

Extracts from the Challenge 1 Subcommittee Summary  
Concerning Goals, Objectives and Priorities  
For William & Mary as a Leader Among Liberal Arts Universities

April 15, 2010

Over the past year, the Challenge 1 Subcommittee has worked hard to provide a summary of the analysis behind the selection of goals, objectives and priorities for William & Mary as a leader among liberal arts universities. The body of the summary and the appendix covering selected principles for setting priorities are included below. The subcommittee also developed a separate appendix (not included here) that included a preliminary discussion of cost estimates and potential targets. The Planning Steering Committee considered the summary and the appendices in developing its recommendations for the strategic planning framework for FY11-15.

Michael Halleran and Jim Golden, Co-chairs, Planning Steering Committee

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To: Members of the William and Mary Community  
From: The Challenge 1 subcommittee  
RE: Summary document concerning Challenge 1  
Date: April 7, 2010

Dear Colleagues:

As part of this year's strategic planning process, our group was charged with the further refinement of the Goals and Objectives for Grand Challenge 1. Along the way, we found it very useful to develop this summary document. This document provided a vehicle to solicit feedback from colleagues, and working through it helped all members of the committee develop a better understanding of this part of the plan. We hope that you will find it useful, too. Comments and suggestions are welcome. Please feel free to send them to the Gene Tracy ([ertrac@wm.edu](mailto:ertrac@wm.edu)) who will forward them to the committee.

Respectfully submitted,

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Monty Mason, '89, Alumni Representative  
Leisa Meyer, Associate Professor of History  
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## **Grand Challenge 1: Be a Leader Among Liberal Arts Universities Framing Our Goals and Objectives**

We begin by recalling the Vision Statement, which goes hand in hand with our Grand Challenge:

William & Mary will continue to be one of the world's great liberal arts universities. Already a university of compelling academic distinction, the College will expand its interdisciplinary study, global relevance, and faculty-student research, as well as its lifelong ties with alumni. Our students come wanting to change the world and will leave with the tools to do it.

To meet this challenge, and to realize this vision, we must continue to attract and retain the best faculty, students, and staff, preserve our distinctive blend of teaching, research and scholarship, and celebrate and protect our existing strengths. We must also embrace the changing context in which we do our work, enriching the creative lives of our faculty and students by extending our collaborative, interdisciplinary, and global reach.

Toward these ends, we have identified two critical goals that must guide our planning efforts.

**Goal 1:** Embed the core values of liberal arts education in all parts of the university.

**Goal 2:** Provide more robust support for teaching, research, scholarship, and creative activities.

The objectives associated with these goals are not intended to be exhaustive; they are, instead, an indication of the critical actions we must take in the next several years. A generation from now, our faculty and students should be working and studying at an institution of even greater academic distinction than we are today. We must move forward, not stay where we are.

### **Goal 1: Embed the core values of liberal arts education in all parts of the university.**

#### Rationale for the goal

We start with the idea that a *university* is an institution that advances knowledge and passes it on to the next generation, while the *liberal arts* embody a shared set of values and skills that transcend disciplinary and school boundaries. As an institution and intellectual community, we promote and protect curiosity, intellectual rigor, free and open inquiry, and diversity in all its forms.

A university's academic excellence and reputation are determined primarily by the quality of its faculty and through the contributions they make to research, scholarship, and creative work. Another integral measure of a university is the quality of education it provides for its students and the caliber of these students. We aim to provide a high-quality education for all our students -- undergraduate, graduate and professional -- in preparation for further study, professional careers, and productive lives as engaged citizens in a democratic, diverse, and increasingly global society.

#### Objectives

Objective 1: Carry out the Liberal Arts University Conversation and produce a white paper by April 2010 that clearly articulates what we are and what we aspire to become as a liberal arts university, given the vision we have articulated. The white paper will guide any subsequent reviews of the curricula and faculty reward systems.

Objective 2: Carry out a review of the curricula, beginning with the undergraduate curricula in A&S, Business, and Education.

Objective 3: Carry out a review of the faculty merit and incentive system.

## Rationale for the reviews

Periodic curriculum reviews ensure that what we teach, and how we teach it, reflect our core pedagogical objectives as well as innovative educational and scholarly approaches. They also empower junior faculty to engage in the creative evolution of the university. Similarly, reviews of the reward system provide an opportunity to ensure that institutional incentives align closely with institutional goals. W&M has committed to expanding interdisciplinary study and global relevance. These are critical priorities. The reviews called for here will ensure that we achieve them in a manner that is well integrated with our other efforts.

## Proposed metrics for Goal 1, FY11-15

Review of the curricula completed and related changes implemented.

Review of the merit and promotion systems and related incentives completed and changes implemented.

Alignment of review recommendations and changes with the vision and related strategic priorities.

## **Goal 2: Provide more robust support for teaching, research, scholarship, and creative activities.**

### Rationale for the goal

The form of education we provide for undergraduate, graduate, and professional students requires significant resources: faculty and staff time, research equipment, classroom technology, and library facilities, to name a few. To attract and retain the best faculty, staff, and students, and to forward the vision and goals of the university, we must do better in providing needed resources and encouraging innovative work.

### Objectives

Objective 1: Ensure faculty and staff receive competitive compensation as well as the resources they need to succeed.

Objective 2: Ensure graduate and professional stipends are competitive with peer programs.

Objective 3: Promote more undergraduate research opportunities.

Objective 4: Carry out resource needs assessments for research, creative work and teaching (to include the libraries, IT, creative and performing arts spaces, learning environments, etc.). Increase support as appropriate.

Objective 5: Increase support and provide incentives for innovative and collaborative teaching and research.

### Rationale for faculty and staff compensation and resources

W&M cannot achieve its academic goals without attracting and retaining the best faculty and staff. Competitive compensation is thus as much about the core intellectual mission of a liberal arts university as about the financial model under which enables it to thrive. We must also recognize that competitive models might not be wholly adequate for hourly and classified staff and ensure equitable compensation for work done for these groups.

We must ensure new faculty have the resources they need to succeed by providing robust start-up packages. These cover costs such as attending professional conferences, book purchases, library

resources, summer salary, and scientific equipment. These are often critical to faculty members' ability to launch competitive research programs.

In addition, we must support the faculty we have, whose trajectories often include mid-career explorations into related and new fields, opening up new avenues of scholarship and teaching and ensuring that faculty remain productive throughout their tenure at the university. To provide funds needed at this stage, we propose creating a faculty research development fund.

#### Rationale for graduate and professional stipends

Graduate and professional studies are an integral part of William & Mary; they are what make us a university. Many graduate students directly support faculty research, and they assist and enliven our undergraduate teaching with fresh perspectives and research agendas of their own.

Our PhD programs in A&S, Education, and VIMS/SMS, along with our graduate programs in Business and Law, play an important role in shaping our SCHEV peer group and our Carnegie classification as a research university. These external indicators, in turn, have implications for our resource allocations and reputation.

We want our graduate programs to be ranked among the best nationally and internationally, and our graduates to become leaders in their chosen fields. To attract the best students, we must provide competitive support packages, including health insurance. To compete successfully for the top students, we must increase the level of assistantship support in A&S, as well as the amount of financial aid awarded in the Law and Business Schools.

#### Rationale for increased opportunities for undergraduate research

To equip students to lead in a world of change, we must do more than pass on established knowledge. We must help them learn what it means to produce knowledge, and to explore the ways in which knowledge evolves and is disseminated. We do this through research, original as well as pedagogical.

We have been quite successful to date in raising private and foundation funds for undergraduate research. But with our goal of providing opportunities for every W&M undergraduate to engage in independent, faculty-mentored research, we must do more.

#### Rationale for resource needs assessments and funding

Beyond supporting the people who comprise the W&M community, we must invest in the common goods that most directly impact our teaching, research, and creative activities and are integral to our academic success. These include not just infrastructure projects (covered in Challenge 5), but the many digital, material, and human resources on which we rely every day, from books to online databases, software, musical instruments, and technical support.

#### Rationale for more robust support of innovative and collaborative work

W&M's core disciplines remain vibrant in the 21st century. At the same time, students and faculty increasingly do their work outside the traditional classroom, across disciplinary boundaries, and within collaborative efforts that span continents. We must more effectively support innovative work in these realms and use the university's intellectual resources to engage public issues and serve local, regional, national, and global communities.

Examples of existing institutional structures that support the types of activities we have in mind are the Roy R. Charles Center, which supports interdisciplinary programs and the Honors program for undergraduate research; the Reves Center for International Studies, which promotes, develops, and

supports the global dimensions of learning, teaching, research, and community engagement at William & Mary; and the newly opened Office of Community Engagement and Scholarship which serves as a resource for faculty for the integration of engaged teaching and research. This is not an exhaustive list, but just a sampling of existing programs that address the objective.

#### Proposed metrics for Goal 2, FY11-15

Demonstrable progress toward closing gaps between W&M and peer institution faculty/staff compensation and graduate student stipends.

Startup fund, and faculty research development fund, in place.

Successful funding of increased research opportunities for W&M undergraduates.

Assesment of resource needs completed and recommendations implemented.

New funding mechanisms for, and increased allocations to, innovative and collaborative teaching/research.

#### **Appendix I: Suggested principles for setting priorities**

Optimal allocation of resources requires making choices and setting priorities. Those choices should be guided by principles that are embodied in our goals and reflect the shared values of the institution. Overall principles for the setting of priorities, identified by President Reveley, are the following:

- 1] We should keep our eye on the vision.
- 2] We should consider the implementation plan as a whole. Priority should be given to those steps that are most central to the entire strategy.
- 3] We need to make sure that the implementation steps move us clearly and meaningfully toward each goal.
- 4] We should distinguish between things we hope to accomplish with current and projected resources, and things we can only accomplish with additional external support.
- 5] We should leverage our intellectual and financial resources in the most effective way.

As a result of our crafting this summary document, we also identified the following guidelines that we believe amplify and elaborate upon the principles given above:

- 1] While our goal should always be to provide the resources necessary for all our faculty to succeed, if resources are limited investment funds – such as for startup and faculty research development -- should give a preference to those hires that have potential for the most widespread intellectual impact and likelihood of enhancing the faculty research program, understood in the most general sense. For those fields where startup requires the purchase of expensive equipment, this should be treated as a seed investment that will be returned eventually through the capture of external funding.
- 2] Indirect Cost funds (overhead charged to externally funded grants and contracts) faculty research development funds should be allocated on the basis of a competitive process with regard for the College's strengths in various research fields, institutional goals, and the likelihood of return on investment in the most general sense.
- 4] In seeking funds for increased undergraduate research, we should target new funding towards: a) students in the humanities and arts; b) student who are unable to take advantage of summer opportunities because of their need to work; c) faculty projects that provide high quality opportunities for the most students per faculty member; and d) projects that help faculty explore new ways to involve students in their research.