



VCU

College of Humanities and Sciences
Strategic Plan for 2018-2025

Excellence Beyond Boundaries

Office of the Dean
College of Humanities and Sciences
October 2018



Strategic Focus Area I



Attain distinction in preparing students to be leaders in social and scientific innovation in a technologically advancing world and who are prepared for careers across the breadth of twenty-first century opportunities.

Goal 1 : Maximize positive transformations in each student’s academic ambition and capabilities.

Key Performance Measures	Academic Year 2017-2018	Academic Year 2024-2025 Goal
a. College-wide student-to-advisor ratio	268:1	All individual units under 300:1
b. Number of Student Success Collaborative campaigns and email campaigns/outreach	34 SSC Campaigns; 91 email outreach; 125 total	All units participating in SSC campaigns and outreach
c. Number of student affiliation groups (number of participants)	African American Student Mentoring Program; Latinx Student Mentoring Program	Track # of Participants
d. College-wide D grades, F grades, and withdrawals (DFW) for math and science introduction courses (CHEM, MATH, BIOL)	Table 1. DFW, Retention Rates, & Graduation Rates Across Demographic Groups	
e. First-year retention rate		
f. Six-year graduation rates		

Goal 2 : Facilitate meaningful linkages between each student’s academic work and relevant local, national, and international community environments in preparation for careers in a diverse and evolving twenty-first century environment.

Key Performance Measures	Academic Year 2017-2018	Academic Year 2024-2025 Goal
a. Number of students participating in experiential learning (make it REAL initiative; research, study abroad, internships)	2858 students enrolled in 653 research 74 study abroad 1290 internship	100% increase is student participation

b. Number of experiential learning courses in the College	109 courses	100% increase in courses offered
c. Number of courses/programs developed specifically to address diversity and inclusion	53 courses 5 programs	Track Student Participation
d. Number of departments offering mentoring programs (number of students participating in mentoring programs)	6 units offered programs to 2172 students	100% increase in programs and student participants
e. Career preparation activities and programs	16 units offered programs to 1471 students	all 17 units and 200% increase in student participation
f. Develop alumni job-placements database	In Progress	Initiate unit level participation in communicating with alumni

Goal 3 : Provide opportunities and incentives for each student to build both the technical, disciplinary skill sets and broader interdisciplinary connections that are foundational to lifelong professional adaptability and personal growth.

Key Performance Measures

**Academic Year
2017-2018**

**Academic Year
2024-2025 Goal**

a. Number of collaborative programs with VCU Career Services	11 units offered programs in collaboration with VCU Career Services	all 17 units offering programs in collaboration with VCU Career Services
b. Number of interdisciplinary courses and curricula	5 programs with an additional 59 courses	Strategically consider new interdisciplinary programs

Table 1.
DFW Rates, Retention Rates, and Graduation Rates
Across Demographic Groups

DFW Rates	Academic Year 2017-2018	Academic Year 2024- 2025 Goal (20% reduction)
BIOL 101	28.0%	22.4%
BIOL 151	31.3%	25.0%
BIOL 152	18.4%	14.7%
BIOL 205	57.7%	46.2%
BIOL 300	28.5%	22.8%
BIOL 310	41.2%	33.0%
CHEM 101	46.6%	37.3%
CHEM 102	33.2%	26.6%
CHEM 301	41.2%	33.0%
CHEM 302	35.6%	28.5%
CHEM 309	42.6%	34.1%
MATH 141	39.0%	31.2%
MATH 151	43.2%	34.6%
MATH 200	41.1%	32.9%
MATH 201	32.4%	25.9%

Retention (first-year)		80.9% return for 2nd year	90% return for 2nd year (12% increase)
American Indian/Alaskan	Female	100.0%	100.0%
American Indian/Alaskan	Male	33.3%	37.3%
Subtotal: American Indian/Alaskan		66.7%	74.7%
Asian	Female	89.3%	100.0%
Asian	Male	81.5%	91.3%
Subtotal: Asian		86.5%	96.8%
Black/African American	Female	83.5%	93.5%
Black/African American	Male	82.7%	92.7%
Subtotal: Black/African American		83.3%	93.3%
Hispanic/Latino	Female	77.4%	86.7%
Hispanic/Latino	Male	81.2%	90.9%
Subtotal: Hispanic/Latino		78.6%	88.1%
International	Female	82.6%	92.5%
International	Male	80.0%	89.6%
Subtotal: International		81.6%	91.4%
Two or More Races	Female	77.4%	86.7%
Two or More Races	Male	69.1%	77.4%
Subtotal: Two or More Races		74.9%	83.8%
Unknown	Female	86.4%	96.7%
Unknown	Male	83.3%	93.3%
Subtotal: Unknown		85.3%	95.5%
White	Female	78.2%	87.6%
White	Male	80.0%	89.6%
Subtotal: White		78.8%	88.3%

**Graduation Rates
(six-year)**

**61%
overall**

**70%
(15% increase)**

American Indian/Alaskan	Female	90.9%	100.0%
American Indian/Alaskan	Male	60.0%	69.0%
Subtotal: American Indian/Alaskan		81.3%	93.4%
Asian	Female	71.5%	82.2%
Asian	Male	60.7%	69.8%
Subtotal: Asian		66.3%	76.2%
Black/African American	Female	62.1%	71.4%
Black/African American	Male	60.0%	69.0%
Subtotal: Black/African American		61.5%	70.7%
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	Female	50.0%	57.5%
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	Male	28.6%	32.9%
Subtotal: Hawaiian/Pacific Islander		36.4%	41.8%
Hispanic/Latino	Female	56.1%	64.5%
Hispanic/Latino	Male	44.9%	51.7%
Subtotal: Hispanic/Latino		52.1%	59.9%
International	Female	58.3%	67.1%
International	Male	40.9%	47.0%
Subtotal: International		47.1%	54.1%
Two or More Races	Female	72.1%	82.9%
Two or More Races	Male	57.7%	66.3%
Two or More Races	N/R	0.0%	0.0%
Subtotal: Two or More Races		65.3%	75.1%
Unknown	Female	66.1%	76.0%
Unknown	Male	61.9%	71.2%
Subtotal: Unknown		64.9%	74.7%
White	Female	64.7%	74.4%
White	Male	54.4%	62.5%
Subtotal: White		60.3%	69.4%



Strategic Focus Area II



Support student success by ensuring that faculty and staff have the resources necessary, and the opportunities for career development, to engage students in state-of-the-art learning experiences.

Goal 1 : Bolster student success through meaningful teaching and learning relationships among faculty, staff, and students.

Key Performance Measure	Academic Year 2017-2018	Academic Year 2024-2025 Goal
a. Number of tenure track faculty (TTF) and number of term faculty (TF)	268 TTF; 176 TF	Shift from 61% TTF to 70% TTF
b. College-wide student-to-faculty ratio	Table 2. Number of Majors to Unit Faculty and Student Credit Hours Taught to Unit Faculty	
c. Number of faculty from underrepresented groups	444 total faculty members; 120 faculty members from underrepresented groups; 13 fewer than previous year - 89% retention rate (22 international)	Track changes and retention rates for faculty from underrepresented groups
d. Number of Graduate Teaching Assistants compared to number of adjunct faculty	300 GTAs; 295 adjuncts	Shift funding from adjunct positions to GTAs
e. Reliance on adjunct faculty (total student credit hours (SCH) for the College and SCH taught by adjunct faculty)	363,034 total SCH; 63,437 SCH taught by adjunct	Reduce reliance on adjunct faculty from 17.5 to 10%
f. Increase in office space and research laboratory space (STEM Building)	In Progress	Address space needs for teaching science labs and for office and lab space for new faculty

h. Number of faculty participating in CTLE programs/services	39 faculty members	Increase by addressing other metrics focused on excellence in teaching
h. Acknowledge CTLE participation for annual evaluations and promotion and tenure review	all 17 units acknowledge CTLE participation	Develop college-wide promotion and tenure policy for CTLE participation
i. Establish and recognize unit level and College wide teaching awards	2 units have teaching awards	all 17 units recognizing teaching excellence

Goal 2 : Fund and promote the development of transformative learning experiences in domestic and global communities that “make it REAL” for students.

Key Performance Measure	Academic Year 2017-2018	Academic Year 2024-2025 Goal
a. Number of service learning courses (number of students enrolled)	35 (841 students enrolled)	100% increase in student participation
b. Number of for-credit "Make it REAL" experiences (number of students enrolled)	109 courses (2858 students enrolled; 653 research 74 study abroad 1290 internship)	100% increase in student participation
c. Number of donor-supported transformative learning experiences (number of student participants)	5 (20 student participants)	100% increase in student participation

Goal 3 : Enhance working relationships among staff, tenure-track, term, and adjunct faculty in each department to improve communication and enhance teaching and research opportunities.

Key Performance Measure	Academic Year 2017-2018	Academic Year 2024-2025 Goal
a. Number of staff training programs and number of participants	None recorded	Document programs and number of participants

b. Staff mentoring programs and number of participants	None recorded	Document programs and number of participants
c. Number of targeted training programs for adjunct instructors	1 training program	all 17 units with training programs

Goal 4 : Support the development of an environment in which the importance of improved teaching is encouraged, assessed, and valued through promotion of term and tenured faculty.

Key Performance Measure	Academic Year 2017-2018	Academic Year 2024-2025 Goal
a. Number of academic units with clearly defined measures of effective teaching and learning	10 units report having clearly defined measure of effective teaching	all 17 of units with clearly defined measures of effective learning
b. Number of faculty supported to participate in programs/conferences focused on teaching excellence	63 faculty members participated in programs	100% increase in faculty member participation

A cornerstone of our data informed decision-making process is transparency. The data presented in Table 2 is information that is important in our decision-making, but does not preclude our commitment to providing our students and community with an educational experience anchored in the broad goals of a liberal arts education. Peer-institutional data and important national trends are also considered.

Table 2.
**Number of Majors by Number of Unit Faculty and
 Student Credit Hours Taught by Number o Unit Faculty**

Academic Unit	Academic Year	Academic Year
	2017-2018	2024-2025 Goal
	# of Majors: Unit Faculty	# of Majors: Unit Faculty
African American Studies	14 majors: 6 faculty members	
Biology	2,015 majors: 42 faculty members	
Chemistry	503 majors: 41 faculty members	
English	384 majors: 36 faculty members	
Forensic Science	371 majors: 9 faculty members	
Gender, Sexuality & Women's Studies	38 majors: 8 faculty members	
History	248 majors: 24 faculty members	
Kinesiology & Health Sciences	1,467 majors: 13 faculty members	
Mathematics & Applied Mathematics	186 majors: 50 faculty members	
Philosophy	181 majors: 10 faculty members	
Physics	99 majors: 21 faculty members	
Political Science	584 majors: 14 faculty members	
Psychology	1,511 majors: 49 faculty members	
Robertson School of Media & Culture	1,005 majors: 22 faculty members	
Sociology	234 majors: 13 faculty members	
Statistical Sciences & Operations Research	45 majors: 18 faculty members	
School of World Studies	437 majors: 42 faculty members	

Academic Unit	Academic Year	Academic Year
	2017-2018	2024-2025 Goal
	Student Credit Hours (SCH) SCH: Unit Faculty	Student Credit Hours (SCH) SCH: Unit Faculty
African American Studies	3,625 SCH: 6 faculty members	
Biology	44,175 SCH: 42 faculty members	
Chemistry	31,784 SCH: 41 faculty members	

English	15,920 SCH: 36 faculty members	
Forensic Science	2,560 SCH: 9 faculty members	
Gender, Sexuality & Women's Studies	4,778 SCH: 8 faculty members	
History	12,563 SCH: 24 faculty members	
Kinesiology & Health Sciences	17,240 SCH: 13 faculty members	
Mathematics & Applied Mathematics	36,383 SCH: 50 faculty members	
Philosophy	7,582 SCH: 10 faculty members	
Physics	22,469 SCH: 21 faculty members	
Political Science	15,806 SCH: 14 faculty members	
Psychology	32,750 SCH: 49 faculty members	
Robertson School of Media & Culture	16,753 SCH: 22 faculty members	
Sociology	14,637 SCH: 13 faculty members	
Statistical Sciences & Operations Research	12,980 SCH: 18 faculty members	
School of World Studies	36,791 SCH: 42 faculty members	



Strategic Focus Area III



Develop and advance nationally recognized student and faculty scholarship, research, and creative initiatives committed to addressing challenges in our urban Richmond community and beyond.

Goal 1 : Recruit and retain exceptional faculty engaged in research/scholarship across the varied disciplines in the CHS.

Key Performance Measure	Academic Year 2017-2018	Academic Year 2024-2025 Goal
a. Number of Catalyst Awards (number of applicants)	5 awards (30 applicants)	50% increase in awards
b. Number of Seed Grant Awards (number of applicants)	20 awards (28 applicants)	Maintain Program
c. Number of Eminent Scholar Awards	Scholar program developed	18 total; 3 per year for a 5-year Award
d. Annual salary increases to reach peer institution average	3% faculty increase	≥ 3% per year
e. Number of a full-time faculty serving as mentors and number of faculty being mentored	94 mentors; 68 mentees	100% increase
f. Number of graduate students supported with extramural funding	7 units funding 119 students (40 with partial funding)	50% increase in extramurally supported graduate students
g. Number of grant development workshops (number of participants)	1 (n = 30)	100% increase

Goal 2 : Increase the College’s involvement with and impact on the metropolitan Richmond area by evaluating change in the lives of Richmond-area residents.

Key Performance Measure	Academic Year 2017-2018	Academic Year 2024-2025 Goal
a. Number of collaborations with the Division of Community Engagement	10 units collaborated	all 17 units collaborating
b. Number of grants submitted and awarded that are in partnership with our community	29 submitted; 11 awarded	25% increase

c. Number of programs/activities that promote our collaborative programs to the community	11 units coordinated activities	all 17 units coordinating activities
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Goal 3 : Expand VCU’s excellence in research by investing in the strengths and potential areas of growth of our students and faculty.

Key Performance Measure	Academic Year 2017-2018	Academic Year 2024-2025 Goal
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a. Number of external grant submissions, number of awards, and total grant funding expenditures	196 submitted, 65 awarded, and \$17,772,319 total grant funding expenditures	25% increase
b. Number of inter- and cross-disciplinary proposals submitted/number of proposals funded	35 submitted; 11 awarded	25% increase
c. Number of grant proposals that address our 4 research priorities (Changing American Communities; Nanomaterials for Energy and Medicine; Data Science; Mechanisms and Management of Addiction)	Table 3. Grant Proposals and Awards for Research Priorities	
d. Number of externally funded Summer Fellowships	18	100% increase
e. Peer-reviewed publications, books (scholarly monographs), book chapters, editorial scholarship	578 peer-reviewed publications 22 books 72 book chapters 32 publications of editorial scholarship	20% increase
f. Number of scholarly contributions to the Scholarship of Teaching	15 scholarly contributions	25% increase

g. Total grant funding dollars	\$15,701,043	25% increase
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**Table 3.
Grant Proposals and Awards for Research Priorities**

Research Priority	Academic Year 2017-2018	Academic Year 2024-2025 Goal
Changing American Communities (number of proposals submitted and number of awards)	20 submitted; 7 awarded	25% increase in awards
Nanomaterials for Energy and Medicine (number of proposals submitted and number of awards)	16 submitted; 7 awarded	25% increase in awards
Data Science (number of proposals submitted and number of awards)	11 submitted; 5 awarded	25% increase in awards
Mechanisms and Management of Addiction (number of proposals submitted and number of awards)	32 submitted; 10 awarded	25% increase in awards