

The Student Experience at The University of Virginia

Introduction

This report sets ambitious goals for improving the experiences of undergraduate students at the University and by doing so, seeks also to: improve the quality of education for our students; deepen the satisfaction of faculty and staff; increase the standing of the University; increase alumni loyalty; and raise worldwide awareness of the uniqueness of a U.Va. education. Our aim is twofold: based on the best practices of America's most successful businesses, we predicate all of our goals on our core values, while seeking the best strategies for achieving these goals in an ever-changing educational landscape. We identify four core values—academic rigor, honor, student self-governance, and public service—which we believe are central to the mission Thomas Jefferson proposed for the University: to create “educated citizens.” And we propose five core stimuli—faculty/student interaction, diversity, internationalism, technology, and community-building—which should guide the University's development in the next two decades.

While the information presented in this report may not be new or surprising, we hope our conclusions and recommendations will be both. We can neither be faithful to our core values nor truly open to change by maintaining the status quo. Yet, in an important sense, our recommendations call for a simpler means of making difficult decisions: we must preface every important choice we make by asking if it accords with our core values and furthers our mission. We also believe that we cannot achieve our most audacious goals without taking risks. Only by maintaining the status quo can we avoid risk, yet in so doing we guarantee failure.

The analysis and corresponding suggestions presented in this work are meant to provide a path to follow, but they are by no means complete. This proposal is intended to establish a solid foundation from which substantive dialogue about the issues and challenges raised and how best to respond to them may follow.

This report is a product of work conducted by Patricia M. Lampkin, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs, in collaboration with many students, faculty, staff, alumni, and groups, including: the Student Enrollment Services Process Owners' Group (SESPOG), Process Simplification, the Virginia 2020 Student Experience Task Force, the Walter N. Ridley Scholarship Board, the Young Alumni Council, and others.

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Mission

Two hundred years ago, Thomas Jefferson wrote of the benefits of education:

Education generates habits of application, of order, and the love of virtue; and controls, by the force of habit, any innate obliquities in our moral organization. We should be far, too, from the discouraging persuasion that man is fixed, by the law of his nature, at a given point; that his improvement is a chimera, and the hope delusive of rendering ourselves wiser, happier or better than our forefathers were. . . . Education . . . engrafts a new man on the native stock, and improves what in his nature was vicious and perverse into qualities of virtue and social worth. (*The Rockfish Gap Report*, p. 6)

We should not be surprised that one of the key figures of the Enlightenment spoke so passionately of the ennobling qualities of education. But Jefferson was not content with knowledge as an end in itself; he dreamed of a university that would produce educated citizens, the better to make “a more perfect union.” Jefferson argued passionately for a system of public schools capped by a state university, in the belief that, by improving the individual, education benefits society. In his “Bill for the More General Diffusion of Knowledge,” he writes:

experience hath shewn, that even under the best forms [of government], those entrusted with power have, in time, and by slow operations, perverted it into tyranny; and it is believed that the most effectual means of preventing this would be, to illuminate, as far as practicable, the minds of the people at large And whereas it is generally true that that people will be happiest whose laws are best, and are best administered, and that laws will be wisely formed, and honestly administered, in proportion as those who form and administer them are wise and honest; whence it becomes expedient for promoting the public happiness that those persons, whom nature hath endowed with genius and virtue, should be rendered by liberal education worthy to receive, and able to guard the sacred deposit of the rights and liberties of their fellow citizens (*Writings*, p. 285)

Jefferson’s mission for the University has not changed. We remain dedicated to creating educated citizens, but we can only accomplish our mission by following a two-pronged approach: preserving our core values while seeking new strategies to meet the challenges of a changing educational and cultural landscape. These approaches are equally important. We cannot achieve our mission via a static adherence to tradition, nor by tacking aimlessly with every change in the academic winds. Both prongs are vital, although the tension between the two can be intense, particularly at an institution so imbued with tradition. Some may be tempted to shed traditions or values they consider outmoded, while others may interpret any re-visioning as an attack on sacred truths. The solution is to ensure that our visions of the future are always informed by our values and to learn to make even mundane choices reflect both values and strategies.

Senior Vice President for Development Robert Sweeney’s recent work on branding reflects the desire to highlight the University’s uniqueness to the public, to potential students, and to alumni in response to the growing competition for students and resources. This initiative, which borrows corporate marketing strategies, recognizes the

vital importance of standing out from the broad range of colleges and universities. But whereas Senior Vice President Sweeney's work aptly articulates new strategies for helping the University prosper in a changing academic climate, it builds upon unchanging values and a timeless mission, and in doing so it reinforces those values even as it reexamines them. In this way, the work of the Sweeney committee exemplifies the best practices of America's strongest corporations. In their book *Built to Last: Successful Habits of Visionary Companies*, James C. Collins and Jerry I. Porras cite a tenet common to all of the highly successful businesses they studied: "preserve the core/stimulate progress" (p. 80). Collins and Porras represent this core operating principle with the yin/yang symbol, reflecting their belief that it is the creative tension between the two elements which leads to prodigious success.

Among students, parents, and educators, talk of a college or university's reputation is too often shorthand for academic reputation, and excellence is too often boiled down to academic excellence alone. While many schools tout the quality and variety of their "student life," and some are well known for the excellence of their football or basketball teams, the most selective schools are typically known by the general public only for their academic reputations. To middle America, the Ivy League is synonymous with academic excellence but connotes little else; from a distance, Yale and Harvard look the same to many people. MIT enjoys the reputation as the finest science and technology university, but few people know more of it.

Not so the University of Virginia. The Lawn is probably the best known and most revered academic space in the country; its capstone, the Rotunda, may be the most recognizable and most admired academic building in the world. Few institutions of higher learning are known for their founders; the University's founder has been called "the man of the millennium." And while the University is consistently named the top public university in America, its reputation among the general population and its peers extends beyond academics. The recent news of alleged plagiarism in a large physics class may have brought unwelcome attention to the University, but it has also highlighted the welcome news that, to America and the world, the University of Virginia is synonymous with honor.

While the University's reputation is built upon academic excellence, honor, and its sense of tradition, it must not rest on reputation. Yet in preparing for the students of 2020, we must acknowledge that, for too many of its current students, the University's core values are not integral parts of the student experience, and too few of our students feel that they are being prepared to be "educated citizens." Generational changes may account for some of the challenges we face in reinvigorating these values. Today's students are widely considered the offspring of a consumer society who view education as a product to be delivered rather than a means of personal growth or the key to a life of service. The growing heterogeneity of our student body has also been cited as a bar to a cohesive sense of community or a consistent understanding of values such as honor. These explanations may have merit, but they obscure the central truth that core values cannot thrive unless they are learned, understood, enacted, and continually reinvigorated. As Dumas Malone writes of Jefferson in *The Sage of Monticello*:

He never ceased believing that the enlightenment of the people generally was a matter of supreme importance, but he was well aware that a democratic society was also faced with another task that he did not hesitate to designate as noble—training its future leaders. *He had asserted that the earth always belongs to the living generation, but he clearly recognized that every generation must render its youths fit to govern the next.* (p. 237; our emphasis)

That last sentence exemplifies the yin and yang identified by Collins and Porras: as Dumas asserts, Jefferson was clearly aware of the need to adapt and grow with the times, but he never lost sight of his mission.

We believe that, for the University to meet its potential, it must reinvigorate its core values even as it adopts visionary strategies for a changing educational landscape.

Core Values

According to Collins and Porras, "core ideology defines the enduring character of an organization—a consistent identity that transcends product or market life cycles, technological breakthroughs, management fads, and individual leaders" (1996, p. 66).

This core ideology comprises two parts: “core values, a system of guiding principles and tenets; and core purpose [or mission], the organization’s most fundamental reason for existence” (p. 66).¹ As we have already indicated, the University’s mission, to create educated citizens, was articulated by Jefferson as the *raison d’etre* of his envisioned academical village. The four core values we have identified—academic rigor, honor, student self-governance, and public service—were all cited by Jefferson as well, though not explicitly as core values. We have reconfirmed these core values through focus groups with students, alumni, faculty and staff, who acknowledged their timeless appeal and importance.

From the perspectives of both employees and customers, core ideology is central to the identities of the companies studied by Collins and Porras. It comes as no surprise that Walt Disney’s first core value is “no cynicism allowed,” or that Philip Morris’s is “The right to personal freedom of choice (to smoke, to buy whatever one wants) is worth defending” (1997, pp. 70-71). And because their core values are central to company life, these companies all have “cult-like cultures.” According to Collins and Porras:

Visionary, we learned, does not mean soft and undisciplined. Quite the contrary. Because the visionary companies have such clarity about who they are, what they’re all about, and what they’re trying to achieve, they tend to not have much room for people unwilling or unsuited to their demanding standards. (1997, p. 121)

We contend that, in many respects, U.Va. already qualifies as a “visionary” university, although we would not wish our culture to be viewed as “cult-like.” Our founder is widely regarded as the most visionary of our founding fathers, and at no other university is the educational philosophy so clearly imprinted in its physical plan. In addition, as we

¹ Collins and Porras did not approach their research with the preconceived notion of the importance of core ideology. Rather, after studying eighteen of America’s most successful companies, including Hewlett-Packard, Walt Disney, Wal-Mart, and General Electric, they determined that articulation of, and fidelity to, a core ideology was central to their success. In the case of Ford, for instance, people and products have always been more important than profits, yet these core values have made Ford the most successful and profitable automobile manufacturer in America (1997, p. 52). According to Johnson & Johnson: “We have a hierarchy of responsibilities: customers first, employees second, society at large third, and shareholders fourth” (1997, p. 68). Indeed, from 1926 to 1990, the stocks of the eighteen companies studied have been fifteen times as profitable as the stock market in general, while none bases its mission on profitability (1997, p. 4).

have argued above, the University is renowned for more than simply academic prestige. In a market in which academic reputation may be considered the analogue to “profitability,” the University can show considerable profits while pursuing something greater.

Nevertheless, central to this report is our belief that the University’s core values require careful review. We must reassess our priorities and reinvigorate the values that have guided us since 1825. We must recognize the choices we have made in spite of or without regard to our core ideology. And we must rededicate ourselves to these four core values, all of which are vital to our mission. We must understand and embrace our culture, so that we can pass it on and foster its uniqueness. Unless we do so, we cannot achieve the goals we seek.

Academic Rigor

Of all its core values, the University has remained truest to its first, academic rigor. Long recognized as a leading university, U.Va. continues to improve its academic reputation. We consistently place at or near the top of public universities in the *U.S. News and World Report* ranking, and in the top twenty-five overall. The class of 2004 arrived with some of the most impressive credentials yet: a median SAT score of 1330 and 84 percent ranked in the top tenth of their high school class. In pursuit of its “single standard, the idea of merit,” the Office of Admission crafted our most diverse class: ten percent African-American, thirteen percent Asian-American, four percent Hispanic, and six percent international. The University also has at least eight graduate programs ranked in the top twenty in their fields. The broad-ranging talents of our current students will make us proud in ways we cannot imagine.

Yet Jefferson envisioned much more than simply academic strength. In an 1820 letter, he declared: “This institution will be based on the illimitable freedom of the human mind. For here we are not afraid to follow truth wherever it may lead, nor to tolerate any error so long as reason is left free to combat it.” The university he envisioned struck some as implausible; John Adams felt that, while the involvement of the “noble triumvirate” of

Jefferson, James Monroe, and James Madison would lead the world to “expect something very great and very new,” popular prejudices would undercut anything “quite original, and very excellent” (qtd in Malone, p. 256).

Our academic excellence is unquestioned and indisputable, but it is hardly unique. It is instructive to see how prospective students view the University. According to surveys conducted by the Office of Admission, 85 percent of admitted students applied to the University primarily because of its academic reputation, and we may assume that a similar percentage applies for the general pool of applicants. But while our academic reputation clearly attracts students, our yield for the class of 2004 was only 53%. That is, of the 5482 students offered admission, only 2930 matriculated; more than 2500 students opted for another school. Some decisions may have been predicated on financial or other considerations, but among the students who opted for a different school, academic reputation was again the primary consideration. Contrast our yield with Harvard’s, at 80 percent, and Yale’s, 66 percent, and we see that our academic reputation, however strong it may be, is not strong enough to set us apart from our peers. According to the most recent *U.S. News & World Report* rankings, the University ranks nineteenth in selectivity and fourteenth in academic reputation. We believe that a reappraisal of our mission can lead to improved yield, selectivity, and reputation.

First, we must recognize that academic reputation is not synonymous with academic rigor. We believe our reputation can only profit by a careful re-examination of what we mean by rigor. As we will discuss below, under Public Service, the University has always prized thinkers and doers. Ours has never been a university of eggheads, and while we should continue to seek stronger, more intelligent students, such a search need not entail reforming the Rotunda as an ivory tower. Indeed, the sublime architectural harmonies of the Rotunda—its circle surmounting a square—serve as constant reminders of the infinite possibilities which can be built upon a solid foundation. Seen in this light, “academic rigor” comes to mean a thorough grounding in the abstract which leads to the concrete, the theoretical which leads to the practical, the intellectual in concert with the energetic.

We believe that the University should strive to set itself apart by building upon its reputation for developing thinkers and doers, following the incomparable example of Jefferson himself, renowned as a Renaissance man who tirelessly rendered the products of his fertile imagination. We must devote ourselves to stretching our students intellectually, while giving them arenas to explore new ideas and practices. Such work is currently underway in many of our academic departments and research laboratories, and many excellent initiatives have been recommended by the Virginia 2020 commissions. We will work with the Provost, the Faculty Senate, and the deans of the schools to fully realize this conception of academic rigor.

In addition to seeking such initiatives, we must learn not to tolerate processes which limit thinking while enforcing tedious doing. Academic advising is, unfortunately, commonly cited by frustrated students as a process in need of improvement. In general, third- and fourth-years are satisfied with the quality of academic advising; most have secured departmental advisers who are interested in guiding their intellectual pursuits. But first- and second-years consistently report that their academic advising experiences too often entail little more than short meetings and signed forms. We must ensure that academic advising introduces even our youngest students to mentors and encourages the very faculty/student interaction it mandates. One solution is technology. The Degree Audit Reporting System, DARS, which we will discuss below, will enable students to educate themselves on every program of study at the University, allowing for more substantive discussions with faculty advisers.

But technology can only assist; faculty must also be interested in fostering such discussions. If we are to be faithful to our first core value, we must acknowledge that, to be rigorous, education must be guided. As a community, we must value the interaction of teachers and students, and we must commit ourselves to providing the resources and environment necessary for such interaction.

REFLECTIONS:

- How can we help students understand different expressions of academic rigor as they choose between the University's schools and departments, between liberal arts and pre-professional, between humanities and social sciences?
- How do current University practices encourage or discourage the pursuit of academic rigor?
- Given our emphasis on practical application of intellectual pursuits, how do we respond to pure theory?

Honor

Honor is the value most often associated with the University and most praised by its students and alumni, and the University's honor system is among the best known in America. But while the University's adherence to traditions may convince many in our community that some things never change around Grounds, honor's history has been anything but static. From its beginnings in 1842 until the early twentieth century, honor at the University was largely tacit, an unwritten core value of the Southern gentleman's code. It was not until 1909 that a formal code was adopted, and numerous changes have been made in subsequent years. Yet many current students would doubtless agree with Thomas Taylor, who in 1958 wrote that:

. . . we find today that the system, although explained to first-year men seriously and conscientiously, is presented somewhat smugly as a self-evident system of ideal behavior and that the argument of tradition is employed somewhat more liberally than the facts warrant. The central misconception prevailing currently seems to be that the system is a somewhat arbitrary, God-given institution, functioning of itself perfectly enough to never be in need of redefinition. (Taylor, p. 2)

Perhaps the attitude lamented above is a product of honor's genesis as the bedrock of "gentlemanly" conduct, in which, as an anonymous student, writing in 1840, explains:

. . . it is very dishonorable to take a man's money, but very honorable to take his life in a duel. The same admirable theory will explain why, if you break a promise to obey the laws of the college as soon as it is made, you are not a whit the less a gentleman, while if you tell a lie about other matters you will be a

rascal; or why one may, with perfect propriety, obtain a diploma by fraudulent means, while if he procured a man's pocketbook by the same means, he would be a rogue. (Principia, pp. 271-277.)

“Honor” has been continually redefined by the University's students, at times for self-serving reasons. From our perspective, the gentleman who duels in the name of honor may be the great-great-grandfather of the 1940's student who answered “present” for his sleeping friend or of the contemporary student who buys alcohol with a fake ID. We cannot define “honor” once and for all; but if it is to remain a core value for us, we as a community must determine to redefine it continually, we must endeavor to convince our entire community of its importance, and we must fully realize its powers as a tool of education.

While Jefferson never articulated honor as a core value of the University, it was clearly one of his own. In a letter to a nephew, Peter Carr, he speaks of the pre-eminence of honor: “an honest heart being the first blessing, a knowing head is the second” (qtd. in *The Jeffersonian*, p. 49). Yet as many histories of the University explain, honor and student self-governance met the same hard fate in the years between 1825 and 1840. The system of student censors which Jefferson installed failed and was replaced by one of militaristic discipline enforced by the faculty, leading to a state of “war” in which cheating was viewed as a sort of guerilla warfare. Following the installation in 1842 of Professor Tucker's honor pledge, honor was, in the University's eyes, largely a matter for the classroom, although the students who meted justice broadened it to encompass gentlemanly conduct. With the demise of the Southern gentleman, the honor code shifted in important ways from honor to honesty (Taylor, p. 9), and shifting mores continue to shape our understanding of what it means to be honorable.

It is easy to find fault with the University's honor code, but beneath the fragile trappings of its formalized system, the core value of honor is surprisingly hardy, thanks almost wholly to our students. As a writer in 1906 noted, collegiate honor systems are “possible only where the demand comes from the majority of the students rather than from the faculty,” and in this regard, our tradition of student-enforced honor remains strong. Yet

too many current students value the Honor System as a tradition while failing to prescribe to its dictates. Far gone are the days described by *The Jeffersonian* in 1968:

Because of the Honor System the word of a Virginia student is accepted at face value as being the absolute truth. . . . Because of the Honor System, a student can leave his books or valuables lying unguarded in the most conspicuous of places and return some time later to find them unmoved. And most important of all . . . , the Honor System offers students the absolute assurance that as they compete for grades, they are competing solely on the basis of what they know and not on what others might be getting away with in class. (p. 45)

Today's students reflect increasingly relativistic views of honor. As we have seen, the Southern gentleman's code of honor was itself relativistic, but it nevertheless was a unitary code subscribed to by overwhelming numbers of students. In contemporary society, however, values are often considered private territory, and many of our contemporary students have created qualified definitions of cheating. For many more, honor has become a code which may only be enforced on oneself. Professor Bernard Mayo could declare to students in 1969 that, unless students refuse to tolerate cheating among their peers and "root out from the student body any individual who degrades himself and the group by lying or stealing or cheating, . . . the code would become a dismal failure and 'honor' an empty, meaningless word" (*The Jeffersonian*, p. 48). But a high percentage of our students no longer subscribe to such a view. For them, honor must not entail snitching.

The defeat of the recent referendum on honor shows the reluctance of students to alter particulars of the honor system, perhaps reflecting the misapprehension of honor as a static tradition described above. Yet the referendum was spurred by a growing schizophrenia in student views of honor: while surveys show that 85 to 90 percent of students support the single sanction, juries increasingly fail to convict their guilty peers. One plank of the referendum called for the voting standard for guilt to be lowered from four-fifths of a jury to two-thirds. If 85 percent of our students believe in the single sanction, why must we lower voting standards to 67 percent to ensure "justice"? We contend that the slippage occurs because few students truly reflect on what honor means and what a formalized system of honor entails. Too many relish the veneer of honor but

have relinquished its responsibilities. And this environment, coupled with societal influences, has bred a growing cynicism which threatens to undermine this core value.

The central problem with the current treatment of honor at the University, however, is that the Honor System affords participation only by way of punishment for the majority of students. For most of our students, it neither educates nor affirms values, and indeed, many of our minority students, especially African-Americans, increasingly view it as a penal system with deeply ingrained biases. We cannot expect to instill honor via a system which proffers negatives or nothing.

Various commentators have singled out *sine qua nons* of the Honor System: the single sanction, the willingness to report peers, the full support of our community. But a proper re-examination of honor must take none of these for granted. The University's definition of "honor" has changed greatly over the past two centuries, as has its system of enforcement. To reinvigorate this core value, we must undertake the difficult task of affirming what it means for our community today, and then we must agree as a community that we will honor it as a core value. Above all, this effort requires education, because few of our current students have been taught to think critically about honor. As we will explain in the Planning section, below, the recently formed honor team was created with this task in mind.

Once this work is complete, we must follow through by building commitment to this core value throughout our community. We may well hope that the University will never again possess a student body as homogeneous as its nineteenth-century counterparts, but we must strive for a homogeneity of purpose, a "cult-like" single-mindedness regarding the importance of honor. We do not mean to squelch dissent or disagreement about what honor comprises. Rather, we wish to foster a culture in which honor is important to everyone in our community. U.Va.'s allegiance to honor is world-famous, yet its demise is predicted by increasing numbers in our community. If we succeed in reinvigorating honor, we will immeasurably strengthen our community, we will broaden our students' education in vital ways, and we will attract growing numbers of students, faculty, and staff who wish to partake in this value.

REFLECTIONS:

- When educating students about honor, how can we avoid the feeling of indoctrination or of imposing a value on students? Can we teach our students to have an “honest heart”?
- What is a proper balance between honor as a core value with a set meaning and honor as a process for evaluating students?
- How can we help faculty and staff support the Honor System by trusting students?

Student Self-Governance

Student self-governance is not a term to be defined conclusively; it is a philosophy and a process which can only be properly understood when lived and embodied. Student self-governance requires that students take responsibility for themselves as constituents and as representatives of the University community. This responsibility extends throughout student life: the choices students make, the actions they take, their decisions. For it to be successful, students must be allowed to test their own ideas and take responsibility for the consequences. For these reasons, the philosophy requires a delicate balance among all members of the University community. Student self-governance requires that faculty and staff act as mentors for students, not merely by imparting knowledge but by teaching students how to take responsibility for their success or failure—in the classroom, in search of financial aid, etc. Faculty, staff, and administrators must allow students to make mistakes, although they may offer input. It is a philosophy which takes the research model out of the classroom and enables students’ education to expand throughout their interactions: as a professor lends guidance and expertise to help a student explore a subject and grow as a scholar, so must we all lend guidance and expertise so that students may learn organizational, financial, and ethical responsibility. If we do not feel the tension which student self-governance creates—the tension of allowing a student to attempt and err, of deciding when to step in and when to step back, of giving a platform to dissenting and discordant student voices—then we are resting on a pat definition instead of relying on an organic process.

At the founding of the University, Jefferson recognized that there was no model for the system of student self-governance which he envisioned:

The best mode of government for youth, in large collections, is certainly a desideratum not yet attained with us. It may be well questioned whether *fear* after a certain age, is a motive to which we should have ordinary recourse. The human character is susceptible of other incitements to correct conduct, more worthy of employ, and of better effect. Pride of character, laudable ambition, and moral dispositions are innate correctives of the indiscretions of that lively age; and when strengthened by habitual appeal and exercise, have a happier effect on future character than the degrading motive of fear. . . . The affectionate deportment between father and son, offers in truth the best example for that of tutor and pupil It will then be for the wisdom and discretion of the visitors to devise and perfect a proper system of government, which, if it be founded in reason and comity, will be more likely to nourish in the minds of our youth the combined spirit of order and self-respect, so congenial with our political institutions, and so important to be woven into the American character. (*The Rockfish Gap Report*, pp. 11-12)

While Jefferson did not have a particular system in mind, he clearly considered student self-governance a core value, which it remains today. But to be of value, student self-governance must be continually re-evaluated, reinvigorated, espoused, and proclaimed, particularly in light of ever-changing perceptions of our students' roles and duties at the University. For instance, when liability issues involving our students arise, parents and commentators often declare that the University should act *in loco parentis*. We would argue, however, that such a claim fails to capture the essence of student self-governance. Jefferson may offer the "affectionate deportment between father and son" as "the best example for that of tutor and pupil," but it is important to recognize that he limits this comparison along the lines of "deportment," not of responsibility, governance, or obedience.

We would suggest, rather, that the relationship of University faculty and staff to students should be *nec pares nec parentes*, neither peers nor parents. This phrase defines the relationship negatively, by what it is not, emphasizing that, like *student self-governance*, it is a process to be worked out, not merely defined. At the same time, this phrase offers positive parameters between which we should strive to fall. Since the University's founding, the relationship between students and University personnel has in some

respects changed greatly: it is not uncommon for students to call faculty and staff by their first names or to interact in a manner commonly reserved for peers. Nor is it common for faculty to demand or expect the obedience a parent may require of a child. At our best, we are all mentors for our students, yet we must still be prepared to redefine that relationship regularly. Today's students are just as ready to respect faculty and staff as they ever were, and just as eager to seek their own solutions. Only by continually re-evaluating and reinvigorating student self-governance can we "nourish in the minds of our youth the combined spirit of order and self-respect" which Jefferson found so desirable.

We all recognize that students do not run the school, and that the administration supervises with what they see as our best interests in mind. But what we learn on these Grounds is not limited to professorial chalkboard scribbles or course-packet contents. College life in general and life on Grounds in particular is about learning to make decisions and dealing with the consequences of those decisions. And that is what student self-governance is all about. (*The Cavalier Daily*, Feb. 4, 2000)

Student self-governance does not cede control of the University to students. Rather, it calls for us to accord students equal footing whenever possible and to continually re-evaluate when such footing is desirable. It also requires us to see how our services can only be successful to the extent that they recognize and meet students' expectations. It is not uncommon to hear staff dismiss students as complicating factors, squeaky wheels who hinder the smooth running of the engines we build in our offices. Clearly, such an attitude leads to poor customer service, but more importantly, it hinders the education and growth of our students. We must learn to consider them always *students*, who can learn in every interaction and will learn best through experience. After all, "learn" comes from an Indo-European root which carries "the underlying notion of 'gaining experience by following a track'" (Ayto, p. 320). By allowing them to lead, we teach leadership. By according them responsibility, we teach them to be responsible. By valuing student self-governance, we teach students to govern and to govern themselves.

REFLECTIONS:

- How can the University balance its concerns about liability with a willingness to let students fail?
- How can we foster self-governance in the broadest sense, not just for students selected for University committees? For example, how can we help students see under-aged drinking as an issue of self-governance?
- Student self-governance involves students judging students. How can we foster a sense of these student peers as mentors or guides for other students and not just as enforcers?

Public Service

[Jefferson] never ceased believing that the enlightenment of the people generally was a matter of supreme importance, but he was well aware that a democratic society was also faced with another task that he did not hesitate to designate as noble—training its future leaders. He had asserted that the earth always belongs to the living generation, but he clearly recognized that every generation must render its youths fit to govern the next. (Malone, p. 237)

While each of the University's core values complements the others, public service is most clearly imbued by the former three. By learning how to put an intensive education into action, adopting a rigorous code of honor, and developing the skills and sense of duty necessary for shaping their community, our students are primed for public service. And we must remember that this was Jefferson's intention all along, given his mission of producing "educated citizens" and his steadfast belief that enlightened minds were the prerequisites of enlightened societies. Indeed, in a letter to John Adams, Jefferson speaks of the "natural aristocracy among men" which he wishes to develop: "The grounds of this are virtue and talents [as opposed to] the artificial aristocracy founded on wealth and birth, without either virtue or talents. . . . The natural aristocracy I consider as the most precious gift of nature for the instruction, the trusts and government of society" (qtd. in Malone, p. 239). The mission of the University, he felt, should be to develop the virtues and talents of this natural aristocracy for the betterment of all. And while his remarks concerning public service usually focus on governance, we do not believe it unfair to expand this value to encompass service to all areas of society. Once again, Jefferson

affords the best example of this value: as educator, cultivator, inventor, political philosopher, architect, and public servant, America's greatest polymath dedicated his prodigious talents to the betterment of society in unmatched ways.

The University community reflects a broad commitment to public service, and several groups have already offered excellent recommendations for further developing and strengthening this work. The reports of the Virginia 2020 Commission on Public Service and Outreach and the Virginia 2020 Student Experience Task Force (see Appendix A) do not need recapitulating here, and because these groups have laid excellent groundwork, our discussion of this value will be briefer than the above three.

We do wish, however, to stress our interest in public service as a core value for the entire University community. President Casteen has offered a clear rationale behind the creation of the Commission on Public Service and Outreach:

To put the matter very simply, we need broad and motivated public support based on widespread awareness of the value of *faculty* work. People in Tidewater or Northern Virginia or Southwest Virginia or Richmond believe that the University of Virginia lives within the Grounds in Charlottesville, that it does not make substantial commitments to their well being. This perception tells us that something is wrong. (1998, our emphasis)

The Commission's recommendations rightly highlight the University's need to develop service structures and partnerships, to develop priorities for public service, and to increase the visibility of its outreach. Behind these recommendations stands the safe assumption that the University community already performs many services to our city, our state, the nation, and the world, but that we can do more, do it more efficiently, and more effectively publicize our efforts. We applaud its calls for institutional commitment to public service and outreach.

But nowhere is public service discussed as a core value, to be instilled. The commission strongly believes in public service but never addresses public service as a belief. In its report, "institutional commitment" translates as financial support, which again we applaud, but contrast that commitment with Jefferson's commitment to develop the

“natural aristocracy,” which comprises “virtue and talents.” For Jefferson, altruism is the purest product of an enlightened mind, existing on a plane far removed from the need to market one’s selflessness. And in this light, we may come to view a different sort of institutional commitment, in which faculty and staff develop the virtue and talents of the students we admit.

Through Madison House, through their record numbers in the Peace Corps, through a myriad of initiatives, University students daily display their commitment to public service. But the energy already in evidence does not relieve us from re-envisioning what form this core value should take. Should it resemble honor, in that students who lack the value—who are self-serving—are unwelcome here? Can its altruistic spirit thrive in a “service-learning” atmosphere that exchanges credit hours for public-minded deeds? Can it be both an ideal and a pragmatic public relations tool? And in light of that last question, should our conception of public service essentially match that of most other universities, or is there a peculiarly U.Va. brand? Broadly understood, public service is a key goal of any public university: the educational needs of citizens are served; the medical, legal, and technological needs of society are served; cultural needs are served; etc. But given our institutional commitment to the University’s particular brands of academic rigor, honor, and student self-governance, we believe that we can and should fashion an understanding of public service as a value that is uniquely ours.

REFLECTIONS:

- Given the developmental stages of many undergraduate students, how can we foster a willingness to help others?
- How can faculty and staff model public service to our students?

Setting Up the Conditions and Taking on Risk

A well-conceived vision consists of two major components: *core ideology* and *envisioned future*. Core ideology, the yin of our scheme, defines what we stand for and why we exist. Yin is unchanging and complements yang, the envisioned future. The envisioned future is what we aspire to become, to achieve, to create—something that will require significant change and progress to attain. (Collins and Porras, 1996, p. 66)

Risk makes people nervous—which might explain why so many of us have trouble realizing the full length of our creative potential. (Shekerjian, p. 16)

In her book *Uncommon Genius: How Great Ideas Are Born*, Denise Shekerjian studies the habits of winners of the MacArthur Award—the so-called “Genius Award”—and finds that creativity can only thrive in a hospitable environment that accommodates risk. Only when we are granted “the freedom to fail” (p. 17) can most of us fully tap our creativity, yet failure becomes increasingly likely without an appropriate laboratory for our experiments. For an artist, the necessary environment might be the proper studio space; for an engineer, an advanced computer lab. As we envision the undergraduate student experience in 2020, we must develop and deploy core strategies and stimuli to increase the likelihood of our success. We do not say *ensure* our success, because we cannot do so. This is hard, risky work. But remove the risks, and we preclude rewards. If we learn as a community to embrace this uncertainty, and learn to consider our Grounds a laboratory for testing our ideas, then we will be well on our way to realizing the student experience we envision.

As with any creator, Jefferson at times doubted that his vision of an academical village would ever materialize. In an 1817 letter to the Abbé Correa de Serra, he writes: “Mine, after all may be an Utopian dream, but being innocent, I have thought I might indulge in it until I go to the land of dreams, and sleep there with the dreamers of all past and future times” (qtd. in Malone, p. 269). Dumas Malone declares, however, that such “plaintive” language “would be difficult to match . . . elsewhere in his voluminous correspondence” (p. 269); Jefferson was unmatched at making the envisioned future a reality. The years of painstaking effort required to found the University reflect his willingness to embrace risk while pragmatically deploying every strategy at his disposal in pursuit of his goal.

To create the student experience we envision, we must embrace the risk inherent both in our vision and in our strategies for achieving it. Whereas Collins and Porras' model suggests a stable core in constant tension with a risky embrace of change, we cannot ignore the risks inherent in our mission and core values. There are considerable risks involved in building a community of trust, and in allowing students to judge and punish each other. Our model of student self-governance, related as it is to the scientific method of trial and error, is built upon risk. Even our mission of creating educated citizens is far riskier than that of most ivory towers or professional schools; while our classrooms span the gamut between pure theory and applied knowledge, we risk more so that we may produce more.

If this report is successful, it will convince its readers to embrace the core ideology we have articulated along with the accompanying risk. But as we argue in the introduction, once we agree upon this envisioned future, once we embrace its difficulties and risks, our choices become simpler. The first step is the hardest.

Core Stimuli

While our core values entail considerable risk, the core stimuli needed to guide us to our envisioned future may seem reassuringly fundamental. These five-- faculty/student interaction, diversity, internationalism, technology, and community-building—may in fact be *sine qua nons* of any forward-thinking university. We would never opt against faculty/student interaction. We cannot afford to ignore the many blessings of technology, although we disregard its dangers at our peril. And while “diversity” may conjure for some the controversies of affirmative action, our University has proudly committed itself to fostering diversity as a means of broadening all its members.

We call them “stimuli” instead of “strategies,” because they are not plans of attack. Rather, in our experiential laboratory, they are agents of change, and we must devise and deploy strategies to encourage the changes we desire. The test for us lies in determining how these five can best stimulate progress toward our envisioned future. Technology can

do more than simply save our students time; properly harnessed, it will empower them to shape their educations both in- and outside of the classroom. Internationalism entails more than encouraging students to study abroad; a true spirit of internationalism would transform the boundaries of our outreach. The communities we wish to build are communities of trust, of mutual accountability, and of shared values and direction. The University's core values will ground these diverse communities in a cultural system, which allows for both uniqueness and commonality at the same time. Such a process entails educating ourselves in the fundamental study of humanity, fostering inclusion while acknowledging difference, and accepting the tension which accompanies it.

Structured Spontaneity

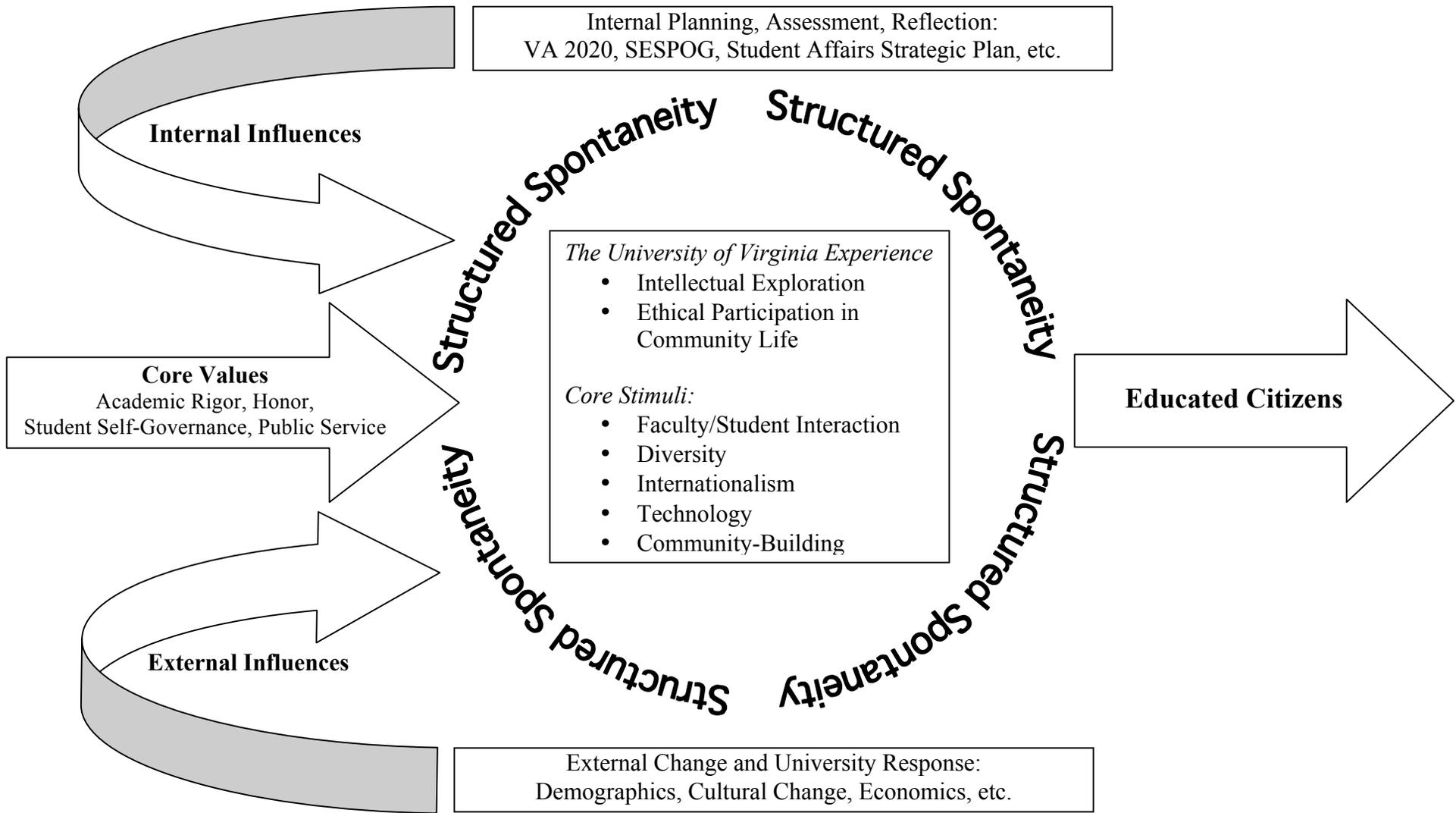
These five core stimuli will enable us to set up the conditions necessary for our student experience laboratory and to be deliberate in encouraging our students to think critically about how our core values shape their intellectual and social development. This laboratory will also accommodate the broad range of internal and external influences which help define students' perceptions of their roles in the University community and society at large. We believe that the manner by which these opportunities and influences come together to shape the student experience can best be understood by the concept of "structured spontaneity," a philosophy of intensive interaction that welcomes students into the University community and makes them active members.

In an environment characterized by structured spontaneity, students experience an abundance of interactive opportunities, such as student workshops, academic programs, research opportunities, organizational activities, and group membership, which lead to lively discussions of the University's core values. These opportunities for interaction are purposeful, though often informal and unpredictable. In short, structured spontaneity describes an environment which engages all members of our community in the process of creating opportunities to participate in academic discoveries, challenging discussions, and fulfilling social interactions.

We have offered a conceptual map of our plan for the undergraduate student experience in an effort to capture clearly the variety of factors involved (see Figure 1 below). The arrows to the left show the three types of inputs brought to bear on students: our core values, which should be central to their experience; external influences, with their often unforeseen effects; and internal influences, which help shape institutional strategies. The diagram's focal point comprises the actual student experience, which is subdivided at the top of the box into the intellectual and the participatory, reflecting our interest in producing thinkers and doers. Below are the core stimuli, the agents of change which accommodate the entering forces and enable growth. "Structured spontaneity" circumscribes the box, signifying both its centrality to and its pervasiveness within the student experience. The single output is our mission, which, while it should encompass a variety of attributes, should also remain reducible to this single, concise goal. Thus, our core values and mission remain central to the student experience, while the strategies and opportunities we pursue in support of our core ideology are, by design, constantly open for examination, refinement, and innovation.

Planning for the Undergraduate Student Experience University of Virginia 2020

Fig. 1: Conceptual Map



Visionary Planning

As an institution of higher learning, one of our fundamental traits is to search tirelessly for more effective ways to use our resources in pursuit of our mission. Our students interact with a variety of University organizations, from academic departments, to deans' offices, to auxiliary services. While collectively these units form the U.Va. community, each has its own reason for being, which in turn influences how it dedicates resources. If, however, our objective is to promote intensive interactions that encourage students to think critically about all aspects of their experience, then we must guide our decision-making by a shared vision for the student experience, a vision which anchors all our plans, regardless of who implements them.

According to Collins and Porras (1996), "core ideology provides the glue that holds an organization together as it grows, decentralizes, diversifies, expands globally, and develops workplace diversity" (p. 66). The University's decentralized structure need not change to accommodate its core ideology. Instead, by inculcating this core ideology throughout all our offices and departments, we can best ensure that our myriad individual strategies, our decentralized decision-making, will nevertheless support our core values and mission. There is a delicate balance between defining a core ideology while pursuing those opportunities which lead to an envisioned future; in our case, we must promote the core values central to the student experience while pursuing strategies that anticipate or react to changing educational, economic, technological, and cultural environments.

In responding to the critical question, "*How can we do better tomorrow than we did today?*," Collins and Porras (1997) suggest that organizations focus on the following:

- What "mechanisms of discontent" can you create that would obliterate complacency and bring about change and improvement from within, yet are consistent with your core ideology? How can you give these mechanisms sharp teeth?

- What are you doing to invest for the future *while* doing well today? Does your company adopt innovative ideas before the rest of the industry?
- Do people in your company understand that *comfort is not the objective*—that life in a visionary company is not supposed to be easy? Does your company reject doing well as an end goal, replacing it with the never-ending discipline of working to do better tomorrow than it did today? (p. 199)

With questions such as these in mind, several planning efforts were launched during the past year to further ingrain our core ideology for the student experience while identifying opportunities to enrich the types of interactions we have with our students.

Specific Initiatives

Numerous University groups have identified or are in the process of identifying possible ways to improve the quality of the student experience. Given the scope of our endeavor and the institutional commitment required to realize our vision, it is critical that we leverage as fully as possible work that is either in progress or already completed, because it allows us to be more effective and efficient in how we invest our resources; helps us identify gaps in our knowledge base; and facilitates the communication which is essential to achieving our desired objectives.

Subscribing to this approach, the Virginia 2020 Student Experience Task Force was formed to explore how the proposed changes in the four Virginia 2020 commission reports would specifically affect the undergraduate student experience. Key themes that emerged from this review clearly resonate with the objectives of other planned or launched efforts with more immediate completion dates. Below are descriptions of these key efforts, along with corresponding time lines for completing the work and a description of next steps that link all of these initiatives together.

Virginia 2020 Student Experience Task Force

Following the publication of the four Virginia 2020 commission reports, the Virginia 2020 Student Experience Task Force was formed to review these reports from the perspective of the undergraduate student experience. A complete report on the team's preliminary findings, including specific recommendations tailored to each of the four commission areas, and a list of team members appears in Appendix A. Many of these recommendations directly address ways to further entrench our core values. For example, the development of interdisciplinary courses and projects would promote academic rigor, while recommendations regarding increased funding for programming and student use of facilities would foster student self-governance. Not surprisingly, the public service and outreach section offers numerous recommendations which would considerably improve student involvement in and appreciation of public service. The task force's recommendations also touch on our five core stimuli, particularly diversity.

The Student Experience Task Force will complete its review by August 2001 and work with the Planning Office as it coordinates the next phase of the Virginia 2020 process.

Honor Team

A key tenet of the student experience at the University of Virginia is to live honorably within the University community and beyond. As such, the core value of honor is critical to the sense of community we foster, and our exploration of this ideal must be ongoing. The purpose of the Honor Team is to recommend an approach or a series of approaches aimed at exposing all University students to a set of experiences in which they confront, question, and reflect on their own ethical foundations and values. We want students to understand and reflect on what it means to live honorably within the University in concrete and specific ways that link their own values to our honor system. In developing its plan to achieve these purposes, the team should determine the resources and structures required to support this objective, as well as the types of opportunities that could be provided to achieve this goal. When contemplating these educational opportunities, the team should also consider the unique perspectives and needs of different students. For

example, a separate series of situations could be developed for athletes, first-year students, international students, and student leaders, in which each group is asked to consider a set of case studies that raise ethical tensions they might encounter as students or in later life. The team should consider ways in which contemporary influences might shape its suggested approaches, keeping in mind, however, that honor's importance as a value remains constant.

As part of its initiative, the team should study the Honor System Review Commission report and should work closely with the Institute for Practical Ethics. Expected team outcomes include:

- Suggest opportunities to expose students concretely to the ideal of honor
- An implementation plan to realize the goal
- Recommendation of an organizational structure to implement the plan and to monitor its effectiveness
- Identification of resources required to implement this effort.

The team's ultimate goal is to develop a variety of educational opportunities in which faculty, staff, and student leaders are encouraged to integrate the exploration of honor into their interactions with students both in- and outside the classroom, so that we may continually reinvigorate this core value.

The team should have a preliminary draft of its recommendations in place by December 2001.

Student Self-Governance Team

The Student Self-Governance Team has not yet been formed but is being modeled on the University-Wide Task Force on Diversity, which focused on exploring ways to foster diversity in many forms, rather than in a single, narrow definition. As we explain above, we view student self-governance as a practice to live by, and a key element of this team's charge will be to review processes and policies which needlessly hinder this practice, while seeking mechanisms to foster an environment which accepts and rewards risk. The

team's work is expected to grow out of many of the issues the Student Organizations and Programming team is currently exploring (see below).

A time line for this team's work has not yet been set.

Process Simplification – Student Enrollment Services Process Owners' Group

Originally, the goal of the Student Enrollment Services Process Owners' Group (SESPOG) was

to integrate core administrative and financial functions in the areas of admissions, bursar, financial aid, and registrar, . . . specifically . . . to evaluate core operations in each functional area and identify opportunities for improving service, streamlining transactions, and integrating functions.”

While this remains a vital objective, during the past three years, SESPOG's mission has evolved to incorporate a broader view of how key units that interact with students can also influence their educational development. This evolution started with the development of summer orientation, a highly successful process which allowed SESPOG to witness multiple units collaborating to achieve a key educational objective. SESPOG is currently engaged in developing a core ideology for student services at the University of Virginia, which is predicated on supporting the University's mission to create educated citizens. In developing this core ideology, SESPOG has defined student services as follows:

The term *student services* refers to the resources, opportunities, and information that University staff and faculty make available and promote to students, which contribute to the students' living and learning experience during their time at U.Va. Student services enhance the educational experience of the University community and include how students interact with staff and faculty, as well as how they access the resources, opportunities, and information that the University provides outside the classroom.

A key assumption in this work is that there *should be* a common philosophy and set of values underlying the ways in which the University delivers the resources, opportunities, and information it offers to students.

With this foundation in place, SESPOG plans to launch teams to target specific processes, which if improved would help us better achieve our mission. The group's pilot effort with Student Financial Services offers an excellent model for subsequent efforts. During this pilot, which was coordinated by Process Simplification in collaboration with Yvonne Hubbard and Steve Kimata, the Bursar and Financial Aid staffs developed independent mission statements and core values, which they subsequently combined as their offices were merging (Appendix C). Staff feedback shows that this philosophy work helped to smooth the merger while increasing staff understanding of the work each office performs. As a next step, SFS, SESPOG, and Process Simplification staff will collaborate on ways to improve the processes with which SFS serves students, including the physical layout of its planned "store front" in Carruthers Hall.

Time line: SESPOG intends to complete its core philosophy work during the fall. Subsequent "smaller" efforts, building on this philosophy work, will be launched during the fall and winter.

Student Organizations and Programming Team

The Student Organizations and Programming Team (SOP) was created by SESPOG to address numerous processes involved in programming, many of which span departmental barriers. The team defines *programming* as any extracurricular activity or event, provided for or by students, which enriches students' lives. Such programming includes, but is not limited to: student organizations; intramural and club sports; concerts, speakers, and festivals; and community outreach. In its preliminary report (Appendix B), SOP identifies five key issues it intends to address: (1) program advising; (2) space availability and reservations; (3) funding; (4) coordination; and (5) the CIO Agreement and process.

SOP's work will predominately affect student self-governance, and the team is pleased that Student Council has agreed to extensive collaboration in the coming school year.

This collaboration should itself be viewed as an exemplary model of including students in key initiatives and empowering them to take risks in their problem-solving. The team's preliminary report recommends the creation or expansion of numerous student-led initiatives, including peer training for student organizations and student-operated program advising. Student Council intends to create an ad hoc programming committee to explore and develop these and similar initiatives, and to work with SOP on larger issues.

We should add that SOP will have three undergraduate members and one graduate member in the fall. Student Council has appointed one of its members, Katherine Martini, to name students to University committees and teams, and we are pleased that many groups, including the President's commissions, now include student representation. We believe that faculty and staff will immediately recognize the benefits of including students in key University committees, and we hope that active participation and representation will soon be the norm.

Time line: SOP expects to report its findings to SESPOG in January 2002 and intends to implement specific improvements throughout the school year.

DARS/Academic Advising Team

SESPOG is currently working with Process Simplification staff, the Registrar's Office and Information Technology and Communications (ITC) to ensure that the Degree Audit Reporting System (DARS) will be fully implemented by September 2002. DARS replaces PACE and offers numerous functions previously unavailable to faculty and students, including real-time and cumulative registration information and on-line information on departmental and degree requirements.

Using information collected during this implementation, the proposed DARS/Academic Advising Team will explore ways in which on-line degree auditing can streamline the academic advising process. It will also incorporate information provided by the "owners" of academic advising in the various schools, which has been gathered by SESPOG and Process Simplification.

Time line: Provided that DARS’s implementation proceeds on schedule, this team will begin its work in spring 2002, with a goal of submitting a preliminary report to SESPOG by fall 2002. While projections of more than one year in advance are necessarily inexact, SESPOG hopes that, by spring 2003, it could begin collaborating with the schools on implementation of recommendations from the DARS/Academic Advising Team.

Coordination of Planning

As the above descriptions show, there are many exciting initiatives underway or in the planning stages which will directly affect the undergraduate student experience. With the assistance from other key individuals, SESPOG will continue to play a key strategic role by coordinating these efforts to ensure the most efficient use of time and energy and guard against unnecessary duplication of effort. In the past year, SESPOG has adopted the role of adviser for a variety of constituencies outside its original purview, and we believe the team is well suited to take on this work. Its members possess broad and deep institutional memory and are strategically positioned to pay expert attention to our core values and core stimuli (See Appendix D for a list of members). To offer one key example, SESPOG is collaborating intensively with ISP, ITC, and other groups to ensure that the Oracle student module meets the needs of both our students and our core ideology. SESPOG will continue to play a key role in our planning for the Virginia 2020 Student Experience.

Initiative	Target Completion Date
VA 2020 Student Experience Task Force	August 2001
Honor Team	December 2001
Student Self-Governance Team	TBD
SESPOG – Core Philosophy for Student Services	Fall 2001
Student Organization and Programming Team	January 2002
DARS/Academic Advising Team	Fall 2002

Assessment

The work described in this report is ambitious; it will require a significant investment of people's time and energies and constant diligence to ensure that we are on the right track. As Collins and Porras (1996) suggest, "companies that enjoy enduring success have core values and a core purpose that remain fixed while their business strategies and practices endlessly adapt to a changing world." (p.66). Our efforts will rely considerably on useful information to guide our decisions and to help us determine if we are indeed affecting the University community in the ways we desire.

All of the teams involved in this endeavor will consider the key question "How will we know if we are making a difference?" At the same time, the initiatives described above vary in scope and expected outcomes; each involves unique factors that will help determine which approaches would most effectively allow us to assess whether we are meeting our intended objectives. Certainly, our interactions with students and the strategies we pursue to deepen these interactions will need to incorporate the lessons we learn in each initiative.

As these projects continue to unfold, key partnerships will be forged to determine the best ways to obtain sound information about the effect of these efforts on the undergraduate student experience, and how to incorporate what we learn into our everyday practices. Among the organizations that will contribute to this ongoing assessment are: the Office of Institutional Assessment and Studies, the Institute for Practical Ethics, the University Planning Council (Virginia 2020), and Process Simplification. Involving these offices is important not only because their input will be essential in thinking through and implementing worthwhile assessment techniques, but also because their collaboration will facilitate an ongoing dialogue which we believe is critical to sustaining this endeavor.

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Appendix A

Virginia 2020 Student Experience Task Force Report

This group of undergraduate and graduate students, faculty and administration was led by Pat Lampkin and chaired by Denise Karaoli, Project Director for Virginia 2020. The task force's purpose was to look closely at each of the Virginia 2020 commission reports and discuss their impact on the undergraduate student experience, including the identification of key issues and concerns that were neglected. Recommendations were made within each commission area.

Overall Themes

The following recommendations encompass all areas of the four commission reports.

1. **Facilities:** There is a need for more space on Grounds for activities within all the commission reports. In order to create excellence in the four areas discussed, this task force strongly advocates for planning and development of state-of-the-art facilities. Current policies should be reviewed to determine how and by whom facilities are being used. The creation of a guide to available facilities, who is eligible to use them and for what, the application process, contact information, and other relevant material should be compiled in one brochure and made accessible to students. Additionally, we advocate for more and better use of current facilities for fine and performing arts.
2. **Diversity:** The open exchange of diverse ideas among diverse individuals is an integral part of an eminent institution. While the University has made demonstrable strides in fostering diversity among faculty, staff, and students, there is still much work to be done, including recruitment and retention of faculty and students from different backgrounds and ethnicities. As an institution, we should communicate about, encourage, and support individuals in attending cultural activities. We must challenge ourselves and others to associate with persons who are different from us. This committee recommends a University point person who will directly address issues of diversity.
3. **Funding:** In order to achieve the level of distinction and sophistication to which the University aspires, significant and sustainable funding is needed. The task force recommends identifying funds to support more Harrison Undergraduate Research Awards, particularly focusing on achievement in the areas identified by the 2020 commissions. Information sessions regarding the application process for Harrison Awards should be given in each department.
4. **Interdisciplinary Courses and Projects:** As in life after college, the liberal arts experience is not limited to one particular area of study. Rather, it exposes students to theories and applications that encompass a range of disciplines. There is a need for a more coordinated effort to bridge academic disciplines and to allow students to experiment with ideas in various environments. Faculty, too, will gain from partnerships across the University Grounds and across the world.

5. **Communication and Academic Advising:** Communication regarding each of the four areas in the commission reports (unless one majors in that area) does not seem to be coordinated, nor does it seem to be directed at a variety of audiences. The most cited example of poor communication on Grounds was made in reference to academic advising. Students do not feel they are receiving enough advice, and in fact, many rely on peers for creation of a schedule. A unified effort must be made to provide excellent interdisciplinary curricular as well as co-curricular guidance to students in every academic area.

Fine and Performing Arts

Discussion regarding this commission report began with a discussion on the mission of the University. Our goal is not to become a renowned school for the arts; rather, we should focus on our liberal arts mission and promote a sophistication in the arts. Currently, students do not have enough access to performance space, and policies prohibit spontaneous or short-term planning, both of which are traits of students. Policies regarding the use and reservation of facilities must be more user-friendly.

Short-term Goals:

1. Incorporate art into everyday life by placing displays in public places across Grounds and encouraging spontaneous dramatic performances in high-traffic outdoor spaces.
2. Centralize and promote communication regarding the arts by establishing an Arts Advocate as part of the Arts Council. Arts communication regarding upcoming University and local events as well as collaborations on Grounds should be widely publicized.
3. Space should be allocated for students.

Long-term Goals:

1. Recruit faculty who will create interdisciplinary courses and more arts classes (including instructional classes).
2. Build state-of-the-art performance space and make it available for student use.
3. Development office and Arts Council should work together to cultivate donors who give priority to arts-related projects and sponsored research funding.

Public Service and Outreach

Public Service and Outreach is one of the defining experiences for many University of Virginia students. Our students have a strong and long history of involvement in service and volunteerism. They understand the reciprocal nature of service, in which both the students and the community benefit from the experience. Alumni also value their service experience as a way to develop the life-long habit of volunteerism and civic engagement. In an effort to support and improve the service experience for University of Virginia students, the task force recommends the following priorities.

Short-term Goals:

1. Study the demographics of students who are involved in service activities to discover trends. There is currently no comprehensive listing of student service activities, analysis of service involvement, or available demographics of students involved in service. As a first step to fully understanding the student service experience and making recommendations for the future, the task force recommends a study be undertaken to accurately reflect the current student experience in public outreach and service.
2. Demonstrate support for Madison House both financially and by recognizing the important work it represents. Madison House serves as the guiding force behind the tradition and involvement of students in weekly service at the University. Students and faculty members recognize that Madison House is a model form of student self-governance and student leadership development that needs and merits the University's financial support. The task force recommends that funding for Madison House be a top priority to guarantee stability.

Long-term Goals:

1. Educate the University community about the concept of service learning. The task force recommends that focus groups, comprising all segments of the community, be held to explore the definitions of and issues involving service learning. The task force recognizes the important aspect of providing opportunities for students to reflect on their service experience as a way of deepening their intellectual, moral, and social development and recognizes service learning can happen in- and outside of the classroom. It became clear we need further discussion and dialogue on service terminology and what we mean when we think about volunteerism, service learning, public service, civic engagement, experiential education, and internships.
2. Improve information about service opportunities to new students before they arrive to Grounds and reinforce once they are here. While the service ethic is strong, the task force realizes that to remain strong, service opportunities need to be visible to new and returning students. To rely solely on the tradition of service and the traditional means of publicizing services is short-sighted and misguided. The task force recognizes the importance of public relations not only to encourage students to serve, but to reflect the value that the University holds in service activities.
3. Investigate the need for a centralized person or group as well as a resource center for service activities. There is a true appreciation for the diversity and the coordination of service activities at the University. However, the task force recommends exploring ways in which these efforts are coordinated and publicized to provide better and more service opportunities for students. The task force also recognizes the importance of community involvement in determining needs of the community. While Madison House has strong community involvement in its programs, the University as a whole lacks the resources to help other service groups and activities make connections with the local community.
4. Establish solid funding opportunities for service activities. As mentioned earlier, the task force recommends funding for Madison House both short and long term. The task force also recommends that further financial support and recognition of

other service activities be a long-term priority. The task force feels that the University says it values the service work of students but does not financially support their efforts. Students also want increased recognition, not individual recognition for service, but recognition from the University, Graduate Schools, the community and future employers that student service and student volunteerism is valued and appreciated.

Science and Technology

Technology, rather than the sciences, was the focus of discussion. Technology is often viewed as a separate subject, as its own domain. Increasingly, however, we live in a technological world. It is necessary for every graduate of the University to be at least minimally technologically fluent. In order for this to occur, technology must be implemented in most every course, in every subject area, and must be a useful part of everyday life on Grounds.

Short-term Goals:

1. Particularly prevalent in science fields, students complain that they are unable to understand subject matter because of the poor English skills of many teaching assistants. Prior to hiring graduate teaching assistants, departments should verify adequate English language and technology skills. Offer short courses that will help them improve.
2. Create a student advisory panel to make recommendations regarding faculty hires or require candidates to offer open presentations during the interview process so that student feedback is part of the hiring process.

Long-term Goals:

1. Gender, cultural, and race issues are especially prominent in science and technology. These issues should be addressed in the context of new faculty hires, faculty retention, and student recruitment and retention.
2. Create “bridge centers” across Grounds in which students do interdisciplinary hands-on technology projects. Faculty and students from different areas could collaborate to integrate technology across the curriculum.
3. Investigate a technological skills placement exam to be administered at the beginning of a student’s first year, designed to identify students who are not technologically literate. Design a credit/no credit intervention program to provide technological enrichment programs for those students. Investigate additional mechanisms to identify those students who “fall through the cracks” during their time at U.Va.

International Activities

Being immersed in an unfamiliar culture is an incredible way to learn about others and about oneself. Students at the University generally seem enthusiastic about studying abroad until logistics are discussed. There are several major impediments for students: transfers of credit, departmental and administrative red tape, lack of support from faculty and administration, participation in on-Grounds activities is limited while abroad, cost (especially for low and middle income families), honors and athletic programs are restrictive, and opportunities are not publicized. If International Activities are truly to be

a revered part of the University, students must be able to participate without the considerable difficulties they currently encounter.

Short-term Goals:

1. The Study Abroad office should be more of a hands-on resource to students planning to travel, offering information regarding visas, immunization, travel, and more. This office should create and maintain a website on which students can place summaries or journals of experiences and advice to share with others.
2. The University should embrace the International Residence College as the catalyst of integrating studies abroad as an important part of the University.

Long-term Goals:

1. Develop easy and efficient transitions and arrangements that encourage and support study abroad. If study abroad is to be accepted, transfers of credit is a particularly problematic issue which must be addressed.
2. Develop an online master calendar to facilitate student participation while studying abroad. Important deadlines such as application for leadership positions, financial aid, student elections, etc. should be included.
3. Create ways to acknowledge the changes that occur in individuals after they travel abroad. Help them reflect upon and share those experiences with others. Sustainable funds must be identified and institutionalized. Assistance should be available to students for the costly basics such as phone calls and academic coordination.

Virginia 2020 Student Experience Task Force Members:

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Appendix B

April 27, 2001

Student Organizations and Programming Team Preliminary Report

INTRODUCTION

The Student Organizations and Programming Team (SOP) has been created to recommend a coordinated, accessible system which makes it easy and attractive for all students to participate in programming at the University. For the purposes of this endeavor, the team has defined *programming* as any extracurricular activity or event, provided for or by students, which enriches students' lives. Such programming includes, but is not limited to: student organizations; intramural and club sports; concerts, speakers, and festivals; and community outreach. While they may enrich the student experience, intercollegiate athletics and work study jobs are not considered programming in this initiative.

APPROACH TO WORK

Education Phase

SOP, which includes students and staff, began its work in January 2001 by gathering available information on every aspect of programming in what it considered its education phase. (See Appendix A for a list of team members.) This task included: finding or compiling comprehensive lists of student organizations, events, programming staff, and spaces available for programming; gathering or writing reports on the current environment surrounding programming, including the Virginia 2020 Commission reports, the Miller report, the report of the Alcohol Task Force, and various technology reports; and reviewing existing policies and restrictions for CIO's, SAF funds, on-Grounds space, and other resources associated with programming.

At the end of its education phase, the team decided to narrow its review for the current semester by focusing on programming created predominately for or by undergraduates. The team identified the following key issues about which it believed it should and could submit preliminary recommendations by the end of the semester: space availability and reservations; funding; program advising; coordination; and communication. The team also identified two issues which it believed were enmeshed in all aspects of programming: the philosophy of student self-governance and diversity.

Interactions Phase

Following this education phase, the team began interacting more actively with the University community through interviews, focus groups, and surveys. In addition, the team began best practices research, focusing on peer institutions noted for excellence in particular aspects of programming. The team considers student involvement and input

vital to its success. To foster interaction with students, the team met with Student Council to explain its mission and has agreed to an ongoing collaboration with its incoming officers.

During the interactions phase the team decided to incorporate communication into the issue of coordination, because, while adequate vehicles for communication seemed already to be in place, information was not regularly being shared among important programming constituencies. The team determined to add recommendations for a fifth key issue, the CIO process and agreement. Finally, the team identified the following future issues which it intends to address:

- Non-participation
- Transportation
- Graduate/professional schools
- Program assessment
- Late-night programming
- Resources and technology
- Policies and restrictions
- Community-building
- Integration with academics

Note regarding findings: SOP has reviewed all of its findings from both phases of work and will include them in subsequent reports. This information is available upon request. Important findings are noted in prefaces to each set of recommendations.

NEXT STEPS

Once it receives guidance from the ISP/PS Steering Committee on what priorities to set for its recommendations, SOP wishes to move into an intensive assessment of current resources and processes. The team believes that considerable improvement can be made to the processes surrounding programming with better coordination of available resources and by revising policies and restrictions which create unnecessary roadblocks for students and other members of the University community.

PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS

The team wishes to emphasize that the following recommendations are preliminary, not final. Wherever possible, the team has sought and articulated clear solutions and “quick fixes,” but in many cases the team’s recommendations focus on the need for review or reconsideration of key processes, rather than solutions. While the team recognizes that many of the key programming issues are intertwined, this report offers its recommendations issue by issue in what the team considers the order of importance. In the team’s opinion, program advising and space are the most pressing issues, followed by funding, coordination, and the CIO process and agreement.

A. Program Advising

Based on considerable input from students, the team has determined that the demand for program advising dramatically outweighs the level currently available. SOP does not recommend replacing the system of student self-governance with one of staff or faculty oversight. Rather, the team seeks to maximize the success of student organizations and programming by providing information and advice. Students want assistance, not mandates, from University administration, staff, and faculty. Hence, program advising must be: facilitative, not prescriptive; structured but flexible; available on demand, with web-based information backed by available advisers; and student-directed when possible, with advisers working in concert with Student Council and other student groups. SOP views the current search for a new Director of Newcomb Hall and Student Programming as a natural complement to all of the recommendations below.

1. Document the level of program advising currently offered by University staff in comparison to the demand for program advising.
2. Develop a strong program advising presence which builds upon available staff expertise and student leadership. Such a presence may consist of a central office or a collaborative network of staff and students, but it must address our students' call for a "place" where programming questions can be answered and needs can be met.
3. Develop and maintain a core group of student program advisers, who would work with Student Council and programming staff to offer the following:
 - Peer training;
 - Train-the-trainer; and
 - CIO workshops.
4. Develop a student leadership network, building upon the success of Leadership 2000, with a goal of fostering collaboration among students on programming issues and developing contacts with University personnel. Such an initiative should:
 - Reach out to diverse student populations;
 - Target emerging leaders;
 - Involve CIO's and non-CIO's; and
 - Create opportunities to foster student interaction with every echelon of staff, faculty, and administrators.
5. Foster faculty and staff involvement in programming by:
 - Soliciting and creating incentives for such involvement;
 - Creating a student-run committee to match CIO's with advisers; and
 - Creating and disseminating a "Who Is?" guide for students, with information on faculty and staff.

6. Incorporate program advising into student organizations by:
 - Soliciting student organizations' interest in advising;
 - Creating a new officer orientation program; and
 - Developing workshops in collaboration with Student Council on a variety of programming issues.
7. Make all programming information available on-line and in hard copy (e.g., CIO Resource Guide). Ensure that all such information is correct and up-to-date, and educate students on its availability.

B. Space Availability and Reservations

Student frustration over the lack of programming space is matched only by complaints about funding. Students consistently cite insufficient space for offices, meetings, rehearsals, and events. In particular, students decry the scarcity of performance space and the absence of rehearsal space for dance. As enrollment grows, the amount of programming space per student continues to fall, and the University's master plan does not make programming space a priority. The Arts Precinct, for example, currently has no student programming space planned. In addition, the reservation process seems to students to be designed to thwart their attempts to secure space, and Newcomb Hall, their central programming building, rarely satisfies the demand for space. As an example of how University policies treat student organizations as second-class citizens, staff regularly reserve space in Newcomb Hall, which is intended for student use, without fear of being bumped by a student organization. But students who reserve academic space are often bumped at short notice by faculty and staff.

1. Maximize availability of current programming space and academic space available for programming:
 - Assess existing space use;
 - Review fees charged for use of space;
 - Build in more flexibility in student use of space (e.g., late-night and just-in-time programming);
 - Consider granting students priority for student space;
 - Evaluate applicable policies regarding ease of use and the extent to which they encourage or discourage student use; and
 - Reform/routinize policies and restrictions for use of space.
2. Create new programming space, especially rehearsal and performance space for student arts programming. SOP supports the New Student Center proposal as one way to help satisfy this need.

3. Develop a web-based, centralized reservations system. Such a system should provide:
 - One-stop reservations while accommodating multiple space “owners”;
 - A comprehensive contact list;
 - Links to guidelines, policies, and restrictions;
 - Room diagrams and set-up information; and
 - Spaces grouped by size and usage.
4. While seeking this system, immediately make available on the web all information, contacts, policies, rules, and restrictions regarding availability and reservation of space for student programming.
5. Review the current use of Newcomb Hall. Consider:
 - Relocating offices that are not student-related;
 - Converting some or all CIO office space into a CIO workroom with phones, computers, and other office supplies; and
 - Identifying new meeting and storage space.

As part of this review, other locations should be sought as well for CIO office, meeting, and storage space (e.g., Maury Rifle Range for storage).
6. Create incentives for cosponsorship of student-run events.

C. Funding

Student frustrations about program funding result largely from perceived inequities, misconceptions, and incomplete information. Of all the programming issues addressed by SOP, funding requires the most advising and education. The University must ensure both that funding is allocated wisely and fairly and that funds are spent appropriately. The following recommendations presuppose that University staff will collaborate extensively with Student Council on any reviews, reforms, and education efforts.

1. Assess whether current funding for student programming is sufficient. As part of this assessment, benchmark similar funding at peer institutions.
2. Create a system to audit and evaluate use of SAF funds. Assess the success of events, while being wary of narrow definitions of “success.”
3. Consider uniform and flexible guidelines and allocations for all funding available for student programming, including funds provided by:
 - Student Council (SAF);
 - University Programming Council;
 - Cultural Programming Board; and
 - Parents’ Program.

4. Review SAF restrictions, including:
 - Using funds to purchase food and pay honoraria;
 - Funding for religious organizations; and
 - Funding social events.
5. Identify new funding and consider new funding mechanisms:
 - An arts funding group modeled after the Cultural Programming Board;
 - A venture fund for new programming ideas; and
 - Money solicited from parents and alumni.
6. Review the annual SAF budget process and consider adapting it to better serve CIO's:
 - Consider mechanisms for providing funding for new CIO's and/or for spontaneous programming, and
 - Remove funding barriers to new and/or small CIO's.
7. Consider building incentives into funding, including:
 - Encouraging cosponsorship of events, and
 - Encouraging the development of cultural programming (i.e., don't reward the status quo).
8. Offer advising and education both to students who seek and who provide funding:
 - Educate students on all available funding sources;
 - Offer training by students or staff on all aspects of the budget process;
 - Educate students involved in funds allocation on their roles and responsibilities;
 - Offer advising to CIO's regarding the wise use of funds; and
 - Offer assistance on writing grants.
9. Identify potential cost-saving measures, including:
 - Funding a CIO workroom instead of office supplies for individual CIO's, and
 - Eliminating funding for computers for individual CIO's.
10. Consider making non-student members of CIO's pay a fee for participation in University programming, perhaps matching the SAF.

D. Coordination

Coordination touches many aspects of programming, from the advantageous timing of multiple events to the effective use of resources. It incorporates communication as well; students routinely voice their frustration over the inadequate dissemination of information and their desire for stronger collaboration among students and staff. In recognition of this need for coordinated efforts, the following recommendations again presuppose strong collaboration between staff and Student Council.

1. Create a network of organizations, perhaps via a student coordination committee, that would:
 - Encourage coordination of programming;
 - Foster collaboration among student leaders;
 - Bring non-CIO's and CIO's together; and
 - Facilitate the exchange and dissemination of correct information on all student organizations.
2. Create a committee of students and staff to explore the coordination of resources.
3. Foster a strong working relationship between Student Council and the University. As part of this effort, create opportunities for interaction between students, faculty, and staff (including senior administrators) and ensure student involvement in all University initiatives (e.g., University Planning Council).
4. Make all programming information available on the web and ensure that it is correct and up-to-date. Educate students on the availability of the web-based student calendar.
5. Review all programming policies. Wherever possible, make them consistent across the University.
6. Encourage cosponsorship of events by student organizations.

E. CIO Agreement and Process

The CIO Agreement was developed to describe the relationship between student organizations and the University. At the time of its creation, the University actively explained its purpose and advised students on the extent of their responsibilities and the limits of their autonomy. Today, few CIO's ever receive such advice. Instead, the CIO Agreement is perceived by students as an impenetrable legal document which must be signed but is rarely read. In addition, the process of becoming a CIO consists of rules and hurdles, rather than of opportunities to advise and educate. The following recommendations seek to reverse the current situation.

1. Work with Student Council and other groups to articulate the goals of student organizations.
2. Review the CIO Agreement with the goals of making it shorter, easier to read, and more interactive (e.g., asking students to articulate the goals of their proposed organization, their plans for programming, etc.), so that students will read it.
3. Work with the Office of the General Counsel to develop a document and system that supports these goals.
4. Develop opportunities to educate students and reverse perceptions about CIO's, possibly offering training on the following:

- What is a CIO?
 - What are the rights and responsibilities of a CIO?
 - What is the University's relationship with CIO's?
5. Improve coordination between Student Council and the University, and reflect that partnership in the CIO Agreement. Develop methods for staff (e.g., IM/Rec) to learn about proposed CIO's before they are approved.
 6. Ensure that new CIO's receive all necessary information, together with advising on important processes, such as funding, risk management, and incorporation.
 7. Develop a uniform timeframe for all CIO processes to encourage participation and improve student understanding. Make all information regarding CIO processes available on line and ensure its accuracy.
 8. Review all CIO policies, including the 51%/49% membership requirement.

SOP WORK PLAN – NEXT STEPS

When SESPOG created the Student Organizations and Programming team, it envisioned a redesign effort lasting into the Spring 2002 semester. Based on input provided by the Steering Committee, SOP will proceed with a more in-depth assessment of the policies, resources, and processes described above. During this analysis, the team will fold in those additional issues it plans to examine, such as non-participation, transportation, and graduate and professional schools. Its goal is to complete this assessment by November to ensure that SOP has sufficient time to obtain feedback on its proposals from students, staff, and SESPOG. This timeframe will also allow the team to finalize its report in time for the spring Steering Committee meeting. SOP's final recommendations will suggest how to implement its proposals.

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS AND PROGRAMMING TEAM MEMBERS:

Terry Lockard, Director, Computing Support Services, ITC, chair
 Donna Baker, Assistant Director for Operations, Newcomb Hall
 Neil Bynum, Assistant Dean and Director, Luther P. Jackson Cultural Center, OAAA
 Virginia Carter, Assistant to the President, Student Affairs
 Virginia Evans, Director, Darden Information Services, Darden
 Shawn Felton, Web Developer and Assistant Webmaster, University Relations
 Debbie Hoffman, Facilities Coordinator, Registrar
 Aaron Laushway, Assistant Dean of Students, Dean of Students
 Matt Newman, graduate student, GED
 Steven Reinemund, second-year, CLAS
 Ed Rivers, Senior Associate Director, Intramurals

Appendix C

PROPOSED REVISED

The Office of Student Financial Services: Mission Statement and Core Values

Mission Statement: The Office of Student Financial Services is dedicated to providing students, alumni, and their families with efficient, courteous, and responsible financial services, while complying with all federal, state, and University policies. Our office provides financial assistance to students, many of whom might otherwise be unable to attend the University, and strives to ease their financial lives. Among its numerous responsibilities, the Office of Student Financial Services:

- Counsels students and their parents on managing the cost of higher education and repaying financial obligations
- Administers and awards student loans, scholarship funds, grants, work-study jobs, and refunds
- Bills and collects tuition, fees, and other charges
- Answers questions on a wide range of financial topics

The Office of Student Financial Services guides students and their families as administrative and financial partners. Our team combines expertise and accountability with compassion and respect. We want our students to feel welcome, and we believe that open communication leads to a community of trust. We seek the most up-to-date technological tools to serve students more efficiently and expand their access to information, while empowering our staff to offer more personal service. We believe that the students we help today strengthen the University, and our team is committed to offering the best service possible.

Core Values:

- The Student Financial Services team strives for **accountability**, both by complying with all federal, state, and institutional regulations, and by showing and teaching financial accountability to students.
- Our team believes in **excellent, consistent, and equitable service**.
- We **trust and respect** those we serve. We are here to help students, families, alumni, faculty, and staff in whatever way possible.
- The SFS team is committed to **principled decision-making**, built upon personal and professional **integrity**.
- We seek **open communication** with students: counseling, listening, and discussing issues before they become problems.

Appendix D

Student Enrollment Services Process Owners' Group:

Pat Lampkin, Chair

Jack Blackburn, Dean of Admission

Bob Burnett, Associate VP for Research/Professor, Chemistry Department

Kathleen Eyre, Fourth-Year, College of Arts and Sciences

Yvonne Hubbard, Director, Office of Financial Aid

Steve Kimata, University Bursar

Terry Lockard, Director, Computing Support Services, ITC

Steven Reinemund, Third-Year, College of Arts and Sciences

Penny Rue, Dean of Students

Carol Stanley, Registrar

George Stovall, Director, Institutional Assessment and Studies

Process Simplification Staff:

Christina Morell, Assistant to the VP for Management and Budget and Process Simplification Manager

Miles Gibson, Process Simplification Coordinator

Nancy Rivers, Exec. Assistant to the VP for Management and Budget