



Office of the Provost and
Senior Vice President

Across the Green
August 2018

TO: University of Vermont Academic Community
FROM: David V. Rosowsky, Provost and Senior Vice President

“Resonance”

INTRODUCTION

Welcome back and happy start of the 2018-19 academic year!

The start of the academic year is a time of renewed focus, refreshed energy, and tremendous excitement. There is a buzz in the air. You can feel it walking across campus. You can see it in our students’ eyes. And, of course, there are the tell-tale signs of fall in Vermont: leaves turning colors, cooling temperatures, crisp nights, and (my favorite) the apples. The start of the year also is a time to welcome our first-year students with their new hopes, expectations, aspirations, and maybe a few trepidations. Thank you for your individual and collective roles in supporting our students as we open the new academic year at UVM. And thank you for opening your eyes, ears, arms, and hearts just a bit more during these critical first weeks for our newest students.

Starting my sixth year as provost, I look back at all we have accomplished together to advance the University, commit to mission and values, enable teacher-scholars, launch new degree programs, create new opportunities for students, construct new facilities for learning and discovery, and enhance our beautiful campus. As we moved over the years from setting the stage and creating engagement ([Evolution of a Great University](#), [Light on the Hill](#), [Energy and Momentum](#)), to accelerating progress ([Driving to Excellence](#), [Flywheel](#), [Agent of Change](#)) and articulating impact ([Academic Ecosystem](#), [Mission: Impact](#)), to meeting challenges facing all of higher education today ([Age of Disruption](#), [Come Together](#)), the word that seems to me to best define this point in time for UVM and our journey (now nearly 228 years in the making) is “resonance.” We have put the pieces in place, we have created the connections, we have engaged and accelerated, and we have enabled innovation. We have made strategic decisions, realignments, and investments. We have reaffirmed our mission as a distinctive and distinguished academic institution, and our commitments to academic excellence and student success. What comes next is magic (or the physics) of *resonance*,

defined as “the phenomenon in which a vibrating system or external force drives another system to oscillate with greater amplitude and specific frequencies.” In other words, synchronous vibration. Where our individual, localized, or unit-specific efforts serve to propel, accelerate, or amplify those of others. Where the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. Where we achieve increasingly more together because of resonance¹, consonance, shared commitment, and shared energy.

Shortly after arriving in summer 2013, I was interviewed for *UVM Today*. I re-read the [interview](#) this summer, using the opportunity to reflect on my early hopes and expectations (both for the role and for my service to the University as provost), and consider the extent to which they held true over the years. I shared humor and humility, and certainly some well-meaning naiveté, but more or less the sentiments hold true today.

In November 2013, in my first *Across the Green* [memo](#), I reflected on my first 100 days as provost:

“As I write this, I am just completing my first 100 days as Provost. I have used these first months to engage with the campus in as many venues as possible, meeting with groups in every College and School, and learning about the University of Vermont, its people and programs. This is indeed a remarkable community.

Many have commented that the University of Vermont is unique, neither public nor private, neither large nor small, neither a liberal arts college nor a truly comprehensive university with a full range of graduate and professional schools. I embrace the notion that we are unique. But as I have suggested to many of you in our first meetings, being unique is no longer enough in the competitive domain of higher education. We must strive for distinction among a peer set of premier universities. We must measure and report the quality and impact of our programs. And we must be able to clearly demonstrate the value of a University of Vermont education.

The liberal arts have been - and always will be - at the core of our university. And we must preserve the culture and ethos that brought our great university to where it is today. We have a breadth of academic programs found at much larger universities, many of which have considerably greater resources. We must be willing to look critically at our offerings and make decisions about how we might reallocate existing resources and where to invest new resources in order to position UVM to achieve prominence in selected fields, while maintaining the breadth of programs essential for a public university.

We must strive for highly ranked programs in each of our Colleges and Schools. We must nurture our most outstanding programs and ensure they remain highly visible, highly ranked, nationally recognized, and highly competitive for the best students. UVM must

¹ A second theme I considered for this memo was “Mission vs. Metrics,” with the goal of rearticulating the role of each, the importance of both, and ultimately the primacy of *mission*. But I have shared these thoughts in the past, and hopefully demonstrated both consistency and authenticity in my commitment to both, and why each is so important. “Resonance” was the far more compelling theme. I hope you will agree.

become a university of choice, not only for its location, but for the quality and reputation of its academic programs; not only for being a nurturing and supportive community, but for the rigor our faculty instill in their classes; not only for what our students expect of their time at UVM, but for what our faculty expect of our students.

In my dual roles of chief academic officer and chief budget officer, I have promised to maintain open lines of communication, and to be transparent and forthcoming with information. These traits have served me well throughout my career and I sense they will serve me well here. I am data-driven and results-oriented, but promise to be both respectful of and responsive to the many cultures that comprise our great university. I will seek input, work to build consensus, and engage with the academic community authentically.” -Nov. 2013, *Across the Green* memo

I remain committed to being visible and accessible, transparent, and communicative. This is a great time for the University of Vermont, a point punctuated by the recent [announcement](#) that we have crossed the \$500M mark in the *Move Mountains* comprehensive campaign. I can't tell you how excited I am for my sixth year at UVM. It continues to be an honor and privilege to serve as UVM's provost.

WELCOME CLASS OF 2022

While final details about the great UVM Class of 2022 come into focus in the weeks ahead, I wanted to share a few highlights. First, we are welcoming about 2500 new first-year undergraduate students, 450 undergraduate transfer students, and more than 600 new graduate students this fall. Once again, this will be our most academically talented undergraduate class, clear evidence of our growing national reputation for academic quality, commitment to student success, and value. Twelve percent of the incoming class are students of color, and twelve percent are first-generation college students. About one-quarter of the incoming class comes from Vermont, consistent with previous years' classes. We continue to attract students from across the country, with significant increases in applications outside New England and the northeast. Beyond Vermont, 43 states and 24 countries will be represented in the incoming undergraduate class. Our class is socio-economically diverse thanks to the [Catamount Commitment](#) program and the University's commitment to access. We all benefit from this richness of diversity in our academic community.

Graduate applications, admits, and yield are all up this year, most notably for PhD students (yield has increased by 25%). The [new doctoral program](#) in Complex Systems and Data Science will enroll 12 PhD students in its first year. Enrollment in [accelerated master's programs](#) has increased 30% over last year. While much of the graduate enrollment growth is seen in the professional colleges and schools, in the College Arts and Sciences there have been enrollment increases in the PhD programs in Psychological Science and Chemistry, and in the Master's programs in English and History. Our newest graduate and professional students will be the first to participate in and have access to important new programs designed specifically around graduate student success, including our first University-wide orientation for new Graduate Teaching Assistants and the

[Graduate Writing Center](#) in its new location on the ground floor in Bailey Howe Library. My thanks to Dr. Cynthia Forehand, Dean of the [Graduate College](#), for her leadership in building and launching these and several other initiatives supporting graduate student success.

I know you will join me, on several opportunities and at several occasions in the coming weeks, in welcoming the UVM Class of 2022 and our newest graduate and professional students.

WELCOME NEW FACULTY

Fall is a time to also welcome new faculty to the University. This fall we are joined by 48 new instructional faculty at UVM, spanning all seven undergraduate degree granting colleges and schools. The Larner College of Medicine, which recruits and appoints faculty year-round, is welcoming more than 60 new faculty this fall. While faculty hiring plans are still being developed by each college/school, it appears we will be searching for a similar number of new faculty this year.

Please join me in welcoming our newest faculty colleagues, helping them find their way around our campus and our community, and supporting their success as they commence (or in some cases continue) their careers at UVM. I hope you will agree that few things are as important as the recruitment and successful onboarding of great faculty colleagues.

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE GOALS, NARRATIVE REFRESH

The University's [Academic Excellence Goals](#) were established in fall 2013 to animate President Sullivan's [Strategic Action Plan](#) and facilitate University-wide discussions, engagement, and initiatives around academic excellence. One year later, in fall 2014, the [Academic Excellence Goals Narrative](#) was written to provide background, specific goals and the bases for those goals, specific strategies for measuring and achieving progress, as well as anticipated timelines and outcomes.

"The Academic Excellence Goals were established to galvanize the University community around a common set of well-defined objectives, and to 'plant a stake in the ground' committing UVM to achieving the highest standards of academic excellence – the highest ideal of any great university.

In defining the eight specific *Academic Excellence Goals*, we carefully considered our mission as a land grant university and our role as Vermont's flagship public research university, our commitment to the principles and content of a liberal education, and our nearly 225 year history as a distinctive and important institution of higher learning. We also considered the challenges facing higher education today and the changes being made by universities to ensure relevancy, sustainability, and a vibrant future.

By achieving against these clearly articulated *Academic Excellence Goals*, we can positively influence nearly all of our indicators of success: student quality, student access and student success, diversity, visibility and rankings, scholarly productivity and impact, alumni

engagement, global reach and global impact, faculty recruitment, institutional innovation, capital project construction, and financial security.”

- Sept. 2014, *Academic Excellence Goals Narrative*

Four years later, the time is right to reflect on our progress and refresh this document and its goals. That work is underway and I look forward to sharing a revised/updated *Narrative* with you later this fall.

IBB 2.0 BUDGET MODEL UPDATE, NEW STRATEGIC INVESTMENTS

IBB 2.0

Our work on IBB 2.0, which started last January^{2,3}, has continued over the summer⁴ and will be concluded this fall. We have made great progress, and will be delivering specific recommendations to the president for his approval shortly. My thanks to the Steering Committee, deans and department chairs, and many others on our campus who have engaged in this important work this year.

Based on its review of the model assessments and campus feedback, the IBB Steering Committee ([expanded](#) for the Model 2.0 work) identified three areas on which it has been focused:

- Algorithm 1 (Undergraduate Net Tuition), focusing on (a) weightings, and (b) whether the 85/15 split should be revised vis-à-vis any role it plays in curricular/course offering decisions;
- Algorithm 6 (Facilities), considering whether the current methodology can/should be revised to account for space weighting by functional use, deferred maintenance obligations, or utility costs; and
- Algorithm 7 (Support Center⁵ Pools), focusing on (a) the headcount cost driver, and (b) whether or not the algorithm can be simplified.

² The process of updating the University’s Incentive-Based Budget model was initiated in December 2017, consistent with plans articulated when we transitioned to the new model 3.5 years ago. The work of the Steering Committee has been both informed and driven by the feedback received from the campus last spring. All information about the budget model (development, implementation, operation, and assessment) as well as the campus feedback can be found on the IBB [website](#).

³ More on the history and evolution of the budget model can be found in my [remarks](#) at the June 2018 Campus-wide Leadership Meeting, or on the [Project Timeline](#) on the IBB website.

⁴ Specifically, (1) additional modeling and analysis to support the work of the Steering Committee, and (2) additional focus groups.

⁵ In January 2018, we transitioned from the term “Cost Center” to “Support Center” in recognition of the essential partnerships between the support units and the academic units (“Responsibility Centers”).

As part of its work, the Steering Committee hosted a series of focus groups for deans, department chairs, and academic program directors in the spring, and has scheduled several more early this fall. The goal of these sessions has been to gather feedback on potential changes to specific algorithms.

As our work has progressed, and as we began forward-planning for implementation of any changes to the budget model, we realized it would be preferable for the Steering Committee to conclude its work earlier than the December 2018 date we had been targeting. December is essentially the start of the FY20 budget planning process, and it is important for the deans and vice presidents and their business managers to both understand changes in the budget model and have the planning and forecasting tools necessary for their budget planning purposes. As a result, the Steering Committee is scheduled to complete its work on changes to the budget model early this fall and will then turn its attention to the other planned elements of the IBB 2.0 process such as refinement of metrics and mapping to the President's *Strategic Action Plan* (see: [IBB Campus Update #7](#), April 2018)

As has been our practice since 2013, we will continue to post all information (reports, data, and communications) on the IBB [website](#).

New Strategic Investments

In response to continuing enrollment challenges in the liberal arts (a declining trend that has mirrored the national trend in the last decade), College of Arts and Sciences Dean Bill Falls is working with the College leadership to develop and implement a bold plan to reimagine Arts and Sciences at UVM. This includes creating exciting new academic offerings and opportunities for both CAS students and students in other colleges and schools, and enabling faculty engagement and innovation in both disciplinary and transdisciplinary spaces. On the basis of the plan's promise and the College's commitment to creating compelling programs, pathways, and partnerships to attract and retain more students in the liberal arts, I look forward to supporting this work, which is so critical for the College and the University, through a significant multi-year strategic investment.

In addition, and in response to recommendations from last year's external review of our Humanities Center sponsored by my office, I will be supporting a new Humanities Fellows program, specifically to be administered by CAS and the Humanities Center.

As I shared in my June 2018 Campus-wide Leadership Meeting [remarks](#), "A strong CAS is foundational to a strong UVM." I remain committed to working closely with the dean and his team to ensure a vibrant, compelling, impactful, and enduring College of Arts and Sciences at UVM, resonant with new ideas within the College and creating resonance across the broader University.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION: ADVANCING THE CONVERSATION, ACCELERATING OUR PROGRESS

In my April 2018 *Across the Green* [memo](#), I reflected on the challenges our campus faced – and opportunities we are starting to realize – around diversity and inclusion. Many of our students,

faculty, and staff voiced their frustration and concern about both campus and national climate, much as we have seen at colleges and universities across the country. I expressed the pride I felt in our students for coming together, working together, and calling for positive change. I also thanked our students, and the many faculty and staff who supported them, for their courage and commitment – to one another and to our university.

But this is not the end of the story. This is very much a journey for our academic community and our University. Many of us have been listening, hearing, learning, and reflecting on last spring's activism, and have used the summer to identify ways to engage more members of our community in our shared work around creating and sustaining a diverse and inclusive campus. We look forward to continuing this important work in the year ahead.

“Commitment is easier than action – but both are necessary. Diversity and inclusion are not substitutes for academic quality and scholarship, but they are inextricably linked. I believe this important work we undertake together – this journey – will make our fabric stronger, our tapestry richer, our discovery deeper, and our mosaic more brilliant.”

– June 2017 Campus-wide Leadership Meeting [Remarks](#)

In my April 2018 *Across the Green* [memo](#), I wrote that the work we were undertaking, together, has “inspired a new sense of urgency that I believe will accelerate our progress toward shared goals around inclusive excellence.” I also offered the reminder, “We may stumble and make mistakes, but respect for one another and love for UVM will carry us far.”

I hope you will follow our collective work – a brilliant example of resonance – on the *Facing Challenges, Advancing Diversity and Inclusion at UVM* [website](#). The progress we have made and the changes to which we have committed are significant. They are, however, but steps in this journey, steps we must take together.

NEW RESIDENTIAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES

As has been reported over the last several years, we have been developing a series of residentially-based [learning communities](#) as part of our commitment to high-impact practices for student success, including a robust First-Year Experience program at UVM. The learning communities integrate students' residential and academic experiences by offering housing and courses built around a common theme. In addition to the [Wellness Environment](#), [Sustainability](#), and the [Honors College](#), last fall we launched two additional learning communities: [Leadership for Social Change](#) and [Outdoor Experience](#). This fall we have launched three new learning communities: [Arts and Creativity](#), [Cultural Crossroads](#), and [Innovation and Entrepreneurship](#). Each of these learning communities offers a credit-bearing course⁶ for first-year students which explores the community's theme and engages students in related events and activities. All of these new learning communities were developed by faculty, and faculty serve as directors.

⁶ These courses are grounded in the three common elements of the First-Year Experience at UVM: (1) Growth Mindset, (2) Emotionally Intelligent Leadership, and (3) the Four-Year Plan for Career Success.

“Residence halls are more than simply a place to live. We know that students benefit when they participate in learning communities created with a shared purpose that engages students in active learning. By offering theme-based learning communities, students will be engaged in rich educational opportunities that optimize wellness and emphasize academic success and community engagement.

Active engagement within Learning Communities includes a first-year success course, community-wide programs, peer mentoring, and opportunities for experiential learning and connections with passionate faculty and staff through intellectual presentations and informal advising.

Learning Communities have been collaboratively created to promote student leadership and build lasting friendships and meaningful faculty and staff connections through a student’s four years and beyond. Community themes reflect our University values and several of our core academic strengths.” – *UVM Learning Communities Vision, 2017*

In addition to these [Learning Communities](#), there are several additional programs that also provide enhanced academic programs and opportunities for our first-year students in CAS to engage with faculty, including [First-year Interest Groups](#) (FIG’s) in biology and neuroscience and the [Liberal Arts Scholars Program](#).

Taken together, as of this fall 83% of our first-year students, 86% of our returning students, and 65% of our transfer and exchange students are participating in our residentially-based learning communities or similar college or school-based academically enhanced programs. This is both impressive progress and very exciting.

My thanks to members of the Learning Communities Steering Committee and the First-Year Experience Steering Committee for their leadership, and to all the faculty and staff who are working collaboratively to create the best experience possible for our first-year students and all of our students living in our residence halls.

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

As with all research universities, we find ourselves operating in interesting times. I wrote about some of the challenges research universities are facing as a result of changes in national priorities and policies in my [January 2018 Across the Green](#) memo. Changes in research priorities, federal agency budgets to support research, and policies affecting current and potential future international students have started to impact all universities engaged in research as well as graduate education and training. In responding to these challenges, the University has been investing⁷ in people, facilities, and support infrastructure to enable greater faculty success in securing extramural support for research and scholarship.

⁷ I wrote about this extensively in my August 2017 *Across the Green* [memo](#).

These investments are paying off. In particular, the University is being much more aggressive and is having greater success in competing for very large (*e.g.*, center-level) grants from sponsors⁸. In addition, as I wrote about in my [August 2017](#) and [April 2018 Across the Green](#) memos, we are increasingly engaged and increasingly successful in securing both [corporate and foundation](#) support for our faculty, our students, and our programs.

We are, at the same time, growing and diversifying our research funding portfolio, no small challenge today. The [Office of the Vice President for Research](#) maintains a significant number of programs to support *all* of our faculty – new and continuing, in all of our colleges and schools, and working in all fields of research, scholarship, and creative arts – through seed grants, matching funds, equipment grants, grant-writing support, and much more.

Keep an eye out for the 2018 INQUIRY Magazine⁹, which will be available in the coming weeks. This beautiful magazine (in print and electronic formats) highlights research, scholarship, and creative works by faculty throughout the University. Widely distributed to college and university leaders nationally, program managers at federal agencies, corporate and government leaders, legislators, and alumni, this annual magazine has become an important (and much anticipated) way for the University to promote the great work of our faculty – the impact of our inquiry.

TAKE 3: CLIMATE CERTIFICATE

Two years ago, first in my [essay](#) on the 2016 first-year reading selection, *The Sixth Extinction*, and then again in my September 2016 *Across the Green* [memo](#), I presented the idea of a “climate certificate” for every University of Vermont student. The idea was simple really. Every student would graduate from UVM with a certification of some level of climate literacy, drawing on courses in climate and earth sciences, environmental sciences, economics, political science, international relations, public policy, anthropology, sociology, and more.

“What if we were the first major university to require *all* of our undergraduate students to have a minor or certificate in Climate? Why not? After all, professionals in every discipline will be required to come together to address the complex issues around climate change, and all of us will live in a world impacted by these changes. And why not UVM? We have nationally recognized faculty and programs in the environment and natural resources, climate studies, energy, water, complex systems, global and population health, policy, sustainability, food systems and agriculture, political science, and more.

⁸ In FY18, UVM faculty received over 35 new awards at the \$500K level or higher, including ten at the \$1M or higher level. This is an all-time high for awards at these levels. In the coming months, based on pending approvals, we anticipate as many as five new multi-million dollar award announcements to UVM faculty, including three at funding levels in excess of \$10M.

⁹ Previous issues: [2017](#) INQUIRY Magazine.; [2016](#) INQUIRY Magazine

“My hope is that the faculty will take this challenge up in their departments, schools, and colleges, bringing a proposal forward to the Faculty Senate for its consideration. This is the right time and, I believe, the right place to contemplate a university-wide certificate or minor, built around elective slates of courses decided upon by the faculty, in Climate. This idea is bold – as some call it, a BHAG (big, hairy, audacious goal) – but it is not far-fetched. Nor is it out-of-reach. We have the courses and the experts. We have the students with the interest and passion. We need only the will to make this happen. Such a requirement can be a discriminator for UVM and can fortify our position as a national leader among major universities.” - Fall 2016 [essay](#), *Climate and Change: Reflections on The Sixth Extinction*

It has been two years since that idea was first introduced. And while progress has unquestionably been made in launching the University’s Sustainability General Education requirement, the opportunity to focus on climate and to provide *all* of our graduates with a first-in-the-nation certification in climate literacy and climate competency has yet to be realized.

Yes, the title of this section (“Take 3”) has double meaning. First, this is my third effort to introduce this idea, one that I feel we are so well positioned to bring to life at the University of Vermont. Second, I envision a model in which each student would take (e.g.) three courses, one each from a small number of pre-approved courses in each of three areas: (i) natural sciences, (ii) policy and economics, and (iii) socio-cultural or global affairs.

If any faculty members have interest in pursuing this concept further, please reach out to my office. I will convene a meeting of interested faculty this fall to explore how such a certificate might be structured¹⁰ and discuss whether and how to bring forward a proposal for consideration by the Faculty Senate. We are so well positioned to do this at UVM and I don’t want this point-in-time opportunity to pass us by. Becoming the first university in the nation to certify that every one of our graduates is climate literate, possessing the climate competency necessary to engage with others in finding the solutions to this grand challenge, would be something that is resonant with both our intellectual strengths and our core values as an academic institution and a community of teacher-scholars.

CAMPUS CONSTRUCTION UPDATES

As you no doubt have noticed (or seen, or heard, or been re-routed around), there has been a tremendous amount of construction activity on the campus this summer, most of which was completed in time for the start of the fall semester. Summer is the best time for many renovation and repair projects as the campus is less congested and there is greater access for construction vehicles and related operations.

You may have seen new roofs being installed, underground pipes being replaced, and perhaps even a very peculiar looking Ira Allen Chapel *sans* columns. This summer also marked the

¹⁰ For example, should such a certification should be built around credit or non-bearing courses, should it include online modules, whether offerings should be available during the winter (J-term) or summer sessions, etc.

completion of several major building renovation projects including Billings Library (which will house several Humanities focused centers as well as Libraries Special Collections), Ifshin Hall (expansion to the Grossman School of Business), and the Taft School (home of the Cohen Center for the Integrative Creative Arts). Work was also completed on the restoration and partial reconstruction of Torrey Hall (damaged by fire last year), as well as several planned residence hall renovations. We added seven new general purpose classrooms and renovated 26 existing general purpose classrooms this summer. As a result, 30% of our general purpose classroom inventory is new or renovated to start the new academic year. Finally, work continued on the new UVM Medical Center patient care facility (Miller Building, opening later this fall) and the second new building in the STEM Complex (Innovation Hall, opening summer 2019).

A refresh of our academic campus, our facilities, and our infrastructure that supports our teaching and scholarship and our students' learning and discovery is essential for the University. Just as we renew and refresh our students, faculty, and staff each year – bringing new energy, new ideas, and new expectations – so, too, must we renew and refresh our physical campus, in order to attract, inspire, and support them.

As always, you are invited to follow progress, get updates, stay informed of any planned disruptions or changes in traffic patterns, and view live videos of several of the projects at the [Building UVM website](#). Ceremonies marking the openings of Ifshin, Billings, and Taft will be held during [Alumni and Reunion Weekend](#). Announcements will be forthcoming. I hope you will join us.

NEASC, FINAL PREPARATIONS

This new academic year is important for another reason. This is the year for the University's decennial reaccreditation review by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC). After a year of work by eight subcommittees comprised of faculty, staff, and administrators, and input from many different campus constituencies, our self-study report is taking shape. The Executive Committee is currently synthesizing the draft self-study report from the standards committees' reports and the supporting data they gathered. The final product will be a comprehensive document that will provide an evidence-based self-assessment of our university: who we are, how we function, and what we aspire to be.

The report and accompanying documents and data forms will be distributed to the re-accreditation external team prior to their site visit, scheduled for March 24-27, 2019. During the site visit, the team of external reviewers will host open forums, conduct interviews, tour facilities, and examine our supporting and enabling infrastructure. Their visit will be an opportunity for us to learn from their valuable external experience and perspectives. Their service will conclude with a formal report to President Sullivan, with both a report on their findings and notification of our re-accreditation status.

My thanks to co-chairs Associate Provost Brian Reed and Dean Mara Saule for their leadership, to the Executive Committee and Steering Committee, and to the [more than 100](#) faculty and staff members serving on the various Standards Committees.

Taken together, the self-study report and the site visit findings will help us understand our strengths, challenges, and opportunities, and can help to inform and guide future priorities, strategies, investments, and directions for the University. I encourage all members of our academic community to (1) read the self-study once it is posted on our accreditation [website](#), (2) participate in the public comment period, and (3) attend an open forum with the external review team during our March 2019 site visit.

WELCOMING THREE NEW SENIOR LEADERS

This summer and fall we welcome three new senior leaders at the University. [Dr. Linda Schadler](#) joined us this summer as Dean of the College of Engineering and Mathematical Sciences. [Dr. T. Simeon Ananou](#) joined us this summer as the University's Chief Information Officer. And [Dr. Richard Page](#) will be joining us in October as Dean of the Larner College of Medicine. All three leaders are highly accomplished, nationally recognized experts in their fields and bring tremendous experience and energy to their new roles. I invite you to read the announcements and introduce yourself to Linda, Simeon, and Rick. The President and I are excited to have them join the University's leadership team. Please join us in welcoming each of them to UVM.

CLOSING THOUGHTS AND SOME INVITATIONS

In closing, I wish you a great fall semester. Take time to reflect on all we have accomplished, where we are, and where we are heading. These are challenging times for colleges and universities, to be sure. I am proud of how we are meeting those challenges, and even more proud of how we are positioning the University for a vibrant, sustainable, and impactful future. We are working together – in *resonance* – as University citizens, as one UVM.

We seek to enable and elevate all parts of our university, all of its programs and all of its people. We do so thoughtfully, responsibly, and respectfully. We walk on common ground. We will celebrate our differences *and* our strengths, those that make us distinctive *and* distinguished. Most importantly, where we go, we go together. Resonant in voice and in our commitment to shared values and shared success.

With all that is happening at the University, and of course all that accompanies the start of the semester, I realize schedules are busy and time is a precious resource. Still, I hope you will make time to attend some of the many (and varied) events around our campus as we kick-off the new academic year. Move-In Weekend, Convocation, and Week of Welcome start us off. And these university-wide events are followed by various college, school, department, and program events, as well as those hosted by student groups, learning communities, service organizations, professional societies, and more. Faculty and staff are welcome and *encouraged* to attend. By engaging early with our students – those who have just joined us and those who are continuing – you do more than simply help them connect a name and a face. You are showing that you care about their success and well-being. You create connections upon which they can rely later on, when they have questions, when they are seeking advice, or when they are struggling.

Thank you for taking time and making these engagements a priority. The impact on student retention, student satisfaction, and student success is enormous.

I hope you will also attend events throughout [Alumni, Homecoming, and Family Weekend](#) in October. In addition to the usual homecoming, athletics, and family events, there will also be dedication ceremonies for several new buildings on campus. Please mark your calendar and plan to join us.

Fall is also a time to enjoy fall sports in Catamount Country. Take the opportunity to cheer on the Cats at Virtue Field (soccer) or Moulton Winder Field (field hockey) this fall. With views of the foliage and mountains, it's hard to imagine a more beautiful NCAA venue for fall sports. I hope to see you at the games.

Finally, it wouldn't be the early fall *Across the Green* memo without at least a couple of references to apple season in New England. Few places offer as perfect a setting as Vermont for a day of apple picking in the orchard. If you are like me, you pick large quantities and bake often. Crisps, cobblers, and buckles are my specialty (no tricky crusts).

Thank you for all you do for our students, for one another, and for the University of Vermont.

GO CATS!

"Thank you for your individual and collective roles in supporting our students as we open the new academic year at UVM."

"This is a great time for the University of Vermont, a point punctuated by the recent announcement that we have crossed the \$500M mark in the Move Mountains comprehensive campaign."

"I am proud of how we are meeting those challenges, and even more proud of how we are positioning the University for a vibrant, sustainable, and impactful future."

"We seek to enable and elevate all parts of our university, all of its programs and all of its people. We do so thoughtfully, responsibly, and respectfully. We walk on common ground."

 Follow @UVMprovost on Twitter