

RADFORD UNIVERSITY

2015 SIX-YEAR PLAN

July 1, 2015

Instructions for Part II (Narrative)

Part II (Narrative) of the Six-Year Plan contains the following sections. Please be as concise as possible with responses.

- A. *Institutional Mission – Please provide a statement of institutional mission and indicate if there are plans to change the mission over the six-year period. Any changes to institutional mission must be formally submitted to SCHEV for review and approval.*

Response: Radford University's mission was approved by the Board of Visitors, May 10, 1991 and revised and approved by the Board of Visitors, May 7, 1999.

Mission: "Radford University serves the Commonwealth of Virginia and the nation through a wide range of academic, cultural, human service, and research programs. First and foremost, the university emphasizes teaching and learning and the process of learning in its commitment to the development of mature, responsible, well-educated citizens. RU develops students' creative and critical thinking skills, teaches students to analyze problems and implement solutions, helps students discover their leadership styles, and fosters their growth as leaders. Toward these ends, the university is student-focused and promotes a sense of caring and of meaningful interaction among all members of the University community. Research is viewed as a vital corollary to the teaching and learning transaction as it sustains and enhances the ability to teach effectively. Radford University believes in the dynamics of change and has a strong commitment to continuous review, evaluation, and improvement in the curriculum and all aspects of the University, so as to meet the changing needs of society."

The University will be updating its Strategic Plan over the next two years as the current "7-17" strategic plan is coming to a close. Proposed changes to the mission could be considered during this review; however, no proposed changes are under consideration at this time. If changes are considered, they will be submitted to SCHEV for review and approval as required.

- B. *Strategies – Describe in more detail strategies proposed in the spreadsheet. Identify each strategy with the title used in the spreadsheet.*

Response:

Following is a summary of the strategies outlined in Radford University's 2015 Six-Year Plan. These initiatives create a framework in support of the institution's mission and align with the goals and objectives of the Statewide Strategic Plan (SSP).

1. **Support Undergraduate Transfer Student Enrollment and the Changing Student Demography.** Since the 2005-06 academic year there has been a 34 percent increase in students who attend a Virginia Community College and then transfer to a Virginia Public Institution. Radford University has consistently supported VCCS transfer students and has enrolled between 600-800 students from this population each year. In order to maximize this opportunity, the University is refocusing its recruiting efforts within the Community College System to be the most transfer friendly four-year public institution in the Commonwealth.

Additionally, the University seeks to become a leader in regional Hispanic/Latino recruiting and student support. While the Commonwealth of Virginia at large is positioned to experience growth of approximately 5 percent in the number of high school graduates from 2013-14 to 2018-19, there will be a significant shift in the demographic composition of this population. According to current projections using data from the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WISHE) the number of Hispanic high school graduates will increase by 41 percent, or 2,843 students, during this time frame and 99 percent, or 6,820 students, by 2023-24. Radford University is well positioned to serve these students as nearly one-third (32 percent) of the current freshman class is from a minority population. The University has been increasing enrollment in these populations steadily since 2010 and has in fact doubled the African-American enrollment within the undergraduate population from 5.7 percent in 2010 to 12 percent in 2014. The strategies employed to reach this important milestone among African American students will be replicated within communities with high Hispanic/Latino populations (e.g., Manassas City Public Schools). In addition to recruiting support, increased resources will be necessary in key instructional, institutional, and student support services. Increasing support in these areas will ensure the Hispanic students are provided with an environment wherein they will be most successful in their pursuit for a college education within the Commonwealth.

Last, this initiative also includes a reallocation to finalize the Pathways to Excellence program improvements which was part of the University's previous six year plan.

2. **Enhance Student Success, Retention, and Graduation.** Radford University has always been an institution that fosters an environment in which all students can find success both inside and outside of the classroom. Furthermore, retention and graduation rates have historically been above the national average of comparable peer institutions. Enhancing these longstanding achievements is an integral focus for the institution over the next biennium. Much of this initiative focuses on experiential learning which has deep roots in the Radford University experience with a long history of dedicated and passionate faculty committed to engaging their students, both inside and outside the classroom, exposing them to "doing" their disciplines, showing them the world and assisting in their growth to becoming engaged citizens. Driving resources towards further engaging students in high impact practices will yield measurable results in enhancing student success, retention, and graduation.

3. **Move Faculty Salaries Toward the 60th Percentile.** Investments in human capital continue to be a high priority of the University. The most recent data from SCHEV indicate that as of FY2014, the average Radford University T&R faculty salary was at the 29th percentile of the respective salary peer group. The University has gained ground in this area relative to its peer group over the last biennium, but considerable progress will need to be made in order to reach the 60th percentile. Competition for faculty is increasing from within the region as well as on the national scene. In order to find the best faculty for the University there are often times when the salaries of junior faculty near or eclipse those of more seasoned faculty causing issues with both compression and inversion.
4. **Increase Financial Aid to Assist Low and Middle Income Students.** The cost of higher education continues to be an item of concern for University leadership, students and their parents, and those in Richmond. Providing additional financial aid is the most prudent approach to offset the cost and as such the University will retain this initiative in the 2015 Six Year Plan. According to SCHEV data the partnership funding model indicates a need of \$21,569,303 in state support for the University in 2015-16; however, the actual support is anticipated at \$7,516,618 or 34.8%. Furthermore, given the planned increased enrollments from traditionally underserved populations it is also anticipated that the University's calculated need under the partnership funding model will continue to increase for this reason alone.
5. **Establish Cyber Security Emergency Operations Training and Education Lab and Emergency Operation Center.** Radford University's Cyber Security Training and Education Lab (CSTEL) and Emergency Operations Center (EOC) will leverage the expertise at the University in the areas of cybersecurity, education, forensic science, and criminal justice to provide training to constituencies across the Commonwealth of Virginia to create a cyber-ready workforce. The facilities would provide cross-disciplinary cyber security training, education, and research opportunities for constituencies across the state including business leaders, K12 teachers and students, law enforcement agencies, public sector administrators, and other organizations. This effort will have an immediate positive return on investment while impacting economic development as Virginia companies/organizations incorporate cyber security best practices.
6. **Implement an Ed.D. in Education.** Radford University is a strategic partner with the Commonwealth's K-12 program and produces strong educational leaders that are employed across the state. To expand the program Radford proposed the implementation of an online Ed.D in Education program which is responsive to the needs of working practitioners with families who must remain place-based and employed full-time while obtaining an advanced degree. The curriculum will engage students in working collaboratively across disciplines and traditional boundaries of school communities to better understand and investigate how critical issues are affected by cultural, economic, and political factors. The Ed.D in Education will be unique from any other doctorate in Education or School Leadership in Virginia.

7. **Develop STEM-H Programs in Science and Technology.** The University proposes the development of the M. S. in Biomedical and Forensic Sciences program to increase the national need for well-trained biomedical and forensic scientists. There has been much demand for accredited training in the applied biomedical and forensic sciences, particularly at the post-undergraduate level. Graduate degrees are becoming necessary in order to obtain employment in these fields. An M. S. degree in Biomedical and Forensic Sciences mitigates this need by providing students with accredited graduate training and skills to gain a competitive edge in job placement in public or private forensic science or biomedical laboratories. This degree program will prepare students for high-demand professional careers in state and national forensic science crime labs, biomedical or pharmaceutical labs, as well as medical school, law school, doctoral studies in the natural or forensic sciences, and biomedical research. It will also serve medical students in their third year who are interested in forensic pathology or biomedical science. The program will ultimately assist in adjudicating criminal cases by alleviating a portion of the backlog in forensic services (e.g., DNA) being faced by forensic laboratories due to their staffing limitations. It will also provide medical school students with research skills and experience and make them more competitive for successful careers in forensic pathology or biomedical research.
8. **Transition to an entry-level M.S. in Athletic Training to enhance students' career preparedness.** Athletic Trainers are recognized by the American Medical Association as allied health care professionals, and they are involved in the treatment of people of all ages. The university currently has a thriving undergraduate degree in Athletic Training in the College of Education and Human Development that is fully accredited by the Commission on the Accreditation of Athletic Training Education Programs (CAATE). However, the profession of athletic training is moving to an entry-level advanced degree. Currently, there are 29 programs in the nation that offer an entry-level master's degree in athletic training, and only one of those is in the Commonwealth of Virginia, Shenandoah University. Four courses (22 percent) of the proposed graduate curriculum will be offered entirely in a distance education format. These courses will be offered during the summer and Wintermester terms to allow students to matriculate through the program faster and reduce required living costs if desired. There is a planned phase-out of the undergraduate program coinciding with the phase-in of the new master's program in Athletic Training.
9. **Expand STEM-H Communication Sciences graduate programs in support of historic K-12 demand.** Historically, the Department of Education in Virginia has noted critical shortage of trained speech-language pathologists and audiologists in the K-12 domain. The University proposes options to address this critical need. Specifically the University will:
 - **Expand the existing M.S. in Communications Sciences and Disorders (COSD – Speech-Language Pathology) program.** A second cohort is proposed to be located in Roanoke, Virginia. Radford University has over 40 years of experience with this successful, high-demand program. The program consistently turns away many well-qualified applicants (acceptance rate is

generally around 9 percent with an annual average of 269 applicants). The institution proposes to double the size of the program in order to accept a second cohort. Resources needed to expand this program and maintain accreditation include additional teaching and research faculty and administrative support staff positions, base operations for instructional delivery, leased facilities and a one-time investment in equipment and facility renovations to start-up the second cohort in Roanoke.

- **Initiate the Doctor of Audiology (Au.D.).** There is a critical shortage in this field, especially in public schools, and the University plans to initiate the Au.D. to assist filling this high need. In 2000, prior to the University offering doctorate degrees, Radford had an audiology training program that closed because the profession moved to the clinical doctorate as the entry-level degree. The University has since initiated offering clinical-based doctoral programs and is now in a position to renew its commitment to the field of Audiology. Currently, there is only one other audiology training program in the state. The addition of the program at Radford University would assist to fulfill a critical shortage of experienced professionals in the field. The program is also proposed to be located in Roanoke further solidifying the University's presence in the growing regional healthcare community.

10. Expand STEM-H Degree Production Through Existing Allied Health Programs. Specifically the University will:

- **Expand the Doctorate of Physical Therapy (DPT) Program:** Due to program and market demand the Doctorate of Physical Therapy (DPT) program is slated expand the cohort size to 30 students by 2016. Once at 30, the physical capacity of the existing space will be at its maximum.
- **Develop Clinical Certificate and Residency Programs in Physical Therapy:** These programs are designed to develop master clinicians who can perform baseline clinical research, which serves as the driver for applicable basic science research. These master clinicians also serve to improve the quality of care in a challenging healthcare market. Coursework for these programs will be provided in a hybrid model that utilizes online learning to prepare participants for laboratory sessions and/or mentored clinical practice.
- **Initiate an Occupational Therapy Doctorate (OTD):** This post professional degree is the clinical doctorate for individuals who are credentialed as occupational therapists and who wish to continue their education. The curriculum would be delivered primarily through online education, with one visit to campus required at the beginning and end of each semester. The Master of Occupational Therapy (MOT) degree will continue to be offered.
- **Develop a Doctorate in Social Work (DSW):** The DSW is an advance practice degree that is seeing resurgence in response to social workers requesting advance clinical practice degrees. The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) implemented a task force to review the emergence of the DSW. Presently, at least two major universities and two online universities

are offering this degree through online instruction only. The DSW would be in line with the University's clinical and professional doctorates and some course work for this degree could be provided through courses offered in the existing professional doctoral programs.

- **Expand the Master in Social Work (MSW):** Approximately six years ago, the Social Work program began offering master's degree coursework through a hybrid format at Roanoke Higher Education Center (RHEC). Expansion of the program format to the Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center (SWVHEC) in Abingdon is being proposed in order to address the growing need in Southwest Virginia.

11. Develop a Master's Program in Health Promotion and Disease Prevention (M.S./M.A.)

The proposed Master's Degree program is designed to allow Health Educators to pursue graduate education while working full-time. The need for prevention of health problems is becoming increasingly apparent as the nation continues to see rising healthcare costs, poorer infant and maternal health than most industrialized nations, and expected increases in rates of obesity, diabetes, and heart disease individually or in combination. The Bureau of Labor statistics projects much faster than average job growth for Health Educators from 2010-2020 (37 percent), outlining the need for the preventive services offered by Health Educators. Though entry-level positions only require a bachelor's degree, a master's degree is either required or preferred to be competitive for advancement in the field. Pursuing a master's degree while working full-time is often difficult (or impossible) for adults, as they cannot take courses during the day or in a traditional format. In order to address this problem in the field, the proposed program is geared toward working adults, and will involve online and hybrid courses strategically structured to allow working adults to finish their degree in two to three years (including summers). The curriculum will be competency-based to assure that the competencies for the Certified Health Education Specialist and Master Certified Health Education Specialist Examinations are covered in the curriculum.

12. Optimize year round utilization of facilities – The University has made great inroads on these initiatives over the past few years with the establishment of two additional intercession terms, Wintermester (online December/January term) and Accelerate (online August term), the University is now open for instruction for a full twelve months. In addition, to the numerous intercession offerings (Wintermester, Maymester, Summer I, II and III, and Accelerate) to students, the University also has a vibrant student orientation and summer conference program schedule. Additionally, many of the summer conference programs target an educational mission geared towards middle and high school students (Boys State, two Governor's Schools, etc.).

13. Library Enhancement – Funding will be used to support library operations in order to maintain the delivery of institutional services. Libraries play an integral role in the educational experience and the costs associated with providing a resourceful enterprise has only increased due to the heavy reliance on digital technology and the rising cost of traditional journal and other materials.

14. **Technology Enhancement** – Funding will be used to deploy state-of-the-art technology and infrastructure, provide administrative and technical efficiencies, attract and retain highly skilled and capable information technology workers, and replace equipment that has exceeded its useful life.
15. **O&M of New Facilities – College of Humanities and Behavioral Sciences** – Funding will be used to support operation and maintenance of plant for the new College of Humanities and Behavioral Sciences building which is slated to come on line in fiscal year 2017. Funds will be used to appropriately maintain and service the new facility and to provide basic staffing levels for operation and maintenance functions.
16. **Utility Cost Increases** – Estimates are provided to account for utility cost increases and to implement energy savings initiatives.
17. **NGF Share of State Authorized Salary Increases/Bonus** – Estimates are provided for the annualization of the 2015-16 two percent salary increase for Administrative/Professional Faculty and Classified Staff, and the annualization of the compression adjustment for Classified Staff..
18. **Fringe Benefit Increases** – Estimates are provided for fringe benefit, retirement, and health insurance rate changes given the University's required fund split and the potential impact on tuition and fees.

C. *Financial Aid – TJ21 requires “plans for providing financial aid to help mitigate the impact of tuition and fee increases on low-income and middle-income students and their families, including the projected mix of grants and loans.” Virginia’s definitions of low- and middle-income under TJ21 are based on HHS Poverty Guidelines. I have attached a table that outlines the HHS guidelines and the definitions.*

Response:

Radford University strives to maintain affordability and access for low and middle income students through reasonable tuition and fees, the use of state general fund and institutional resources to provide student financial assistance to need-based undergraduates, increased work opportunity programs, and focused private fundraising efforts. The University continues to evaluate and implore all strategies to assist low and middle income students with defraying the total cost of attendance. With such a large in-state undergraduate population (94.7 percent), the University continues to be very dependent upon state support to assist low and middle income populations.

Examples of programs the University has instituted include:

1. Work study/scholarship programs provide students with employment opportunities to help defray the cost of their education. Currently, more than 800 student positions are available to gain real-world experience while earning wages to assist with their educational costs. Additionally, the University's dining and bookstore contractors offer over 275 permanent and seasonal positions for which students can apply.

2. Faculty members authored e-books for use in the University's Core (General Education) program which the majority of students are required to complete. These course materials are provided at no charge to students via the University's learning management system, Desire to Learn, (D2L). Previously a custom textbook was sold through the bookstore totaling about \$150,000 in sales annually. This decision reduces each students' textbook cost by over \$100.

D. Evaluation of Previous Six-Year Plan – Summarize progress made in strategies identified in 2014-15 Six Year Plan. Note how additional General Fund support, savings and reallocations were used to further the strategies.

Response:

The following progress has been made on the strategies identified in the 2014-15 Six Year Plan:

1. **Support growth of in-state undergraduate enrollment:** In-state undergraduate enrollment has increased by 926 students, or 12.4 percent, from fall 2010 to fall 2014. In order to support the growth of the increased student population and to fortify the undergraduate experience three existing programs Chemistry, Criminal Justice, and the RN to BSN were identified to strengthen and/or expand. The three programs are collectively referred to as Pathways to Excellence programs and institutional resources have been reallocated to meet programmatic goals within each discipline. The expansion of each program will take several years but progress is really being made. Desired outcomes of the expansion will yield American Chemical Society accreditation for the Chemistry program and an increase in the RN to BSN program within the School of Nursing from 30 to 60 students.
2. **Enhance student success, retention, and graduation:** As a result of the University's partnership with Ruffalo Noel Levitz (RNL), the University recently began the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Retention that was developed with input from multiple campus constituencies during the 2013-14 academic year. Significant accomplishments related to the plan include:
 - Increased academic support provided to students. Most notably, students now have access to online as well as face-to-face tutoring through a new partnership with Net Tutor, The University has utilized over 800 hours of online tutoring January 2014.
 - Increased interventions for students identified as at-risk for attrition through recently developed freshmen self-report instruments. These interventions were executed through the University's highly successful UNIV 100 program for first-semester students.
 - Engaged an ongoing review of the University's "early alert" system in which faculty and others call attention to students with issues that may interfere with their academic and personal success.

- Issued an RFP for new learning communities that will be launched in the fall of 2016. A committee that includes representation from multiple divisions is currently reviewing the proposals. Final decisions related to recommended programs will be reviewed by University leadership over summer 2015.
 - Multiple on-campus constituencies collaborated to draft a Strategic Plan for Advising. The Plan includes actions which seek to enhance the delivery of academic advising at the University. Multiple studies have found that the relationships new students forge with their academic advisors have a significant impact on the likelihood they will be retained.
3. **Move faculty salaries towards the 60th percentile:** Over the biennium, teaching and research faculty salaries have moved from the 22nd percentile of peers to the 29th percentile. The institution earmarked funds from enrollment growth to address inequities, compression, and inversion issues in addition to the state authorized salary increase.
 4. **Financial aid to assist low and middle income students:** The University strives to maintain affordability and access for all students through reasonable tuition and fees so that a Radford University degree is financially attainable for any student. In 2014-15, the number of institutionally funded student work scholarship positions increased by 25 over the previous year to provide more on-campus employment opportunities for students. In addition, faculty developed a Core Curriculum textbook that is offered at no charge to students which is a savings of over \$100 per undergraduate student; bookstore sales decreased \$150,000 annually due to this change. Lastly, the University recently negotiated a strong bookstore contract which will provide students with a textbook price match guarantee and increased vendor provided textbook scholarships starting in 2015-16.
 5. **Develop STEM-H programs in Science and Technology:** The University received notification from the SCHEV on May 7, 2015 that the Master of Science in Data and Information Management program proposal had been approved to initiate effective fall 2015. The College of Science and Technology is currently preparing to operationalize the program.
 6. **Expansion of STEM-H Communications Sciences graduate programs (COSD – Speech Language Pathology and Doctor of Audiology, Au. D):** External support is necessary to move forward with this initiative. To date funding has not been secured to expand the COSD program by adding a second cohort in Roanoke, VA or to implement the Au. D. The University continues to pursue this expansion.
 7. **Develop a M.S. in Prosthetics and Orthotics:** Due to the absence of State or any other external financial support for the startup of this program, no progress has been made toward the development of the M.S. in .Prosthetics and Orthotics. Additionally, it has been determined to remove this program from the University's 2015-16 Six Year Plan update.
 8. **Expand STEM-H degree production through existing allied health programs:** The Doctorate of Physical Therapy program received full accreditation and was authorized to increase the cohort size by three additional students. Additionally, a

collaborative public-private partnership between Radford University, Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine, and Jefferson College of Health Sciences was formed to create the Virginia Intercollegiate Anatomy Lab located in Roanoke, VA and officially opened on May 22, 2015.

9. **Expand the RU – Mobile Innovation Learning Lab (MILL) K-12 Consortium:** Institutional resources were used by the award winning development team at the Mobile Innovation Learning Lab (MILL) at Radford University to develop an iPad game that uses a systematic, explicit, success-oriented approach to help young readers master fundamental literacy skills in phonics, phonemic awareness, and fluency. Peppin's Bay is also viewed as an iPad game template that will enable ongoing repopulation with various content. Initially, Peppin's Bay will target the early childhood literacy market with a game-based word study approach. This approach will also provide opportunities to target the emerging English Language Learners (ELL) or English as Second Language (ESL) both nationally (i.e., immigrant populations) and internationally (e.g., emerging markets such as China, India and Brazil).
10. **Develop STEM-H programs in the Sciences:** The College of Science and Technology has decided to move in a different direction with this program and thus it will be removed from the University's 2015 Six Year Plan submission.
11. **Funding for Base Operations:** The University continuously reallocates resources, to the highest extent possible, in order to address funding deficiencies and adequately support growing program demands. Funding was authorized to address safety and security enhancements, compliance measures related to Title IX, the Clery Act, Payment Card Industry Data Security Standards (PCI), and Agency Risk Management and Internal Control Standards (ARMICS), and student benchmarking surveys to meet accreditation requirements.
12. **Optimal year round use of facilities and instructional resources:** The University has made great inroads on these initiatives over the past few years with the establishment of two additional intercession terms, Wintermester (online December/January term) and Accelerate (online August term), the University is now open for instruction for a full twelve months.

The most recent addition, Accelerate piloted in August 2014, enabled new freshmen to take an online, asynchronous class before arriving on campus and to join a research team in their first year at Radford University.

In addition, to the numerous intercession offerings to students, the University also has a vibrant student orientation and summer conference program schedule. New student orientation offers 14 sessions with over 7,000 new students and families visiting our campus. For the 2014 summer conference season, the University has approximately 30 events with over 5,000 participants which equates to roughly 25,000 overnight accommodations in our residential facilities. The summer conference schedule has targeted groups with educational missions such as Boys State, Governors School, and the Virginia Steam Academy to name only a few.

- 13. Library enhancements:** Additional support has been provided for contract escalators related to digital subscription services and ongoing efforts associated with the digitization of the University's archives collections.
- 14. Technology enhancements:** Several key system implementations have occurred over the last few years in order to build operational efficiencies and improve business operations. The most notable implementations were related to the Constituent Relationship Management System (CRM), Identity Management and Access System (IMA), data loss prevention tools, and new call tracking system. Specifically the CRM will support student recruitment, student retention, alumni involvement, and development activities; the IMA will enhance the efficiency, timeliness and accuracy of account management while provisioning and de-provisioning of services; the data loss prevention tools provide monitoring and additional protections for the University data; and the call tracking system provides an integrated solution for tracking and reporting IT service requests and projects.
- 15. O&M for new facilities:** The Center for the Sciences is slated to open in fall 2015. The University has been planning for the operation and maintenance needs of this facility based upon the projected cost outlined in the 2014-15 Six Year Plan and, the identical, New O&M Cost of Facilities Coming Online report submitted to SCHEV.
- 16. Utility cost increase:** The University was able to manage cost increases through energy efficiencies and sustainability efforts.
- 17. Fringe/health insurance benefits increase:** Cost associated with fringe benefit and health insurance rate changes are unavoidable and their respective rate changes outlined in legislation have been addressed as necessary.
- 18. Explore online degree programs:** When implementing any new degree program the University first seeks to house the program online whenever possible. Most recently, the Master of Fine Arts (MFA) in Design Thinking was launched as a fully online program and the Master of Business Administration (MBA) program was retooled to offer more online content to be more suitable for working professionals.

E. Capital Outlay – Note any capital outlay projects that might be proposed over the Six-Year Plan period that could have a significant impact on strategies, funding, or student charges. Do not provide a complete list of capital projects, only those projects that would be a top priority and impact E&G and NGF costs.

Response:

The new College of Humanities and Behavior Sciences building is scheduled to open in fall 2016. Operation and maintenance of plant for this facility have been included in the University's Six Year Plan and will impact student charges if state general fund support is not allocated to cover the respective fund split.

The authorized Renovate Whitt Hall capital projects should not have a significant impact on funding or student charges as this facility is currently in use and the scope is intended to address building envelope and infrastructure needs.

The University has also identified in the 2016-2022 Six Year Capital Outlay Plan submission two high priority E&G renovation projects (e.g. Curie/Reed Halls and Porterfield Hall). These existing academic facilities need to be modernized with basic building envelope and infrastructure improvements. Once authorized, these projects should not have a significant impact on student charges as operation and maintenance funding is currently budgeted for these facilities.

F. Restructuring – This section pertains to Level II and Level III institutions:

- i. Level III and Level II institutions: please provide a list of any items that you feel need clarification under your existing authority (i.e., ability to provide employees with an early retirement plan). Please list any additional concerns or issues.*

Response:

No concerns or issues are identified at this time. The University's Level II authority in procurement and information technology have been very beneficial to improving operational efficiencies, streamlining processes, reducing duplication of effort, and allowing faster turnaround time to name a few. The University continues to explore areas where additional autonomy may provide future opportunities. The respective channels will be used to present ideas, as appropriate.

- ii. Level II institutions: there was proposed legislation in the 2015 Session that would have granted "Level 2.5 authority". Level 2.5 provided each institution with the three areas as authorized under the original Level 2 legislation (IT, capital outlay & procurement) plus some additional administrative and financial authority with the same post-audit checks and balances that Level III institutions operate under in order for these authorities to continue. Please list areas, issues, or specific items of additional authority that you would request through legislation and/or renegotiated management agreements.*

Response:

Following are potential finance related issues that could be implemented to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the University's operations:

Topic: Travel

1. More than three traveling.

- a. Request to delegate the authority to approve more than three traveling internationally to the Agency Head of Institutions of Higher Education or increase the number of travelers required to obtain Cabinet Secretary Approval.**

Requirement: CAPP Manual Topic 20335, State Travel Regulations, p. 11, Travel Involving Multiple Employees section states "To ensure

all travel meets the test of necessity, travel involving more than three employees from a single agency to a single travel destination must be approved in advance by the Agency Head or designee. This includes travel of presenters as well as attendees. **For international travel, such approval must be obtained from the responsible Cabinet Secretary.** These provisions apply to daily and overnight travel. “

Given the nature of higher education in relation to the study abroad program, academic presentations, and professional development that can be obtained internationally, request to delegate this authority to the Agency Head of Institutions of Higher Education. The number of ‘multiple travelers’ could also be increased for what the agency head/designee has to approve.

- b. **Request to differentiate the more than three traveler requirement for all travel for institutions that have multiple campus locations,** for example – the additional approval would not be required for RU if employees at extended sites (e.g. Roanoke Higher Education Center (Roanoke), Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center (Abingdon), New College Institute (Martinsville), Carilion Community Hospital/JCHS site (Roanoke), etc.) were traveling to similar meetings/conferences as employees from main campus.

2. Allow Agency Head to grant exceptions for expenses exceeding 50% over the guidelines.

Requirement: CAPP Manual Topic CAPP Manual Topic 20335, State Travel Regulations, p. 13, “**Only the Comptroller or his designee (Assistant State Comptroller) may grant exceptions for expenses exceeding 50% over the guidelines.** Such approvals must be requested and granted prior to the travel and the approved request must be attached to the voucher for reimbursement. Requests for such exceptions must include sufficient documentation showing alternative cost comparisons justifying the exception. The cost comparisons must include the name and complete address of the hotels, including zip code, used for the cost comparison. These requests must be reviewed by the agency fiscal office, which must evaluate and approve the request prior to sending it to DOA.”

There are certain conferences and professional development opportunities, where the lodging rates do not cover the lodging expenses under the 150 percent rate, for example CBMI (College Business Management Institute) located in Lexington, Kentucky – the \$141 (150 percent) rate does not cover the conference lodging. Employees should not have to incur a few dollars of additional charges to stay in the conference location. Perhaps increase allowable overage to 200 percent, or have Comptroller review if over 200 percent. Consider authorizing the Agency Head to approve between 150 percent and 199 percent.

3. Use federally-published out-of-state rates for meals and incidental expenses.

Requirement: CAPP Manual Topic 20335, State Travel Regulations, p. 47, Per Diem Rates section states "The Commonwealth of Virginia uses the lodging and M & IE per diem rates for foreign travel as defined by the Federal Government, General Services Administration (GSA). The Department of Defense (DOD) sets the rates for Hawaii, Alaska, and all United States Territories (Puerto Rico, Guam, The Virgin Islands, etc.). The Secretary of State establishes these maximum rates of per diem allowances for travel in foreign areas."

Expand using the federal government rates for out of state travel. Randy McCabe has stated this is being considered by DOA. This would be extremely helpful and more efficient for institutions that use an automated travel module to manage the per diem rates.

Topic: Collections

4. Increase dollar threshold that is required to be sent to the Attorney General to at least \$5,000.

Requirement: CAPP Manual Topic 20505- Accounts Receivable (June 2004) Section: Accounts Receivable Collection (page 9). The Virginia Debt Collection Act (Code of Virginia, Sections 2.2-4800 through 2.2-4808, as amended) establishes the overall policy of the Commonwealth that all agencies and institutions must take "...all appropriate and cost effective actions to aggressively collect all accounts receivable." §2.2-4806 (Utilization of certain collection techniques.). A. Agencies shall take all appropriate and cost-effective actions to aggressively collect accounts receivable including, but not limited to the following: Credit Reporting Bureaus, Collection Agencies, Garnishments, Liens, and Judgments, and Administrative Offset. **B. All accounts receivable of \$3,000 or more and more than 59 days past due must be forwarded to the Office of Attorney General, Division of Debt Collection for collection, except as otherwise provided in D. below.** C. All accounts receivable under \$3,000 and more than 59 days past due must be sent to a private collection agency. The accounts may be first offered to the Division of Debt Collection, but in any case except as noted in D. below, the accounts must be sent out for collection action. D. Where an agency or institution has accounts receivable whose collection requirements are set by the federal government, the agency may elect to retain the accounts in house longer than 59 days. Likewise, where an agency has procedures in place to secure payment or the debtor is making satisfactory periodic payments, the agency may elect to retain the claim.

Adjusting the minimum amount of \$3,000 to \$5,000 is reasonable since the amount has not been reevaluated in the past decade (established in 2004). RU is charged attorney fees and does not receive the full principal back from claims with the AG. This would also save the AG on travel expenses from

sending two employees to Southwest Virginia four times a year to file judgments on these accounts.

Topic: Small Purchase Charge Cards (SPCC)

5. **Currently institutions are allowed to apply for select 'lifts' to make certain purchases on the SPCC. RU currently applies for the following lifts each year. These lifts could be granted until revoked, rather than having to reapply each year thus creating a more efficient process.**
 - a. Travel (airfare, bus, taxi, subway, etc.)
 - b. Rental (car rental)
 - c. Restaurant (most frequent lift)
 - d. Gas (not lifted for gas purchases- 2 in place on campus –for Claytor Lake because of the way they are registered – used for entrance into park, and occasionally lifted for towing).
 - e. Accommodations - usually only lifted for student related events

Topic: Moving and Relocation

6. **Allow the Agency Head to make exceptions to the 50 mile change in distance rather than State Comptroller.**

Requirement: CAPP Manual Topic 20345 Moving and Relocation (page 10) states “The distance between the employee's new work location and former residence must be at **least fifty (50) miles greater than the distance between the employee's old work location and the former residence**. That is, the employee's commuting distance must have increased by at least fifty (50) miles one way. For example, if the original commuting distance from the former residence to the old work site was 10 miles, the new work site must be at least 60 miles (10 miles original commuting distance plus the 50-mile increase) from the former residence. Exceptions may be considered by the State Comptroller for relocations which require the employee to establish a new residence in a specific geographical location when commuting distance is not increased by 50 miles”.

Given the volume of higher education moving and location and our geographical area, this exception could be managed by the Agency Head on a case by case basis as necessary.

Topic: Financial Reporting - Longer term efficiency initiative that could assist DOA and IHE with financial statement submissions

7. **Revamp higher education directive submissions.** Directive submissions are increasing and the deadlines are also being moved up. While we greatly appreciate the concept of 'Faster CAFR', and the work and analysis that DOA

puts into each submission, the agency may be prone to submit inadvertent errors when more request are being made in the same submission.

Small improvements could be made, for example – break out the HE-10 to focus on financial data only and shift policy questions to a separate template. Perhaps a system could be implemented that once an attachment is complete, for example the HE-9, it would auto populate into the HE-10. This may be more of a long-term goal to work with DOA to create efficiencies but evaluating the process could improve outcomes for both DOA and IHE.