



University of Vermont

Dean

University of Vermont, College of Education and Social Services
Burlington, Vermont

THE SEARCH

The University of Vermont (UVM, the University) seeks an experienced, forward-looking leader to serve as Dean of the College of Education and Social Services (CESS, the College) as the institution embraces its first chapter as an R1 institution. CESS is central to the university's Land-Grant mission, preparing educators, counselors, social workers, and human service professionals whose work directly shapes communities across Vermont and beyond. This is a distinctive opportunity to lead a College singularly and deeply connected to the public good.

Reporting to the Provost, the Dean will serve as the chief academic and administrative officer of the College, leading nearly 150 faculty and staff. The Dean will serve as a compelling advocate for the College's disciplines, demonstrating their critical role in higher education and society. This leader will be a coalition builder, skilled at fostering trust and relationships across campus, with students, alumni, donors, and external partners. The Dean will play a central role in advancing the College's fundraising and development priorities, articulating a compelling vision for investment in CESS's mission, programs, and people.

The next Dean will be called upon to strengthen the College's scholarly enterprise in ways that complement its longstanding teaching and service mission, while leading with a deep commitment to UVM's "Common Ground" values. These values of respect, integrity, innovation, openness, justice, and responsibility shape how the University approaches education, research, and community partnership, and are central to how colleagues at UVM engage with faculty, staff, students, and external collaborators. For CESS, whose work is inherently entwined with equity, human development, and social change, these values are active commitments the next dean will be called upon to model, champion, and practice every day.

Experience navigating complex institutions, along with a thoughtful approach to strategic planning and resource management, will be essential. Candidates must possess an earned doctorate in a relevant academic discipline in education or social services (e.g., social work, human development and family science, counseling), and an outstanding record of teaching, service, and scholarship that meets requirements for Full Professor with tenure.

The University of Vermont has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to support this recruitment. Confidential inquiries, nominations, and applications may be directed to the firm as indicated at the end of this document.

THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT

Founded in 1791, UVM is one of the nation's oldest public universities and the state's flagship research institution. The University draws students from more than 80 countries, and nearly 80% hail from outside Vermont, with nearly 50% from outside New England. The University achieved R1 status in February 2025, the result of decades of investment in faculty excellence, cutting-edge research, and academic innovation. UVM embraces both a strong teaching mission and a dedication to advancing fields of knowledge through research. The University has been consistently ranked among the nation's top public universities. It provides a rich environment for teaching, research, community engagement, and scholarship in many realms of human inquiry, achieved in large measure through a distinguished faculty of accomplished teacher-scholars. The University received the No. 1 ranking on Princeton Review's 2024 and 2025 lists for "Best Schools for Making an Impact." UVM has also been named to Princeton Review's "Green Rating Honor Roll" in recognition of sustainability-related practices, policies, and academics, and ranked first among institutions with larger populations on the list of top green colleges.

The University offers a rich complement of academic programs, including more than 100 bachelor's degree programs, 61 master's programs, 33 accelerated master's programs, 28 PhD programs, 6 professional doctorates, and an MD program. The University's academic units include the Colleges of [Agriculture and Life Sciences](#), [Arts and Sciences](#), [Education and Social Services](#), [Engineering and Mathematical Sciences](#), [Nursing and Health Sciences](#), the [Larner College of Medicine](#), the [Grossman School of Business](#), the [Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources](#), the [Patrick Leahy Honors College](#), the [Graduate College](#), [Professional and Continuing Education](#), and the [UVM Libraries](#). As the state's only research university and only medical college, UVM plays a special role in the region as a research hub.

[UVM's strategic plan](#), Green, Gold, and Bold, is organized around four pillars: Forge Bold Futures, focused on student connection and purpose; Study What Matters, centered on values-driven learning and research; Create Opportunity, emphasizing access, engagement, and community partnership; and Enable Excellence, which commits the University to investing in its people, systems, and infrastructure.

LEADERSHIP

President

Marlene Tromp, PhD, became the 28th President of the University of Vermont in July 2025. She is an accomplished scholar and experienced leader in public higher education, with a career spanning comprehensive research universities and Land-Grant institutions.

Before joining UVM, Tromp served for six years as President of Boise State University, where she worked in partnership with faculty and campus leaders to strengthen academic programs, expand research activity, and improve student outcomes. Earlier in her career, she held senior academic leadership roles at the University of California, Santa Cruz, where she served as campus provost and executive vice chancellor, and at Arizona State University, where she was dean and vice provost. Across these roles, Tromp has been engaged in advancing interdisciplinary research, strengthening external partnerships, and integrating universities more fully with the needs of their states and regions.

A scholar of English, Tromp's academic work has focused on Victorian studies and cultural history. She earned her BA from Creighton University, MA from the University of Wyoming, and PhD from the University of Florida.

THE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Grounded in UVM's public mission, CESS emphasizes professional preparation, community-engaged learning, and scholarship that address educational and social systems. Experiential learning is a central component of a CESS education, reflecting UVM's belief that education is not preparation for life, but life itself. In the current year, 738 students were placed with nearly 125 organizations across 235 placement sites through service-learning, practicum, and internship courses. Collectively, CESS students contribute 200,000 hours of service each year in schools, agencies, and community organizations across Vermont.

CESS plays a critical role in the vitality of the broader UVM community through its longstanding contributions to equity-focused initiatives, community-engaged scholarship, and interdisciplinary collaboration, including UVM's 5-year, HHMI-supported ["Driving Change" initiative](#) to define a path to an equitable and inclusive campus. The role of CESS expertise in steering University-level policy and planning is well-established, and CESS's clinical connections to the Larner College of Medicine and major STEM-related, enterprise-level initiatives place it at the center of the University's continuing transformation as a tier-one research institution.

CESS currently enrolls 696 undergraduate and 413 graduate students. Approximately 16% of undergraduate students are the first in their families to go to college, 13.5% identify as members of underrepresented groups, and 52.5% come from out of state.

Students are supported by 48 tenure-track faculty, 37 non-tenure-track faculty, and 58 staff. The College's AY25-26 operating budget is approximately \$29.6M, with additional sponsored support totaling approximately \$11.5M.

Academic Departments and Programs

The College's [undergraduate and graduate programs](#) are organized into three academic departments: Education, Social Work, and Counseling, Human Development, and Family Science. Although distinct in nature, these departments work collaboratively to prepare high-quality social workers, counselors, educators, scholars, and practitioners to be leaders in their fields.

Education

The Department of Education offers 16 undergraduate majors and minors, and 22 graduate degree or certificate programs in teacher education, curriculum and instruction, special education, educational leadership, trauma and resiliency, and social-emotional health and inclusive education. Department of Education faculty are committed to inclusive and equitable education, culturally responsive practices, and collaborative community engagement. They prepare educators who strive to uplift people, improve societies, and advance a just society.

Social Work

The Department of Social Work is the home of two academic programs (BSW/MSW) and one community outreach and training unit ([the Child Welfare Training Partnership](#)). The Bachelor of Social Work prepares students for social work practice, while the Master of Social Work prepares students for transformative social work with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. 100% of MSW graduates taking the Master's level exam pass the first time, compared to 74% overall in the U.S.

Counseling, Human Development, and Family Science

The Department of Counseling, Human Development, and Family Science offers an undergraduate program in Human Development and Family Science and two master's degree programs in Counseling: school counseling and clinical mental health counseling, or a dual option track. 100% of graduate students consistently score above 90% on the National Counselor Certification (NCC) exam.

Research and Outreach

The College also has three outreach centers and institutes that work on important initiatives that support the Land-Grant mission and the College's commitment to transformative teaching, research-practice partnerships, policy development, and service.

- [Center on Disability and Community Inclusion](#) (CDCI): The CDCI is a federally authorized University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD). Staff and faculty at the

CDCI provide teaching, research, and community-engaged service to students at the University, professionals in the field, and people with disabilities and their families to improve outcomes in education, health, employment, and quality of life for people with disabilities. CDCI serves as a resource and a bridge between the broader disability community and the University of Vermont.

- [Catamount Community Schools Collaborative](#) (CCSC): CCSC is a research-policy-practice partnership between the University of Vermont, the Vermont Agency of Education, and state and local partners. CCSC supports schools as community hubs that integrate academic learning with health, social, and family supports, with a particular emphasis on rural contexts.
- [The Vermont Child Welfare Training Partnership](#) (CWTP): CWTP staff, in partnership with the Vermont State Department of Children and Families, train the statewide child protection workforce and all caregivers for Vermont's most vulnerable children, youth, and families. The CWTP scales up evidence-informed practices aimed at improving safety, permanency, and well-being for this population and engages in practice and policy guidance at a statewide systems level. Additionally, the CWTP, in collaboration with CESS, facilitates experiential field-based educational opportunities in social work and special education.

CESS maintains an advisory council of practitioners and community partners, including leaders from local schools and social services organizations, who bring real-world perspective to conversations about academic programs and ensure the College's programs remain responsive to the needs of the communities it serves.

ROLE OF THE DEAN

Reporting to the Provost, the Dean is the principal academic and administrative officer for CESS. At a time when education, social work, and human services are undergoing enormous challenges and change, the next Dean will ensure effective operation and unite and energize the College community around a shared identity that conveys its potential. The Dean will build upon the College's foundation and the University's recent elevation to R1 research status, honoring and preserving the College's longstanding commitment to excellence in teaching and community engagement, while supporting research growth and infrastructure development. As the College's public representative, the Dean communicates its vision and mission to the community and professional constituencies while seeking public and private funds to support its goals.

The Dean will serve on the Provost's leadership team and partner with the ten other deans at UVM. The Dean is supported by a talented team of 3 Associate Deans (Faculty Affairs, Academic Affairs, Graduate, Non-Degree, and Research Programming), 2 Assistant Deans (Finance and Administration, Advocacy, Access, and Strategic Impact), 3 Department Chairs, the Director of Assessment, Data, and Accreditation, and the Director of the Center on Disability and Community Inclusion.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE DEAN

The new Dean of the College of Education and Social Services will be charged with addressing the following opportunities and challenges:

Align the College's structure and resources with a shared strategic vision.

The next Dean will join CESS as the College aligns its priorities with the [new strategic plan: Green, Gold, and Bold](#). CESS is operating under a strategic framework through 2027 while building a new strategic alignment plan consistent with Green, Gold, and Bold. The Dean will work to ensure that the College's priorities align with the new strategic plan while advancing the relevant commitments outlined in the current CESS framework.

As this work progresses, the Dean will have the opportunity to examine how the College's current organizational structure supports its academic and operational needs. CESS includes departments that differ vastly in size and administrative scope, which shapes how responsibilities and resources are distributed. The successful Dean will assess whether the current structure is supporting collaboration, capacity, and long-term success, and propose solutions that cultivate shared identity and purpose.

Build infrastructure to support a growing research enterprise.

UVM's recent transition to R1 status is a defining opportunity for CESS to elevate its research profile while maintaining its long-standing commitment to teaching, professional preparation, and community engagement. The next Dean will be instrumental in building the research enterprise, administrative support, and grant development resources that faculty need to compete successfully for external funding. This growth must be pursued thoughtfully, expanding research expectations in ways that strengthen the College's core mission while leveraging new technologies and shared services. Faculty have a strong foundation in federally funded work, particularly through the U.S. Department of Education, and the next Dean will be called upon to diversify the College's funding portfolio across agencies and foundation sources at a moment when the federal landscape is shifting.

Guide the College toward long-term financial and enrollment growth.

Higher education is entering a period of significant change, with an increasingly constrained federal funding environment, shifting attitudes about the value of a college education, and demographic declines creating pressure in the Northeast. UVM and the College must confront all these obstacles boldly, creatively, and deftly. The College increased graduate enrollment by 30 percent last year and is exploring programmatic changes and innovations to educational delivery to grow enrollment revenue. Its long-term fiscal health will depend on continued, thoughtful approaches to recruitment, retention, and program development that reflect the evolving needs of students and employers. The Dean will also inherit a budget model that rewards unit-level productivity and will work creatively within that structure to identify opportunities for collaboration and shared investment. Fostering a sense of collective financial purpose within the college, as well as with other deans, where academic units see their fortunes as connected

rather than competing, will require both relationship-building and a sophisticated understanding of the incentives and constraints that shape resource decisions.

Foster collaboration within CESS and across campus and community.

CESS encompasses a wide range of disciplines, programs, and professional pathways that can support learning in many fields, offering strong potential for collaboration with other Colleges and for the next Dean to strengthen the College's role as a keystone in institution-wide efforts. Building stronger relationships across campus, identifying opportunities for shared work, and ensuring the College has a meaningful seat at the table in campuswide decision making will require both vision and the ability to cultivate trust across institutional boundaries. Internally, the Dean will inherit a college whose people and programs are distributed across multiple buildings, creating barriers to the collaboration faculty and staff aspire to build.

Beyond campus, CESS has cultivated a wide network of field-based and community partnerships across the state of Vermont that represent one of its greatest assets and opportunities. Many of those relationships are grounded in the work of our outreach centers and the work of individual faculty and staff within our academic units. The next Dean will have the opportunity to formalize, expand, and elevate those partnerships to serve the state, the larger nation, and the world in ways that reflect the College's collective identity and long-term ambitions.

Actively cultivate prospects for scholarly, philanthropic, and strategic partnerships.

The Dean will serve as a visible and consistent advocate for the College and the fields it represents at a time when the contributions of education and social services require clear articulation and sustained support. As the face of CESS, the Dean will communicate the College's mission, values, and work to university leadership, external partners, donors, and broader audiences, emphasizing the essential role of preparing educators, counselors, social workers, and human service professionals who support communities across Vermont and beyond.

CESS and its programs are recognized for their commitment to equity-centered practice, professional preparation, and scholarship that confronts the educational and social conditions that perpetuate injustice. The Dean will be a compelling storyteller who highlights these strengths and represents the College in policy conversations, philanthropic engagement, and collaborative initiatives. Working with the College's constituents, the Dean will be its champion among alumni, community and corporate leaders, local, state, and federal partners, and the international education community. The Dean will be deeply committed to the University's Land-Grant mission, seeking opportunities to fulfill it by growing the capacity of school districts, social service organizations, and communities across the state.

Continue to strengthen the student experience.

As UVM advances its research portfolio, the next Dean will play a central role in ensuring this translates into transformative opportunities for students at all levels. Many CESS students balance academic work

with significant professional, family, or community responsibilities, and the dean will need to support pathways that integrate research, practice, and experiential learning without creating barriers to access or success. The successful dean will actively seek out and listen to students' experiences and needs and ensure a supportive College infrastructure that is responsive to those needs. The ultimate goal is to prepare graduates who are well prepared for professional and civic leadership, who serve communities across Vermont and beyond, and who remain meaningfully connected to UVM.

Attract, retain, and develop an exceptional faculty and staff.

CESS is sustained by a committed and talented group of faculty and staff who are integral to the daily work of the College and bring their expertise and exceptional service to bear in support of its mission. Supporting the recruitment, retention, and development of this community remains central to the College's success. The Dean will play an important role in fostering a welcoming environment where faculty and staff feel supported, valued, and able to pursue their work effectively. Attention to professional development, mentoring, and clear expectations across roles will be a priority, particularly as CESS advances its academic and research goals. The Dean will also advocate for resources and practices that support stable staffing, career development, and effective onboarding.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

The successful candidate will possess the following required qualifications:

- An earned doctorate in education, social work, counseling, human services, or a closely related field, with a distinguished scholarly record commensurate with a tenured appointment at the rank of full professor in the College of Education and Social Services at UVM;
- Experience in the administration of a large academic unit, including strategic and financial planning and enrollment management, with a track record of successful leadership;
- A record of success in advancing intercultural competence;
- A strong commitment to inclusive public education and service and appreciation for the important public role Land-Grant institutions play and the positive impact these institutions can have on their states and regions;
- Experience with alumni or donor relations, and/or demonstrate the potential for success in this work; strength in storytelling and a desire to engage in fundraising activities.

While no person will embody every quality, the successful candidate will bring many of the following professional and personal qualifications:

- An appreciation for the varied backgrounds and complex needs of undergraduate and graduate students today;
- Record of investment in creating a supportive culture of excellence in scholarship, teaching, and outreach;
- Experience with licensure and accreditation;

- The resilience and vision to bring initiatives to fruition even in times of constraint;
- Commitment to recruiting and retaining top faculty, staff, and students;
- Demonstrated appreciation for the principles of shared governance;
- A disposition toward collegial, cross-unit partnership and commitment to working across silos;
- Track record of engaging community and professional partners in meaningful, ongoing collaborations;
- Experience connecting academic program design with current and evolving workforce demands;
- An understanding of and facility in change management, with the ability to empower, delegate, build consensus, and handle conflict;
- The capacity to approach difficult conversations with empathy, transparency, and a commitment to resolution.

APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS

The University of Vermont has retained Isaacson, Miller to assist in this search. The target salary is approximately \$250,000 and will be commensurate with experience and qualifications. Screening of complete applications will begin immediately and continue until the end of the search process. Inquiries, nominations, referrals, and CVs with cover letters should be sent in confidence via [the Isaacson, Miller website](#).

Greg Esposito, Partner (he/him)

Vijay Saraswat, Partner (he/him)

Annah Wells, Senior Associate (she/her)

Elizabeth Arvantis, Senior Search Coordinator (she/her)

Isaacson, Miller

The University of Vermont is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability, protected veteran status, or any category legally protected by federal or state law. The University encourages applications from all individuals who will contribute to the diversity and excellence of the institution.

This document has been prepared based on the information provided by University of Vermont, College of Education and Social Services. The material presented in this leadership profile should be relied on for informational purposes only. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this information, the original source documents and information provided by University of Vermont, College of Education and Social Services would supersede any conflicting information in this document.