



# Division Strategic Plan



**VCU**

Student Affairs





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## **Message from the Vice Provost**

It is my pleasure to share with you our Division of Student Affairs Strategic Plan which serves to engage the entire community in our division.

This plan serves to refine our mission, articulates our values, and establishes our divisional goals. We see this document as a living document that will be influenced by our work as we move forward as a division.

We are currently working on a tactical action plan to help authenticate and operationalize our strategic plan through our on-going programs, services, facilities, budget and human resource practices.

As always, please share your thoughts and reactions with us as we strive to support the success of our students and their holistic development.

Sincerely,  
Charles Klink, Ph.D.  
Vice Provost for Student Affairs

## **Mission**

Through our programs, services, and facilities, the Division of Student Affairs at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) champions holistic student development by fostering inclusive communities and providing dynamic, integrative learning experiences that prepare our students to be thoughtfully engaged contributors to the global community.

## **Vision**

Educating all students to become innovative, courageous, and socially engaged leaders.

## **Values**

VCU Division of Student Affairs fosters a community committed to excellence by upholding values that promote student success, diversity, integrity, wellness and community.

### **Community**

We develop meaningful and collaborative relationships with others to positively impact student learning and engagement.

### **Diversity**

We seek to empower all members of our community by providing inclusive environments, advocating for social justice, and fostering equity.

### **Integrity**

We uphold the highest ethical standards of honesty, openness, and transparency. We utilize assessment, data, and research to inform resource management, decision-making, and practices with an intentional focus on student learning and program sustainability.

### **Student Success**

We contribute to the success, persistence, and employability of students by providing leadership in wellness, diversity, and experiential learning. We create innovative student-centered experiences and proactively respond to the diverse needs of our student body.

### **Wellness**

We promote the comprehensive holistic development of the physical, emotional, intellectual, occupational, financial, social, and spiritual health of our campus community members.



VCU Student Affairs



Division Strategic Plan

## Goal 1

Enable the university community to pursue a life of wellness to promote healthy behaviors.



## Learning Outcomes

1.1. Students will demonstrate the skills necessary to engage in wellness opportunities of their choosing.

1.2. Students will exhibit positive and health behaviors in relation to one or more of the following: body image, coping skills, eating behaviors, emotional wellness, relationships, sexual health, stress management, and substance abuse.



The Outdoor Adventure Program helped me find a balance between my engineering coursework and my love for the outdoors. The climbing wall means I can train for trips even while taking 15–18 credits a semester. Working at the rock wall has also been a huge bonus as well; it honestly doesn't feel like work when you love what you do.

### **Michael Berger**

Biomedical Engineering

Class of 2016

## Goal 2

Create opportunities for students to meaningfully and positively engage with diversity to foster an inclusive campus culture.





## Learning Outcomes

2.1. Students will describe the perspectives of individuals with identities different from their own.

2.2. Students will articulate their own unique identity and how that informs their view of the world.

2.3. Students will evaluate diverse perspectives and how those perspectives inform their own.

At VCU everyone can find a home because of its diversity. There is a space for everyone to fit in.

### **Sydney Brown**

Biology, Pre-Dentistry  
Class of 2017



### Goal 3

Provide dynamic leadership experiences so students can utilize their unique talents to respond to the needs of the community.



## Learning Outcomes

3.1. As a result of participating in Division of Student Affairs related experiences, students will demonstrate critical thinking skills.

3.2. Students will identify how the skills gained through their academic and co-curricular VCU education relate to their vocational goals.

3.3. Students will participate in innovative leadership experiences that promote the development of leadership skills.

3.4. Students will identify at least three (3) physical environments on campus that support their holistic development.

I have learned key leadership and problem solving skills, especially working with Student Affairs. I have learned to create quick solutions to hard problems. VCU is a place of opportunity and there may be obstacles and applications and competition in the way. But the fact that the opportunity is there, is amazing.

### **Judy Branham**

Psychology, African American Studies  
Class of 2017

## Goal 4

Proactively identify student concerns and respond to student needs to support student success and safety.



## Learning Outcomes

4.1. Students will identify at least (3) on-campus resources to address their needs or concerns.

4.2. Students will reflect on their choices and the impact of their behavior on themselves and others.

4.3. Students will create and implement a plan to advocate for their own success.

It's a warm feeling to have faculty and administrators know you by first name, and inviting you, firsthand, to sit at the table to share your vision and inspire others.

### **Tre Straughter**

Mass Communications, Public Relations  
Class of 2016



## Goal 5

Provide opportunities for staff to engage in life-long learning experiences that promote quality services.




## Learning Outcomes

5.1. Staff will engage in professional development opportunities and experiences.

5.2. Supervisors will foster staff development by providing support and feedback.

5.3. Staff will exhibit quality assurance standards.



My favorite part of being involved with VCU Student Affairs is that I am able to express my voice as a student. There are numerous opportunities for students to say what they feel around campus, and I am grateful that I have found my place to be heard. Through my involvement I have learned what it means for all students, and people, to be treated equally and fairly.

### **Ryan Carroll**

International Studies, Spanish  
Class of 2018

**February 9, 2016**

Working Group disseminates operating assumptions for process.

**February 11, 2016**

Conduct visual explorer with DSA Administrative Team.

**February 18, 2016**

Working Group drafts Mission, Vision, and Values.

**February 19, 2016**

Draft of Mission, Vision, and Values made available for review and comment by DSA Administrative Team.

**February 25, 2016**

Review current key performance measures with DSA Administrative Team. Specifically, answering the following questions for each department or office:  
—In one or two words, what is the purpose of your office or department?  
—How do you know your office or department is successful?

**February 26, 2016**

Comment and review period of Mission, Vision and Values draft closes.

**March 3, 2016**

Working Group drafts Goals, Learning Outcomes, and Service Outcomes.

**March 24, 2016**

Draft of Goals, Learning Outcomes, and Service Outcomes made available for review and comment by DSA Administrative Team.

**April 1, 2016**

Comment and review of Goals, Learning Outcomes, and Service Outcomes closes.

**April 22, 2016**

Revised Draft of Strategic Plan submitted to DSA Leadership Team for review and revision.

**May 6, 2016**

Strategic Plan made available for Division-Wide comment and review.



## **May 18, 2016**

Open Forum and Feedback Session on Strategic Plan at Student Affairs Conference.

## **May 20, 2016**

Comment and review period of Strategic Plan closes.

## **June 1, 2016**

Strategic Plan finalized and submitted to VP of Student Affairs.



## **Strategic Planning Committee**

### **Joslyn Bedell**

Associate Director, Employer and Experiential Development  
VCU Career Services

### **James Gahagan, Ph.D.**

Director  
VCU LEAD

### **Derek Hottell, Ph.D.**

Director  
VCU Recreational Sports

### **Yiyun Jie, Ph.D.**

Director of Assessment and Planning  
VCU Student Affairs

### **Matthew Lovisa**

Coordinator for Communications and Marketing  
VCU Student Affairs

### **Justin Moses, J.D.**

Associate Vice Provost  
VCU Student Affairs

**Mission Statement** is a clear concise statement of the fundamental purpose of a division or unit. The statement describes what the organization does (its function), who it serves (target population) and results it intends to achieve (intended outcomes). The mission statement should answer the question, “why does this specific unit exist?” The statement describes the unique role of this organization.

**Vision Statement** is a brief statement that provides a picture of the organization in the future, or the impact the organization will have in the future – the state the organization is working toward. Harvard Business Review defines the key elements of a vision statement as core ideology - (what we stand for and why we exist) and the envisioned future (what we aspire to become, to achieve, to create - something that will require significant change and progress to attain.)

Taken together, the mission and vision statements communicate the core purpose of an organization, make its unique role clear, describe results it intends to achieve, and communicate the motivation for doing the work – what is most important to the organization.

**Organizational Values** attempt to answer the questions how we approach our work? And what core beliefs and assumptions will collectively shape how we interact with and serve students? They reflect agreed upon standards, internalized attitudes, and moral and ethical frameworks.

**Goal Statements** are framed around the core functions of a division/unit, and describes measureable results the organization intends to achieve through this core function. Each goal statement should state what the unit will do (core function), who it will serve (target population), and the intended results (outcomes).

Initiatives are specific action strategies, in support of core function goal(s). Each initiative should be stated in terms of what action the unit will take, who it will serve, and intended results.

**Key Performance Indicator (KPI)** is a quantitative measure that summarizes assessment results of some aspect of performance, distilled down to single numbers. KPIs are not statements that describe work that will be done or action that will be taken. KPI's often include data related to access, persistence, and cost/affordability.

**Access** - for example, a KPI might comprise data about who the organization serves: numbers, demographic information, change over time

**Persistence** – for example, a KPI might comprise persistence data for students served by the organization, with context such as change over time or as compared to appropriate group

**Cost/affordability** – for example, a KPI might comprise data on cost/affordability, with context such as change over time or as compared to appropriate group





**Learning outcomes** are “specific, measurable, objectives that describe what an individual will learn and be able to do as a result of a lesson or program” (Gahagan, Dingfelder, & Pei, 2010) Learning outcomes help organizations think intentionally about their work by identifying the knowledge or skills that they want for someone to take away from a specific engagement or experience.

**Service and institutional outcomes** relate to specific “functions, demands, targets, resources, and efficiencies.” Service and institutional outcomes help a unit or division describe its work in quantitative ways and answer questions such as how many students/clients were served, retention rates, graduation rates, and the number of cases resolved, etc.

**Competencies** are “knowledge, values, abilities, and behaviors that help an individual contribute to or successfully engage in a role or task” (Seemiller, 2014)

**Assessment methods** are the practices that will be used to measure some aspect of performance, in order to provide an indicator (KPI) of the effectiveness of the practice being assessed. Qualitative methods include a concise summary of relevant key findings.

Description of assessment method should include: what will be assessed (satisfaction, learning), assessment tool (survey, exam), who will be assessed (sampling procedure) and how assessment will be conducted.

Several important resources to utilize when developing assessment methods are Alexander Astin’s inputs, experiences,

outcomes (1993) framework; Nine principles of good practice in assessing student learning outcomes (A. Astin, et. al, 1992); and Marilee Bresciani’s meaningful, manageable, measureable questions to guide assessment projects (2004).

**Experiential Learning** is defined as “a meaningful, hands on experience in a diverse, real world setting with regular constructive feedback from an identified mentor that builds individual identity and confidence to pursue career goals” (VCU Career Council, 2015).

**Leadership** is defined as “the process of mutual influence whereby leaders and followers work together to clarify values and achieve common goals” (VCU LEAD, Division of Student Affairs).

**Peer Leadership** is defined as “students who have been selected and trained in a leadership role to deliver educational services and promote active citizenship among their peers” (VCU LEAD, Division of Student Affairs).

**Wellness** is defined as “a dynamic process of change and growth toward an optimal state of physical, emotional, intellectual, occupational, financial, social, and spiritual health” (The Well, VCU Division of Student Affairs)

*Adapted from the University of South Carolina’s, Division of Student Affairs & Academic Support, Planning Assessment, and Innovation Council’s Blueprint Notebook.*



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