



Forging our Future, Building from Strength

A Plan for the University of Richmond

MISSION

The mission of the University of Richmond is to educate in an academically challenging, intellectually vibrant, and collaborative community dedicated to the holistic development of students and the production of scholarly and creative work. A Richmond education prepares students for lives of purpose, thoughtful inquiry, and responsible leadership in a diverse world.

VALUES

STUDENT GROWTH: The University of Richmond is committed to the personal and intellectual development of all students. Through close mentoring and small classes taught by dedicated teacher-scholars and the opportunities and environment made possible by talented and engaged staff, the University challenges students to recognize their full potential, supports the development of their resilience, and encourages their growth as socially responsible community members.

PURSUIT OF KNOWLEDGE: The University of Richmond values intellectual curiosity, teaching that challenges and inspires, ambitious scholarly and creative work, and education as a lifelong process of discovery and growth. The University is committed to academic freedom and the promotion of a vibrant intellectual community that encourages thoughtful disagreement and the vigorous exchange of ideas.

INCLUSIVITY AND EQUITY: The University of Richmond values the dignity, worth, and contributions of all individuals; the thoughtful and respectful engagement with a broad diversity of perspectives and experiences essential to intellectual growth; and an inclusive community in which all members can engage meaningfully in institutional life and contribute to a community where all thrive.

DIVERSITY AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY: The University of Richmond is committed to fostering a diverse community of students, staff and faculty. It is dedicated to access, affordability, and ensuring that the benefits of its transformative educational opportunities are not limited by financial circumstance or background.

ETHICAL ENGAGEMENT: The University of Richmond values integrity, responsibility for the ethical consequences of our ideas and actions, and meaningful engagement with our local and global communities.

RESPONSIBLE STEWARDSHIP: The University of Richmond values the trust that has been placed in it by generations of alumni, students, parents, and members of our community. The University is committed to the careful stewardship of institutional and environmental resources, and of the relationships that provide the foundation of our University community.

VISION

The University will be a leader in higher education, preparing students to contribute to, and succeed in, a complex world; producing knowledge to address the world's problems; and modeling the way that colleges and universities can effectively meet the challenges of our time.

Forging our Future, Building from Strength

A Plan for the University of Richmond

The University of Richmond is a vibrant institution of higher learning where the highest quality scholarly and creative work is produced and shared, and where our commitment to teaching is unparalleled. The complex world into which our students graduate reminds us of the importance of our work together at the University. We are poised to harness our considerable strengths to forge a bold future.

This plan lays out our shared goals for the coming years, a project that will help ensure the University of Richmond's place as one of the preeminent institutions in the country. The University will be a leader in higher education, preparing students to contribute to, and succeed in, a complex world; producing knowledge to address the world's problems; and modeling the way that colleges and universities can effectively meet the challenges of our time.

We have many assets on which to build. Our singular combination of schools and educational offerings provides us a unique and enviable position within American higher education. An outstanding faculty who are excellent scholars and teachers, a student body that is high-achieving and purposeful, talented staff members dedicated to supporting the development of students into tomorrow's leaders, and accomplished alumni are all key members of the University of Richmond's lifelong learning community.

Through *The Richmond Promise*, our community embraced greater diversity, deepened our commitment to educational opportunity, expanded the faculty so all students have a small-class experience, extended a Richmond education into the city of Richmond and beyond, and increased alumni engagement.

Building on that foundation, we have undertaken a new planning process during which the University community coalesced around a commitment to our shared values. These values provide a strong articulation of our beliefs and support the achievement of our aspirations. The University community is committed to building on our remarkable legacy and harnessing our strengths to shape the education of our students and the future of higher education. We will:

- provide an academic program that educates students to develop the insights they need to navigate and lead in a rapidly changing world and that promotes and supports the production of high-quality scholarly and creative work;
- recruit, retain, and inspire academically talented students from all backgrounds;
- model a thriving and inclusive university community;
- ensure that the University of Richmond is central to the lives of its students and alumni; and
- develop innovative practices to sustain our environmental, human, and financial resources.

The goals below provide direction, and an invitation to our community to forge an ambitious future together. Hundreds of community members have suggested initiatives that can help us reach our aims, and operational plans will be developed to animate those initiatives – or identify better means to accomplish our goals. Our work will be enhanced by a commitment to measuring our success rigorously, sharing that information transparently, reckoning honestly with opportunities and challenges that these assessments reveal, and using that information to improve. Through this plan, and achievement of the goals that we have outlined, the University of Richmond will build on our considerable strengths to forge a bold future and assume a place of leadership among the nation’s premier colleges and universities.

GOALS

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE: *The University will provide students the knowledge, insight, and skills needed to understand, contribute to, and lead in a rapidly changing world, and it will embrace and support the production of high-quality scholarship.*

A University of Richmond education will stimulate intellectual and personal growth, connect theory with practice, and offer the inspiration of the liberal arts and the ability to approach problems thoughtfully, critically, ethically, and creatively. Every undergraduate student will have the opportunity to enter into an intellectually engaging first-year experience based on the University’s values; ascend through living-learning, community-based, and international exposure; and pursue faculty-mentored research and internships to graduate enriched and fully prepared for challenging and fulfilling lives. In every school, a Richmond education will chart a course for transformational learning from student acceptance to graduation. That education will take place within a vibrant intellectual community that supports the production of high-quality scholarly and creative work and engages students as active partners in that work.

Initiatives:

- Develop a signature first-year experience that will immerse undergraduate students into our intellectual community and set them on a purposeful, ambitious path of inquiry and achievement in the classroom and in their personal development.
- Ensure that our curriculum provides students with the best possible preparation for lifelong learning, success in their chosen profession, and meaningful contributions to addressing the world’s problems.
- Encourage and support the production of excellent scholarly and creative work.
- Support a robust intellectual community inside and outside the classroom, including innovations in the use of campus spaces, the structures of campus life, and the visibility of scholarly and creative accomplishments.
- Create institutional structures to support an enhanced culture of writing, so that Richmond graduates in all disciplines are recognizable by their proficiency in this area.
- Strengthen and expand faculty development opportunities to support inclusive pedagogy and continuing faculty innovation in the classroom.
- Invest in areas of academic strength that take advantage of our disciplinary breadth to address the world’s problems from multiple perspectives. Areas of emphasis could include ethics, sustainability, entrepreneurship, data analytics, and areas of law and public policy.

ACCESS AND AFFORDABILITY: *The University will recruit, retain, and inspire academically talented students from all economic, racial, and ethnic backgrounds.*

The University of Richmond has a tradition of providing opportunities and assistance to promising students. Each generation has worked in new ways to extend opportunity and

welcome to students from all backgrounds. We will continue to build on that tradition to open doors for students with the potential to excel and contribute to the University, and help families understand clearly the value and affordability of a Richmond education.

Initiatives:

- Provide leadership as a founding member of the American Talent Initiative, dedicated to expanding the number of talented low- and moderate-income students who enroll at the nation's top colleges.
- Explore ways to expand *Richmond's Promise to Virginia* (e.g. geographically, student populations served) in order to make a Richmond education accessible to more academically talented students.
- Develop a program to identify a cohort of local students for admission to Richmond.
- Help families more clearly understand the cost and value of a Richmond education from the beginning of the college search process by investigating new approaches to financial aid that can ensure families a maximum that they would have to pay to attend the University based on their income.
- Develop innovative outreach programs to ensure that the most academically talented students in the world understand the value of a Richmond education and are inspired to apply.

THRIVING AND INCLUSIVE UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY: *Students, faculty, and staff will reach their full potential and thrive in an inclusive University community.*

The University of Richmond will serve as a model institution in which all members challenge themselves and one another to engage fully in the life of the University, reach their full potential, and contribute to a robust intellectual community. As we prepare the next generation of global leaders, we will center well-being, foster dynamic engagement across a wide range of perspectives and experiences, and create a learning community where all individuals are valued and respected.

Initiatives:

- Create a comprehensive well-being initiative for students that would strengthen and align programs (e.g. student health, recreation and wellness, CAPS) that support both high achievement and a well-balanced life.
- Recruit, hire, and retain more diverse faculty and staff.
- Ensure that high-impact practices (such as living-learning communities, capstone projects, internships, research opportunities for students, study abroad, and community-based learning) are of the highest quality and accessible to all undergraduates.
- Continue to enhance the accessibility of our institutional spaces so that they support the full participation of our community members.
- Redesign and program campus venues to provide vibrant social spaces that support the variety of opportunities that students seek.
- Develop and implement an ambitious Athletics Strategic Plan that helps to ensure that student-athletes are able to take full advantage of a Richmond education, supports competitive success of the University's Division I program, and imagines new ways for Athletics to contribute to a thriving University community.
- Acknowledge the essential contributions of all faculty and staff to the University's mission and ambitions.
- Provide professional development and mentoring opportunities that support rewarding career paths and encourage faculty and staff to engage fully in the life of the University.

ENHANCED ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT: *The University of Richmond will be central to the lives of our students and alumni.*

It is essential to the University's future that our students, parents, and alumni remain engaged in the life of the University. Our alumni have supported the University's educational excellence and contributed to its growing national reputation. Enhanced alumni involvement in the life of the University and the lives of its current and future students will benefit all members of our community. Combining the knowledge, experience, and loyalty of Spider alumni with the curiosity and passion of current students, we will build a community characterized by lifelong learning, mentoring, and commitment to the University.

Initiatives:

- Create a legacy scholarship initiative that would allow alumni to help the children of other alumni who have been admitted to the University, but may need financial assistance in order to attend.
- Grow and enhance programs that link alumni with each other and link alumni and parents with current students for mentoring, internships, and professional opportunities.
- Enhance opportunities for alumni and parents to engage in the intellectual life of the University, and showcase the creative and scholarly contributions of our community members.
- Provide increased opportunities for alumni to engage actively with the University, whether they are participating in activities on campus, attending sponsored programs in their own communities, cheering on Spider student-athletes, or interacting through communications that reach them wherever they may live.
- Inspire increased alumni giving to sustain educational excellence for generations to come.

STEWARDSHIP IN A CHANGING WORLD: *The University of Richmond will be a leader in innovative practices that sustain our environmental, human, and financial resources.*

The future health and vibrancy of the University – like all institutions of higher education – rest on our shared commitment to steward our vital resources: the environment on which we all depend, funds for our needs and aspirations, and the faculty, staff, student, and alumni relationships that form the core of our educational model. Responsible stewardship will enable us to better support our academic aspirations and will enrich our intellectual community. In response to emerging environmental and financial challenges, we will imagine and implement new approaches to our work that support the sustainability of our mission and serve as a model for other institutions.

Initiatives:

- Complete and implement a Sustainability Strategic Plan to further weave responsible environmental stewardship into the fabric of the University.
- Become an innovator in developing programs that address the challenges of the current higher education financial model to ensure our commitment to educating academically talented students today and in future generations.
- Work aggressively to achieve the University's goals while moving away from an additive model that places stress on the human, environmental, and financial resources of the University.