

# Strategy 2022: College of Education and Social Services at UVM

## September 2017

### Mission

Our mission is to (1) educate and prepare outstanding professionals in education, social work, and human services; (2) engage in policy relevant scholarship of highest quality; and (3) provide exemplary professional service within the state of Vermont, nationally, and globally.

Our actions are designed to promote a more humane and just society, free from oppression, that maximizes human potential and the quality of life for all individuals, families and communities.

### Values

Respect, Integrity, Innovation, Openness, Justice, Responsibility

### Our Five-Year Strategy

Our strategy builds on the College's historic prioritization of teaching, research, and service that are student-centered, family-focused, community-engaged, culturally competent and collaboratively designed.

We are a college of education and social services, and the impact of our work is driven by the systems orientation that we bring to the problems we address in education, human development, counseling, and social work. We strive for academic excellence in each of these areas, and we actively cultivate programmatic connections between these fields, leveraging the interconnected nature of the schools, families, and communities that we serve. Our understanding in each area of the college is powerfully enhanced when put in the context of the larger set of forces present in the programmatic domains of other areas of the college. Enhancing this intellectual and academic architecture across our programming is the first strategic component driving us toward distinction and our 2022 vision.

The second core component of our strategy is The Vermont Distinction, which is about the people, place, and history of Vermont. It is a distinction that is simultaneously geographic, demographic, economic and historical. It is evident in the long history of grassroots mobilization in our communities, the drive toward direct democracy seen in our Town Meeting Days, the local activism found in a myriad of community based organizations, and the influence of these activities on the mechanisms of our formal legislative system. That distinction is formally manifested in centuries of nationally pioneering public policies in health, social welfare, land-use, and education that are based on informed anticipation and prevention of problems.

The third strategic component driving us toward our 2022 vision is the relentless exercise of our responsibility to bring our work to life in the context of the diverse, globalized society of which we are one small part. The impact and distinction of our work as a college ultimately stands on how we understand not just the distinctiveness of our programs, but also how they relate to settings across the United States and around the globe.

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## CESS Vision 2022

**SYNERGISTIC:** Our academic programs clearly articulate the College's commitment to the welfare of individuals, families, and their communities. Our work is grounded in an interdependent approach, linking students and families to the schools, human service agencies and citizen organizations that serve and support them and others in our communities.

**INTERDISCIPLINARY:** The College actively facilitates and brokers inquiry from allied areas across the UVM campus — both disciplinary and professional — that informs perspectives on all topics related to the health and well-being of schools, social service agencies, families, and communities. It is our business to be knowledgeable about the research and service activities in these domains that are being conducted by our colleagues in other colleges and research units on campus.

**DISTINCTIVELY VERMONT:** Our research and academic programs fully embrace the cultural, demographic, political, economic, and geographic diversity of Vermont. We focus systematically on areas in the state where we feel our work can have the greatest impact, within the scope of financial responsibility.

**DIVERSE:** We embrace the full diversity of our society in order to realize the promise of liberal education in a research university setting. Diversity brings intellectual vibrancy and that we leverage to better prepare our students academically and professionally to serve the welfare of diverse communities in Vermont and beyond.

**GLOBAL:** We have a small number of selective international partnerships for academic programs and research activity, and we leverage these partnerships to strengthen our orientation to global learning, our real-world impact, and our visibility domestically as well as abroad.

**ACADEMICALLY VIBRANT:** We prioritize the academic and continually assess the degree to which our administrative structure and organization contribute to academic excellence and scholarly impact. Every unit within the College is demonstrably connected to driving our core mission and distinction. We work to overcome the challenges that impede our shared progress by identifying and refining levers for progress.

**NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED:** We achieve and evidence national and international recognition as leaders in research and scholarship in several fields.

**STRATEGICALLY RESOURCED:** UVM's Incentive Based Budgeting (IBB) model is fully implemented within the College, providing us with a strategic advantage through the generation of new revenue and growth that enable the substantive research, teaching, and service components of our 2022 vision. As a resourcing tool, IBB is used to encourage and reward the programmatic innovation and entrepreneurial activity that fulfill our core mission and support our distinction as a College.

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## Pathway 1: Undergraduate Education

- Recognize our distinction as Vermont’s only land-grant research university by leading with the nationally recognized research strengths of our faculty, and by resourcing the “teacher-scholar” environment that is distinctively CESS and UVM.
- Continually revisit and reinvent our academics, student affairs, and business practices to enhance learning, improve service and efficiency, and foster student success.
- Directly incentivize the development of new undergraduate degree and certificate programs that respond to innovation and new discovery in our academic fields as well as the needs of students, the state, and the region. Redirect resourcing to those programs that are most responsive to these interests.
- Promote and reward intersectional work to ensure that every undergraduate has meaningful opportunities for academic work across colleges on the UVM campus, between departments within the College, and in international settings.
- Deepen and broaden efforts to provide field-based experiences and experiential learning opportunities for undergraduates that span the range of settings in Vermont.
- Recognize that excellence in undergraduate education requires the embrace of and respect for the full diversity of our society (ascriptive and ideological). Resource our commitment to enhancing diversity throughout our undergraduate programs.
- Recognize that high-quality advising and mentoring are key to undergraduate student success. Resource and reward these activities accordingly.
- Demonstrate and reward connections between faculty research, undergraduate programs, and high-quality undergraduate research opportunities.
- Provide and regularly evolve clearly defined course and field-experience pathways to on-time graduation for all students in our baccalaureate programs.
- Develop the capacity and infrastructure to bring classes and programs to students using advanced technologies and multiple delivery formats, where appropriate. Reward innovation in programming.
- Develop and disseminate clear assessment procedures and outcome indicators in each undergraduate program. Ensure that assessment procedures are aligned with and furthering of all accreditation expectations in each area (where relevant), and that all data aggregated for outcome indicators are analyzed to inform continuous program improvement.
- Resource the incorporation of regular alumni and employer feedback into continuous improvement processes for all of our undergraduate programs.

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## Pathway 2: Research and Scholarship

- Prioritize resources toward the further development of our College's unique strengths and opportunities for research and innovation based on our location and land-grant mandate to be responsive to the needs of Vermont.
- Prioritize resources to encourage cross-program and cross-departmental collaborations that support the College's commitment to the development of individuals and their communities. Reward linkages to the broad array of human service agencies and schools that bring life to this commitment.
- Pursue policies, systems, and incentives that promote interdisciplinary collaboration and research within CESS and across the University.
- Prioritize resources that support activity enhancing individual scholarly productivity and impact. Recognize that the College's academic reputation, nationally and internationally, rests on the scholarly productivity and impact of our faculty. Reward faculty accordingly.
- Better integrate the activity of the College's research centers to promote the synergistic scholarship central to our vision. Discourage activity not directly connected to substantively promoting or materially supporting that vision.
- Support and encourage the systematic pursuit of extramural support for faculty research and scholarship. Reward both demonstrated effort and realized success in this area.
- Attract, retain, develop, and promote a diverse, highly engaged, and productive faculty.
- Develop a College infrastructure that can support the coordination of large-scale, interdisciplinary or multi-campus research initiatives.
- Promote and support the application of our policy-relevant scholarship and scholarly expertise in the public sphere. Connect this application to the measurement of our impact as a college.
- Support faculty involvement with state, federal, and international agencies.
- Proactively nominate faculty to national awards, society fellowships, and academy memberships.
- Encourage and support faculty seeking leadership positions in major scholarly and professional associations.
- Continue to refine the College's communications activity to systematically showcase and present the impact of our scholarship and to evidence our vision.

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### Pathway 3: Graduate Education

- Prioritize resources around the provision of relevant, timely, and impactful graduate education through a programming structure that includes a small, highly selective Ph.D. program; a larger, research-based, practice-oriented Ed.D. program; and master's-level degree and certificate programs.
- Incentivize the development of new graduate degree and certificate programs that are responsive to innovation and new discovery in our academic fields; responsive to the needs of students, the state, and the region; and fiscally responsible. Redirect resourcing for programs that are not supporting these interests.
- Further our partnership with the Graduate College to sharpen the distinction of our graduate programs and complement the graduate-level offerings across the University.
- Recognize that excellence in graduate education requires the respect and embrace of the full diversity of our society (ascriptive and ideological). Resource our commitment to enhancing diversity throughout our graduate programs.
- Develop the capacity and infrastructure to bring classes and programs to students using advanced technologies and multiple delivery formats, where appropriate. Reward innovation in programming.
- Support deliberate connections between graduate students and the scholarly and/or professional bodies defining their specific fields. Promote their involvement with, and recognition by, these groups.
- Provide and regularly evolve clearly defined course, practica, and internship pathways to optimize student time to degree in all of our graduate-level programs.
- Recognize that high-quality mentoring sits at the heart of effective graduate education. Reward it accordingly.
- Facilitate and deepen the optimal interaction of graduate students and faculty. This includes support for leadership, staff assistance, faculty graduate advisers, and space.
- Develop and disseminate clear assessment procedures and outcome indicators in each of our graduate programs. Ensure that assessment procedures are aligned with and furthering of all accreditation expectations in each area (where relevant), and that all data aggregated for outcome indicators are analyzed regularly to inform ongoing program improvement.
- Resource the incorporation of regular alumni and employer feedback into continuous improvement processes for all of our graduate programs.

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## Pathway 4: Responsibly Resourcing a Sustainable Environment

- Invest in the development of knowledge, capacity, and skills across faculty and staff to ensure the successful implementation of the College's priorities.
- Implement practices and habits that foster a healthy work-life balance. Strive to create work environments that encourage health and well-being for everyone.
- Initiate individual professional development plans for all members of the CESS staff.
- Invest in staff career development, provide on-the-job "stretch" opportunities for possible advancement, and work to provide promotion opportunities within the College and across the University.
- Effectively implement IBB to create a strategic advantage for CESS by encouraging innovative, entrepreneurial behavior by faculty, staff, and organizational units. Develop effective mechanisms to return appropriate revenue to units in order to support continued innovation.
- Pursue new sources of revenue (including enhanced fundraising), new entrepreneurial activities, and new programs in order to reinvest in CESS priorities, strengthen our impact, and ensure that CESS salaries and benefits are competitive.
- Clarify and align roles and responsibilities to promote clearer communication and greater efficiency. Identify and minimize elements of our structure and culture that inhibit communication, collaboration, and creativity.
- Continually revisit and reinvent our academic and business practices to improve service and efficiency, and to increase college-wide productivity.
- Simplify or eliminate policies and procedures that waste effort and resources.
- Proactively nominate staff for College and University awards.
- Strategically foster and resource faculty-development leave opportunities to advance CESS priorities.
- Enable transparency and promote widespread and timely access to reliable and understandable data. Use these data to inform decision making across the College.