

The VSCS Anti-Racism Pledge

The members of the Vermont State College System (VSCS) acknowledge that we must implement and protect educational opportunities for all cultures and their histories. To protect all community members from social, academic, and systemic harm we must initiate progressive standards and actions that promote respect for all people from all cultural backgrounds.

Anti-racism is the practice of equitably advocating for all races by working to address and dismantle racism within ourselves and our society through intentional and sustained actions that challenge and change racist ideas, policies, behaviors, and beliefs. Anti-racism is a constant educational process. It questions *why* power is held in the hands that it is, *where* within us and within our systems these structures manifest, and *how* we can change these dynamics to create more equitable systems for all people.

Here, on original Abenaki and other Indigenous Peoples Lands in the State of Vermont, we are not insulated from the plights of racism.

Education provides greater opportunities to those who are able to access its benefits. Education is a key area where educational institutions make it a priority to act on core *human* values, where both students and employees feel safer and supported. This is essential in providing, pursuing and achieving higher levels of education.

As members of the VSCS, we pledge to continue building equitable education experiences for all members of our community. We must actively involve every student, educator, administrator, alum, and policy maker within the system to help make changes for our future. We must also educate the communities in which we live, for the impact of this work does not end at the classroom door nor the State borders.

We pledge to commit to this process. We pledge to:

- Provide equitable opportunities for all to achieve a higher education free from harm & discrimination based on race/ethnicity/culture;
- Listen to and respond to voices of those who are oppressed;
- Actively speak out against racism and *call in* our peers when they display racist behaviors, *even when it is inconvenient or uncomfortable.*

Call to Action - As a member of this educational institution, I pledge to advocate for the implementation of the following actions:

- Provide and endorse Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI) and social justice training for all employees. Provide educational resources on these topics to all students.
- Support the integration of DEI education into all general education courses as well as all programming for all incoming and transfer students, including the First Year Seminar with the purpose of educating students about social justice, with a specific emphasis on anti-racism.

- Provide dedicated safe spaces, support systems, and wellness resources for students of color and allies of students of color.
- Directly and clearly inform first year and transfer students of the VSC policies and procedures regarding discrimination and harassment. Consistently inform all members of the community of such policies.
- Create a system-wide racial equity audit to be performed and assessed regularly --- including a review of the processes through which community members report issues and an annual assessment of the progress of these commitments.

With this pledge, we come together to not only understand ourselves and each other better, but equally, to respect, listen to, and learn from one another. I, along with the VSCS and all its members, agree to reject racism in all its forms. By educating ourselves about the history of and continued impacts of racism, we can strengthen our efforts to work against racist beliefs and actions.

I am committed to fostering safe, diverse, and inclusive campuses for all people who are part of, and interact with, the VSCS.

Signed _____ Date _____

For more information on these topics and for resources on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion please visit [*Link will be added when it exists*]

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