

Division of Student Affairs Strategic Directions, 2006-2012

Mission: The Division of Student Affairs promotes students' academic success, personal growth, and development of life skills.

Strategic Directions:

1. *Contribute to the holistic and transformative educational experiences of Virginia Tech undergraduate and graduate students*

- Create new and strengthen existing Student Affairs partnerships with academic departments, academic support services, University Center for Undergraduate Education, Graduate School, the HED Program, and external stakeholders such as community constituents, parents, alumni, employing organizations, and international partners.
 - Identify and establish new avenues for partnerships; create and measure desired student learning outcomes
 - Inventory current partnerships; create and measure desired student learning outcomes
- Participate and collaborate in the development and implementation of a comprehensive First-Year Experience Program.
- Identify and evaluate current leadership development and experiential learning opportunities within the Division of Student Affairs and develop appropriate, new opportunities to meet existing needs.
 - Inventory current leadership development and experiential learning opportunities and establish and measure desired student learning outcomes for each.
 - Establish needs assessment and use other measures to identify developmental needs. Create programs, services, or opportunities with established learning outcomes to meet those needs. Assess and evaluate the attainment of desired outcomes.
- Maintain and expand partnerships with the academic and external communities to provide stimulating experiences to shape ethical, globally-conscious citizens and leaders.
 - Identify or develop instruments or processes to determine growth and development in these areas.
- Identify a means by which to formally establish and offer credit-bearing courses developed by student affairs departments to further student learning, training, and development.
 - Annually evaluate learning objectives and course quality to assure that course goals are accomplished.

2. *Promote the development of inter-cultural and multicultural competencies in Virginia Tech students*

- Develop facilities and create environments that are welcoming, accessible, comfortable, and representative of a diverse campus community.
 - Provide appropriate space to accommodate multicultural programs and services. (completed)

- Evaluate the division's facilities and environments to identify and address those areas that need to become more accessible and welcoming to a diverse campus community.
- Improve campus climate, creating a campus environment of civility, sensitivity, and mutual respect.
 - Refine the diversity presentation offered during new student orientation to ensure that it communicates the VT Principles of Community to all incoming students. (completed)
 - Develop appropriate partnerships to ensure that SafeWatch meets community needs and expectations.
 - Develop on-going, creative programming for students that addresses campus climate.
- Recruit and retain a more diverse staff to provide leadership and support in the Division of Student Affairs.
- Create opportunities that encourage students to have productive and positive interactions with different cultures while at Virginia Tech.
 - Enhance living and learning communities to contribute to a welcoming community.
 - Provide leadership development programs and encourage participation by students from diverse backgrounds.
- Develop programs and support services that address the needs of students from a wide variety of backgrounds and that reflect and stimulate diversity of thought and encourage meaningful participation and dialog.
 - Strengthen Multicultural Programs and Services, enhancing the cultural competencies of the Virginia Tech community and creating an inclusive and welcoming environment for all students.
 - Enhance coordination and communication within the division to ensure that the needs of a diverse student body are met.

3. Support the university's commitment to continuous improvement by integrating the assessment of student learning outcomes into all divisional programs and services

- Develop divisional student learning outcomes that explicitly connect the co-curricular experience to the education of students in a developmentally appropriate manner.
- Continue to track student wellness behaviors and use this information to evaluate and develop programs that support the education of students by enhancing their health, safety, and wellness.
- Initiate a program review process through which each student affairs department is reviewed on a regular basis, utilizing new and existing data that accurately describe our students' learning styles and needs. (implemented)
- Develop and implement a research agenda that furthers the development of a civil and just campus community.

4. Improve the capital assets that underpin student learning and support programs

- Renovate and/or build contemporary residential living facilities to attract top-tier students, enhance the on-campus residential living experience, and contribute to student holistic education.
 - A new residence hall is scheduled to be completed by August 2009.

- The first phase of the renovation plan is scheduled to be completed by 2014.
- Respond to the growing number of fitness-oriented students with an expanded state-of-the-art fitness facility and renovations to current facility.
 - This project was approved by the University and a funding plan put in place for scheduled completion during 2008-10 biennium.
- Respond to inadequate space for Dean of Students Office. (completed)
 - The Dean of Students Office moved into new office space off-campus during the fall of 2006.
- Address the increasing number of students with disabilities through user-friendly, accessible accommodations.
 - A plan for satisfactory space for Services for Students with Disabilities is scheduled to be developed by spring of 2008.
- Address the growing need for mental health services through expanded accommodations in counseling services.
 - This project was approved by the University and a funding plan put in place for scheduled completion during 2008-10 biennium.
- Address the growing need for medical treatment through expanded accommodations in health services.
 - This project was approved by the University and a funding plan put in place for scheduled completion during 2008-10 biennium.
- Build, expand, and enhance student union facilities to accommodate the increased interest in student organizations, activities, and advocacy.
 - New student union building(s) are recommended in the University Master Plan.
- Execute a facilities condition and program study of dining halls and student centers and implement recommendations.
 - Studies were conducted during 2006 and plans are being developed to implement recommendations over the next five years.
- Respond to the Corps of Cadets need for administrative and program space in Lane Hall.
 - Lane Hall is scheduled to be renovated and to have an addition built in the 2008-10 biennium.
- Address the needs of the Oak Lane Community for program, meeting, administrative, and limited food service by building a “Commons Building.”
 - Commons Building is scheduled to be completed in the 2010-12 biennium.
- Provide additional programming and administrative space for Cranwell International Center.
 - A plan, including the capital project request, is scheduled to be developed by 2009.

5. Invest in division staff morale, recognition, and professional development

- Evaluate and address inadequate levels of staffing across the division to address increasing demand for services.
- Continue to benchmark faculty and staff salaries and wage rates to ensure competitive compensation for the recruitment and retention of qualified professionals.

- Provide employees with access to professional development opportunities, programs, and funding to enhance knowledge, develop skills, and increase competencies, including inter-cultural competencies.
- Promote and provide equitable access to the Tuition Waiver Program for all employees in the division and develop a uniform process to review and approve participation in the program.
- Establish a staffing strategy for employee retention and succession that includes cross-training, mentoring, leadership development, and management skills training.
- Develop and disseminate best practice models for faculty performance evaluations and developmental plans.
- Regularly provide opportunities to recognize, reward, and celebrate faculty, staff, and department contributions and accomplishments.
- Collaborate with the faculty in the Higher Education Program to provide staff with graduate education opportunities that enhance professional development.

6. Performance Measures

- Increase the number of first year students participating in residential and co-curricular first year experiences.
- Increase the percentage of students who engage in leadership programs and experiential learning opportunities.
- Assess and enhance the multicultural and international competencies of the VT student community.
- Assess and enhance reporting mechanisms, programming, and interventions to positively impact campus climate and civility.
- Assess and enhance student wellness behaviors.
- By 2012 complete construction of a new residence hall and an addition to McComas Hall as well as facilities renovations in selected residence halls, dining facilities, and student unions.