

University of the Virgin Islands

SAFRA Comprehensive Development Plan

Strengthening Historically Black Colleges and Universities

October 1, 2015 – September 30, 2020

COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

INTRODUCTION

The Title III Part B Grant Program, created by the Higher Education Act of 1965, was designed to assist Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) in strengthening their infrastructure in areas such as their physical plants, financial management, and student services and resources. The University of the Virgin Islands, which holds the distinction of being the only HBCU outside the U.S. mainland, has been a recipient of Title III funding since the inception of its relationship with the U.S. Department of Education in 1968. There are 16 legislatively allowable activities for which these funds provided to UVI and other institutions can be used, including the purchase of scientific equipment, construction or renovation of classrooms, purchase of books and periodicals and student services such as tutorial sessions and counseling.

BACKGROUND

The University of the Virgin Islands was chartered on March 16, 1962, as the College of the Virgin Islands (CVI)—a publicly funded, coeducational, liberal arts institution—by Act No. 862 of the Fourth Legislature of the U.S. Virgin Islands. According to that law, the College’s cornerstone objective was to provide for “...the stimulation and utilization of the intellectual resources of the people of the Virgin Islands

and the development of a center of higher learning whereby and wherefrom the benefits of culture and education may be extended throughout the Virgin Islands.”

The first campus opened on St. Thomas in July 1963, on 175 acres donated by the federal government, with the first Board of Trustees taking office in August of that year. In 1964, the College founded a second campus on St. Croix, on 125 acres also donated by the federal government. Through purchase and other donations, the University has increased its real property to 295 acres on St. Croix and 390 acres on St. Thomas. The majority of the initial holdings and the immediately contiguous areas, houses the academic, research and outreach programs and services and technical assistance that are integral to achieving mission elements, including the responsiveness to community that is embedded in the mission.

The College of the Virgin Islands began by offering only associate of arts degrees. In 1967 it added bachelor’s degree programs in liberal arts and education. The first baccalaureate degrees were awarded in 1970, and in 1976 the college awarded its first master’s degrees in education. Two years later, master’s degree programs in business administration and public administration were instituted on both campuses.

CVI was designated as a Land-Grant institution in 1972, when then-President Nixon signed the Education Amendments Act. As a part of a network of such institutions, the College of the Virgin Islands assumed the responsibility for implementing (in the US Virgin Islands) the concept that a practical education should be available to all interested students, not just the wealthy. With both the Agricultural Experiment Station and the Cooperative Extension Service, the institution continues its agricultural research and information dissemination activities.

In 1986, the College of the Virgin Islands was renamed the University of the Virgin Islands to reflect the growth and diversification of its academic curricula, community and regional services, and research programs. That same year, the United States Congress named UVI one of America's Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU); **therefore, it holds the distinction of being the only HBCU outside of the continental United States.** UVI is also the Territory's only accredited institution of higher learning.

INSTITUTIONAL PROFILE

Two campuses comprise the University of the Virgin Islands; one on the island of St. Thomas and the other on the island of St. Croix. The University has a population of over 2,331 students (as of Fall 2014), where the St. Thomas campus accounts for 62%, with the remaining 38% on the St. Croix campus. UVI's diverse population includes 69% of the student body Black/African American, 7% Hispanic, and 7% Caucasian. Females represent 70% of the student body. UVI offers both undergraduate and graduate degree programs. Over 93% of the student population (as of Fall 2014) is enrolled in undergraduate degree programs, and the remaining 7% are attending graduate courses.

In 2010, UVI renamed its five academic units as Schools and Colleges: the School of Business; the School of Education; the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences; the School of Nursing; and the College of Science and Mathematics. The Schools and Colleges offer a wide range of Bachelors of Science and Art as well as Associates of Arts degrees. The School of Business offers Bachelors of Art and Associates of Arts degrees in Business Administration, Accounting, and Management. Additionally, the school also

offers a Master of Business Administration program. The School of Education awards degrees in Elementary Education and Inclusive Early Childhood Education. With its Master of Arts in Education program, degrees are offered in Teaching, Educational Leadership, and Counseling and Guidance.

Applied Mathematics, Computer Science, Biology, Marine Biology and Chemistry are some of the major degrees offered by the College of Science and Mathematics. This school also offers a Master's program in Mathematics for Secondary Teachers as well as a Master in Marine and Environmental Science.

The former Divisions of Humanities and Social Sciences were merged to form the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences. Degree programs for this academic unit include an Associates of Arts degree in Police Science and Administration, Bachelor of Arts degrees in Communication, English, Humanities, Music Education, Psychology and Speech Communication. The College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences also offers Master of Arts degrees in Public Administration and Psychology. The School of Nursing is presently the only academic unit without an advanced degree program; Nursing degrees are offered at the Associates and Bachelors levels.

THEME

The theme selected by UVI's President Dr. David Hall for the Title III SAFRA grant program for the 2015-20 cycle is *Continuing on the Pathway to Greatness*. There are four projects selected by the President for the new cycle, which coincide with the overarching theme and which address the university's needs. They include:

- 1. Expanding Opportunities for Science Majors on the Albert A. Sheen (St. Croix) Campus*

2. *Advancing Learning Environments*
3. *Learning and Educational Access Program*
4. *Establishing a Child Care Center for the School of Education*

Additional projects consistent with both the theme for the cycle and the Legislatively Allowable Activities may be added during the cycle as funding becomes available. These projects will seek to:

- enhance the institution's services to STEM students; or
- improve the institution's academic quality.

MISSION

The mission of the University of the Virgin Islands clearly defines the institution's purpose within the context of higher education. The mission statement reads:

The University of the Virgin Islands is a learner-centered institution dedicated to the success of its students and committed to enhancing the lives of the people of the U.S. Virgin Islands and the wider Caribbean through excellent teaching, innovative research, and responsive community service.

VISION

The institution's vision statement describes what the university wants to be in the future and publicly declares expected outcomes. Developed with broad institutional support, UVI's vision is responsive to the institution's dynamic

environment and articulates what UVI seeks to become within the context of its mission, as stipulated by the Middle States Commission in Higher Education. The vision is:

The University of the Virgin Islands will be an exceptional U.S. institution of higher education in the Caribbean dedicated to student success, committed to excellence, and pledged to enhancing the social and economic transformation of the U.S. Virgin Islands.

CORE VALUES

The strength of the university lies in the value system that embodies the principles, ideals and beliefs of its key stakeholders (including students, faculty, staff, administrators, and trustees), and forms the foundation for UVI's actions. These values also speak to the institution's aim of serving the larger community and region as well. There are 10 core values adopted by the university to fulfill its mission and vision. They are:

- *Students First*—Students are the most important stakeholders.
- *Learning and Scholarship*—Learning and scholarship for UVI students and employees, and the community at large, are valued.
- *Excellence*—There is a commitment to upholding high academic standards and providing a nurturing and supportive educational environment.
- *Teamwork*— Teamwork and accountability are essential to achieving institutional goals and objectives.
- *Collegiality and Shared Governance*—The institution is committed to a partnership among students, faculty and staff.

- *Inclusiveness of Ideas*—Mutual respect for everyone is valued and expressed through fair and equitable treatment.
- *Principled Leadership*—The institution’s leadership is committed to achieving optimal results by collaborating with employees to solve problems and reach solutions.
- *Supporting our Community*—There is a shared responsibility to support the local community through enthusiastic, responsible service.
- *Effective Use of Technology*—Technology is viewed and used as a tool to enhance teaching and learning and to improve the effectiveness of UVI’s educational and administrative processes.
- *Equitable Reward System*—The institution and its leaders support a performance-based system that recognizes and values the contributions of all employees.

MANAGEMENT VALUES

In addition to its core values, UVI has also adopted several management related values. President Hall introduced seven management values, which serve as the framework for the university’s internal operation. These management values include:

- *High performance Institution with a focus on quality*—Provide quality services and products, as well as be efficient in delivering these services and programs.
- *Service Oriented*—The quality of our service and programs must meet the needs of our core customers (students) and also increase their level of satisfaction.

- *Uncompromised Integrity*—The University must demonstrate moral and ethical standards.
- *Informed Decision Making*—For informed decisions to be made, information must be available, transparent and shared.
- *Fiscal Responsibility*—The University has to manage its resources responsibly and efficiently.
- *Performance Assessment*—Evaluating the performance of employees to ensure that standards are met and training can be provided where necessary.
- *Emotional and Spiritual Health*—To nurture the emotional and spiritual well-being of employees and to provide support as needed.

STRATEGIC PLAN PROCESS

The University of the Virgin Islands has adopted a new strategic plan “*Strategic Plan 2017: Pathways to Greatness*” for the five year period, 2012-17. At a recent meeting of the Board of Trustees meeting, the duration of the Strategic Plan was extended to 2018. In crafting this new strategic plan, input was solicited from key stakeholders including faculty, staff, students and persons from the community. UVI has embraced a “shared governance” approach to its decision making and its implementation is evident in this process. The University hired consultants whose expertise lies in the areas of higher education administration, to facilitate a number of workshops and training sessions to engage faculty and staff members into sharing their views of the institution.

Another key part of the strategic planning process was to assign faculty and staff members into several task forces, referred to as the Planning Task Force (PTF). The PTF conducted a number of data gathering activities (including conducting an external environmental scan) with external stakeholders to ensure that their views and opinions were included in framing the institution's future. Also, a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Analysis was performed to review the internal and external factors impacting on the university, and a number of trends, issues and events were also studied.

TRENDS, ISSUES AND EVENTS

Events:

The continued deterioration of the economic climate both locally and nationally has had an adverse impact on the University as Virgin Islands Government appropriations to UVI have continued to decrease. Reduction in financial support limits the University's ability to implement new initiatives to better serve its students, the community and the wider Caribbean region.

Trends:

One of the most alarming trends for UVI is the increased number of colleges and universities providing online educational access. In fact, in April of 2012, a group of Ivy League institutions announced that they would offer free online courses in collaboration with a California-based online education company.¹ With limited resources, current and potential students enroll in classes with online offerings to gain access to degree and

¹ <http://www.philly.com/philly/insights/147859875.html>

certificate programs not offered here at the university. Enrolling in online higher education programs allows students to maintain their employment while attending classes at their leisure, an arrangement that proves difficult in the traditional academic setting. Also, more mainland colleges and universities will continue to recruit local high caliber students.

Additionally, students in the Caribbean region are also opting to attend other Caribbean universities such as the University of the West Indies (UWI), as this institution has several campuses and offers a wide range of degree programs. Furthermore, for students from supporting Caribbean countries and territories, there are no visa requirements for students to attend UWI.

Issues:

Is UVI truly preparing its students for the future? Do the programs being offered coincide with the needs of the workplace? Is there a need for vocational training? Questions such as these highlight the need for the University to review its degree programs to ensure that curriculum content prepares its graduates to make a contribution to the workplace. A recurring issue for the University of the Virgin Islands is the impact of the funding sources at the national level, which could result in a reduction in allotments from the various federal agencies such as the U.S. Department of Education.

SWOT ANALYSIS

One of the key processes of the university's strategic planning exercise is to conduct a SWOT analysis. Key stakeholders and focus groups, participated in this

important exercise to identify the internal and external factors that would impact the University's ability to fulfill its objectives and mission. A key strength for the institution is the leadership of the current administration and the Board of Trustees; one of the positive attributes of their leadership is transparent processes and involvement of employees in important issues pertaining to the university through the shared governance process.

This model for shared governance at UVI is based on input from University stakeholder groups. The arrows indicate decision making responsibilities and communication flow. The Senate consists of four representatives from each of the three University groups in addition to the President and Cabinet.

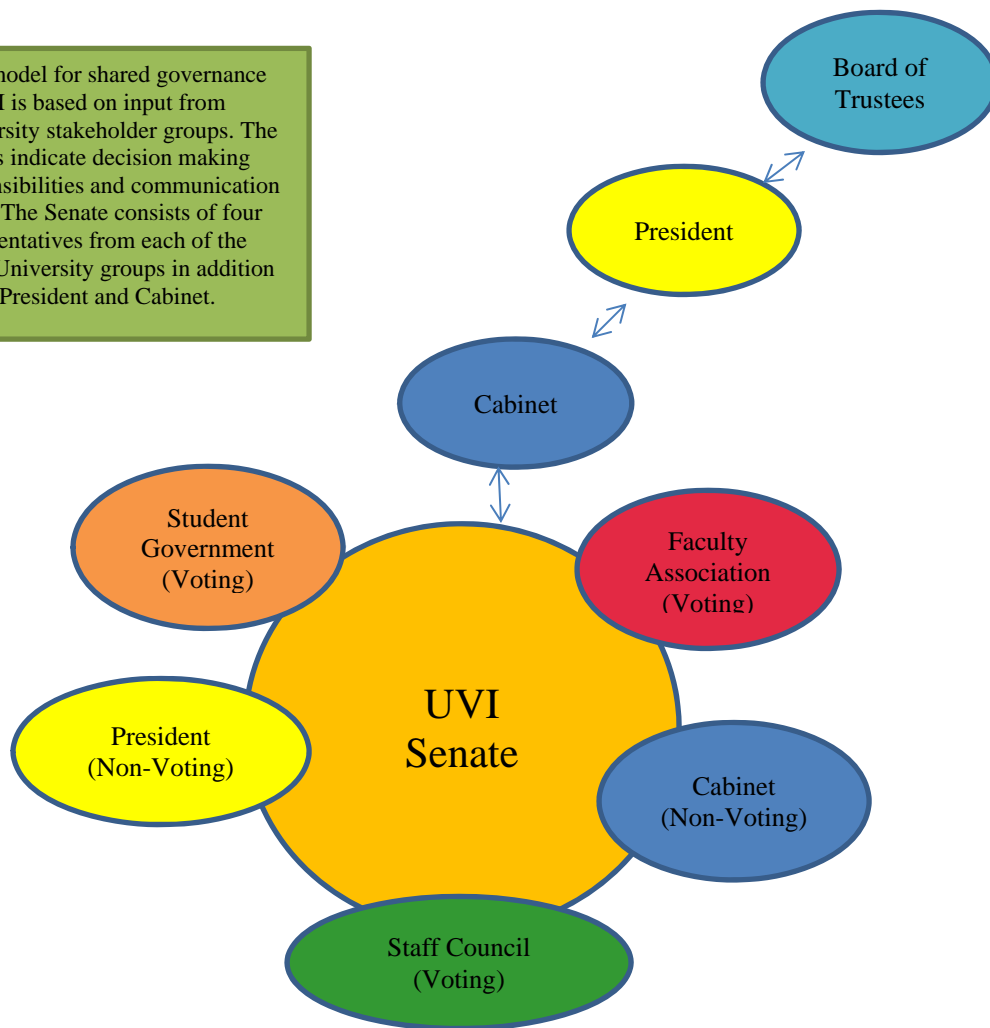


Figure 1. UVI Shared Governance Model

The University has always maintained a strong partnership with the Virgin Islands Government. Among the institution's chief strengths are the affordability of its degree programs as well as its size; students enjoy the small class sizes, which bolster communication and learning in the classroom.

While the university can reap the benefits of some of its core strengths, its weaknesses and limitations must be addressed. One of the weaknesses identified in the SWOT analysis was a limited number of faculty members with Ph.Ds.; this can have an adverse impact on the institution as accreditation boards strongly encourage the hiring of new faculty with Ph.Ds. Since the preparation of the plan, the percentage of faculty with Ph.Ds. has risen from 74% in fall 2012 to 83% in fall 2014; however, due to the economic climate, it is difficult for UVI to compete with other universities for faculty and staff who may opt to leave for higher salaries elsewhere.

There are a number of excellent opportunities for the University of the Virgin Islands to exploit for improvements to its resources and infrastructure. Engaging in scientific research has always enabled UVI to stimulate student interest in research as well as to generate revenues. With more students enrolling in online universities, UVI has to consider this avenue as a possible revenue source, especially with the improvements to its facilities and technological capabilities.

There are a number of threats facing UVI but one of the most critical is the reduction in available funding from the local government. The University has seen its government funding allotment reduced as a means of absorbing its proportionate share of

the financial burden the government is experiencing. Another significant threat to the UVI is the reduction in student enrollment and retention rates. Tuition is an important revenue stream for the university; however the reduced tuition revenue that results from lower enrollment, coupled with the constant reduction in funding from the local government, will eventually lead to UVI being unable to meet its objective of serving the students and the greater community.

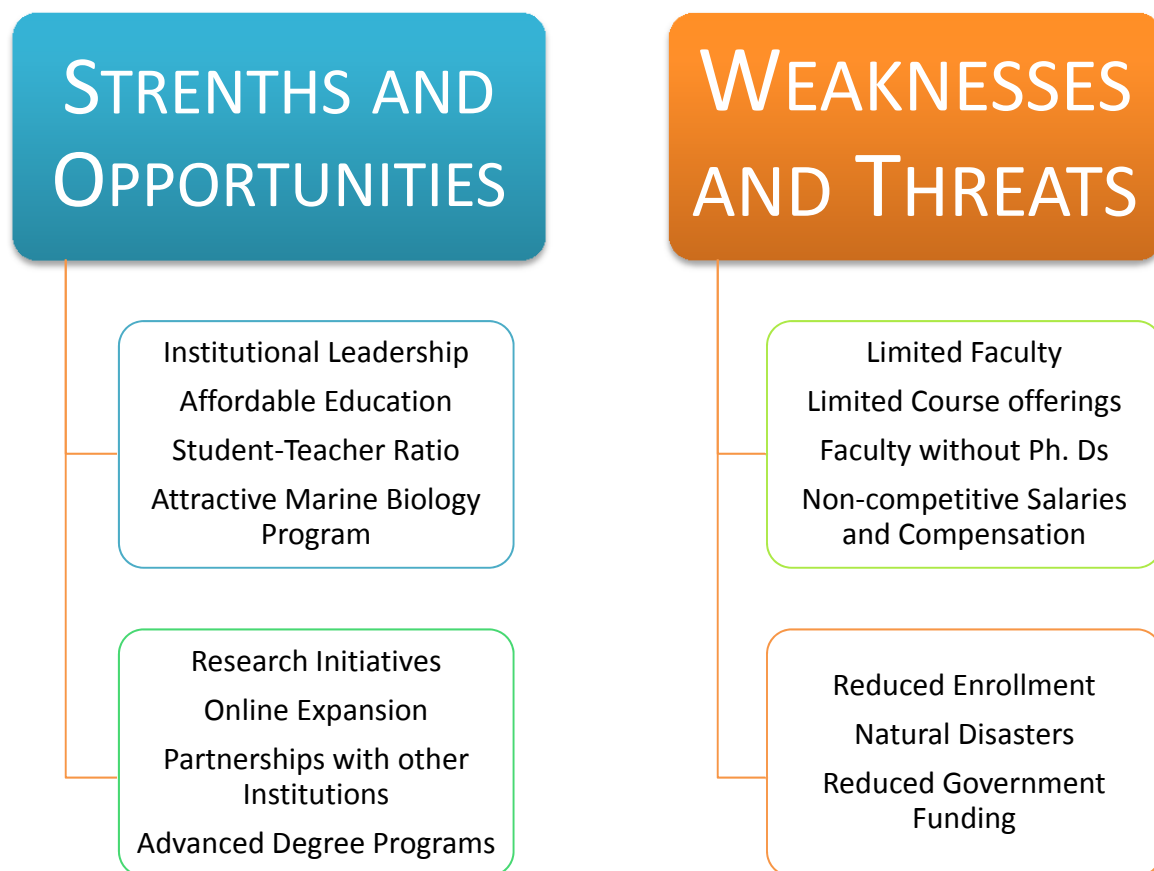


Figure 2. SWOT Analysis Hierarchy Chart

STRATEGIC PLAN FOCUS AREAS

The University of the Virgin Islands’ strategic plan for the 2012-17 period, “*Pathways to Greatness*”, includes six (6) focus areas. During the planning stages of the

new strategic plan, sub-groups of the Planning Task Force constructed a list of goals, objectives and outcomes for each of the focus areas. Additionally, timelines and resources needed to implement these objectives were also considered. The focus areas include:

- **Academic Quality and Excellence**

To support its stance as a learner-centered institution, UVI must continue to enhance its academic programs through more investment in technology, more research initiatives, and having the right faculty and staff in place to implement these improvements. Lastly, the university has to continue to seek and obtain accreditation for its degree programs.

- **Organizational and Human Development**

This component of the strategic plan reviews university-wide policies and procedures as they relate to employee development and well-being. Opportunities for growth and professional development and succession plans will be given careful consideration as these factors impact the university's ability to preserve its intellectual capital.

While employees' skill sets are important for carrying out the day-to-day tasks, their spiritual and emotional state must be nurtured; it is the goal of the university to ensure that the well-being of its employees are respected and maintained. Additionally, this focus area will review UVI's desire to encourage and increase the level of input of employees' views and opinion on

the direction of the institution through optimization of the shared governance process.

- **Community Engagement and Globalization**

The University of the Virgin Islands has to engage the community in activities to promote development as well as to advertise some of the activities and programs to show who we are and what we do. The university must also continue to foster existing relationships with local public and private schools, as well as its relationship with government agencies and private organizations. UVI also has to develop and maintain partnerships with colleges and universities regionally and nationally to attract students from the Caribbean region and the U.S. mainland.

- **Modern and Safe University Environment**

One of the key focus areas of the strategic plan is the need for the University to continue to upgrade its facilities and infrastructure. Considerable progress has been made over the years to improve several critical facilities at the institution; however UVI still has some work to do in this area to provide a safer working and learning environment for its employees and students. The University will also continue to implement environmentally friendly upgrades, especially through investment in newer technologies.

- **Student Development and Success**

The University of the Virgin Islands has always recognized students as one of its most important stakeholders. This focus area of the strategic plan places an emphasis on the university's ability to stimulate the interest of students by offering a wide range of programs and an improved customer service base to stimulate and encourage academic growth and development. Being able to better serve its student population and future students could also lead to improved retention rates.

- **Financial Stability and Sustainability**

Given the state of the current economic climate, especially locally where the university has seen a reduction in its allotment from the Government of the Virgin Islands, the management of financial resources as well as the ability to obtain additional support is critical for the survival of this institution. This area of the strategic plan emphasizes the need to identify potential funding sources in addition to entrepreneurial investments, the comprehensive Capital Campaign, and continual support from major grant programs.

LEGISLATIVELY ALLOWABLE ACTIVITIES

Legislatively Allowable Activities are those activities articulated by legislation and on which program funds may be expended toward improvement of the grantee institutions. The Student Aid and Fiscal Responsibility Act (SAFRA) grant program is governed primarily by five of the 16 Legislatively Allowable Activities (LAAs)

authorized by Title III, Section 323 of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended. A sixth “Other” category includes activities that are intended to prepare students for careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). The SAFRA LAAs include:

- Purchase, rental, or lease of scientific or laboratory equipment for educational purposes, including instructional or research purposes;
- Construction, maintenance, renovation, and improvement in classroom, library, laboratory, and other instructional facilities, including purchase or rental of telecommunications technology equipment or services;
- Academic instruction in disciplines in which Black Americans are underrepresented;
- Purchase of library books, periodicals, microfilm, and other educational materials, including telecommunications program materials;
- Establishing or enhancing a program of teacher education designed to qualify students to teach in a public elementary or secondary school in the State that shall include, as part of the program, preparation for teacher certification; and
- other activities, consistent with the institution's comprehensive plan and designed to increase the institution's capacity to prepare students for careers in the physical or natural sciences, mathematics, computer science or information technology or sciences, engineering, language instruction in the less-commonly taught languages or international affairs, or nursing or allied health professions;

TITLE III FOCUS AREAS

Overview

The Title III Part B grant program utilizes four areas of focus within which grant funds may be used to initiate new programs or improve existing programs at grantee institutions: academic quality, student services, institutional management and fiscal

stability. The Legislatively Allowable Activities for which Student Aid and Fiscal Responsibility Act (SAFRA) grant funds may be used all fall under the academic quality focus area. This focus area serves as the framework for the design and implementation of the projects and activities that will be selected for the five-year grant period described in this Comprehensive Development Plan. The institution has completed its new strategic plan, “*Pathways to Greatness*” which overlaps with the first two years of the new SAFRA grant cycle running from the period of 2015-20. As such, institutional values and objectives must be aligned with the core Title III SAFRA focus area of Academic Quality. Overviews of all four focus areas are provided to provide contextual alignment with Pathways to Greatness.

Academic Quality

Pursuant to focus area definitions offered by the National Association of Historically Black Colleges and Universities Title III Administrators, Inc., the Academic Quality focus area supports projects that are intended to improve those factors that contribute to the educational capacity of an institution. Striving to provide quality education to students locally and regionally by nurturing academic excellence has been the core of the university’s focus since its inception. However, one of the major pitfalls identified by participants of the strategic planning sessions was the limited faculty the university has to serve its students. As such, some plausible solutions to ensure that UVI achieves this goal were developed, including:

- Increasing the number of programs at the graduate and undergraduate levels;

- Expanding the degree programs and seeking collaboration with other universities and other partners;
- Increasing students' exposure in learning through outreach activities and research;
- Improving the quality of teaching at all levels of the University;

The Title III SAFRA project *Establishing a Child Care Center for the School of Education* will provide students in the School of Education who are majoring in early childhood education with practical experience by establishing an early childhood education lab school. Through this initiative, these students will be able to receive practical experience through the management, instruction and curriculum development of an early childhood development center that would be located on campus. Faculty members in the School of Education will be able to conduct research based on educational models developed and implemented through this lab.

Additionally, the *Expanding Opportunities for Sciences Majors on the St. Croix Campus* project will support establishing science courses and laboratories. This project will enable some science majors on St. Croix's Albert A. Sheen campus to complete their degrees without having to transfer to the St. Thomas campus. Conversely, this project will also support the increase in faculty in the College of Science and Mathematics. More students and faculty members on the St. Croix campus can be exposed to research and publication opportunities through the implementation of this project.

Learning and Educational Access Program (LEAP) will continue to offer on-island courses for students residing on St. John, reducing the need to commute to St. Thomas by offering video-conferenced courses and library facilities on their home island. Since the inception of this project, there has been an increase in the number of enrolled

students residing on St. John, even as overall enrollment has declined. Additionally, The *Advancing Learning Environments* project, supported by the SAFRA grant has supported the upgrade of a number of classrooms on both the St. Thomas and St. Croix campus during the 2010-15 grant cycle. During the 2015-20 grant cycle, this project will continue to renovate and modernize classrooms on both campuses, enhancing the pedagogical capacity of the institution's instructors by incorporating technology into more of the institution's classrooms.

Student Services

UVI maintains a "students first" approach to the services and programs it offers to students. This approach is supported by the university's management values as it pertains to recognizing the need to provide a superb service package to its most important client, students. The Student Services focus area is geared towards improving students' success here at the institution, which would assist in addressing enrollment and retention rates, as well supporting the university's role in developing future leaders of the territory.

The university's strategic plan has identified several goals that would address the enhancement of student services including:

- Designing and implementing research based approaches to improve student retention and graduation rates;
- Designing curricula to facilitate employability or advancement in chosen field;
- Publicizing student success and achievements;
- Enhancing the integration of the Center for Student Success throughout the university;

- Utilizing the data collected from the student satisfaction survey to enhance existing programs and develop new ones.

Institutional Management

Faculty and staff have voiced their opinions during the strategic plan sessions about the need for the University to improve its technology infrastructure. UVI needs to invest in more technology to improve processes and functionality to efficiently serve its students and the community. While SAFRA is the focus of this comprehensive development plan, some of the much needed improvements to the University's technology infrastructure and business processes have been supported by the Title III Part B grant under the auspices of the *It's all About the Students* project. Some of the solutions devised to assist the University in addressing this dire need are:

- Develop and maintain sustainable technology infrastructure to meet modern educational and administrative needs;
- Make the University a campus safer and more secure;
- Create modern living and learning for students, faculty and staff; and
- Be the leader in the use of alternative and/or renewable energy in the Territory and the Caribbean.

One of the focus areas of the University of the Virgin Islands' current strategic plan "Pathways to Greatness" is for the institution to maintain a modern and safe environment for all stakeholders including faculty, staff and students.

Fiscal Stability

Although the SAFRA grant does not include fiscal stability as one of its focus areas and there are no Title III activities that address it, it is still one of the University's primary goals. Given the weakened state of the economy, both locally and nationally, the financial picture painted for the University of the Virgin Islands appears unmoving. The University has continued to operate on a reduced budget to achieve a wealth of objectives to offer exemplary and competitive services to students and salaries to its dedicated employees. Some of the goals outlined in the current strategic plan for UVI to move it toward fiscal stability and sustainability are:

- Improve institutional effectiveness through the use of appropriate assessment and decision making tools.
- Create an institutional culture of entrepreneurship.
- Increase revenues from new client bases, new products, and other entrepreneurial activities.
- Increase revenues from transfer-in of graduates from regional educational institutions.
- Increase revenues from enrollment through the offering of online and doctoral programs.
- Expand the funding base of the University through increased philanthropic support.
- Increase the number and dollar value of federal grants awarded to the University.
- Restore local government funding to 2009 levels and higher.
- Enhance revenue productivity and profitability of auxiliaries.

The Title III SAFRA grant program will serve as an auxiliary funding source for the institution, enabling it to engage in activities and projects to improve its physical plant and academic offerings. The projects approved for the 2015-20 grant cycle will help to address areas in need of improvement at UVI.

Focus Areas Matrix

The Focus Area Matrix illustrates the relationship between UVI's core values, its strategic plan core values and the Title III, Part B focus areas. The Title III focus areas serve as the heart of the matrix to show how the grant program relates to the institution's core values and strategic plan focus areas. As stated previously, there are four core focus areas for the Title III Part B program: Student Services, Academic Quality, Institutional Management and Fiscal Stability. On the other hand, within the UVI Strategic Plan, there are six (6) areas of focus developed to chart the course of the institution over the five-year period—2012-2017. The UVI strategic plan focus areas are delineated by the color pink, while the core values are identified in color light blue.

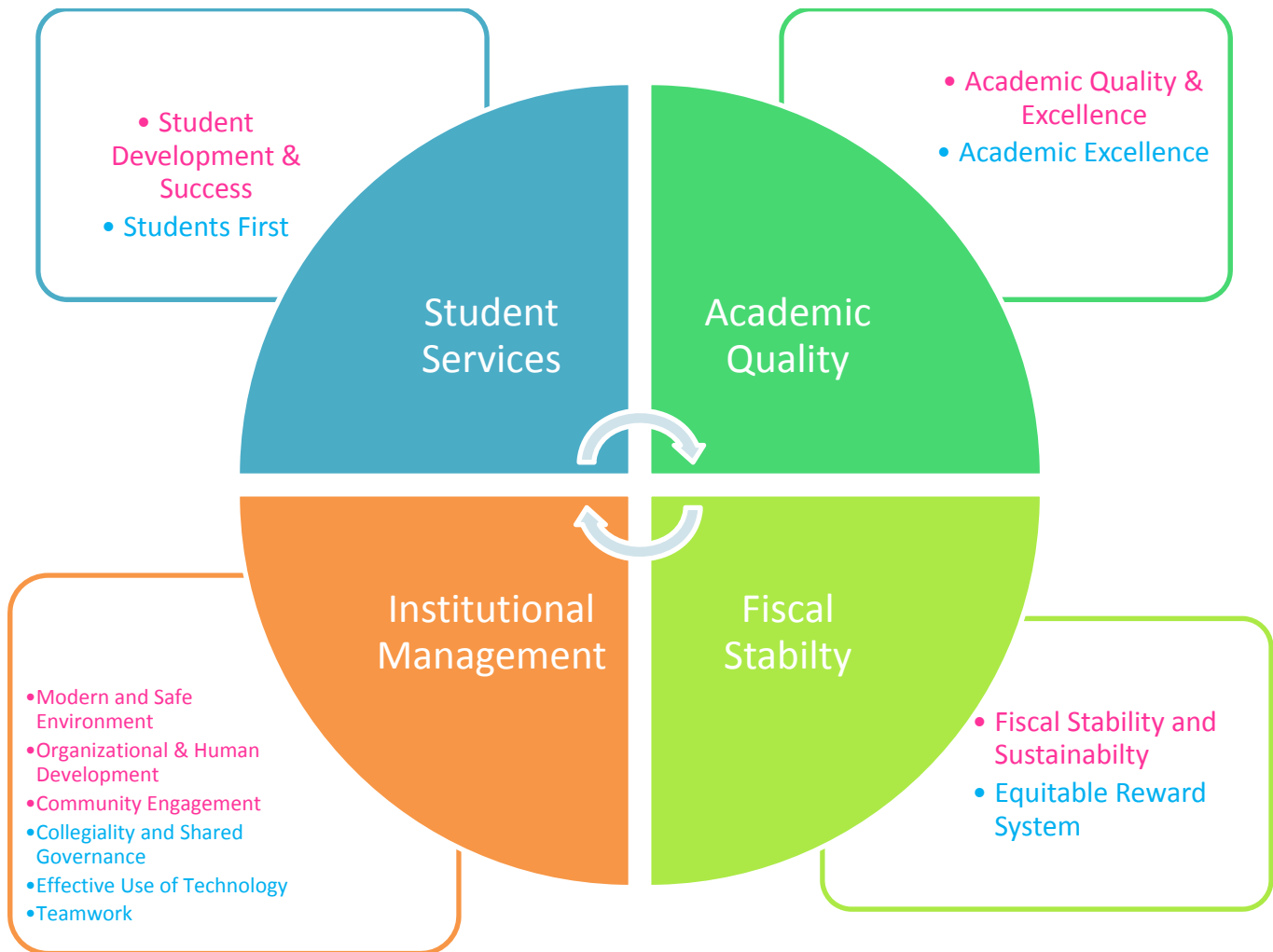


Figure 3. Focus Area Matrix

PROJECT MONITORING

To ensure that the University of the Virgin Islands Title III SAFRA program maintains a high level of integrity and accountability as it pertains to the use of federal funds received from the U.S. Department of Education, the Title III Coordinator will ensure that all Activity Directors adhere to the Title III Policies and Procedures Manual, developed by the Project Administration office. Most importantly, all Activity Directors must consult with the coordinator before utilizing grant funds to ensure consistency with

their Phase II work plans and budgets. The monitoring system that will be implemented by the Title III Coordinator involves:

- review of expenditure requests for goods and services;
- quarterly meetings with the Principal Investigator (UVI President) and Activity Directors;
- quarterly progress reports;
- periodic meetings with individual Activity Directors;
- provision of information to Activity Directors; and
- formal evaluation.

EXPENDITURE MONITORING

The purchase of all goods and/or services must first be approved by the Title III Coordinator. As such, the coordinator must make sure that all requests are consistent with the cost principles articulated in 2 CFR 200, university policies and procedures and the Title III Policies and Procedures handbook. On a monthly basis, the Title III Coordinator will provide an expenditure report for the President, who serves as the Principal Investigator for the Title III grant, to show the spending progress for each activity.

ACTIVITY QUARTERLY REPORTS AND MEETINGS

Title III Activity Directors are required to submit a quarterly progress report to illustrate the level of progress made for each quarter of the fiscal year. Additionally, on a quarterly basis, meetings are held with the Activity Directors and the President to provide

a verbal synopsis of the progress realized and challenges encountered on individual projects. These meetings allow the President to keep abreast of all the events and issues occurring on each project and more importantly, they afford Activity Directors an opportunity not only to communicate their progress but also to express concern about issues that may hinder the progress of the activities.

FORMAL PROJECT EVALUATION

During the course of the grant cycle, there will be three evaluations conducted—two formative and one summative evaluation. The former will serve as a mechanism for measuring the effectiveness of the program implementation and will identify areas where corrective actions are required to make certain that the approved Title III projects are serving their intended purposes and that established targets and objectives are met. Summative evaluations will determine to what extent established objectives have been achieved.

CONCLUSION

As the University of the Virgin Islands continues on its pathway to greatness, the Title III SAFRA grant program will support a number of the institution's initiatives to improve academic quality. Through these projects approved for the grant cycle, the institution will be better positioned to offer high-quality instruction to its students on the three main islands comprising the US Virgin Islands. The alignment of these projects with the institution's strategic plan will also translate to the achievement of strategic goals established for the institution by its Board of Trustees. The funding made available

by the U.S. Department of Education for the university through the Title III SAFRA grant program will continue to serve as a much needed resource, especially considering the current economic climate in the US Virgin Islands.