



# Quest 2028: One VCU Together We Transform



# VCU

# We asked for your feedback....and you responded!

Proud of strong commitment to diversity and inclusivity – but can do more to intimately weave the actualization of that commitment throughout all of our work within VCU and beyond our borders.

VCU needs to focus on using our research and expertise to inform needs and solutions in our region.

VCU excels in providing real world learning opportunities – leveraging our urban environment as a classroom for students, but we need to provide more of those opportunities for ALL of our students.



VCU is innovative, welcoming, accepting, and engaging, but we need more innovative curricula to meet student and workforce needs, and personalized support to ensure student success.

We can and need to do more to recruit and retain outstanding staff and faculty.

We need to confidently tell our ONE VCU story in bold, engaging ways to strengthen and deepen key relationships with alumni, employers and the community.

# VCU's Recalibrated Strategic Plan is...



The process through which we, as an institution, define, what we do (mission), what we strive to be (vision), and our aspirations (goals).



Measurable when effectively implemented, monitored and reviewed to determine progress, success or where changes are needed.



Not about trying to form a plan that is all things to all people or able to address every aspect of the University.



A broad University level document, in which all divisions and school/colleges will develop strategic plans that connect to the goals and strategies of the University's plan. These unit-based plans become the tactics or operational components of the VCU plan.



# VCU Charge

We are One VCU, an inclusive public research university and healthcare system where accessibility combines with excellence to produce exceptional educational and healing results.

Here, students and patients come first.

We impact lives through global partnerships and commitment to our communities. We research solutions to societal challenges and ignite transformative innovation that improves learning and health for all.

We prove every day that different works.

As One VCU, we are united by purpose, devoted to inclusion and driven by impact.



# Quest 2028: **One VCU** **Together We Transform**

---

Final Revision

**Themes**  
**Goals**  
**Strategies**  
**Metrics\***

\*Metrics will be finalized over Summer 2022

# Theme 1: Diversity Driving Excellence

## GOALS:



1.1: Nurture an institutional culture and climate that is diverse, inclusive, equitable and engaged.



1.2: Implement an organizational infrastructure to support, sustain and scale DEI initiatives that infuses them into clinical care, curriculum, scholarship and practice.



1.3: Demonstrate national and international DEI thought leadership.



1.4: Actively seek community partnerships and opportunities to elevate awareness and collaborative action between VCU and communities.

## Theme Description

*Champion diversity, equity and inclusion in all that we do and advance a conscientious drive to support a climate where excellence and success for all people are valued and differences are celebrated.*



# Theme 1: Diversity Driving Excellence

## Strategies

### 1.1 Culture and Climate

Assess the continuous improvement in culture and climate indices for all units across the enterprise

Administer biennial organizational culture and climate survey across academic and medical enterprises

Implement progressively phased approach to DEI education, training and remediation

Fully integrate DEI leadership competencies in management and performance systems for all employees across the enterprise

### 1.2 Organizational Infrastructure

Incorporate NADOHE (National Association for Diversity Officers in Higher Education) standards in senior leadership performance goals.

Employ Affirmative Action data to set faculty and staff hiring benchmarks that are responsive to shortfalls in placement goals for women and minorities

Set utilization goals for employee hiring that exceed recommendations for persons with disabilities and protected veterans

Utilize internal expertise to guide accrediting bodies and national organizations in developing compliance standards and best practices in engaging diverse students and patients

### 1.3 Thought Leadership

Engage in developmental, transitional and transformational change management processes to build enterprise-wide teams that focus on DEI goal attainment.

Institutionalization of faculty and student pipeline programs, in particular the STEM and health professions that address deficits in expertise and representation

Promote, develop and scale curricular initiatives related to inclusive pedagogy and experiential learning

Create opportunities that increase URM and minority faculty and students engaged in transdisciplinary research

### 1.4 Community Partnerships

Collaborate with community organizations in offering conferences and workshops of topics of mutual interest

Establish city-wide dialogue and lecture series with community partnership organizations

Formalize community feedback and information loop on DEI-related matters

Integrate return on investment / return on trust perspectives in all engagements with community partners

# We Will Be Successful When We Achieve --

## Diversity Driving Excellence

### Diversity Training

**100%**

Employees complete Title IX and Non-Discrimination Trainings

### Organization Culture and Climate

**Positive percent change**  
biennium culture and climate survey results in diversity, inclusion, engagement and performance indices

### Faculty and Staff Retention

**Positive percent change**  
minority, underrepresented minority, and women faculty

**Positive percent change**  
minority, underrepresented minority, and women staff



# Theme 2: Student Success

## GOALS:



2.1: Transform curriculum so that all students engage in inquiry, discovery, innovation, experiential learning, civic engagement and creative expression to prepare them for the future of work.

---



2.2: Enhance the university culture of care and responsiveness supporting student engagement, success and sense of belonging.

---



2.3: Retain and attract a diverse community of highly qualified faculty and staff that reflects a culture where everyone matters and belongs.

## Theme Description

---

*Ignite student success through curricular innovation and a holistic culture of care.*

# Theme 2: Student Success

## Strategies

### 2.1 Transform Curriculum

Foster interdisciplinary collaboration by engaging multiple knowledge communities in developing new undergraduate and graduate academic programs and credentials

Support undergraduate and graduate curricular innovations that align with 21st-century workforce needs and VCU's research strengths and priorities

Redesign undergraduate curriculum to expand the integration of transformative experiences (REAL level 3-4) focused on the future of work and student engagement in research

Redesign general education to include expected competencies for the future of work: digital literacy, racial literacy and entrepreneurship

Foster a hybrid university environment, focused on improving student learning, that integrates technology with teaching and learning innovation in course and program design

Deliver high quality educational opportunities and services that are responsive to the needs of learners (i.e., traditional, non-traditional and life-long learners) and are attractive and accessible to communities across Virginia and beyond

Reshape graduate education to strengthen the attraction, reach, and education of masters and highly qualified PhD students.

Develop approaches and initiatives that enhance the global competency of students, faculty and staff, and also facilitates differentiation of VCU's education, research and engagement in the global academic marketplace.

### 2.2 Culture of Care

Empower and sustain a university-wide culture of collaboration, adaptability and innovation focused on student success

Develop approaches and programs that strengthen student academic, financial, and career planning, readiness and agency.

Strengthen and provide intentional opportunities and conditions for purposeful student engagement, growth, physical/mental well-being and belonging among all students (undergraduate, graduate and first-professional).

Create an environment that supports and strengthens student success through: faculty/staff-student mentorship, faculty/staff development and engagement.

### 2.3 Retain and Attract Faculty/Staff

Strengthen a cross-organizational culture of appreciation that is expected of all academic and administrative units and is reflected in day-to-day behaviors, activities, clarity of goals, rewards and accountability.

Develop and scale innovative employee recruitment, advancement, and retention programs that contribute to a diverse and highly qualified faculty (tenure-track) and staff (i.e: i-Cubed).

Develop a culture through appropriate institutional shared governance structures to promote inclusive excellence in teaching and learning across the curriculum and within co-curricular programming.

# We Will Be Successful When We Achieve --

## Student Success

### Retention and Graduation Rates

**90%**

One-year retention rate  
elimination of equity gaps

**78%**

Six-year graduation rate  
elimination of equity gaps

### Post-Graduation Outcomes

**70%**

employment and/or  
graduate/professional school  
within 6 months of graduation

### Enrollment

**32,000**

students

### Faculty and Staff

**Increase**  
tenure-track faculty positions

**Increase**  
faculty retention

**Increase**  
staff retention



# Theme 3: Research and Innovation

## GOALS:



3.1: Amplify VCU's impact on society through excellence across all disciplines, knowledge creation and transdisciplinary research.

---



3.2: Build a collaborative research culture that powers meaningful change and impact and is based on ethics, integrity, inclusive practices and critical and analytical thinking.

---



3.3: Implement a research infrastructure model that is scalable, nimble and ready for growth.

## Theme Description

*Distinguish VCU as a vibrant public research university where researchers, educators, practitioners and entrepreneurs innovate together to improve lives and address societal challenges.*

# Theme 3: Research and Innovation

## Strategies

### 3.1 Amplify VCU's Impact

Fully implement the One VCU Research Strategic Priorities Plan and its four key initiatives aligning transdisciplinary strengths with societal grand challenges impacting our community, region, and globe.

Invest in promising research aligned with VCU's strengths and emerging research areas as a catalyst for increased external research awards including federal research awards, and research expenditures as a measurement of knowledge creation.

Improve VCU processes and procedures supporting the tracking and reporting of VCU research expenditures.

Expand and amplify the societal impact of VCU-led innovations including market and start-ups launched in the Commonwealth.

Develop a comprehensive communications approach to disseminate public impact results and their role in inclusive knowledge creation and experiential learning for the next generation of innovators across all disciplines.

### 3.2 Collaborative Research Culture

Prioritize inclusive research that advances the creation of new knowledge and public impact.

Advance community engagement as a standard for knowledge co-creation and public impact.

Develop approaches and mechanisms that ensure 'knowledge creation' is a prominent opportunity for students and trainees.

Implement strategies where collaboration and team science-based approaches yield public impact across disciplines.

### 3.3 Scalable and Nimble

Implement strategies where collaboration and team science-based approaches yield public impact across disciplines.

Expand training grants and trainee positions.

Prepare for growth by establishing performance metrics, analytics, and infrastructure strategies (e.g., reduced administrative burden).

# We Will Be Successful When We Achieve --

## Research and Innovation

### Research Funding and Portfolio

**>\$400M**

Annual external sponsored awards

**3-5%**

Increase in total federal research awards per fiscal year

**Double**

Patents, licensing, partnerships, startups

**5-10%**

annual increase clinical research and trials

### US and State Ranking

**Top 50 US**

US public research universities NSF ranking (measured by total research expenditures)

**#2 in VA**

Based on external sponsored funding

### Public Impact

Impactful research across all disciplines through

**Increase**

faculty effort and number of new faculty hires (including URM)

**Increase**

students (undergraduate and graduate) and postdoctoral fellows engaged in research

**Increase**

number and quality of publications, scholarly articles, proceedings, communications



# Theme 4: Thriving Communities for All People

## GOALS:



4.1: Collaborate to build an adaptive infrastructure that meets the evolving needs of VCU and communities.

---

## Theme Description

---

*Deliver on our commitment to solving social and health inequities in partnership with communities.*



4.2: Partner with communities to help inspire authentic gains in health, education and economic prosperity.

---



4.3: Create and leverage pathways that demonstrate that our academic and healthcare goals and innovations benefit and complement the objectives of our community partners.

# Theme 4: Thriving Communities for All People

## Strategies

### 4.1 Adaptive Infrastructure

Enhance strategic investments in infrastructure to expand operational capacity and management to oversee and implement policy reform, communications, and university-wide coordination and execution of strategies.

Implement continuous improvement and sustainability of community and economic practices throughout VCU and VCU Health.

Development of community and economic engagement leadership and leadership pathways.

Enable a collaborative community and economic engagement enterprise that is inclusive of clinical care, curriculum, scholarship and practice and student initiative.

Establish enterprise-wide team to guide VCU's continued competitiveness for the Carnegie Community-Engaged classification.

Establish sustainable process for reviewing and developing policies, practices, principles and ethics for transformation.

### 4.2 Partner with Community

In collaboration with community stakeholders, develop a process to identify targeted partnership neighborhoods, including audit of existing VCU and other partners activities, to be aligned and leveraged.

Build relationships and partnerships to foster civic agency and community resiliency.

Foster community trust through open, transparent and timely communication.

Work with community partners and stakeholders to determine strengths, assets and resources to inform the development and implementation of a model and identify success and baseline metrics.

Collaboratively partner with community to design and implement comprehensive health, education and economic strategies.

Galvanize the academic and health system enterprise around a priority RVA social issue to catalyze bold transformation.

### 4.3 Leverage Pathways

Drive local workforce opportunity in student and employee recruitment, development and advancement within VCU and VCU Health.

Work with partners to strengthen pre-K-16 student success.

Collaboratively cultivate an economic ecosystem for the growth and development of community and student entrepreneurship and small business development by leveraging VCU assets, processes and student experiences.

Lead inclusive art, social, health and technological research, innovation and practice informed by community priorities.

# We Will Be Successful When We Achieve --

## Thriving Communities for All People

### Supply Chain Diversification

#### **Increase**

vendor contracts with local minority and female business in priority communities

### Community Engagement

#### **Increase**

coordinated programs/ interventions in priority communities

### Training in Standards of Excellence

#### **Increase**

number of staff, students and faculty trained (certified/badged) in DEI and community engaged research best practices



The recalibrated Quest 2028: One VCU -Together We Transform was influenced by feedback from VCU leaders, faculty, staff, and student shared governance groups, alumni and external community stakeholders. The document was drafted by an executive committee of VCU Cabinet members and refined by a senior communications team.

## **STRATEGIC PLAN RECALIBRATION EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

- Matthew A. Conrad, J.D., Vice President for Government and External Relations for VCU and VCU Health System
- Grant J. Heston, Vice President for University Relations
- Arthur L. Kellerman, M.D., M.P.H., Senior Vice President for Health Sciences and CEO of the VCU Health System
- Tomikia P. LeGrande, Ed.D., Vice President for Strategy, Enrollment Management and Student Success
- Pamela D. Lepley, Senior Advisor to the President
- Aashir Nasim, Ph.D., Vice President for Institutional Equity, Effectiveness and Success
- P. Srirama Rao, Ph.D., Vice President for Research and Innovation
- Fotis Sotiropoulos, Ph.D., Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Meredith Weiss, Ph.D., Vice President for Administration

## **SENIOR COMMUNICATIONS TEAM**

- Jenn Carmean, Interim Assistant Vice President for Content and Storytelling
- Carolyn Conlon, Executive Director Administration
- Shena Crittendon, Executive Director SEMSS Strategic Communication
- Chelyen Davis, Executive Director Executive Communication
- Carissa Etters, Director of Executive and Enterprise Communications
- Jamie Stillman, Director of Strategic Communications