

**VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY BOARD OF VISITORS
COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC & STUDENT AFFAIRS
9:00 A.M.; THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2026
Gateway Dining & Event Center
(No Public Comment Period Scheduled)**

AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER.....Mr. Thomas Cosgrove, Vice Chair

ROLL CALL

INVOCATION (*Reverend Thomas Wynn, Director of Campus Ministries*)

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES (if any)

- November 20, 2025

PRESIDENT’S REMARKS.....Dr. Makola M. Abdullah

CLOSED SESSION

- Discussion or consideration of honorary degrees or special awards

REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Enrollment Projection.....Dr. Alexis Brooks-Walter
Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management

- Academic Affairs Student Success & Completion
Initiatives.....Dr. Tia A. Minnis
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

OTHER BUSINESS

ADJOURNMENT

1.28.26

**VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY BOARD OF VISITORS
COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC AND STUDENT AFFAIRS
MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2026**

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Cosgrove, Vice Chair, called the Academics and Student Affairs Committee meeting to order at 9:02 am. The Meeting was held at the Gateway & Dining Event Center on the Campus of Virginia State University.

ROLL CALL

A Quorum was present.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Dr. Leonard Haynes, III, Chair (*Virtual due to medical*)
Mr. Thomas Cosgrove, Vice Chair
Mr. M. Peter McPherson
Dr. Robert Denton, Jr. (*Virtual due to weather*)
Dr. Harold Green, Jr.
Ms. Morenike Miles
Mr. Victor K. Branch (Rector) ex officio

BOARD APPOINTEES:

Dr. Kenneth Lewis, Faculty Representative
Mr. Marquis Mason, Student Representative

OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT:

Ms. Verndell Robinson (*Virtual due to transportation issues*)
Dr. Joseph A.F. Chase, Jr.
Mr. Jon Moore
Mr. Robert Thompson
Mr. Kishore Thota
General Dennis L. Via (Vice Rector)

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT:

Dr. Makola M. Abdullah, President
Dr. Tia A. Minnis, Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs
Mr. Kevin Davenport, Senior Vice President for Finance & Administration/CFO
Dr. Willis Walter, Jr., Interim Vice President, External Relations & Advancement
Dr. Alexis Brooks-Walter, Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management
Dr. Annie Redd, Chief of Staff/Director, Board of Operations & Relations

INVOCATION

Vice Chair, Cosgrove, invited Reverend Thomas Wynn to offer the invocation.

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LEGAL COUNSEL:

Mr. Nathan Moberly

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The Committee approved the agenda by voice vote.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

The Committee approved the minutes from the November 20, 2025, meeting by voice vote.

PRESIDENTS REMARKS

President Abdullah expressed appreciation to the Board members for their attendance at Virginia State University and for the time they devote to the meetings.

REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

ENROLLMENT PROJECTION

Dr. Brooks-Walter provided an update on Virginia State University's enrollment trends and projections for Spring and Fall 2026. She reported that Spring 2026 enrollment is currently 3 percent higher than Spring 2025. She further noted that early indicators for Fall 2026 reflect strong momentum, with applications up 23 percent and deposits up 32 percent compared to the same point in the previous year. These indicators suggest a positive enrollment outlook for the 2026 academic year.

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS STUDENT SUCCESS & COMPLETIONS

Dr. Minnis provided an overview of expanded initiatives designed to advance student academic success, improve persistence and degree completion, and enhance student competitiveness and workforce readiness. She reported that these efforts include expanding the Academic Center for Excellence (ACE) intrusive advising model to ensure sustained academic support beyond the first year and throughout students' academic progression.

An overview of the expansion of the Gateway Course Restart Initiative (GCRI), completed in Fall 2025, was presented. The initiative allows students to restart a course at the midterm point with faculty who are trained in high-impact teaching practices shown to improve student outcomes. The pilot program served 64 students identified as at risk of earning D, F, or withdrawal (DFW) grades in biology, chemistry, English, and mathematics courses. Of those participants, 52 percent earned a grade of "C" or higher.

Dr. Minnis reported on enhanced faculty development efforts facilitated through the Academy for Faculty Enrichment (AFE), led by Dr. Michelle Mosely, Director of General Education and Faculty Excellence. During Fall 2025, AFE conducted 39 workshops with 394 participants. The sessions focused on pedagogical rigor, data-informed leadership, inclusive excellence, and artificial intelligence and future readiness. Dr. Minnis also noted that faculty members demonstrating exceptional instructional innovation were formally recognized.

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Updates were provided on the Bachelor of Individualized Study Program, which offers flexible degree pathways and supports stop-out students in returning to the University. During Fall 2025, outreach was conducted to 932 stop-out students, resulting in 75 students re-enrolling and 12 students completing their degree requirements and graduating in December 2025.

Dr. Minnis provided an overview of the Trojans Work Program, which is designed to ensure that students gain meaningful work experience aligned with current workforce needs. The program offers both internal and external employment opportunities, industry-recognized certifications, and comprehensive wraparound supports to address barriers to student success. During the previous year, a total of 1,312 students across all colleges were placed in internship opportunities.

Dr. Minnis concluded her presentation by informing the Board that Virginia State University received the Fulbright HBCU Institutional Leader designation for the fourth consecutive year. She further reported that the University was recognized as one of the top-producing institutions of Fulbright U.S. Scholars for the 2025–2026 academic year. During this cycle, the University achieved national distinction, ranking first in the nation in the Baccalaureate Institution category, second among HBCUs nationwide, second within the Commonwealth of Virginia, and thirty-fourth nationally among the 356 institutions that received Fulbright awards.

CLOSED SESSION

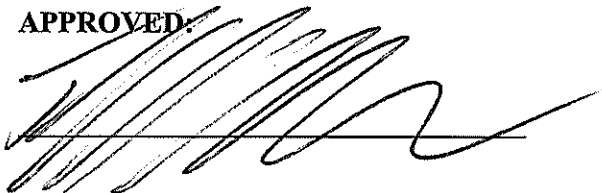
The Chair read the motion to enter closed session at 10:35 a.m. to discuss OR CONSIDER HONORARY DEGREES OR SPECIAL AWARDS PURSUANT TO 2.2-3711(A)(11); namely, review and approval of candidates for conferral of degrees during the University's Spring 2026 Commencement exercises and special faculty recognition. The motion was made and properly seconded, and passed by voice vote.

After the discussion, the Rector asked for a motion to enter open session; the motion was made and properly seconded. The motion passed by voice vote. The Rector proceeded to read the certification statement: During its closed meeting, the Board discussed only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, and only those public business matters identified in the motion convening the Board in closed session. The Rector asked for a motion to certify the closed meeting. The motion was made, properly seconded, and passed by roll call vote.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Vice Chair Cosgrove called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was received, properly seconded, and the Committee voted by voice vote. The Vice Chair adjourned the meeting at approximately 10:49 am.

APPROVED:

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be written over a horizontal line.

4/23/26