The University of Vermont

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RESPECT INTEGRITY JUSTICE RESPONSIBILITY INNOVATION OPENNESS

VT UVM US

UVM Comprehensive
Inclusive Excellence
Action Plan

2023 | 2028

The University of Vermont

The campus of the University of Vermont sits within a place of gathering and exchange, shaped by water and stewarded by ongoing generations of Indigenous peoples, in particular the Western Abenaki.

Acknowledging the relations between water, land, and people is in harmony with the mission of the university. Acknowledging the serious and significant impacts of our histories on Indigenous peoples and their homelands is a part of the university's ongoing work of teaching, research, and engagement and an essential reminder of our past and our interconnected futures for the many of us gathered on this land.

UVM respects the Indigenous knowledge interwoven in this place and commits to uplifting the Indigenous peoples and cultures present on this land and within our community.

Our Common Ground

The University of Vermont is an educationally purposeful community seeking to prepare students to live in a diverse and changing world. We who work, live, study, teach, do research, conduct business, or participate in the University of Vermont are members of this community. As members, we believe in the transforming power of education and agree to help create and foster an environment where we can discover and reach our true potential.

WE ASPIRE TO BE A COMMUNITY THAT VALUES:

Respect
We respect each other. We listen to each other, encourage each other and care about each other. We are strengthened by our diverse perspectives.

Integrity
We value fairness, straightforward conduct, adherence to the facts, and sincerity. We acknowledge when things have not turned out the way we had hoped. As stewards of the University of Vermont, we are honest and ethical in all responsibilities entrusted to us.

Innovation
We want to be at the forefront of change and believe that the best way to lead is to learn from our successes and mistakes and continue to grow. We are forward-looking and break new ground in addressing important community and societal needs.

Openness
We encourage the open exchange of information and ideas from all quarters of the community. We believe that through collaboration and participation, each of us has an important role in determining the direction and well-being of our community.

Justice
As a just community, we unite against all forms of injustice, including, but not limited to, racism. We reject bigotry, oppression, degradation, and harassment, and we challenge injustice toward any member of our community.

Responsibility
We are personally and collectively responsible for our words and deeds. We stand together to uphold our common ground.

FROM THE PRESIDENT & PROVOST

We are pleased to share with you the University of Vermont's first comprehensive Inclusive Excellence Action Plan. Aligned with our *Amplifying Our Impact* strategic vision and Academic Success Goals, the plan is a comprehensive strategy to advance Inclusive Excellence at UVM. This plan is the result of a broad, participatory process in which every unit of the university developed a data-driven Inclusive Excellence Action Plan with unique features and shared goals. The university's *Our Common Ground* values underpin every element of this work.

We are grateful to the many members of our community who made this plan possible through their energy, commitment, and collaboration. We now ask everyone at UVM to embrace and model *Our Common Ground* values of justice, openness, respect, integrity, responsibility, and innovation and to build and sustain a culture of belonging, equity, and inclusion for students, faculty, and staff. We are asking our community to move their action plans forward with acknowledgement and understanding of local and global demographic realities.

The university pursues inclusive excellence because doing so will empower us to fulfil our mission as the state's public flagship land-grant university. We are committed to attracting and retaining world-class, diverse talent to our region to drive innovation and economic impact. Only by fully realizing inclusive excellence will UVM and our region to thrive. Inclusive excellence is, indeed, an investment in Vermont's future.

The ongoing success of the university calls for our deliberate and unwavering focus on equity and inclusion. UVM is a thriving university because of the rich diversity of backgrounds, perspectives, and ideas our community comprises. This plan charts our course for an even more equitable and inclusive institution right now and far into the future.

Suresh V. Garimella
President, University of Vermont

Patricia A. Prelock
Provost and Senior Vice President, University of Vermont

FROM THE VICE PROVOST

The University of Vermont's Comprehensive Inclusive Excellence Action Plan is the result of an unprecedented all-inclusive process involving a broad set of stakeholders across our community including our University Diversity Council (UDC) and all senior leaders. With membership from every division and College, the UDC worked with the Office of the Vice Provost for DEI to support UVM's first-ever data-driven DEI strategic planning process. Each unit developed an Inclusive Excellence Action Plan (IEAP) that utilizes metrics baselined by our 2022 Campus Climate Survey, demographics, and other data points to set their goals. These plans are public and will include tracking of progress on an annual basis during this 5-year implementation period.

I want to thank all members of the UVM community who spent countless hours to ensure that every unit set goals and made concrete commitments to advance DEI in their respective part of the institution. UVM's commitment to strategic action on DEI should remind all Catamounts that we are a community that boldly works to live into *Our Common Ground* values: Respect, Integrity, Innovation, Openness, Justice, and Responsibility.

Amer F. Ahmed
Vice Provost for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

AMPLIFIED IMPACT

WORDS TO ACTION

UVM has a noteworthy history of commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. As our institution advances the Amplifying Our Impact strategic vision with a focus on promoting healthy societies and a healthy environment, we must make specific commitments to address historically based and emerging inequities. Meanwhile, the landscape of higher education continues to evolve in response to rapidly shifting demographics. We must harness this opportunity to impact the world positively through innovation, creativity, and educational excellence by setting and achieving specific, ambitious, and measurable goals.

UVM's Comprehensive Inclusive Excellence Action Plan helps us to work together effectively across our institution by embedding the value of diversity, equity, and inclusion into every aspect of our work. Each academic and administrative unit created customized Inclusive Excellence Action Plan (IEAP) with measurable goals tailored to the unit's function. Each plan incorporates *Our Common Ground* values and, together, they amplified our ability to positively impact our community. The university's IEAP is a thematic overview of the units' unique IEAPs, available for review at: **go.uvm.edu/inclusiveexcellence**

Our community represents at least six distinctive areas of excellence that can be viewed through an inclusive excellence and equity lens from our values to our focus on building healthy environments, sustainable systems, and resilient communities. A few examples are:

DISTINCTIVE AREAS OF EXCELLENCE

HEALTH EQUITY

EQUITABLE COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

CLIMATE CHANGE: ENVIRONMENTAL EQUITY, JUSTICE, AND INCLUSION

VALUE-BASED LEADERSHIP ALIGNED WITH OUR COMMON GROUND

INCLUSION TOWARDS INNOVATION OF COMPLEX SYSTEMS

SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS WITH EQUITABLE ACCESS TO HEALTHY FOOD

EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE

OUR VISION

UVM will deploy 'Shared Equity Leadership' across the university in pursuit of Inclusive Excellence.
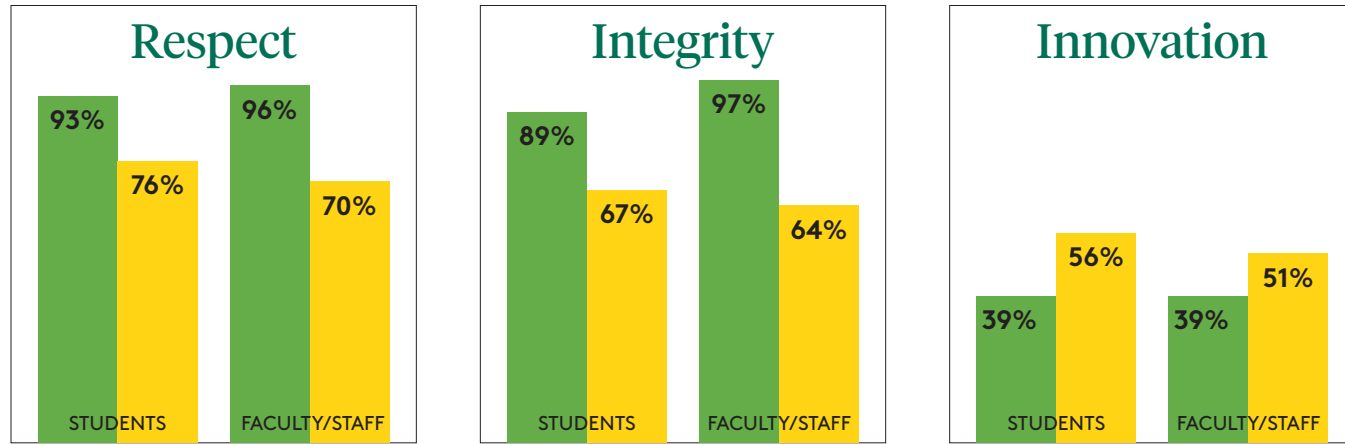
Inclusive Excellence is a key aspect of UVM's identity as a premier public research institution focused on sustainable solutions to the complex challenges of our time with local, national, and global applications, applying our expertise to ensure people and planet thrive. We claim our unique position among public flagship institutions and high-ranking mid-sized private universities that create, evaluate, share, and apply knowledge. We prepare students to be accountable leaders who will bring to their careers a dedication to the global community, an ability to navigate complexity, effective problem-solving and communication skills, and an enduring commitment to learning and ethical conduct.

Finally, we lean into *Our Common Ground* values and address the impact of harm and behaviors that do not live up to these values
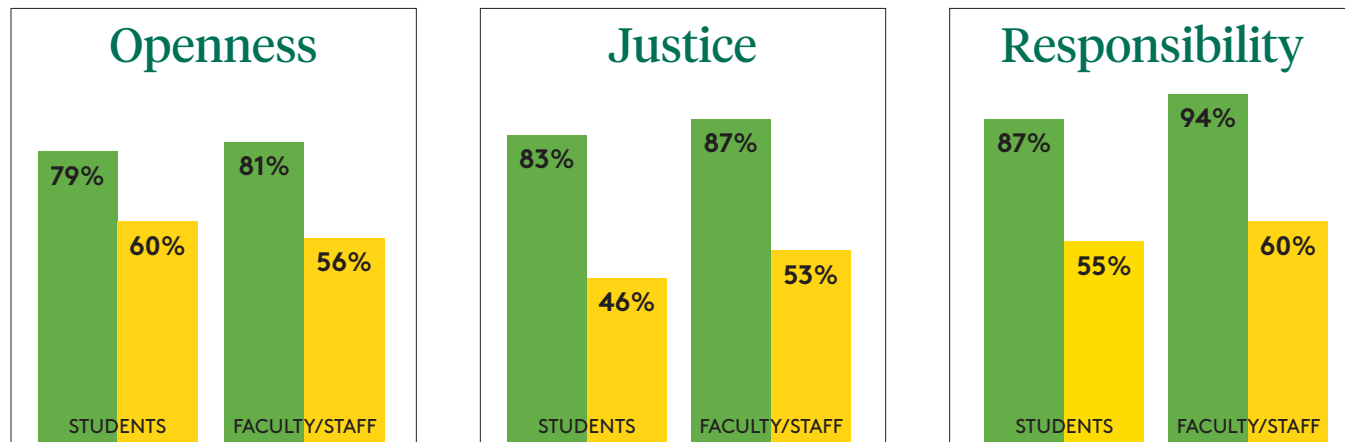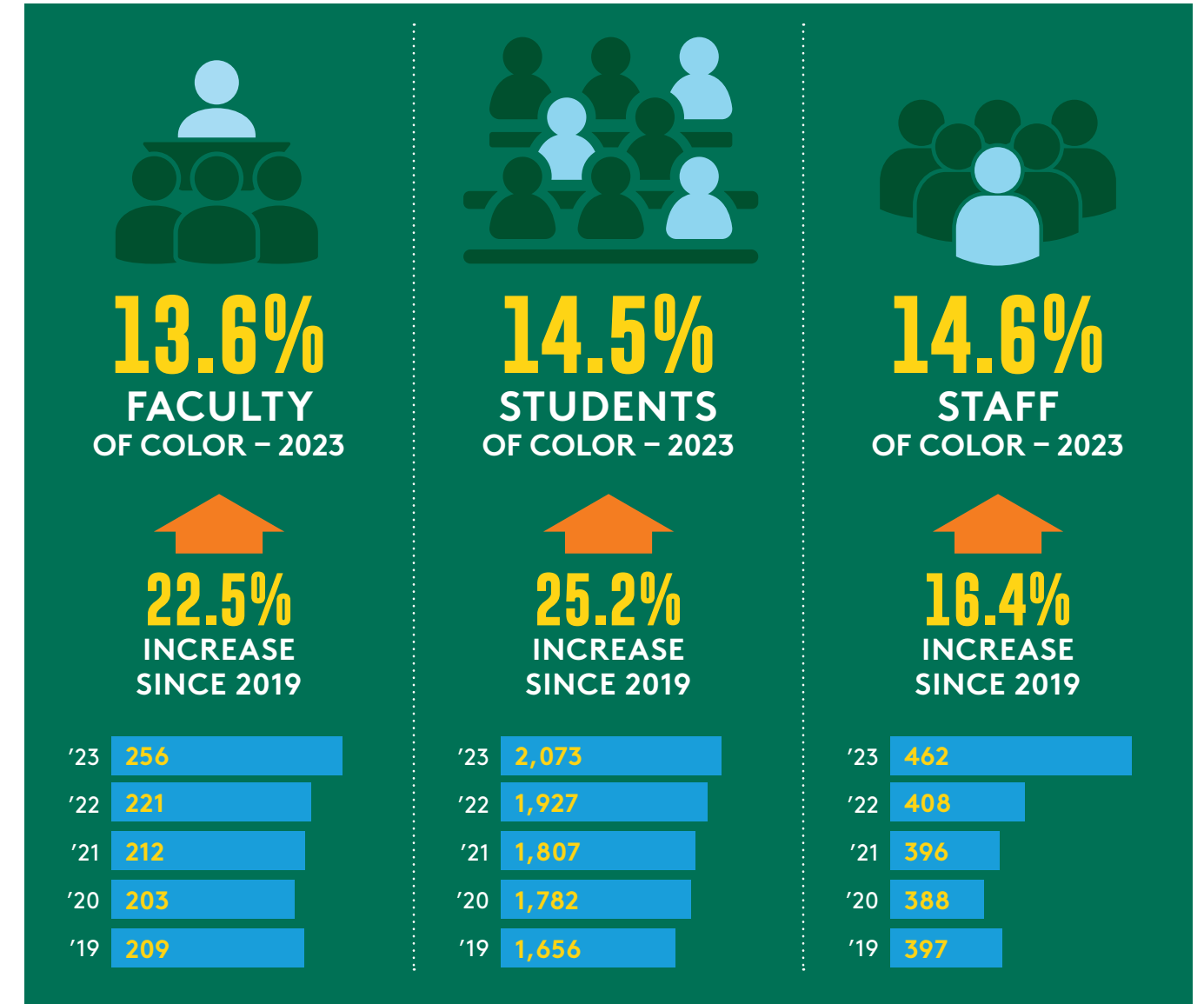
INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE

OUR COMMON GROUND VALUES

Respect
- 93% STUDENTS
- 76%
- 96% FACULTY/STAFF
- 70%

Integrity
- 89% STUDENTS
- 67%
- 97% FACULTY/STAFF
- 64%

Innovation
- 39% STUDENTS
- 56%
- 39% FACULTY/STAFF
- 51%

HOW OFTEN DO YOU ADHERE TO OUR COMMON GROUND VALUES?

DO YOU BELIEVE YOUR COLLEGE/DEPARTMENT UPHOLDS THE OCG PRINCIPLES?

Openness
- 79% STUDENTS
- 60%
- 81% FACULTY/STAFF
- 56%

Justice
- 83% STUDENTS
- 46%
- 87% FACULTY/STAFF
- 53%

Responsibility
- 87% STUDENTS
- 55%
- 94% FACULTY/STAFF
- 60%

DEMOGRAPHICS

13.6% FACULTY OF COLOR – 2023
22.5% INCREASE SINCE 2019
- '23 256
- '22 221
- '21 212
- '20 203
- '19 209

14.5% STUDENTS OF COLOR – 2023
25.2% INCREASE SINCE 2019
- '23 2,073
- '22 1,927
- '21 1,807
- '20 1,782
- '19 1,656

14.6% STAFF OF COLOR – 2023
16.4% INCREASE SINCE 2019
- '23 462
- '22 408
- '21 396
- '20 388
- '19 397

UNIVERSITY DIVERSITY COUNCIL TIMELINE

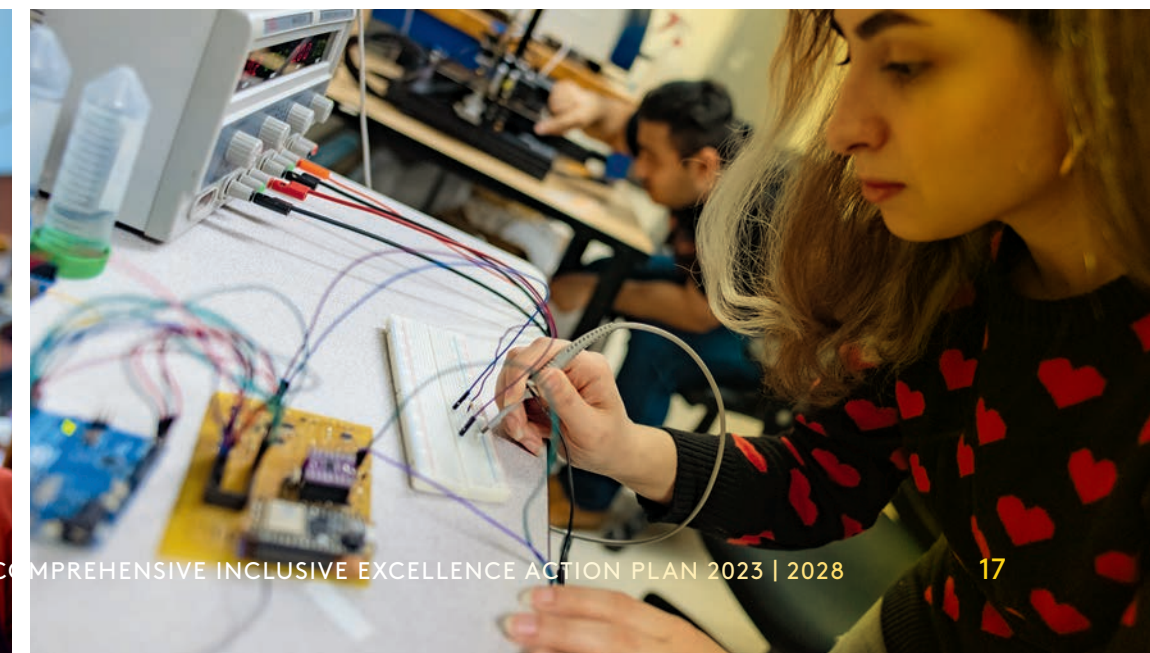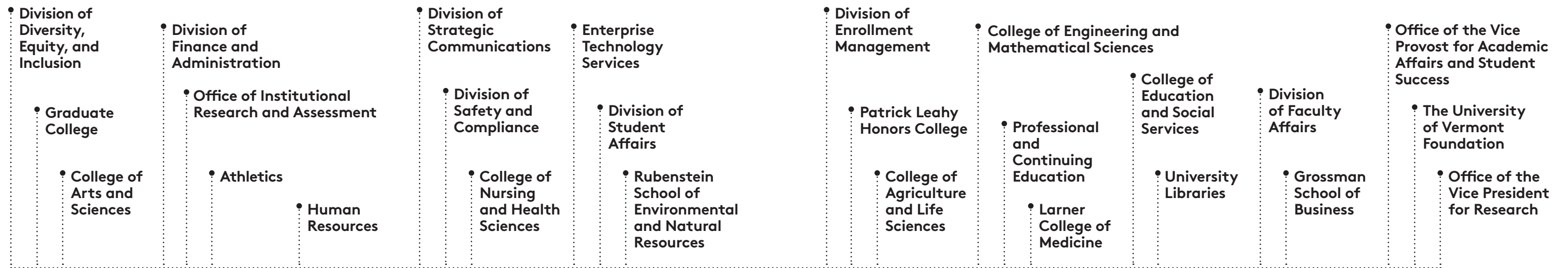| SPRING 2021	FALL 2021	SPRING 2022	SPRING 2022	FALL 2022	DECEMBER 2022	SPRING 2023	MAY 2023	AUGUST 2023	OCTOBER 2023
University Diversity Council (UDC) Charge and Launch	UDC & President's Senior Leadership Meeting	University Campus Climate Survey	UDC & President's Senior Leadership Meeting	UDC & President's Senior Leadership Meeting	Unit Inclusive Excellence Action Plan Drafts Due	UDC & President's Senior Leadership Meeting	Final Unit Inclusive Excellence Action Plans Due	President's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategy Draft	Board of Trustees DEI at UVM Presentation

IEAP Process Overview

Charged by President Garimella, the University Diversity Council (UDC) was formed during the Spring of 2021. In Fall 2021, the newly appointed Vice Provost for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (VPDEI), Amer F. Ahmed began convening the UDC monthly and led a process towards the development of data-driven unit Inclusive Excellence Action Plans (IEAPs). In January 2022, Dr. Damon A. Williams, first author of the American Association of College and Universities' initial white paper on the Inclusive Excellence framework, was brought to campus to engage UVM senior leaders on how to enact **Strategic Diversity Leadership** in higher education. At the same time, a campus climate survey was conducted during the Spring 2022 semester to provide units with baseline data that would enable them to set goals for their respective IEAPs. Coupled with demographic data, the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment provided dashboards with unit-specific disaggregated data. This is the first time that campus climate data has been used at UVM to set measurable DEI-related goals. Campus climate surveys will continue to be administered on a recurring 3-year basis to track progress over time.

Each semester during the planning process, The VPDEI convened UDC reps with their respective senior leaders to ensure high-level investment and engagement in the development of IEAPs in support of broader unit goals and priorities. This engagement ensured that each IEAP complements the broader unit efforts to advance President Garimella's *Amplifying Our Impact* strategic vision and Provost Prelock's *Academic Success Goals*.

UNIVERSITY DIVERSITY COUNCIL

The UDC is made up of 26 units from across the university community:

- Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
  - Graduate College
    - College of Arts and Sciences
- Division of Finance and Administration
  - Office of Institutional Research and Assessment
    - Athletics
      - Human Resources
- Division of Strategic Communications
  - Division of Safety and Compliance
    - College of Nursing and Health Sciences
- Enterprise Technology Services
  - Division of Student Affairs
    - Rubenstein School of Environmental and Natural Resources
- Division of Enrollment Management
  - Patrick Leahy Honors College
    - College of Agriculture and Life Sciences
- College of Engineering and Mathematical Sciences
  - Professional and Continuing Education
    - Larner College of Medicine
- College of Education and Social Services
  - University Libraries
- Division of Faculty Affairs
  - Grossman School of Business
- Office of the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Student Success
  - The University of Vermont Foundation
    - Office of the Vice President for Research

UVM's Inclusive Excellence Strategy

The University's IEAP integrates key elements of the administrative and academic units' plans ensuring engagement across campus, accountable to achieving a culture of inclusive excellence at UVM. The thematic areas across action unit plans focused on implementation of our Academic Success Goals including curricular and co-curricular activities; recruitment and retention of faculty, staff and students who bring diverse ideas, perspectives, and thoughts to campus; faculty professional development; and research with an equity lens.
The specific areas of alignment with the ASGs from the academic units are described below.

CURRICULAR & CO-CURRICULAR ACADEMIC SUCCESS GOALS (ASGs)

Academic Units
ASG 1.6: Increase the diversity of perspectives, experiences, and thought
- Ensure an inclusive learning environment developed and implemented by faculty and staff
- Implement a strategy for recruiting and retaining diverse faculty, staff, and students
- Strengthen D1 and D2 course offerings in the Catamount Core General Education Curriculum in collaboration with the Division for Academic Affairs and Student Success

Academic Units in collaboration with the Division for Faculty Affairs and Division for Academic Affairs and Student Success
ASG 2.1: Raise the University's research, scholarship, and creative arts profile by identifying and growing areas of research, scholarship, and creative arts strength through strategic hiring

ASG 2.2: Increase interdisciplinary research in areas of distinctive strengths

ASG 3.1: Use an evidenced-based engagement approach to addressing contemporary challenges on service to and partnership with rural and other under-served communities including culturally responsive participatory action research

ASG 3.3: Prepare students to be engaged citizens by:
- providing and supporting community-engaged experiential learning activities for students at all levels that address community priorities and challenges
- establishing pathways for global learning; developing learning opportunities and assess outcomes in intergroup dialogue at all educational levels, including faculty and staff, to improve civil discourse and civic engagement

UNIVERSITY ACTIONS

VPAASS, Division of Student Affairs (DOSA), and Vice Provost for DEI (VPDEI) will collaborate with Academic units to implement UVM Integrative Learning Rubric

for DEI-related out-of-classroom student learning experiences and opportunities.

DOSA will integrate DEI principles across all residential and student life programming.

DOFA in collaboration with HR, DEI, the Graduate College, and other academic units Recruit & retain diverse faculty and staff by:

ASG 1.6: Revising job descriptions that highlight our commitment to inclusive excellence with objective rubrics in search processes, and a commitment to diversification of pools and in-person recruitment

ASG 2.1: Increasing the number of post-doctoral positions and fellowships across underrepresented groups

ASG 2.1: Providing coordinated mentorship and support for junior and mid-career faculty research, scholarship, and creative activity to support retention

- Developing and implementing a talent management strategy with strengthened recruitment tools, onboarding, and classification and compensation architecture for staff
- Convening diversity officers in academic and non-academic units to develop community-building and support opportunities for faculty/staff of color and other historically/systemically marginalized identity groups

In collaboration with Academic Units, the Division of Enrollment Management (DEM), DOSA, VPAASS, & VPDEI will:

ASG 1.3: Improve retention, progression, and graduation rates at all educational levels by:
- Implementing strategies to support success in foundational academic

experiences, community building, and opportunities for integrative learning
- Ensuring all students have access to quality academic and student life support services including academic success, wellness, and mental health support
- Building a high-quality, effective, and accessible system of academic advising that empowers and enables both advisors and advisees at all educational levels

ASG 1.6: Increase the diversity of perspectives, experiences, and thought by:
- Implementing strategies to diversify the student body at all educational levels
- Establishing an enrollment and educational strategy for increasing international student enrollment and retention at all educational levels
- Developing a pre-college outreach strategy focused on strengthening Vermont college access pipeline for underrepresented populations with VPDEI, University Outreach Council, and Office of Engagement

PROFESSIONAL & FACULTY LEARNING

VPDEI, HR, and DOFA will implement shared DEI Faculty & Staff Professional Development Strategy building intercultural skills, identity-based knowledge, and practical application through communities of practice.

In alignment with ASG 1.5 and 1.6, Academic Units working with Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) & VPDEI will provide ongoing learning opportunities including inclusive pedagogy workshops in alignment with faculty Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure (RPT) guidelines.

ASG 1.5: Increase faculty and staff participation in impactful professional development; coordinate faculty and academic administrator participation in comprehensive faculty development and mentoring programming; and assess the effectiveness of these initiatives.

Utilize the recently awarded Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) grant to incentivize STEM faculty to strengthen inclusive teaching in the classroom through Communities of Practice, advancing dialogic facilitation principles, and other methods.

Through coordination between units and the Office of the VPDEI, develop and offer key faculty and staff development to promote inclusive excellence.

- Support diversity officers in academic and non-academic units to develop unit-specific DEI-related professional and faculty development opportunities, and ensure an inclusive learning environment developed and implemented by faculty and staff (ASG 1.6)
- Integrate skills into job descriptions and performance evaluations supported by ongoing professional development opportunities offered through the Office of the VPDEI
- Collaborate with HR and academic and student success leaders to ensure strategic staff professional development opportunities that support institutional goals (ASG 1.5)

Several other alignments across administrative and academic units emerged in critical areas of inclusive excellence including campus accessibility; international experiences to support intercultural competency; commitment to sustainability and research with a health equity lens; ways to communicate *Our Common Ground Values*; and ways to ensure resources are available and used strategically to implement our IEAPs across campus. These are described briefly below:

ACCESSIBILITY

Strengthen utilization of Universal Design, Universal Design Learning, and digital accessibility/inclusion across all units.

Coordinate and streamline resources in CTL, VPASS, DOSA, Center for Disability and Community Inclusion, Safety and Compliance, Enterprise Technology Services (ETS), Strategic Communications, etc.

INTERNATIONALIZATION

Work with the Executive Director of International Partnerships and Programs, VPDEI, DOFA & Provost to implement the Campus Internationalization Plan utilizing intercultural skills to strengthen international student, staff, and faculty inclusion.

Embed a global equity lens into international education opportunities utilizing the Intercultural Praxis Model.

Strengthen synergies for international inclusion and a DEI strategy including international dimensions of inclusive pedagogy.

- Infusing intercultural skills throughout UVM community
- Strengthening International student support in UVM Identity Centers (Mosaic Center for Students of Color, Interfaith Center, Women and Gender Equity Center, and Prism Center), ACCESS, and all other related support resources

SUSTAINABILITY

Embed DEI initiatives into the UVM Comprehensive Sustainability Plan with regular convening of representatives Rubenstein, CEMS, CALS, and Grossman Schools/Colleges; the Gund Institute and Agroecology Institutes, Office of Sustainability, and VPDEI to identify synergistic opportunities.

HEALTH EQUITY

Strengthen newly developed collaborative efforts to advance DEI and Health Equity by the Larner College of Medicine (LCOM), College of Nursing and Health Sciences (CNHS), Osher Center for Integrative Health, UVM Health Network, and VPDEI including recently developed and implemented annual Health Equity Summit.

COMMUNICATIONS

Strengthen ongoing UVM *Our Common Ground* campaign with a unified reporting system for hate/bias educational response and tracking.

Implement UVM DEI Communication strategy.

ASSESSMENT

Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA) with VPDEI to provide units with ongoing access and support of disaggregated data dashboards on DEI-related data points (e.g., Campus Climate Survey, Demographics, National Survey of Student Engagement survey, 6-week student survey, retention data, etc.).

OIRA and Provost Office tracking progress on ASG implementation.

VPDEI working consultatively with all units on IEAP annual progress reports.

RESEARCH

Office of Vice President for Research working with Academic Units to support DEI-related research including grants, grant-writing, and other mechanisms that can garner external resources

Build research and internship partnerships with organizations that seek to benefit from UVM demographic diversity and DEI-related research

VPDEI working with UDC will populate the new Catamount DEI Hub with all DEI-related research being conducted across UVM

FINANCE, ADMINISTRATION, AND FUNDRAISING

Prioritize financial resources for IEAP implementation.

Strengthen physical accessibility and gender inclusion in facilities.

Diversify suppliers contracted by UVM

Use IEAPs as a fundraising roadmap to garner energy, interest, and resources from donors and alums with passion, energy, and commitment to DEI at UVM.

Ultimately, the university's IEAP is designed to support, empower, and ensure accountability in the implementation of the administrative and academic units' IEAPs.

COLLABORATIVE SPIRIT

As UVM charts its course into the future, we do so with an unprecedented collaborative spirit on DEI to plot a clear course that is integral for successful implementation of the *Amplifying Our Impact* strategic vision. Through Shared Equity Leadership and a commitment to Inclusive Excellence, we will work together with clear goals and metrics to track progress and demonstrate our commitment to live into *Our Common Ground* values.

GLOSSARY

DIVERSITY: Built out of various social identities through which groups have shared – and intersecting attributes, such as race, ethnicity, citizenship, national origin, language, religion, sexual orientation, disability, class, and gender.

EQUITY: Promotes justice and fairness, ensuring that individuals have real chances to be successful. Building equitable learning environments requires understanding and actively undoing systematic structures that have promoted unequitable outcomes.

INCLUSION: Means that all participants in an educational setting are valued, respected, and supported. Inclusion depends on the culture created through interpersonal interactions, course policies, and curriculum choices.

EQUITABLE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS: Learning environments that operate in awareness of the ways privilege and oppression affect relationships and interpersonal dynamics; consider and incorporate diverse domestic and global cultural perspectives; and respond to students' needs at different points of their curricular journey.

INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE: "The recognition that a college or university's ability to successfully advance its mission is dependent on how fully it values, engages, and includes the rich diversity of students, staff, faculty, administrators, trustees, alumni, institutional partners, and guests."—AAC&U; University of Dayton

SHARED EQUITY LEADERSHIP: "In the shared equity leadership framework, a greater number of individuals engage in leadership across an institution and leverage multiple perspectives and expertise to transform conditions of campus inequity. The idea of this framework, informed by studying leaders at different types of institutions, is that broadly distributing leadership responsibilities and accountability helps equity work become less marginalized."—ACE

ABBREVIATIONS & ACRONYMS

AAC&U	American Association of Colleges & Universities
ACE	American Council on Education
ASG	Academic Success Goals
CALS	College of Agriculture and Life Sciences
CEMS	College of Engineering and Mathematical Sciences
CNHS	College of Nursing and Health Sciences
CTL	Center for Teaching and Learning
DEI	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
DOSA	Division of Student Affairs
DOFA	Division of Faculty Affairs
ETS	Enterprise Technology Services
HR	Human Resource
IEAP	Inclusive Excellence Action Plan
LCOM	Larner College of Medicine
OIRA	Office of Institutional Research and Assessment
UDC	University Diversity Council
UOC	University Outreach Council
VPDEI	Vice Provost for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
VPAASS	Vice Provost for Academic Affairs & Student Success