

State Council of Higher Education
for Virginia
New Program Survey Results Memo

Strategic Plan Development Project

October 24, 2014

As part of the planning process for Virginia’s statewide strategic plan, the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) conducted a voluntary survey of postsecondary institutions to ask them about proposed new academic programs that they are developing for future implementation. The purpose of collecting this information, as part of the strategic planning process, was to provide perspective on the interaction between the proposed new programs and the strategic plan.

All new programs within Virginia’s public institutions must be reviewed and approved by SCHEV as a measure to reduce unwarranted program duplication. This survey, however, specifically asked about programs that are currently in development and have not yet reached the point of being submitted to SCHEV for approval. A variation of the survey was also provided to private institutions in Virginia through the Council of Independent Colleges in Virginia (CICV). Institutions were asked to complete one instrument for each new program in development. In total, 200 proposed programs were identified. It is not surprising that the majority of responses were from public institutions given that they represent a larger share of the enrollment.

Table 1. Response count for new program survey, 2014

	Public	Private	Total
Number of responses	170	30	200

Source: SCHEV New Program Survey, 2014.

The survey included both multiple-choice/short response questions that help to characterize the nature of the proposed new programs, as well as open-ended questions that allowed the institutions to provide additional commentary describing the proposed programs and reasons for the program’s development. A copy of the survey instrument is included at the end of this Appendix. The following tables present a summary of the results from the multiple-choice and short answer questions and provide a descriptive “first look” at the survey results. Further analysis of the more detailed qualitative responses is also planned.

Tables 2 through 4, below, tabulate the number of new programs being developed by public 2-year, public 4-year and private 4-year institutions, respectively. Table 2 shows that all but one community college and Richard Bland College, reported having at least one new program in development, highlighting their responsiveness to community needs. Also of note is that while Northern Virginia CC and Tidewater CC are by far the largest community colleges in the VCCS system, they do not currently have the most new programs in process. With three new proposed programs each, they fall below the average of 3.5 new programs. Several institutions influence the average with more than five new programs in development, including J. Sargeant Reynolds CC, New River CC, Piedmont Virginia CC and Thomas Nelson CC, which has the most at ten.

Table 2. Count of proposed new programs at public, 2-year institutions, 2014

Institution	New Programs
Blue Ridge CC	4
Central VA CC	1
Dabney S. Lancaster CC	4
Danville CC	5
Eastern Shore CC	1
Germanna CC	3
J. Sargeant Reynolds CC	6
John Tyler CC	3
Lord Fairfax CC	1
Mountain Empire CC	1
New River CC	7
Northern VA CC	3
Patrick Henry CC	1
Paul D. Camp CC	4
Piedmont VA CC	7
Rappahannock CC	5
Southwest VA CC	1
Thomas Nelson CC	10
Tidewater CC	3
VA Highlands CC	2
VA Western CC	2
Grand Total	74

Source: SCHEV New Program Survey, 2014.

A similar pattern is evident among the public 4-year institutions, shown in Table 3, with several institutions developing five or fewer new programs and a few institutions developing many more. George Mason University (GMU) alone has 40 new programs in development, if its various colleges are included in the count. That is more than triple the number of any other institutions except Old Dominion University. The new programs in development at GMU range from Visual and Performing Arts to African American Studies to Geology. This level of program development makes sense for GMU, which is the largest public university in Virginia by enrollment and is in a rapidly growing region of the state. Old Dominion University and Virginia Commonwealth University were the next most active institutions, with 29 and 11 new programs under development, respectively; none of the remaining institutions had more than five.

Among the private institutions, shown in Table 4, the pattern was similar, but less pronounced. Eastern Mennonite University (6) and Randolph Macon College (5) reported the most new programs being developed, with the entire group reporting an average of three.

Table 3. Count of proposed new programs at public, 4-year institutions, 2014

Institution	New Programs
Christopher Newport University	1
George Mason University	40
James Madison University	3
Longwood University	1
Norfolk State University	1
Old Dominion University	23
Radford University	5
University of Virginia	4
VA Commonwealth University	11
VA State University	4
Virginia Tech	3
Grand Total	96

Source: SCHEV New Program Survey, 2014.

Table 4. Count of proposed new programs at private institutions 4-year institutions, 2014

Institution	New Programs
Averett University	3
Bluefield College	1
Bridgewater College	1
Eastern Mennonite University	6
Emory & Henry College	3
Hollins University	4
Jefferson College of Health Sciences	2
Lynchburg University	2
Randolph Macon College	5
University of Richmond	3
Grand Total	30

Source: SCHEV New Program Survey, 2014.

Table 5, below, reports the program areas of the new courses under development in descending order by the total number of programs among public and private institutions. The top four disciplines for new programs reported were Health, Science, Engineering and IT; together these four areas accounted for 120 of the 200 new programs included in the institutional responses. This is consistent with the emphasis given to STEM-H fields by the performance incentives in the recent Top Jobs Act, as well as the Governor's "New Virginia Economy Workforce Initiative," which set a goal of conferring 50,000 STEM-H credentials on Virginians by 2017.

Table 5. Program areas of proposed new programs, 2014

Program Area	Private	Public	Total
Health	9	43	52
Science	2	26	28
Engineering	1	21	22
IT	—	18	18
Other	2	14	16
Management	2	9	11
Arts	1	9	10
Business	1	8	9
Humanities	3	5	8
Instruction	1	6	7
Education	2	3	5
Law	3	—	3
Math	—	3	3
International Studies	2	1	3
Interdisciplinary Studies	—	1	1
Language	—	1	1
Indus. Tech.	—	1	1
Engineering/Science	—	1	1
Communication	1	—	1
Total	30	170	200

— Not available.

Source: SCHEV New Program Survey, 2014.

Tables 6 through 8 review the emerging programs in these top four program areas in detail. Table 6 provides the number of specific programs in each of the top four program areas by degree or credential level. The largest number of programs slated for the next few years are at the Master's level, with a total of 28 new programs across public (24) and private (4) institutions, though that is only two more than at the short certificate level which has 26 proposed programs. This total includes 11 programs each in the Health and Science program areas. Within the Health area, four programs are for nursing, but the others range from health administration to Prosthetics. In the Science area, five of the new programs are in fields related to biochemistry.

Short term certificates (26) and Occupational/Technical Associate's (22) degrees were the next most common award levels for the new programs being developed. The certificate programs were clustered in Health and IT, but no single concentration, such as nursing or programming, stood out. Rather, the new certificate programs all targeted different specializations. Among the Occ/Tech Associate's degree programs, the Engineering program specialties had the greatest number of planned programs with 12, seven of which were in or related to advanced manufacturing.

Table 6. Top four proposed new program areas, by level, 2014

Degree Level	Engineering	Health	IT	Science	Total
Master's	2	11	4	11	28
Certificate, less than 30 credits	4	12	7	3	26
Associates, Occ/Tech credit	12	5	4	1	22
Bachelor's	1	9	1	9	20
Doctor's	2	11	—	2	15
Associates, BA credit	—	1	2	2	5
Certificate, (30-59) credits	1	2	—	—	3
Master's and Doctor's	—	1	—	—	1
Total	22	52	18	28	120

— Not available.

Source: SCHEV New Program Survey, 2014.

Table 7 provides a first look at the scope, in terms of FTE enrollment, of the new programs being developed in Virginia. Ninety-nine of the 120 programs in the top four program areas expect to have fewer than 50 FTE students enrolled annually at program maturity. Five programs anticipate having more 500 students, a Master's program in Curriculum and Instruction at GMU, a bachelor's program in Management at VCU and an Education Bachelor's program being developed at Bridgewater College. Among the top four program areas, programs being developed in Engineering, Health and Science tended to be fewer than 25 students, while nearly two out of three IT programs were in the 25–50 of students category.

While a majority of the proposed new programs are in STEM-H program areas, two of the three largest programs under development are in Education. This should not come as a surprise; K-12 education is a major employer in Virginia. Six of the 30 largest employers in the state in the first quarter of 2014 were public school systems and the occupations of elementary and secondary school teachers are expected to have a combined demand 2,300 new openings per year through 2022.

Table 8, below, shows the anticipated start years for the programs being developed. The largest number of programs are anticipated to begin in 2015, with 87 set for that year and 51 for 2016. Only six programs, out of the full 200 responses, are planned to start four or more years from now. All of these programs are being planned at GMU and all but one are graduate programs. The delays, therefore, likely reflect the complexity and difficulty in planning and funding these types of programs.

Table 7. Estimated program size (FTE enrollment) at program maturity of proposed new programs in the top four program areas, 2014

Program Size (FTE enrollment)	Engineering	Health	IT	Science	Total, Top Areas	All Programs
Less than 25	10	26	5	14	55	91
25-50	8	16	13	7	44	72
51-100	1	5	—	1	7	14
101-250	—	5	—	2	7	11
250-500	—	—	—	1	1	1
500+	—	—	—	—	—	3
Unknown	3	—	—	3	6	8
Total	22	52	18	28	120	200

— Not available.

Source: SCHEV New Program Survey, 2014.

Table 8. Anticipated start-up year for proposed new programs in the top four program areas, 2014

Anticipated Start-up year	Engineering	Health	IT	Science	Total, Top Areas	All Programs
2012	—	—	—	—	—	2
2013	1	4	—	—	5	7
2014	5	5	1	2	13	25
2015	6	26	10	13	55	87
2016	6	9	3	12	30	51
2017	4	7	2	—	13	16
2018	—	1	—	—	1	2
2019	—	—	—	1	1	2
2020	—	—	—	—	—	1
2022	—	—	—	—	—	1
Unknown	—	—	2	—	2	6
Total	22	52	18	28	120	200

— Not available.

Source: SCHEV New Program Survey, 2014.

Tables 9 and 10, below, describe the modes of delivery for the programs in development. Table 9 reveals that while 69 percent of programs at private colleges are planned to be strictly on-campus, over 50 percent of planned programs at public institutions will be online or mixed (with some courses taught on campus and some available online). The Top Jobs Act provides some performance incentives to encourage the use of electronic resources and resource sharing, which may be influencing the public institutions to plan more online and mixed-mode programs. Additionally, public institutions – especially the community colleges – sometimes provide distance access to programs offered at other institutions.

Table 10 goes on to look at the size of programs by mode of delivery. Nearly all of the online and mixed programs anticipate 50 or fewer FTE students to be enrolled at program maturity. One mixed-delivery program, the Curriculum and Instruction Master's program being developed at GMU, anticipates having

500 or more students. Overall, however, institutions do not seem to be emphasizing programs that capitalize on the potential of online instruction to reach large numbers of students efficiently.

Table 9. Delivery mode of proposed new programs, by control and award level, 2014

Control & award level	On-Campus	Online	Mixed	Total
Public	79	3	84	166
Associate's	16	—	22	38
Bachelor's	16	—	9	25
Certificate	15	—	29	44
Graduate	32	3	24	59
Private	20	4	5	29
Bachelor's	10	2	—	12
Certificate	2	—	1	3
Graduate	8	2	4	14
Total	99	7	89	195

— Not available.

Note: Excludes responses with no delivery mode given and one write-in response value of "multi-campus."

Source: SCHEV New Program Survey, 2014.

Table 10. Estimated program size (FTE enrollment) at program maturity, by delivery mode of proposed new programs, 2014

Program Size (FTE enrollment)	On-Campus	Online	Mixed	Total
Less than 25	49	1	40	90
25-50	27	4	41	72
51-100	8	—	4	12
101-250	6	1	2	9
250-500	—	1	—	1
500+	2	—	1	3
Unknown	7	—	1	8
Total	99	7	89	195

— Not available.

Note: Excludes responses with no delivery mode given and one write-in response value of "multi-campus."

Source: SCHEV New Program Survey, 2014.

Finally, Table 11 looks at the institutions' responses to the open-ended prompt: "Please provide any additional information that you think is relevant regarding your institution's reasons for developing this program." The survey instrument provided to the private institutions did not include this free-form response section, so the responses are only from 170 the public institution, of which thirty-seven did not respond to this question.

The responses varied widely in their nature and character. Some respondents provided extensive theoretical rationales for the value of the program's field of study, complete with citations, while others simply noted reports of workforce demand. It was also evident that the responses for some programs had been reused for other, related programs, but it was assumed that the content of those responses remained valid for each program. Another important factor to consider is that a few institutions (GMU, ODU, VCU) submitted far more responses than the other institutions, so it is possible that distinctive attributes in the way that these institutions think about new program development, or the way in which they responded to the survey, might have an outsized influence on the results of the analysis.

The analysis of these responses is, therefore, intended to reveal ideas and themes that the respondents thought were important enough to include giving minimal prompting or direction. In particular, it should be noted that the absence of a specific idea or theme from the responses on this survey, such as alignment with the institution's strategic plan, does not imply that the theme or idea does not apply to that new program.

The responses were coded into categories to enable analysis. The categories were developed based on an initial review of the responses and were designed to be both broad and flexible in order to capture a variety of different, but related, ideas within each category. The categories, which were not mutually exclusive, were as follows:

- **Leveraging Existing Programs and Curricula** – A number of responses indicated that the program was being developed as a new degree based on an existing minor or concentration or that they were introducing a higher level degree based on the success of an existing lower level degree (e.g. a Ph.D. based on an existing MA).
- **Student Demand** – Some responses explicitly indicated student demand as a reason for developing the program.
- **Labor Demand** – This category included responses that explicitly stated the program was being developed in response to a growing workforce demand for graduates, rapidly industry growth, or changing credentialing requirements in the workforce.
- **Academic and Social Benefit** – A number of responses cited an impetus for increased knowledge in an area or spoke to community benefits beyond strictly workforce needs. This category also includes a few responses that indicated faculty interest.
- **Institutional Prestige** – Some responses specifically mentioned increasing the institution's reputation or brand recognition.
- **Aligns with Institutional Mission/Plan** – Several responses explicitly indicated that the new program was part of their institution's strategic plan.
- **Institutional Growth and Diversity of Academic Offerings** – A number of responses spoke to the value that the program would bring in terms of offering a wider selection to students or attracting new faculty.
- **Other** – In a few cases, the responses only provided a description of the program, such as competencies to be taught or courses to be included. Others simply stated that the program

would be submitted to SCHEV shortly. This was a catch-all category for responses that did not lend themselves to additional analysis.

Table 11, below, presents the percentage of responses that were included in each category out of the total number of responses among 2-year and 4-year institutions. It is important to note that, because the categories were not mutually exclusive, each response could appear in one or more categories.

Among both the 4-year and 2-year institutions, “Leveraging Existing Programs and Curricula” and “Labor Demand” stood out as the most referenced ideas or themes among the responses. “Labor Demand” was the most frequently cited among 4-year institutions, with 45% of responses mentioning it. “Leveraging Existing Programs and Curricula” and “Labor Demand” were the most commonly referenced categories among 2-year institutions, with 28% and 27%, respectively. However, there were far more institutions that did not answer this question among 2-year institutions. Also, the 2-year institutions that did answer were not very likely to speak to a category outside of those top two. In comparison, the 4-year institutions were more likely to respond and more likely to include longer responses referencing more categories. Among the institutions that did respond to this question, 4-year institutions’ responses averaged 551 characters and 1.8 categories, compared to 240 characters and 1.2 categories among the responses of 2-year institutions.

Table 11. Responses to opened ended prompt for “additional relevant information, 2014

Total Responses	4-year		2-year	
	#	%	#	%
	96		74	
Category of Response	#	%	#	%
Leveraging Existing Programs and Curricula	35	36%	21	28%
Student Demand	17	18%	4	5%
Labor Demand	43	45%	20	27%
Academic and Social Benefit	16	17%	4	5%
Institutional Prestige	21	22%		0%
Aligns with Institutional Mission/Plan	11	11%	2	3%
Institutional Growth and Diversity of Academic Offerings	14	15%	1	1%
Other	1	1%	4	5%
No Response	10	10%	27	36%

Source: JBLA analysis of SCHEV New Program Survey, 2014.

SCHEV Statewide Strategic Plan – New Program Survey Instrument

STATE COUNCIL OF HIGHER EDUCATION FOR VIRGINIA Statewide Strategic Plan Development

Plans for New Academic Programs Survey

This is a short survey of programs that are in the planning process but have not been presented to SCHEV for approval. The information will be used in the state higher education strategic planning process and is not a binding commitment on your part.

Please complete one survey per planned program.

Institution name: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Public: **Private:**

Program Award Level: [Choose an item.](#)

Program Area (For example, network security, EMT, energy technology, Spanish):
[Click here to enter text.](#)

Program CIP Code (if known): [Click here to enter text.](#)

Anticipated Start-up Year: [Click here to enter year.](#)

Delivery mode: [Choose an item.](#)

Average annual student enrollment when program reaches maturity:
[Click here to enter text.](#)

This program is being developed primarily in response to: [Choose an item or enter text.](#)

Please provide any additional information that you think is relevant regarding your institution's reasons for developing this program:
[Click here to enter text.](#)