Sugar Maple Ballroom (4th Floor)

Sending your student off to college is a big life change - for them and for you. As they begin to find their footing, make decisions, and face new challenges, it's natural to wonder how involved you should be.

This session is for families of first-year students who want to stay supportive while giving their student room to grow. We'll talk through common situations families often encounter and explore when it's helpful to step in - and when it's better to step back. You'll leave with practical tips, reassurance, and a better sense of how to stay connected while encouraging your student's independence and success.

Student Involvement and Belonging: Insider Advice Families Can Offer Their Students

Presented by Lina Balcom (she/her), Director of Student Life

Davis Center, Mansfield Dining (2nd Floor)

Join us to discover how families can play a pivotal role in their students' college experience. This session will provide practical tips and conversation starters you can use to encourage your student to get involved, build connections, and feel at home on campus. Learn about the opportunities available—clubs, organizations, events, and leadership roles—and why engagement matters for student success. This session will offer strategies for guiding your student to explore their interests, step beyond their comfort zone, and find their community.

4:00 - 4:30 PM

Session Block II

Safety First: Helping Your Student Navigate Campus and Community with Confidence

Presnted by Kevin Hytten (he/him), Training Coordinator, Division of Safety and Compliance

Davis Center, Sugar Maple Ballroom (4th Floor)

Join staff from the Division of Safety & Compliance for an overview of how UVM prioritizes campus safety and empowers students with the tools, training, and resources to navigate Burlington and beyond. Learn about the university's key safety initiatives, including de-escalation strategies, active threat response, and the CATSafe app. We'll also share how students are encouraged to report concerns, stay aware of their surroundings, and contribute to a safe and supportive community. This session will help you better understand the systems in place to support your student's well-being and success during their time at UVM.

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4:30 - 5:30 PM

Closing Reception and Resource Fair

Wedesday, 8/20: Davis Center, Olin Atrium (1st Floor)

Thursday, 8/21: Davis Center, Livak Fireplace Lounge (4th Floor)

Before you leave campus, join us for the Closing Reception. Enjoy light appetizers and beverages, connect with campus partners to discover helpful resources, and don't miss the chance to pick up a special gift and write a postcard to your student.

Bringing children with you? We will have a dedicated space for them to relax and unwind in our Zen Den on the 4th floor of the Davis Center, Jost Room. A UVM themed activity book will also be available to help keep them engaged.

Pre-Orientation Program (POP)? If you're arriving early for a POP, you're welcome to attend either day, August 20 or 21.



University of Vermont
Orientation and Student Advancement