



**Faculty Senate
Minutes
Monday, March 23, 2026
4:00 – 5:30 PM, Waterman Memorial Lounge**

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

Senators in Attendance: 68

Absent: 12 Senators: Agriculture, Landscape, and Environment (Tracy), Anesthesiology Rep1 (Hoeft), Biomedical & Health Sciences (Allen), Counseling, Human Dev. And Family Sciences (Maianu), Emergency Medicine Rep1 (Schlein), Emergency Medicine Rep2 (Pellet), English Rep2 (Joo), Nursing (Graziano), Philosophy (Moyer), Plant Biology (Beckage), Radiology Rep1 (vacant), Radiology Rep2 (Brennan)

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

- Faculty Senate Election Results:
 - Amy Trubek, has been elected by acclamation to serve as Faculty Senate President-Elect for the one-year term beginning July 1, 2026, followed by a two-year term as President of the Faculty Senate (July 2027-June 2029).
 - Lizzy Pope (CALs, Nutrition and Food Sciences), Abby Crocker (CEMS, Mathematics and Statistics) have been elected to serve as Members at-large to the Executive Council for a two-year term running July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2028. Thank you to Lisa Holmes and Nels Olson for their willingness to run in this year's election.
- The elected members of the faculty panel for the Provost Search Committee will meet March 24 to choose their four representatives to serve on the search committee. During the search, public forums will be held for the UVM community to participate.
- Faculty have been asked to review a new stand-alone AI module intended for first-year students. After reviewing the module, faculty are asked to complete a brief 4-question survey. The survey will close on Wednesday, March 25. A resolution on whether to adopt the module will be brought to the Senate for vote in April.
- The April meeting will include an update from VP for Research Kirk Dombrowski on R1 status progress one-year after designation, and an update from Jamie McGowan, Executive Director of International Partnerships and Programs, on international student issues.

- Faculty are encouraged to stay engaged in the many events and initiatives at UVM. Upcoming events of interest include a faculty panel on the war in Iran scheduled for Thursday, March 26, featuring speakers from political science, history, religion, and a scholar from Middlebury College; UVM Research Week begins April 13, highlighting campus innovation and knowledge creation; and the Translating Identity Conference, a student-run event focused on trans, non-binary and gender non-conforming students and community.
2. **Consent Agenda** – The following items were presented as a consent agenda:
 - A. The minutes of the February 2026 Senate meeting
 - B. Curricular Affairs
 1. Minor in One Health (CALs)

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

Vote: 57 approve, 0 oppose, 0 abstain. **The motion carried.**
 3. **AI in Grading: Ad hoc Committee** - Two ad hoc committees are being formed around AI. The first, emerging from the Catamount Core Curriculum Committee, will explore how AI should be incorporated into the curriculum, including whether it should be a standalone requirement or integrated into existing requirements. Reach out to Abigail McGowan or Kat Scollins if you are interested in being involved in this ad hoc committee. The second will examine the use of AI in grading, focusing on campus norms, principles, and potential guardrails. Both committees will gather faculty input, coordinate with the AI Task Working Group, and continue into next year. Faculty interested in serving on the ad hoc committee for AI in Grading should contact the Faculty Senate office (Faculty.Senate@uvm.edu).
 4. **Assessment Report** – Richard Cohen, Assessment Coordinator in the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment, presented the 2024-2025 Assessment of Catamount Core Curriculum outcomes. The attached slides summarize the five-year assessment timeline, key achievements, areas for improvement, methodologies, and sample results. Recent accomplishments include effective multi-department data collection, a dedicated rating day, and strong cross-campus collaboration, though ensuring broad faculty participation remains a challenge. The assessment process focuses on continuous improvement by refining outcomes and methods and maintaining ongoing dialogue with departments. Findings from this cycle will guide future assessments and help identify areas where students may need additional support.
 5. **Update on recent legal developments and campus inclusivity** – Sharon Reich Paulsen, VP for Legal Affairs and General Counsel, and Senior Advisor to the President provided an update on the shifting legal landscape surrounding federal actions related

to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). She explained that confusion began when, after President Trump took office, the Department of Education issued a “dear colleague” letter interpreting new executive orders on DEI. A federal district court later blocked the Department from enforcing that letter because it had not gone through proper regulatory procedures. Although the Department of Education chose not to appeal that injunction earlier this year, this did **not** overturn the underlying executive orders themselves.

A subsequent Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals decision confirmed that the executive orders remain valid. The court emphasized that the federal government, acting as a *funder*, may choose to prioritize—or deprioritize—equity initiatives when distributing grant money. These orders do not directly regulate universities, but federal agencies still determine how they will implement them.

Because accrediting agencies and federal offices continue to adjust their expectations, institutions that ignore changes to the DEI landscape may face risks, including potential challenges to federal funding. For UVM, the practical takeaway is to continue grounding its work in the university’s long-standing Common Ground values while ensuring compliance so research funding is not jeopardized.

During Q&A, several clarifications were offered:

- Teaching about race and racism remains protected under academic freedom, affirmed by the Faculty Senate.
- The university expects values to endure even if terminology evolves.
- UVM’s “red line” is staying true to its core mission and values.
- While individuals may voice concerns about national shifts in higher education, UVM must remain aware of new federal parameters
- The Board of Trustees has reaffirmed its support for academic freedom.

6. **Update from working groups on 10% allocation** - The Faculty Senate received updates from four academic units—the College of Arts & Sciences (CAS), the College of Education & Social Services (CESS), the Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources (RSENr), and the College of Engineering & Mathematical Sciences (CEMS)—regarding ongoing work to standardize **teaching effort allocation at 10% per course** across the university. Because the shift affects workload definitions, service expectations, and unit-level practices, each unit formed **working groups** with faculty and administrators. Their task is to determine how the new 10% standard should be implemented in practice rather than left as an abstract policy.

Although the Faculty Senate does not have authority to set workload policy, it serves an important consultative role. The two goals of this update are:

1. **Transparency** – to update faculty on how the working groups’ discussions are progressing, what issues have emerged, and how units are interpreting or adjusting to the change.
2. **Uniformity** – to ensure that, in standardizing teaching effort, the university doesn’t inadvertently produce new inconsistencies elsewhere (e.g., in defining service or “other” workload categories).

The CAS Teaching Faculty Workload Task Force (slides attached)

The CAS Workload Task Force is developing guidance for departments as they revise evaluation and promotion guidelines in response to the shift to a 10% teaching-effort allocation per course. Their primary goal is to ensure that non-tenure-track faculty do not experience increased or uncompensated workload. The task force has met with the Dean, held listening sessions, reviewed existing guidelines and the CBA, and will produce best-practice recommendations to support consistent, equitable departmental revisions.

The RSENR Workload Guidelines Committee (slides attached)

Rubenstein faculty spent the past year developing a new course-equivalency (CE) system and are now evaluating its impact. The system adjusts CE values based on class size and course type. Faculty are completing workload forms together to ensure accuracy and to identify work that should count toward teaching or service. For non-tenure-track faculty, the model uses an 80% teaching / 20% service split with some flexibility for research. Early comparisons show that teaching loads may shift slightly but also provide clearer credit for responsibilities like program direction. The committee will continue gathering data to assess effects across the school.

CESS Workload Task Force

The CESS Workload Task Force—made up of faculty across ranks—has been reviewing how **the** 2026 workload guidelines may require updates to departmental policies, evaluation forms, CE guidelines, and advising/service expectations. The group meets biweekly, gathers faculty and chair feedback, and emphasizes that bargaining with United Academics is ultimately needed, though their work continues in the meantime. Draft recommendations include updating workload and evaluation documents, revising guidelines, adjusting course evaluation materials, and adding a clear policy that reducing teaching effort to 10% per course must not increase teaching load. Ongoing concerns include course weighting, impacts on course integrity and student learning, staffing effects, and how students will be informed. Next steps include an April 22 listening session and developing a faculty survey.

CEMS Course Equivalency Task Force (slides attached)

A special college meeting was convened at the request of faculty to discuss concerns about the proposed 10% teaching-effort directive. Following that meeting, the college faculty overwhelmingly approved a February 27 resolution calling for the *immediate suspension* of the 10% effort policy. A new Standards of Course Equivalency Task Force

was appointed last week, with members representing multiple departments—including Electrical and Biomedical Engineering, Physics, Computer Science, Mathematics and Statistics, Mechanical Engineering, and Civil and Environmental Engineering. The group received its formal charge on Friday.

Abigail McGowan opened the floor for discussion. Key points included:

- Concerns about the impact on pedagogy and student learning, noting that the proposed changes may require instructional adjustments and should consider student outcomes.
- Questions regarding the continued use of the term “NTT,” which some felt is not inclusive; alternative titles such as “teaching faculty” have been considered but not adopted.
- An update from Rubenstein faculty on their shift from a 96% teaching / 4% service model to an 80% teaching / 20% service model. They emphasized that most lecturers will not see an increased course load, though those teaching multiple small-enrollment courses may be affected as CE values adjust. Their unit also has greater flexibility in modifying CE formulas than larger colleges like CAS.
- Clarification of timelines: tenure-track faculty will move to the new percentages in 2026, with lecturers and senior lecturers transitioning in 2027. Committees will continue refining guidelines and supporting departments throughout the transition.

7. Reports that do not require a Senate vote:

- a) Curricular Affairs Committee (CAC) Report – APR Department of Animal and Veterinary Science
- b) Faculty Affairs Committee (FAC) Report – Recommendation regarding safety in classrooms. This recommendation calls for centralized reporting, a standardized response team, transparent follow-up, and expanded training to ensure faculty safety while maintaining student privacy.

8. New Business - none

Without objection, the meeting adjourned at 5:26 PM.

2024-2025

Assessment of CCC Outcomes

Richard Cohen, Ph.D.

Assessment Coordinator

Outline

- Timeline of Assessment for CCC Outcomes
- Notable Achievements
- Areas of Growth
- Assessment Methodologies
- Standard Rubric
- Results of 2024-2025 Assessment
 - Arts (AH1)
 - Literature (AH2)
 - Humanities (AH3)



University of Vermont

Catamount Core Curriculum Timeline of Assessment

Year 1 (2023-24)	Year 2 (2024-25)	Year 3 (2025-26)	Year 4 (2026-27)	Year 5 (2027-2028)
MA S1 WIL2	AH1 AH2 AH3	OC N1 N2	QD WIL1 SU	GC1 GC2 D1 D2

Notable Achievements

Held a Rating Day for AH3

Collected Data for a Single Attribute from Multiple Departments

Collected Meaningful Direct Assessment Data

Engaged Numerous Faculty from Diverse Areas

Used Multiple Assessment Methodologies

Collaboration of OIRA, CCCC, Key Campus Partners

Areas of Growth

**Increasing
Participation Rates**

**Collecting Indirect
Data from Students**

**Using the Data for
Continuous
Improvement**

**Catching up with
Departments that
Couldn't
Participate Last
Year**

**Development of
CCC Rubrics**

**Determining the
Methodology
(and Timing)
that Works Best for
Each Category**

Assessment Methodologies

Embedded Assessment

Professors assess one or more assignments from their course(s) utilizing a common rubric. Results are submitted to a Qualtrics form after which they are tabulated and discussed.

Rating Day

Professors submit one or more assignments to OIRA where they are anonymized and randomly assigned to folders. Professors then gather on a rating day where they “norm” a common rubric and assess the assignments. Results are tabulated and discussed. Rating days can either be within their own department or cross departments.

Standard Rubric

0	1	2	3	4
No Evidence	Not Meeting	Approaching	Meeting	Exceeding

Assessment Activities: Arts (AH1)

English

Embedded assessment

Other Departments

Other departments had planned to participate but other obligations prevented them from doing so.

Several have already put plans into motion to collect data this year.

Analysis of Findings: Arts (AH1)

English Department

- Student strengths:
 - In general, they were best able to critically analyze artistic works as they relate to different aspects of society and history, including the examination of social structures, identities, practices and/or problems.
 - Some students were very capable at incorporating research and formal technique into their fiction writing. (Others were not.) Most were able to manage solid to excellent critical thinking (#3), both in their original writing and their critique of peer work.
 - Students successfully incorporated the vocabulary introduced in class, especially around ecopoetics and ways of thinking about nonhuman agents in poetry.
 - At the end of this course, a significant percentage of the students have attained an unexpected fluency with the formal skills of the course.

Analysis of Findings: Arts (AH1)

English Department

- Areas where students can improve:
 - About half the students struggled to incorporate research into their creative work. They simply did not take the time for it, or they didn't absorb how detail enriches plausibility and context. Several struggled to meet their deadlines in general.
 - The average student (with exceptions in the top range) is still developing confidence in their own analytic skills and learning to take risks that aren't prepared or sanctioned by teacherly encouragement.
 - Some of the students, while ostensibly writing under the influence of historical examples, did not display much awareness of those examples.

Continuous Improvement: Arts (AH1)

English Department

- In retrospect, I might spend more time on Learning Outcome #1: not just zeroing in on fiction writing, but more on the particular craft of historical fiction writing and/or writing about a place or time you've never visited.
 - I have already incorporated incremental deadlines. Perhaps encouraging students to set up notifications about their assignments.
- Frankly, a broad mandate on students to read independently and deeply. Even majors, I find, largely read within the lines of syllabuses, whereas that material should be a starting point for a deeper independent exploration.
- I may adjust the evaluation in the course to include some spot-checks on reading for exemplary texts, so the students develop habits of reading and studying them.
- My recommendation is more of a point about academic culture; it might be encouraged by funding independent projects for advanced majors (summer funding aligned with particular goals, and requiring careful and well-read proposals.)
- More classroom time and more time for writing feedback per student would be helpful. In general, the enrollment caps for writing classes are higher than they should be, which makes it easy for students to conceal half-hearted preparation.

Assessment Activities: Literature (AH2)

English

Embedded assessment

School of World Languages & Culture

Embedded assessment

Analysis of Findings: Literature (AH2)

- Areas where students can improve :
 - General writing/editing skills
 - Differentiating between literary/cultural forms
 - Using critical skills of evidence and argument to build support for a claim from evidence from the text
 - Integrating quotations from texts as evidence
 - Organization of arguments
 - Linking of interpretive ideas to specific points of text
 - Negative influences of AI

Continuous Improvement: Literature (AH2)

- Introductory courses need to be smaller (mentioned many times)
 - Skill of building an argument needs time for reflective feedback and course size makes this difficult.
- Greater promotion of Writing Center.
- Fund an office of “First-Year Writing”
- Focus more instruction on basic grammar & sentence structure
- More exercises tying together form & genre
- Require two semesters of intensive writing
- Find ways to limit AI use or inform students how to properly use it

Assessment Activities: Humanities (AH3)

History

Rating Day

Religion

Faculty discussion

Other Departments

Other departments had planned to participate but other obligations prevented them from doing so.

Plan to follow-up this year.

Analysis of Findings: Humanities (AH3) History Rating Day

- The assignments that were aimed at learning outcome 1 produced consistently good results
- Assignments dedicated to primary source analysis also reflected reasonably strong student performance in learning outcomes 2 and 4.
- The assignments frequently called on students to engage with learning outcomes 1, 2, and 4
 - Bridging these categories, which is an important aspect of historical thinking.
 - This is also something that is less susceptible to AI and there was not evidence of much use of AI.
- There was a level of engagement with learning outcome 3, but that wasn't the main focus of any of the assignments.
 - As a result, there were mixed results with students demonstrating their comprehension of secondary sources.
- Assignments do not reflect an engagement with learning outcome 5.
 - Expected since assignments came entirely from introductory courses
- Learning outcomes 4 and 5 are higher-level skills, and the students could go further in their work.

Continuous Improvement: Humanities (AH3) History Rating Day

- For students to improve in any skill/outcome, they need to practice.
 - History faculty are encouraged to design their assignment structure so that students can demonstrate improvement over the course.
- At the intro level, most of our faculty particularly value having students work with primary sources.
 - Ideally, students would work with Special Collections, the Fleming Museum, Government Information, etc.
 - It is recognized that this can be challenging with classes of 100+ students.
- Prefer that all students, not just majors, work with primary sources across the three geographic concentrations of the major (the Americas, Europe, and Global)
 - Our library resources are not balanced across these geographies.
 - Access to databases of primary sources dealing with the entire globe would be welcome.

Humanities (AH3)

Results of Religion Faculty Discussion

- Conducted review of syllabi from 9 of 15 courses approved for the Humanities attribute.
 - Discussed the ways each course addresses the Humanities learning outcomes.
- Conducted review of assignments submitted from 6 courses
- Results were uneven at least partially due to mix of first-years and seniors.
- Evidence indicated that skill development occurred over the course of the semester.
- Overall, “students coming out of Religion classes have had exposure to claims about the world and what it means to be human, and they have had the opportunity to develop skills focused on analyzing the claims of texts, thinking about texts in context, and practicing how scholars interpret the claims.

CAS Teaching Faculty Workload Task Force

Task:

Develop recommendations to support departments in the process of revising their reappointment, promotion, and annual evaluation guidelines to address the inclusion of “service and research related to teaching” (see CBA Article 14.10) in light of the adjustment of effort allocation for teaching to 10% per CE.

i.e., How can departments ensure that NTT faculty are protected from uncompensated new work?

N.B.: This unilateral change in the percentage of effort is the subject of an ongoing grievance by United Academics

CAS Teaching Faculty Workload Task Force

Starting points:

Currently, 100% of the workload of a Lecturer or Senior Lecturer is devoted to teaching.

The new dispensation will apportion 80% of the workload to teaching, 10% to research related to teaching, and 10% to service related to teaching.

The responsibility for making the necessary revisions to RPT, AEG, and CE policies fully lies with the departments.

No one, including our Dean, wants this to result in more teaching or more work for NTT faculty.

CAS Teaching Faculty Workload Task Force

Halfway through our process we have:

- Met with our dean

- Held one of two listening sessions

- Begun to review RPT, AEG, and CE guidelines from across the college

- Reviewed CBA

CAS Teaching Faculty Workload Task Force

How can we help departments ensure that NTT faculty are protected from uncompensated new work?

- Suggest a small set of “best practices” for the revision process:
 - Key language to CBA
 - Include NTT faculty on revision committee
 - Careful alignment of language across RPT, AEG, and CE policies
 - Etc.
- Identify landmines that departments might stumble into as they make their revisions.
- Provide key references to the relevant sections of the CBA
- Provide at least two examples from other departments: RPT, AEG, CE documents.

CAS Teaching Faculty Workload Task Force

Task Force Members:

Mary Lou Kete, Chair of English, Task Force Chair
Erica Andrus, Senior Lecturer, Department of Religion
Doc Bradley, Senior Lecturer, Department of Political Science
Deborah Cafiero, Senior Lecturer, School of World Languages & Cultures
Linden Higgins, Senior Lecturer, Department of Biology
Sara Nelson, Senior Lecturer, School of Arts
Deborah Noel, Senior Lecturer, Department of English

RSENR WORKLOAD GUIDELINES COMMITTEE UPDATE

Charge	Plans
Assess how the new CE structure is affecting faculty workload distribution in its first year of implementation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comparison of RSENR guidelines to other UVM departments • Comparison of CE changes for individual courses • Comparison of faculty workload documents (in-progress)
Identify unintended consequences or areas of ambiguity.	Survey to faculty (in-progress)
Offer recommendations, if warranted, to Faculty regarding potential updates to RPT guidelines (particularly in areas such as Service and Scholarship).	Planned for future, following analysis
Review the CE definition at the end of the first year of implementation and proposing refinements if needed.	Planned for future, following analysis
Represent the faculty voice.	Survey to faculty (in-progress)

Example TT Workload Comparison

Academic Year	Elements Counted as Teaching	On-load CE (sum)	CE to % FTE Rule	Teaching %	Advising %	Teaching + Advising %
2024–25	NR 2750 (0.5 CE, co-taught); PRT 3300 (1.5 CE); PRT 1500 (1.0 CE); NR 2750 (0.5 CE, co-taught); NCR (1.0 CE)	4.5	1 CE = 8% FTE	36	4	40
2025–26	PRT 1100 (2.0 CE); PRT 3300 (1.5 CE); PRT 1500 (1.0 CE); NR 2750 (1.0 CE overload, excluded from on-load)	4.5	1 CE = 8% FTE	36	4	40
2026–27	Program Directorship (1.0 CE); PRT 1100 (1.0 CE); Ecotourism coverage (0.5 CE); PRT 1500 (1.0 CE); Undergraduate Research (0.5 CE)	4	1 CE = 10% FTE	40	NA	NA

Report from the CEMS Course Equivalency Task Force

After a special College meeting that was held at the request of faculty on February 26, a resolution was proposed and voted on by the College faculty. The vote was overwhelmingly in favor of adopting the resolution (79% in favor vs 17% opposed). Here is the resolution:

Resolution (passed 2/27/2026)

“The CEMS Faculty calls for immediate suspension of the 10% effort directive as applied to CEMS and requests that any future changes to workload or effort allocation be developed through a transparent, data driven, and faculty governed process that respects existing college guidelines and the current Collective Bargaining Agreement.”

CEMS Course Equivalency Task Force

Tony Barsic, Department of Electrical and Biomedical Engineering

Matt Dawber, Department of Physics

Jackie Horton, Department of Computer Science

Joe Kudrle, Department of Mathematics and Statistics

Jeffrey Marshall, Department of Mechanical Engineering

Helen Read, Department of Mathematics and Statistics

Dana Rowangould, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering

Summary of the Charge of the Task Force

3/20/2026

To identify the college and department guidelines which require revision, to draft potential revisions to said guidelines, and to recommend ways to count service and advising, with consideration of a 0.10 (10%) FTE course equivalent, resulting in 0.2 FTE available for other teaching activities, advising, and service.

Each department will need to amend their own guidelines in consideration of the language and recommendations recommended by this task force and approved by the Dean. Further, CEMS is honoring the current bargaining activities under way and this work in no way precludes or dismisses those activities but are contingent to the grievance currently taking place.