



# WILLIAM & MARY

CHARTERED 1693

## MEMORANDUM

To: Katherine Rowe, President

From: Henry Broaddus, Vice President for Strategic Initiatives & Public Affairs  
Matthew Lambert, Vice President for University Advancement  
Amy Sebring, Vice President for Finance & Technology

Cc: Peggy Agouris, Provost  
Jeremy Martin, Chief of Staff

Date: September 19, 2019

Subject: Continuing Education Tiger Team: Consultant's Report & Next Steps

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In August 2018, Faculty Assembly proposed to you that William & Mary explore the growing market for working learners; by some measures, nearly 12 million now seek retraining in the United States alone, a population growing more swiftly than traditional college-age students and one that has a strong claim on a public ivy committed both to excellence and educational access. In January 2019 you charged a "tiger team" led by the three of us "to explore potential models of continuing education, characterizing each's benefits and challenges, determine the most viable model for William & Mary, test and evaluate that model operationally and financially in regard to implementation – yielding an actionable recommendation for a decision by the president."

### **The committee**

Henry Broaddus, Vice Pres. for Strategic Initiatives & Public Affairs, *ELT sponsor*

Matthew Lambert, Vice Pres. for University Advancement, *co-chair*

Amy Sebring, Vice Pres. for Finance and Technology, *co-chair*

Rhonda Barton, Mason School of Business Corporate Education

Leslie Grant, Associate Dean of Academic Programs, School of Education

Carlane Pittman, Mason School of Business Director of MBA Programs

Todd Stottlemeyer, business leader and former member of the Board of Visitors

Scott Swan, Professor of International Business and Marketing

Molly Swetnam-Burland, Associate Professor of Classical Studies

### **Our process and recommendations**

After preliminary discussions with national leaders in the field, we engaged an external consultant, Entangled Solutions (ES), to assess markets, degrees and modalities for W&M's potential early foray in continuing education. A 14-slide executive summary from ES accompanies this memo. Our group quickly moved beyond the single notion of “continuing education” into one that also included professional education with a primary focus on post-baccalaureate degrees, and we concluded that opportunities exist for W&M in this domain. We also concluded that what appears to be the most promising path would require us to work with an established partner.

ES determined the most promising market for W&M is the Washington D.C. Metropolitan Area, especially since it is more than twice as large as Richmond and Hampton Roads combined. Outside of that market, ES acknowledged that some opportunities in Hampton Roads focused on military and federal officials may be worthwhile to explore, but Washington provides more opportunity.

Additionally, ES advised that any offering by W&M in the Washington market must be highly distinctive in light of the many competitors already operating there and the strong demand for technology-oriented fields such as computer science. We asked ES specifically to look closely at whether the Washington market provided opportunity to offer our M.P.P. degree in light of the recent decline in on-campus enrollment and strength of our alumni network there. Given declines in the DC-area enrollments for master's level public policy programs, W&M would need to differentiate itself clearly in this market by making considerable changes to the existing curriculum and delivery mode. With such changes, hope remains for a reimagined M.P.P. offering,

especially in light of our reputation and history.

Entangled Solutions modeled three scenarios for possible entry in the Washington market. Scenario A would be smallest scale with relatively low startup costs that would vary based on the number of offerings, but also relatively low return with net revenue being slightly positive before taking into account the cost of purchasing or leasing a new facility. Scenario B would involve significantly more investment (up to \$1 million over three years) with an ROI that would require more than five years. ES notes that W&M could mitigate its upfront investment and shorten the ROI, but the long-term revenue stream to the university would be lower. Neither scenario makes the desired impact and both stand out as boutique-level moves.

Scenario C would require W&M to find a major partner with growth capital that enables the university to enter the market at larger scale and grow faster. Given the pace of change with these kinds of partnerships, there is no shorthand for what the revenue projections would be, but more investment by W&M and more assumption of risk would improve the returns. We recommend moving forward with a formal request for proposals (RFP) for prospective partners in order to gain clarity on the costs and returns of the kind of partnership envisioned in Scenario C. By proceeding with an RFP, of course, we would not commit to entering a contractual relationship with a partner, but we would be able to test the waters more thoroughly than our consultants could with mere hypotheticals.

### **Recommended next steps**

In addition to moving forward with an RFP for new, university-level offerings in continuing education, we recommend concurrent assessment of what the schools at W&M already are doing — or want to do — that might fit within a continuing education institute (or school) based in Washington. Conjoint analyses to evaluate more precisely the viability of specific offerings might be conducted as part of that assessment or could be built into the services requested via the RFP. The school-specific requirements that emerge from this assessment would inform any actual selection of a partner or partners if we ultimately elect to pursue Scenario C.

Broadly, based on our work so far, the desired capabilities of such a partner or partners would include the following:

- Ability to open a branch campus in the DC area and, potentially, other locations over time
- Support for continuing/professional education offerings developed either in partnership or by our faculty alone
- Platform that supports any combinations of face-to-face, hybrid and online modalities
- Robust infrastructure for marketing, student acquisition, support, billing and related administrative overhead
- International recruitment capabilities that complement other efforts to increase the visibility of W&M internationally
- Online program management
- Learning analytics that go beyond the measurement of transactional events, (e.g., quizzes) to cognitive events (e.g., correct application of a concept in a new context), and that synthesizes results for faculty and students in a way that empowers learners
- Program development expertise for shorter-term offerings (on-campus or off-campus) for pre-collegiate learners, undergraduates or post-baccalaureate learners
- Facilitation of opportunities for consortial efforts with other universities
- Favorable revenue sharing and transparency for all expenses

### **The past is prologue ...**

In closing, we note that W&M's early history included continuing education. The term "universal study" that appears in the royal charter at one time encompassed issuing a professional credential in the form of a surveyor's license to an off-campus learner named George Washington. Establishing a stronger presence for W&M in the district named for him would be a resumption and extension of what was part of the university's early mission. And if we can find the right partner with growth capital to help us move farther and faster, W&M has the opportunity to combine the best of its traditional educational model with the latest modes of delivery in order to

offer low-cost, high-impact education to more of the public we aspire to serve. We are optimistic about that prospect and see the establishment of a continuing education institute, potentially in partnership with a vendor, as a way for W&M to serve more learners, establish a sandbox for innovation that informs changes to pedagogy on campus, and improve our overall financial model by earning revenues to be reinvested in the university's strategic priorities.