

To: Vermont State College System Communities
From: Chancellor Sophie Zdatny
Re: **Transformation Update #21**
Date: January 17, 2022

Dear Vermont State Colleges Community,

First, I would like to recognize that today is **Martin Luther King Jr. Day**. The third Monday in January has been recognized as a federal holiday since 1983 and is an official day of service and celebration of the civil rights leader's life and legacy.



Photo taken on August 28, 1963. If you are not familiar with it, I would encourage you to read Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "The Other America" speech -- a powerful statement on race, poverty, and economic justice in the United States, which continues to resonate strongly almost 55 years after its delivery in April 1967. See [Veterans of the Civil Rights Movement -- The Other America \(crmvet.org\)](http://www.crmvet.org).

Second, welcome back to those students for whom classes start this week. Please check your emails for the latest information on COVID protocols and do your part to take care of yourselves, your colleagues, and your communities.

UPDATES FROM PROJECT TEAMS

Academic Operations Team Update

The Academic Operations teams have identified and prioritized their projects and are currently working to identify the tasks, timing, and other project elements. Several important project elements have been accomplished in recent weeks. For example, the General Education working group has created a first draft of a mission, vision and goals for Vermont State University's general education program and is in the process of reviewing these with general education committees at each institution. A common course time-block model with designated meeting periods will be used for scheduling courses next year (2022-2023), which will facilitate student access to courses and provide common meeting times for faculty collaborations across campuses. Faculty input on a first draft of a new academic organization structure is being collected. Finally, the leaders of all four Faculty Assemblies and the Faculty Federation have agreed to an adjusted timeline for work on the optimized program array, which calls for completion of optimized program information for admissions this spring and governance reviews next fall.

Student Experience Team Update

Since completing the discovery stage gate meetings,¹ the student experience teams have been processing sponsor/stakeholder feedback. The strategic vision of the hybrid university is helping each team to go back and reflect on their design principles through the lens of achieving digital-first student services. With the help of the project management team, considerable time has been spent on fine-tuning the list of projects that each team will be working on, while at the same time assessing the impact and effort for each one. Some teams are further along than others in identifying these projects due to upcoming operational deadlines.

Administrative Operations Team Update

Administrative Operations is preparing for the first of its stage gate meetings. The Facilities sub-team and the Information Technology sub-team are scheduled to go through the discovery gate meeting with the Project Sponsors and stakeholders² on January 19, followed by the Operations and Processing sub-team on February 10. The Alumni and Development sub-team, which was recently added to Administrative Operations, will be scheduled for mid-February. The remaining two teams Business Planning and Employee Services are not yet scheduled.

¹ The Discovery Phase is the first step in the project development process and involves considering what is working, what is not working, and what the best practices are in a particular field or area. This is followed by the Design Phase, during which the teams consider potential solutions and narrow down the choices to determine the most efficient and effective way forward.

² The Project Sponsors are the Council of Presidents (Chancellor and four Presidents). Stakeholders include other key leaders, such as the Chief Academic Officers, Dean of Admissions and Enrollment Maurice Ouimet, Chief Financial and Operating Officer Sharron Scott, General Counsel Patty Turley, and Chief Information Officer Kellie Campbell.

Workforce Development Team Update

The Workforce Development team is continuing to engage in discovery. Historically workforce and continuing education were often siloed within institutions and so there is much to learn through the discovery process. Representatives of the Workforce team are also engaged on the Slate and Colleague project teams to ensure that our technical designs address their potential needs.

Dependencies between Core Teams

Dependencies between the two core teams that have completed the Discovery stage gate, Student Experience and Academic Operations, and Administrative Operations have been identified and continue to expand, especially between the Operations and Processing, IT, and Facilities teams. Close communication between these core teams and functional areas will be essential moving forward.

Diversity, Equity, and Social Justice Workgroup

Members of the Workgroup will be providing a DEI training session for Project Sponsors and Stakeholders on January 27, 2022, as well as participating in upcoming Discovery Gate meetings and on the Slate and Colleague project teams. This will include work on the consistent use of pronouns across VSC platforms. The group will also be providing ongoing training, coaching and support through the design phase for transformation teams.

KICKOFF OF TWO TECHNICAL PROJECTS

The projects on Colleague and Slate (two of our core systems that support critical business functions) have launched. The **Slate Transformation team** will be holding a three-day hybrid retreat at Vermont Tech on January 19-21, 2022. This project is being overseen by the Student Experience Core Team and membership on the team includes:

Jessica Van Deren - Team Lead	(VTC/Admissions)
Cory Tardie	(VTC/Admissions)
Maureen Hebert	(VTC- Workforce)
Sarah Ballou	(VTC-Workforce)
Carrie Wright	(VTC-Workforce)
Liz Whooley	(VTC-Financial Aid)
Ann Nygard	(NVU- Workforce)
Patrick Rogers	(NVU- Admissions)
Bethany Harrington	(NVU- Admissions)
Erica Machia	(CU- Admissions/Workforce)
Emily Wiezalis	(CU- Admissions/Marketing)
Megan Foote	(CU Admissions)

Adam Warrington	(CCV- Admissions)
Doug Eastman	(OC)
Jill Carroll	(OC)

UPDATED TOWN HALL SCHEDULE

Here are the final dates and times. Please note that the date for the Castleton Town Hall has been changed due to a meeting conflict. Employees from the Chancellor’s Office and the Community College of Vermont are invited to participate in the Town Hall of their choosing.

Location	Date	Time	Format*
Vermont Tech	Monday, January 31	Noon-1:00 p.m.	Virtual only
NVU-Johnson	Tuesday, February 1	Noon-1:00 p.m.	Dibden & virtual
NVU-Lyndon	Thursday, February 3	Noon-1:00 p.m.	Alexander Twilight & virtual
Castleton	Wednesday, February 9	Noon-1:00 p.m.	Casella Theater & virtual

*Although we hope to be able to conduct the Town Halls in person and virtually, we may need to switch the format to virtual only depending on the course of the coronavirus. Information on how to participate virtually will be shared prior to the meeting date.

STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL – LAST CALL

Please submit your self-nomination (if you are a student) or nomination of a student by **Friday, January 28, 2022** for those interested in participating on the Student Advisory Council this spring. The nomination form is available [here](#).

The Council will be meeting on selected Thursday evenings listed below between 6:00-7:30 p.m. The Council plays a critically important role in providing feedback and suggestions on issues relevant to the ongoing transformation work. There is an agenda for each meeting. For example, in the Fall, many of the meetings revolved around the ongoing discovery work and sought student input as to what was working well and not working well. As the teams move into the design phase, the Council’s opinion on proposed solutions will be sought. The first meeting, scheduled for January 27th, will be a carry forward from last semester as the Council was interested in providing input on the creation of a Canvas course template.

The Student Advisory Council is scheduled to meet on:

January 27th (Canvas course template)

February 3rd

February 24th

March 17th

April 14th

April 28th

NEW TRANSFORMATION WEBSITE

The new transformation website (<https://transformation.vsc.edu/>) continues to be populated with information and the transition away from the existing website will be happening shortly. Past transformation updates are available under the “News and Updates” tab on the new site and are searchable so you can locate information relevant to a specific topic, either by searching for the term or clicking on the “topics” listed in the column on the right of the screen. Moving forward, project transformation team-specific information will be posted directly to the website. The Academic Operations and Student Experience teams’ information is located under the “Creating Vermont State University” tab. Administrative Operations and Workforce Development teams have their own tabs on the ribbon as these teams cover both Vermont State University and the Community College of Vermont. If you have feedback or suggestions related to the new microsite, please submit them to chancellor@vsc.edu.

UPCOMING BOARD AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Agenda and meeting materials for upcoming meetings are posted [here](#).

January 24, 2022 at 1:00 p.m.	Education, Personnel & Student Life (EPSL) Committee (Zoom)
January 24, 2022 at 1:30 p.m.	Full Board meeting (Zoom)
February 7, 2022 (time TBD)	Audit Committee (Zoom)
February 7, 2022 (time TBD)	Finance & Facilities (Zoom)

Additional information about Board and Committee meetings, including information on how to access the meetings may be found [here](#).

PUBLIC INPUT

We will continue to solicit broad input as our transformation continues. **We encourage you to share your feedback at [this link](#).** This feedback is reviewed and posted monthly on the transformation website.

With kind regards, Sophie