



The University of Vermont

**Enhancing Quality and Affordability
Strategic Action Plan**

President Tom Sullivan

**To the University of Vermont Board of Trustees
Friday, October 25, 2013**

Approved by the Board of Trustees: October 26, 2013

I. “Access to Success”: Promoting Affordability, Financial Access, and Academic Support

- A. Focus on the “relationship” between tuition and scholarships and financial aid: What is the right balance to maximize prospects for student enrollment and retention and minimize student debt?
 - 1. Moderate tuition growth and optimize financial support to achieve a tuition level that is financially sustainable for both students and the institution
 - 2. Prioritize scholarships and financial aid in the upcoming Comprehensive Campaign
- B. Ensure optimal academic support to achieve academic and career success

II. Promoting a culture of advancing academic excellence and cultivating talent

- A. Create and nurture an atmosphere of raising expectations and aspirations focused on quality and excellence
- B. Student focused
 - 1. Implement a new Enrollment Management Plan that
 - a. Reduces incrementally undergraduate enrollment to approximately 9,800 students
 - b. Recruits and supports transfer students
 - c. Increases international student undergraduate enrollment to approximately 5% to 7% (from the present 1%) by creating a new recruitment and “student preparation pathway” plan
 - d. Continues to annually value and promote domestic student diversity
 - e. Designs and offers graduate education programs in a way that ensures an optimal size, scale, and scope of the Graduate College consistent with and supportive of the “vision statement” of the University
 - f. Broadens student recruitment efforts outside the present, targeted geographic market to offset the effects of regional demographic trends
 - g. Increases the number of applications, selectivity, and yield for a well-prepared, diverse entering class
 - h. Rebalances the student-faculty ratio in order to enhance instruction and advising

2. To improve the whole student campus life experience, (academic, cultural, developmental wellbeing and social), review the curriculum and advising to enhance:
 - a. Retention of students from first to second year (from present 85% to 90%)
 - b. Four-year graduation rates (from present 65% to 70%)
 - c. Career advising and placement success at graduation
 - d. The optimal use of web-based education to supplement the curriculum and student experience
 - e. Educational standards, quality and vigor for an enriched student experience

C. Faculty focused

1. Promote increased research and creative scholarship of the faculty that has high impact and recognition
2. Increase the number of tenure-tenure track faculty in high quality programs that are aligned with UVM's strategic priorities where there has been a substantial enrollment increase over targets in order to advance excellence in teaching and learning

D. Staff focused

1. Promote high quality professional development programs

III. Identifying necessary investments to ensure a bright future

A. New investments, along with cost efficiencies, are essential to enhance the quality, impact, and reputation of the University

1. Investments in facilities, infrastructure, and information technologies are necessary to advance the educational and research responsibilities and opportunities of the University, particularly in engineering, sciences, and libraries
2. Priorities should include
 - a. Completion of Billings Library restoration
 - b. Laboratory restoration or new laboratories for Engineering, Chemistry, Physics
 - c. Completion of the Alumni House restoration
 - d. Design and construct a multi-purpose event center to house cultural, social, academic, wellness, and athletic events as well as additional fitness and recreation space primarily for student use
 - e. Completion of the Housing Master Plan

IV. Instilling an institutional commitment to efficiency and effectiveness that optimizes the use of facilities, technology, assets, and shared services that

- A. Develop a new budget model and framework that includes at its core an incentive-based approach to budgeting (IBB)
- B. Considers a three-semester curriculum that increases choices for students and faculty and supports timely degree completion

- C. Examines a winter “J” term that broadens students opportunities for international experience, internships, co-op opportunities, and special curriculum offerings
- D. Reduces administrative costs, redundancies and barriers that do not add value and/or effectiveness by implementing an administrative unit and budget review process similar to academic program review
- E. Encourages joint initiatives with academic institutions that have different comparative advances and qualitative strengths
- F. Uses benchmarks, metrics, timelines, relative comparisons and best practices to measure progress toward goals and aspirations
- G. Engages in continuous strategic planning and implements well-devised actions designed to sustain, promote, and measure academic creativity, research breakthroughs, and impact
- H. Plans and initiates a bold, creative Comprehensive Campaign to increase private support, grants, and endowments in order to support scholarships, faculty support, academic programs, and the restoration and construction of key facilities
- I. Focuses and aligns resources, reallocations, and revenue with academic priorities by undertaking and completing the Strategic Value / Financial Strength Plan regarding academic programs
- J. Encourages state officials to support and invest in direct, “special appropriations” that are closely aligned with state priorities and University goals in order to advance the public good within Vermont and the vibrancy of UVM
- K. Provides transparent communications and open dialogue throughout the University in order to achieve outcomes collaboratively
- L. Achieving the right balance in decision making among the following goals:
 - 1. Promoting student affordability
 - 2. Advancing institutional quality and value
 - 3. Maintaining financial sustainability for the institution
 - a. Focus on a reasonable, predictable cost of a high quality education experience for students
 - b. Hire, retain, and reward top talent among faculty and staff to ensure a culture of excellence and progress.