VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF VISITORS
ACADEMIC AND HEALTH AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
3:00 - 4:30 PM[1]
December 7, 2023
VCU JAMES BRANCH CABELL LIBRARY
901 PARK AVE., ROOM 303
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA
AGENDA

1. **CALL TO ORDER**   **Dr. Tonya Parris-Wilkins**, *Chair*

2. **ACTION ITEMS:**   **Dr. Tonya Parris-Wilkins**, *Chair*
   5 minutes (3:00 - 3:05 p.m.)
   a. Sept. 14, 2023 meeting minutes
   b. Proposal to create a Bachelor of Science degree program in Supply Chain Management in the School of Business
   c. Proposal to create a Bachelor of Science degree program in Digital Forensics and Incident Response in the College of Humanities and Sciences
   d. Proposal to create a Master of Science degree program in Digital Forensics & Incident Response in the College of Humanities and Sciences
   e. Proposal to create a Master of Science degree program in Data Science in the College of Humanities and Sciences
   f. Proposal to create a Bachelor of Arts degree program in Computer Science in the College of Engineering (pending internal approvals)

3. **REPORT FROM THE PROVOST**   **Dr. Fotis Sotiropoulos**, *Provost and*
   25 minutes (3:05 - 3:30 p.m.)   *Senior Vice President for Academic*
                                                           Affairs

4. **REPORT FROM THE SENIOR VICE**   **Dr. Marlon Levy**, *Interim Senior*
   PRESIDENT FOR HEALTH SCIENCES   *Vice President for Health Sciences*
   15 minutes (3:30 - 3:45 p.m.)   *and CEO VCU Health*

5. **REPORT FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT**   **Dr. P. Srirama Rao**, *Vice President*
   RESEARCH AND INNOVATION   *for Research and Innovation*
   15 minutes (3:45 - 4:00 p.m.)

6. **OTHER BUSINESS**   **Dr. Tonya Parris-Wilkins**, *Chair*

7. **ADJOURNMENT**   **Dr. Tonya Parris-Wilkins**, *Chair*

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[1] The start time for the Board of Visitors meeting is approximate only. The meeting may begin either before or after the listed approximate start time as Board members are ready to proceed.

In accordance with the Board's operating procedures and in compliance with the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, there will be no opportunity for public comment at this meeting.

ACADEMIC AND HEALTH AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
OF THE BOARD OF VISITORS
December 7, 2023

OPEN SESSION

D R A F T

ACTION ITEMS:

- Minutes of Sept. 14, 2023 meeting

- Five academic program proposals:

  1) Proposal to create a Bachelor of Science degree program in Supply Chain Management in the School of Business
  2) Proposal to create a Bachelor of Science degree program in Digital Forensics and Incident Response in the College of Humanities and Sciences
  3) Proposal to create a Master of Science degree program in Data Science in the College of Humanities and Sciences
  4) Proposal to create a Master of Science degree program in Digital Forensics & Incident Response in the College of Humanities and Sciences
  5) Proposal to create a Bachelor of Arts degree program in Computer Science in the College of Engineering (pending internal approvals)

FOR INFORMATION/COMMITTEE REVIEW:

1) Items that may be action items at upcoming committee meeting:
   - None

2) Items that the board needs to be aware of, but will not require action:
   - None

EXECUTIVE REPORTS:

Report from the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs (25 min.)

- Dr. Fotis Sotiropoulos will provide a report on the SACSCOC reaccreditation progress and preparation for the upcoming site visit in February 2024.

Report from the Interim Senior Vice President for Health Sciences (15 min.)

- Dr. Marlon Levy will provide updates on issues pertaining to the health sciences schools and campus.

Report from the Vice President for Research and Innovation (15 min.)

- Dr. Srirama Rao will provide a brief update on technology commercialization.

Virginia Commonwealth University Proposed Program Brief
Proposal to create a Bachelor of Science degree program in Supply Chain Management

Overview
Virginia Commonwealth University seeks approval for a Bachelor of Science (B.S.) degree program in Supply Chain Management at the Monroe Park Campus in Richmond, VA. The proposed program will be administered by the Department of Supply Chain Management and Analytics in the School of Business.

The purpose of the proposed program is to equip students with the necessary skills to assume roles as supply chain managers within both public and private sector organizations. The proposed degree program will provide students with a comprehensive understanding of the managerial principles and quantitative methods necessary for improving the efficiency and responsiveness of an organization's supply chain. Students will learn to effectively analyze information and data in order to address the complex challenges presented by modern, global supply chains. Through experiential learning opportunities, students will be exposed to techniques that support sound decision making in areas such as sourcing, logistics and distribution, sustainability, process management, quality management, forecasting, and inventory management. Students of the proposed program will gain an ability to work across diverse populations, navigate cultural differences, and incorporate people from different socioeconomic backgrounds in their roles as supply chain managers. Graduates of the proposed degree program will be well-prepared for a wide range of supply chain vocations, including procurement, logistics and distribution planning, sustainability, vendor management, and quality management.

Delivery Format
The proposed program will be offered in a face-to-face delivery format.

Target Implementation Date
Fall 2024

Demand and Workforce Development
The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and the Virginia Economic Commission (VEC) do not currently report employment projections under the title of "supply chain manager". Instead, they report projections for various career paths that fall under the broader domain of supply chain management. Projected growth rate for occupation such as logisticians, which falls under the broader supply chain management domain, is 29% over the next 10 years.

External Competition
Virginia Commonwealth University would be the first public institution in Virginia to offer a dedicated B.S. degree program in Supply Chain Management. No other public institution in the Commonwealth offers such a program.

Target Population
All interested undergraduate students will be encouraged to consider the major. Of particular interest are students enrolled in a supply chain management concentration currently offered at

VCU and in-state students interested in supply chain management but who would need to attend out-of-state schools due to lack of available in-state options.

Impact on Existing Programs
The proposed B.S. in Supply Chain Management will not compromise any existing degree programs at Virginia Commonwealth University. No degree programs will close as a result of the initiation and operation of the proposed degree program.

Impact on Faculty
The Supply Chain Management and Analytics (SCMA) department has 10 full-time faculty, six tenured and four non-tenure (term) faculty, all of which will teach coursework throughout the proposed program. As part of the School of Business core requirement, the Department of Economics, the Department of Information Systems, the Department of Accounting, the Department of Finance, the Department of Marketing, and the Department of Management will be impacted.

Funding
The proposed program will require 5.75 FTE faculty instructional effort in the initiation year, rising to 7.25 FTEs by the target year 2028-29. The Department of Supply Chain Management and Analytics in the School of Business will be the primary funding source to initiate and sustain the proposed degree program. The program will be supported by resources already in place to sustain existing academic programs, including student support services (enrollment services, library support, and career services) and faculty support services.

Alignment with the VCU Mission
The proposed program aligns with the institution's mission. The curriculum emphasizes "real-world learning" where actual industry problems related to supply chain management are integrated throughout the coursework. Because supply chain management involves integrating the supply and demand sides of an organization, the proposed program will train students on effectively managing "interdisciplinary collaborations" with other fields such as marketing, finance, and operations management. The proposed program will emphasize the global nature of modern supply chains, teaching students how to incorporate the "diversity, inclusion and equity" of the many cultural, socioeconomic, and ethnic backgrounds found across the globe. Finally, the proposed program will train students on solutions to one of "society's most complex challenges": global supply chain management.

Next Steps
- October 26 – University Committee on Academic Affairs (UC-AA) Meeting
- November 2 - University Council (UC) Meeting
- November 6 - President's Cabinet
- December 8 - Board of Visitor's Meeting (BOV)

Virginia Commonwealth University Proposed Program Brief
Proposal to create a Bachelor of Science degree program in
Digital Forensics and Incident Response

Overview

Virginia Commonwealth University seeks approval for a Bachelor of Science (B.S.) degree program in Digital Forensics and Incident Response at the Monroe Park Campus in Richmond, VA. The proposed program will be administered by the Department of Forensic Science in the College of Humanities and Sciences.

The purpose of the proposed B.S. degree program is to equip students with the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively collect, analyze, and preserve a variety of digital evidence for forensic purposes, as well as identify, combat, and respond to threats and/or attacks. The degree program will prepare students for a wide range of positions, such as digital forensic examiners, computer forensic analysts, cyber forensic investigators, cyber incident responders, and security and threat assessment analysts. Through experiential learning, the program will expose students to a variety of operating systems, platforms, devices, and malware. The proposed program will address other professional responsibilities of a forensic examiner, including ethical concerns, report writing, and expert testimony. Graduates will be prepared to work in law enforcement agencies, federal government agencies (e.g., Federal Bureau of Investigation, Drug Enforcement Agency, Homeland Security, etc.), private cyber forensic companies, and counterintelligence or counterterrorism incident response that involves any digital media. Graduates will be capable of: securing forensic digital evidence and responding to live attacks; analyzing a variety of evidence; and troubleshooting challenging situations based on the needs of the client.

Delivery Format

The proposed program will be offered in a face-to-face delivery format.

Target Implementation Date

Fall 2024

Demand and Workforce Development

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) does not have data or a job category for "Digital Forensics" or "Incident Response" fields. The closest occupations to "Digital Forensics and Incident Response" with data and listed in the BLS are "forensic science technician" and "information security analyst". The occupational fields closely related to digital forensics and incident response are expected to grow at a rate of 11-35% over the next 10 years.

External Competition

Virginia Commonwealth University would be the first public institution in Virginia to offer a B.S. degree in Digital Forensics and Incident Response. No similar degree program exists.

Target Population

All interested undergraduate students will be encouraged to consider the major. The intended target audience for the program includes individuals interested in careers as digital forensic

examiners, computer forensic analysts, cyber forensic investigators, cyber incident responders, and security and threat assessment analysts.

Impact on Existing Programs
The proposed B.S. in Digital Forensics and Incident Response will not compromise any existing degree program at Virginia Commonwealth University. No degree programs will close as a result of the initiation and operation of the proposed degree program.

Impact on Faculty
The Department of Forensic Science has 11 full-time faculty (11 FTEs). Five (5) of these faculty will teach core courses for the proposed B.S. in Digital Forensics and Incident Response. Five (5) faculty members in the Department of Computer Science will teach core computer science courses for the proposed degree program.

Funding
The proposed degree program will require approximately 1.25 FTE of instructional effort to initiate, rising to approximately 4 FTE by the target year 2028-2029. Two (2.0) FTE new faculty members will be hired for the proposed program, one in 2025-26 and one in 2028-29. The Department of Forensic Science in the College of Humanities and Sciences will be the primary funding source to initiate and sustain the proposed degree program. The program will be supported by resources already in place to sustain existing academic programs, including student support services (enrollment services, library support, and career services) and faculty support services.

Alignment with the VCU Mission
The proposed B.S. in Digital Forensics and Incident Response aligns with the institution's mission. The proposed degree is "interdisciplinary", with emphasis on core coursework in computer and forensic science. Through hands-on, laboratory-based specialized courses, the curriculum emphasizes "real-world learning," equipping students with the skills to effectively employ innovative technology and software in delivering investigative information to the criminal and social justice systems. The degree program will advance VCU's mission of helping "solve society's most complex challenges" and will assist in bringing an objective and scientific eye to a system that is often wrought with social, cultural, and economic biases.

Next Steps
- October 26 – University Committee on Academic Affairs (UC-AA) Meeting
- November 2 - University Council (UC) Meeting
- November 6 - President's Cabinet
- December 8 - Board of Visitor's Meeting (BOV)

Virginia Commonwealth University Proposed Program Brief
Proposal to create a Master of Science degree program in
Digital Forensics & Incident Response

Overview

Virginia Commonwealth University seeks approval for a Master of Science (M.S.) degree program in Digital Forensics and Incident Response at the Monroe Park Campus in Richmond, VA. The proposed program will be administered by the Department of Forensic Science in the College of Humanities and Sciences.

The purpose of the proposed M.S. in Digital Forensics & Incident Response degree program is to equip students with the necessary knowledge and skill set to effectively collect, analyze, and preserve a variety of digital evidence for forensic purposes, as well as identify, combat, and respond to network and cloud-based threats and/or attacks. The degree program will prepare students for a wide range of jobs, such as digital forensic examiners/analysts, computer forensic examiners/analysts, cyber forensic analysts/investigators, incident responders, security and threat assessment analysts, etc. Graduates will be prepared to work in law enforcement agencies, federal government agencies (e.g., Federal Bureau of Investigation, Drug Enforcement Agency, Homeland Security, etc.), private digital/computer/cyber forensic companies, additional counterintelligence / counterterrorism agencies, etc. Through experiential learning, the degree program will expose students to accessing and preserving evidence from a variety of operating systems, platforms, mobile devices, and malware. They will perform independent research in the field of Digital Forensics and/or Incident Response, extract data from and build case files from complex mock evidence, and be able to evaluate the use, potential and limitations of digital forensic laboratory techniques. Graduates of the proposed program will graduate with industry-relevant certifications specific to digital forensics data recovery.

Delivery Format

The proposed program will be offered in a face-to-face delivery format.

Target Implementation Date

Fall 2024

Demand and Workforce Development

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) does not have data or a job category for "Digital Forensics" or "Incident Response" fields. The closest occupations to "Digital Forensics and Incident Response" with data and listed in the BLS are "forensic science technician" and "information security analyst". The occupational fields closely related to digital forensics and incident response are expected to grow at a rate of 11-35% over the next 10 years.

External Competition

One public institution in Virginia offers a degree program similar or related to the proposed M.S. in Digital Forensics and Incident Response: George Mason University.

Target Population
The intended target audience for the program is individuals interested in a broad range of careers such as digital forensic examiners/analysts, computer forensic examiners/analysts, cyber forensic analysts/investigators, incident responders, security and threat assessment analysts.

Impact on Existing Programs
The proposed M.S. in Digital Forensics and Incident Response will not compromise any existing degree program at Virginia Commonwealth University. No degree programs will close as a result of the initiation and operation of the proposed degree program.

Impact on Faculty
The Department of Forensic Science at VCU has 11 existing full-time faculty positions (11 FTEs). These faculty will be involved with teaching core and other required forensic science courses in the proposed M.S. degree program.

Funding
The proposed degree program will therefore require approximately 0.67 FTE of instructional effort to initiate, rising to approximately 1.84 FTE by the target year 2028-2029. The dean of the College of Humanities and Sciences has committed resources for two (2) additional faculty members (2.0 FTE); one will be available to teach in the proposed B.S. in Digital Forensics and Incident Response degree program beginning in fall 2025 and the other fall of 2028 after enrollment targets are met. The program will be supported by resources already in place to sustain existing academic programs, including student support services (enrollment services, library support, and career services) and faculty support services.

Alignment with the VCU Mission
The proposed M.S. in Digital Forensics & Incident Response aligns well with VCU's mission. With a significant number of hands-on, laboratory-based specialized courses, the curriculum will focus on "real-world learning", teaching students how to use innovative technology and software to provide investigative information to the criminal and social justice systems. The program will advance VCU's mission of helping "solve society's most complex challenges" and will assist in bringing an objective and scientific eye to a system that is often wrought with social, cultural, and economic biases. Our curriculum features full-time faculty experts as well as part-time faculty with digital forensics expertise from across the state to provide our students with unique transdisciplinary and "interdisciplinary collaborations and community partnerships".

Next Steps
- October 26 – University Committee on Academic Affairs (UC-AA) Meeting
- November 2 - University Council (UC) Meeting
- November 6 - President's Cabinet
- December 8 - Board of Visitor's Meeting (BOV)

Virginia Commonwealth University Proposed Program Brief
Proposal to create a Master of Science degree program in Data Science

Overview

Virginia Commonwealth University seeks approval for a Master of Science (M.S.) degree program in Data Science at the Monroe Park Campus in Richmond, VA. The proposed degree program will be jointly administered by the Department of Computer Science in the College of Engineering and the Department of Statistical Sciences & Operations Research in the College of Humanities & Sciences.

The purpose of the proposed MS in Data Science degree program is to educate students with the advanced knowledge, skills, and tools necessary to analyze and interpret complex data and help solve real-world problems. Data science is an interdisciplinary field that combines expertise in statistics, computer science, and domain-specific knowledge to extract valuable insights and knowledge from data. The proposed degree program will prepare students to excel in using data to drive data-driven decision-making in various industries and domains. An MS in Data Science prepares students to work as data analysts, data scientists, machine learning engineers, data engineers, business analysts, research scientists, data consultants, etc. They may also specialize in specific domains like healthcare or biomedical data analysis and can find opportunities in government, startups, academia, and industry research. The program will address various specific needs and issues in today's data-driven world. It tackles a growing demand for data experts and by combining interdisciplinary education, the proposed program will create well-rounded professionals capable of solving real-world data challenges.

Delivery Format

The proposed program will be offered in a face-to-face delivery format.

Target Implementation Date

Fall 2024

Demand and Workforce Development

Employment projections in the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics' (BLS) Occupational Outlook Handbook show the viability of employment for graduates of the proposed M.S. in Data Science. According to the BLS, employment of data scientists is expected to grow 36%, or "much faster than the average for all occupations."[1]

External Competition

Four (4) public universities offer a similar or related degree program. The following universities offer graduate degree programs in the area of data science: George Mason University, Old Dominion University, Radford University, and the University of Virginia.

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[1] The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. https://www.bls.gov/ooh/math/data-scientists.htm#tab-6

Target Population
The intended target audience for the program is individuals interested in a broad range of careers such as data analysts, data scientists, machine learning engineers, data engineers, business analysts, research scientists, data consultants.

Impact on Existing Programs
The proposed M.S. in Data Science will not compromise any existing degree programs at Virginia Commonwealth University. No degree programs will close as a result of the initiation and operation of the proposed degree program.

Impact on Faculty
The Department of Computer Science has 18 full-time tenure-track or tenured faculty members, of which seven (7) are involved in developing and teaching core and required courses for the proposed MS in Data Science. The Department of Statistical Sciences and Operations Research has 13 full-time tenure-track or tenured faculty members of which 10 are involved in developing and teaching core and required courses for the proposed MS in Data Science.

Funding
The proposed degree program will require approximately 1.875 FTE of instructional effort to initiate, rising to approximately 4 FTE by the target year of 2029-2030. The colleges and departments have the faculty, classified support, equipment, space, library, and other resources necessary to initiate the proposed program. The program will be supported by resources already in place to sustain existing academic programs, including student support services (enrollment services, library support, and career services) and faculty support services.

Alignment with the VCU Mission
The proposed MS in Data Science program directly serves to fulfill the mission of Virginia Commonwealth University. The program's emphasis on "real-world learning" ensures that students actively engage with practical applications, fostering civic engagement, inquiry, discovery, and innovation. The "interdisciplinary" nature of data science enables students to collaborate with diverse fields, forging community partnerships that drive innovation, cultural and economic vitality, and solutions to "society's most complex challenges". The underrepresentation of minority populations in the field of Data Science is notable, but VCU's status as a minority-serving institution offers a pathway to enhance diversity among Data Science professionals and cultivate an inclusive environment.

Next Steps
- October 26 – University Committee on Academic Affairs (UC-AA) Meeting
- November 2 - University Council (UC) Meeting
- November 6 - President's Cabinet
- December 8 - Board of Visitor's Meeting (BOV)

Virginia Commonwealth University Proposed Program Brief
Proposal to create a Bachelor of Arts degree program in Computer Science

Overview

Virginia Commonwealth University seeks approval for a Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) degree program in Computer Science at the Monroe Park Campus in Richmond, VA. The proposed program will be administered by the Department of Computer Science in the College of Engineering.

The purpose of the proposed B.A. degree program in Computer Science is to educate a broader population of students to identify, build, and support computer systems in all industries within Virginia by proposing a multidisciplinary approach to computer science. The proposed program will provide students with the knowledge and skills in client computing needs assessment, computing system design and prototyping, coding, code testing, and system documentation generation. The proposed degree program will provide students specific coursework to become proficient in contemporary software development methodologies, including agile programming, and enhance their teamwork and problem-solving skills through collaborative projects. Graduates will possess the fundamental knowledge and skills in programming and software development to work as entry-level software designers, software developers, software engineers, and systems engineers. Graduates of the proposed degree program will be prepared to work in all industries in the public and private sectors that seek candidates who can seamlessly integrate computing skills to address business needs.

Delivery Format

The proposed program will be offered in a face-to-face delivery format.

Target Implementation Date

Fall 2024

Demand and Workforce Development

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), between 2021 and 2031, employment for many computer professionals will grow at 15%, "much faster than other occupations"[1]. The BLS goes on to say, "[T]his increase is expected to result in about 682,800 new jobs over the decade.

External Competition

Three (3) public institutions in Virginia offer a degree program similar or related to the proposed B.A. in Computer Science: Longwood University, the College of William and Mary, and the University of Virginia.

Target Population

All interested undergraduate students will be encouraged to consider the major. Of particular interest are students minoring in computer science, students with plans to double major and/or pursue interests in other subject areas.

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[1] The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Occupational Outlook Handbook. https://www.bls.gov/ooh/computer-and-information-technology/home.htm

Impact on Existing Programs
No degree programs will close as a result of the initiation and operation of the proposed degree program. We anticipate minimal impact on the current B.S. in Computer Science.

Impact on Faculty
All existing full-time faculty (20) in the Department of Computer Science will teach in courses in the program. Five (5) faculty from the Department Mathematics and Statistics will teach other required courses.

Funding
The proposed program will require a total of 0.7 FTE of instructional effort in 2024-25, rising to 2.9 FTE by the target year 2028-29. The Department of Computer Science within the College of Engineering will be the primary funding source to initiate and sustain the proposed degree program. The dean of the College of Engineering has committed resources for another faculty member (1.0 FTE) who will be available to teach in the proposed B.A. in Computer Science degree program beginning in Fall 2025. The program will be supported by resources already in place to sustain existing academic programs, including student support services (enrollment services, library support, and career services) and faculty support services.

Alignment with the VCU Mission
The proposed degree program directly serves to fulfill the mission of Virginia Commonwealth University. The proposed degree program will educate students with "real-world learning that furthers inquiry, discovery and innovation" in computer systems and programming. Students will form "interdisciplinary collaborations" to "solve society's most complex problems" by applying their computing skills in all areas of society. The proposed program will allow for "diversity, inclusion, and equity" by providing additional pathways faor students to attain a degree in computer science.

Next Steps
- October 26 – University Committee on Academic Affairs (UC-AA) Meeting
- November 2 - University Council (UC) Meeting
- November 6 - President's Cabinet
- December 8 - Board of Visitor's Meeting (BOV)

A Guide to SACSCOC

The Reaffirmation of Accreditation Process

VCU
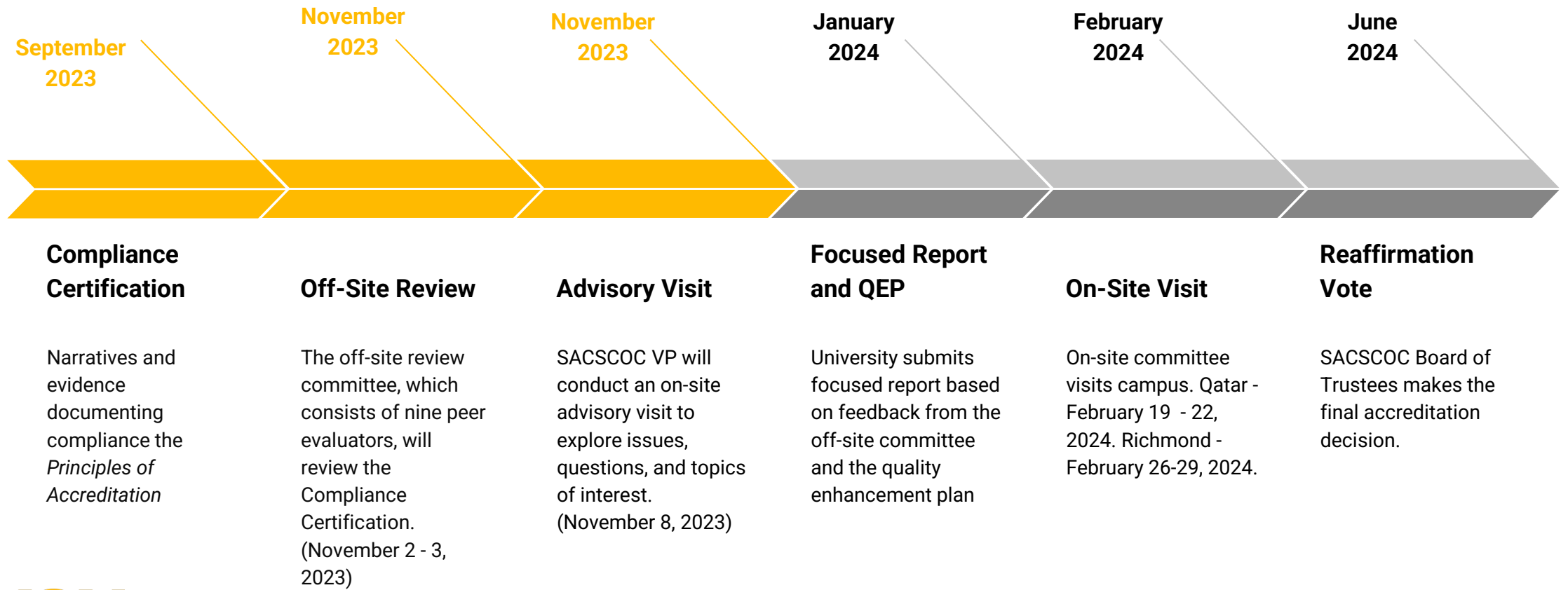
Reaffirmation of Accreditation

- **WHAT**: Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges commonly referred to as **SACSCOC**

- **WHY:** Accountability and Continuous Improvement

- **WHEN:** Every 10 years. On-site visit scheduled **February 26-29, 2024**

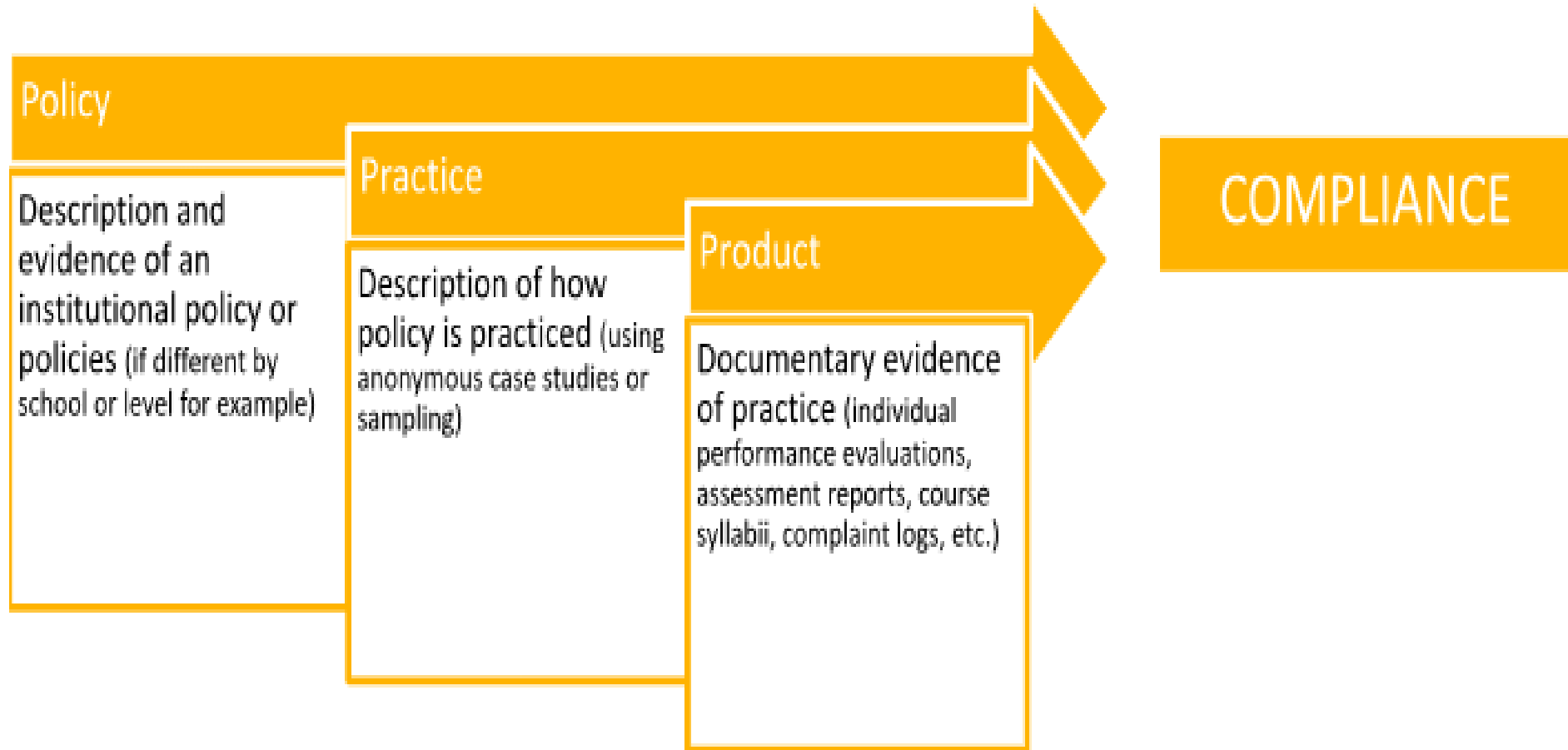# Board of Visitors - What to Expect?

Broad questions about the following:

- Ways in which the university fulfills its mission

- How governing structure and lines of responsibility are followed

- The Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP)

Timeline

September 2023

November 2023

November 2023

January 2024

February 2024

June 2024

Compliance Certification

Narratives and evidence documenting compliance the *Principles of Accreditation*

Off-Site Review

The off-site review committee, which consists of nine peer evaluators, will review the Compliance Certification. (November 2 - 3, 2023)

Advisory Visit

SACSCOC VP will conduct an on-site advisory visit to explore issues, questions, and topics of interest. (November 8, 2023)

Focused Report and QEP

University submits focused report based on feedback from the off-site committee and the quality enhancement plan

On-Site Visit

On-site committee visits campus. Qatar - February 19 - 22, 2024. Richmond - February 26-29, 2024.

Reaffirmation Vote

SACSCOC Board of Trustees makes the final accreditation decision.

VCU

Institutional Audit Documenting Compliance

Policy
Description and evidence of an institutional policy or policies (if different by school or level for example)

Practice
Description of how policy is practiced (using anonymous case studies or sampling)

Product
Documentary evidence of practice (individual performance evaluations, assessment reports, course syllabii, complaint logs, etc.)

COMPLIANCE

VCU

WE ARE THE UNCOMMON.

Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP)

FOCUS

- Transforming the undergraduate curriculum through innovative research-supportive project-based learning courses that address real-world problems.

GOALS

- Enhance students' real-world learning.

- Increase the number of students engaged in undergraduate research.

VCU

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VCU

Preparing for the On-Site Visit of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges
February 26 – 29, 2024

Contents

SACSCOC by the Numbers

11
States in the southeast as well as locations abroad
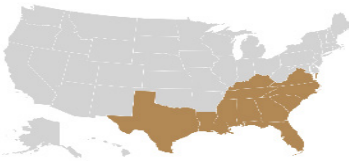
14
Sections in the *Principles of Accreditation* with 86 separate standards that require response
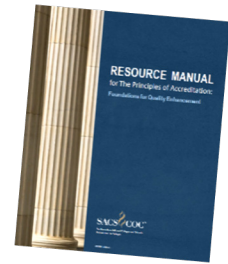
296
Number of pages in VCU's Compliance Certification

39
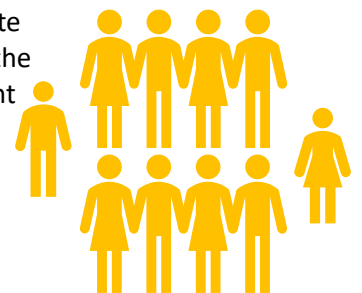Number of individual narratives submitted for differentiated review

18
Average number of standards that institutions are required to respond to in the Focused Report

10
Years between accreditation cycles and the max number of members on the On-Site Committee. Including the SACSCOC Vice President

ACCREDITATION BASICS

What you need to know about accreditation and the reaffirmation process

ACCREDITATION

Virginia Commonwealth University is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). VCU is a candidate for reaffirmation of its accreditation status in 2024.

It is hard to overestimate the importance of accreditation to universities. Accreditation is the way that the federal government ensures compliance with federal laws and mandates for higher education. Accreditation determines VCU's eligibility to receive federal and state funds, the ability to transfer credits to other schools, and the ability to earn recognition from students, other universities, and the business, non-profit and government communities.

COMPLIANCE CERTIFICATION

The Compliance Certification is an institutional audit completed by the institution demonstrating the extent of its compliance with each of the core requirements and other standards in the *Principles of Accreditation*.

The Off-Site Reaffirmation Committee conducts the initial review of this document and presents preliminary findings to the institution and the On-Site Reaffirmation Committee.

The university was granted differentiated review, which means VCU only had to respond to 39 of the 80+ SACSCOC standards. Differentiated review is granted to institutions that have not been required to submit a monitoring report in the last five years. VCU submitted its Compliance Certification for differentiated review to SACSCOC in September 2023.

FOCUSED REPORT

The Focused Report, while optional, provides institutions with an opportunity to address non-compliance issues cited by the Off-Site Committee. Institutions are encouraged to submit a Focused Report because it provides additional information for the On-Site Committee. VCU will submit a Focused Report in response to six standards. This pre-visit work helps make the time spent on campus more efficient and productive for the committee and the university.
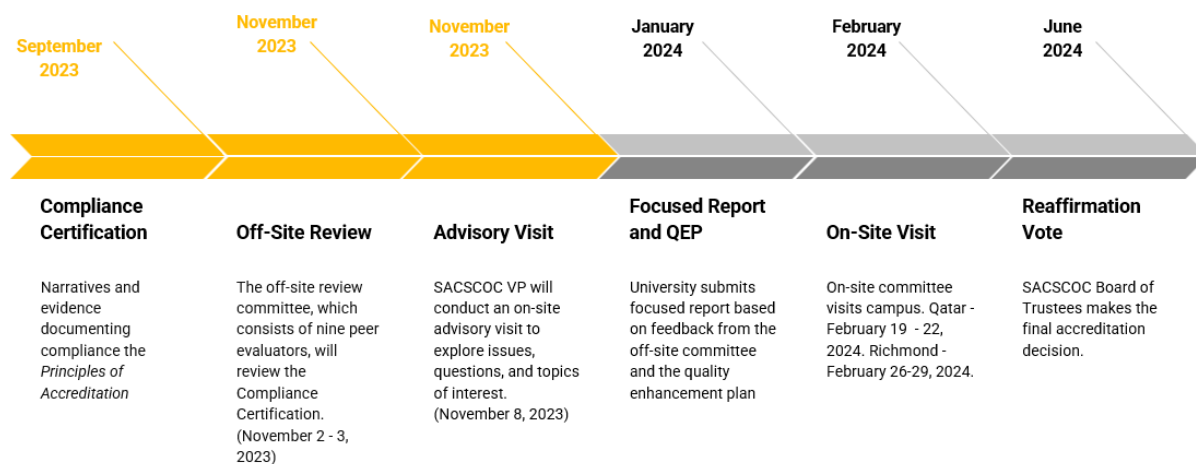
ON-SITE VISIT

VCU's on-site review is scheduled **February 26–29, 2024**. The on-site visit will consist of a team of reviewers, called the On-Site Reaffirmation Committee. The committee members will visit off-campus instructional sites and meet with key individuals in person. The On-Site Committee is made up of a different, equally qualified, group of individuals from the Off-Site Reaffirmation Committee. The Committee has three goals:
   1) To clear up any lingering questions related to the Compliance Certification,
   2) Ensure the university is compliant with all key areas of accreditation as required by the United States Department of Education, and
   3) Review the QEP and provide feedback.

Over the course of the visit, the On-Site Reaffirmation Committee will meet with students, faculty, staff, administrators, and members of the Board of Visitors. The number one goal of the committee is ensuring the institution is fulfilling its mission via compliance with the SACSCOC standards outlined in the *Principles of Accreditation*.

Timeline

September 2023	November 2023	November 2023	January 2024	February 2024	June 2024
Compliance Certification	**Off-Site Review**	**Advisory Visit**	**Focused Report and QEP**	**On-Site Visit**	**Reaffirmation Vote**
Narratives and evidence documenting compliance the *Principles of Accreditation*	The off-site review committee, which consists of nine peer evaluators, will review the Compliance Certification. (November 2 - 3, 2023)	SACSCOC VP will conduct an on-site advisory visit to explore issues, questions, and topics of interest. (November 8, 2023)	University submits focused report based on feedback from the off-site committee and the quality enhancement plan	On-site committee visits campus. Qatar - February 19 - 22, 2024. Richmond - February 26-29, 2024.	SACSCOC Board of Trustees makes the final accreditation decision.

VCU

WE ARE THE UNCOMMON.

Two members of the committee and the SACSCOC vice president will visit VCU's campus in Doha, Qatar the week of February 19, 2024. The full committee will meet with faculty, staff, and administrators on the Richmond campuses February 26-29, 2024 to ensure compliance with the standards required by the U.S. Department of Education. They will also meet with students, faculty, and staff to discuss the QEP.

The On-Site Reaffirmation Committee will present its findings to institutional representatives during the exit conference on February 29, 2024. These findings will include any recommendations related to standards for which the institution has not yet demonstrated compliance; the chair usually reads any recommendations without discussion.

respond to all recommendations cited by the committee. The institution's response and copies of its Quality Enhancement Plan are usually due five months after the committee's visit is concluded.

A Committee on Compliance and Reports (C&R), one of the standing committees of the SACSCOC Board, will receive and review the *Report of the Reaffirmation Committee* and the response of the institution to the committee's report. The Executive Council and the full SACSCOC Board will receive the C&R Committee report and will make a decision regarding the institution's accreditation and any follow-up activities that it requires of the institution.

WHAT COMES NEXT?

Approximately three weeks after the On-Site Reaffirmation Committee's visit, the chair will send the institution a draft of the committee report to review for factual errors. The final report, titled the *Report of the Reaffirmation Committee*, is received about one month after the visit. At this time, the institution is required to

Save the Date!

February 26-29, 2024

GETTING TO KNOW THE QEP

INTRODUCTION

The Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) is an integral component of the reaffirmation process and is derived from an institution's ongoing comprehensive planning and evaluation processes. In general, QEPs are expected to focus on improving student learning and/or student success.

The QEP is a document developed by the institution that (1) has a topic identified through its ongoing, comprehensive planning and evaluation processes; (2) has broad-based support of institutional constituencies; (3) focuses on improving specific student learning outcomes and/or student success; (4) commits resources to initiate, implement, and complete the QEP; and (5) includes a plan to assess achievement.

TOPIC SELECTION

The university engaged in a multi-year process that was publicly launched in 2021 with the formation of a QEP Planning and Development Committee. The committee (i) solicited proposals from the university community, including students, faculty, staff, and alumni, (ii) held informational forums, (iii) implemented a tiered review process, and (iv) gauged the soundness of each proposal in relation to the Quest 2028 strategic plan. The top proposal, *Scaling Undergraduate Research at VCU: Equitable Engagement in Transformative Learning* was selected in 2022.

GOALS & OUTCOMES

The overarching goal of the QEP is to advance an undergraduate culture of inquiry that will empower students to tackle societal grand challenges and increase engagement in undergraduate research. The QEP has the following program outcomes:
1. Increase the number of students engaged in undergraduate research, inquiry, and creative expression.
2. Increase the number of faculty mentoring undergraduate research.
3. Increase the number of courses aligned to the QEP learning outcomes.

The QEP will prepare students for transformative learning experiences using a research supportive, project-based learning pedagogical framework in alignment with the following learning outcomes:
1. **Investigation**. Students apply skills and processes of inquiry or research to investigate real-world challenges.
2. **Reflection**. Students reflect on their self-efficacy, self-regulation, and academic identity regarding inquiry and/or research.
3. **Collaboration**. Students apply the skills of collaboration to group work.
4. **Connection**. Students articulate connections between their lived experiences and their work to address real-world challenges.

WHAT TO EXPECT

The On-Site Reaffirmation Committee will the Virginia Commonwealth University February 26-29, 2024 to review facilities and meet with students, staff, faculty, administrators, and members of the Board of Visitors.

TOP FIVE THINGS TO REMEMBER

1. The On-Site Reaffirmation Committee is composed of highly qualified experts from peer institutions similar in size and scope to VCU. The number one goal of the committee is to ensure the university is fulfilling its mission to educate students.

2. SACSCOC does not provide the committee or the university with a list of questions. The committee develops their own questions based on the materials provided by the university in the Compliance Certification, Focused Report, and information gained during the visit itself.

3. Academic affairs staff will be present at the beginning of each meeting to assist and introduce the attendees.

4. Everyone will be asked about the QEP; brush up using the information on page 4.

5. Always be honest and act with integrity. If you do not know the answer to a question, simply say you do not know and pass the question to academic affairs staff after the meeting.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

FACULTY, STAFF, & ADMINISTRATORS

Participants in the sessions for the Department of Education standards should expect very specific questions related to the topic at hand.

Prepare by reviewing the narrative and all supporting documentation submitted during the Compliance Certification and the Focused Report (if applicable). Be sure to read and understand the guidelines published in the SACSCOC *Principles of Accreditation* for your area. Feel free to have documentation and notes on hand -- but do not try to predict questions or draft answers ahead of time.

You may be asked to provide additional documentation; if this happens, let academic affairs staff know what has been requested. Academic affairs staff will collect the materials and facilitate delivery to the On-Site Reaffirmation Committee.

STUDENTS

Students should expect questions related to the student experience, including the QEP. Be prepared to describe student life at the university, including but not limited to: advising, campus facilities (classrooms, labs, libraries, athletics), campus dining, Greek life, health and wellness services, career services, and student organizations.

You may also be asked about your major, why you chose your major, and challenges you have faced as a VCU student.

BOARD OF VISITORS

The Board of Visitors should expect broad questions about:

1. the ways in which the university fulfills its mission;
2. how governing structure and lines of responsibility are followed, and
3. the QEP.

Tips for Your Meetings

The "dos" and the "don'ts"

DO

- Prepare in advance by reviewing materials and documentation.
- Know the basic concepts in the VCU [mission](#).
- Let the SACSCOC team set the pace of the interview.
- Listen carefully to the question being asked and tailor your answer appropriately.
- Be thorough in your response, but concise.
- Answer all questions honestly and to the best of your ability.
- Ask for clarification if you don't understand a question.
- Let the Committee (and Academic Affairs staff) know if you can't answer a question.
- Let Academic Affairs know immediately if you will be late to a meeting.
- Remain professional, cordial and respectful.
- Plan to be early.
- Be honest and be yourself.

DON'T

- Provide information not specifically requested by members of the Committee.
- Volunteer information on matters about which you may not be entirely informed.
- Interrupt.
- Criticize or blame others.
- Make excuses.
- Make negative comments.
- Gossip.
- Lie or misrepresent anything.
- Treat the interview casually.
- Be unprepared.
- Talk or text on your phone.
- Answer emails.
- Use a lot of acronyms without context.
- Be late.

Meet key members of the SACSCOC On-Site Committee

On-Site Reaffirmation Committee members will visit campus February 26 – 29, 2024.

The On-Site Reaffirmation Committee consists of peers and serves as an evaluative committee in the reaffirmation process. Following review by the Off-Site Reaffirmation Committee, an On-Site Reaffirmation Committee will conduct a focused evaluation at the campus to finalize issues of compliance with the Core Requirements and Standards, evaluate the QEP, and provide consultation regarding the issues addressed in the QEP. At the conclusion of its visit, the On-Site Committee will finalize the Report of the Reaffirmation Committee, a written report of its findings noting areas of noncompliance. The Report of the Reaffirmation Committee, along with the institution's response to areas of noncompliance, is forwarded to the SACSCOC Board for review and action on reaffirmation of accreditation.

SACSCOC Vice President

SACSCOC assigns a staff liaison known as the SACSCOC VP to each institution. VCU's SACSCOC VP is Dr. J. Matthew Melton. Dr. Melton earned a PhD in Communication in 1994 from Regent University (VA). He was a higher education professor and administrator (as department chair and then academic dean) from 1995-2022 at Lee University (TN). His research and writing have consisted of academic papers or presentations, a scattering of book/article reviews, university magazine articles, and thoughts on the importance of the liberal arts for college education. He is an amateur photographer, occasional preacher, pop culture critic, and avid reader.

SACSCOC On-Site Committee Chair

Dr. Karla L. Davis-Salazar is Associate Professor of Anthropology at the University of South Florida (USF). Dr. Davis-Salazar earned a PhD in Anthropology from Harvard University. Dr. Davis-Salazar served as Associate dean in USF's Office of Undergraduate Studies for four years. Dr. Davis-Salazar finds universities to be fascinating social and cultural systems. Her current research interests lie in the anthropology of higher education, with a focus on educational policy and practice. Her current projects include explorations of academic administrator experiences, faculty-administrator relations, and the role of organizational change in university life.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Still have questions?

Q: Is the On-Site Reaffirmation Committee actually qualified to evaluate VCU?
A: Absolutely. Each member of the committee is an expert in their field and works at an institution similar to VCU in size and scope.

Q: When is this visit taking place?
A: The on-site visit will take place from February 26-29, 2024. Two committee members and the SACSCOC VP chair will visit Doha, Qatar the week of February 19, 2024.

Q: What kind of questions will I be asked?
A: This depends on your role. Students will be asked questions about their educational and extracurricular experiences at VCU and the QEP. Members of the Board of Visitors will be asked questions about the university, its mission and governance, and the QEP. Faculty, staff, and administrators will be asked questions specific to their areas of involvement and the *Principles of Accreditation*. The committee can also develop questions based on what you discuss during the meetings.

Q: Is there any way to know the questions in advance?
A: No. Faculty, staff, and administrators can prepare by reviewing materials submitted as part of the Compliance Certification and Focused Report. Students can prepare by reflecting on their experiences as a VCU student. Everyone can prepare by reviewing key information related to the QEP. Remember that anything you say during the meeting could result in follow-up questions from the committee.

Q: What should I do if I do not know the answer to a question?
A: That's okay! If you do not know the answer to a question, write the question down and tell the committee you do not know the answer. Then, pass the question on to Academic Affairs staff and they will assist.

Q: What should I do if there's an emergency?
A: If you have an emergency and will be late or miss a meeting, contact Academic Affairs staff as soon as possible.

Q: What is the most important thing to know?
A: The ultimate goal of the reaffirmation process is to ensure VCU is fulfilling its mission to educate students. It is a positive experience that will help VCU remain a leader in higher education.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For questions related to SACSCOC accreditation, the *Principles of Accreditation*, the Compliance Certification and Focused Report, or the on-site visit:

Katrice A. Hawthorne
AVP, Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness
SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison
hawthorneka@vcu.edu

For questions related to the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP):

Andrew T. Arroyo
Interim Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs
atarroyo@vcu.edu

VCU Health Sciences

General Overview

- 5 of 6 schools have new (or relatively new) deans
- All are using Quest 2028 to guide planning and program priorities
- All are managing a budget cut this year

Notable Achievements

- Dr. Alice Coombs (Anesthesia) elected President of MSV
- Dr. Ken Kendler selected as #1 Lifetime ranking, worldwide, for psychiatry scholarship.
- Dr. Curt Sessler named VCU Innovator of the Year for inventing "world standard" for ICU patient comfort.

VCUHealth™

November 16, 2023

School of Pharmacy

Progressing with approval for new BS in pharmaceutical sciences (will resubmit to SCHEV)

Recently achieved full **8-year reaccreditation**

Board pass rate (91%) **among highest** in US

Significant increase in NIH funding (#12 in US by BRIMR)

Medicinal chemistry department tops in VCU for patent and invention disclosures

Challenges:

- **Enrollment decline-** created new cooperative program with SoM and SoD to share applicant information and increase applications to SoP
- **Budget** - managing budget deficit with selective operations and hiring reductions and programmatic reductions (such as at UVA site)

School of Dentistry

School of Population Health

Expansion of dental services through Medicaid

Multiple areas of clinical service expansion and **improvement**

100% dental student **pass rate** on integrated board exam and **97%** on clinical board exam

Expanding research and development in digital dentistry technology

Received r**e-accreditation** from CEPH for existing program

Preparing for submission of application for school of public health to CEPH

Significant **increase** in research funding

Now establishing SOPH organizational structure and appointing leadership positions.

College of Health Professions

School of Medicine

Maintaining top ranking in key programs by USNWR:

- Nurse Anesthesia #1
- Health Care Management #3
- Rehabilitation Counselling #6

Significant increase in undergraduate enrollment (mainly through new BS in Health Services)

- Dean Search formally begun (Dean Ogbonna chairs)

Upcoming LCME accreditation visit in February 2024

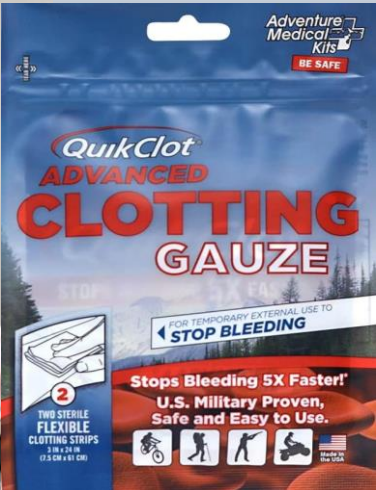Certified treatment Center of Excellence designation for ALS Clinic out in Dept. of Neurology

Bringing VCU Innovations to the Marketplace

Updates from TechTransfer and Ventures

P. Srirama Rao, Ph.D.
Vice president for research and innovation

VCU Inventions are impactful and growing

VCU Research

The Impact of TechTransfer and Ventures

126 invention disclosures

25 patents issued

12 licenses to startups

17 record copyrights

154 patents filed

$3M licensing revenue

7 new startups

$250K state funding for entre. program

60+ startups

50+ products to market

$32M+ in licensing revenue

FY2023

10+ years
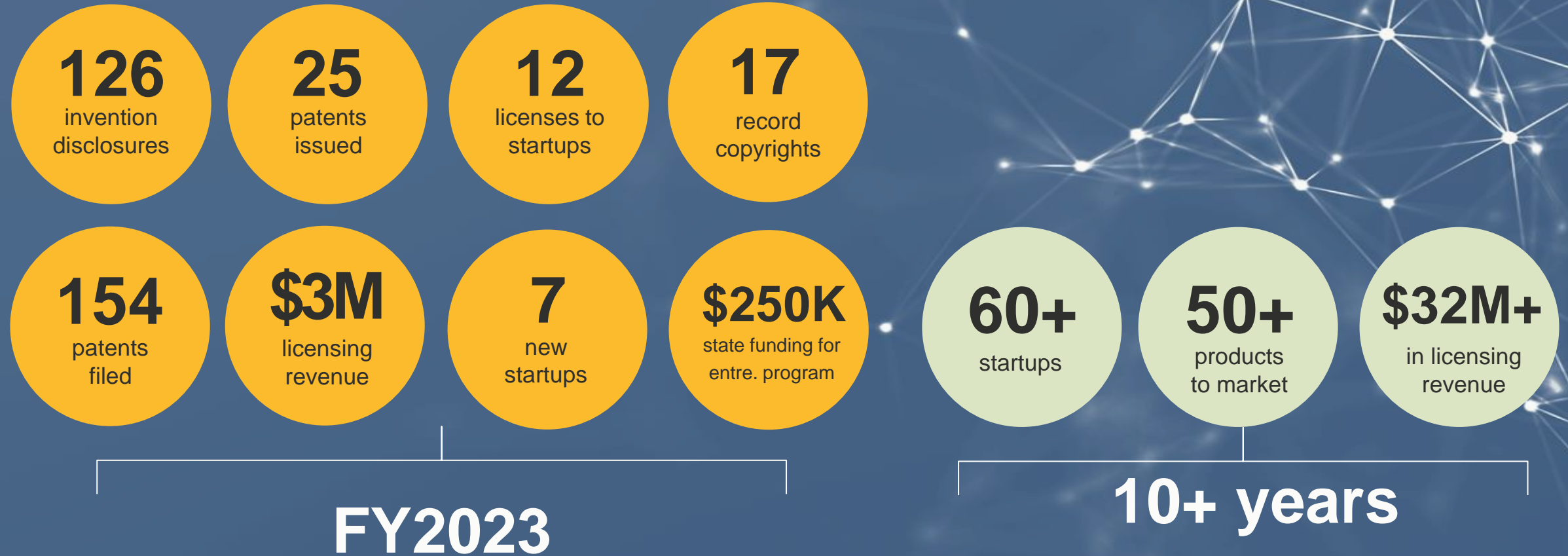
VCU licenses its technologies to:

Major corporations

SIGMA-ALDRICH

M MERCK MILLIPORE

centaur ANIMAL HEALTH

SANOFI PASTEUR

FINIS

Z-MEDICA®

Baxalta

ThermoFisher SCIENTIFIC

Enzo

COOK MEDICAL

zoetis

affymetrix

DURECT

SANTA CRUZ BIOTECHNOLOGY
The Power to Question

abcam

Genentech
A Member of the Roche Group

Shire

New ventures and startups

ST. TERESA MEDICAL INC.
VIRTUS RESPECTUS

PERFUSION MEDICAL

WINGSPAN
Strengthening Children's Skills For Life

PEG LLC

Teclison

Weave

CTS

Light Switch Bio

data blueprint

InterLeukin

CLINICAL MEDIA LLC

QUENCH MEDICAL

GLOBAL LYME DIAGNOSTICS

Sanyal BIOTECHNOLOGY

60+ startups

$80M in funding

8 products to market

VCU Research

VCU technologies are generating significant revenue

ImmunoCAP Tryptase

- The **only WHO-recommended** and **FDA approved** assay for Systemic Mastocytosis
- **Total royalties** to VCU > **$5.5M**
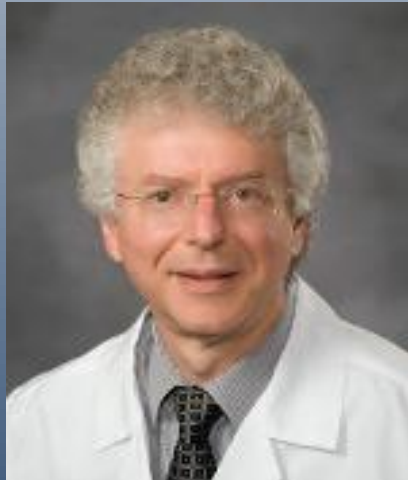
Dr. Lawrence Schwartz
Internal Medicine

Vanguard® crLyme

- **Best selling** Lyme disease vaccine for dogs in U.S.
- **Total royalties** in 6 years on market > **$5.2M**
- Sponsored research funding > **$8M**
- **Pipeline of new products:** diagnostics; vaccine for human Lyme and for other tickborne diseases

Dr. Richard Marconi
Microbiology & Immunology

VCU Research

National Academy of Inventors (NAI)
Fellows, senior members and VCU chapter members*

- **8** fellows

- **8** senior members

- **50** VCU chapter members (since 2014)

*VCU's chapter recognizes members with at least 2 U.S. patents

Inductees from Spring 2023 VCU NAI Chapter reception at Maymont Park

VCU Research

VCU Commercialization Fund
Advancing and maturing faculty inventions

81 projects funded

9 years going

$2.7M total awards

has led to

$20M follow-on funding

13 startups created

21 licenses and options

- Two rounds of funding per year
- $500,000 per year; Up to $50,000 per project
- Sourced by royalty revenue and the OVPRI

Venture Support

- IP protection, creation, validation
- Entrepreneurs-in-residence
- SBIR/STTR support
- Advisory board governance
- External state funding
- Networking with community partners

FY2023: executed <u>20</u> licenses to startups
Current: Supporting <u>~20</u> startups

New
- Collaborative Innovation Challenge
- Startup Accelerator programs

Supporting startups through internal and external partnerships:

VCU Research

VCU Venture Support Program:
Entrepreneur in Residence Team

Gerard Eldering
- 15 years experience as university spinout entrepreneur
- Perfusion Medical CEO

BioHealth Innovation

Richard Pellegrino
- 35+ years experience as Medical Device Entrepreneur
- Former Stryker/K2M Executive

Additional EiRs
- Todd Stave
- Reid Lewis
- Louisa Spring
- Biotech executives

Albine Martin
Entrepreneur & investor in therapeutics, diagnostics
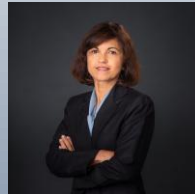
Steve Wolpe
Highly experienced life science executive in therapeutics sector

Entrepreneur Support Organizations

ACTIVATION CAPITAL
From start to phenomenal

EGC Eva Garland Consulting

ADEPT PROJECT SOLUTIONS

TANDEMLAUNCH

NCSU TECH Program

CATEA ENTERPRISES

SPARK product development

VCU Research

The OVPRI's TechTransfer and Ventures Team

Appendix Material

Board book only

VCU TechTransfer and Ventures

Mission

- Foster a culture of **innovation**

- Facilitate **commercialization** of VCU inventions

- Promote **entrepreneurship**

- Create new **startups**

Vision

- Enhance **innovation and commercialization** to:

  - Increase **value for VCU** and its **inventors**

  - Bring **national prominence** and global recognition to VCU

Value Proposition

Commercialization	Outreach and Education	Venture Support

VCU Research

Value Proposition of Translational Research and Technology Transfer

To VCU & the region:

- Public benefit

- Recruitment & retention

- Diversified funding

- Ventures (startups)

- Economic development

To VCU inventors:

- Professional & personal benefits (faculty, trainees and staff)
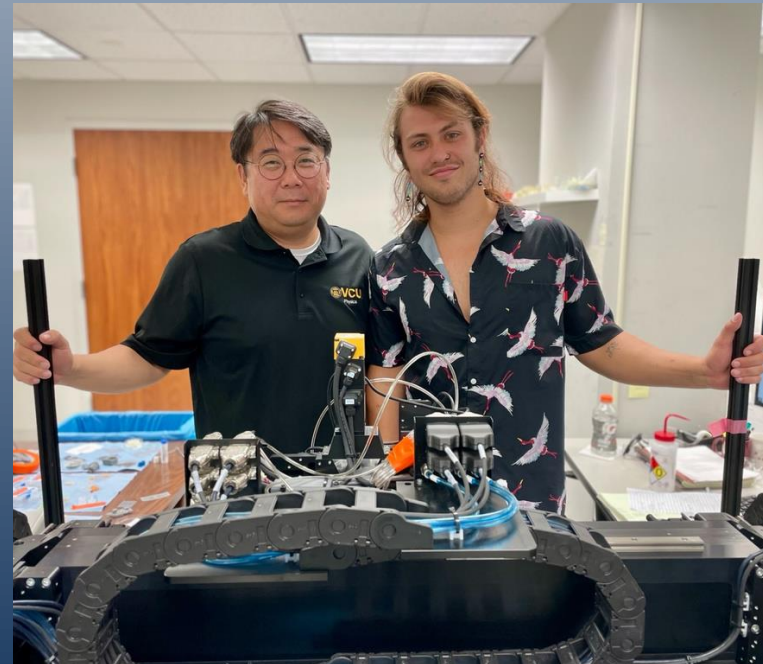
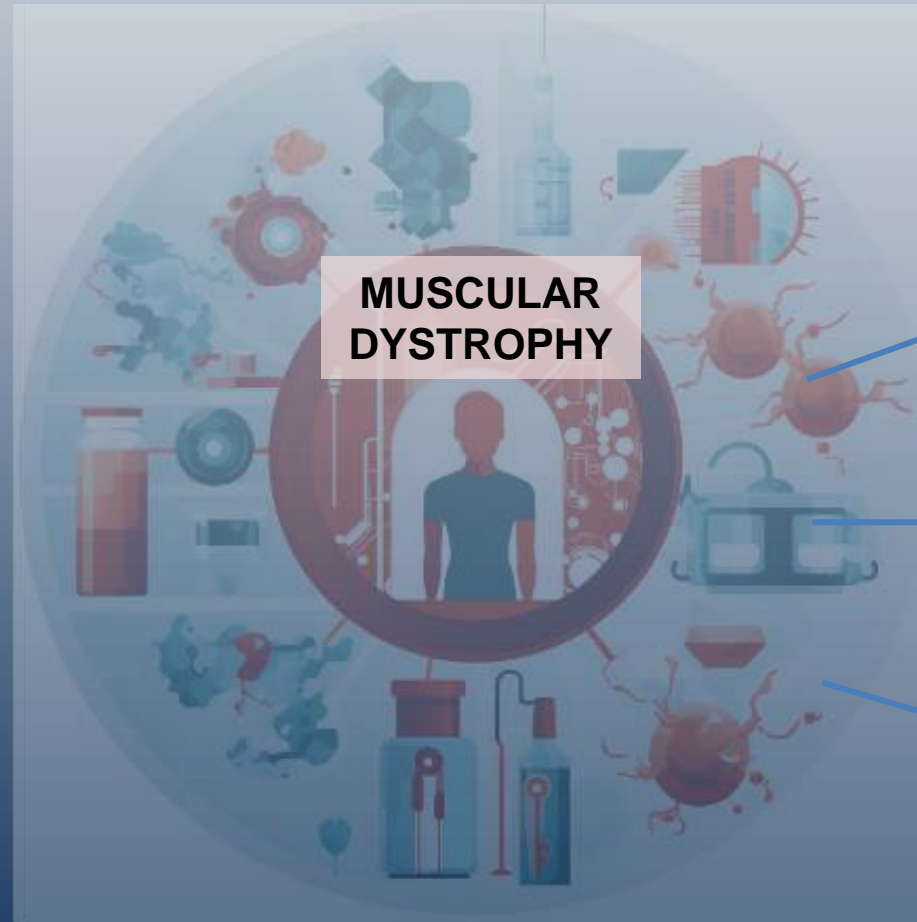VCU Physics professor Daeha Joung, M.D. (left) and Ph.D. candidate Phillip Glass

VCU Research

VCU Services for Inventors

- **IP protection**

- **IP assessment and validation**

- **Technology maturation / de-risking**

- **Marketing and licensing**

- **Industry engagement**

- **Startup facilitation**

- **Education**

- **Commercialization Funds**
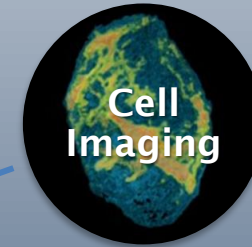
Where we stand among VA peers

	Research Expenditures	Invention Disclosures	Patent Applications	Licenses + Options	*Licensing Income	Patents Issued	Start-ups
VCU	$364M	160	124	24	$3.8M	29	7
University of Virginia	$611M	172	203	92	$11.8M	44	4
Virginia Tech	$542M	142	125	27	$1.4M	36	7

Source: FY2021 AUTM.net   *Royalties, out-licensing, equity*

VCU Research