

## PATRICK LEAHY HONORS COLLEGE

### INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE ACTION PLAN 2023-2028

#### Background

A community of students from the full spectrum of academic programs at the University of Vermont, the Patrick Leahy Honors College provides students a rigorous, multi-disciplinary academic challenge that complements and enriches the entire undergraduate experience.

The Patrick Leahy Honors College mission is to build a vibrant community of inquiry that embeds the liberal arts in a culture of research and scholarly exploration. We cultivate a community centered around inclusive values, we empower students through experiential learning, and we nurture our students' potential to grow into courageous thinkers and compassionate leaders.

In the Patrick Leahy Honors College, we value:

- Inquiry driven by curiosity and the creation of knowledge
- A diverse and inclusive community, grounded in empathy
- An abiding commitment to identify and to dismantle systems of oppression
- Intellectual risk-taking and growth through rigorous scholarship
- A residential experience that integrates academic and co-curricular exploration while promoting scholarly and personal development.
- A holistic approach to community wellbeing and belonging
- Compassionate service to our community and to our world
- A culture of integrity, accountability, and courageous leadership

#### Inclusive Excellence Committee/Implementation Team Members

Name	Title	College/Division/Department/Unit
David Jenemann	Dean	Patrick Leahy Honors College (PLHC)
To be hired	Director of Persistence and Belonging Officer	Patrick Leahy Honors College
To be hired	Assistant Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)	Patrick Leahy Honors College
Scott Clark	Assistant Director of Fellowships, representative to the University Diversity Council	Office of Fellowships, Opportunities, and Undergraduate Research
Mareesa Miles	Academic Advisor, representative to the University Diversity Council	Patrick Leahy Honors College

Genevieve Anthony	Assistant Dean	Patrick Leahy Honors College
Committee on Equity and Inclusion	PLHC staff members	Patrick Leahy Honors College

**Units within College**

- Patrick Leahy Honors College
- Fellowships, Opportunities, and Undergraduate Research

## Part 1 – [Integrative Learning](#):

### Academic Success Goals and/or Co-Curricular Learning

#### Curricular Experiences

*The Patrick Leahy Honors College curriculum draws inspiration from John Dewey’s “community of inquiry,” the idea that society’s pressing social challenges can only be addressed by “questioning, reasoning, deliberating, challenging, and developing problem-solving techniques,” and where “an inquirer in a given special field appeals to the experiences of his fellow worker for confirmation and correction of [their] results.” What’s more, Dewey believed that considerations of “the impact of cultural conditions upon social inquiry is obvious. Prejudices of race, nationality, class and sect play such an important role that their influence is seen by any observer of the field.”*

*Our goal is to redesign the PLHC curriculum to reflect this legacy and these values, introducing students to contemporary challenges and critical approaches to their solutions, while developing their skills as researchers, writers, and critical thinkers. Fundamental to this goal are considerations of diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice in all aspects of the curriculum, not only in D1 and D2 classes. Over the next five years, we will implement a comprehensive curriculum and advising strategy that encompasses academic offerings, co-curricular programming, community building, and residential education.*

#### Curriculum

Goal	Responsible Group	Time Frame
Launch first-year Contemporary Challenges seminars in Fall 2023, maintaining the Writing and Information Literacy 1 focus from the Catamount Core Curriculum. These seminars will engage with human diversity by illuminating the ways in which different individuals and communities are impacted by the problem addressed in the course.	Associate Dean with support from Dean	Year 1 (2023-24 AY)
Renegotiate unit Memoranda of Understanding with an eye toward establishing multi-year teaching commitments from specific faculty members in order to create a more diverse Patrick Leahy Honors College faculty.	Associate Dean Dean	Year 1 (2023-24 AY)

Expand first-year Contemporary Challenge seminars to include the Spring semester.	Associate Dean with support from the Dean	Year 2 (2024-25 AY)
Collect input, on an annual basis, from students and faculty on the DEI-related aspects of the curriculum.	Associate Dean	Year 2 (2024-25 AY)
Launch second-year Critical Solutions seminars in Fall 2025. These seminars will engage with the application of knowledge, building on the recognition of human diversity initially developed in the context of the first-year Contemporary Challenges seminars.	Associate Dean Dean	Year 3 (2025-26 AY)
Weave a consideration of human diversity throughout all new courses offered in the first two years of the Patrick Leahy Honors College curriculum.	Associate Dean	Year 3 (2025-26 AY)

### Academic Standards

Goal	Responsible Group	Time Frame
Develop clear, transparent, equitable policies for the Academic Standards Review and dismissal processes.	Assistant Dean	Year 1 (2023-24 AY)
Revamp Patrick Leahy Honors College Enhanced Advising experience (formerly known as academic probation).	Advising Team Dean	Year 1 (2023-24 AY)

### Advising

Goal	Responsible Group	Time Frame
Establish a mission and values statement for Patrick Leahy Honors College academic advising that highlights the College's commitment to equity and social justice.	Advising Team	Year 1 (2023-24 AY)
Provide students with diversity-themed learning engagements	Assistant Director of DEI Associate Dean	Year 2 (2024-25 AY)

(e.g. affinity spaces, common hour programming) at least once a month for the duration of the academic year.	with programming support from Committee on Equity and Inclusion and Student Equity Action Committee	
Revise and implement summer and fall outreach and engagement strategy for new Patrick Leahy Honors College students. Employ best practices for engaging and supporting underrepresented and marginalized populations.	Advising Team	Year 2 (2024-25 AY)
Build a four-year advising syllabus that centers equity and the “hidden curriculum,” and explicitly lays out the responsibilities of students and advisors.	Director of Persistence and Belonging Advising Team	Year 2 (2024-25 AY)

**Co-Curricular Experiences**

*Co-curricular activities are structured learning activities that complement the formal curriculum. Examples include: research intensive experiences, internships and externships, global opportunities, and community involvement such as participation in many UVM Clubs.*

*The Patrick Leahy Honors College is sensitive to the “hidden curriculum” of opportunities, resources, networking, and support that some students have access to and others do not. We are committed to making these opportunities available and transparent to all through proactive outreach. In order to truly embody that principle, we must promote opportunities for a diverse and inclusive student body.*

**Residential Experience**

Goal	Responsible Group	Time Frame
Collaborate with Residential Life, Liberal Arts Scholars Program, and Trail Blazers Leadership Program to identify equitable support and programming for students in University Heights consistent with other Learning Communities.	Director of Persistence and Belonging Assistant Director of DEI Assistant Director for Wellness & Wellbeing with support from Dean, LASP, and ResLife	Year 2 (2024-25 AY)

Develop a programming plan for students living in Patrick Leahy Honors College housing.	Assistant Director of DEI Assistant Director for Wellness & Wellbeing	Year 2 (2024-25 AY)
Implement programming plan from previous goal.	Assistant Director of DEI Assistant Director for Wellness & Wellbeing In consultation with LASP & ResLife	Year 3 (2025-26 AY)

### Student Leadership

Goal	Responsible Group	Time Frame
Ensure all student leadership groups have mission statements that reflect inclusive values.	Dean Committee on Equity & Inclusion Assistant Director for Wellness & Wellbeing	Year 1 (2023-24 AY)
Provide DEI training to student leadership groups at least once per semester that prepares them to respond to the diverse needs of students.	Assistant Director of DEI Assistant Director for Wellness & Wellbeing with support from Committee on Equity and Inclusion	Year 2 (2024-25 AY)
Update bylaws of the faculty of the Patrick Leahy Honors College, to include student leadership representatives.	Dean	Year 2 (2024-25 AY)

### Research and Fellowships Advising

*An integral part of the Patrick Leahy Honors College experience is the promotion of undergraduate research and the support of students' thesis projects. These opportunities should be accessible to all students at the university, and students engaged in thesis projects should be introduced to inclusive research methods.*

Goal	Responsible Group	Time Frame
Revamp "Fall Intro to Research" (FIRE) to include an introduction to inclusive research strategies.	Fellowships, Opportunities, and Undergraduate Research	Year 1 (2023-24 AY)
Develop programming structures that provide scaffolding and support to recipients of SURF (Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowships). Build content on the ethics and	Director of Fellowships, Opportunities, and Undergraduate Research	Year 1 (2023-24 AY)

impacts of research. Build on existing partnerships for supporting underrepresented students through the summer research experience.		
Engage in two year listening tour with equity-focused campus partners to identify obstacles to participating in research and fellowships and to support the work of campus partners; foster collaboration and reciprocity for mutual benefit	Fellowships, Opportunities, and Undergraduate Research	Year 2 (2024-25 AY)
Assess SURF (Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowships) Program Year 1 results (survey, essays, participation)	Fellowships, Opportunities, and Undergraduate Research	Year 2 (2024-25 AY)
Request a demographic survey, of the last 4 years, of students utilizing FOUR advising, submitting competitive applications with FOUR's support, and named finalists and winners.	Fellowships, Opportunities, and Undergraduate Research in collaboration with Office of Institutional Research and Assessment	Year 2 (2024-25 AY)
Develop and host annual workshop to introduce students to inclusive research methodologies such as community-based participatory action research, organizational assessment, etc.	Fellowships, Opportunities, and Undergraduate Research in collaboration with Office of Community-Engaged Learning	Year 2 (2024-25 AY)
Partner with the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Life Science Award, which advances diversity in the life sciences, to ensure the continuation of that program beyond its Howard Hughes Medical Institute funding.	Fellowships, Opportunities, and Undergraduate Research	Year 2 (2024-25 AY)
Provide an annual grant proposal writing workshop series with an emphasis on engaging underrepresented/marginalized student populations. Provide	Fellowships, Opportunities, and Undergraduate Research	Year 2 (2024-25 AY)

continued advising support through post workshop tracking outreach.		
Annually for two years create advising content responsive to the results of the listening tour and implement best practices for underrepresented student populations.	Fellowships, Opportunities, and Undergraduate Research	Year 3 (2025-26 AY)
Use findings of demographic survey to establish a comprehensive plan to ensure equitable delivery of FOUR services.	Fellowships, Opportunities, and Undergraduate Research	Year 3 (2025-26 AY)
Assess survey data of grant proposal writing workshop, to compare use by subpopulations over time and then implement changes.	Fellowships, Opportunities, and Undergraduate Research	Year 3 (2025-26 AY)
Deliver targeted outreach and support to underrepresented and marginalized students through the junior year to address the diversity gap in undergraduate research.	Fellowships, Opportunities, and Undergraduate Research	Year 4 (2026-27 AY)
Implement junior-year research pathway to promote accessibility across the Patrick Leahy Honors College experience.	Dean with support of Fellowships, Oppurtunities, and Undergraduate Research	Year 4 (2026-27 AY)



## Part 2 – Recruitment and Retention

*The Patrick Leahy Honors College is a university leader for academically motivated students. The Patrick Leahy Honors College is a place where excellence meets opportunity. We aim to foster a welcoming community that supports, with intention, students of marginalized populations; including but not limited to students of color, LGBTQ+ students, first-generation students, and students with disabilities. In order to truly embody our values, we must promote opportunities for a diverse and inclusive student body across the entire university experience, including opportunities for marginalized students to find a home in the Patrick Leahy Honors College throughout their academic career.*

Goal	Responsible Group	Time Frame
Establish enrollment targets for underrepresented populations and a timeline for recruitment.	Dean Assistant Dean in consultation with Admissions	Year 1 (2023-24 AY)
Work with Admissions to identify additional regions of focus and partnership schools to increase the racial diversity of our applicant pool. Identify timeline for recruitment.	Dean Assistant Dean in consultation with Admissions	Year 1 (2023-24 AY)
Revise application and selection process for sophomore admission to the Patrick Leahy Honors College to promote equity and accessibility.	Dean Assistant Dean Patrick Leahy Honors College Council	Year 1 (2023-24 AY)
Identify financial resources to support DEI initiatives including Student Equity Action Committee, speaker series, etc.	Assistant Dean	Year 1 (2023-24 AY)
Increase outreach to campus partners (e.g., Identity Centers, Athletics) to attract a more diverse applicant pool for sophomore admission.	Assistant Director of DEI Advising Team with support from Dean	Year 1 (2023-24 AY)
Conduct an audit of all recruitment materials (print, web, FOUR, etc.) and revise for cultural sensitivity, inclusivity and belonging.	Assistant Dean Director of Fellowships, Opportunities, and Undergraduate Research Assistant Director of DEI	Year 2 (2024-25 AY)

Explore opportunities to support existing pre-college and first-year programs (e.g. Summer Academy)	Assistant Dean in consultation with Professional & Continuing Education	Year 2 (2024-25 AY)
Develop new on-ramps to promote access to the Patrick Leahy Honors College in the sophomore and junior years.	Dean In consultation with Patrick Leahy Honors College Council	Year 2 (2024-25 AY)
Conduct annual Orientation survey of students' expectations and needs as they relate to DEI topics.	Director of Persistence and Belonging Assistant Director of DEI Assistant Director for Wellness & Wellbeing	Year 2 (2024-25 AY)
Conduct a financial needs assessment and identify opportunities for making the Patrick Leahy Honors College affordable and accessible.	Dean Assistant Dean In consultation with Division of Enrollment Management, Student Financial Services, and Office of Institutional Research and Assessment	Year 2 (2024-25 AY)
Based on the needs assessment build a roadmap for the development of a comprehensive plan to support socioeconomically disadvantaged students.	Dean Director of Persistence and Belonging	Year 3 (2025-26 AY)

### Part 3 – Professional and Faculty Development

*A diverse and inclusive student body deserves a faculty and staff that reflect them and their values. We are committed to recruiting, retaining, and supporting a diverse faculty and staff and adequately resourcing DEI and professional development opportunities for all those who work in the Patrick Leahy Honors College.*

Goal	Responsible Group	Time Frame
Amplify university policies and resources for responding to bias incidents in classrooms, advising services, staff and faculty interactions, and college communications.	Dean Associate Dean	Year 1 (2023-24 AY)
Establish Patrick Leahy Honors College-specific practices for responding to bias incidents in classrooms and staff, faculty, or student interactions.	Dean Associate Dean in consultation with UVM Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion	Year 1 (2023-24 AY)
Establish a DEI charge for Patrick Leahy Honors College Council, the Curriculum and Admission & Retention subcommittees; ensure DEI is reflected in the charge of any subsequent subcommittees.	Dean	Year 1 (2023-24 AY)
Develop and articulate an equitable Professional Development Fund policy for Patrick Leahy Honors College team.	Assistant Dean	Year 1 (2023-24 AY)
Encourage annual attendance and fund Patrick Leahy Honors College staff participation in Inclusive Excellence Symposium	Dean Assistant Dean Supervisors	Year 1 (2023-24 AY)
Introduce faculty workshops that include DEI topics such as managing difficult classroom conversations, trauma-informed teaching practices, microaggressions, mis-gendering, etc.	Associate Dean with assistance of Center for Teaching & Learning	Year 1 (2023-24 AY) – Introduce Year 2 (2024-25 AY) – Progress toward monthly workshops

Through Patrick Leahy Honors College Strategic Planning process, evaluate staff roles and ensure the assignment of DEI responsibilities while reimagining the organizational structure of the College.	Dean	Year 2 (2024-25 AY)
Ensure Patrick Leahy Honors College teaching and commitment to DEI (per United Academics contract) is recognized and considered in University reappointment, promotion, and tenure decisions.	Dean With assistance of UVM Deans and Provost	Year 2 (2024-25 AY)
Organize equity-themed staff trainings twice annually (e.g., accessible communications, mis-gendering, microaggressions, etc.) and introduce regular opportunities for DEI engagements	Director of Persistence and Belonging Assistant Director of DEI with support from Dean and Committee on Equity and Inclusion	Year 2 (2024-25 AY)
Create a resource for new and returning faculty that includes commitment, expectations, and responsibilities as they relate to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.	Associate Dean	Year 2 (2024-25 AY)
Develop a faculty fellows program that establishes incentives, professional support, and collaborative partnerships with other colleges to ensure diverse and pedagogically inclusive faculty are teaching Patrick Leahy Honors College classes.	Dean In collaboration with UVM Deans and Provost	Year 4 (2026-27 AY)

## Part 4 – Accessibility

### Universal Design

*“Universal Design is the design and composition of an environment so that it can be accessed, understood and used to the greatest extent possible by all people regardless of their age, size, ability or disability. An environment (or any building, product, or service in that environment) should be designed to meet the needs of all people who wish to use it. This is not a special requirement, for the benefit of only a minority of the population. It is a fundamental condition of good design. If an environment is accessible, usable, convenient and a pleasure to use, everyone benefits. By considering the diverse needs and abilities of all throughout the design process, universal design creates products, services and environments that meet peoples' needs. Simply put, universal design is good design” (What is Universal Design, 2020).*

### Curriculum

Goal	Responsible Group	Time Frame
Apply a Universal Design framework to Patrick Leahy Honors College course syllabi.	Associate Dean	Year 2 (2024-25 AY)

### Advising and Co-curricular Engagement

Goal	Responsible Group	Time Frame
Provide affinity space programming for students with disabilities.	Assistant Director of DEI in collaboration with campus partners	Year 3 (2025-26 AY)
Create multiple modalities for the delivery of advising services to accommodate different learning styles and abilities.	Advising Team	Year 3 (2025-26 AY)
Ensure all staff and student groups implement programming and events in compliance with University-wide guidance for inclusivity and equitable access.	Assistant Director of DEI Director of Persistence and Belonging	Year 3 (2025-26 AY)

### Gender-Inclusive Housing

Goal	Responsible Group	Time Frame
Establish a task force to examine best practices and affordability of gender-inclusive housing.	Dean In collaboration with Residential Life, Student Financial Services, Division of Enrollment Management	Year 1 (2023-24 AY)

Ensure gender-inclusive housing is available to all Patrick Leahy Honors College students living in UVM residence halls.	Dean In collaboration with Residential Life	Year 2 (2024-25 AY)
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**Physical Accessibility**

Goal	Responsible Group	Time Frame
Conduct comprehensive audit of Patrick Leahy Honors College building spaces for ADA compliance and accessibility (e.g. elevator access, size-inclusive seating, etc.).	Assistant Dean In collaboration with Residential Life and UVM Facilities	Year 1 (2023-24 AY)
Work with campus partners to implement solutions to audit findings from previous goal.	Assistant Dean In collaboration with Residential Life	Year 4 (2026-27 AY)

**Digital Accessibility**

Goal	Responsible Group	Time Frame
Review and update web-based non-recruitment materials to ensure ADA compliance, screen reader accessibility, and gender inclusivity.	Program Support Generalist with assistance of Web Team	Year 1 (2023-24 AY)
Teach best practices for accessibility in digital communications to all those leading Patrick Leahy Honors College courses	Associate Dean	Year 3 (2025-26 AY)

**Cognitive Accessibility**

Goal	Responsible Group	Time Frame
Formalize Patrick Leahy Honors College tailored programmatic offerings related to time management, executive functioning, and the academic transition to college.	Assistant Director for Wellness & Wellbeing Advising Team In consultation with Center for Academic Success	Year 2 (2024-25 AY)
Offer resources and guidance to faculty for differentiating instruction to support different learning styles and needs	Associate Dean with the assistance from Center for Teaching and Learning	Year 3 (2025-26 AY)

## Part 5 – International Inclusion and Global Education

Goal	Responsible Group	Time Frame
Build a portfolio of fellowships and opportunities that are available for non-U.S. citizens; make accessible online.	Assistant Director of Fellowships	Year 1 (2023-24 AY)
Expand communications related to funding resources available for academic experiences abroad.	Fellowships, Opportunities, and Undergraduate Research Advising Team	Year 2 (2024-25 AY)
Develop an inclusion plan for exchange students while studying at UVM.	Advising Team	Year 2 (2024-25 AY)
Provide thesis prep course instructors guidance and resources related to inclusive pedagogy to address the learning needs of English Language Learners preparing for the thesis experience.	Associate Dean In consultation with the Office of International Education	Year 3 (2025-26 AY)
Provide Patrick Leahy Honors College course instructors guidance and resources related to inclusive pedagogy to address the learning needs of English Language Learners.	Associate Dean In consultation with the Office of International Education	Year 3 (2025-26 AY)
Expand the number of courses in the Patrick Leahy Honors College curriculum that have D2 and/or Global Citizenship designation.	Associate Dean	Year 3 (2025-26 AY)
Expand study abroad offerings with an emphasis on bilateral exchanges.	Associate Dean In consultation with Office of International Education	Year 5 (2027-28 AY)

## **Part 6 – Review Schedule**

Annual review of the plan will occur each June. The Dean, Director of Persistence and Belonging, and Assistant Director of DEI will co-facilitate the review and Responsible Groups will be tasked with preparing updates on the corresponding goals.

Findings of the review will be communicated to students, staff, and faculty associated with the Patrick Leahy Honors College. The findings will include, but are not limited to: assessment of a goal thus far, impediments to reaching a goal, developments or changes to existing goals, and/or the addition of new goals. Critical steps in the evaluation of goals include data collection, metric setting, and outcome identification. There is an expectation of ongoing review by the Responsible Group (suggested: quarterly).

**Spring 2024**

**Spring 2025**

**Spring 2026**

**Spring 2027**

**Spring 2028**