



# VCU College of Humanities and Sciences

## Pathways for Transformation:

### A Six-Year Strategic Plan for the College of Humanities and Sciences

(original version, May 12, 2014 – newest version January 4, 2015)

#### **VIII: Specific action items and measurements as they relate to Quest for Distinction**

##### **Theme 1: Enhance academic quality and student success**

Rarely do students enter college knowing the exact pathway for their lives and follow a pre-determined linear pathway to get a deeply meaningful life and career. H&S aims to provide the support and resources needed for students to follow a non-linear, inter-connected and sometimes stochastic pathway that evolves during the course of an academic career to leave VCU with highly engaged and excited visions for their future, and with a set of skills and disciplinary knowledge that will allow them to realize that vision as they mature during their lives and to commit to life-long learning. A key to this is linking liberal education skills and disciplinary knowledge with transformational experiences in research, service learning, international study, entrepreneurship or real world learning such as can occur in internships to unlock a student’s passion and to connect that passion with opportunities for successful and financially viable careers. Faculty play *the key role* as mentors, guides and Sherpas for students to journey along a successful pathway. Our focus to theme 1 of Quest is built on the notion that faculty are the key to reaching our vision of student success.

Humanities and Sciences Strategy	Tactics	Performance Measures
<p><b>Ensure adequate faculty numbers and quality to effectively deliver transformational academic programs and to mentor students along academic pathways. Also, ensure that schools, departments and faculty have staff support and effective administrative processes to allow them to focus their efforts on transformational education and research. And that our faculty evaluation systems are clear in expectations and rigorous in their evaluation.</b></p>	<p>Develop and use a data-driven process (e.g., Delaware study; enrollment trends tuition revenue by program) to determine benchmarks for minimal student-to-faculty ratios in academic programs and use data in hiring priorities for the unit</p> <p>Improve student-to-faculty (T/R) ratio in H&amp;S disciplines to be in the range of Quest peer Arts and Sciences units (at least 30:1) by effective hiring of new, talented and diverse tenure-eligible, tenured and term faculty through the development of a six year hiring plan or through enrollment management</p> <p>Increase the number of core curriculum course sections taught by full time faculty</p> <p>Develop a space plan and plan new building to ensure we have the physical space to support the necessary faculty</p> <p>Work with the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, Vice Provost for Enrollment Management and Vice Provost for Student Success and Learning Innovation to explore better use of prerequisites to facilitate student</p>	<p>4- and 6-year graduation rates</p> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year retention rates</p> <p>Increased number of H&amp;S students winning national academic awards and percentage of students attending nationally ranked graduate programs</p> <p>Reduction in average class sizes and increase in the number of classes available to upper level undergraduates with under 20 students</p> <p>Reduction of student-to-faculty ratio to 30:1, or to appropriate benchmark numbers</p>

	<p>success, and to implement registration tools with better advising to deter students from repeatedly taking classes that they fail. Doing so may facilitate more manageable class sizes and increased mentoring of students</p> <p>Develop algorithms to determine the minimal level of staff and advisor support that is needed to effectively deliver education and support faculty given faculty size and enrollment demand, and develop a plan such that all units have the necessary staff support</p> <p>Develop algorithms to ensure appropriate ratios between students and academic advisors</p> <p>Raise philanthropic funding for endowed chairs and professorships as one of three priorities in H&amp;S campaign</p> <p>Work with the Vice Provost for Student Success and Learning Innovation to implement the generalizable education goals of the QEP</p>	<p>Increase in percentage of Tier II courses taught by full time faculty</p> <p>Increase in NSSE student satisfaction scores</p> <p>Improvements of student-to-advisor ratios to appropriate benchmark numbers (for full-time or professional advisors)</p> <p>Measureable progress on metrics defined in the QEP</p>
<p><b>Enhance curricular quality through several mechanisms including, adoption and creation of best practice, high quality online learning/distance education, collaborative teaching, and integration of technology into the learning experience. Further integrate “pathways” experiences (research, entrepreneurship, internships, service-learning, study abroad, etc.) into the curriculum including career and internship prospects</b></p>	<p>Develop incentives with the Vice Provost for student success and learning innovation to develop resources and incentives to encourage pedagogical improvement and adoption/creation of best practices the classroom</p> <p>Implement an education leave program for faculty facilitating the development of new courses, to implement new technological tools or move courses on-line, or to innovate pedagogy in existing courses; ensure that curricular innovation is recognized in annual reviews</p> <p>Integrate career engagement throughout the curriculum through: developing strong relationships with University Career services; developing a stronger alumni network to engage our students; working with the university to track student career success after graduation; and effectively using part-time faculty to bring real world experiences into the classroom</p> <p>Use program reviews to help assess, improve, or potentially redirect curricular programs</p> <p>Develop new net revenue generating programs that meet student demand, and by generating revenue, allow for investments in faculty and program improvement</p>	<p>Number of team taught interdisciplinary courses</p> <p>Number of courses and students in service learning</p> <p>Number of students in entrepreneurship programs (Da Vinci, certificate)</p> <p>Number of students in independent research.</p> <p>Number of on-line courses and students in on-line courses</p> <p>Number of alumni engaging with students Proportion of students who are employed in their discipline or attend graduate school at graduation and in the future</p> <p>Number of new continuing or professional masters courses/programs and net revenue generated</p>

<b>Develop mechanisms to holistically assess undergraduate student success so as to assess the value-added of the VCU experience and to demonstrate the transformational experience of a VCU education</b>	Develop methodologies to implement measuring the “slope of the line” – these might involve the use of broad-based statistical approaches, as well as implementing strategies such as student portfolios that allow us to assess the full growth of students during their time as undergraduates. Such strategies allow for the holistic measurement of the growth of a student’s core liberal arts and sciences skills, integrative thinking, disciplinary knowledge, self - reflection, and vision for a future career. Implement pilot strategies in a few units.	Quantitative and qualitative metrics that holistically assess the development of generalizable skills, disciplinary knowledge, and self-reflection of VCU students that will form the baseline of future plans
<b>Improve the Humanities and Sciences capacity to compete for high quality graduate students</b>	<p>Work with the graduate school to increase the number and compensation for graduate students; to develop new tuition models that can allow for greater support of graduate students on grants, and to increase the proportion of graduate students funded by grants or philanthropic dollars</p> <p>Build the research capacity in our existing doctoral programs through targeted investments and faculty hires</p> <p>Explore the development of select new graduate programs where there is a demand and where we can deliver high quality</p> <p>Track and promote success of our graduate students</p>	<p>Stipend levels</p> <p>Graduate application numbers and yield rates in programs</p> <p>Data on graduation rates and success of students after graduation</p> <p>Recognition/ranking of graduate programs</p> <p>Proportion of graduate students supported on external funding</p> <p># publications and presentations by graduate students at regional and national meetings; awards applied for and received by graduate students</p>
<b>Create a physical home for the humanities and sciences that enables students and faculty to access administrative and academic services and provides an interdisciplinary hub for VCU’s largest unit, as well develop plans to renovate space and participate in the Monroe Park Campus STEM building</b>	<p>Undertake an integrated planning process for new College of H&amp;S home</p> <p>Continue the development of a space plan and continue to build and utilize a renovation fund within the H&amp;S budget</p> <p>Make funds for a new building a priority in fundraising campaign</p>	<p>H&amp;S “home” building completed</p> <p>Space plan completed and regularly updated</p>

<p><b>Recruit a talented and diverse student body</b></p>	<p>Implement and monitor a plan with strategic enrollment to improve the standardized test scores, GPA of students in H&amp;S and to recruit a larger number of students from out of state and internationally so that we maximize the ability of our student body to take full advantage of VCU</p> <p>Work to develop programs to increase the success of “at risk” students</p>	<p>Increased GPA, SAT and ACT scores of incoming students</p> <p>Number of non-Virginia resident students enrolling in H&amp;S programs</p> <p>Increased student retention</p>
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***Theme 2: Attract, retain and support faculty and staff.***

The core of our approach to Theme 1 is to ensure that the College of Humanities and Sciences increases the quantity and quality of our faculty, and provide them with quality staff support, so that we can reach our goal of providing exceptional transformation education and research. Our actions described in Theme 2 are aimed at specific strategies we much undertake to retain and recruit the best faculty

<p><b>Humanities and Sciences Strategy</b></p>	<p><b>Tactics</b></p>	<p><b>Performance Measures</b></p>
<p><b>Ensure that compensation for tenure-eligible, tenured, term and part-time faculty, and staff, is competitive with peer institutions.</b></p>	<p>Use data from the University compensation study, peer universities, and internal databases to continue to reallocate funds to increase faculty salaries to competitive levels and to reduce salary compression. H&amp;S will strive to make all salaries competitive by continuing practices such as equity adjustments and merit-based salary increments as funds can be obtained or made available through reallocation.</p> <p>Explore the possibilities of offering longer term contracts to term faculty as they proceed up the promotion ladder</p> <p>Reallocate or obtain new resources to increase the pay of part-time faculty to competitive levels of peer institutions</p>	<p>Improvement of H&amp;S salaries toward mean of peer institutions or using benchmarks such as the MLA guidelines</p> <p>Increase retention of faculty</p> <p>Increase the quality and retention of part-time faculty</p>
<p><b>Develop a six year hiring plan and work with Provost to develop resources to improve faculty diversity and to seize opportunities to hire excellent faculty</b></p>	<p>Assess areas of potential distinction and prioritize new hires in those areas</p> <p>Assess areas where deficiencies exist in programs with high demand; prioritize new hires to stabilize programs and improve their effectiveness</p> <p>Develop succession planning for key faculty with upcoming retirements to ensure continuity of strong research programs</p> <p>Develop budget planning to effectively allocate start-up resources</p> <p>Develop a space plan that integrates with hiring plan</p>	<p>Increased number of FT faculty, aiming for a 30:1 student-to-faculty ratio in five years- approximately 100 faculty hires</p> <p>Increased sponsored research dollars</p> <p>National recognition for VCU faculty and programs through significant awards</p> <p>Proportions of tenure eligible, tenured, term and part time faculty</p>

	Implement strategies to ensure a diverse and talented pool of faculty candidates	
<b>Implement a Great Place Initiative program</b>	Create a position for a director of a great place initiative who acts a key point person for issues of climate in H&S and who organizes programming and initiatives to improve campus climate.	Increasingly positive responses in campus climate in annual surveys. Reduction in staff and faculty turnover
<b>Improve access to resources for faculty and staff development</b>	Refine budgets at the School, Department and College level through continued internal review and reallocations and ensure adequate support for faculty and staff professional development. Ensure professional development is addressed in annual reviews.	Professional development plans incorporated into annual workplans

***Theme 3: Advance the discovery of new knowledge, creative expression, and innovation through increasing and diversifying sponsored research and promoting translational research and scholarship that contributes to human health and addresses the most complex global challenges***

<b>Humanities and Sciences Strategy</b>	<b>Tactics</b>	<b>Performance Measures</b>
<b>Strengthen H&amp;S Research Centers and Institutes and support the development of new interdisciplinary research centers and research related to interdisciplinary graduate programs</b>	Targeted faculty hiring to build a critical mass of strength around center themes Develop incentives and continuing support for productive centers Incorporate Centers in space planning Work with VP for Research to develop increased opportunities to seed innovative research	Increase Competitive funding National recognition through publications in high-impact journals, and faculty awards
<b>Diversify and increase sponsored research funding</b>	Develop infrastructure in H&S research office to assist faculty in finding funding and in assisting with proposal development. Specific areas to increase involve foundation funding Work to create culture of rewards and pursuit of competitive funding in all areas in the Humanities and Sciences by strengthening Humanities Research Center and developing a similar structure for social science	Research awards and expenditures by a funding of sources
<b>Effectively promote the research, scholarship and creative activities in H&amp;S to attract faculty and graduate students, and to increase competitiveness of faculty for national and international awards</b>	Highlight research activities in newsletters and through VCU news Develop a process for nominating faculty for key research awards	Number and media hits on research stories. Recognition ranking of research programs

<b>Develop an ever-increasing environment of intellectual vibrancy that maximizes interdisciplinary interactions and models an intellectual community</b>	<p>Promote, advertise, and write about the intellectual exchange in the large number of academic and scholarly events that occur every year in H&amp;S (over 300 in FY 14), including encouraging attendance of students and faculty</p> <p>Develop a series of academic events and perhaps infrastructure in the new building to bring faculty and students together in interdisciplinary scholarly discussions, including holding informal events to all for discussion.</p>	<p>Number of academic events</p> <p>Attendance at academic events</p> <p>Identification of new partnerships</p>
<b>Develop new modern research space</b>	<p>Create space plan and plan for new building</p> <p>Work with Provost and VPR to identify and renovate research space</p>	<p>Square footage of research space.</p> <p>Research funding per square footage of research space</p>
<b>Engage undergraduates in research, scholarship and creative activities</b>	<p>Continue to support UROP activities and to promote undergraduate research and to participate fully in undergraduate research symposia</p> <p>Develop systems to track students who complete undergraduate research</p> <p>Encourage students to engage in undergraduate research earlier, in their freshman or sophomore years.</p>	<p>Increased number of students participating in undergraduate research</p> <p>Increased number of students with authorship on an academic publication</p> <p>Increased presentations by undergraduates at regional and national meetings.</p> <p>Increased number of students enrolling in a research-based graduate program</p>

**Theme 4.** *Contribute to the economic, cultural and civic vitality of the region and the world through collaborative efforts that increasingly define the university as an intellectual, creative, and innovative center*

<b>Humanities and Sciences Strategy</b>	<b>Tactics</b>	<b>Performance Measures</b>
<b>Service learning</b>	<p>Full-time (or part-time) position to coordinate focused academic initiatives such as service learning, online education, entrepreneurship, and international/study abroad programs</p> <p>Continue to work closely with the VCU Division of Community Engagement to develop new service learning courses, or convert existing courses to have a service learning component</p>	<p>Number of courses and students in service learning</p> <p>Number of new service learning opportunities</p>
<b>International partnerships and student experiences</b>	<p>Raise significant funding to provide financial support for students to participate in international and study abroad experiences</p>	<p>Number of courses offered for study abroad</p> <p>Number of students participating in study abroad programs</p>
<b>Innovation and Entrepreneurship</b>	<p>Expand/improve communications and support to students regarding opportunities to participate in the Da Vinci</p>	<p>Number of students in entrepreneurship programs</p>

	<p>program, in the entrepreneurship certificate program and in the entrepreneurship living learning facility</p> <p>Support faculty and student in their efforts to start new companies by implementing strategies to support their efforts</p> <p>Partner with the VCU Innovation Gateway to increase the flow of intellectual property</p> <p>Raise student scholarship funds to support students participating in starting a company and to develop resources for the hiring of an entrepreneur in residence to act as a resource for entrepreneurial students</p>	<p>Number of new companies or nonprofit organizations created by H&amp;S students and faculty</p> <p>Number of invention disclosures</p>
<p><b>Bring the university to the community to solve problems and enrich the intellectual and creative energy</b></p>	<p>Full-time (or part-time) position to coordinate community engagement activities within H&amp;S</p> <p>Continue a broad range of activities that promote a rich culture of community-engaged scholarship and instruction across our many disciplines, including the VCU Clark-Hill Institute for Positive Youth Development. The work on this project intersects with other initiatives such as Bridging Richmond and the East End Promise.</p> <p>Continue to support the Center for Psychological Services and Development, where doctoral students work closely with licensed faculty supervisors in integrating established psychotherapy skills and current research to provide a range of psychotherapeutic and assessment services to the community</p> <p>Continue to participate in VCU’s Community Engagement grants program through the Division of Community Engagement</p> <p>Continue support of programmatic components for the <i>ASPiRE</i> living learning community</p> <p>Develop coordinated effort for promotion of public lectures (e.g., as done by <i>Alexandrian Society</i> of the Department of History)</p>	<p>University/community projects and leadership activities.</p> <p>Number of public lectures or other scholarly activities.</p> <p>Number/funding of Community Engagement grants, internally and externally.</p> <p>Number of courses/enrollment for <i>ASPiRE</i> courses.</p> <p>Move into the full implementation phase of the Yale National Initiative with Richmond Public Schools</p>

***Theme 5: Be responsible stewards of resources through the implementation of an accountable financial plan, an emphasis on strategic fundraising and alumni support, and a decision support system that aligns existing and new resources with the mission and vision of Quest for Distinction.***

Humanities and Sciences Strategy	Tactics	Performance Measures
<p><b>Develop H&amp;S Advisory Board of engaged, high profile, and successful alumni and community members with a passion for the liberal arts and sciences to help develop our narrative and to help us prepare for a fundraising campaign</b></p>	<p>Advisory Board created: develop specific task and metrics for advisory board and use them to both help promote H&amp;S and to give us feedback on our strategies and plans to move us forward</p>	<p>Qualitative sense of increasing profile of H&amp;S within VCU and the community.</p>

<p><b>Initiate a multi-million dollar campaign to support our “transformational pathways” efforts by increasing philanthropic giving to support student pathways, faculty, and new facilities</b></p>	<p>Develop a fundraising campaign around the theme of “pathways for transformation” that has three focal areas: support for students to explore integrative pathways through scholarships or infrastructure; support to hire and retain excellent faculty through endowed professorships or chairs; support to create a physical home for H&amp;S</p>	<p>Successful completion of fundraising campaign goals</p>
<p><b>Continue development of a data-driven, transparent processes and tools to guide resource allocation and budget preparation</b></p>	<p>Commit to a transparent budget and allocation process that is based on data including enrollment, tuition revenue, productivity, existing resources, and priorities</p>	<p>Continued refinement of instruction and resource table for all units in H&amp;S</p> <p>Publication of annual internal budget calendar</p> <p>Completion of Delaware Study Phase II (peer institution analysis)</p>
<p><b>Streamline administrative processes and create administrative efficiencies through technology, policies or service centers</b></p>	<p>Identify administrative processes that need improvement and identify areas of administrative staffing deficiencies, and create tactics to improve processes (e.g., electronic processes) or reduce deficiencies (e.g., continue administrative service center direction such as Chemistry/Forensic Science)</p>	<p>Development of Dean’s Office/Department ARMICS/Financial Management “Roles &amp; Responsibilities” chart, consistent with university’s Finance Handbook</p> <p>Development of Dean’s Office/Dept. financial management services and responsibility contracts for FY15</p>
<p><b>Explore developing revenue generating programs</b></p>	<p>Assess areas where revenue can be generated because of demand in continuing education or in professional master’s degree and provide support for schools, departments and programs to develop revenue generating courses to meet that demand</p>	<p>Number of new revenue generating programs</p>