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VISION 2012 Framework: transforming our future

**Approved: March 11, 2006
UVI Board of Trustees**

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VISION 2012 FRAMEWORK

I. CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND

1.0 INTRODUCTION

VISION 2012: transforming our future outlines the goals, objectives and priorities necessary for the University of the Virgin Islands (UVI) to become an exceptional U. S. institution of higher education in the Caribbean. As UVI's third strategic plan, *VISION 2012* focuses on implementing a variety of initiatives that will improve student success, promote institutional excellence, and enhance the social and economic interests of the Territory. Over the next seven years (2006-2012), the University will become stronger, more responsive, and more competitive as a result of focusing its resources, energies and reaffirming its commitment to realizing greater institutional effectiveness and improved performance, significant academic enhancement, improved systems and processes, expanded educational opportunities for students, faculty and staff, higher enrollments, and as much financial growth and development as possible. This will be accomplished by centering the collective efforts of the University on four strategic areas of focus – *educational excellence, institutional improvement, financial sustainability, and community engagement*. The realization of these strategic focus areas combined with the mission, vision and core values, as expressed in *VISION 2012*, provide institutional focus and direction, and serve as an organizational blueprint for the continuous transformation of the University of the Virgin Islands through 2012.

1.1 STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

October 16, 2004	Board of Trustees approves planning process
December 2004	Review Mission, Values, Vision; Determine Strategic Priorities/Thrusts Meetings with Staff Groups - 12/1 - Research and Public Services (STT)
January 2005	- 1/24 - Student Affairs (STC and STT) - 1/26 - Administration and Finance
February 2005	- 2/2 - Enrollment Management - 2/4 - Information Technology and Libraries - 2/10 - Business and Facilities STC - 2/11 - Institutional Advancement, UVICELL - 2/16 - Business and Facilities STT - 2/17 - Chancellor's Office - STT and STC - 2/23 - Research and Public Service STC - 2/28 - Provost's Office Conduct Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Survey - 2/ 28 - Graduate Students Promote Strategic Plan via Media Sources

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March 2005	Conduct Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Survey - 3/ 1 and 3/ 2, Undergraduate Students - 3/ 2, Graduate Students March 14 – 24, Noel-Levitz Process Data External Stakeholder Focus Group Meetings: - 3/2 - Businesses and Non-Profits – STT - 3/4 - STC Stakeholders - 3/9 - Educators, Government Agencies, Legislators Board of Trustees Meeting Update: 2006-2012 Strategic Plan Progress Faculty Focus Group Meetings (6 sessions)
April 2005	Continue External Stakeholder Focus Group Meetings - 4/4 - Alumni STC - 4/5 - Alumni STT Conduct Student Focus Group Meetings (UG&G) Share Student Satisfaction Survey Results w/Students - 4/22 - St. Croix – Focus Group Meeting
May 2005	Share Student Satisfaction Survey Results w/Students - 5/10 – St. Thomas - 5/9 – 12 – Share Satisfaction Survey Results with UVI Community UVI Town Hall Meetings - May 10 – STJ - May 12 – STT - May 18 – STC Full Cross Section of UVI Community: Review Mission, Values, Vision and Strategic Directions/Priorities/Thrusts Preliminary Resource Requirements for Plan's Implementation Cabinet Approve Mission, Values, Vision and Strategic Directions/Priorities/Thrusts

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June 2005	Present “Draft” 2006-2012 Plan to BOT Planning Committee Comments, Feedback Board of Trustees Retreat (St. Croix) – June 24, 2005 Board of Trustees Meeting June 25, 2005 Submit Progress Report on 2000-2005 Strategic Plan Mission, Vision, and Core Values Approved
July 2005	Rework Framework Include Accomplishments from 2000-2005 Component Heads Full Staff Unit Meetings Establish Component Operational Objectives and Measures of Accomplishment
August 2005	Communicate 2006-2012 Plan to University Community and Invite Additional Comments Fall Convocation Additional Follow Up Meetings
October – November 2005	Work with Board Chair Work with Planning Committee to Revise Closeout and VISION 2012 Framework
December 2005	Meeting-Full Strategic Planning Steering Committee Closeout of 2005 Plan and Reaffirm VISION 2012
January 2006	Work with Board Chair
February 2006	Work with Planning Committee to Revise, Finalize and Approve Closeout 2005 and VISION 2012
March 2006	Present Closeout 2005 and VISION 2012 to the Board of Trustees

1.2 PLAN FORMAT

Mission → *focused by* → Vision → *supported by* → Core Values

Strategic Goals → *supported by* → Operational Objectives → *assessed with* → Measures of Accomplishment

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1.3 TIME FRAME FOR PLAN

VISION 2012 covers the planning period 2006 through 2012. The plan culminates in 2012, UVI's 50th anniversary. VISION 2012, as a dynamic process, will be monitored annually and revised as appropriate.

1.4 PLAN CONTRIBUTORS

- Strategic Planning Steering Committee (administrators, students, faculty, and staff)
- Board of Trustees (the Chair, the Planning Committee, Board Members)
- President's Cabinet
- Faculty and Staff (focus groups, surveys, and committees)
- Students (focus groups, surveys, and committees)
- Alumni (focus groups and community meetings)
- Community-at-large (focus groups, town meetings, and Seaside Chats)

2.0 VISION OF THE UNIVERSITY

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

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.

3.0 CORE VALUES OF THE UNIVERSITY

An integral part of the University of the Virgin Islands' strength lies in its value system which embodies the principles, ideals and beliefs of its students, faculty, staff, administrators, and trustees, and forms the foundation for UVI's actions. The values represent what is important and reveal UVI what strives to become as a university. These ten values are essential qualities to ensuring the fulfillment of UVI's mission and vision.

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UVI values ...

1. **Students First.** Students are our most important stakeholders. We value student-centered learning and a campus climate that promotes school spirit. We believe putting students first bolsters enrollment and retention, and responding effectively to student needs promotes satisfaction and commitment to the university.
2. **Learning and Scholarship.** Learning and scholarship for our students, our employees and the community. We value personal growth and seek to continuously learn as an organization while being responsive to our changing environment.
3. **Excellence.** Excellence in all we do. We are committed to upholding high academic standards and providing a nurturing and supportive educational environment. We continuously seek opportunities for improvement.
4. **Teamwork.** Teamwork and accountability are essential to achieving institutional goals and objectives. We promote the growth and development of faculty and staff through ongoing training and professional activities. We advocate high standards of performance for students, faculty and staff while creating a supportive environment that encourages individual and group success.
5. **Collegiality and Shared Governance.** We believe students, faculty and staff are partners with the administration in decision making on issues that impact the university. We believe students, faculty and staff stakeholders should be active participants in any proposed institutional change.
6. **Inclusiveness of Ideas.** We value mutual respect for everyone, expressed through fairness and equitable treatment. We embrace multiculturalism and recognize the unique contributions of all people. We value open communication and the candid exchange of thoughts and opinions.
7. **Principled Leadership.** We believe optimal results are best achieved by collaborating with employees to solve problems and reach solutions. We advocate planning and joint goal-setting to advance the mission and vision of the university.
8. **Supporting Our Community.** As members of the university, we have a shared responsibility to support our local community which is demonstrated through enthusiastic, responsible service. We value our university and encourage the active participation of everyone through cooperation and communication.
9. **Effective Use of Technology.** We view technology as a tool to enhance teaching and learning and to improve the effectiveness of our educational and administrative processes.
10. **Equitable Reward System.** We support a performance-based system that recognizes and values the contributions of all employees. We value equal opportunity and upward mobility for everyone.

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4.0 MISSION OF THE UNIVERSITY

UVI's mission clearly defines its purpose within the context of higher education and explains whom the mission serves and what it intends to accomplish. Consistent with accreditation standards and best practices, the mission was examined and refocused with broad institutional, alumni, and community participation in response to the changing environment. The newly clarified mission statement focuses on students, is externally focused, and is grounded in the University's core values.

The University of the Virgin Islands is a learner-centered institution dedicated to the success of its students and committed to enhancing the lives of the people of the U.S. Virgin Islands and the wider Caribbean through excellent teaching, innovative research, and responsive community service.

4.1 MISSION COMPONENT – PRODUCT SCOPE: TEACHING

CURRENT	FUTURE STATE
♦ 30 Undergraduate Programs via 5 Divisions	♦ 4.1.1 – Increased interdisciplinary approaches among existing programs and additional undergraduate partnership programs in allied health and social work
♦ Unaccredited professional programs	♦ 4.1.2 – Fully accredited programs in Business and Education
♦ 3 Masters Degrees and Educational Specialist Degree	♦ 4.1.3 – New Masters degree programs in Marine Science, Math Education, Nursing and/or Computer Science and Technology
♦ Participating in University Consortium of Small Island States (UCSIS)	♦ 4.1.4 – Developed programs to support participation in UCSIS to support internationalization, student exchanges
♦ Initiated on-line courses in computer science and other selected disciplines	♦ 4.1.5 – Expanded use of e-learning in appropriate contexts and markets

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4.2 MISSION COMPONENT – PRODUCT SCOPE: RESEARCH

CURRENT	FUTURE STATE
♦ Local and regional environmental, social and economic related research with limited capacity ♦ \$24 million in Sponsored Programs (including high profile initiatives such as EPSCoR (Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research) and CMES (Center for Marine and Environmental Sciences)) ♦ Initiation of renewable energy resources program (e.g. solar energy) ♦ Collaboration with external stakeholders to develop UVI Research and Technology Park ♦ Relatively low level of faculty research and publications	♦ 4.2.1 – Established organizational structure with capacity to support the development of VI and Caribbean communities ♦ 4.2.2 – Significantly increased level of federal and local grants and contracts in support of nationally recognized Centers of Excellence and student and faculty development ♦ 4.2.3 – Expanded renewable energy resources program to include wind turbine and solar to reduce energy costs ♦ 4.2.4 – Collaboration with functioning UVI Research and Technology Park focused on student and faculty benefits ♦ 4.2.5 – Increased faculty research and publications at levels commensurate with peer institutions in the U.S.

1.0 MISSION COMPONENT – PRODUCT SCOPE: COMMUNITY SERVICE

CURRENT	FUTURE STATE
♦ Economic transformation of Territory supported via higher education initiatives through research and public units (e.g. WRRI, CES, AES, CMES, ECC, CDC, SBDC, VIUCEDD)¹ and academic programs	♦ 4.3.1 – Recognized leadership role within community to address social, economic, political and cultural issues impacting the Territory

¹ WRRI: Water Resources Research Institute CES: Cooperative Extension Service AES: Agricultural Experiment Station CMES: Center for Marine and Environmental Studies ECC: Eastern Caribbean Center CDC: Conservation Data Center SBDC: Small Business Development Center VIUCEDD: Virgin Islands Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities

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♦ CELL ²and VI-EPSCoR programs developed to address community demand for workforce training and competitive research ♦ Limited campus venues for various stakeholders to participate in activities and dialogue ♦ Leadership role in developing sports tourism (e.g. Paradise Jam) ♦ Insufficient facilities to meet emerging demand in support of conferences and meetings related to community activities, especially on St. Thomas	♦ 4.3.2 – CELL programs expanded in scope and capacity for training, professional development and consulting and a fully developed EPSCoR program ♦ 4.3.3 – Create community centers on each campus to bring external/internal stakeholders together ♦ 4.3.4 – Increased involvement and recognition in sports tourism ♦ 4.3.5 – Establish Hotel and Conference Center on STT campus to meet demand
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2.0 MISSION COMPONENT – GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE

CURRENT	FUTURE STATE
♦ Students from US Virgin Islands and Caribbean (94% of students are VI residents) ♦ Initial outreach and collaboration initiatives with institutions in the Caribbean and the U.S.	♦ 4.4.1 – Increased diversity of student body ♦ 4.4.2 – Increased number of international students ♦ 4.4.3 – Increased research programs focusing on small islands economies ♦ 4.4.4 – Expanded outreach to institutions in Eastern Caribbean via e-learning and articulation agreements

² CELL: Community Engagement and Lifelong Learning

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4.5 MISSION COMPONENT – WAYS TO ACHIEVE/MAINTAIN COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

CURRENT	FUTURE STATE
◆ External consultants and assessment addressing the need for additional and new skill sets for faculty and staff ◆ Non-competitive compensation for employees ◆ Silo-based approaches to leadership ◆ Inadequate technological infrastructure to address demands from students, faculty and staff ◆ Advisory Boards for community outreach for Research and Public Service (RPS) ◆ Participation in local (Governor's Cabinet) and national (Higher Education Associations and Commissions) policy and governance institutions and organizations ◆ Initial partnering in collaborative agreements for academic and institutional development	◆ 4.5.1 – Increased investment in training and professional development for faculty and staff ◆ 4.5.2 – Competitive compensation for staff, faculty and research personnel ◆ 4.5.3 – Cross functional and interdisciplinary approaches to leadership across the institution ◆ 4.5.4 – Technologically improved infrastructure to support change in instruction, research and management ◆ 4.5.5 – Advisory Councils established and linked to academic programs, specifically professional and graduate programs ◆ 4.5.6 – Increased leadership role in local and national policy and governance organizations and institutions in support of additional resources and enhanced University reputation ◆ 4.5.7 – Expanded collaborative partnerships in teaching, research and community service to enhance revenues and enrollment

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The following strengths and weaknesses represent the most frequently referenced perspectives voiced by the University community and external stakeholders during a series of strategic planning meetings conducted between December 2004 and May 2005. These perspectives have not been ranked or prioritized.

5.0 INTERNAL SCRUTINY – STRENGTHS

- 5.1 Administration committed to institutional change
- 5.2 Dedicated faculty and staff
- 5.3 Strong employee desire to enhance institutional effectiveness and performance
- 5.4 Great place to work in the Virgin Islands
- 5.5 Accessible educational opportunity
- 5.6 Community outreach and service programs
- 5.7 Improved physical plant and facilities
- 5.8 Good solid reputation in the community
- 5.9 Board committed to excellence and performance
- 5.10 Marine biology research niche and EPSCoR designation
- 5.11 Energy conservation orientation

6.0 INTERNAL SCRUTINY – WEAKNESSES

- 6.1 Not student centered – not putting students first
- 6.2 Process and organizational inefficiencies
- 6.3 Silo orientation to managing student and administrative processes and systems
- 6.4 Inadequate human resources system
- 6.5 Two campuses not operating as one university
- 6.6 Limited diversity among student body
- 6.7 Limited number of academic majors available to students
- 6.8 Insufficient growth in new academic programs
- 6.9 Inadequate technological infrastructure
- 6.10 Need for more transparency
- 6.11 Declining employee morale

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7.0 EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

1.1 ECONOMIC OVERVIEW

TREND	7.1.1 -- MAJOR OPPORTUNITIES	7.1.2 -- MAJOR THREATS
♦ Uncertainty regarding EDC³ programs ♦ Continued financial challenges of VI government ♦ Rising energy costs ♦ Declining VI median income and rising unemployment	♦ 7.1.1.1 – Need to explore new revenue sources ♦ 7.1.1.2 – Implement new energy sources (e.g., wind turbine) ♦ 7.1.1.3 – Increased demand for workforce training	♦ 7.1.2.1 – Declining market for fundraising ♦ 7.1.2.2 – Decreasing VI government support ♦ 7.1.2.3 – Eroding financial viability ♦ 7.1.2.4 – Potential need to increase tuition and fee levels ♦ 7.1.2.5 – Limited scholarships for high ability students ♦ 7.1.2.6 – Possible need for more remedial programs

³ EDC: Economic Development Commission

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7.2 EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN – MARKET OVERVIEW

TREND	7.2.1 – MAJOR OPPORTUNITIES	7.2.2 – MAJOR THREATS
♦ Growing Hispanic portion of VI population	♦ 7.2.1.1 - Development of programs relevant/attractive to Hispanics	♦ 7.2.2.1 - Not meeting the educational/training needs of this growing population and competition for local Hispanic high school graduates from other institutions offering special programs
♦ Globalization of the education market	♦ 7.2.1.2 – Increased internationalization of programs	♦ 7.2.2.2 – Increased competition for students by mainland universities
♦ Growing complexity of emerging career and employment opportunities.	♦ 7.2.1.3 – Increasing demand for workforce training and additional Masters degrees	♦ 7.2.2.3 - Inadequately trained local workforce to meet demands.

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7.1 EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN – TECHNOLOGY ISSUES

TREND	7.3.1 – MAJOR OPPORTUNITIES	7.3.2 – MAJOR THREATS
♦ Online education growth ♦ Growing use of technology in the marketplace	♦ 7.3.1.1 – Utilize e-learning to the University’s advantage ♦ 7.3.1.2 – Share technology expertise to address VI community issues	♦ 7.3.2.1 – Decrease in traditional campus enrollments ♦ 7.3.2.2 – Raised student expectation of more technology infused instruction

1.2 EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN – POLITICAL

TREND	7.4.1 – MAJOR OPPORTUNITIES	7.4.2 – MAJOR THREATS
♦ Uncertain future for growth in federal aid for students ♦ Greater demand for institutional accountability and outcomes	♦ 7.4.1.1 – Utilize accreditation process to forge stronger external relationships with U.S. commission authorities ♦ 7.4.1.2 – Continue to develop awareness of higher education and UVI’s potential through marketing VISION 2012 and other initiatives	♦ 7.4.2.1 – Decreasing enrollments due to financial constraints impacting students ♦ 7.4.2.2 – Loss of accreditation for University

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7.4 EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN – SOCIAL

TREND	7.5.1 – MAJOR OPPORTUNITIES	7.5.2. – MAJOR THREATS
♦ Continued demographic changes in VI due to immigration	♦ 7.5.1.1 – Utilize changes in social environment to drive programmatic alignment	♦ 7.5.2.1 – Rapidly changing demand on UVI structure and services

1.0 EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN – LEGAL

TREND	7.6.1 – MAJOR OPPORTUNITIES	7.6.2 – MAJOR THREATS
♦ Compliance and accountability requirements from federal and other agencies	♦ 7.6.1.1 – Utilize increased requirements in legal environment to drive process redesign efforts	♦ 7.6.2.1 – Raised compliance requirements and accountability ♦ 7.6.2.2 – Litigious constituents

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II. STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

A. Strategic Area of Focus – Educational Excellence

Teaching and learning are the primary purposes of any institution of higher education, whether at the undergraduate or graduate level. Consistent with accreditation standards, an institution's educational offerings must display academic content, rigor, and coherence appropriate for its higher education mission. When asked to comment on UVI's programs and services, faculty, students, staff, alumni, and the community concluded that the quality, variety, and relevancy of the University's academic programs and services needed to be strengthened and/or expanded. They recommended that professional programs be accredited; processes and policies be more student-friendly; enrollment-related processes be improved, particularly registration; and workforce training and continuing education efforts be expanded.

These perspectives, coupled with the future state and the SWOT⁴ analysis examining the internal and external environments impacting the University, were factored into the development of *VISION 2012* and resulted in the identification of *educational excellence* as a key strategic area of focus for UVI to realize its mission and vision.

Strategic Goal #1 supports the desired future state for high quality educational programs, activities and processes linked to UVI's mission components through the operational objectives detailed below.

Strategic Goal #1 - *Create a learner-centered experience that fosters academic excellence and student success through innovative, effective teaching strategies and high quality academic and student support programs.*

The following operational objectives detail the specific initiatives and activities required to realize educational excellence at UVI:

- 1.A.** *Offer high quality outcomes-based academic programs that are flexible and responsive.*
- 1.B.** *Accredit all professional programs and develop internal standards to assess the quality of programs consistent with best practices.*
- 1.C.** *Increase enrollment by enhancing recruitment, registration, and enrollment related services.*
- 1.D.** *Enhance student success while increasing retention and graduation rates.*
- 1.E.** *Create an engaging, student-centered environment that promotes school spirit and institutional pride.*
- 1.F.** *Increase scholarly, research and outreach activities that enhance student learning, respond to community needs, and/or generate new knowledge that also meets peer-reviewed standards.*

⁴ An assessment of institutional strengths and weaknesses as well as an assessment of external opportunities and/or threats impacting the University's future.

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B. Strategic Area of Focus – Institutional Improvement

Faculty, staff and students concluded that the University needed to improve its processes and systems as well as policies and procedures in order to strengthen institutional performance and effectiveness. The need for excellence in the execution of business processes and practices; higher performance standards; greater investment in faculty and staff development; and better internal and external communication systems were articulated by the University community. In addition, the need to support enhanced collegiality and shared governance to improve operational effectiveness was a key issue. Students also described several scenarios in which their interests were not reflected in course scheduling, registration processes, timelines for distributing financial aid, and the need for more-student friendly billing policies. These perspectives are consistent with the mandates of the Middle States Commission of Higher Education and other regulatory agencies demanding greater accountability by institutions of higher education. Collectively, these assessments reinforced the necessity for continuous and systematic operational improvements that will facilitate UVI's efforts to achieve its vision to become an exceptional institution. *Institutional improvement* has been identified as a strategic area of focus for *VISION 2012*.

These perspectives, coupled with the future state and the SWOT analysis examining the internal and external environments impacting the University, were factored into the development of *VISION 2012* and resulted in the identification of *institutional improvement* as a key strategic area of focus for UVI to realize its mission and vision of excellence in all aspects of the University.

Strategic Goal #2 supports the desired future state for high levels of institutional performance and effectiveness linked to UVI's mission components through the operational objectives detailed below.

Strategic Goal #2 - Insure that the strategic goals and objectives are met by enhancing the capacity of the University to achieve results.

The following operational objectives detail the specific initiatives and activities required to realize higher performance levels that will enhance service delivery to UVI's internal and external stakeholders:

- 2.A.** *Support superior performance and foster individual and group success through advancement of compensation strategies and investment in training, professional development and cross-functional activities.*
- 2.B.** *Insure enhanced customer service delivery and improved operational results (with specific measurements to be defined) through redesigning administrative and educational processes.*
- 2.C.** *Facilitate University-wide information and data flow by enhancing the internal communications infrastructure system.*
- 2.D.** *Optimize the successful implementation of VISION 2012 through the development of an integrated planning, assessment and evaluation system by FY 2006.*
- 2.E.** *Continuously promote the image and reputation of the University by enhancing the external communications system.*

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- 2.F.** *Strengthen relationships with alumni and alumni association chapters through outreach, support and education.*

C. Strategic Area of Focus – Financial Sustainability

The most challenging issue confronting the University in recent years has been the uncertainty and volatile financial picture of the Virgin Islands Government. This ongoing challenge has thwarted efforts to increase compensation for employees, hampered growth in human resource development and hiring, and limited the University's capability to respond to demands from the community for expanded educational programs. In an era of declining state appropriations, the requirement for UVI to acquire new revenue sources and to reduce operational costs will be crucial to effectively managing institutional change and renewal. Focusing on *financial sustainability* will continue to be a strategic area of focus for the University through 2012.

These perspectives, coupled with the future state and the SWOT analysis examining the internal and external environments impacting the University, were factored into the development of *VISION 2012* and resulted in the identification of *financial sustainability* as a key strategic area of focus for UVI to realize its mission and vision while maintaining a strong financial operation.

Strategic Goal #3 supports the desired future state for a strong, diverse financial base in support of high quality educational programs and institutional change and success linked to UVI's mission components through the operational objectives detailed below.

Strategic Goal #3 – Enhance and diversify the University's financial base through the development of new revenue streams and realization of cost savings.

The following operational objectives detail the specific initiatives and activities necessary to build a strong, diversified financial base in support of UVI's mission and vision through 2012:

- 3.A.** *Assess markets for UVI products and services which might have the potential to provide significant new revenues.*
- 3.B.** *Meet internal and external demands, institutional goals and cost reductions by improving operating financial management systems.*
- 3.C.** *Increase annual giving targets and insure capital campaign objectives are appropriately linked to institutional, student and academic needs.*
- 3.D.** *Increase mission-centered grant acquisitions that support and promote research and community development.*

D. Strategic Area of Focus – Community Engagement

Community engagement is the cornerstone of UVI's mission and vision that is dedicated to student success and enhancing the lives of the people of the U.S. Virgin Islands and the wider Caribbean. Focus group meetings with community leaders, local residents at town hall meetings, and UVI employees, alumni and students identified several community-oriented themes that will be essential to realizing its objectives. The community affirmed the vital role UVI plays in the social and

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economic development of the Virgin Islands. However, the community recommended that UVI share its achievements with the public more; collaborate more with the community to address problems/issues confronting the Territory; establish flexible instructional modes to meet needs of working professionals; expand program offerings linked to emerging careers; and to expand research and assessment capabilities linked to the Virgin Islands. The community also urged the University to become more client-centered; expand access to higher education via distance learning; and to align academic programs with the Territory's education and business sectors. These candid recommendations reinforced the University's ongoing commitment to serve the needs of the U. S. Virgin Islands through active participation, collaboration, and *community engagement*.

These perspectives, coupled with the future state and the SWOT analysis examining the internal and external environments impacting the University, were factored into the development of *VISION 2012* and resulted in the identification of *community engagement* as a key strategic area of focus for UVI to realize its mission and vision.

Strategic Goal #4 supports the desired future state to enhance the lives of the people of the U. S. Virgin Islands and the wider Caribbean through educational initiatives linked to UVI's mission components through the operational objectives detailed below.

Strategic Goal #4 – *Become a leader and partner with the community to address social, economic, environmental, political, educational and cultural issues impacting the U. S. Virgin Islands through a range of higher education initiatives.*

The following operational objectives detail the specific initiatives and activities required to continue the enhancement of community engagement as an essential component of UVI's mission and vision:

- 4.A. *Continue addressing critical issues that will improve public education in the Territory by working with the VI Department of Education. (Ongoing)*
- 4.B. *Enhance the quality and relevancy of programs by increasing collaboration with education, business, health, human services, art, labor and other community sectors.*
- 4.C. *Address issues impacting the community by expanding consulting services, directed research and technical support.*
- 4.D. *Support community skill development and success by expanding certifications, workforce training, continuing education, lifelong learning, professional development, and consulting services.*