



**Faculty Senate
Minutes
Monday, January 26, 2026
4:00 – 5:30 PM, on TEAMS**

The meeting was called to order by Faculty Senate President Abigail McGowan at 4:00 PM

Senators in Attendance: 75

Absent: 5 Senators: Anesthesiology Rep1 (Hart), Emergency Medicine Rep1 (Schlein), English Rep2 (Huh/Joo), Psychiatry Rep 2 (Klemperer), Radiology Rep1 (vacant)

1. Faculty Senate President's Welcome Remarks – Abigail McGowan made the following remarks:

A. The nomination period for two Faculty Senate elected roles has opened:

- 1) President-Elect: A one-year term beginning July 1, 2026, followed by a two-year term as President of the Faculty Senate (July 2027-June 2029)
- 2) Executive Council (Member At-Large): Two seats, each with a two-year term running July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2028. Nominees must be sitting senators.

Current nominations include Amy Trubek for President-Elect and Lizzy Pope (CALS, Nutrition and Food Sciences) for Member At-Large. Additional nominations are encouraged and may be submitted to the Faculty Senate Office (faculty.senate@uvm.edu). Nominations will also be accepted from the floor at the February Senate meeting.

The election ballot will be distributed during the first week of March and remain open for approximately seven days. Uncontested races will be decided by acclamation. If no nominations are received for a position, a new nomination period will be opened with a revised call.

B. Two upcoming events focused on community building and intercultural excellence:

- 1) The MLK keynote lecture will take place on Thursday, January 29, featuring Rose Ellen Peles on “The Power of Resistance and Resilience” with RSVP required and an online option available.
- 2) **March: A Celebration of Leadership**, will be held on March 31, co-hosted by the WAGE Center and the Student Government Association. Nominations are encouraged for the Exemplary Outstanding Faculty

Award, for individuals who have demonstrated leadership in advancing intercultural education at UVM. Nominations are due March 1.

- C. Proposed revisions to the Attendance Policy have received significant feedback and questions. The policy has been returned to the Student Affairs Committee (SAC) for further review. The SAC plans to bring an updated proposal to the Senate for consideration in February.
- D. The February Senate meeting will be held on Teams and will include the annual budget update from Alicia Esty, Chief Financial Officer and VP for Finance, Administration, and Human Resources. The March in-person meeting will feature updates from deans on workload implications of the 10% effort-per-course shift, with working groups reporting on their progress. In April, VP for Research, Kirk Dombrowski will present a one-year update on UVM's R1 status, including campus impacts and anticipated future implications.

2. Degree Conferrals

It was moved, seconded and voted that the following numbers of graduates be recommended by the Senate to the President for the awarding of the appropriate degrees or certificates as authorized by the Board of Trustees. Individual names of the graduates are recorded with the Minutes of this meeting in the permanent Senate records.

Degrees:

College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (36)
College of Arts and Sciences (154 Bachelor of Arts, 40 Bachelor of Science)
College of Education and Social Services (15)
College of Engineering and Mathematical Sciences (54)
Graduate College (101)
Grossman School of Business (23)
College of Nursing and Health Sciences (17)
Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources (47)

Vote: 65 approved, 0 opposed, 0 abstained. The motion carried.

- 3. **Update on University Strategic Plan** - President Marlene Tromp commended Katharine Shepherd and the Strategic Planning Committee for their extensive outreach and thoughtful engagement with more than 1,000 participants across 53 listening sessions. Katie Shepherd reported that the committee met biweekly from September through early December, continually refining the draft plan based on campus and statewide feedback. Dean Shepherd's presentation slides are attached to these minutes and provide an overview of the process and current status. The current version of the Strategic Plan includes updated mission and vision statements and is organized around four pillars: student success; teaching, research, and innovation; engagement and partnerships; and university infrastructure and people. Version 4, the final draft, will be presented to the Board of Trustees for discussion and a vote on February 6-7.

Dean Shepherd emphasized that, once approved, the plan will become a living document. Units will align their local plans with the university-wide plan, develop tactics and metrics, and report annually on progress. Strategic Communications will develop a marketing and communications strategy to support implementation, and the UVM Foundation will use the plan to guide campaign priorities.

President Tromp noted the essential role of Senate-elected faculty representatives in the process and expressed appreciation for the campus community's contributions.

Discussion topics included how to address active global engagement; the anticipated timeline for work on aligning unit-level plans into the fall; the commitment to keeping UVM's "Our Common Ground" values central and plans for upholding UVM's values when faced with potential future political or regulatory pressure; confirmation that the strategic plan is envisioned as a five-year framework that is meant to function as a flexible, living document.

4. **Consent Agenda** – The following items were presented as a consent agenda:

- A. The minutes of the December 2025 Senate meeting
- B. Curricular Affairs
 - 1) New Co-Major in Statistics (CEMS)
 - 2) Substantial Revision to MED in Special Education (CESS)
 - 3) Subject Code request (EDES) (Grad/CESS)
 - 4) New CGS in Autonomy and Robotics (Grad/CEMS)
 - 5) New MS in Agroecology (Grad/CALS)
 - 6) New MS in Exercise Science (Grad/CNHS)
 - 7) New Doctorate in Public Health (Grad/LCOM)
 - 8) Substantial Revision to Food Systems BS (CALS)
 - 9) Substantial Revision to BS in Nutrition and Food Science (CALS)
 - 10) Substantial Revision to MS in Nutrition and Food Sciences (CALS)

Motion: Abigail McGowan stated that the consent agenda came to the Senate moved and seconded by the Executive Council.

Vote: 67 approve, 0 oppose, 0 abstain. **The motion carried.**

5. **Resolution in Memoriam** – Michael Gurdon, Professor Emeritus of Business Administration, presented a Resolution in Memoriam for Malcolm Severance, Professor Emeritus of Business Administration. The resolution is attached to these minutes.

Motion: Michael Gurdon moved to inscribe the resolution in memoriam for Malcolm Severance in the minutes of the Faculty Senate and have a copy sent to the family.

Vote: 67 approve, 0 oppose, 0 abstain. **The motion carried.**

6. **Faculty Senate Committee Updates**

- A. **Educational & Research Technologies Committee (ERTC)** – Helen Read, Chair, provided an overview of the committee's charge and recent activities. The

presentation slides are attached to these minutes. The ERTC is examining whether the Senate-approved policy requiring regular faculty computer replacements is being consistently implemented across colleges. Helen polled the Senate on the following questions, and will use this preliminary feedback to inform the work of the ERTC:

- 1) Are you familiar with your College's policy for regular replacement of faculty computers?
- 2) How often does your College allow you to replace your computer using College funds?
- 3) What is the maximum amount your College will pay for a replacement computer for faculty?

B. Faculty Affairs Committee (FAC) – Thomas Borchert, Chair, provided an overview of the FAC, one of two new Senate committees established last year. Attached slides summarize the committee's charge, membership, and initial work.

7. Reports that do not require a Senate vote:

- a) Curricular Affairs Committee (CAC) Report – An additional modality is available for students in the Pharmacology MS program.

8. New Business

- A. Meghan Emery (School of World Languages & Cultures) expressed interest in the University revisiting DEI-related changes made during the federal challenge to DEI programs. Abigail McGowan will determine which Senate committee should address this issue, and bring it back to the Senate.
- B. Teresa Graziano (Nursing) reported concerns about academic freedom following the recent killing of Alex Pretti by ICE. She noted increased faculty vulnerability, and recent incidents at UVM of faculty being targeted or harassed. Her unit requested that the Faculty Senate consider issuing a statement affirming academic freedom. Abigail McGowan will gather more information, and determine next steps for bringing the issue back to the Senate.

Without objection, the meeting adjourned at 5:25 PM.

2025– 2026 Strategic Planning

Presented to the Faculty Senate

January 26, 2026

Dr. Marlene Tromp

Dr. Katie Shepherd

Process to Date

- 53 Listening Sessions and surveys, over 1,000 participants
- Includes Message from the President, New Mission and Vision statements, 4 Pillars & Strategies
- Version 3 and survey released on December 12, 2025
- Final vetting in January with key university leaders
- Next steps for Version 4 (final draft):
 - Submission of plan to UVM Board of Trustees, January 31
 - Board discussion and vote: February 6 and 7

Moving into Action

Alignment and Implementation

- Units will align local plans with university plan
- Aligned plans to include tactics and metrics
- New/revised unit plans to be reviewed by an Alignment Committee

Communications and Marketing Plan

- Strat Comm to develop marketing & communications strategies for all audiences

Comprehensive Campaign

- Strategic plan to drive UVM Foundation efforts

Long-term Implementation and Outreach

- Annual reporting on metrics by units
- Integration into social media, communications within Vermont and beyond
- Continued partnership & community building

Mission/Vision

Mission

Guided by Our Common Ground values of respect, integrity, innovation, openness, justice, and responsibility, UVM creates, shares, and applies knowledge to serve humanity. With optimism and purpose, the UVM community leads boldly to solve complex challenges, improve and sustain life and the planet, further meaningful inquiry, and advance the well-being of democracy in our state and the nation. We strive to strengthen our connections with Vermont and increase our positive impact on the world.

Vision

UVM will champion sustainable, hopeful, and bold futures—strengthening Vermont and the world. Here, deep and broad thinking becomes action and advances personal and societal health and well-being, civic discourse, and new ways of thinking about and seeing the world. All members of our community are empowered to forge purposeful paths into work and life. In cooperation and partnership with the communities we touch, we engage as scholars, researchers, leaders, learners, and problem-solvers who seek to make an impact locally and globally.

Pillar 1 – Forge Bold Futures: Student Connection, Purpose, and Impact

What we mean: We create an environment where students learn deeply, belong, contribute, and develop the tools to navigate life beyond UVM—grounded in reflection, mentorship, a sense of history and place, and substantive experiences.

Strategies:

- Provide an intellectually challenging environment
- Prepare students to navigate life beyond UVM
- Expand opportunities for experiential learning
- Connect alumni and students
- Foster UVM community, pride, belonging, and connection
- Prioritize well-being, ensure accessible student success

Pillar 2 – Study What Matters: Values-Driven Learning, Research, and Practice

What we mean: UVM inspires learners driven by curiosity and integrity to be innovative in addressing impactful problems and serious questions in Vermont and broader global contexts. UVM community members are empowered to explore areas of personal significance and meaning and embrace a lifelong pursuit of knowledge.

Strategies:

- Make a lasting commitment to research excellence
- Prioritize the liberal arts
- Create collaborative solutions to contemporary and complex challenges
- Transform practice and policy through discovery and innovation
- Accelerate the innovative impact of emergent technology

Pillar 3 – Create Opportunity: Access, Engagement and Partnerships

What we mean: As Vermont's flagship and land-grant research university, UVM broadens access and strengthens engagement and partners with communities and organizations in Vermont and beyond. We embrace and support learners from everywhere to become life-long members of the UVM community and contributors to Vermont's well-being and common good.

Strategies:

- Broaden Access for learners of all backgrounds and cultures
- Expand our partnership network (local and global)
- Amplify belonging, dialogue and civic life
- Improve Affordability and Access to Resources
- Celebrate athletic, creative and intellectual excellence at UVM
- Share UVM's story

Pillar 4 – Enable Excellence: Campus Community, Systems and Infrastructure

What we mean: To achieve our shared goals, we will invest in and renew UVM's infrastructure: our physical spaces, technological systems, and organizational processes. With the same goals, we will fully support the university's most crucial asset: its people. We will approach our work with a mindset of stewardship, collaboration, transparency, and sustainability. We will modernize the practices and processes that support and govern our work, renew our spaces, and cultivate a collaborative and innovative culture where every member of our community is supported to thrive and optimize their UVM experience.

Strategies:

- Champion our campus community: Recognize the excellence of faculty, staff, and students
- Invest in modern systems and processes
- Enhance UVM's digital experience and data stewardship
- Prioritize sustainable and accessible spaces
- Engage in responsive resource planning and allocation

Resolution in Memoriam
Malcolm Severance
Professor Emeritus of Business Administration
1924-2025

Presented by Michael Gurdon
Professor Emeritus of Business Administration
January 26, 2026

Born on the family farm in Colchester, Malcolm Severance was a true son of Vermont and, unquestionably, became the father of what was to evolve into the Business School at UVM. Malcolm's connections with this university were multifold across the decades beginning with his graduation in 1949 with a bachelor of science degree. He returned as a faculty member in 1953 after earning a doctorate in economics from the University of Wisconsin. He became assistant dean within the College of Arts and Sciences as well as taking on a special administrative role assisting the President of the day. Following the separation of what had been the Department of Economics and Business into two separate academic units, he became chair for the first eight years of the new Department of Business. In that position Malcolm recruited a quality faculty and prepared the business program for transition to autonomous school status and successful accreditation. One endearing practice in this recruitment process was for Malcolm and his wife Gladys to host a dinner in their home as part of each candidate's visit.

Malcolm retired from his faculty role in 1986, but his contributions to both the university and his community continued to be significant. He was appointed executive director of the New England School of Banking, sat on local boards such as the Vermont Symphony Orchestra, and served four terms as the representative for Colchester in the Vermont House. In addition, Malcolm's regard for this university, and the respect with which he was held, led to his appointment to the Board of Trustees on two separate occasions.

Finally, it is notable that his intellectual curiosity led him to begin a multi-year research project which ended in the publication, at the age of 91, of his book A Pursuit of Excellence: A History of the University of Vermont School of Business Administration. Of course, Malcolm himself had lived through much of that history. Malcolm's intellect, vision, and social skills reflected his own personal pursuit of excellence and produced a lasting legacy.

Educational & Research Technologies Committee (ERTC)

Helen Read, Chair
hpread@uvm.edu

Excerpt from the ERTC Charge

The ERTC shall review and recommend policies and procedures relating to the planning, introduction, and use of campus-wide technologies, including computers, communications, electronic data handling, instructional media, and emerging technologies, such as Artificial Intelligence.

Recent ERTC Activities

- Heard from the UVM Web Team about the new Web Governance Task Force and from the Office of Accessibility Services about new rules around digital accessibility
- Advised ETS on the timing of routine deletion of old course teams
- Requested early access to the new MyUVM before it rolled out, and advised pushing back the rollout from January 2024 to May or June of that year
- We meet regularly with CTO Mike Austin, CIO Kellie Campbell, the Registrar, and various representatives from ETS and CTL

Faculty Affairs Committee

Faculty Affairs Committee

- Charge
 - **7.1.5.8 Faculty Affairs Committee (FAC).** This committee shall have responsibility for matters of concern to the faculty not comprehensively addressed through existing university structures, including faculty welfare, inclusive excellence, and related matters. This includes items referred to in Sections 1.1 a, 1.1i, 1.2a, 1.2b, 1.2d, 1.2g, and 1.2h.
 - **1.1** To review and establish policy with respect to the following matters:
 - a. Academic freedom, including rights and responsibilities
 - i. Other academic matters referred to it by the Board of Trustees, the University Administration, the faculty of a school, college, department, Extension or the Libraries, or other members of the University community.
 - **1.2** To review, to recommend, and to participate in the formulation of policy with regard to:
 - a. Institutional priorities
 - b. The allocation and utilization of the University's human, fiscal, and physical resources.
 - d. Faculty affairs, including appointment, promotion, tenure, dismissal, leaves, and economic benefits, welfare, and matters related to inclusive excellence. The Senate shall also participate in decisions regarding the application of these established policies to individual faculty members.
 - g. Resources that support scholarly activities and research, including the libraries, the academic computing center, the Center for Teaching and Learning, the instrumentation and model facility, media services, the university store, the museum, and other supporting services.
 - h. Administrative procedures and organizational structure

Members of the Faculty Affairs Committee

CALS	Feng-Qi Zhao	2025-2027
CAS	Thomas Borchert	2025-2026
CAS	Sean Stillwell	2025-2028
CEMS	pending	2025-2026
CESS	Melissa Kate Adams-Silva	2025-2028
CNHS	Kimberly Bauerly	2025-2027
GSB	Edward Gamble	2025-2028
LCOM	Margaret Doyle	2025-2027
LCOM	Bill Majdalany	2025-2028
LIB	Shir Bach	2025-2026
RSENR	pending	2025-2027

Work the Committee has done this year

- Established itself and operating procedures
- Discussion about University processes around challenging students and safety
- Discussion about academic freedom

Upcoming issues

- Operating Procedures:
 - Following the Charge, the Committee will meet at least once a year, or as need with the following: The Chair of the Professional Standards Committee, the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs, representatives from LCOM, representatives of the Women's Faculty Caucus, the Vice Provost for Inclusive Excellence, leadership of United Academics, any other body that may represent faculty concerns.
- Meeting with key stakeholders (VP for FA; UA leadership)
- academic freedom