

**VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY BOARD OF VISITORS
COMMITTEE ON INSTITUTIONAL ADVANCEMENT**

9:00 A.M. FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 2025

Alfred W. Harris Academic Commons

Bldg. 1st Floor

(on the campus of Virginia State University)

(No Public Comment Period Scheduled)

DRAFT AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER..... Dr. Valerie Brown, Chair

ROLL CALLMs. Verndell Robinson, Board Secretary

INVOCATION (*Rev. Wynn, Director of Campus Ministries*)

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES (if any)

- September 26, 2025 Committee Meeting

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

CLOSED SESSION (if any)

REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Approval Items: (if any)
- Information Items:
 - Largest Gift in VSU History/Current Donor Contributions..... Mr. Franklin Johnson-Norwood
Asst VP for Alumni Engagement & Advancement Services
 - Comprehensive Campaign Update Dr. Willis Walter, Jr.
Interim Vice President, External Relations & Advancement
 - Presidential Gala Strategy..... Dr. Gwendolyn Williams-Dandridge
Assistant Vice President for Communications

OTHER BUSINESS

ADJOURNMENT

11.13.2025

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CALL TO ORDER

Dr. Valerie K. Brown, Chair, called the meeting of the Institutional Advancement Committee to order at approximately 9:00 am. The meeting was held at the Alfred W. Harris Academic Commons Bldg. 1st Floor.

ROLL CALL

A quorum was present.

INVOCATION

Reverend Thomas Wynn, Director of Campus Ministries

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Dr. Valerie K. Brown (Chair)
General Dennis L. Via (Vice Rector)
Dr. Robert Denton, Jr.
Ms. Verndell Robinson
Mr. Robert Thompson
Ms. Morenike Miles
Ms. Kishore Thota (*Absent*)
Mr. Victor K. Branch, Rector (ex-officio)
Ms. Brenda Stith-Finch (Chair, VSU Foundation) (*Absent*)

OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. Jon Moore
Mr. M. Peter McPherson
Dr. Joseph A.F. Chase
Ms. Daphne Meeks
Dr. Harold Green, Jr. (*participated virtually, @ 9:18 am*)

Dr. Harold Green participated virtually from Richmond VA due to medical reasons.

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
Ms. Shawri King-Casey, Vice President for Institutional Integrity and Compliance
Dr. Willis W. Walter, Interim Vice President For Advancement and External Engagement
Dr. Alexis Brooks-Walter, Vice President for Student Affairs & Enrollment Management
Dr. Annie Redd, Chief of Staff/Director, Board of Operations & Relations

BOARD APPOINTEES:

Dr. Kenneth Lewis, Faculty Representative (*arrived @ 9:21 am*)
Mr. Marquis Mason, SGA Representative (*arrived @ 9:55 am*)

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APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The Chair called for the approval of the agenda. The Committee approved the agenda by voice vote.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

The Chair requested a motion to approve the minutes from the previous meeting, held on September 12, 2025. The Committee approved the last meeting minutes by voice vote.

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

Dr. Abdullah expressed his sincere appreciation and extended thanks to Dr. Walter, Mr. Franklin Norwood, and Mr. Maurice Jones for their outstanding contributions to the success of Homecoming 2025.

REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Dr. Willis Walter, Interim Vice President for Advancement and External Engagement delivered a concise presentation on annual donor contributions and provided an update on the Institutional Advancement comprehensive campaign. Additionally, Virginia State University has been awarded a \$2 million grant from the Thurgood Marshall College Fund to support an AI-enabled digital transformation initiative.

Project HBCU Capacity Building prioritizes both institutional and student success by:

- Expanding research infrastructure and advancing pathways toward Carnegie R1 status
- Enhancing enrollment, advising, and financial aid systems
- Driving innovation in student success, career readiness, and workforce development
- Building collaborative cohorts to share best practices across the HBCU sector

Dr. Willis Walter announced that Virginia State University has received a historic \$50 million gift—the largest single donor contribution in the University's 143-year history. Author and philanthropist MacKenzie Scott has generously gifted \$50 million to VSU, marking her second transformative contribution to the institution within the past five years.

Dr. Walter gave a breakdown on Redefining the Comprehensive Campaign Goal for 2027 and what it will look like: Embrace the Momentum, Current Comprehensive Campaign Goal: \$105 Million, Establish a new attainable goal: \$125 Million, Revise and implement a strategic plan to achieve the new target, and to leverage the expertise and leadership of Institutional Advancement Co-Chairs, Victor Branch and Thomas Cosgrove.

Dr. Walter introduced two new members to his team, who are frontline fundraisers, Dr. Joscelyn Brazile Corporate/Business Relations and Darryl Stuckey STEAM Portfolio.

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Office of Alumni Engagement and Advancement Services Update

Mr. Franklin Johnson Norwood, Assistant Vice President for Alumni Engagement and Advancement Services, gave a brief update on Fully Autonomous Fundraising, Giving Challenges, the upcoming CIAA Basketball tournament in February 2026, and the GALA Sponsorship Levels and Contributions.

Office of Communications Update

Dr. Gwen Williams Dandridge, Assistant Vice President for Communication, gave a detailed presentation on the Greater Sponsorship Gala and Legacy opportunities. Dr. Dandridge challenged the Board of Visitors and audience to The Comprehensive Campaign Charge:

- Presidential Receptions
- Presidential Gala Strategy
- Legacy Naming Opportunity

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the Chair called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was received, properly seconded, and the Committee voted by voice vote. The Chair adjourned the meeting at 10:02 am.

APPROVED:

Chair

Date