

Curricular Affairs Committee of the Faculty Senate

To: The UVM Faculty Senate

From: Curricular Affairs Committee of the Faculty Senate, Laura Almstead, Chair

Date: April 4, 2019

Re: Approval of a proposal to 1) establish a Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) degree at UVM and 2) convert the current BS with a major in Social Work to a BSW degree from the College of Education and Social Services

At its meeting on April 4, 2019, the Curricular Affairs Committee approved the actions recommended in the following memo.

The Curricular Affairs Committee approved a proposal from the Department of Social Work in the College of Education and Social Services (CESS) to establish a Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) degree at UVM, and to transition the existing Bachelor of Science with a major in Social Work to a BSW degree. Social Work is an accredited program and the curriculum, which meets the criteria for a BSW degree, will remain the same. If approved by the Faculty Senate and Board of Trustees, the Bachelor of Social Work degree would be established fall 2019. New students and students continuing a Social Work major will be able to choose to receive a BS or a BSW degree until Spring 2022 at which point all students completing a Social Work major will receive a BSW upon graduation. This end point will allow students that started a major in Social Work prior to the establishment of the BSW degree to receive a BS if they so choose.

A majority of institutions that offer accredited programs in social work award students Bachelor of Social Work degrees, including regional competitors such as the University of Maine and the University of Connecticut. Students that hold a BSW degree are eligible for limited, but substantive, professional work. The accrediting body (Council on Social Work Education) refers to all accredited undergraduate programs as offering BSW degrees. Therefore, although the curriculum for the Social Work major fits the expectations for a BSW degree, the Department of Social Work at UVM frequently has to defend the program to prospective students. Establishing a Bachelor of Social Work degree at UVM will help students completing the program as they move on to graduate studies or into the job force, and help UVM attract students to the program.

The request to establish a BSW degree at UVM and transition the current BS with a major in Social Work to a BSW degree was strongly supported by the Chair of the Department of Social Work, Jan Fook, the CESS Curriculum Committee, and the Dean of CESS, Scott Thomas.