

Virginia State University

STRATEGIC PLAN OVERVIEW

Preeminence with Purpose

2020- 2025

“Sustaining our Legacy through Access, Leadership and Transformative Excellence”



Greetings Trojan Family,

It is my pleasure to present to you, *Preeminence with Purpose*, VSU's 2020-2025 Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan is a document that provides direction on how VSU plans to operate in the next five years. The Plan is intentional and strategic and provides guidance that will (1) build upon our innumerable successes of preparing students to become leaders in a global society, (2) solve emerging world issues through research, (3) build on the profound impact of our Land-Grant Mission, (4) continue academic excellence, and (5) ensure the holistic transformative experience of our students.

The challenges of being an institution of higher education have never been greater. The declines in state and federal funding have caused increases in tuition which threaten a student's access and affordability to attend Virginia State University (VSU) and limits the crucial investments needed to grow. Despite these financial challenges, VSU has one of the lowest tuitions in the Commonwealth of Virginia. However, as an Opportunity University providing a quality education and transformative experience to students from a wide range of cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds, it is critical that VSU (1) encourage more philanthropic giving from alumni and corporations to increase endowments needed for scholarships, (2) continue investing in new degree offerings to meet employer demands for talent, (3) work with the Virginia General Assembly on making college more affordable, (4) obtain grant revenue for civic engagement that addresses community issues, and (5) improve enrollment management/marketing.

The challenges listed above come at a defining time in our history and demand an urgent and comprehensive response. Therefore, the Strategic Plan is about sustained excellence (*Preeminence with Purpose*) and outlines the next chapter in our continued growth. The Plan focuses on the following six areas: 1. Increase Student Opportunity and Access to Higher Education; 2. Sustain Academic Excellence; 3. Transform and Support a Holistic Experience for Students; 4. Enhance the Land Grant Mission of the University; 5. Define the VSU Brand; and 6. Increase and Diversify Financial Resources/Operational Effectiveness.

This bold and forward-thinking strategic plan, is the culmination of our principles of shared governance. The planning and structure of this plan considered the voices and visions of our alumni, faculty, local community, staff, students, and various other internal and external stakeholders. Active participation and transparency were ensured through alumni forums, campus meetings, community town halls, and surveys with hundreds of our stakeholders sharing their vision. This exchange of ideas led our strategic planning committee to build this plan; which is inclusive, equitable, and diverse; yet ambitious and forward thinking. While the Strategic Plan has been developed and implementation planning is underway, we understand the need to be nimble and are prepared to adjust to changing conditions. Further, VSU will continue an open dialogue with our valued stakeholders on our progress in implementing and/or revising the Strategic Plan as needed, as we move forward.

In closing, I wish to thank all who helped to set the strategic vision for our beloved VSU. Our successes over the past 137 years would not have been possible without the confidence and support of our dedicated village of educational enthusiasts.

Thank you to each of you for your continued dedication and support of our Virginia State University. Hail State.

Makola M. Abdullah, President
Virginia State University

VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY

2020-2025 Strategic Plan Summary Draft

THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The five-year strategic plan for Virginia State University (VSU) was established through a collaborative effort that included various internal and external stakeholders. This plan, for **sustained excellence**, *Preeminence with Purpose* sets forth the next chapter in our continued growth, focusing on six areas: *Student Opportunity and Access, Academic Excellence, The Holistic Experience for Students, Enhancing the Land Grant Mission of the University, The VSU Brand and Financial/Operational Effectiveness.*

VSU is dedicated to using a holistic approach to academic excellence and student success and engagement. This plan emphasizes leadership and professional development, career planning, and experiential learning. It focuses on developing student leaders who are more engaged with their learning, have the soft skills necessary to be successful in their careers, and are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and disposition to be globally competitive while remaining civically engaged.

This plan is transformative as it considers new opportunities and identifies methods of adapting to the ever-changing landscape of higher education. *As such, the plan identifies new academic programs to prepare our students to be competitive in the growing fields of computer science, cyber security, engineering, food science, military science and health care. In addition, it promotes continuous learning through the creation of a Master of Business Administration (MBA) and a Master of Social Work (MSW) programs and recognizes the need for added infrastructure to support the new programs and the holistic student experience.*

The strategic plan identifies priority area, goals, objectives and strategic actions to grow the university and address the challenges facing the University and our students. Some of the key challenges are as follows:

- Managing declining state and federal funding;
- Increasing philanthropic giving from alumni and corporations to grow endowments needed for student scholarships;
- Implementing new degree offerings that are responsive and innovative through online and/or traditional class room environments;
- Working with the Virginia General Assembly on making college more affordable;
- Communicating the unique challenges that Opportunity Universities and their students must address in financing college tuition and fees;
- Increasing research and grant opportunities to address global and community issue;
- Communicating and advocating solutions to the “student gap funding”(Student gap funding represents the point where student financial aid and scholarships are not enough to fund tuition and fees);
- Improving VSU’s enrollment management/marketing efforts;
- Improving the campus learning infrastructure by working with the General Assembly and corporate donors to replace Harris Hall and continually update the technology infrastructure;
- Communicating with stakeholders by effectively telling the VSU story and establishing OUR brand;
- Partnering with other institutions of higher learning and the corporate community to grow the Commonwealth’s talent pool;
- Obtaining employment/internship opportunities for all students.

THE PROCESS

Initiated by the Board of Visitors (the University’s governing body,) and led by the President (the University’s Chief Executive Officer), the VSU strategic planning process identifies critical performance areas that affect and determine the University’s capacity to achieve its mission and realize its strategic vision. In addition, it identifies steps to address each of the priorities. In developing the Strategic Plan, the University constituents focused on the academic strengths of the University, the Institution’s role as an HBCU, a Land Grant Institution, and the Opportunity University for students of all backgrounds.

The VSU Strategic Plan is designed to accomplish the mission and vision of the University through a collaborative effort of shared governance and strategic alignment of institutional resources. The President, members of the Executive Cabinet, Academic/Administrative Deans, and Department Heads provided oversight for the strategic planning process and are ultimately responsible for the execution, monitoring, and assessment of The Plan. It considered the expressions, input, and visions of *The Strategic Plan Steering Committee*. This cohort collaborated for more than a year to identify the strengths, challenges, opportunities and threats that impact the University. Active participation was encouraged through vision sharing during focus groups, alumni forums, campus meetings, community town halls, and surveys with hundreds of our internal and external patrons and supporters.

IN SUMMARY:

The Strategic Plan has profound implications for those who believe in and support the holistic VSU experience. In summary, it is our five-year blueprint to equip our students to be reformists, critical thinkers, and community activists and leaders. *Preeminence with Purpose* is our roadmap for administrative decision making and sets the path to help us develop and implement aggressive, innovative, and multidisciplinary solutions to authentic personalized real-world learning.

MISSION

Virginia State University, a public, comprehensive 1890 Land Grant institution and historically black college/university, is committed to the preparation of a diverse population of men and women through the advancement of academic programs and services that integrate instruction, research, extension, and outreach. The University endeavors to meet the educational needs of students, graduating lifelong learners who are well equipped to serve their communities as informed citizens, globally competitive leaders, and highly effective, ethical professionals.

VISION

Virginia State University will foster **sustained excellence** as a Preeminent Public Land-Grant university providing access to higher education and a holistic transformative learning experience to produce **world-class leaders** and **scholars** for a diverse state, national and the global workforce.

CORE VALUES

- **Student Centered** – Promoting the intellectual, physical, social, and emotional development of students in all facets of University life.
- **Integrity** – Displaying the highest degree of ethical commitment in the pursuit of knowledge.
- **Engagement** – Developing civically engaged citizens who value all persons and demonstrate the desire to positively impact their immediate surroundings, nation, and world.
- **Customer Service** – Creating an atmosphere of respect, collegiality, and responsiveness to provide excellent service to our internal and external constituents.
- **Excellence** – Utilizing a balanced approach to create a high expectation of achievement, awareness, and intellectual development among our students, faculty, and staff.
- **Scholarly Research** – Conducting scholarly activity is at the forefront of our disciplines and applying translational discoveries and intellectual pursuits to benefit the community.
- **Global** – Preparing globally aware citizens that respect and appreciate cultural differences of all people through service and the dissemination of knowledge to the world.
- **Teaching** – Providing learning environments and activities consistent with best educational practices to create a framework where scholarship is intentional, transformational, and deepens understanding in the preparation of future leaders.

- **Diversity** – Fostering a community that identifies, values, and respects differences of all people by creating an inclusive, culturally responsive and positive experience for students, faculty, staff, and the community.

Staying true to our Mission Vision, and Core Values, the Virginia State University 2020- 2025 Strategic Plan focuses on sustaining our legacy through access, leadership and transformative excellence. The following six **(6)** priorities have been established to achieve this vision.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

PRIORITY 1: Increase Student Opportunity and Access to Higher Education

PRIORITY 2: Sustain Academic Excellence

PRIORITY 3: Provide a Transformative VSU Experience that Supports the Holistic Development of Students

PRIORITY 4: Define the VSU Brand and Tell our Story

PRIORITY 5: Increase and Diversify Financial Resources and Enhance Operational Effectiveness

PRIORITY 6: Enhance the Land Grant Mission of the University

Through the collective efforts of the University constituents, this plan, embraces continuous improvement through an effective and efficient use of resources that support quality academic programs in a student-centered environment, directly aligning with the goals of The Virginia Plan for Higher Education.

| ALIGNMENT OF VSU STRATEGIC PLAN WITH GOALS OF THE VIRGINIA PLAN FOR HIGHER EDUCATION | | | | |
|---|---|--|--|--|
| VSU STRATEGIC PLAN STRATEGIC PRIORITIES | GOALS OF THE VIRGINIA PLAN FOR HIGHER EDUCATION | | | |
| | PROVIDE AFFORDABLE ACCESS FOR ALL | OPTIMIZE STUDENT SUCCESS FOR WORK AND LIFE | DRIVE CHANGE AND IMPROVEMENT THROUGH INNOVATION AND INVESTMENT | ADVANCE THE ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL PROSPERITY OF THE COMMONWEALTH AND ITS REGIONS |
| Priority 1: Increase Student Opportunity and Access to Higher Education | X | X | X | X |
| Priority 2: Sustain Academic Excellence | X | X | X | X |
| Priority 3: Provide a Transformative VSU Experience that Supports the Holistic Development of Students | X | X | X | X |
| Priority 4: Define the VSU Brand and Tell our Story | X | X | X | X |
| Priority 5: Increase and Diversify Financial Resources and Enhance Operational Effectiveness | X | X | X | X |
| Priority 6: Enhance the Land Grant Mission of the University | X | X | X | X |

STRATEGIC PRIORITY, GOALS, AND OBJECTIVES

PRIORITY 1: INCREASE STUDENT OPPORTUNITY AND ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

GOAL 1: Become a national model institution offering opportunities for educating students from all backgrounds to attain high academic achievement and employment success rates

OBJECTIVES

1.1 *Ensure affordability and reduce the financial obligation for all students*

Strategic Actions

- 1.1.1 *Educate and seek financial support from the General Assembly, corporate sponsors and alumni to assist with Student Gap Funding*
- 1.1.2 *Develop a sustainable financial support structure for tuition, fees, and room and board*
- 1.1.3 *Develop a comprehensive financially sustainable scholarship award program to support student enrollment, retention, and persistence*

1.2 *Implement a comprehensive enrollment, marketing and management plan to attract, recruit, retain and reclaim students and increase the enrollment yield*

Strategic Actions

- 1.2.1 *Develop, and implement a comprehensive marketing plan to share the VSU story with stakeholders, and the Commonwealth as a leading University committed to solving Commonwealth, national, and world challenges through excellence in education, innovation, and research*
- 1.2.2 *Engage alumni to advance university goals and priorities with marketing and student recruitment*
- 1.2.3 *Engage in active data analysis to identify target markets, student profile, and ideal number of students to achieve desired enrollment*
- 1.2.4 *Develop recruitment packages that market the distinctiveness of the academic programs, and co-curricular services at the University*
- 1.2.5 *Establish a Trojan Degree Completion Program for VSU students who have stopped out*
- 1.2.6 *Increase articulation agreements with two and four year colleges*
- 1.2.7 *Integrate information technology systems to increase the efficiency of applications processing and response time for students*

1.3 *Establish a diverse and inclusive learning environment*

Strategic Actions

- 1.3.1 *Establish a collaborative definition of diversity that represents VSU's brand and campus-wide community*
- 1.3.2 *Integrate culturally responsive pedagogy and practices into the curricula of all programs*
- 1.3.3 *Provide ongoing diversity training and workshops for administration, faculty, staff and students that will create safe spaces for conversations and cultural exchanges*
- 1.3.4 *Identify cultural attributes amongst individuals within recruiting and hiring practices to provide a broader lens of diversity and inclusion amongst the student body and the campus-wide community*

1.4 *Implement a university-wide comprehensive student academic success plan*

Strategic Actions

- 1.4.1 *Implement academic support counselors and graduation specialists in each College*
- 1.4.2 *Conduct annual and periodic reviews of all academic and administrative and educational support programs*
- 1.4.3 *Actively engage all students through a high-tech and high touch tailored services based on profile analysis*
- 1.4.4 *Administer annual surveys of faculty, staff, and students related to attrition issues and student satisfaction*

- 1.4.5 *Implement a Summer Bridge Program for incoming freshmen focused on foundational courses, and assimilation to college and enhance student retention and success*
- 1.4.6 *Develop supplemental instructional programs to support students' academic progress and progression*
- 1.4.7 *Engage in data analytics to identify effective strategies that support student retention, persistence, progression and graduation*

PRIORITY 2: SUSTAIN ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

GOAL 2: Strategically establish and enhance academic programs to deliver distinctive, responsive and innovative offerings that effectively prepare leaders and scholars to meet the demands of a global society and workforce

OBJECTIVES

2.1 Pursue and implement programs that define our niche and prepare our target population to meet the demands of a global society and workforce

Strategic Actions

- 2.1.1 *Develop new undergraduate and graduate programs responsive to the demands of Virginia and the global workforce (i.e. Military Science (ROTC), Degrees in Nutritional and Food Sciences, Data Analytics, and Nursing, MBA with an entrepreneurial/employment focus; and other advanced degree in Humanities, Agriculture and Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics – Health (STEM-H) disciplines)*
- 2.1.2 *Create new intradepartmental/interdisciplinary majors and concentrations in Food & Agriculture Industry, Marketing and Management across Agriculture, Family and Consumer Sciences and Hospitality Management*
- 2.1.3 *Establish industry based membership for a board of directors in each College to provide holistic feedback on preparing students with the skills needed to become valued and productive employees and future leaders*
- 2.1.4 *Conduct audits to assess the productivity and effectiveness of all current academic programs, and calculate Return on Investment (ROI) with specific metrics*
- 2.1.5 *Review all academic programs to identify opportunities to develop new degrees with our current courses, human and physical resources*
- 2.1.6 *Achieve reaffirmation and/or accreditation of all professional programs*
- 2.1.7 *Develop programs that provide students the opportunity to earn professional certificates and stackable credentials*

2.2 Pursue and implement innovative and non-traditional instructional program methods and content delivery

Strategic Actions

- 2.2.1 *Initiate online degree programs*
- 2.2.2 *Offer certificate programs in traditional, hybrid, and online modalities*
- 2.2.3 *Offer training and support for faculty to employ innovative, and nontraditional pedagogy and andragogy delivery techniques*
- 2.2.4 *Develop formal education and degree programs for major employers in the metropolitan area as a remote educational center with the VSU brand*

2.3 Hire, develop, and retain talented and renowned faculty that cultivate an intellectual environment and demonstrate excellence in teaching, research and service

Strategic Actions

- 2.3.1 *Develop a salary administrative plan for faculty, and allocate financial resources that support the prioritization of maintaining a high-caliber faculty corps*
- 2.3.2 *Conduct an independent organizational review for each College to ensure that staffing, faculty assignment loads, resources and incentives that are aligned to maximize recruitment, teaching, research and service opportunities*

- 2.3.3 *Evaluate and revise the tenure and promotion process to better address retention and recruitment of renowned faculty*
- 2.3.4 *Formalize the tenure and promotion process*
- 2.3.5 *Provide appropriate tenure-track faculty, instructors, and support staff positions to implement new degree offerings.*
- 2.3.6 *Invest in ongoing faculty professional development*
- 2.3.7 *Implement timely hiring procedures to streamline the faculty onboarding process*
- 2.3.8 *Develop a faculty leadership institute to support faculty leadership aspiration beyond the classroom*

2.4 Develop infrastructure to create an environment that supports needs of our students, faculty and staff

Strategic Actions

- 2.4.1 *Enhance the technological infrastructure to support SMART instructional classroom*
- 2.4.2 *Invest in creative and innovative spaces to support students, faculty, and staff development*
- 2.4.3 *Leverage technology use across academic programs*
- 2.4.4 *Upgrade and improve upon the physical infrastructure of existing facilities; while building new facilities, which support and expand the academic, research and extension missions of each College*

2.5 Implement leadership programs that promote civic engagement and prepare globally competitive leaders and scholars

Strategic Actions

- 2.5.1 *Implement VSU's Quality Enhancement Plan- BOLT (Becoming Outstanding Leaders of Tomorrow)*
- 2.5.2 *Engage alumni and industrial partners to establish and advance university goals and priorities with student leadership development programs*
- 2.5.3 *Facilitate, and promote student opportunities to engage in leadership development programs, career readiness programs and impactful internships*
- 2.5.4 *Increase the number of students participating in national, and international internship and experiential learning activities*
- 2.5.5 *Develop leadership minors*
- 2.5.6 *Establish local community partners to collectively identify and address issues of public concern*

2.6 Increase faculty engagement in research and scholarly activity

Strategic Actions

- 2.6.1 *Support development activities to improve research and grant proposal writing*
- 2.6.2 *Provide additional opportunities for faculty-student research collaborations*
- 2.6.3 *Promote interdisciplinary learning, research, and engagement via a world-class collaborative platform while optimizing building space utilization, faculty engagement, and idea exchange.*
- 2.6.4 *Enhance the infrastructure to support grant funded activities*
- 2.6.5 *Evaluate and enhance faculty incentives, including funding, promotion, tenure, and post tenure review, to increase productivity in grantsmanship, research, and scholarly activities*

2.7 Increase internationalization and global learning

Strategic Actions

- 2.7.1 *Develop and implement a plan for internationalizing the curriculum across disciplines and integrating global learning outcomes into academic programs and co-curricular activities*
- 2.7.2 *Schedule periodic faculty and staff professional development workshops, seminars, etc. designed to transform the teaching and learning process to enhance students' global competencies*
- 2.7.3 *Increase faculty and student access to global experiences*

2.8 Offer increased options for life-long learning

Strategic Actions

- 2.8.1** Enhance the Professional Certification and Continuing Education Center to prepare students for professional credentialing and assist other professionals in meeting the continuing education demands of their profession.
- 2.8.2** Develop programs that are responsive to the demands of employers and industry
- 2.8.3** Allocate resources needed to implement continuing education infrastructure implementation of programs

PRIORITY 3: PROVIDE A TRANSFORMATIVE VSU STUDENT EXPERIENCE THAT SUPPORTS THE HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENTS

GOAL 3: Facilitate and promote leadership development, career readiness and civic engagement programs

OBJECTIVES

3.1 Implement student support and co-curricular programming that fosters student success, civic engagement and a culture of global and servant-leadership

Strategic Actions

- 3.1.1** Engage alumni and industrial partners to financially support student paid internships
- 3.1.2** Develop innovative co-curricular support services and educational activities to support the needs in each academic department
- 3.1.3** Utilize internal and national surveys and other assessment methodology that identify the specific needs of the student population, and identify services that address their needs based upon high impact practices
- 3.1.4** Enhance residential living/learning programs and activities
- 3.1.5** Increase internships, international studies, and study abroad experiences related to academic programs for national and global leadership experience
- 3.1.6** Increase the number of student opportunities for community service, civic engagement, and service learning to foster a culture of servant-leadership among our students
- 3.1.7** Expand the Honors Program to establish a Honors College
- 3.1.8** Leverage Agricultural Research and Cooperative Extension to Expand undergraduate and graduate research opportunities for VSU students

3.2 Implement an inclusive student financial support and advisement infrastructure

Strategic Actions

- 3.2.1** Review and enhance processes for student financial aid awards, registration, and validation to ensure efficiency and effectiveness
- 3.2.2** Offer additional support programs in financial literacy, awareness, and responsibility
- 3.2.3** Integrate increased access to academic advisement through the use of technology
- 3.2.4** Provide professional development for advisors and faculty advisors to support student matriculation

3.3 Develop programs and activities that support student safety, and their physical, mental and emotional health

Strategic Actions

- 3.3.1** Review and enhance a university-wide safety plan
- 3.3.2** Initiate a strong integrated health, counseling, and mentoring support structure
- 3.3.3** Provide faculty and staff training to develop skills necessary to identify and support students' needs

3.4 Improve student physical spaces to support housing, recreation, and co-curricular activities

Strategic Actions

3.4.1 *Develop student-centered spaces to support extracurricular and co-curricular activities*

3.4.2 *Enhance students' living and learning physical spaces*

PRIORITY 4: DEFINE THE VSU BRAND AND TO TELL OUR STORY

GOAL 4: Effectively demonstrate and communicate the value of Virginia State University

OBJECTIVES

4.1 Define the Virginia State University Brand

Strategic Actions

4.1.1 *Initiate a comprehensive review of the University's current branding tools and activities*

4.1.2 *Define the "VSU Brand" as an opportunity university producing world-class leaders and scholars*

4.1.3 *Effectively communicate the VSU brand to all internal and external constituents*

4.1.4 *Implement measures to assess brand penetration*

4.1.5 *Leverage our internal constituents (students, faculty, and staff) to effectively communicate the VSU brand to external constituents*

4.1.6 *Develop a Brand Use Standard Guide*

4.2 Implement a university-wide marketing plan

Strategic Actions

4.2.1 *Initiate a comprehensive review of the University's current marketing and activities*

4.2.2 *Engage alumni and industry partners to help develop and advance the university marketing plan*

4.2.3 *Leverage our internal constituents (students, faculty, and staff) to effectively communicate and market VSU's value proposition to external constituents*

4.2.4 *Enhance the University's web and social media presence, design, and content*

4.3 Enhance VSU's contribution and economic impact to the region

Strategic Actions

4.3.1 *Leverage innovation and entrepreneurship to provide talent and to attract new industries and businesses to the region*

4.3.2 *Increase access for the region to VSU's facilities and intellectual capital*

4.3.3 *Address community identified issues through civic and community engagement*

4.3.4 *Expand the programmatic footprint of VSU Cooperative Extension*

4.3.5 *Increase research and engagement activities which support protection of the environment and natural resources*

4.3.6 *Expand campus engagement and participation in research associated with nutrition and public health*

4.3.7 *Create relevant partnerships with private sector companies and organizations to assist with and facilitate research, educational, employment, and developmental needs*

4.3.8 *Support small farmers and entrepreneurs via joint and dual capital enterprise development opportunities*

PRIORITY 5: INCREASE AND DIVERSIFY FINANCIAL RESOURCES AND ENHANCE OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

GOAL 5: Strengthen philanthropic support and ensure university resources and operations to support long-term growth, sustainability and excellence

OBJECTIVES

5.1 Build a portfolio of revenue producing capital projects that complement and support the University's mission

Strategic Actions

- 5.1.1** Partner with Virginia State University Real Estate Foundation (VSUREF) to identify, evaluate, build and manage a portfolio of capital projects that fills an educational need within the university
- 5.1.2** Develop and execute an operating plan that defines the roles and responsibilities of the VSUREF and VSU in identifying and managing potential revenue producing capital projects
- 5.1.1** Identify and explore funding opportunities between corporate and private sponsors that may have existing synergy between proposed revenue producing capital projects and their respective operations

5.2 Increase and diversify funding streams to enhance revenue mix

Strategic Actions

- 5.2.1** Develop a strategic institution-wide fundraising campaign to enhance resources to support academics, athletic programs, endowment and operational needs
- 5.2.2** Increase alumni engagement and giving
- 5.2.3** Increase community and corporate partnerships to increase funding and resources to support the academic, athletic, and operational needs of the University
- 5.2.4** Improve revenue from auxiliaries operations
- 5.2.5** Stimulate research scholarship that leads to the generation of commercialized intellectual property
- 5.2.6** Market intellectual property and develop business incubators
- 5.2.7** Improve the offering of self-supporting cultural and other events to the students and community in the Multipurpose Center
- 5.2.8** Partner with Virginia State University Foundation (VSUF) to identify and evaluate major fund-raising opportunities to support the strategic plan

5.3 Enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of our business operation

Strategic Actions

- 5.3.1** Conduct business process reviews (BPRs) of prioritized operations and programs to ensure services are being delivered efficiently
- 5.3.2** Invest resources to achieve the maximum return on the investment in educational programs, technology, infrastructure, faculty, and staff
- 5.3.3** Align internal policies, processes, and procedures to drive increased efficiencies
- 5.3.4** Invest in innovative technology to improve efficiency and effectiveness of business services
- 5.3.5** Streamline the hiring process for staff and administrators
- 5.3.6** Engage in ongoing planning and assessment for continuous improvement and sustainability
- 5.3.7** Improve customer service throughout the university and overall constituent satisfaction
- 5.3.8** Remove barriers to information sharing

5.4 Allocate resources efficiently to ensure a sound return on investment

Strategic Actions

- 5.4.1** Define financial metrics, and return-on-investment expectations for critical projects

- 5.4.2** *Create a cost effective resource allocation process to integrate planning-based budgeting, and data-driven decision making in all academic and administrative units*
- 5.4.3** *Annually assess the impact of departmental spending and resource allocation*
- 5.4.4** *Establish appropriate reserve funding levels for auxiliary funds*

5.5 Develop university-wide accountability and continuous improvement plan

Strategic Actions

- 5.5.1** *Provide annual planning, budgeting, and assessment training workshops for all faculty, and staff*
- 5.5.2** *Develop standard operating procedures manual for each unit/department within the university*
- 5.5.3** *Refine the annual evaluation process and tools for staff and administrators*
- 5.5.4** *Develop a streamlined communication plan to document all institutional regulatory compliance requirements at the local, state, and federal levels*

5.6 Improve campus facilities to support the needs of our students, faculty, staff and administrators

Strategic Actions

- 5.6.1** *Implement a capital campaign to help upgrade and maintain the campus*
- 5.6.2** *Work with state legislators to plan and build a new Academic Resource, Health Education and Physical Training Center*
- 5.6.3** *Work with the corporate donors to plan and build a Student Union building to replace Foster Hall*
- 5.6.4** *Improve transportation access to campus*

5.7 Evaluate the Athletic Sport Program marketing processes, offerings and level of competitiveness in relation to long-term institutional growth

Strategic Actions

- 5.7.1** *Engage an outside firm to holistically assess the athletics program and the feasibility of changing divisions*
- 5.7.2** *Provide opportunities for alumni and the Athletic Boosters to engage in the feasibility study*

PRIORITY 6: ENHANCE THE LAND GRANT MISSION OF THE UNIVERSITY

GOAL 6: Elevate the Agricultural Research, Cooperative Extension Operations and Agricultural Academic Areas to carry out the land-grant mission for the University throughout the community, the Commonwealth, nationally and globally

OBJECTIVES

6.1 Expand and strengthen the academic opportunities

Strategic Actions

- 6.1.1** *Foster the integration and utilization of Randolph Farm with the College of Agriculture*
- 6.1.2** *Establish Virginia State University as the Commonwealth's Center for Agricultural Teacher Education*
- 6.1.3** *Expand opportunities for VSU student participation in both undergraduate and graduate education internationally via Agricultural Research and Cooperative Extension*

6.2 Create and conduct national and international agricultural research programs

Strategic Actions

- 6.2.1** *Incentivize faculty to obtain additional grant funding opportunities to add capacity within the College of Agriculture*
- 6.2.2** *Evaluate and modify existing indirect cost plans to maximize funding from grants for the College of Agriculture*

- 6.2.3 *Expand College of Agriculture and campus engagement/participation in research associated with nutrition and public health*
- 6.2.4 *Accelerate development of novel and alternative technologies for processing and packaging that improve the value, quality and safety of food*
- 6.2.5 *Expand research opportunities and experimentation into increased production and utilization of renewable biofuels which can provide microeconomic benefits for urban and rural sectors alike*
- 6.2.6 *Increase the probability of higher incomes for farmers through adoption of potentially-profitable alternative crops such as edamame (vegetable soybean), industrial hemp, hops, flax, chickpea, sorghum and teff*
- 6.2.7 *Accelerate the dissemination of research-based information to expand sustainable forage based small-ruminant production in Virginia*
- 6.2.8 *Increase research opportunities to protect the environment and natural resources*
- 6.2.9 *Establish a Center of Excellence to support water and quality of life for rural Virginians*

6.3 *Expand the programmatic footprint of VSU Cooperative Extension within Virginia Cooperative Extension, as well as increase university/corporate partnerships and collaborations*

Strategic Actions

- 6.3.1 *Develop and implement a vibrant Cooperative Extension program that supports Agriculture and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) initiatives at VSU*
- 6.3.2 *Create a “Healthy Lifestyles” collaborative encompassing Cooperative Extension, Agricultural Research and select VSU Colleges focused on the amelioration of health disparities*
- 6.3.3 *Expand the VSU Cooperative Extension’s ongoing program efforts in the arena of “Sustainable Families and Communities” via the development of strong partnerships and collaborations with federal and state agencies*
- 6.3.4 *Create and deploy four (4) full-time positions within Cooperative Extension; inclusive of food safety, water quality, urban agriculture and forestry, and wildlife to further expand VSU role relative to outreach and engagement*

6.4 *Expand university/corporate partnerships and collaboration*

Strategic Actions

- 6.4.1 *Review the function and organizational structure of the Center of Agricultural Research and Engagement to enhance its impact on the land-grant mission*
- 6.4.2 *Create relevant partnerships with private-sector companies and organizations to assist with and facilitate research, educational, employment, and developmental needs*
- 6.4.3 *Forge new markets for small farmers via joint/dual venture capital enterprise development opportunities*
- 6.4.4 *Actively engage the College of Agriculture Advisory Committee and stakeholders in program development and implementation*

6.5 *Enhance and expand the infrastructure and technological capability of facilities within the College of Agriculture, both on and off campus*

Strategic Actions

- 6.5.1 *Upgrade and improve upon the physical infrastructure of existing facilities while building new facilities; which support and expand the academic, research and extension missions of the College*
- 6.5.2 *Promote interdisciplinary learning, research and engagement via a world-class collaborative platform optimizing building space utilization; faculty engagement and idea exchange in student learning; and the expansion of student experiential learning per internships and/or volunteer hours at Randolph Farm*

6.5.3 *Upgrade technologies and technological infrastructure of College of Agriculture facilities in furtherance of improve administrative operations; student learning via smart technologies; and enhanced branding, marketing and communication efforts to external stakeholders and publics*