Strategic Planning Faculty Survey Report 2008
An Initiative of the W&M Faculty Assembly

One response to the Strategic Planning Steering Committee
request for widespread faculty input

(1) Introduction

(a) Background and Overview

The Strategic Planning Faculty Survey is part of a broad effort to solicit faculty engagement in the strategic planning process underway during the 2008-2009 academic year.   As part of the process, the Strategic Planning Steering Committee has gathered (and continues to gather) input from a wide range of constituencies on challenges and priorities that the college will face in the next 5-10-15 years. Members of the William and Mary community on-campus as well as the extended members of the William & Mary community beyond Williamsburg are included in this endeavor: students, faculty, staff, advisory boards, alumni, parents, the board of visitors, etc.

The Strategic Planning Steering Committee created and charged a subcommittee to focus on each of the specific constituencies to be consulted.   The input from each of the subcommittees will be reviewed and considered, as the PSC prepares to identify approximately 6-8 major challenges or aspirations for the college.   This survey is an initiative of the Faculty Assembly and comes in response to a request from the PSC for faculty input and is only one of multiple venues by which faculty may provide their feedback. The draft challenges included in the survey are exactly that – "draft challenges" – they will feed into the final, smaller set of challenges that will form the basis for on-going strategic planning.

The survey content is drawn from recent discussions across the university concerning the challenges facing the college in the coming years, as well as from the most recent triennial Faculty Survey (in 2006).   Prepared by the Faculty Affairs Committee of the Faculty Assembly, and approved by the full membership of the Faculty Assembly, the survey has also been approved by the William and Mary Protection of Human Subjects Committee.

At this stage of the process, the draft challenges are intended to be broad, aspirational statements. Once a short list of challenges has been identified and approved by President Reveley, planning units all across campus will have an opportunity to propose specific, concrete strategies for addressing the challenges and for moving towards our shared aspirations for the college. It is in this second stage that measurable goals will be set by which we will monitor our progress, and hopefully our success, in meeting the challenges before us.

(b) Organization of the Report

For the purposes of this report, the following outline will be observed:

(1) Introduction

    (a) Background and Overview
    (b) Organization of the Report

(2) Profile of Survey respondents for Strategic Planning Faculty Survey (SPFS)

(3) Focus of Strategic Planning Faculty Survey

    (a) Aspirations and Challenges

        i. Overall results
        ii. Academic Area
        iii. Academic Rank
        iv. Gender

    (b) Aspirations and Challenges: open-ended survey questions

    (c) Feedback on draft Vision statement: open-ended survey questions

(2) Profile of Survey Respondents for Strategic Planning Faculty Survey (SPFS)

Surveys were sent to 530 tenured and tenure-eligible faculty, of whom 337 completed the survey for a response rate of 64% (63.6%).   The following tables provide demographic information for survey respondents and, for comparison, the same information for the total pool of tenured and tenure-eligible faculty for the same semester in which the survey was administered.   In general, the demographic profile of survey respondents is a good match for the demographic profile of the population sample.

Despite little advance notice and the brevity of the time that the survey was open (only five days), the response rate was strong and included a greater than 50% response rate from five of the seven faculty academic constituencies. A sixth academic area had a response rate of 48% and only one area was less than 30%. Table 1 gives response rates by academic area.

Table 1. Response Rates by Academic Area

Response Rate by Academic Area
Faculty Survey on Strategic Planning
November 2008

Academic Area	Response Rate
A&S Humanities	76%
A&S Social Sciences	55%
A&S Natural Sciences & Mathematics	85%
School of Business	60%
School of Education	71%
School of Law	48%
School of Marine Science	28%

Table 2. Faculty Survey Respondents and Survey Population by Academic Area

Survey Respondents and Survey Population by Academic Area
Faculty Survey on Strategic Planning
November 2008

Academic Area	Survey respondents		College-wide	
	%	n	%	n
A&S Humanities	27%	89	23%	117
A&S Social Sciences	21%	69	24%	126
A&S Natural Sciences	28%	92	21%	108
School of Business	9%	30	10%	50
School of Education	7%	24	7%	34
School of Law	5%	15	6%	31
School of Marine Science	4%	14	10%	50

Note: with only 4% of the faculty from the School of Marine Science completing the survey (14 of 50 individuals), the responses summarized in the survey report may not accurately reflect the views of the majority of SMS/VIMS faculty.   It is also important to note that the School of Marine Science has recently completed its own strategic planning process, which may explain the lower response rate to this survey.

Table 3.   Faculty Survey Respondents and Survey Population by Academic Rank

Response Rates by Academic Rank
Faculty Survey on Strategic Planning
November 2008

Academic Rank	Survey Respondents	College-wide
Full Professor	40%	39%
Associate Prof.	36%	34%
Assistant Prof.	23%	27%

Table 4.   Faculty Survey Respondents and Survey Population by Gender

Response Rates by Gender
Faculty Survey on Strategic Planning
November 2008

Gender	Survey Respondents	College-wide
Female	37%	33%
Male	61%	67%
Total	98%	100%

(3) Focus of Strategic Planning Faculty Survey

The Strategic Planning Faculty Survey sought faculty input on two-related matters:

☐ to identify and prioritize faculty aspirations or challenges for the future of the College (where do we want to be as an institution in 5-10 years?),

☐ to provide faculty feedback on the draft of the Vision statement for the College (Does it accurately reflect who we are? Does it include realistic aspirations? Is there anything that has been omitted and should be added?)

(a) Aspirations and Challenges

The first part of the survey provided a draft list of potential aspirations or challenges derived from the most recent Faculty Survey 2006 (which included a ranking of future faculty priorities for the College). That earlier list was revised and updated in light of discussions held in recent faculty meetings and in faculty groups, specifically focused on strategic planning (Oct A&S Faculty mtg., DAC mtg, etc.) and, from on-going discussions in of the Strategic Planning Steering Committee.

Survey respondents were asked: *Which priority rating would you assign to each of the following items as potential "grand challenges" for the College over the next 5-10 years?* Response options were: (1) a high priority, (2) a mid priority, (3) a low priority, (4) not a priority, (5) no rating assigned

A. Become a national leader in civic engagement & institutional outreach

B. Enhance the role of the creative and performing arts

C. Sustain/enhance focused support for faculty research

D. Attract and retain a superb student body

E. Expand interdisciplinary teaching & research opportunities

F. Create and support an innovative liberal arts model for a university with excellence in <u>both</u> teaching and research as core elements of its mission

G. Attract and retain a superb staff

H. Provide/enhance an environment that supports the unique nature of the W&M student residential & campus experience

I. Achieve greater financial independence through a strong business plan that includes an expanded revenue base

J. Attract and retain a superb faculty

K. Foster excellence in the teaching / learning experience

L. Expand efforts to internationalize the college (curriculum, dissemination of research, students, faculty)

M. Position our graduate and professional programs to be nationally competitive

N. Implement communications, marketing and branding initiatives that provide a clear focused, consistent message

O. Provide appropriate <u>infrastructure</u> for our teaching and research aspirations

P. Diversify the college (students, faculty, staff, curriculum, etc.)

Q. Publicize and expand upon the W&M tradition of preparing future leaders in their chosen profession

R. Make W&M a model for campus environmental sustainability

S. Become one of Virginia's most effective universities contributing to economic development

[i] Overall results

Given the broad, and often overlapping nature of the draft challenges, the goal of the survey was to identify general trends in faculty views regarding possible priorities and aspirations for future of the college.   In a survey of this type, the data does not lend itself to detailed numerical analysis. Therefore, the focus of this report is broad in scope and remains on a general level of identifying trends rather than attempting to examine discrete points.

The survey included the 19 draft challenges listed above (here labeled Q5-Q23). In the following table (Table 5), the highlighted challenges are the 10 challenges that received the greatest overall number of combined ratings of "high priority" + "mid priority".

**Table 5.   Top 10 draft challenges rated as "high priority" & "mid priority"
by overall survey respondents [not in ranked order]**

Q 5. civic engagement/institutional outreach
Q 6. enhance role of creative & performing arts
✓ **Q 7. sustain/enhance support for faculty research**
✓ **Q 8. attract & retain superb students**
✓ **Q 9. expand interdisciplinary T&R opportunities**
✓ **Q10. create model for liberal arts university**
✓ **Q11. attract & retain superb staff**
Q12. enhance student residential & campus experience
✓ **Q13. achieve greater financial independence**
✓ **Q14. attract & retain superb faculty**
✓ **Q15. foster excellence in teaching/learning experience**
Q16. expand efforts to internationalize the college
✓ **Q17. nationally competitive grad & professional programs**
Q18. implement communications, public relations initiatives
✓ **Q19. provide appropriate infrastructure for T&R aspirations**
Q20. diversify the college
Q21. publicize/expand W&M tradition of preparing leaders
Q22. model for campus environmental sustainability
Q23. become effective contributor to econ development in VA

The overall priority ratings of the challenges do occur in grouped subsets offering a general overview of hierarchy. Please note that within each subset, the challenges are numbered numerically (not in ranked order).

There is a distinct group of four challenges that were consistently rated as a "high priority" or "mid priority" by greater than 85% of survey respondents. They are:

| |
|---|
| ✓ Q 7. sustain/enhance support for faculty research |
| ✓ Q 8. attract & retain superb students |
| ✓ Q13. achieve greater financial independence |
| ✓ Q14. attract & retain superb faculty |

Table 6.   Percentage of overall survey respondents rating top 5 challenges as either "high priority" or "mid priority"
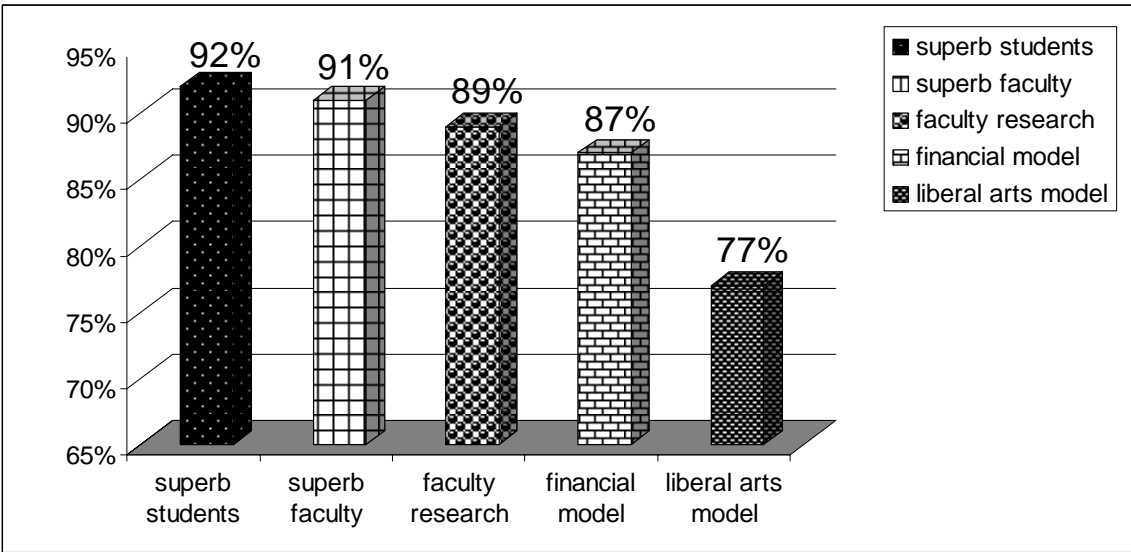
This first subset of challenges was followed by another close grouping of four more:

✓ Q11. attract & retain superb staff
✓ Q10. create model for liberal arts university
✓ Q15. foster excellence in teaching/learning experience
✓ Q19. appropriate infrastructure for T&R aspirations

Table 7. Percentage of overall survey respondents rating challenges (Q10, Q11, Q15 & Q19) as either "high priority" or "mid priority"
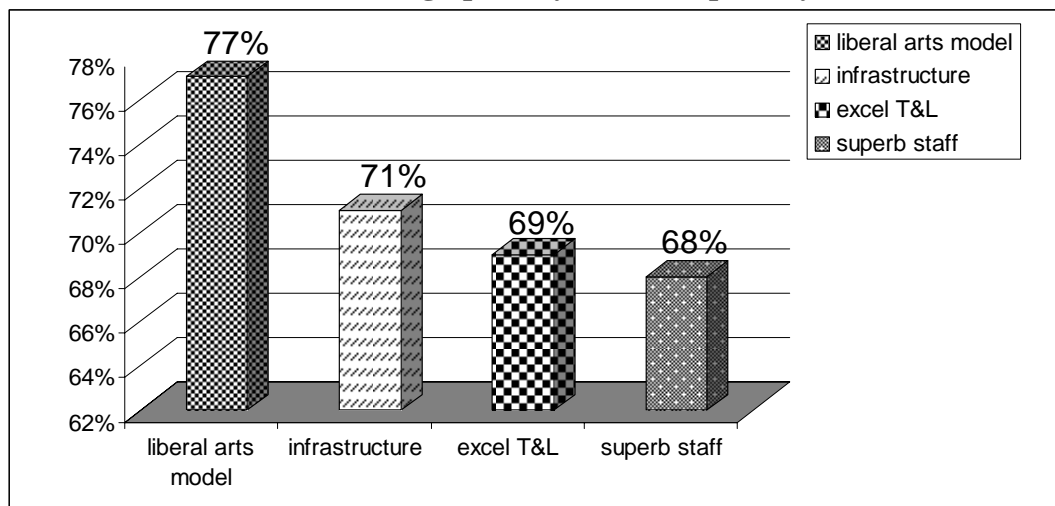
After a small gap, the following two challenges round out the top ten items rated as a "high priority" or a "mid priority" by overall survey respondents.
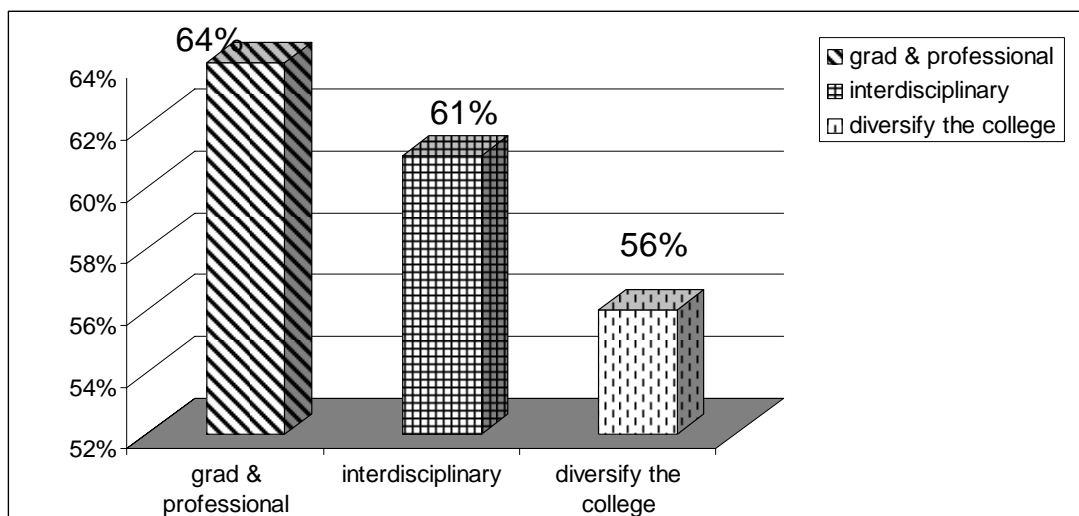
✓ Q 9. expand interdisciplinary T&R opportunities
✓ Q17. nationally competitive grad & professional programs

Very close, but just missing the top ten is:

✓ Q 20. diversify the college

Table 8. Percentage of overall survey respondents rating challenges (Q9, Q17, Q20) as either "high priority" or "mid priority"

Beyond that, there is a small gap followed by another tightly bunched grouping of challenges:

Q12. enhance student residential & campus experience
Q16. expand efforts to internationalize the college
Q22. model for campus environmental sustainability

Finally, two groups of challenges complete the list. Although approximately a third of survey respondents (*more than 100 faculty*) rated the challenges in the first grouping below as either a "high priority" or a "mid priority", that was not sufficient in the grand tally for the challenges to make the overall top 10 list.

Q 5. civic engagement/institutional outreach
Q 6. enhance role of creative & performing arts
Q18. implement communications, public relations initiatives

Fewer than 100 faculty rated the remaining two challenges as a "high" or "mid" priority when measured against the other 17 proposed challenges.

Q21. publicize/expand W&M tradition of preparing leaders
Q23. become effective contributor to econ development in VA

Note: although the above rankings were reached by combining "high" and "mid" priority ratings, the same top ten challenges resulted from a listing of those items rated solely as a "high" priority.   Using the alternate methodology, only two items shifted position slightly, neither of which were among the top six items.

[ii] Academic Area

The next table shows what happens when the responses are grouped by academic area, and for comparison, how the faculty responded as a whole. The challenges are not in rank order. An "x" indicates only they that appear in the top ten rated challenges for that academic area or overall.   The highlighted items were ranked among the top ten priorities for every academic area, without exception.

Viewed by academic area, survey responses are very consistent with the overall priority ratings. Seven of the ten highest priorities in the overall responses also appear in the top ten priorities for every single academic area (all of the professional schools, plus each of the three subdivisions of Arts & Sciences). Differences among the ten highest priorities as rated by academic area are limited to three items.

Table 9. The ten challenges rated most often as either "high priority" or "mid priority" by academic area and, for comparison, by overall survey responses.

	Overall	A&S A1	A&S A2	A&S A3	Business	Education	Law	SMS
Q5. civic engagement								
Q6. creative/perf. Arts								
✓ **Q7. faculty research**	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
✓ **Q8. superb students**	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Q9. interdisciplinary	X	X		X			X	
✓ **Q10. model Lib Arts**	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Q11. superb staff	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
Q12. student residential					X			
✓ **Q13. financial model**	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
✓ **Q14. superb faculty**	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
✓ **Q15. excellence T&L**	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Q16. internationalize								
Q17. grad & prof prog.	X			X	X	X	X	X
Q18. communication							X	
✓ **Q19. infrastructure T/R**	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Q20. diversify		X	X			X		
Q21. leadership								
Q22. sustainability				X				X
Q23. econ development								

Six of the seven academic areas share *"attracting & retaining superb staff"* as one of the remaining top priorities. *"Support for graduate and professional programs"* ranks among the top ten priorities for A&S Natural Sciences, and for each of the professional schools: Business, Education, Law and Marine Science. A&S Humanities, A&S Social Sciences, and the School of Education, all place *"diversify the college"* among their top ten priorities. *"Support for increased interdisciplinary opportunities in teaching and research"* are rated in the top ten for A&S Humanities, A&S Natural Sciences, and the School of Law. Faculty in both A&S Social Sciences and in the School of Marine Science/VIMS rated *"environmental sustainability"* as one of their top ten challenges for the college. Finally, the School of Business was the only academic area to include *"enhancing the student residential & on-campus experience"* among the top ten rated challenges.

[iii] Academic Rank

The remarkable consistency of faculty priorities was maintained in a review of survey responses by academic rank.   The next table shows what happens when the responses are grouped by academic rank, and for comparison, how the faculty responded as a whole. The challenges are not in rank order. An "x" indicates only they that appear in the top ten rated challenges for that academic rank or overall.   The highlighted items were ranked among the top ten priorities for every academic rank, without exception.

Table 10.   The ten challenges rated most often as either "high priority" or "mid priority" by academic rank and, for comparison, by overall survey responses.

	Overall	Assistant Prof	Associate Prof	Full Professor
Q5. civic engagement				
Q6. creative/perf. Arts				
✓ Q7. faculty research	X	X	X	X
✓ Q8. superb students	X	X	X	X
✓ Q9. interdisciplinary	X	X	X	X
✓ Q10. model Lib Arts	X	X	X	X
✓ Q11. superb staff	X	X	X	X
Q12. student residential				
✓ Q13. financial model	X	X	X	X
✓ Q14. superb faculty	X	X	X	X
Q15. excellence T&L	X		X	X
Q16. internationalize				
Q17. grad & prof prog.	X	X		X
Q18. communication				
✓ Q19. infrastructure T/R	X	X	X	X
Q20. diversify			X	
Q21. leadership				
Q22. sustainability		X		
Q23. econ development				

Eight of the ten *overall* most highly rated challenges were also among the top ten challenges for faculty at the Assistant Professor, Associate Professor and Full Professor ranks.   The priority differences by academic rank were:

Assistant Professors: *support for graduate & professional programs & sustainability*

Associate Professors: *foster excellence in teaching/learning experience & diversify the college*

Full Professors: *support for graduate & professional program,*
                    & foster *excellence in teaching/learning experience*

[iv] Gender

General consensus on priority challenges was maintained in a review of survey responses by gender. Nine of the ten highest rated challenges were the same for both male and female faculty members. The next table shows what happens when the responses are grouped by gender, and for comparison, how the faculty responded as a whole. The challenges are not in rank order. An "x" indicates only they that appear in the top ten rated challenges for either female faculty, male faculty, or for overall. The highlighted items were ranked among the top ten priorities for both female and male faculty.

Table 11.   The ten challenges rated most often as either "high priority" or "mid priority" by gender and, for comparison, by overall survey responses.

	Overall	Female	Male
Q5. civic engagement			
Q6. creative/perf. Arts			
Q7. faculty research	X	X	X
Q8. superb students	X	X	X
Q9. interdisciplinary	X	X	X
Q10. model Lib Arts	X	X	X
Q11. superb staff	X	X	X
Q12. student residential			
Q13. financial model	X	X	X
Q14. superb faculty	X	X	X
Q15. excellence T&L	X	X	X
Q16. internationalize			
Q17. grad & prof prog.	X		X
Q18. communication			
Q19. infrastructure T/R	X	X	X
Q20. diversify		X	
Q21. leadership			
Q22. sustainability			
Q23. econ development			

Women faculty members rated "*diversify the college*" as one of their top ten priority challenges, while male faculty placed a higher priority on "*support for graduate and professional programs*".

(b) Aspirations and Challenges: open-ended survey questions

Results from open-ended questions (Q 62 & Q63)

Q62. *"Are there other 'Grand Challenges' that are not included in the list above that you would like to suggest? Please list them here."*

Q63. *"Are there other strategies or means of achieving the draft challenges that you would like to suggest? Please list them here."*

There are approximately 52 pages of narrative comments in response to the two survey questions listed above (Q62 & Q63).

The themes which received the greatest number of survey responses are:

➢ the debate concerning "who we are?" and "what do we want to be?"

approximately equal numbers of recommendations:

(a) to move toward greater support for enhanced research university status and recognition, and --
(b) to refrain from placing a greater emphasis on our research university status

Among those who would push for greater research university status and recognition, there is a split among calls for greater support for current programs, recommendations for expansion of graduate programs into new areas, and suggestions for closing of current grad programs deemed "weak" or "not nationally competitive".

Among survey respondents who do not wish to place a greater emphasis on the research status of the university, the recommendation is to highlight the strengths of the teaching mission of the college recognizing the current dual nature (and current balance) of teaching & research.

➢ calls for greater support of collaboration in teaching, research, hiring, etc., within and across disciplines, departments, programs and professional schools within the College of William & Mary, as well as more collaborative efforts globally (with colleagues around the world)

➢ concern for the strategic planning process (timing, timeline, sufficient input, etc.)

➢ remarks that some of the draft 'grand challenges' are too vague, (some) appear to be geared to special interest groups, or lacking true inspiration, etc. Comments include recommendations: to shorten the list of challenges, to combine or synthesize overlapping challenges, and to provide greater focus and specificity, while striving for *inspirational and realistic* aspirations.

Recurrent themes found in the narrative comments are as follows:

Comments on the strategic planning process
 (as summarized above)

Reactions to the list of 'grand challenges'
 (as summarized above)

Remarks related to the question, "Who are we?"

- a need to define ourselves, our particular niche
- describe model of who we are now, or create model for what we want to become
- a need for strong leadership
- a need for true vision

Financial situation & financial model

- more effective use of our 'market power"
- massive expansion of fund-raising in Arts & Sciences
- revisit the College's relationship with the Commonwealth (privatize?)
- take measures to increase energy conservation
- adjust in-state / out-of-state undergraduate student ratio
- consider donors and what they are willing to support

    "Sticking with our current state constrained financial model is like tying a bag of sand to a marathoner's shoes." [anonymous survey respondent]

Students

- increase diversity of student body
- increase support for all students (undergraduate, graduate, professional)
- increase financial aid
- maintain size of the undergraduate student population
- increase size of the undergraduate student population
- do more to attract and recruit the strongest possible students
- increase recognition and student awards
- greater emphasis on student research
- review & revise policies for student campus life

Faculty
- calls to increase the number of faculty at W&M
- recommendations for faculty hiring: how to attract & retain strong faculty, spousal or partner hiring
- the allocation of faculty lines
- distribution of resources among faculty (old and new)
- faculty evaluation: tenure & promotion, as well as annual merit evaluation
- faculty compensation: salary, tuition remission for children, etc.

Administration

- recruitment & retention of administrators
- call for reduction in number of administrators
- concern regarding top-down decision making
- lack of respect for faculty governance structure

Research

- support for faculty research
- implications of, and support for UG student / faculty research
- support for graduate students
- travel support for research presentations at professional conferences
- call for more collaboration within W&M on research between Grad/Prof programs and Undergrad programs

Graduate Programs and Professional Schools (6.5 pages)

- calls to better support current graduate programs
- calls to eliminate weaker graduate programs (current)
- recommendations to add new grad programs (in key areas)
- recommendation to add new professional school (engineering)
- calls for greater focus on the professional schools'
- calls to drop the push to be competitive with Research 1 institutions

Undergraduate Education / Undergraduate Curriculum

- ensure & enhance the quality of the undergraduate curriculum
- time to undertake a serious review of the curriculum
- consider revising the curriculum in a radical way (beyond traditional GER requirements)
- place limits on class size
- don't lose has earned W&M its reputation for excellence

Teaching/Research – the push/pull for teaching & research

- can we continue to do both quality teaching & quality research with limited resources?
- review tenure & promotion criteria (inconsistencies in evaluating teaching & research)
- don't change the mix, the balance that initially attracted faculty to W&M

Collaboration / Interdisciplinary / International

- collaboration in research (within W&M, as well as internationally)
- collaboration in hiring (across departments, programs, professional schools)
- collaboration in teaching (across departments, programs, professional schools)
- collaboration in entrepreneurial ventures (with other VA institutions)

Faculty Governance

- too much top down governance (initiatives, policies, even this process)
- faculty need true voice in the budgeting process (greater role for FUPC)
- too many meetings filled with reports, need more real discussion items
- strengthen faculty governance and recognition of its essential role
- make W&M a model university for consultation and democratic decision-making
- pursue the Carnegie designation of an "engaged campus"

Sustainability

- 'sustainability' in the environmental resource/green sense'
- 'sustainability' in the broader sense of sustainable programs and objectives (these have been listed under their respective themes: research, teaching, etc.)

Approximately 30 comments distributed among the following topics:

Alumni
Arts building
Assessment
Athletics
BOV (W&M Board of Visitors)
Diversity (religious)
Emergency planning
Intellectual environment
Library
Technology
Public relations
Quality of life issues – too many demands on time
Critical feedback on the survey
Miscellaneous

(c) Feedback on draft Vision statement: open-ended survey questions

Survey respondents contributed approximately fifty pages of narrative comments concerning the draft vision statement. Remarks centered on: the length of the document, the need for a more forward-looking perspective, the concern that the statement does not distinguish William & Mary sufficiently from other institutions, etc. Specific suggestions were offered concerning organization, wording and tone of the document. A summary of the remarks was shared with the entire Strategic Planning Steering Committee and the full text of the comments has been provided to the SPSC subcommittee charged with revising the draft vision statement.