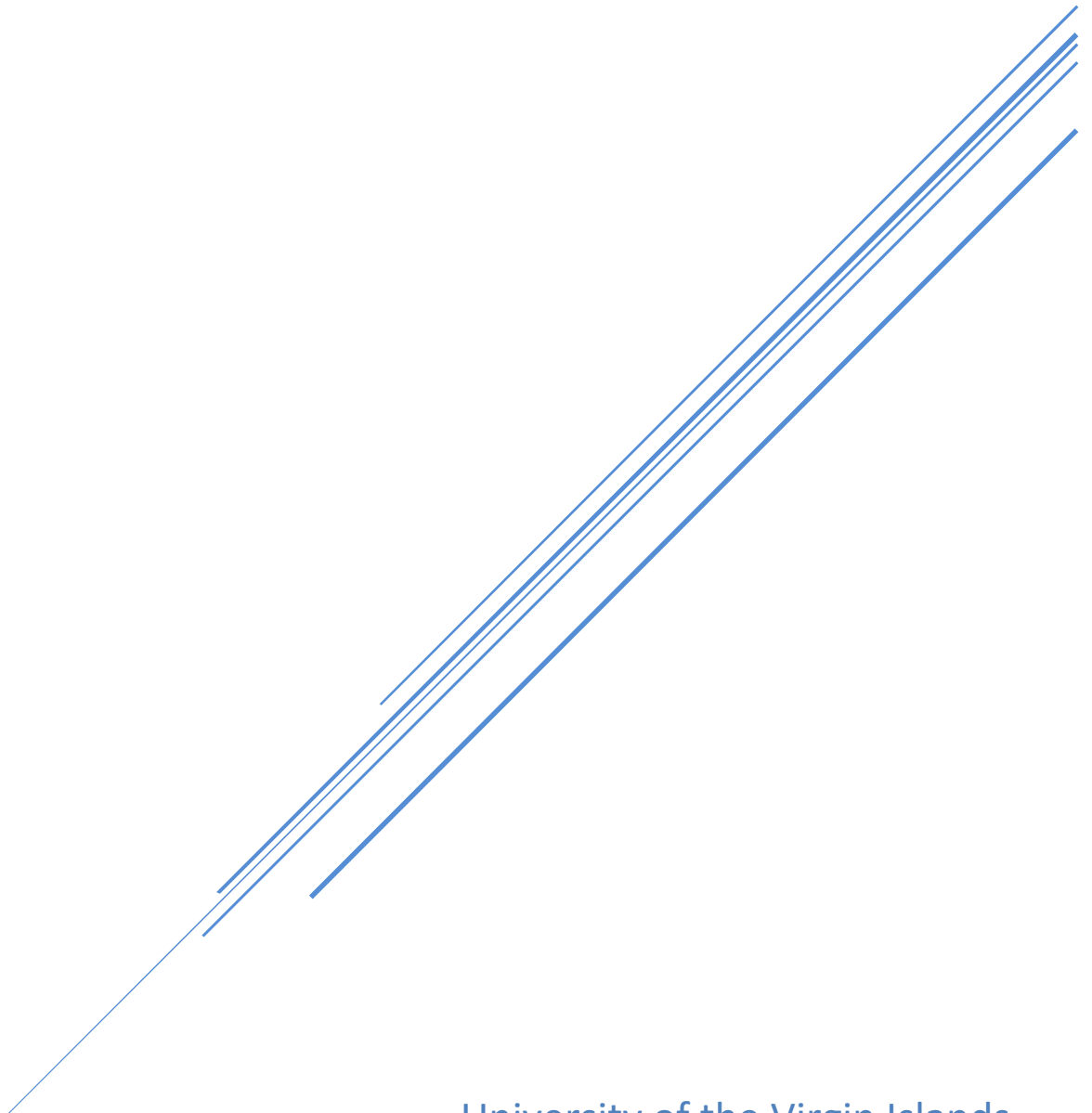


COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT PLAN



University of the Virgin Islands
Title III Project Administration

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INTRODUCTION

The Title III Part F Fostering Undergraduate Talent by Unlocking Resources for Education (FUTURE) Act Grant Program, enacted in December 2019, was designed to assist Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) in strengthening their infrastructure in areas such as their physical plants and academic resources. The University of the Virgin Islands, which holds the distinction of being the only HBCU outside the U.S. mainland, has been a recipient of Title III Part B funding since the inception of its relationship with the U.S. Department of Education in 1968. The institution has participated in the FUTURE Act’s predecessor grant programs—the College Cost Reduction and Access Act (2007) and the Student Aid and Fiscal Responsibility Act (2009). There are six legislatively allowable activities for which these funds provided to UVI under the Part F grant program can be used; these uses include the purchase of scientific equipment, construction or renovation of classrooms, purchase of books and periodicals and supporting teacher education.

BACKGROUND

The University of the Virgin Islands was chartered on March 16, 1962, as the College of the Virgin Islands (CVI)—a publicly funded, coeducational, liberal arts institution—by Act No. 862 of the Fourth Legislature of the U.S. Virgin Islands. According to that law, the College’s cornerstone objective was to provide for “...the stimulation and utilization of the intellectual resources of the people of the Virgin Islands and the development of a center of higher learning whereby and wherefrom the benefits of culture and education may be extended throughout the Virgin Islands.”

The first campus opened on St. Thomas in July 1963, on 175 acres donated by the federal government, with the first board of trustees taking office in August of that year. In 1964, the college founded a second campus on St. Croix, on 125 acres also donated by the federal government. Through purchase and other donations, the University has increased its real property to 295 acres on St. Croix and 390 acres on St. Thomas. The majority of the initial holdings and the immediately contiguous areas, houses the academic, research and outreach programs and services, and technical assistance that are integral to achieving mission elements, including the responsiveness to community that is embedded in the mission.

The College of the Virgin Islands began by offering only associate of arts degrees. In 1967, it added bachelor's degree programs in liberal arts and education. The first baccalaureate degrees were awarded in 1970, and in 1976 the college awarded its first master's degrees in education. Two years later, master's degree programs in business administration and public administration were instituted on both campuses.

CVI was designated as a Land-Grant institution in 1972, when then-President Nixon signed the Education Amendments Act. As a part of a network of such institutions, the College of the Virgin Islands assumed the responsibility for implementing (in the U.S. Virgin Islands) the concept that a practical education should be available to all interested students, not just the wealthy. With both the Agricultural Experiment Station and the Cooperative Extension Service, the institution continues its agricultural research and information dissemination activities.

In 1986, the College of the Virgin Islands was renamed the University of the Virgin Islands to reflect the growth and diversification of its academic curricula, community and

regional services, and research programs. That same year, the United States Congress named UVI as one of America's Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU); *therefore, it holds the distinction of being the only HBCU outside of the continental United States.* UVI is also the Territory's only accredited institution of higher education.

INSTITUTIONAL PROFILE

The University of the Virgin Islands is comprised of two campuses; one on the island of St. Thomas and the other on the island of St. Croix. The University has a population of over 2,104 students (as of Fall 2019), where the St. Thomas campus accounts for 62%, while the Albert A. Sheen Campus accounts for 36%; the remaining 2% are attributed to the St. Maarten campus and online offerings by the university. UVI has a diverse demographic, 69% of the student body is Black/African American, while 10% are of Hispanic descent, and 4% are Caucasian. Based on gender, females represent 68% of the student body, while males account for the remaining 32%. As the only institution of higher learning in the U.S. Virgin Islands, UVI offers undergraduate, graduate, and doctorate degree programs. Over 89% of the student population (as of Fall 2019) is enrolled in undergraduate degree programs, while 8% attending graduate courses, and the remaining 4% are enlisted in doctoral studies.

There are five academic units within the University of the Virgin Islands to include the School of Business; School of Education; College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences; School of Nursing; and the College of Science and Mathematics. The Schools and Colleges offer a wide range of Bachelors of Science and Arts as well as Associates of Arts degrees.

The School of Business offers three different bachelor's degrees and two master's degrees. In addition, there is a minor and a certificate program in Entrepreneurship, which students may take to complement their chosen program of study. The Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) degree includes majors in Accounting, Hospitality and Tourism Management, Information Systems and Technology, Management, and Marketing. There is also a Bachelor of Arts degree with a concentration in Finance. The graduate degree programs include a Master of Business Administration (MBA) and a Master's in Accounting (MACC) degree. In support of the entrepreneurship programs, Innovation and Entrepreneurship labs are available on the St Croix and St Thomas campuses. These are places where students can brainstorm and explore their creative spirits.

The School of Education awards degrees in Elementary Education and Inclusive Early Childhood Education. With its Master of Arts in Education program, degrees are offered in Teaching, Educational Leadership, and Counseling and Guidance. In fall 2016, UVI launched its doctoral program in Creative Leadership for Innovation and Change. This program is offered to students in three specialized tracks: Creativity and Leadership for Change, Organizational Development and Leadership, and Educational Leadership for Change.

Applied Mathematics, Computer Science, Biology, Marine Biology and Chemistry are some of the major degrees offered by the College of Science and Mathematics. This school also employs a Master's program in Mathematics for Secondary Teachers as well as minors in Marine and Environmental Science. In collaboration with the School of Education, the College of Science and Mathematics offers a Master's degree in Mathematics for Secondary Teachers.

The College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences offers the following degrees: Associates of Arts degree in Criminal Justice, Bachelor of Arts degrees in Communication, Criminal Justice, English, Humanities, Music Education, Psychology and Social Work. The College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences also offers Bachelor of Science degrees in Criminal Justice and Psychology, and Master of Arts degrees in Public Administration and Psychology. The School of Nursing offers a Bachelor of Science degree and is presently the only academic unit without an advanced degree program.

THEME

The theme selected by UVI President Dr. David Hall for the Title III Part F grant program cycle is *Achieving Greatness through Creativity and Innovation*. The President, who is also the Principal Investigator, has selected the projects for the new grant cycle; these projects will be aligned with this overarching theme and the University's Strategic Plan, "*Greatness through Innovation*." They include:

- *Developing a Computer Kiosk Program at the University of the Virgin Islands*
- *Introducing an Associate of Applied Science in Renewable Energy Technology*
- *Developing a Business and Innovation Instructional Research Center*
- *Developing a Certificate Program in Biomedical Laboratory Research*

Any additional projects added during the course of the grant cycle will be consistent with both the theme for the cycle and the Legislatively Allowable Activities.

These projects will seek to:

- enhance the institution's services to STEM students;
- establish or enhance a teacher education program;

- improve instructional and laboratory spaces;
- provide educational materials and laboratory equipment; and
- improve the institution's academic quality.

MISSION

The mission of the University of the Virgin Islands clearly defines the institution's purpose within the context of higher education, explaining whom the mission serves and what it intends to accomplish. The mission statement is:

The University of the Virgin Islands' mission is to educate and empower the U.S. Virgin Islands, the Caribbean and the world through an environment that promotes creativity, innovation and excellence in teaching, student learning, research, and community engagement.

VISION

The institution's vision statement describes what the university wants to be in the future and publicly declares expected outcomes. Developed with broad institutional support, UVI's vision is responsive to the institution's dynamic environment and articulates what UVI seeks to become within the context of its mission, as stipulated by the Middle States Commission in Higher Education. The vision is:

The University of the Virgin Islands will be an exceptional U.S. institution of higher education in the Caribbean dedicated to student success, committed to excellence, and pledged to enhancing the social and economic transformation of the U.S. Virgin Islands.

CORE VALUES

The strength of the university lies in the value system that embodies the principles, ideals and beliefs of its key stakeholders (including students, faculty, staff, administrators, and trustees), and forms the foundation for UVI's actions. These values also speak to the institution's goal of serving the larger community and region as well. There are 10 core values adopted by the university to fulfill its mission and vision. These encompass:

- *Students' Well-Being First*—Students are the most important stakeholders.
- *Learning and Scholarship*—Learning and scholarship for UVI students and employees, and the community at large, are valued.
- *Excellence*—There is a commitment to upholding high academic standards and providing a nurturing and supportive educational environment.
- *Teamwork*— Teamwork and accountability are essential to achieving institutional goals and objectives.
- *Collegiality and Shared Governance*—The institution is committed to a partnership among students, faculty and staff.
- *Inclusiveness of Ideas*—Mutual respect for everyone is valued and expressed through fair and equitable treatment.
- *Principled Leadership*—The institution's leadership is committed to achieving optimal results by collaborating with employees to solve problems and reach solutions.
- *Supporting our Community*—There is a shared responsibility to support the local community through enthusiastic, responsible service.

- *Effective Use of Technology*—Technology is viewed and used as a tool to enhance teaching and learning and to improve the effectiveness of UVI’s educational and administrative processes.
- *Equitable Reward System*—The institution and its leaders support a performance-based system that recognizes and values the contributions of all employees.

MANAGEMENT VALUES

In addition to its core values, the University of the Virgin Islands has also adopted several management related values. There are seven management values introduced by President Hall, which serve as the framework for the university’s internal operations. These management values include:

- *High performance Institution with a focus on quality*—Provide quality services and products, as well as be efficient in delivering these services and programs.
- *Service Oriented*—The quality of our service and programs must meet the needs of our core customers (students) and also increase their level of satisfaction.
- *Uncompromised Integrity*—The University must demonstrate moral and ethical standards.
- *Informed Decision Making*—For informed decisions to be made, information must be available, transparent and shared.
- *Fiscal Responsibility*—The University has to manage its resources responsibly and efficiently.
- *Performance Assessment*—Evaluating the performance of employees to ensure that standards are met, and training can be provided where necessary.

- *Emotional and Spiritual Health*—To nurture the emotional and spiritual well-being of employees and to provide support as needed.

STRATEGIC PLAN PROCESS

The University of the Virgin Islands has adopted a new strategic plan “*Greatness Though Innovation*” for the five-year period, 2018-23. In constructing this new strategic plan, the university adopted a new approach to its development; under the auspices of the leadership, it was determined that in order for the university to maintain its competitive foothold among its peer “brick and mortar” and online institutions, Creativity and Innovation should serve as the foundation. UVI’s leadership has emphasized the notion of adhering to its “shared governance” approach to decision-making and its implementation is evident in this strategic planning process.

A significant component of the strategic plan development was the formation of a Planning Task Force (PTF), which was given the charge to work in a collaborative manner toward development of the plan, with an emphasis on Creativity and Innovation. This task force consisted of faculty, administrators, and staff members. In the first phase of the data collection process, the PTF created several focus area subcommittees, focused primarily on those focus areas identified in the accreditation self-study, entitled *Greatness by Design*. Each of these committees assumed responsibility for development of the goals and objectives to support these respective focus areas. Stakeholders such as faculty, staff, administrators, and members of the wider community participated in a series of training sessions, utilizing the Creative Problem Solving (CPS) model as the framework. Creativity and innovation consultants were on hand to facilitate these training sessions. The CPS netted a number of ideas, which then served as the basis for constructing a SWOT Analysis,

to review the internal processes and procedures of the university, and to identify areas where enhancements are needed.

SWOT ANALYSIS

One of the key processes of the university's strategic planning exercise is to conduct a SWOT analysis. Key stakeholders and focus groups, participated in this important exercise to identify the internal and external factors that would impact the University's ability to fulfill its objectives and mission. The plan is intended to guide the University's personnel and resources as it builds on its strengths and capitalizes on potential opportunities while recognizing possible threats and addressing those areas of weakness that need to be fortified in order to ensure the continued viability and success of the institution.

Strengths

The University has always maintained a strong partnership with the Virgin Islands Government (GVI). The GVI has served as the primary funding source for the University; through this continued partnership, the university has been better positioned to continue providing quality academic offerings to students, locally, regionally, and nationally. During the strategic plan exercises and meetings, stakeholders recognized UVI's academic programs, supported by a distinguish faculty as one of its greatest strengths. Other institutional strengths identified include: the marine biology and other academic programs; the institution's research capability; noteworthy publications; excellent buildings and grounds; student exchange program; and the leadership of the current administration and Board of Trustees, especially with regard to its transparent processes and the involvement

of employees in important issues pertaining to the institution through the shared governance process.

Weaknesses

While the University can reap the benefits of some of its core strengths, its weaknesses and limitations must be addressed. The limited financial resources has been identified as one of the most significant weaknesses facing the University of the Virgin Islands. Additionally, the university has relied heavily on funding provided by GVI and private donors; both have declined over the years, thereby limiting the offerings and initiatives that can be undertaken by the University. While UVI prides itself in providing a robust academic program and research capabilities, stakeholders opined that the declining enrollment for the university has served as one of its greatest weaknesses. The University was dealt a tremendous blow to its facilities, including instructional spaces, at the hands of two Category 5 hurricanes in fall 2017. These natural disasters adversely impacted the delivery of instruction and the student population.

Relative to employees, stakeholders further declared that the services UVI offers to its employees and the wider community are very limited. One of the factors that was highlighted by those participating in the strategic planning process is the infrequency with which the University is able to offer salary increases to its employees. Another weakness that was identified during the strategic planning stages was the susceptibility of the institution's information technology infrastructure to natural and man-made disasters. One of the projects supported by the Title III Part B grant program addresses this exposure by replicating in the Cloud, several systems that previously operated solely on UVI servers.

Opportunities

Through the strategic planning sessions, several ideas for excellent opportunities were identified for the University of the Virgin Islands to explore to expand its relationships with external partners, improve its infrastructure, and academic offerings. Expanding and improving relationships with peer institutions is a viable option that UVI should fully exercise. Stakeholders also recommended that the University should foster its relationship with the Virgin Islands Department of Education. In addition to enhancing relationships, other potential opportunities for the institution rest on expanding its academic offerings. Stakeholders suggested that, with more students enrolling in online universities, UVI should also continue to expand its academic programs online; UVI has to consider this avenue as a possible revenue source, especially with the improvements to its facilities and technological capabilities. Emphasis should also be placed on the marine biology and engineering programs. Engaging in scientific research has always enabled UVI to stimulate student interest in research as well as to generate revenues through grant funding.

Threats

There are a number of threats facing UVI, but one of the most critical is the reduction in available funding from the local government. The University has seen its government funding allotment reduced as a means of absorbing its proportionate share of the financial burden the government is experiencing. Other significant threats to UVI include the reduction in student enrollment and retention rates. Tuition is an important revenue stream for the University; however, the reduced tuition revenue that results from lower enrollment, coupled with the constant reduction in funding from the local government, will eventually

lead to UVI being unable to meet its objective of serving the students and the greater community and providing an exemplary service. A very prominent threat to the University of the Virgin Islands is the exposure to natural disasters. During the 2017 hurricane season, the Virgin Islands suffered tremendously from an unprecedented two Category 5 hurricanes, which inflicted catastrophic damage to the islands and the institution. These hurricanes also fueled the declining student population, as well as the decline in overall population in the Territory, as the University worked feverishly to recover.

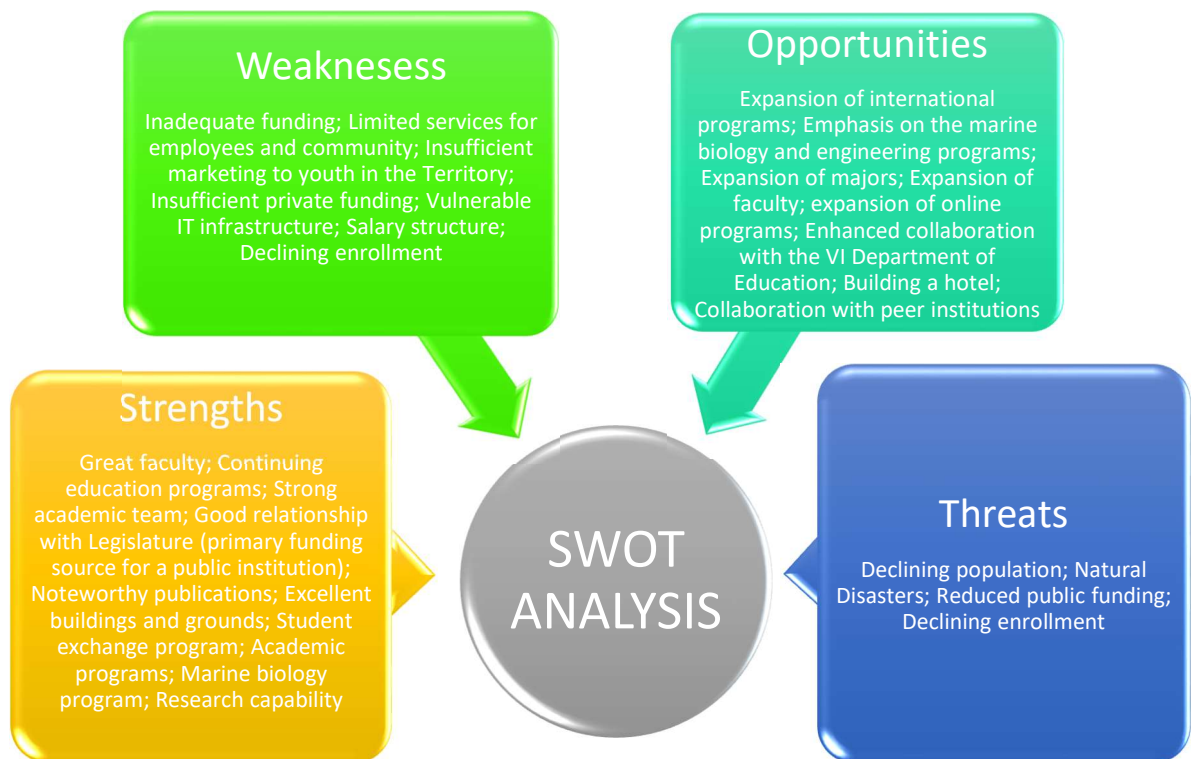


Figure 1. SWOT Analysis Hierarchy Chart

STRATEGIC PLAN FOCUS AREAS

The University of the Virgin Islands' strategic plan for the 2018-23 period, "*Greatness Through Innovation*", includes six (6) focus areas. During the planning stages of the new strategic plan, sub-groups of the Planning Task Force constructed a list of goals and objectives for each of the focus areas. Additionally, timelines and resources needed to implement these objectives were also considered. The focus areas include:

- Innovation and Distinction--This focus area seeks to emphasize embracing and implementing creativity and innovation as the cornerstone for realizing and improving the operations of the university.
- Leadership and Excellence in Academics, Research, and Public Service--As the sole provider of post-secondary education in the U.S. Virgin Islands, the University of the Virgin Islands will emerge as the leader in utilizing creativity to improve its academic offerings and public service initiatives.
- Student Access, Recruitment, and Success—UVI seeks to produce graduates that are “academically excellent, globally sensitive, entrepreneurially focused, emotionally and spiritually balanced, and willing to serve the world.” To do so, the institution will prioritize the well-being of current and future students through creative and innovative measures, while proactively eliminating barriers to student access, recruitment, success, and achievement.
- Measurement, Analysis, Knowledge Management, and Results--This focus area underscores UVI's management value of informed decision-making. Changes in programs and operations at the University, intended to facilitate improvements, will be guided by collection and analysis of qualitative and quantitative data.

- Operational Efficiencies and Focus--University operations will be optimized for efficiency and effectiveness. This effort will be instrumental in preserving the University's valuable resources.
- Valuing People, Relationships, and Culture--Faculty and staff are important assets to the success of the University and its desire to emplane and encircle creativity and innovation as keys to present and future operations. The university will incentivize this relationship through maintaining its stance on employee development and growth, shared governance, and embracing diversity.

LEGISLATIVELY ALLOWABLE ACTITIVITIES

Legislatively Allowable Activities are those activities articulated by legislation and on which program funds may be expended toward improvement of the grantee institutions. The Title III Part F grant program is governed primarily by five of the 16 Legislatively Allowable Activities (LAAs) authorized by Title III, Section 323 of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended. A sixth "Other" category includes activities that are instrumental in preparing students for careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). The Title III Part F LAAs include:

- Purchase, rental, or lease of scientific or laboratory equipment for educational purposes, including instructional or research purposes;
- Construction, maintenance, renovation, and improvement in classroom, library, laboratory, and other instructional facilities, including purchase or rental of telecommunications technology equipment or services;
- Academic instruction in disciplines in which Black Americans are underrepresented;

- Purchase of library books, periodicals, microfilm, and other educational materials, including telecommunications program materials;
- Establishing or enhancing a program of teacher education designed to qualify students to teach in a public elementary or secondary school in the State that shall include, as part of the program, preparation for teacher certification; and
- Other activities, consistent with the institution's comprehensive plan and designed to increase the institution's capacity to prepare students for careers in the physical or natural sciences, mathematics, computer science or information technology or sciences, engineering, language instruction in the less-commonly taught languages or international affairs, or nursing or allied health professions;

TITLE III FOCUS AREAS

Overview

The Title III Part F Fostering Undergraduate Talent by Unlocking Resources for Education (FUTURE) Act Legislatively Allowable Activities (LAAs) serve as the framework for the design and implementation of any activities that are to be supported during the five-year grant period described within the Comprehensive Development Plan. Underlying the Legislatively Allowable Activities are Focus Areas, which serve as the infrastructure on which the LAAs are built. For the Title III Part B grant program, there are four: academic quality, student services, institutional management and fiscal stability. In the Part F grant program, however, all LAAs fall under the academic quality focus area. This focus area undergirds the design and implementation of the four activities that have been selected for the five-year grant period described in this Comprehensive Development Plan.

The institution has completed and implemented its new strategic plan, “*Greatness Through Innovation.*” The current strategic plan highlights a number of new institutional initiatives, values, and objectives, aligned with the Title III Part F focus area of Academic Quality; although not primary Part F focus areas, institutional goals and objectives for Institutional Management, Student Services and Fiscal Stability will also be reviewed.

Academic Quality

Striving to provide quality education to students locally and regionally by nurturing academic excellence has been the core of the university’s scholastic focus. The UVI strategic plan focus area that best aligns with the Title III Academic Quality focus area is *Leadership and Excellence in Academics, Research, and Public Service.* While this institutional focus area is multi-faceted, it possesses elements intended to enhance the quality of the educational services provided by the university. The strategic goals and objectives discussing the improvement of academic offerings include:

- 🚩 *UVI will become a leader in the utilization of current, resilient, and reliable instructional Technology.*
 - Ninety percent of full- & part-time faculty will be certified in e-learning techniques and will demonstrate proficiency in using instructional technology strategies
 - Use data on teaching technology to improve institutional effectiveness by 15% above baseline on annual surveys.
 - Upgrade all teaching technology in order to realize no less than 95% uptime and functionality.
 - Increase to 100% the number of classrooms with 21st century teaching and learning technologies.

✚ *UVI will develop 21st century academic and, vocational & technical programs and policies, to meet the changing workforce development needs of the Virgin Islands and Caribbean.*

- Review and revise general education curriculum, recommending changes to ensure it meets 21st century needs.
- Implement at least five vocational or technical certificate programs or offerings that align with existing academic strengths and compelling local market needs.
- Implement and sustain at least two additional innovative academic programs that meet market needs (e.g. Data Science).
- Increase by 10% the number of students who graduate with minors, double majors, and/or certificates, in addition to a major.

The *Student Access, Recruitment, and Success* focus area of its Strategic Plan offers a strategic goal that is closely aligned with the *Academic Quality* focus area. This strategic goal calls for the University to improve the environment for student success and achievement through innovative practices in instructional pedagogy. Further, this goal will be supported by introducing opportunities for transforming teaching and learning strategies, course designs and policies through funding five such projects a year.

Institutional Management


Institutional initiatives will incorporate creative and innovative approaches while ensuring that administrative and procurement processes are efficient and aligned, protocols are well-documented, and accurate data supports decision-making. Two of the strategic plan focus areas are consistent with Institutional Management—Measurement, Analysis, Knowledge Management and Results; and Operational Efficiencies and Focus. Goals and objectives within these UVI focus areas include:

Measurement, Analysis, Knowledge Management, and Results


 *Enhance the collection of high- quality quantitative data for evidence- based decisions.*

- Develop an institutional Dashboard where all key institutional data and measurements are easily accessible 24/7.
- Dashboard data will be reviewed and used by key decision makers on institutional improvement objectives.
- Develop a predictive analytic model for forecasting student enrollment and retention outcomes with a confidence interval of 95% or greater.

Operational Efficiencies and Focus

 *Streamline operations using lean process/process re-engineering techniques for continuous improvement to improve business practices by saving time, reducing costs, reducing protocol steps, empowering employees, and increasing efficiency.*

- Provide multiple training sessions on lean process/process re- engineering methods.
- Develop a comprehensive and fully-embedded model that can measure savings, continuous improvements and reduction in cost from lean process/process re- engineering.

 *Implement innovative processes utilizing technology to improve efficiencies and effectiveness.*

- At least two administrative functions per year will become paperless.
- Annually, at least 25% of all staff will attend training on the use of administrative applications.
- Implement a comprehensive software system to manage student support functions such as student housing, and security reporting.

✚ *Re-establish a recurring plant fund with a minimum of \$2 million to address repairs and enhance University facilities.*

- Each fiscal year a designated portion of facilities/vehicles will be repaired and enhanced based on input from the UBC and other stakeholders.

Student Services

UVI affirms its dedication to its primary stakeholder, its students, by providing exemplary educational services and programs. This will be achieved by embracing the “Students’ well-being first” core value, which calls for instituting innovative strategies that promote success and academic achievement. Further, this focus area is geared towards improving students’ success here at the institution, which would assist in addressing enrollment and retention rates, as well supporting the university’s position in developing future leaders of the territory. The university’s current strategic plan focus area, *Student Access, Recruitment and Success*, has identified several goals and institutional objectives that would address the enhancement of student services, including:


✚ *Develop and implement alternative degree pathways, to include a 3- year accelerated degree pathway for selected undergraduate students*

- Enroll at least 10 students each year into a 3- year accelerated program
- Enroll at least 10 students each year into an enhanced and rigorous honors program.


✚ *Improve the environment for student success and achievement through innovative practices in Instructional Pedagogy.*

- Introduce opportunities for transforming teaching & learning strategies, course designs & policies through funding five such projects a year.
- Provide multiple opportunities annually for faculty/advising staff to participate in “Growth Mindset” or other non- cognitive skills training and


formulate a plan for implementing these approaches in courses and interactions with students.

 *Improve the environment for student success and achievement through streamlined structures and accountability in Academic Advising.*

- Fully implement and promote all aspects of the Advising Plan, including well-defined & communicated advising relationships, resources, and accountability.
- Improve student satisfaction with academic advising effectiveness by 10% above baseline each year.
- Improve student advising and degree planning through use of existing/new software by 25% of faculty & students.

 *Improve the environment for student success and academic achievement through enhanced holistic student support.*

- Increase by 10% above baseline the number of faculty submitting Early Alerts and Progress Reports annually.
- Improve academic success by reducing student D/F grades 10% below baseline for all Schools and Colleges.
- Institutionalize and assess a “Retention Boost” program for all Schools and Colleges.

 *Improve the environment for student success and achievement through innovative opportunities for student engagement.*

- Develop Living-Learning Communities.
- Increase by 10% each year, above baseline, faculty-led out-of-classroom student learning experiences.
- Create a comprehensive student engagement plan, with elements integrated into courses and extracurricular activities.

 *Improve Recruitment, Persistence, and Graduation Rates of students.*

- Implement a comprehensive, multi-year recruitment and retention plan to support a first-year retention rate of 80% and a 6-year graduation rate of 40%.
- Realign University operations for improved strategic enrollment management, to increase enrollment by 8% above baseline, reaching a total of 3,000 students.
- Standardize and enhance all transfer student processes, in order to increase transfer student enrollment by 5% each year.

Fiscal Stability

The Strategic Plan, “*Greatness Through Innovation*” calls for the need to embrace and unravel the notion of creativity and innovation to revitalize and energize institutional processes and protocols that will enable the university to achieve its goals and objectives for the duration of the strategic plan and well into the future. Welcoming multitudinous innovative initiatives will increase the university’s potential for increasing its financial and human resources, thereby enabling it to provide exemplary services to students, invest in its employees, and continue to improve its physical plant and infrastructure. Some of the goals articulated in the current strategic plan for UVI to move toward fiscal stability and sustainability are:

- Improve institutional effectiveness through the use of appropriate assessment and decision making tools.
- Create an institutional culture of entrepreneurship and innovation.
- Increase revenues from new client bases, new products, and other entrepreneurial activities.

- Increase revenues from transfer-in of graduates from regional educational institutions.
- Increase revenues from enrollment through the offering of online and doctoral programs.
- Expand the funding base of the University through increased philanthropic support.
- Increase the number and dollar value of federal grants awarded to the University.

The Title III Part F grant program will serve as an auxiliary funding source for the institution, enabling it to engage in activities and projects outlined in the current strategic plan to improve its academic offerings.

Focus Areas Matrix

The Focus Area Matrix illustrates the relationship between UVI’s core values, its strategic plan core values and the Title III, Part B focus areas. The Title III focus areas serve as the heart of the matrix to show how each area relates to the institution’s core values and strategic plan focus areas. There are four core focus areas for the Title III Part B program, which includes *Academic Quality*, *Institutional Management*, *Student Services and Fiscal Stability*. However, only the Academic Quality focus area is applicable to the Part F grant program, as there are no legislatively allowable activities focused on generating revenues, improving operational effectiveness, or providing services to students other than academic instruction. Contrarily, within the UVI Strategic Plan, there are six (6) areas of focus developed to chart the course of the institution over the five-year period—2018-2023. In Figure 2, the Title III focus areas are the core of the diagram, and

the focus areas outlined in the strategic plan rest on the outskirts. This figure illustrates the connectivity of the two sets of focus areas.

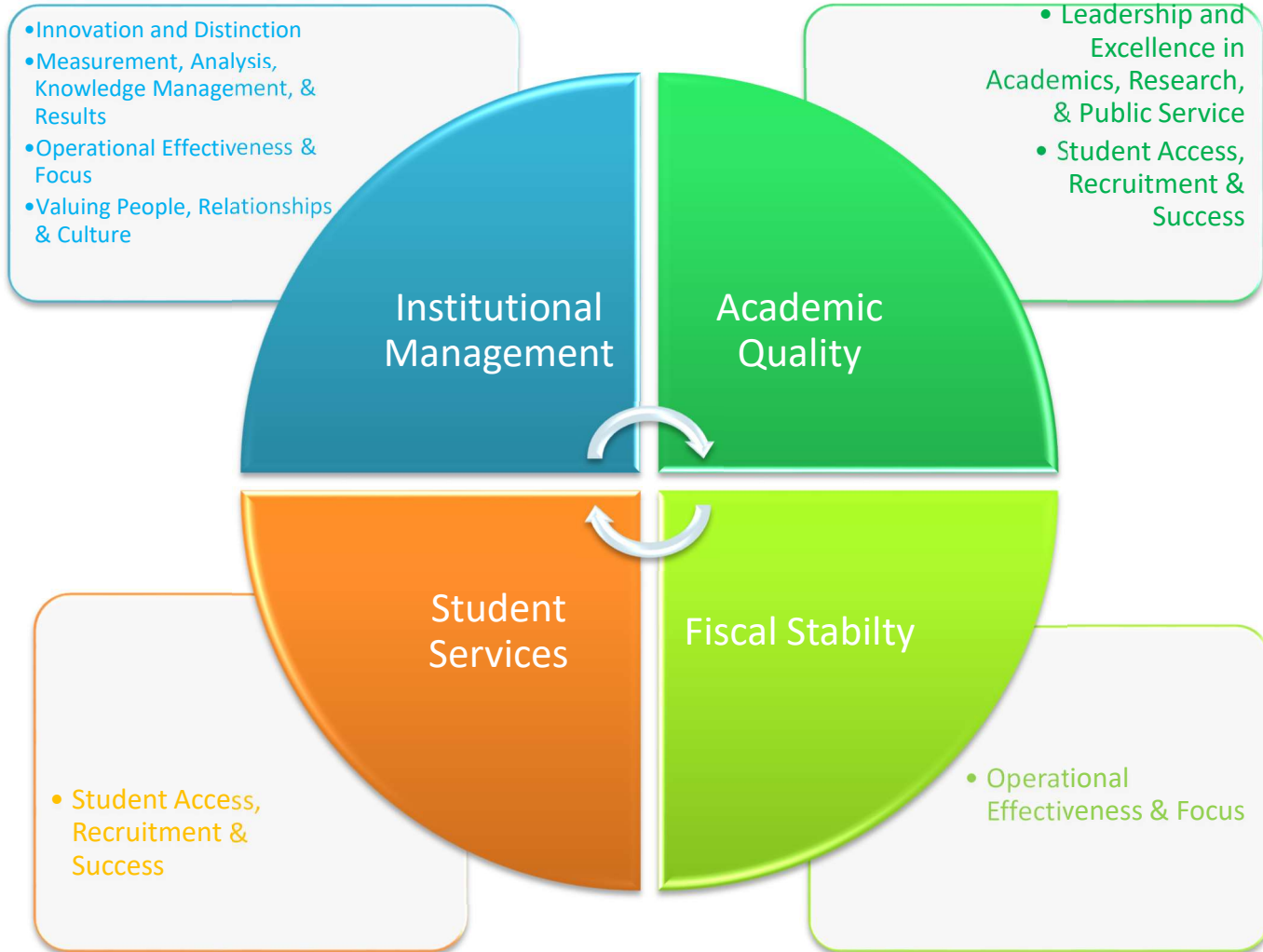


Figure 2. Focus Area Matrix

PROJECT MONITORING

To ensure that the University of the Virgin Islands Title III Part F grant program maintains a high level of integrity and accountability as it pertains to the use of federal funds received from the U.S. Department of Education, the Title III Project Administration

Office will ensure that all Activity Directors adhere to the Title III Policies and Procedures Manual. This manual was recently updated to reflect current changes in federal regulatory and programmatic mandates. Most importantly, all Activity Directors must consult with the Project Administration Office before utilizing grant funds, to ensure consistency with their Phase II work plans and budgets. The monitoring system that will be implemented by the Title III Coordinator involves:

- review of expenditure requests for goods and services;
- quarterly meetings with PI and Activity Directors;
- quarterly progress reports;
- periodic meetings with individual Activity Directors;
- provision of information to Activity Directors; and
- formal evaluation.

EXPENDITURE MONITORING

The purchase of all goods and/or services must first be approved by the Title Project Administration Office. As such, the office must ensure that all requests are consistent with the cost principles articulated in 2 CFR 200, the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR), university policies and procedures and the Title III Policies and Procedures Manual. On a monthly basis, an expenditure report will be provided to the President, who serves as the Principal Investigator for the Title III grant, to show the spending progress for each activity.

ACTIVITY QUARTERLY REPORTS AND MEETINGS

Title III Activity Directors will be required to submit a quarterly progress report to illustrate the level of progress made for each quarter of the fiscal year. Furthermore, on a quarterly basis, meetings will be held with the Activity Directors and the President to provide a verbal summation of the progress realized and challenges encountered on individual projects. These meetings will allow the President to keep abreast of all the events and issues occurring on each projects and more importantly, they afford Activity Directors an opportunity not only to communicate their progress but also to express concern on issues that may hinder the progress of the activities.

FORMAL PROJECT EVALUATION

During the course of the grant cycle, three evaluations will be conducted—two formative and one summative evaluation. The former will serve as a mechanism for measuring the effectiveness of the program implementation and will identify areas where corrective actions are required to make certain that the approved Title III projects are serving their intended purposes and that established targets and objectives are met.

CONCLUSION

As the University of the Virgin Islands continues to forge on its pathway to greatness, embracing innovation and a new creative spirit, the Title III Part F grant program will support a number of the institution's initiatives through the projects approved for the grant cycle. The funding made available by the U.S. Department of Education for the

University through the Title III Part F grant program will continue to serve as a much needed resource, given the current economic climate especially here in the Virgin Islands.