



**VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY  
BOARD OF VISITORS**

**June 24, 2022**

**10:00 a.m.<sup>1</sup>**

**James Branch Cabell Library**

**901 Park Avenue – Room 303**

**Richmond, VA**

**&**

**Virtual**

**AGENDA**

**1. CALL TO ORDER & OPENING REMARKS**

**5 minutes (10:00 – 10:05)**

**Mr. H. Benson Dendy, III, Rector**

**2. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

**3 minutes (10:05 – 10:08)<sup>2</sup>**

**Ms. Chelsea Gray, Board Liaison  
and Executive Assistant to the  
President**

**3. QUEST RECALIBRATION**

**30 minutes (10:08 – 10:38)**

**Dr. Fotis Sotiropoulos, Provost &  
Senior Vice President for Academic  
Affairs**

**Dr. Tomikia LeGrande, Vice  
President for Strategy, Enrollment  
Management and Student Success**

Action Items, recommendation for:

**5 minutes (10:38 – 10:43)**

**4. CLOSED SESSION – *Freedom of Information  
Act Sections 2.2-3711 (A) (1) and (23) specifically:***

**5 minutes (10:43 – 10:48)**

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> The length of time for public comment period subject to the number of people who sign up for public comment.

- a. VCU Health System  
**30 minutes (10:48 – 11:18)**

**Dr. Michael Rao, *President***

- b. Presidential Contract and  
Compensation Review  
**45 minutes (11:18 – 12:03)**

**Ms. Carolina Espinal, *Chair & Vice Rector***

**5. RETURN TO OPEN SESSION AND  
CERTIFICATION**

**Mr. H. Benson Dendy, III, *Rector***

Resolution and Certification  
**2 minutes (12:03 – 12:05)**

**Action Items:** Approval of items discussed in  
closed session, if any  
**5 minutes (12:05 – 12:10)**

- 6. **BREAK** – *lunch will be served*  
**15 minutes (12:10 – 12:25)**

- 7. **BUDGET, TUITION & FEES**  
**30 minutes (12:25 – 12:55)**

**Ms. Karol Kain Gray, *Senior Vice President and CFO***

Action Items, recommendation for:  
**5 minutes (12:55 – 1:00)**

- 8. **OTHER BUSINESS**

**Mr. H. Benson Dendy, III, *Rector***

- 9. **ADJOURNMENT**

**Mr. H. Benson Dendy, III, *Rector***

To: VCU Board of Visitors  
From: Everett Carpenter, Ph.D. M.B.A.  
VCU AAUP Chapter President  
Date: June 11, 2022



Dear Board of Visitors,

After the last board of visitors meeting, the AAUP chapter sent a survey out to all members and to the faculty senate requesting suggestions on ways to address the current budget shortfall. The survey received over 140 suggestions from faculty in over 20 departments across both campuses. Faculty have noticed that over the past several years, over 30% of the departments have seen a decrease in the total number of faculty and over a 50% decrease in the number of support staff at the department level. This reduction severely hampers the ability of faculty to meet our obligations to our students.

With those observations in mind, the faculty wanted to make some suggestions to consider as tough decisions are made to balance the budget. **But we wanted to stress that under no circumstances should the cuts come from the faculty side without impacting our ability to carry out our educational and research missions.**

Of the suggestions given, nearly 70% can be summed up in the following three areas.

**Examining the administrative structure at the dean's level offices:**

Over the years there has been an explosion of mid-level administrative positions in the dean's offices across both campuses. For example, within the College of Humanities and Sciences, there has been nearly a doubling in the administrative positions compared to just 10 years ago. Of those changes, many were faculty positions which have now been converted into administrative positions removing faculty from the decision making. Using data from the American association of medical colleges, the VCU vice-president of health sciences office did an analysis of the dean's office within the school of medicine. It was determined that VCU ranks in the 60% of public schools in the number of assistant deans and 55% in senior associate deans. While some of those positions do not receive funding from the SOM but instead from the health system, it is still indicative of a problem.

Another example of administrative expansion is the reorganization that is going on in several units. Within the School of the Arts, during a recent reorganization, the contracts were changed for department chairs effectively cutting their salaries (without appreciably cutting their duties) and 3 new associate dean positions were created negating any cost savings. Within the College of Humanities and Arts, 2 new middle associate dean positions were created to add yet another layer of middle management between the faculty and the administration. While reorganization in some cases is necessary to support the universities mission or eliminate redundancies, adding additional administrative positions is not cost effective and just serves to reduce faculty input in decision making processes.

It is critical to examine the duties of the various assistant and associate dean positions across campus and determine are they all still necessary. One such review was recently carried out within the College of Engineering during the recent leadership change. As a result, 4 associate dean positions were ended and those administrators returned to faculty. This is exactly the type of change that the chapter feels would be beneficial if carried out in other departments.

Some comments from the faculty: *Check your administration on a unit by unit basis. In Honors... (there are) 13 employees and FOUR!!!, yes four, of them are deans. We only have four faculty. Do we really need that kind of ratio going on?*

*Consider eliminating any administrative position that does provide service, value, or support to students, faculty, and researchers.*

*Upper level administrators making such a significant percentage more than faculty, and even more than many staff, is a significant morale problem and the place to make cuts.*

*Reorganize the way the graduate school works with the other schools and colleges. There is a lot of overlap done between the two. Either have the graduate school be a true graduate school and take care of all the graduate education or put it all in the individual schools/colleges.*

#### **Audit administrative position duties and freeze all new hires:**

There should be a freeze on all administrative hires. Any position which is not directly related to the educational mission of the university should be left vacant and no new positions created until we are past this budget crisis. An administrative audit should be completed to examine the job descriptions and duties of administrative staff and see if there can be consolidations or re-assignments rather than hiring to fill new positions. For example, do we need every cabinet level and dean's office to have a strategic planning administrator? Or can some of those roles be consolidated? Do we need administrative positions to help with program assessment, or do we just need an additional support staff to support existing administrative offices? The same can be said for diversity equity and inclusion or community engagement administrative positions. Decentralizing these positions results in duplicative efforts which are inefficient and potentially counterproductive. This review could really help streamline operations and make VCU nimbler while saving money.

Some comments from the faculty: *Currently the Provost and most of the senior leadership... should redirect their efforts into streamlining the vast and ever-expanding administrative bureaucracy.*

*There seems to be a lot of overlap among some administrative units, especially in the DEI-related space. I am sure we could save lots of money by reducing redundancies and overlap in this area as well as others (a simple comparison of the student-administrators and faculty-administrators from the pre-Rao era to right now would shed light on this issue).*

*Cutting costs is going to require cutting from the top. There are just too many "leaders" who don't complete core organizational tasks. They don't work with students (teaching, supervising), they don't do research, and they don't do clinical work. They contribute, and in an ideal world we'd keep them all, but we just can't afford it. We also can't afford to support upper management at the expense of students, faculty, and staff; they'll just leave. We need to look at public universities that are not floundering and start to model our organizational spending accordingly. We've all seen the data that shows how we differ. Now we need to fix it.*

### **Pause the hiring of external consulting agencies:**

Here at VCU we have some of the world experts in a wide array of topics. Therefore, why do we turn to outside consulting groups first before engaging the faculty to see if their expertise could be used instead. While sometimes outside groups are needed to provide a more independent perspective, that is not always the case. But, in general, we don't need other outside contractors when the faculty are ready and have the expertise to help. Not only does this save money, but it helps give the faculty a voice in the decision-making process.

*Comments from faculty: Use internal faculty/administrator hiring committees instead of outside recruiting agencies to fill vacant administrative posts. Recruiting agencies are very expensive and, as far as I can tell, provide no value relative to internal hiring committees.*

*We seem to be hiring a lot of outside advisors and reviewers who provide very little constructive feedback and value... Efficiencies should be asked first of the people actually doing the work. Small adjustments at the point of action, and this will free people up to tackle other challenges.*

### **Summary:**

There were several other suggestions, but over 65% of the responses to our survey are covered in these three suggestions. We recognize that the budgeting for such a large organization is a very difficult process. We wanted to take this opportunity to remind VCU's administration that **that under no circumstances should the budget cuts come from the faculty or their support staff. Both areas are already spread incredibly thin resulting in faculty and staff feeling overworked and underappreciated.** The chapter feels that any more cuts to those areas will start to hamper the educational mission as well as the research mission of the university.

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# Quest 2028

## One VCU: Together We Transform

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# VCU's Recalibrated Strategic Plan is...



The process through which we, as an institution, define, what we do (mission), what we strive to be (vision), and our aspirations (goals).



Measurable when effectively implemented, monitored and reviewed to determine progress, success or where changes are needed.



Not about trying to form a plan that is all things to all people or able to address every aspect of the university.



A broad University level document, in which all divisions and school/colleges will develop strategic plans that connect to the goals and strategies of the university's plan. These unit-based plans become the tactics or operational components of the VCU plan.



Representative of key One VCU elements woven into its fabric that are essential for VCU to achieve national prominence and maximum success : diversity, equity and inclusion, philanthropy, branding, communications and marketing, and human resources.

# One VCU Charge

We are **One VCU**, an inclusive public research university and healthcare system where accessibility combines with excellence to produce exceptional educational and healing results.

Together, we are dedicated to serving the needs of students and patients.

**We impact lives** through focused global partnerships and commitment to our communities. We research solutions to societal challenges and ignite transformative innovation that matters to the people who need us most.

We prove every day that **different works**.

As One VCU, we are **united by purpose, devoted to inclusion and driven by impact**.



# Areas of Focus

## Feedback from internal and external stakeholders:

- More can be done to comprehensively weave diversity and inclusion throughout all of the work within the university and beyond our borders.
- More innovative curricula to meet student and workforce needs, and personalized support to ensure student success.
- Provide more real-world learning opportunities for ALL of our students.
- Do more to recruit and retain outstanding staff and faculty.
- More focus on using our research and expertise to inform needs and solutions in our region.
- Confidently tell our ONE VCU story to strengthen and deepen key relationships with alumni, employers and the community.



# Quest 2028

## One VCU: Together We Transform

### Strategic Themes



# Diversity Drives Excellence

## GOALS:



DDE 1: Nurture an institutional culture and climate that is diverse, inclusive, equitable and engaged.

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DDE 2: Implement an organizational infrastructure to support, sustain and scale DEI initiatives that infuses them into clinical care, curriculum, scholarship and practice.

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DDE 3: Demonstrate national and international DEI thought leadership.

## Theme Description

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*Champion diversity, equity and inclusion in all that we do and advance a conscientious drive to support a climate where excellence and success for all people are valued and differences are celebrated.*



# We Will Be Successful When --

## Diversity Drives Excellence

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### Diversity Training

**100%**

Employees complete Title IX and non-discrimination trainings

### Organization Culture and Climate

**Positive percent change** biennium culture and climate survey results in diversity, inclusion, engagement and performance indices

### Faculty and Staff Retention

**Positive percent change** minority, underrepresented minority, and women faculty

**Positive percent change** minority, underrepresented minority, and women staff

# Student Success

## GOALS:



SS 1: Transform curriculum so that all students engage in inquiry, discovery, innovation, experiential learning, civic engagement and creative expression to prepare them for the future of work.

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SS 2: Enhance the university culture of care and responsiveness supporting student engagement, success and sense of belonging.

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SS 3: Retain and attract a diverse community of highly qualified faculty and staff that reflects a culture where everyone matters and belongs; ensure the culture supports career satisfaction and growth.

## Theme Description

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*Ignite student success through curricular innovation, a holistic culture of care and an engaged and empowered workforce.*



# We Will Be Successful When We Achieve --

## Student Success

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### Retention and Graduation Rates

**90%**

One-year retention rate,  
elimination of equity gaps

**78%**

Six-year graduation rate,  
elimination of equity gaps

### Post-Graduation Outcomes

**70%**

employment and/or  
graduate/professional school  
within six months of graduation

### Enrollment

**32,000**  
students

### Faculty and Staff

**Increase**  
tenure-track faculty positions

**Increase**  
faculty retention

**Increase**  
staff retention



# Research and Innovation to Address Societal Challenges

## GOALS:



RI 1: Amplify VCU's impact on society through excellence across all disciplines, knowledge creation and transdisciplinary research.

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RI 2: Build a collaborative research culture that powers meaningful change and impact and is based on ethics, integrity, inclusive practices and critical and analytical thinking.

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RI 3: Implement a research infrastructure model that is scalable, nimble and ready for growth.

## Theme Description

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*Distinguish VCU as a vibrant public research university where researchers, educators, practitioners and entrepreneurs innovate together to improve lives and address societal challenges.*

# We Will Be Successful When We Achieve --

## Research and Innovation

### Research Funding and Portfolio

**>\$400M**

Annual external sponsored awards

**3-5%**

Increase in total federal research  
awards per fiscal year

**Double**

Patents, licensing, partnerships,  
startups

**5-10%**

annual increase clinical research  
and trials

### Ranking

**Top 50 U.S.**

public research universities  
NSF ranking

(measured by total research expenditures)

### Public Impact <sup>\*</sup>

Impactful research across  
all disciplines through

**Increase**

faculty effort and number of new  
faculty hires (including URM)

**Increase**

students (undergraduate and  
graduate, including URM) and  
postdoctoral fellows engaged in  
research

**Increase**

number and quality of publications,  
scholarly articles, proceedings,  
communications

# Thriving Communities

## GOALS:



TC 1: Collaborate to build an adaptive infrastructure that meets the evolving needs of VCU and communities.

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TC 2: Partner with communities to help inspire authentic gains in health, education and economic prosperity.

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TC 3: Create and leverage pathways that demonstrate that our academic and healthcare goals and innovations benefit and complement the objectives of our community partners.

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TC 4: Actively seek community partnerships and opportunities to elevate awareness and collaborative action between VCU and communities.

## Theme Description

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*Deliver on our commitment to solving social and health inequities in partnership with communities.*



# We Will Be Successful When We Achieve --

## Thriving Communities

### Supply Chain Diversification

#### **Increase**

vendor contracts with local  
minority and female business in  
priority communities

### Community Engagement

#### **Increase**

coordinated programs/  
interventions in priority  
communities

### Training in Standards of Excellence

#### **Increase**

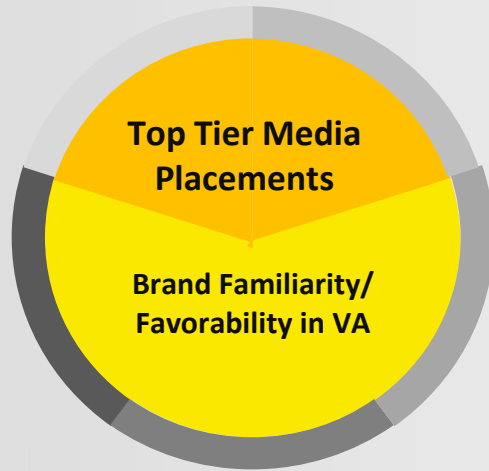
number of staff, students and  
faculty trained (certified/badged)  
in DEI and community engaged  
research best practices

# Next Steps

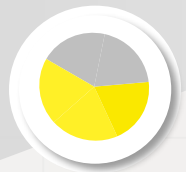


# Proposed BOV Dashboard

## Brand Awareness & Perception



2022	2025	2028
200	250	300



2022	2025	2028
TBD*	TBD	TBD

## Enrollment

### Total

New Freshman

Out of State

Fully Online

## Student Success

### 1 YR Retention

Pell

URM

### 6 YR Graduation

Pell

URM

### Transformative Experiences

% of students participating

### Post-Graduation

Employment & Grad School

*Tentative*

29,087

30,698

32,130

4,363

4,700

4,900

3,997

5,066

5,748

1,100

1,860

2,622

85%

88%

90%

83%

87%

90%

83%

87%

90%

65%

74%

78%

60%

71%

78%

61%

72%

78%

70%

TBD

TBD

58%

65%

70%

2022

2025

2028

\*RFP out for summer 2022 to establish baselines and goals for the five-year plan.



# Proposed BOV Dashboard

## Supply Chain Diversification

### Faculty

*Tentative*

**Tenure/Tenure-Track**

**1,003**

Increase  
consistent with  
enrollment

Increase  
consistent with  
enrollment

**Minoritized**

**26.5%**

Increase  
representation

Increase  
representation

**Female**

**46.7%**

Increase  
representation

Increase  
representation

**Turnover Rate**

**7.8%**

**7%**

**6%**

### Research

**Total Expenditures**

**364M**

**Increase**

**Increase**

**Ranking**

**#50's**

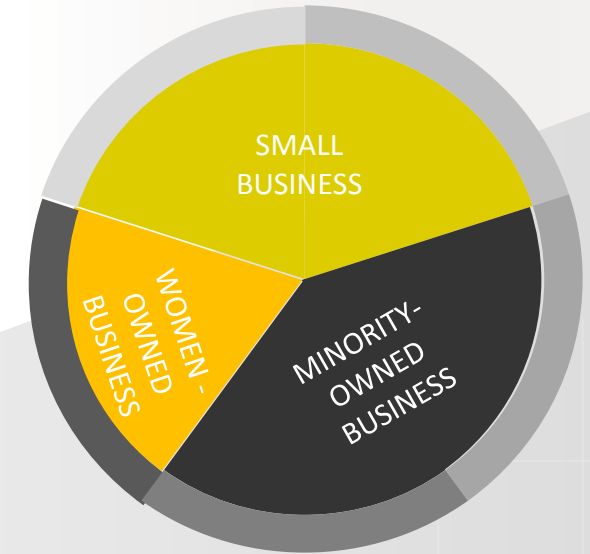
**Improve**

**Improve**

**2022**

**2025**

**2028**



**2022**

**36%**

**2025**

**35%**

**2028**

**35%**

**2022**

**4.5%**

**2025**

**7.5%**

**2028**

**8%**



**2022**

**4.5%**

**2025**

**7.5%**

**2028**

**8%**

\*Expenditures are reported on the prior fiscal year. #45 ranking if total expenditures were \$364 January 2022.

# THANK YOU TO THE VCU COMMUNITY

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The recalibrated **Quest 2028: One VCU Together We Transform** was influenced by feedback from VCU leaders, faculty, staff, and student shared governance groups, alumni, and external community stakeholders.

The document was developed by an executive committee of VCU Cabinet members and refined by a senior communications team with multiple iterations of campus feedback on draft versions.