

William & Mary

2023 SIX-YEAR PLAN NARRATIVE (Part II)

July 2023

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SECTION A: MISSION & PRIORITIES

Key question: What are your institution’s unique strengths and how do those inform your strategic priorities?

A1. What is your institutional mission? Please share any plans you have to change your mission over the six-year period.

Vision

William & Mary transcends the boundaries between research and teaching, teaching and learning, learning and living. People come to William & Mary wanting to understand and change the world — and together we do.

Mission

A preeminent, public research university, grounded in the liberal arts and sciences since 1693, William & Mary is a vibrant and inclusive community. Through close mentoring and collaboration, we inspire lifelong learning, generate new knowledge, and expand understanding. We cultivate creative thinkers, principled leaders, and compassionate global citizens equipped for lives of meaning and distinction. William & Mary convenes great minds and hearts to meet the most pressing needs of our time.

Values

William & Mary’s core values infuse our collective effort: belonging, curiosity, excellence, flourishing, integrity, respect, and service. William & Mary is a community that fosters deep human connection. We reflect on the lessons of history to meet the challenges of a rapidly changing world. We engage diverse perspectives and seek wisdom in bridging differences. Together, we are unceasing in our efforts to make a meaningful difference in our communities, the Commonwealth, the nation, and the world.

William & Mary’s strategic plan, Vision 2026, names three goals:

1. Expand William & Mary’s Reach. Address global challenges and forge dynamic partnerships to fuel positive change and extend W&M’s influence in the world.
2. Educate for Impact. Consistent with W&M’s history of innovation, reimagine the liberal arts and professional education in the 21st century to ensure the lifelong success of our graduates and model democratic ideals.
3. Evolve to Excel. Embrace change to achieve our full potential in financial and environmental sustainability, diversity, and operational excellence.

See Section A3 for the strategic priorities supporting these goals.

A2. What are your institution’s greatest strengths and areas of distinctiveness that it should continue to invest in? What are your institution’s greatest opportunities for improvement?

William & Mary provides students with the most personal, highest quality liberal arts & sciences education of any public university in the nation. Small class sizes and close student-faculty partnerships ensure robust applied learning opportunities. Completion rates are consistently high across demographic cohorts. W&M cultivates creative thinkers, principled leaders, and compassionate global citizens equipped for lives of meaning and distinction. Our post-graduation salary data attests to the consistent professional success of our graduates.

- W&M ranks #1 in The Princeton Review under “Best Schools for Internships.” W&M has rapidly become known as the university that brings together an exceptional education with extraordinary experiential learning and provides connections that will support alumni throughout their professional lives.
- W&M ranks #4 in study abroad participation among public universities. We have been globally oriented since our founding.
- Roughly 84% of undergraduates engage in mentored research. That figure rivals MIT and depends on W&M’s low student-faculty ratios.

The university will continue to invest in this high-quality student experience. This is a market imperative. Our data shows that when Virginia students accepted to William & Mary go out of state for college, their destination is to the Ivy League. When students from any domicile choose W&M, it is based on our academic reputation. Virginia has no Rice or Duke – no mid-sized, elite, private institution – because W&M has held that market position for centuries.

Key opportunities for improvement:

1. Grow our Pell-eligible population. To that end, beginning with the 2023-2024 school year, W&M will guarantee scholarship aid to cover at least the cost of tuition and fees for all in-state undergraduate Pell Grant eligible students. W&M has success graduating over 90% of its current Pell students, which is in line with graduation rates of the overall student body.
2. Invest in computational and data sciences, applied sciences: to meet high student demand and workforce needs in the knowledge economy. W&M has historically under-invested in these areas.
3. Ensure efficient, modern campus facilities and business infrastructure. Deferred maintenance has grown considerably as the university’s buildings and business systems continue to age. Decennial reaccreditation required a campus wide facility condition assessment to ensure our academic facilities can support the excellent education being provided. W&M has embarked upon a comprehensive housing and dining master plan to modernize housing facilities with an average age of 54 years and dining facilities with an average age of 42 years; our recently closed Public Private Partnership (P3) will ensure lower energy and maintenance requirements in a way that is cost-effective for the university, students, and families. Similarly, W&M’s Enterprise Resource Platform (ERP) is at the end of life, locking W&M into decades-old business processes. We seek similar innovative paths to lowering the cost of more efficient, modern systems.

A3. What are the top 3-5 strategic priorities you are currently pursuing or planning to pursue in the next six years? Please explain how each strategy relates to the strengths and/or opportunities for improvement mentioned above and will ultimately drive better outcomes for students.

W&M’s strategic plan, Vision 2026, identifies four priorities for collaboration, restructuring, and growth, summarized in four key words: *Data, Careers, Water, Democracy*.

Data: a priority emerging from internal and regional demand

For regional needs and partnerships in data science, see Section J below. In this section we speak to internal demand and improvement goals.

At W&M, we aim to cultivate the next generation of well-rounded professionals and principled citizens, fluent in thinking critically with data at scale to support workforce needs. The urgency to invest broadly in data sciences at W&M emerged organically. In the past decade, interest in computational fields has more than tripled here. From 2020 to 2022, undergraduate computer science degrees awarded at W&M increased by nearly 20%. In the data science program, we have seen a four-fold increase in the number of degrees conferred from 2020 to 2022.

This surge of interest reflects the importance of computational thinking in every community and industry around the nation. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that employment in data science alone will grow by 31% in the coming decade. According to a DataCamp survey, 89% of companies rate data fluency as a priority for their business.

To meet growing demands for data-savvy employees, the Commonwealth, business communities and higher education have aligned around talent. In 2019, W&M joined the Tech Talent Pipeline, which challenged Virginia colleges and universities to produce an additional 25,000 computer science-related degree holders by 2039.

The rapid growth in our computer science and data science programs was identified early in the strategic planning process in 2019 as an area to scale up teaching and research. The W&M Student Assembly underscored this need in a 2019 whitepaper. Faculty, staff, and administrators set out to “pursue a more dynamic and influential presence in engineering, computational and information sciences” as part of a fall 2021 Vision Framework for Planning In. In fall 2022, three departments then brought a proposal for a new school.

In spring 2023, Provost Agouris charged a design team comprising deans from all five of W&M’s schools, faculty, and other university leaders with exploring the concept. That team conducted research and drafted a preliminary proposal. The provost is preparing a business case that will be presented to the campus, Board, and eventually SCHEV this fall.

The main takeaway: data science is core to a liberal arts degree in the 21st century. Statistical analysis and computational modeling are modes of critical thinking, just like other core modes of critical thinking our graduates cultivate at W&M. Thinking statistically helps humans understand likelihood, pattern, and variation — and navigate uncertainty by tracking patterns across large bodies of evidence. Computational models offer ways to describe and analyze using digital tools. The ability to solve problems and think ethically using these toolkits is part of what it means to be an educated person today.

Careers: guaranteeing a funded internship without extending time to degree

At a moment when work is transforming at extraordinary speed in every profession and industry, employees who can learn continually, think critically, and adapt are powerful assets. W&M will provide the best preparation for principled success. The fluent integration of work and learning that will last a lifetime must begin in college — and will be the hallmark of a W&M education.

This evolution of the liberal arts to include internships and other work-integrated experiences, will span every discipline at W&M. Building on distinctive excellence in research and study abroad, along with a strong global network, W&M is well positioned to deliver on this promise.

Currently, two thirds of our undergraduate programs have a credit-bearing internship course on the books. Our goal is for 100% of all undergraduate programs to offer such a course. However, if you are a first-year student or a first semester sophomore, you do not yet have an academic home to pursue an internship or applied learning experience. Our new, pre-major internship course answers this need for early career exposure. See C5 for more on these initiatives and strategies for enhancing career readiness.

Water: world-class research and services to support coastal resilience in a uniquely vulnerable economy and ecosystem

Virginia’s coastal systems — from the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries and watersheds to the outer coast — are vital to the Commonwealth’s ecological and economic future. Hampton Roads faces a double threat unique in the country: simultaneous land-subsidence and sea-level rise. Of necessity, our region must lead nationally on issues that the rest of the world will soon grapple with: salt-water intrusion, rising temperature, drought, and storm-induced flooding.

As the home to one of the world’s preeminent marine science institutes — VIMS — and to outstanding conservation, law, policy, and education programs — W&M is poised to develop critical solutions to these challenges. Our students will lead the next generation of scientists and industry professionals who steward the world’s water resources. Key initiatives include:

1. VIMS Center of Excellence in Environmental Forecasting (CoEEF). The proposed center would leverage unique expertise and resources at VIMS to establish a world-class environmental forecasting center.
2. This summer, W&M founded a new Virginia Coastal Resilience Collaborative (VCRC) to translate coastal science. VCRC will provide unbiased and apolitical advice and guidance for Virginia’s decision makers and those who do business here. This multidisciplinary hub will ensure continued delivery of guidance formerly provided by the Virginia Coastal Policy Center (VCPC). It will also lead student training and workforce development. W&M’s regional advisory committee will align VCRC with the needs of external stakeholders and decision makers.

Democracy: making Virginia a national destination in 2026, cultivating citizenship

No institution is better positioned than W&M to tell the story of our nation’s first 250 years. None can better prepare the next generation of citizens to understand and unify around the core principles of democracy. As a leader in Virginia’s 250th celebration, W&M aims to make Williamsburg a national destination for understanding the complex history of the United States. As our close partners in Colonial Williamsburg put it, our goal is to ensure “that our nation’s origin story becomes every American’s shared story.”

Home to the #1 Colonial History program in the country, W&M is an epicenter of new stories. As examples of the extraordinary discoveries underway: at Highland, W&M archaeologists discovered the site of President James Monroe’s residence. And last year W&M began a joint reconstruction project with Colonial Williamsburg of the original 1760 Bray School. Discovered inside Digges Hall, the structure is the oldest extant schoolhouse in the Northern Hemisphere built for the education of free and enslaved Black children. These children grew up to organize First Baptist Church in 1776. W&M’s new Bray School Lab seeks to center African American legacies like these at the founding of American democracy. Stay tuned for more centennials and more discoveries to come.

W&M will lead in the education of citizens by ensuring an open community of dialogue and robust debate around tough issues. Our strategic plan and our institutional values are anchored in this nation’s constitutional commitments to freedom of expression and facts as a public good. W&M has a green rating with FIRE and regularly ranks among that organization’s top 10 institutions nationally for upholding these principles.

At W&M, we lay the foundation for constructive dialogue by affirming the inherent dignity of every individual. From a bedrock of mutual respect, we can cultivate environments in which students share divergent views, wrestle productively with competing ideas, build strong arguments from facts, and test their thinking — always respecting one another as people with “much desire to learn.”

With this principle in mind, W&M Student Affairs is leading a Building Connections & Bridging Differences initiative to “promote empathy and encourage civil discourse around difficult topics and contrasting viewpoints.” This fall, all new students completed a series of online interactive lessons, Perspectives, developed by the Constructive Dialogue Institute: learning “evidence-based skills for constructive conversations.” W&M continues to expand digital and data literacy throughout our curricula, so students graduate equipped for evidence-based argument and savvy to falsehoods and distortions.

A4. What support can OpSix provide to help you achieve those strategies? Please include both budget and policy requests and reference Part I of your submission where appropriate.

1. **Fund the Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program (VMSDEP) \$4,400,000.** Since FY19, the cost to W&M of VMSDEP waivers has increased nearly 550% from around \$550k to almost \$3.6M in FY23. These waivers are commitments the Commonwealth established without appropriating funds and then expanded — leading to growth in awards across all institutions. The cost of these waivers has become a driver in setting tuition each year. A commonwealth commitment to funding these waivers would remove a significant and unavoidable cost driver for Virginia public universities and colleges.
2. **Modernize Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP).** Estimated cost of \$8.2M over two years, with additional one-time costs of \$11.4M over the next biennium to migrate Financial and HR systems.

Virginia’s higher education institutions continually seek to flatten the curve of tuition increases by becoming more efficient. In 2014, the Virginia Higher Education Procurement Consortium was created to help leverage contracts to reduce costs and strengthen value to the institutions, faculty, students, and staff. The Virtual Library of Virginia is another example of higher education and the Commonwealth partnering to manage procurement costs of library materials and ensure high quality library resources across institutions.

With the state’s focus on expanding data analysis for greater efficiencies, a new opportunity for partnership among institutions and the Commonwealth presents itself. We seek to establish a collaborative model for Enterprise Resource Planning Modernization. We seek Richmond’s support in this innovative effort.

W&M, like many of our peers, must modernize our ERP systems by converting to a cloud-based, Software as a Service (SaaS) approach. This will enable business efficiencies in HR, Finance, and the Student Information Systems and improve user experience. ERP modernizations are multi-million-dollar undertakings, requiring significant investment to redress decades of deferred maintenance in business processes. The magnitude of the task requires the joint buying power of Virginia’s higher education institutions. W&M aims to realize economies of scale and long-term savings by selecting a common platform and coordinating implementation with our peers. We seek state support to build on our successful track record of consortial procurement in university library systems and other areas – ultimately reducing the overall cost to students and families of this critical investment.

The administration has expressed interest in potentially creating a pool of funds for this large, one-time expenditure to help create greater long-term operational efficiency for public institutions and dramatically improve services for students, faculty, and staff. W&M has worked with one potential supplier to develop a proposed contract that provides large discounts that scale by aggregate number of FTE employees of participating institutions with discounts increasing as more universities join. Shared implementation increases efficiencies for Virginia institutions and provides a single integration layer that can be used for all participating institutions to load data from the university system into Commonwealth systems such as Cardinal HCM and Finance.

3. **Support James Monroe’s Highland as a centennial legacy project, \$1,125,000 base funding, \$2,700,000 one-time.** Virginia was home to the four US presidents — Washington, Jefferson, Madison, and Monroe — who make up the Virginia Dynasty that played a pivotal role in the formation of the American Republic.

Alone among the homes of the four “Virginia Dynasty” presidents, James Monroe’s Highland is owned by the Commonwealth of Virginia. Already a significant attraction, Highland now has the potential — if properly developed, enhanced, and sustained — to assume its appropriate place in the compelling narrative of Virginia’s indispensable role in winning American independence and founding a republic in the aftermath.

Perhaps the most exciting aspect of Highland is the ongoing process of discovery occurring there. Stunning archaeological findings, including the recent discovery of the foundations of the Monroe house, are bringing new history to light daily and creating unique opportunities for young and adult Virginia residents and visitors to engage with public history via a modern-day detective story. New exhibitions shaped by the discoveries address civics, service, the presidency, and slavery, with additional exhibitions and programming coming later this year.

Anticipating that Highland will welcome more visitors as the 250th Commemoration approaches, public and private support is being sought to enhance the visitor experience through site improvements related to health, safety, access, and wayfinding. The support also is needed to complete a new Community Research Center where residents and visitors will engage with the ongoing process of archaeological and historical discovery.

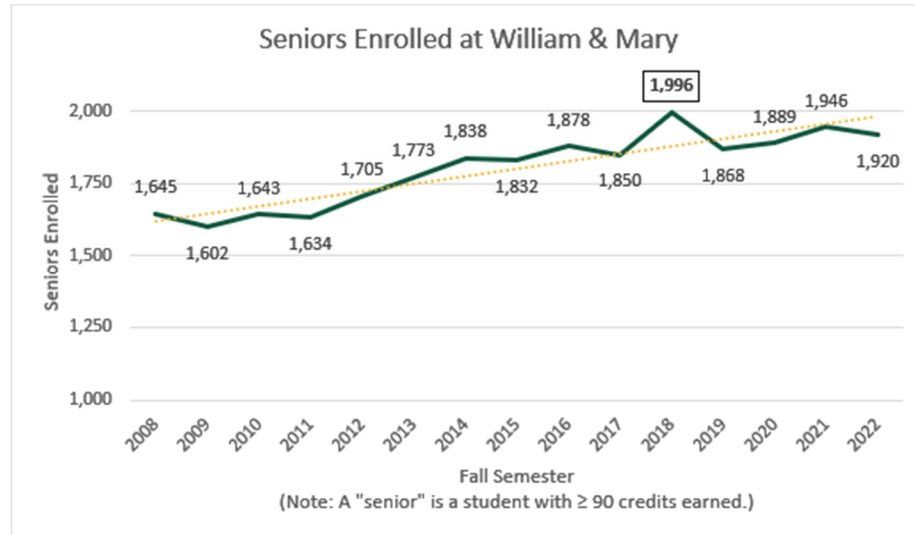
W&M has been the proud owner of Highland since 1974. Yet it does not have the financial freedom to support Highland at a level where it can thrive. Highland has never received direct support from the Commonwealth. Lacking an endowment, a flourishing Highland requires greater budgetary support than the current model can provide.

To that end, W&M will ask the Commonwealth of Virginia for the first time to make a direct investment in Highland. Direct support would lift operations to a new level and allow Highland to thrive for the benefit of Virginia students, residents, and visitors alike. Among the top priorities during and after the 250th are establishing ongoing archaeological research that engages K-12 students and public visitors in the story of discovery, and operational resources that create the well-maintained presentation expected in Virginia. The one-time funding would support needed health and safety upgrades related to deferred maintenance and safety and security systems.

With partnership and support from the Commonwealth, private philanthropy, and continued support from W&M, the vision is to move Highland beyond a marginal level of staffing and create a dynamic place for engaging tourists and students alike in the role of Virginia and Virginians in the story of our nation.

4. **Tech Talent Investment Program Organic Degree Production.** W&M has exceeded TTIP Computer Science degree production goals through FY22: producing 93 degrees against a target of 79. However, the baseline year used for total university undergraduate degrees awarded, 2018-19, was an outlier. That year, W&M experienced the highest degrees awarded. In fall 2018, W&M saw an unusually high number of seniors who earned 90 or more credits towards a bachelor’s degree. As a result, W&M conferred more bachelor’s degrees in 2018-19 than anticipated. Using 2018-19 as the baseline year for W&M’s TTIP university degree production target produced an artificially high goal. The MOU lays out a process for updating/renegotiating. W&M wishes to raise the issue in the event this is a broader concern for TTIP institutions.

The chart below illustrates this anomalous year and our trend line. Incoming classes, retention and graduation rates remained steady prior to and after the base year. W&M increased incoming classes, towards a goal of growing the total undergraduate population by 600. With this growth, along with our strong 4-year graduation rates, we project degrees awarded will continue to rise.



We are proud to be meeting the Commonwealth's intent for the initiative. W&M continues to focus on growing degree production in CS, yet based on the calculator provided by VEDP, W&M will still see reduced funding in this critical area even with degree production above the 2018-19 base as we "make up" for that artificial deficit. We also clearly hear Richmond's concern about organic enrollment growth at W&M. We ask that OpSix support adjustments to the formula, considering these context shifts.

5. **Out-of-State Undergraduate Enrollment Flexibility.** The state recently allowed additional flexibility on out-of-state undergraduate enrollment, but it still limits the level of growth allowed. With the overall population of undergraduates projected to decline starting in 2026, it will be even more important that Virginia institutions have all avenues available to maintain enrollment in an effort to address Virginia's workforce demands and keep students in Virginia through paid internships and other "sticky pathways". W&M understands that as a state institution there is an expectation that we utilize state resources to educate Virginians, and that will always be an integral part of what we do. Additional flexibility would also provide another avenue to keep the cost of education more affordable for our in-state students.
6. **Update VA's Higher Education Equipment Trust Fund (HEETF) Guidelines.** Current guidelines for HEETF prohibit purchase of cloud-based software used to support instruction and research. Yet 20th C. hardware should now be replaced with 21st C. cloud-based software as a service (SAAS). By expanding ETF guidelines, the state would promote efficiency and align with evolving technology. Per the new accounting standard, all SAAS solutions should be considered a capital expense regarding use of ETF bond proceeds. SAAS based solutions not currently eligible under the ETF guidelines should be available for all institutions through use of ETF allocations. On this model, ETF would provide more progressive and robust computing solutions that better serve the education and research goals in Virginia.

7. **Expedite Program Approval.** W&M continues to adopt innovative and flexible academic offerings for the summer as part of our strategic plan. We anticipate that the student summer workload may include course modules that vary from standard 15-week semester courses. As W&M looks to develop new programs that include both coursework and fully integrated experiential learning opportunities, we request flexibility and expedited SCHEV program review.
8. **Revisit eVA Transactional Fee Assessments.** Consider implementing an annual eVA fee, to allow for a set fee structure for covered institutions not utilizing eVA as a front-end procurement tool. After initial implementation, eVA support to the institutions is minimal — the integrations will be completed, and purchase order data transfer provided nightly by W&M. Vendor transaction fees will still be recouped from eVA due to the data transfer. This would provide greater predictability in this expense line for institutions.

SECTION B: STRATEGIC DEEP DIVE — ENROLLMENT VOLUME & COMPOSITION

Key question: How is your institution managing enrollment in light of state and national trends, and what are the financial implications?

B1. What do you see as the primary drivers of recent enrollment trends for your institution? Please reference any specific academic programs that have had a significant (positive or negative) effect on enrollment, if relevant.

William & Mary’s most significant threat in the face of the demographic cliff is sustaining external perception of quality and value. Our success will depend on funding and policy constraints. We anticipate significant competition for the highest quality students both in-state and out-of-state and dearly wish we could compete more freely and aggressively in the latter arena. If we could, that would strengthen the overall Virginia enrollment picture for all institutions — strengthening resources and quality in a way that does not draw from other institutions in the state.

The current strength of W&M’s enrollment makes clear both the opportunities and risks our system faces. From fall 2013 to fall 2022, W&M’s total enrollment has increased by 17.0% (+1,295 total students). New, primarily online, master’s programs accounted for more than half of the total growth, increasing 82.5% (+763 master’s students). W&M’s School of Education and Raymond A. Mason School of Business have been drivers of the master’s level enrollment growth, including through online counseling and business degrees.

Undergraduate enrollment grew 8.7% (+543 undergraduate students) during the same span, nearly all of which occurred from fall 2017 to fall 2022. This growth was intentional, delivering upon a 2018 Board of Visitors-approved plan to increase undergraduate enrollment by 600 students. The fall 2023 enrolling cohort will complete that intentional growth plan. The resulting revenue growth was essential to W&M’s ability to hold tuition at the same price for five years during a period of steep inflation.

W&M continues to see strong undergraduate enrollment demand. Aligned with national trends, the university’s admit rate increased from 35% in 2011-12 to 43% 2020-21. It then returned to historical levels, reaching 33% in 2022-23, based on rising application numbers. In surveys of admitted students enrolling at W&M as well as those who choose to enroll elsewhere, **the university’s academic reputation remains the primary decision factor.** Delivering on that expected level of quality will continue to be the primary driver of undergraduate enrollment for the foreseeable future.

B2. Please summarize your enrollment management strategy moving forward and the specific actions (if any) you are taking to implement that strategy.

W&M’s undergraduate strategy is to (A) sustain strong in-state enrollments supplemented by significant out-of-state demand and (B) increase the presence of Pell Grant recipients from Virginia. More than 60% of W&M applications in fall 2022 were from out-of-state. Within an overall acceptance rate of 33%, the rate was 42% in-state and 28% out-of-state.

Since fall 2017, W&M increased enrollment of in-state undergraduates by 6.9% (+285 in-state students), sustaining access for the Commonwealth’s students. Robust out-of-state demand will continue to supplement in-state enrollment, fulfilling our mission as a “vibrant and inclusive community” and providing significant tuition revenue.

In September 2022, W&M established the goal of reaching 20% in-state Pell enrollment and announced that every Virginia Pell recipient would receive a scholarship covering at least tuition and fees. Most receive far more in institutional grants. SCHEV is a terrific partner in evaluating how to grow our Pell enrollment. W&M looks forward to continuing this collaboration.

B3. How ambitious/realistic/conservative are the enrollment projections you most recently submitted to SCHEV? What are the greatest unknowns or risks that could lead enrollment to differ significantly from your projections? Please reference national and statewide enrollment trends/projections and cite any other data (e.g. regional trends, performance of prior enrollment strategies) that informed your projections.

Our enrollment projections reflect observed demand, retention, and graduation. Projections of the national decline in high school graduates are troubling. Yet those projections include growing demand for high-quality, selective institutions.

The greatest risk to W&M’s enrollment is failure to deliver on market expectations of quality, which would negatively impact demand. W&M holds a fortunate position: applications have risen in recent years, both for early decision and regular applicant pools. Demand remains strong, both in-state and out-of-state. First-year retention has returned to 95% after a modest decline during pandemic-affected years. Graduation rates remain above 90%, reflecting ongoing student persistence to degree completion. Some margin exists to adjust admissions practices in response to any fluctuations in demand or retention.

B4. Explain the implications of your enrollment strategy on your institution’s financials. Please consider impacts on both revenues (e.g., discounting, financial aid, net tuition revenue) and expenditures.

The strategy described above contributes to a stable financial model with predictable incoming classes and consistent overall enrollment. Increased financial aid due to our commitment to growing Pell percentages is factored into W&M’s financial plan. We will continue to face the same cost pressures as peer institutions from inflation, VMSDEP waivers, salary and benefit increases, and utility and other contract cost escalations. W&M models these factors along with tuition, reallocation, enrollment growth, etc. to inform our path forward.

SECTION C: STRATEGIC DEEP DIVE — PROGRAM ALIGNMENT & PERFORMANCE

COMPLETION OUTCOMES

Key question: How is your institution supporting all students to succeed in completing their degree in a timely manner?

C1. What are your highest-priority completion outcomes targets, both overall and for particular student segments? Please include aspirational targets, realistic expectations, and qualitative targets and specify by when you are aiming to meet those targets (e.g., X% 6-year graduation rate for Pell students by 2030).

W&M consistently delivers exceptional completion outcomes for all students. Retention is 95% for the overall population with limited, if any, gaps for students of color. The average time to degree is 4.01 years, and the six-year graduation is 91% with limited, if any, gaps experienced by income level.

W&M’s top priority is sustaining high levels of student success while serving a growing population of Pell Grant recipients and reaching the university’s goal of 20% in-state Pell enrollment by 2026. W&M strives to ensure that Pell recipients graduate at rates comparable to their classmates (see table below).

Table 1. Graduation Rates for Pell Grant Recipients

	First-Time, Full Time (FTFT) Students ¹		New Transfer from VCCS/RBC ²
	4-year	6-year	4-year
W&M	87	92	89
Avg. – VA Public Universities	48	65	63

Source: ¹ NCES, IPEDS, Outcome Measures, 2021; ² SCHEV Two-Year, TR05, 2017-18.

C2. What specific strategies/actions are you planning to take to achieve those goals? How will you draw on successes/challenges from your prior completion outcome improvement strategies?

W&M is grateful for SCHEV grant funding, to speed progress on the following actions:

- Scholarships covering at least tuition & fees for every Pell Grant recipient from Virginia.
- Doubling the W&M Scholars Program to 100 recipients per entering cohort as well as refining the award’s criteria to focus on academically distinguished students who receive a Pell Grant with additional priority on those who are first in their family to attend college.
- Identifying high-achieving, low-income prospective students through direct outreach to districts and schools, ideally complemented by partnership with the Virginia Department of Education to reach these talented students.
- A full-time position to coordinate programs for first-gen, low-income students.

- Increased funding for the W&M Scholars Undergraduate Research Experience (WMSURE), which offers workshops as well as faculty and peer mentoring. The W&M Scholars award is presented each year to a small group of academically distinguished students who overcome unusual adversity. Many are the first in their families to attend college. Awards equal in-state tuition and fees, renewable each year that the recipient remains in good academic standing.

C3. How will you use existing/recently provided resources to execute those strategies? Will you be requesting incremental state resources? Please state the request and rationale and explicitly tie to Part I of your planning template.

As mentioned above, W&M is working with SCHEV through the new Pell award funding process. Funding from that source will help accelerate W&M's Pell enrollment goals. In addition, more general fund financial aid was provided by the state in the FY24 budget which helps offset the need for W&M to use tuition increases to fund need-based aid.

As noted elsewhere, the rapid growth in VMSDEP waivers — mandated and not funded by the Commonwealth — has put significant upward pressure on financial aid.

POST-COMPLETION OUTCOMES

Key question: How is your institution preparing all students for success beyond completion (e.g., career preparation)?

C4. Please explain how you monitor post-completion outcomes (e.g., employment rates, wage attainment, debt load, upward mobility). What data do you collect? What metrics are you monitoring most closely? What do the data reveal about your institution's greatest strengths and areas for improvement with respect to post-completion outcomes? Please include any relevant data/reports in the appendix or as a separate attachment, including any data that captures outcomes by school/department/program.

Over the last 10 years, we have collected responses using a variety of survey platforms, including Qualtrics, Baseline from Campus Labs, now Anthology, and now the survey module provided through CSM Symplicity. Last year we adapted it to include geographic information about where graduates first land in jobs.

Please see Appendix A for our annual First Destination Survey data schematic and the undergraduate Career Success Reports for A&S, Business and First Destination Report for 2021. We follow the National Association of Colleges & Employers policy and guidelines for administering the survey. In addition to the response rate, we report an overall knowledge rate based on data mining from a variety of sources, including the National Student Clearinghouse, fellowship news releases, academic department surveys, LinkedIn profiles, and more. The knowledge rate allows us to represent a larger portion of the class with incomplete data since the secondary sources do not provide salary information or opinion information, e.g. "How well does this match your career goals?" We primarily advertise the survey through emails, flyers, QR codes, sharing with campus partners, and alumni engagement.

We note with pride recent studies by the [Wall Street Journal](#) showing William & Mary graduates who pursue careers in finance, management consulting, law, and technology fields are among the highest earners in the industry when compared to graduates from our peer institutions.

C5. What specific strategies/actions, including potential changes to your program portfolio or curriculum, are you planning to take to maximize the career readiness and job attainment of all students across programs of study, including increasing early career exposure for students (e.g., internships) during their time at your institution? How will you draw on successes/challenges from prior initiatives?

1. School of Computing, Data, and Applied Science. W&M’s planning efforts here are anchored in strong data reflecting student demand, career opportunity, and workforce needs, as noted elsewhere in this plan. We use VEDP’s specified knowledge economy fields to guide planning.
2. Guaranteeing an internship without extending time to degree. W&M is at the front of the paid internship march in the Commonwealth and is identifying and establishing solutions to address internship and applied learning gaps related to student demographics writ large. To support students who have secured an unfunded or underfunded internship or applied learning experience, W&M has an established program named FUSE (Funding for Underfunded Student Experiences).

In 2023, W&M was named by the Princeton Review as “the best public institution for internships” for the third year in a row. The university has achieved this by systematically transforming our Career Development approach during and post-pandemic. We track our data, our internship placements, and we have refactored the work of 70-80 professionals on campus to take a platform approach to career services. The revamped Career program funds unpaid internships that align academic goals with professional pathways; to date, we have closed more than \$5M in philanthropy dedicated to this initiative. Our early placement initiatives focus on programs at W&M with direct connection to knowledge industries: data science, cybersecurity, finance, etc.

3. Integrating internships across all majors. Our goal is that 100% of all undergraduate programs offer a credit-bearing internship course by 2026. Currently, two thirds have accomplished this.
4. Internship opportunities for pre-major years. Through a collaborative partnership with the Charles Center, Career Development and Professional Engagement has established a pre-major, credit-bearing internship course to ensure professional exploration. If you are a first-year student or a first semester sophomore, you do not have an academic home to pursue an internship or applied learning experience due to the fact you have not declared a major; therefore, you don’t have an academic home. The pre-major internship course creates an opportunity for early career exposure.
5. Expanded career readiness. Starting in summer ‘23, our internship programs feature 0-3-credit career-readiness courses, with faculty and alumni mentorship. As a prerequisite, students complete SCHEV career-readiness modules.

C6. How do you intend to use existing/provided resources to execute those strategies? Will you be requesting incremental state resources? Please explicitly tie to Part I of your planning template.

The Commonwealth has focused resources through the Virginia Talent and Opportunity Partnership because it also recognizes the importance of internships to student outcomes. W&M has combined private giving and a whole-institution approach to Career and Professional Engagement to integrate funded internships and applied learning opportunities into every major.

Beginning in 2020, during the pandemic, W&M brought together all the career development staff across the university (70+ individuals). They took a “center-led / locally activated” platform approach to internship recruitment and placement that has yielded more productive, wider-reaching, efficient and coordinated programming. We created one stop for students, alumni mentors, and employers.

WORKFORCE ALIGNMENT

Key question: How are your institution’s programs of study and degree conferrals aligned with the evolving talent needs of the Commonwealth?

C7. For which specific workforce needs is your institution best positioned to supply talent, based on regional, industry, or occupation alignment?

W&M is well-positioned to meet the Virginia Economic Development Program (VEDP) priorities for talent pipelines in knowledge industries. We track those priorities closely and you will note they are interwoven throughout this plan.

As noted in A3 above, Vision 2026 (the Strategic Plan of William & Mary) identifies Careers, Data, Water, and Democracy as cornerstones of our institutional focus. By specifically calling out careers in this list, we underscore the university’s strategic commitment to the evolving talent needs of the Commonwealth. The remaining three goals position the university to educate professionals aligned with workforce needs in the knowledge economy.

Data. W&M trains critical thinkers to tackle complex challenges of broad social relevance. As the world becomes increasingly immersed in data, and to ensure our graduates will thrive in data-rich environments, the university has advanced its distinctive excellence by integrating data and computational sciences across numerous fields in an approach that emphasizes interdisciplinarity. The creation of a new school focusing on computing and data science is uniquely aligned with our mission and will directly deliver on talent needs identified by VEDP. Our Jump Start Data Science Summer Program, part of an accelerated minor in Data Science, teaches students about trends in data science, internships & full-time positions, as well as how to stand out as a job candidate.

Water. Virginia’s coastlines are vital to the Commonwealth’s ecological and economic future. Yet they face intense stress in the decades to come from higher temperatures, rising sea levels, drought, and storm-induced flooding. W&M is home to the Virginia Institute of Marine Sciences, a global leader in this field. It has outstanding conservation, law, policy and education programs.

Across these fields, W&M is poised to address these complex challenges. Additionally, W&M’s Institute for Integrative Conservation (IIC) works closely with a network of conservation partners. Funded by generous philanthropy, the IIC integrates expertise from across disciplines and sectors, and fosters collaboration between academia, public and private sectors, indigenous and local communities.

Democracy. W&M has played a pivotal role in shaping our republic since its founding. With regional partners, such as Colonial Williamsburg, W&M aims to make Virginia a national destination for visitors in 2026, the nation’s quarter millennium. Through the Democracy Initiative, W&M studies, teaches, and illuminates the rights and obligations of 21st-century citizenship. Through undergraduate research at the Global Research Institute, the Charles Center, and other programs, academics, practitioners, and students are brought together to apply research to real world issues with national and international implications.

C8. What specific strategies/actions is your institution planning to take to better align your program offerings or degree conferrals to current and projected workforce needs? Please provide a list of specific programs you intend to sunset or grow in the next 6 years to increase alignment, partnerships/initiatives you intend to launch or deepen, etc. If you intend to launch any new programs, please explain why your institution is particularly well-suited to succeed in that area.

W&M evaluates regional and national workforce needs data and adjusts our programs towards them as appropriate. We take timely and measured steps to align programs with those needs. On program closures, please see the bottom of this section.

Specifically, as noted above, we track the knowledge industries VEDP has prioritized:

1. In fall 2023, we will advance plans for a **new school of Computing, Data Science, and Applied Science**. Four existing programs are the principal founders with the expectation of strong multidisciplinary ties across the institution.

As VEDP has identified, the industry footprint of this new school is one of the fastest growing segments of the Commonwealth’s economy. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts that computer science employment may grow 15% nationally by 2031. The data science market is expected to grow to well over \$300 billion by 2030. This new school meets increased student and industry demand by (1) creating professional Master’s programs in these disciplines; (2) creating pathways for non-CS majors to pursue Master’s degrees in CS; and (3) developing a Graduate Certificate program. It will serve as a hub for outreach activities and foster recruitment of minority students and faculty. Ph.D. programs in Data Science and Mathematics are also under consideration to address workforce needs.

2. W&M has begun to **explore degree-granting programs in cybersecurity**. Certifications under discussion include Master’s, PhD., and/or Graduate Certificates — as well as undergraduate tracks in fields related to this urgent workforce need. As cyber threats become more sophisticated and persistent, organizations are investing in measures to safeguard their reputation, mitigate financial loss, and protect customer trust. This increased focus on cybersecurity has driven demand for expertise, technology solutions, and consulting services.
3. Because Virginia has a unique legal and regulatory framework, the W&M Law School is planning to propose a **Master of Legal Studies (MLS), designed for non-legal professionals** who seek an edge in an increasingly sophisticated legal world. Concentrations under

consideration include compliance, emerging technologies, environment, finance, and health care. These certifications answer a growing demand for professionals with legal knowledge and skills who do not wish to become practicing attorneys. The MLS program will provide students with a solid understanding of national and state laws, regulations, and requirements governing local and state industries and activities. This degree program will also provide students with internship opportunities in Virginia. Graduates of the MLS program will be equipped to navigate complex legal and regulatory matters, make informed decisions, and manage risk for their organizations.

4. W&M's Virginia Institute of Marine Science ("VIMS") is building on its recent success launching a **Professional Master of Arts degree** to work with the Arts & Sciences to plan the creation of a **new major within A&S (B.A./ B.S. in Marine Science)**. In recent years the marine sciences industry has grown in the Commonwealth in response to pressing environmental and resource management concerns, as well as the need to protect marine ecosystems. As the global demand for seafood continues to rise, so too does the need for sustainable management practices in fisheries and aquaculture. Marine scientists play a crucial role in studying fish populations, developing sustainable fishing techniques. These assets ensure the viability of marine resources.
5. W&M's Washington D.C. Center constantly evolves its programming in the capital area to reflect workforce trends. Via campus partnerships, and via its growing enrollments, the Center responds to workforce trends in our larger region.

Discontinued programs:

- William and Mary has discontinued our Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree program in German studies, located within the Department of Modern Languages & Literatures. Due to changing workforce demands, student interest has not matched offerings.
- Other programs in review for closure or restructuring to match workforce needs include: (1) BA in Math; (2) BA in Geology; (3) BA in Spanish; and (4) BA/BS in Kinesiology.

SECTION D: STRATEGIC DEEP DIVE – FINANCIAL EFFECTIVENESS & SUSTAINABILITY

AFFORDABILITY FOR STUDENTS & FAMILIES

Key question: How is your institution accounting for and improving affordability for students and families?

D1. What specific strategies/actions do you plan to take to improve affordability moving forward across your overall student body and priority subpopulations, and what is the expected impact? Please account for a broad range of factors including the full cost of attendance, net price, time to degree, debt load, etc.

Since 2019, W&M has sought to “flatten the curve” of tuition increases by identifying major cost drivers and seeking innovative ways to reduce their impact on our operating budget. Those include our recently closed P3 for Housing & Dining and our consortial planning efforts around ERP conversion noted elsewhere in this plan.

Low net price. W&M meets the full demonstrated need for in-state students, driving down net price for low- and middle-income families in the Commonwealth. To fulfill this commitment, institutional financial aid has increased 153% since FY13, in accordance with the W&M Promise. As a result of this commitment, the percentage of W&M students with student loans has declined from 28% in 2017 to 15% in 2021. The average amount borrowed per FTE has been stable during the same span, ranging from \$6,000 to \$6,300.

As the university’s cost of attendance has increased, W&M’s commitment to meeting demonstrated need has kept net price relatively stable. In sustaining this commitment, we recognize that net price is likely to increase in the coming years. That increase will reflect more students qualifying for financial aid rather than diminished effectiveness of aid. That is, as the cost of attendance increases, more middle-class students will benefit from institutional aid. As these students are included in net price calculations, the result will also increase even as W&M continues to meet every in-state student’s demonstrated need.

W&M continues carefully to monitor student debt. In 2020-21, only 33% of W&M graduates held student loans compared to the statewide average of 60%. The median debt of that cohort was \$20,051 at W&M compared to \$26,232 statewide.

Very high completion rates. Among the factors keeping W&M graduate debt low is the university’s ability to support students to on-time degree completion within four years. This institutional priority requires low student/faculty ratios and robust staffing in mental health, career development, tutoring, and many other student support arenas.

REVENUE

Key question: How is your institution approaching pricing and revenue management? What are the implications on long-term top-line financial health?

D2. Please explain the rationale behind your full pricing (i.e. published tuition & fees, including mandatory non-E&G fees) and financial aid award strategy (i.e. net tuition revenue projections). What data informed your assessment of T&F increase feasibility (e.g., market comparisons, student capacity to pay) and estimates of discounts/waivers/unfunded scholarships? What informed your strategy around financial aid awards, merit and need-based, particularly for various student segments by income level and academic preparation?

In surveys of admitted students enrolling at W&M — as well as those who choose to enroll elsewhere — the university’s academic reputation remains the primary decision factor. Thus, W&M’s primary rationale in full pricing has been to ensure we deliver on that expectation of quality in the market. W&M provides the most personal education of any leading national public university as reflected by having the lowest student-to-faculty ratio of that cohort. By way of market comparison, only one university among the U.S. News & World Report top-50 universities offers students from Virginia a lower full price. Staff continue carefully to monitor student capacity to pay with W&M’s low student debt loads being a strong indicator.

W&M strives to be affordable for every Virginia student capable of succeeding here. The university meets full demonstrated need for in-state students. Staff carefully monitor the implications of this commitment on discount rates, which remain well below national averages. A generous alumni base has funded over \$350M in scholarships.

For out-of-state students, W&M provides little need-based aid. The pricing rationale for out-of-state applicants reflects market considerations; and it provides revenue to sustain the highly personalized quality of a W&M education for all students, in-state and out-of-state.

D3. What do you expect to be the impact of your pricing/discounting approach on enrollment numbers/mix (if any) and net tuition revenue moving forward and why?

W&M has committed to “flattening the curve” of tuition increases, providing the lowest increases that are consistent with meeting our mission. We set prices that sustain the quality of the education provided. In continuing this approach, staff closely monitors student capacity to pay alongside the university’s ability to meet full demonstrated need for in-state students. This approach aligns quality with cost in meeting market expectations as well as ensuring a W&M education remains affordable for the Commonwealth.

Five years of holding tuition flat from 2019-2023 made it impossible to meet our mission without increasing tuition, absent more significant funding from the Commonwealth. Nevertheless, we will remain committed to the lowest possible increases we can sustain.

COST EFFECTIVENESS

Key question: How has your institution maintained bottom-line financial health and focused investment on the levers that will drive improvements in student outcomes?

D4. Reflect on the categories/subcategories of cost that have recently experienced the most significant increases on an absolute or per-student basis. What have been the primary drivers of those increases? Please be specific and include supporting data.

We appreciate the legislature’s recent significant investments in higher education operating support to restore historic funding reductions and also recognize increased inflationary costs. However, the Commonwealth’s cost-share policy goal included in the Code of Virginia (Paragraph A of Section 23.1-303 of the Higher Education Opportunity Act) and in the Appropriation Act is still not being met. Despite recent improvements in the state cost-share, the Commonwealth remains 13 percentage points below the policy goal of the state covering 67% of the cost of higher education for in-state students, thus shifting the responsibility from the state to the student in the form of higher tuition.

At W&M, over the ten-year period roughly \$25 million of total cost increases were related to state mandated salary actions. In addition to state salary actions, W&M targeted faculty salary increases as part of the institution’s plan to remain competitive nationally and retain the outstanding faculty our students expect. That \$25 million does not include increased minimum wage. W&M responded to competition in the local employment market by first going to \$12/hour minimum wage and subsequently \$15.50/hour. Both were ahead of the state requirements and saved the General Fund money because W&M had already funded the full increase in advance of the state mandate and did not benefit from a general fund share.

Maintaining a talented workforce is essential to providing a high-quality educational experience. Fringe benefit costs have also increased, a function of increased salaries and increases to rates, over 80% since 2012. Chapter 890 retirement plus other post-employment benefit rates totaled 9.25%. Those same benefits reached 17.53% in 2023. Health insurance rates increased 85%, which combined with fluctuations in employee elections, have led to almost \$11 million in additional cost. On the non-personnel side, the university has opened new educational facilities, experienced an average of 3.6% annual increase in utility costs over ten years, and seen inflationary costs related to contracts for library resources, technology, and facilities management, among others.

In addition to these general resource pressures, W&M has evolved academic programs in response to demand, requiring new and reallocated faculty, staff, and operational resources. In 2012, W&M did not have any online graduate programs producing revenue, but the Schools of Business and Education have implemented several programs since 2016 which now produce over \$20M in revenue that supports costs.

VMSDEP waivers have emerged as an unmanageable cost-driver, as the Virginia legislature has expanded their scope with zero allocations. At W&M, VMSDEP waivers grew ~550% from FY19 to FY23. We anticipate they may exceed \$4M for FY24.

Deferred maintenance on campus infrastructure and business systems are near-term “cost rocks” that W&M has sought innovative solutions for – to continue to flatten the curve of tuition growth.

D5. What specific strategies/actions do you plan to take to contain/reduce key costs and improve fiscal health going forward while improving student outcomes? What are your objectives and what have been your results to date of any already-launched initiatives? What is the expected impact and timeframe of these strategies? Include any short-term costs that would need to be incurred to implement the strategies.

1. Over the past three years, W&M has implemented new systems for procurement, undergraduate admissions, sponsored programs and research compliance, vendor payments, business meals and catering, robotic process automation, vendor payments and Amazon lockers. These modernizations increase efficiency, while providing better data that further improves our business processes. We estimate that these operational efficiencies resulted in 2.5% savings in non-personnel expenditures, a \$5.7M cumulative savings.
2. As part of our five-year tuition freeze, W&M reduced overall headcount by 200+ positions (6% of faculty, 5% of staff). With an ever-changing technological landscape and evolving student demand, it is important to assess vacant positions to ensure that we align staffing with our institutional mission. Further improvements in position control tools would permit greater insight into future staffing needs.
3. The next big “cost rock” W&M faces is the urgent need to modernize our business systems by converting from a 20th C. enterprise platform to a cloud based, S.A.A.S. solution. We estimate upwards of \$30M in costs to modernize, which will produce operational efficiencies and the ability to reallocate activity towards more strategic priorities over time. We are in conversation with the Secretary of Administration and peer institutions about consortium purchasing approaches to this significant expenditure.
4. While W&M has prioritized efficiency in our administrative processes, we also undertook a faculty productivity study in 2022 and reported back to the Board of Visitors. As part of this work, the provost established a longitudinal enrollment dataset to track degree conferrals over time. This data supports enrollment trend analysis, curriculum planning, and staff projections. W&M now has a baseline for establishing faculty workloads and enrollment demand — ensuring informed decision-making.
5. The university faces significant deferred maintenance in buildings and physical infrastructure. By making facilities more efficient, we contain costs and redirect resources. To this end, W&M is focusing on renovating existing E&G facilities while implementing a comprehensive plan for its housing and dining facilities via a P3.

D6. Provide information about your institution’s highest-priority E&G capital projects and requests (including new construction as well as renovations) over the six-year plan period and how they align to your enrollment trajectory, student outcomes improvement plans, or other strategic priorities. Please also reflect on your current E&G facilities utilization (especially classrooms, labs and student service areas), particularly in light of any recent trends that might impact space needs (e.g., enrollment trends, shifting learning modalities). How has square footage per student changed over time and why? What efforts have you made to reassess and further optimize the use of your existing facilities, and what has been the impact of those efforts to date? What do you intend to do in the next six years to increase utilization?

The university continues to assess its capital needs on a regular basis. Preserving existing facilities and ensuring they are structurally sound, code compliant, accessible, efficient, and sustainable are high priorities — ensuring the best learning environment experience for current and future students.

Renovate: Ewell Hall / \$30,000,000 GF

Consistent with W&M’s capital plans for more than a decade, Ewell Hall — one of the historic academic buildings at the heart of campus — requires significant renovation. With the completion of Fine & Performing Arts Phase 1 & 2 in 2023, we will vacate most of Ewell Hall, allowing W&M to address significant building systems issues, and modernize classroom and administrative space that will support Health Sciences, the Arts & Sciences Dean’s Office and the Reves Center for International Studies. The project includes long-overdue renovations to update life safety and other building systems, achieve code compliance, ensure full accessibility, and reconfigure the interior to suit future use. Timing is critical: Ewell will become partially vacant with the opening of Fine & Performing Arts. This near-term vacancy allows a non-disruptive window for renovations.

Renovate: Adair Hall / \$16,600,000 GF

As outlined in the university’s 2015 Master Campus Plan and with the opening of the final phase of the Integrated Science Center scheduled for August 2025, the university’s focus will need to shift to addressing other academic facilities on campus that house the remaining science departments. The project will update life safety systems including fire alarm and sprinkler systems, ensure full accessibility, and make necessary adjustments to mechanical and electrical systems to support continued use of the facility as an academic space for what is currently the Kinesiology department. Arts & Sciences is reorganizing this department to better align the program with industry and workforce needs.

Maintenance Reserve Program

State funding to support the renovation and revitalization of aging E&G facilities is essential to ensure that the physical plant can be utilized efficiently and effectively. This has become even more critical as the university works toward becoming carbon neutral by 2030. In addition, ongoing support through the maintenance reserve program ensures that W&M can address essential repairs to E&G facilities, thus extending their useful life.

Campus Master Planning, 2023-25

During this six-year plan period, the university will complete a Campus Comprehensive Plan. The most recent Master Plan, completed in 2015, provided an excellent framework for strategic capital investments. The next Comprehensive Plan will incorporate additional components: 1) the recently completed housing and dining master plan; 2) a landscape plan to steward and protect our beautiful campuses; 3) a learning spaces plan focused on modernizing educational facilities and optimizing their use.

W&M is assessing opportunities to utilize spaces more fully over the summer semester — so as to run the university year-round, a far more efficient use of resources overall. W&M is currently exploring demand and will prepare a business case this coming year.

Using SCHEV’s annual FTE figures, W&M instructional square footage has gone from 102.2/FTE in 2018-19 to 101.1 in 2022-23. Over that time, total instructional square footage increased by almost 50,000 contributing to W&M’s overall plan for enrollment growth that can be sustained and supported. As noted above, better enrollment projections enabled by the provost’s data initiative now provide for improved curricular planning.

SECTION E: BUDGET REQUESTS

E1. Provide additional information for any budget requests in Part I of your planning template that are not described elsewhere in your narrative.

SECTION F: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ANNUAL REPORT

F1. Provide a link to any report your institution has produced about its economic development contributions. You may also share it in the appendix or as an attachment.

See Appendix B.

SECTION G: FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INQUIRY, FREE SPEECH, ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND DIVERSITY OF THOUGHT

G1. Provide a copy of any policy or reports your institution has produced and provide information about annual training or orientation related to this topic.

W&M is a community in which the ideals of freedom of inquiry, thought, and expression are actively respected and sustained. The university is committed to supporting the exercise of constitutionally protected expression in university-controlled facilities and property while maintaining a safe atmosphere free from disruption. Consistent with the university’s mission to “create a learning environment where teaching, research and public service are linked through programs designed to preserve, transmit, and expand knowledge,” a commitment to free expression is essential to fostering open discourse, argumentation, speaking, listening, learning, and exploration of ideas.

W&M’s relevant policies and materials concerning freedom of expression (including our process for reporting disruptions of constitutionally protected speech and our annual report of campus freedom of

expression) are published [here](#). As laid out in the annual report located at the shared link, during fall orientation new students participated programming based on the Aspen Institute’s Better Arguments Project, “a national civic initiative created to help bridge divides.”

Further, the Council of Presidents affirmed our commitment to free speech with the below statement:

As presidents of Virginia’s public colleges and universities, we unequivocally support free expression and viewpoint diversity on our campuses. Free expression is the fundamental basis for both academic freedom and for effective teaching and learning inside and outside the classroom. Our member universities and colleges are bound to uphold the First Amendment. We are committed to promoting this constitutional freedom through robust statements and policies that are formulated through shared governance processes and through actions that reflect and reinforce this core foundation of education. We value a scholarly environment that is supported by a diversity of research and intellectual perspectives among our faculty and staff. We pledge to promote and uphold inclusivity, academic freedom, free expression, and an environment that promotes civil discourse across differences. We will protect these principles when others seek to restrict them.

SECTION H: NEW SCHOOLS, SITES, MERGERS

H1. Provide information on any new instructional sites, schools, or mergers supported by all types of funding that your institution is considering or planning to undertake during the six-year period.

As noted above, W&M is developing plans to establish a School of Computing, Data Science, and Applied Science. In Spring 2023, the provost charged a Steering Committee to study the opportunity. They synthesized market research, feedback from the W&M community, and submitted their findings on 6/12/2023. In fall 2023, the provost will submit a business case to the president and Board. W&M anticipates making a proposal to SCHEV in 2024.

If approved, a school of Computing, Data Science and Applied Science (“CDSAS”) at W&M would become the first new school established at the institution in more than half a century. Proponents of this new entity believe that once established, it will address increased student demands in high growth areas, elevating W&M’s national profile in industries marked by robust innovation across the country. They also note that increased visibility and autonomy for these three disciplines will strengthen recruitment of world-class faculty and graduate students and attract increased external funding for research (both external grants and state funds).

W&M has no plans to establish new instructional sites nor merge with other institutions.

SECTION I: RESEARCH

I1. Highlight any strategic research priorities, programs, or key areas of investment (e.g., hiring plans, critical research agendas, interdisciplinary centers, business partnerships, commercialization efforts) and IP dissemination and commercialization priorities you intend to pursue over the next 6 years that have not already been mentioned in this narrative. What are the anticipated benefits to your faculty attraction/retention strategy, student value proposition, and the economic competitiveness of the Commonwealth?

W&M seeks to expand our research. Vision 2026 emphasizes high-impact research — research directly relevant to future needs of the Commonwealth. W&M anchors GoVa Region 5, aligning with Governor Youngkin’s goals of advancing marine technology. In GoVa Region 6 the Commonwealth has set growth objectives for IT, data centers, and manufacturing. Here we are also strategically aligned with our commitments to growing Data Science degrees and job-oriented student internships. Our Engineering Physics and Applied Design (EPAD) major provides study of advanced prototyping of mechanical, electrical, and nanodevices, and remote-sensing, machine-learning and artificial/augmented intelligence control of autonomous vehicles and other systems.

In addition to being a powerful presence in the statewide Commonwealth Cybersecurity Initiative, W&M is currently developing a Center for Academic Excellence for Cybersecurity, to meet the interests of the intelligence community in our area. Our Data Science program is working with DOE to expand Jefferson Lab’s (JLab’s) scope to multidisciplinary research. The construction of JLab’s data center will generate a very large number of construction jobs in Virginia, along with significant jobs (>\$400M) for an enduring operational presence. W&M data scientists, working with Jlab personnel, have been organizing machine learning and advanced artificial intelligence workshop programs (AI4EIC) to meet that challenge.

All of these areas are targets of opportunity called out in Commonwealth plans. In coordination with VIPC, and with attention to Virginia Economic Development Partnership objectives, directed proposals bringing advanced computerized methods to bear on problems in human health and public health, have been positioned as joint targets of opportunity. W&M remains a closely connected partner to the local military presence on the Peninsula, offering both research and advanced training support to uniformed members of all branches of service. We have recently become a highly valued partner to NATO in all-domain training.

Internal incentives to grow research output include:

- Revised faculty research grants program to reinforce the expectation that faculty scholars labeled research-active must conduct research year-round.
- Workshops and pilot funding supporting major grant applications.
- Systematic academic restructuring to focus on “wicked problems” — complex problems and require interdisciplinary solutions. The vanguard of this trend is our School of Marine Science at VIMS, which dissolved traditional departments. VIMS is now structured around pressing scientific and industry challenges, which will guide faculty hiring. We anticipate that major improvements to research outcomes will follow this “cluster-hiring” approach. We anticipate similar efforts on the Williamsburg campus will enhance our reputation as an undergraduate destination, while increasing post-doctoral and graduate enrollment.

- We will continue to prioritize commercialization opportunities. Over consecutive years, IP commercialization revenues to W&M have exceeded all technology transfer office expenses and payouts to inventors. (We note that only 25% of universities nationwide are net profitable in any given year.) Historically, most W&M licensing revenues come from “green tech.” Yet, in the absence of a medical school or engineering school, W&M’s IP is field-agnostic. We aim to get W&M research into the public domain, often freely. E.g., VIMS’ SCHISM model is [used](#) by the EPA for the Chesapeake Bay.

SECTION J: COLLABORATION

J1. Outline any existing or potential initiatives you have not already highlighted in this narrative that feature collaboration across public higher education institutions (and other state agencies as appropriate) in furthering the goals outlined in sections B-D. What is the expected impact and in what timeframe? What is the timeline for the initiative and how far along is it? What (if anything) would be required from a budget or policy perspective to facilitate the success of the initiative?

Data Science. The Hampton Roads region has positioned itself as an emerging player in data science but is lagging in job growth and the necessary talent pipeline to support industry. To address this gap, the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) has been charged through Item 487.10 of the 2022 Appropriations Act to assess the implementation of a data science innovation hub in the region. Since March 2022, W&M has been a lead advisor on this effort, along with several other major public institutions in the region and Jefferson Labs, sharing expertise on the necessary services, collaborations, applied research, and industry engagement to support the region. We will contribute faculty, facilities, and research funding to the hub. We expect this multilateral effort to bolster the regional talent pipeline, better attract and retain students and faculty, and align academia-industry priorities.

William & Mary has already identified four data science-related thrust areas that reflect its immediate innovation interests and its deep expertise in the data science ecosystem: *Data & Society*, *Data & Location*, *Data & Public Health*, and *Data & Large-Scale Experiments*. We expect that activities in these thrust areas will be featured prominently among the portfolio of the future data science innovation hub, with W&M managing the corresponding portion of that portfolio to maximize the return on the Commonwealth’s investment to this activity. Hub activities are expected to include: i) collaborations with local stakeholders (industry, government, and communities) to foster immediate regional innovation and impact, as well as ii) basic and applied research and entrepreneurship to establish the innovation foundation for the future data-driven regional economy that will help the Hampton Roads region elevate its economic conditions. Ongoing activities at W&M related to the establishment of a new School of Computing and Data Sciences are perfectly aligned with this endeavor.

ERP Conversion. A consortial approach to Enterprise Systems akin to the Commonwealth’s successful library consortium would modernize business systems, improve operational performance, and significantly reduce both one-time outlays and annual costs. As noted above, W&M is leading conversations with peers and the Governor’s team about this innovative approach. It would require both a new policy vehicle for business modernization and significant one-time funding support.

Williamsburg Schools. In June, the City of Williamsburg City Council voted to launch a feasibility study regarding the possibility of running its own school system, separate from James City County. The study

will take place this summer through fall 2023. The City has invited W&M to share its expertise through its School of Education. Following the input of nearly 2,000 residents, the City seeks to improve K-12 pathways to higher education and certificate programs via coordination with local institutions.

Williamsburg Economic Development Authority. W&M collaborated with the Williamsburg Economic Development Authority in a bond issuance for Phase 1 of our housing and dining comprehensive facilities plan. Bonds will support essential upgrades to W&M’s infrastructure, via a public-private partnership. This financing structure allows the university to replace facilities more expeditiously than traditional financing methods and eases the burden on the university’s debt capacity and ratio. Ultimately, this focus on cost containment benefits students and families: reducing the potential impact on room rates and dining plans, which are driven in part by debt service.

SECTION K: STATE POLICY

K1. Use this section to outline any state policy changes you have not already mentioned in this narrative that would enhance your ability to achieve greater success on the topics, strategies, and initiatives referenced in this narrative. What existing policies, if any, are hindering your ability to maximize outcomes and value for students? What new policies might create conditions that are more conducive to achieving those goals? What strategies or initiatives would these policy changes enable your institution to do or try that you are not yet able to do today? Please be as specific as possible.

Please see above.

SECTION L: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

L1. Use this final section to provide any additional context and/or supporting materials you feel should be incorporated into the six-year planning process.