

Strategic Direction 3.1

In our undergraduate programs, we will help all students to reach their full potential by providing a multifaceted, supportive learning environment in which we strive for both disciplinary competence and “education of the whole person.”

Teaching and Learning: A Land-Grant Learning Community

Strategy 3.1a

Develop, implement, and assess academic support initiatives designed to improve student success for all undergraduate students.

Task 3.1a.1:

- i. Conduct an inventory and assessment of existing academic assistance interventions at Virginia Tech.
- ii. Monitor retention and graduation patterns of all undergraduate students with focused attention on African American students.
- iii. Implement a program of improved undergraduate advising.

Assigned to: Associate Provost for Retention and Academic Support

Measure: 1) By the Fall of 2001, increase the number of first-time freshmen and transfer students completing the first academic year with QCAs of 2.0 and above from 82.4% to 85%, 2) increase the Fall to Fall persistence rate to 86%, and 3) by the end of the 2006 academic year, increase the six-year graduation rate to 78%.

Completed by: 1 & 2) September, 2001, and 3) July, 2006

Strategy 3.1b

Develop and implement student recruitment and retention strategies designed to increase diversity and maintain enrollment levels consistent with available resources of faculty, support services, space, and infrastructure.

Task 3.1b.1:

Formulate and publish a university statement on undergraduate admissions which would include criteria designed to increase diversity and maintain enrollment levels.

Assigned to: Vice Provost for Academic Affairs

Measure: Publication and distribution of the completed statement

Completed by: October 1, 1999

Task 3.1b.2:

Develop a student recruitment plan designed to increase the diversity of the undergraduate student population.

Assigned to: Vice Provost for Academic Affairs

Measure: The percentage of minority students represented in the undergraduate student body.

Completed by: July 1, 2000

Task 3.1b.3:

Develop a student retention plan designed to increase the diversity of the undergraduate student population.

Assigned to: Vice Provost for Academic Affairs

Measure: Fall to fall retention rate of the minority population in the undergraduate student body.

Completed by: August 1, 2000

Task 3.1b.4:

Institute a University Development mini-campaign to support a merit scholarship program which would include strategies to increase diversity and maintain enrollment levels of incoming freshmen students.

Assigned to: Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and
Vice President for University Development

Measure: Endowment established; financial aid available.

Completed by: March 15, 2000

Strategy 3.1c

Develop teaching and learning initiatives, methodologies, and curricula to ensure that they help prepare students to become effective professionals, life-long learners, and productive citizens of their society and the world.

Task 3.1c.1:

Complete the review of the University Core Curriculum

Assigned to: Vice Provost for Academic Affairs

Measure: Report presented the Provost.

Completed by: July 1, 2000

Task 3.1c.2:

Develop flexible enrollment services (including flexible course calendars, registration, and transcript and credentialing services) for students participating in courses and programs delivered technologically.

Assigned to: Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, IDDL
Executive Director and Director

Measure: Flexible enrollment services for students in distance and distributed learning courses delivered technologically.

Completed by: Continuous

Task 3.1c.3:

Develop flexible support and student services (including orientation, advising, personal and career counseling and tutoring) for students participating in courses and programs delivered technologically.

Assigned to: Vice President for Student Affairs, IDDL Executive Director and Director

Measure: Flexible student services for students in distance and distributed learning courses and programs delivered technologically.

Completed by: Continuous

Task 3.1c.4:

Facilitate new teaching pedagogy through the integration of technology in distance and distributed learning environments.

Assigned to: Vice President of Information Systems with appropriate directors, Vice-Provost for Academic Affairs, IDDL Executive Director and Director

Measure: Number of courses offered through distance and distributed learning technologies.

Completed by: Continuous

Task 3.1c.5:

Create a task force to review faculty roles and rewards with emphasis on areas such as evolving definitions of scholarship, the teaching evaluation process, differentiated staffing expectations, and the relationship of departmental expectations to college and university work.

Assigned to: Vice Provost for Academic Programs
Associate Provost for Undergraduate Programs

Measure: Incorporate recommendations of task force to address issues of current concern and planning of future development.

Completed by: Task Force recommendations by July, 2000.
Implementation plan to follow in 2000-2001 AY.

Task 3.1c.6:

Create a task force to assess the climate for curricular innovation and propose recommendations to encourage and support development of innovative curricular structures and pedagogy.

Assigned to: Vice Provost for Academic Affairs
Associate Provost for Undergraduate Programs
Measure: Incorporate recommendations of report of task force to address
Completed by: Task Force recommendations by July, 2000.
Implementation plan to follow in 2000-2001 AY.

Strategy 3.1d

Create communities of learners that integrate formal study with experiential learning, develop collaborations among faculty and students, include academic support programs, and involve students as active learners.

Task 3.1d.1:

Sustain and publicize existing residential learning communities.

- Residential Leadership Community
- The W.E.L.L.
- The WING
- The WORLD
- Internationally based communities

Assigned to: Vice President for Student Affairs
Process Measures: Number of students in these communities
Annual publication for distribution to selected university personnel
Outcome Measures: Annual control-group comparisons of grades, retention, and Student Residence Environment Scales responses
Alumni surveys
Completed by: On-going

Task 3.1d.2:

Identify and evaluate potential new residentially based learning communities and make recommendations to the Senior Vice President and Provost and the Vice President for Student Affairs for orderly and coordinated implementation.

Assigned to: Learning Communities Task Force
Process Measure: Semi-annual recommendations
Outcome Measure: Orderly and coordinated implementation of new learning communities
Completed by: On-going

Task 3.1d.3:

Develop a comprehensive plan to provide a connected and coherent experience for first-year students.

Assigned to: Associate Provost for Undergraduate Programs

Process Measure: Plan completed

Outcome Measures: Key measures of student attachment to the university
Fall-to-fall retention rates for first-year students

Completed by: Plan completed by June 2000
Plan implemented for the Fall 2001 entering class

Task 3.1d.4:

Study the feasibility and advisability of a senior capstone experience for students in each college.

Assigned to: Vice Provost for Academic Affairs
Academic Deans

Process Measure: Study completed and decision made whether to implement a capstone experience

Completed by: June 2000

Task 3.1d.5:

Move toward permanent recognition and administrative support for existing student leadership education programs.

- Residential Leadership Community
- Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets
- Peer leader courses for resident advisors, orientation leaders, and Greek peer educators
- Assistant Director of UUSA for Leadership Development

Assigned to: Vice President for Student Affairs

Process Measures: Plan developed for stable staffing and funding for RLC
Jointly appointed admissions officer in place to recruit for VTCC
Permanent course designation achieved for peer leader courses
Assistant Director position approved and filled

Outcome Measure: Annual assessment of leadership skills developed using the Student Leadership Outcomes Instrument

Completed by: June 2000

Task 3.1d.6:

Use existing and new programs to encourage contacts between students and faculty outside the classroom

- Faculty Associates program in residence halls
- “Dine with the Faculty” program in dining halls
- Book Club in Multicultural Programs
- New requirement that student staff in residence halls develop Faculty Interaction programming

Assigned to: Vice President for Student Affairs
Process Measure: Number of student-faculty contacts generated by these programs
Outcome Measure: Key measures of student attachment to the university
Completed by: On-going

Task 3.1d.7:

Continue existing collaborations between Student Affairs and Academic Affairs; create new credit-bearing courses, teaching arrangements, and other mechanisms that formalize other such collaborations.

- Long-standing collaborative relationship between Student Affairs and the HESA program for teaching courses and offering graduate assistantships and practicum experiences
- On-going RLC steering committee
- On-going collaborations in assessment
- New: Aerobics classes for HNFE students taught by Recreational Sports
- New: Internship course in Career Services
- New: Career Choice course in Career Services

Assigned to: Vice President for Student Affairs
Vice Provost for Academic Affairs
Process Measures: Total number of existing and new formal collaborations
Completed by: June 2000 and on-going

Strategy 3.1e

Increase diversity throughout the university community through program development, through increased accountability, through faculty recruitment and retention, and through enhancing the multicultural competencies of all faculty members.

Task 3.1e.1

Develop comprehensive university-level incentive programs by further coordinating activities between the EO/AA and Multicultural Affairs offices, and by increasing resources available for diversity related initiatives.

Assigned To: Vice President for Multicultural Affairs
Director of EO/AA

Measure: Increase in total number of programs supported at the university level in priority areas of recruitment/admissions and retention activities, and initiatives to improve campus climate and cultural exposure.

Completed by: July 2000

Task 3.1e.2

Develop multi-year plans for long term, sustainable collaborative projects that promote positive and supportive relationships between students and individuals from majority, underrepresented and international groups.

Assigned To: Vice President for Multicultural Affairs

Measure: Documented evidence of strategic alliances between the Office of Multicultural Affairs, Cranwell International Center, Outreach and/or Alumni Relations.

Completed by: July 2000

Task 3.1e.3

Complete diversity assessment process, including an analysis of staff and student climate surveys, and diversity programs inventory.

Assigned To: Vice President for Multicultural Affairs
Associate Provost for Academic Administration

Measure: Publication and dissemination of staff and student climate survey results, and university-wide inventory of diversity assets.

Completed by: April 2000

Task 3.1e.4

Complete a comprehensive diversity strategic plan that is designed to establish, monitor and reward goal achievement at all levels of the university, is compatible with the direction set by the Academic Agenda, and serves as a guide for obtaining additional resources to support diversity initiatives.

Assigned To: Vice President for Multicultural Affairs
Measure: Completion and dissemination of Diversity Strategic Plan
Completed by: Versions; Draft January 2000, Final July 2000

Task 3.1e.5

Strengthen the faculty search procedures so that female and minority individuals are selected to participate on search committees and included in the interview pools.

Assigned To: Vice President for Multicultural Affairs
Director of EO/AA
Senior Vice President and Provost
Measure: Proportion of new faculty appointments who are female and/or minority
Completed by: July 2000

Task 3.1e.6

Develop and offer a variety of training programs for faculty to increase their comfort and competence in working with diverse student, faculty, and staff groups.

Assigned To: Vice President for Multicultural Affairs
Measure: Number of faculty members who attend, and/or those who develop and offer, programs that increase multicultural competence.
Completed by: Beginning July 2000

Task 3.1e.7

Develop and offer intensive seminars for faculty to transform their courses to incorporate multicultural perspectives.

Assigned To: Vice President for Multicultural Affairs
Center for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching
Measure: Number of courses certified through peer review as exemplary in their inclusion of multicultural perspectives.
Completed by: July 2000

Strategy 3.1f

Ensure that the university library supports learning, teaching, research, and outreach by providing access to information resources and services regardless of location or format of materials.

Task 3.1f.1:

Extend Newman library opening hours to midnight on Friday and Saturday in a pilot program in fall and spring term with an assessment of use in the extended hours.

Assigned to: Dean of Libraries, funding from Sr. Vice President and Provost.

Measure: Statistics regarding library use in extended hours

Completed by: May, 2000.

Task 3.1f.2:

Working with the University Library Committee, develop a library plan to ensure that undergraduate students are provided with opportunities to acquire the information management skills needed to support their learning needs at Virginia Tech and those they will encounter afterwards as they participate in their professional, social, and cultural environments.

- i. Establish benchmarking data regarding similar programs at peer institutions.
- ii. Review the undergraduate curriculum to identify courses which have a component that requires that students identify, evaluate, and use relevant information resources for class assignments.
- iii. Review the graduate curriculum to identify research methods courses.
- iv. Outline a plan that provides a curriculum-based cumulative learning experience for students to develop information management skills with the plan addressing needs of both local and distant students and faculty.
- v. Move the plan through appropriate university governance agencies.

Assigned to: Dean of Libraries, Library Instruction Coordinator, University Library Committee

Measure: Plan presented to university governance agencies

Completed by: May 2000 – (I, ii, iii), May 2001 – (iv), May 2002 (v.)

Task 3.1f.3:

Compete with the establishment of funds needed to support the materials, the faculty core inventory of essential research publications for Virginia Tech using faculty input of journal titles needed for research from 98/99 survey, data regarding the publications faculty cite, data regarding where faculty publish, and faculty and graduate student interlibrary loan borrowing patterns.

Assigned to: Dean of Library

Measure: Completed faculty inventory

Completed by: December 2000

Task 3.1f.4:

Deliver VT's library physical resources at Blacksburg and needed by students and faculty at distant learning sites, by the mode of support provided through university funding.

Assigned to: Dean of Library

Measure: Statistics regarding external delivery of Blacksburg campus library resources.

Completed by: Annual, ongoing

Task 3.1f.5:

Develop a contingency plan for elimination of up to \$ 600,000 in continuing serial costs for fiscal 2000/2001. Amount is based on projected funding for 2000/2001 known as of May 2000.

Assigned to: Dean of Library

Measure: Projected list of serials to be cancelled.

Completed by: May, 2000

Task 3.1f.6:

Review all serial publications received in both paper and electronic format for duplication or near-equivalency to determine what paper might be eliminated to save costs associated with purchasing, processing or storing.

Assigned to: Dean of Library

Measure: List of items to be held in electronic format only.

Completed by: May 2000

Task 3.1f.7:

Plan for relocation of library services associated with linking Newman Library to the ACITC building.

Assigned to: Dean of Library

Measure: Developed plan

Completed by: May 2000

Strategy 3.1g

Produce skilled graduates for a workforce that can meet the current and future needs of the commonwealth and the nation.

Task 3.1g.1:

Ensure the technological competence of all baccalaureate-degree recipients through the incorporation of technology throughout the undergraduate curriculum.

Assigned to: Associate Provost for Undergraduate Programs

Measure: (1) Competency rates as determined by standardized testing at or near the end of the freshman year.

(2) A plan for addressing assessment of technological competence at the senior level, produced in collaboration with the Provost's Office, the Office of Academic Assessment Programs, and the college deans.

Completed by: Summer 2002

Task 3.1g.2:

Increase the number of undergraduate majors in the technology-based disciplines of Computer Science, Electrical Engineering, Computer Engineering, Accounting, and Management Sciences and Information Technology.

Assigned to: Deans of the Colleges of Arts & Sciences, Business, and Engineering

Measure: Increase the annual number of graduates in Computer Science, Electrical Engineering, Computer Engineering, Accounting, and Management Science & Information Technology.

Completed by: Summer 2004

Task 3.1g.3:

Develop graduate, certificate, and other programs, both on campus and off, that support the educational development of working professionals in government, industry, and education. See also Strategies 3.2_ and 3.3_.

Assigned to: Vice Provosts for Academic Affairs, Research and Graduate Studies, and Outreach

Measure: Three new programs in a three-year period

Completed by: Summer 2002