



VIRGINIA UNION
UNIVERSITY

Delivering on the
PROMISE
Strategic Plan 2020–2025





Letter from the President

On behalf of the Virginia Union University community, I am pleased to present our 2020-2025 Strategic Plan: *Delivering on the Promise*. Our singular focus is to be ranked as one of the top HBCUS in the nation by 2025. This document serves as a road map to guide us to our goal. We strive to be ranked as one of the top HBCUs in the nation. The Plan contained in this document is a road map to guide us to our goal. Its conception and execution are made with great deliberation and analysis to provide a strategic measure centered around our beloved University's growth and sustainability. In addition, it displays the best that our organization offers to our students, alumni, faculty, and staff.

As we guide you along this journey, please take a moment to consider all this document has to offer. As we venture through the University's Vision, Mission, and Core Values, we will also highlight our overall approach to the Plan and how it is prioritized. The Strategy House displays the framework of which the Plan was built. In conjunction, our goals, objectives, and indicators exhibit how we currently compare to peer institutions, using the scorecard to show the progress we continue to make.

Implementation of this Plan will ensure the University's growth, increase national awareness, and build upon the legacy of "The Promise of a Limitless Future." VUU continues to meet our students' needs by equipping them with the skills and confidence to know that their personal and professional aspirations are within reach.

The rise in national rankings will come through innovation, construction of research facilities, global recruitment, and upgraded technology. This Plan is designed to produce the results necessary to reach the objectives set forth by the Board of Trustees and Executive Leadership. These collaborative efforts will propel VUU towards becoming a premier University and recognized as a "Best-In-Class" institution of higher education.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "HJ Lucas".

Hakim J. Lucas, Ph.D.
President and CEO
Virginia Union University



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Vision Statement

Virginia Union University is a premier liberal arts urban institution of higher education and center of excellence for the preparation of students and the development of leaders for tomorrow's world.

Mission Statement

Virginia Union University is nourished by its African American heritage and energized by a commitment to excellence and diversity. Its mission is to:

1. Provide a nurturing, intellectually challenging, and spiritually enriching environment for learning;
2. Empower students to develop strong moral values for success; and
3. Develop scholars, leaders, and lifelong learners of a global society.

To accomplish this mission, Virginia Union University offers a broad range of educational opportunities that advance its liberal arts education, teaching, research, science, technology, continuing education, civic engagement, and international experiences.





Core Values

Five fundamental principles guide Virginia Union University. Each principle is essential to our ability to provide a holistic experience for students, faculty, and staff while delivering a Best-In-Class educational experience in pursuit of the promise of a limitless future. They are:

Innovation— We consistently search for and create growth opportunities that forge groundbreaking research, state of the art technology, or top-of-the-line curriculum. We welcome and encourage new ideas and processes that positively impact experiences.

Spiritual Formation— As a faith-based University, we welcome the regular practice of prayer, worship, silence, and mediation that matures one's relationships, values, and life purpose that lead to ongoing spiritual growth and transformation.

Integrity— We value our commitment to fairness, honesty, and truth reflected in each person's words and deeds while holding ourselves accountable for our personal and words and actions.

Diversity & Inclusion— As one of the nation's oldest HBCUs, we value diversity in thought, perspective, and embodiment, trusting that we are stronger when various voices, traditions, and experiences are present. We value inclusivity and promote a safe with dignity, respect, and compassion.

Excellence— We provide the highest quality of experiences and interactions while remaining flexible, responsive, and open-minded in developing and delivering programs, services, and facilities committed to exceeding the standards of what it means to be Best-In-Class.

These five fundamental principles aid our community in understanding the right path to fulfilling our institution's mission. To carry out the mission set before us, we embrace the Nine Noble values, which are the foundation for supporting and matriculating our students successfully through their academic careers. As the principles and values sync with one another, the result will be an institution listed amongst the nation's top-tier HBCUs.



Introduction to the Strategic Plan

Virginia Union University has been impacting the world for more than 155 years. As we embark on the next five years, we will commit our unwavering support to provide future leaders of the world access to a limitless future. The expected result is growth and sustainability to provide a Best-In-Class education for the next 150 years and beyond, granting access to personal advancement and development.

A by-product of hard work, opportunity, and scholarship, our most powerful asset is our diverse community, including the faculty members who lead teaching and research, the professionals who support every part of our operation, the students who learn and inspire us, and the alumni who represent us worldwide. The Strategic Plan will bring our members together in a creative and innovative space to guide us through the next five years.

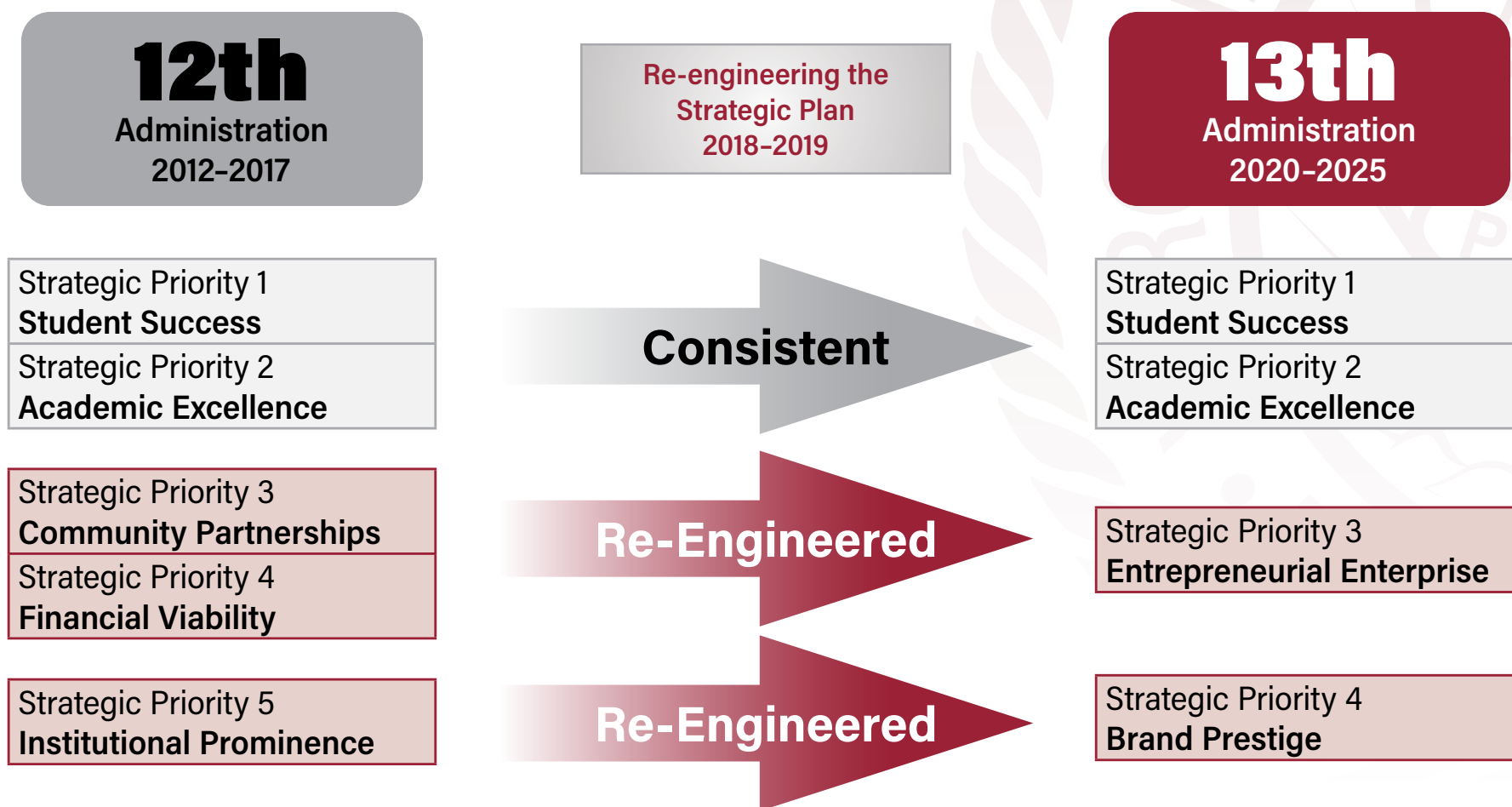
We envision a bold future built on our tradition of excellence and our African American heritage. This will require us to utilize our talents and resources to be "Best-In-Class" in every aspect of our mission.

Using Six Sigma methodology, VUU has taken an alternate tactic to execute the Strategic Plan, using an innovative and unprecedented approach to the University's operation and how we manage our daily procedures. Virginia Union endures to carry its rich heritage and will continue to bear the responsibility of creating a cultural environment that breeds Academic Excellence, Student Success, Entrepreneurial Enterprise, and Brand Prestige.

Approach to the Strategic Plan

The 2012-2017 Strategic Plan was developed under the leadership of our 12th president, Dr. Claude G. Perkins. Upon being appointed as the 13th president of Virginia Union University, Dr. Hakim J. Lucas extended the 2012-2017 Strategic Plan by two years (2012-2019) to bridge the planning gap between administrations. Those two additional years served as a stepping-stone to create a new path forward in research, teaching, engagement, and resources that leveraged the importance of our mission and our pursuit of excellence. Recognizing the need to apply a more rigorous business management philosophy to the planning process, Dr. Lucas introduced and instituted the Six Sigma methodology to retool the Plan. The resulting document, the 2020-2025 Strategic Plan, ***Delivering on the Promise***, provides the institution's pathway to becoming the #1 HBCU in the nation.

The chart below represents how the 2012-2017 Strategic Plan was re-engineered under the 13th administration from 2018-2020:



University Strategic Priorities

The University Strategic Priorities result from a comprehensive collaboration led by the Board of Trustees, guided by the President, Dr. Hakim Lucas, and supported by the Executive Leadership Council, the University Leadership Council, and the Student Government Association. Through this process, six priorities integral to the University's legacy of excellence were established. They are as follows:

1. **PROMOTE** Virginia Union University and its **MISSION** locally, nationally, and globally
2. Inspire **ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE**, innovative research, and civic impact throughout VUU
3. Devise and execute **STRATEGIC PLANNING** to ensure sustained excellence, long-term growth, and renovation of its facilities and operations
4. Cultivate **STRONG PARTNERSHIPS** across the philanthropic sector while building and strengthening relationships with the local community and alumni
5. Improve the **FINANCIAL VITALITY** of VUU through engagement of key stakeholders and entrepreneurial initiatives
6. Identify and **AMELIORATE OBSTACLES** to enroll, retain, and graduate students from VUU in a timely manner





Strategy House

A cornerstone of the Six-Sigma methodology, the Strategy House represents a schematic of how the institution is working towards its vision, mission, and core values with the objective of becoming the #1 HBCU in the nation. The house is rooted in the metrics that will produce results through Key Performance and Student Success Indicators along with Student Learning Objectives.

The four pillars support the four University Strategic Goals. As we continue to rise, the roof points to the objective of becoming the top HBCU in the nation, while the house peaks with the vision, mission, and core values.

University Strategic Goals



**Student Success
(USG#1)**



**Academic Excellence
(USG#2)**



**Entrepreneurial Enterprise
(USG#3)**



**Brand Prestige
(USG#4)**

University Strategic Goals, Objectives, and Indicators

This Plan consists of four key elements: (1) University Strategic Goals (USGs), (2) University Strategic Objectives (USOs), (3) Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), and (4) the University's Balanced Scorecard. Each of the four elements combined to create the overall framing of the University Strategic Plan. The University Strategic Goals (USGs) anchor this Plan in strategies that support and sustain the organization's long-term viability.

**Ensuring Student Success | Invigorating Academic Excellence
Promoting Entrepreneurial Enterprise | Enhancing Brand Prestige**

The University Strategic Objectives (USOs) were developed from division-based action plans. Each of the USOs defines what must be done in order for students to succeed.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) accompany every strategic objective. The KPIs measure every strategic objective's progress, providing data on student success indicators, student learning outcomes, and presidential points of interest within a specific timeframe. The Balanced Scorecard will encompass the product of the combination of USGs, USOs, and KPIs. The three encase a blend of guiding strategies that will lead us to become Best-In-Class.

The scorecard allows Virginia Union University to benchmark its KPIs to Best-In-Class metrics. It compares VUU to top-ranked universities across the nation through an environmental scan that gives us insight into our market position.



Student Success

University Strategic Goal #1

Virginia Union University's commitment to students is at the core of its mission. The University's goal is to develop scholars, leaders, and lifelong learners of a global society prepared to accomplish their academic, personal, and professional goals. The institution uses nine noble values to distinguish a VUU man or woman. Upon graduation, we anticipate that each student will fulfill the Nine Nobles and a degree that would result in their successful transition into the marketplace.

University Strategic Objectives

Objective 1.1: Identify, recruit, and enroll undergraduate and graduate students based on enrollment targets.

Objective 1.2: Increase undergraduate and graduate retention and progression rates.

Objective 1.3: Develop and implement distinctive and transformative undergraduate curricular and co-curricular experiences based around the Noble Nine, which include: *Access* (PEP), *Scholarship* (Academic Achievement), *Future* (Semester Away), *Wisdom* (Mentoring), *Culture* (Career/Graduate Offer), *Wealth* (Average \$60k), *Experience* (Internship), *Purpose* (Graduate in 4-years) and *Focus* (Financial Support).

Objective 1.4: Strengthen and enhance student engagement, satisfaction, and experience.

Key Performance Indicators, such as:

Enrollment, Retention, Gainful Employment, Internships, Student Engagement, Student Satisfaction, and Student Experience



Academic Excellence

University Strategic Goal #2

The University has multiple pathways for academic achievement and innovation. The value of rigor, relevance, and relationships embedded in our culture underscores the importance of ensuring that the academic programs offered result in our students being highly sought after upon graduation.

University Strategic Objectives

Objective 2.1: Offer exceptional quality academic undergraduate, graduate, and global programs that are highly relevant to workforce demand and support the University's mission.

Objective 2.2: Increase the number of students matriculating at a satisfactory pace towards degree completion.

Objective 2.3: Accurately assess and evaluate institutional practices, pedagogical techniques, and integrity of the learning environment.

Objective 2.4: Strengthen and enhance faculty engagement, satisfaction, and experience.

Key Performance Indicators, such as:

Graduate Rate, Retention Rate, New Program Development, Faculty Experience, Faculty Engagement, and Faculty Satisfaction





Entrepreneurial Enterprise

University Strategic Goal #3

Virginia Union University is accountable to its students, its community, and the governing Board of Trustees. The University has a long-standing commitment to the financial and economic impact of operational business practices that will promote sustainable growth to the institution and the surrounding area.

University Strategic Objectives

Objective 3.1: Implement and promote operational excellence by streamlining processes and procedures to strengthen infrastructure, services, and maintain compliance.

Objective 3.2: Create a culture of learning through training and development.

Objective 3.3: Leverage technology and information to support and advance teaching, learning, research, and business operations.

Objective 3.4: Attract, promote, retain, and assess the highest quality talent to provide an inclusive, diverse, and growth-oriented environment.

Objective 3.5: Develop effective student financial programs designed to support access, affordability, and retention.

Objective 3.6: Align financial resources through generation, redirection, prioritization, cost containment, and stewardship to address strategic priorities.

Objective 3.7: Ensure University infrastructures (i.e., physical and technological) are well planned, constructed, operated, and maintained to provide high-quality living and learning spaces.

Key Performance Indicators, such as:

Compliance, Endowment, Technological Innovation, Student Default, Capital Projects, and Grant Procurement



Brand Prestige

University Strategic Goal #4

The integrity and appreciation of a student's degree hinge on the University's ability to hold itself to a higher standard than the marketplace demands. Our ability to understand and respond to our key stakeholders' needs is imperative to creating a globally recognizable brand and a top-choice University to attend, be employed with, or support financially.

University Strategic Objectives

Objective 4.1: Maintain a safe and secure campus environment.

Objective 4.2: Strengthen business, community, and regional ties through service, research, programs, and partnerships that enhance economic, educational, and cultural opportunities.

Objective 4.3: Provide giving and engagement opportunities for our constituents and Alumni aligned with the University's academic programs and strategic initiatives to raise funds.

Objective 4.4: Develop and execute an integrated, coordinated, and sustained marketing and communication plan to position the University to become Best-In-Class.

Objective 4.5: Cultivate a culture committed to excellence and winning through research, publications, and recognition through conferences, regional, and national events.

Key Performance Indicators, such as:

Campus Safety, Community Service, Fundraising, Alumni Engagement, Publications, Championships, and University Ranking



Nine Noble Achievements

At Virginia Union University, the institution's mission, coupled with the value proposition for a unique student experience, can be leveraged for the purpose of student success. VUU has a proven record of admitting students who have traditionally underperformed academically, immersed them into our institution's history and culture, and propelled them to fulfill their academic and professional goals. The nine components represent an outcome-orientation model referred to as the Nine Noble Achievements and signify student expectations, development, and future impact on society.

	FOCUS All students must have a Financial Investment Plan.		WISDOM All students must have a mentor as a part of their circle of support.		ACCESS All students must have an active Personalized Education Plan.
	SCHOLARSHIP All students must graduate with a 3.0 GPA.		PURPOSE All students must graduate on-time.		EXPERIENCE All students must complete an internship.
	CULTURE All students must have a term-away experience.		FUTURE All students must have a career/graduate/professional school offer before graduation.		WEALTH All career paths must average \$60,000.

Summary

This strategic plan was developed as a blueprint for Virginia Union University to be recognized as a Best-In-Class institution by 2025. These unwavering commitments to collaboration between our executive stakeholder audiences, the Board of Trustees, the Executive Leadership Council, the University Leadership Council, the distinguished Alumni, and the Student Government Association, will lead to the results outlined in the document. Over the next five years, the team will work by implementing and assessing the work outlined.

We are steadfast in our belief that our future success depends on the organization's culture. We will continue to recruit, reward, and recognize employees who truly embody the values. We pride ourselves on being a working, writing, assessing culture which holds each other accountable. As such, we are committed to continuing the use of the Six Sigma methodology as our operational approach to lead us through continuous improvement. Not only is Six Sigma a framework used as a principal foundation of our Strategic Plan, but it also has been infused throughout the day-to-day operations to transform Virginia Union University.

Appropriately, our Strategic Plan focuses on how we, as a community, can connect all that we do to the University's overarching mission. Just as VUU creates an environment where our faculty and staff can demonstrate their talents, gifts, and abilities, the Plan sets the stage for all of us to work collectively to define VUU's future as the #1 HBCU in the nation. The Plan is both tactical and strategic, outlining and demonstrating our strategies for long-term investment. We look to you, our key stakeholders, to turn this Plan into action by thinking creatively about aligning your time, talent, and effort with the strategy provided within this document.

This Plan is the roadmap for student success and long-term sustainability at Virginia Union University. It emphasizes how our students will build generational wealth by securing sustainable employment as well as providing a pathway for succeeding with entrepreneurial aspirations upon graduation and beyond. It gives voice to our vision. With the acquisition of a higher education degree, students can access more opportunities to realize the limitless future we promise.



Delivering on the
PROMISE
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