

**CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES AT RADFORD UNIVERSITY
WHITE PAPER**

Process

Radford University has begun the critically important strategic planning process with an overall Task Force and seven subgroups. The Challenges and Opportunities subgroup was charged with developing a white paper describing the challenges and opportunities facing the university. The white paper is therefore constructed mainly to inform other subgroups.

The subgroup, which included students, faculty, staff, and administrators, began by brainstorming challenges and opportunities and discussing how to accomplish our task. Data was collected from the wider university via two campus-wide forums, at which spoken and written input were collected, and an online survey. Including the campus and community was a critical step in this process. All of the data was distilled and developed into this white paper.

As we analyzed the data for themes, the challenge of understanding the connectivity amongst the subgroups became obvious. Many emergent themes impact multiple subgroups thus earning their own **Overarching Themes** section. The remaining sections are organized into the identified subgroups, namely: **Brand Identity, Academic Excellence and Research, Student Success, Strategic Enrollment Growth, Economic Development and Community Partnerships, and Philanthropic Giving and Alumni Engagement.**

Overarching Themes

A number of overarching themes emerged. These include (1) understanding the needs and expectations of diverse stakeholders, (2) evolving external and internal cultural climate, (3) economic challenges, (4) administrative efficiencies, (5) the impact of technology on core components of our mission, and (6) issues related to infrastructure.

One of our challenges is trying to understand and meet the possibly conflicting needs of our stakeholders. Important stakeholders are the students and their parents; faculty and staff; alumni; employers; accrediting organizations; and regional, state and federal governments. Communication with these stakeholders presents challenges. Email alone may not be meeting the needs of the current population (for example, campus social and entertainment events need to be better communicated to increase attendance). Staying up to date on and utilizing available technologies including social media and other internal means of communication are other ways to inform our stakeholders. The following paragraphs detail further challenges facing these various stakeholders as well as possible opportunities for working with them more effectively through evidence-based practices that foster success.

Twenty-first century American universities face a variety of cultural challenges, and Radford University is no exception. The anti-intellectualism displayed by some may place more emphasis on one of higher education's goals, preparing students for a career, while devaluing other equally important outcomes such as learning to think, valuing diversity, having a global view, or

becoming outstanding citizens. For example, the fine arts and humanities may be less valued than more explicitly career-oriented and technical fields. Radford University will need to address these challenges and the ongoing shift in cultural values.

The internal culture of Radford University has challenges based on perceptions. Some students feel faculty are not as committed to student success or engaged with extracurricular activities as they would like and perceive that some faculty are only on campus long enough to teach classes and meet required office hours. On the other hand, some faculty believe some students are not as committed to academic excellence as they would like. The most recent Faculty Morale Survey, conducted in 2014, found morale was exceptionally low compared to benchmark universities. The Radford University community must work to improve morale and counter these perceptions.

Across Virginia, as well as the rest of the United States, universities compete for scarce resources. The cost of higher education is rising, but funding from the state is declining, resulting in a university even more dependent on tuition for its ongoing expenses. This situation leaves Radford University with challenges including increasing costs for students and families, and inadequate support for faculty, staff, and administrative activities. Radford University may need to implement new, more entrepreneurial financial management models to solve these problems, increase revenues, and reduce costs. Moving to new revenue models may be challenging within the current laws, policies, and bureaucracy. In addition, some faculty believe that some college/departmental generated revenue needs to go back to the college/department that generated it, rather than into the overall budget.

One area of discussion raised the possibility of different tuition and fee models. Differential tuition and/or fees according to major, discounts for students from neighboring states, and fee differentials for various amenities need to be analyzed. Radford University should also consider different rates for different delivery options, such as online courses, and for out-of-state students within the southern Appalachian region. Another area to evaluate is the use of fees versus tuition. Increasing enrollments, expanding continuing education, and providing services, should be explored as ways to increase revenue. Another option for increasing enrollments/revenues is exploring additional online/hybrid courses and degree programs, competency based education, and other models directed to meet the needs of today's diverse student populations.

Other options to increase revenue include increasing sales of internal services such as printing, charging fees for and increasing the year-round use of facilities, and creating a "Big Ideas Think Tank." Using intellectual property to generate entrepreneurial ventures and provide revenue to the university should be explored. Accessing Radford University's faculty, staff, and students' expertise and scholarship can both enhance academic and organizational performance and save costs on external consultants. Finally, opportunities exist to analyze our current cash flows to identify ways to better utilize current resources and potentially support one-time funding to allow for long-term savings (e.g., green technology).

While there is an on-going effort to improve efficiencies, an analysis of current procedures should occur to identify additional opportunities for efficiencies and develop streamlined innovative business processes. This includes maximizing efficient use of space allowing for greater opportunities for instruction, administrative needs, and internal and external events. Conducting an analysis of our need for energy and other utilities could lead to greater

efficiencies, reduced costs, and a more sustainable physical environment. Radford University can be a leader in green building efforts.

Radford has an opportunity to be a leader in using technology to enhance teaching, learning, and administrative functions. The university could provide students with above average technology skills and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of learning. Technology can also be used to reduce costs and improve administrative efficiency. Evolving technology represents tremendous opportunities, but needs to be managed in a way that lessens the negative disruption to faculty, staff, and students, and to foster positive change in innovative ways.

Cybersecurity represents a risk to the university from cyber-attacks, but it also represents opportunities for expansion of academic programs for career opportunities for our information technology students. Due to our position as a state and regional leader in cybersecurity education, we have an opportunity to publicize how we meet this critical state and national need. In addition to cybersecurity, other security issues provide both risks and opportunities. An awareness of and preparedness for physical security should be forefront (e.g. flooding, chemical accidents, campus shootings, sexual assault, or other violent crime), with projects such as the Emergency Operations Center providing opportunities for students to learn crisis management.

Accessibility in all its varieties is yet another challenge facing Radford University. These varieties range from the physical campus environment to access to online and electronic content. Some of the campus's older buildings and hilly topography challenge students, faculty, and staff with disabilities, while accessing online courses can present challenges not only for students who have visual and auditory disabilities but also students who live in rural areas without broadband Internet access. Radford University has the opportunity to improve access to a college education through changes to facilities and technology, and through universal design. These opportunities extend to the dining halls, with greater availability of allergen-free and gluten-free options.

Brand Identity

A university's brand is dependent on its identity. While Radford University recently concluded a rebranding exercise, and is currently rolling out the new campaign, this subgroup heard a message that many in our community do not relate to our current brand and brand portrayal. Hence, some members of this subgroup have determined that resetting or establishing a brand message and identity that the community may connect with is a significant opportunity. Our objective is to steer our brand identity towards the best aspects of who we are and who we want to be.

Positive comments from surveys and open forums pointed out: faculty involvement in student success; small class sizes and one-to-one faculty-student interaction; favorable image of many academic programs; relatively small campus providing a feeling of tightknit community; helping students discover their voice, vocation, and passions; employers that like the 'roll-up the sleeve and get to work' attitude of our students; and the associated external validation of our students' readiness. Some of the negative perceptions are that Radford University is a party school, is not academically rigorous and anyone can get accepted, and the campus is in the middle of nowhere with little for students to do besides outdoor activities.

Radford University's brand should address these perceptions head-on rather than indirectly. We have high quality programs and should make an effort to identify gems and showcase them in our branding campaigns. Radford University is the optimum size for many students: large enough to provide opportunities across multiple high-quality academic programs and many service and social organizations, but also small enough to provide one-on-one interactions. Our size and location make transformation possible with academic programs that develop highly sought-after world class skills with practical experience in solving real world problems in our local context. These programs provide service opportunities that develop informed citizens and social activities that develop interactive collaborative skills. A rich on-campus, social environment exists for those who care to take advantage of it, with such activities such as Homecoming and Highlander Days. Our location enables us to be a center for leadership and service to stakeholders in Virginia, West Virginia, and the Appalachian region. It also allows for a wide variety of outdoor opportunities for students and faculty.

Academic Excellence and Research

One of our biggest challenges is to change the perception that Radford University is not an academically excellent university. Developing a balance between increasing enrollment and fostering retention and academic reputation is necessary. Radford must decide how to define excellence for students, faculty and the university as a whole, creating synergy among teaching, research, and public service. The expectations we place on students are a component of academic excellence. Increased expectations can challenge students to perform at a higher level which will result in better prepared graduates. We must consider what knowledge and competencies are represented by a Radford University degree, from the goals for the core curriculum to the accreditation standards for given majors.

Rethinking Quest and University 100 using a data-driven approach could provide more individualized instruction and support. If we do that well, we can provide students with a richer learning experience and therefore a higher chance of success. Additional academic preparation through Quest, summer bridge programs, and/or University 100 could help ensure student readiness and thus student excellence. Exit surveys and interviews from graduating students could provide feedback and mentoring for entering students.

Radford could become more successful with our student population by adjusting traditional pedagogies to newer instructional models, including a Universal Design for Learning (UDL). UDL is “a framework to improve and optimize teaching and learning for all people based on scientific insights into how humans learn,” which considers multiple means of engagement, representation, action, and expression (CAST.org). Faculty development in instructional delivery and universal design for learning can facilitate the development of innovative pedagogies.

We can also achieve excellence by encouraging the greater use and documentation of a variety of High Impact Practices (HIPs), as described by the American Association of Colleges & Universities (AAC&U) LEAP Initiative. Such practices include undergraduate research, internships, writing-intensive courses, service learning, learning communities, and other pedagogies, many of which Radford University already provides.

Another opportunity is to become a leader in interdisciplinary study. We find ourselves in an increasingly interdependent world with new and intriguing connections between traditionally divergent disciplines. Radford University has the opportunity to develop and enrich interdisciplinary collaborative projects and programs, which enhances our academic reputation, increases opportunities for research, and contributes to the region. The challenge is to identify existing and potential programs, which are/could become signature programs (e.g., education and nursing) and centers of excellence (e.g., DHS and NSA National Center of Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense Education or Allied Health and the Center for Governmental and Non-profit Accounting). Creating centers of excellence that integrate research, academic programs, and public service would distinguish Radford University as a unique institution of higher learning.

Radford University also has an opportunity to differentiate itself by focusing on high value research that can be applied to regional needs and connected to undergraduate and graduate education through the scholarship of teaching and learning. However, we lack consensus on what research is/should be in our institutional context, and how it should be balanced with faculty commitments to teaching and service. Thus, we have the opportunity to better define the types of research appropriate to our institution and have that research be integrated with the teaching and service missions of the university.

Changing societal expectations with regard to traditional university models also challenge academic excellence. Accrediting agencies and governmental bodies drive change through new standards and mandates; we must respect this need for change while setting our own course. For example, SCHEV and SACS encourage alternative forms of credentialing and degree completion, including outcome-based education and competency testing, as well other forms of determining credit hours, and our competing institutions are seizing these opportunities.

New models of completion may increase our ability to serve non-traditional students including veterans and other student populations with particular needs. Non-traditional students are attracted to accelerated degree programs and inter-professional certificates and certification programs, as well as individualized programs. Radford University has developed a number of certificate programs in the past few years, and marketing these programs presents a significant opportunity as does developing new certificate programs in high-demand areas.

Student Success

Student success faces many challenges in higher education, and Radford University is not immune. Factors such as academic readiness (or preparedness), university engagement, and finances have a direct impact on student success and retention. Specifically, on Radford University's campus, additional resources and infrastructure are needed to create and sustain programs that promote matriculation and persistence.

Radford University needs to address the diverse learning needs of our students. Some students are more prepared than others for the rigor of academia. Keeping classes small and having small breakout groups in larger classes can foster faculty-student and peer-to-peer connections, which enhance success. In order to better serve our students, we must have systems in place to identify the underprepared students early so that we can connect them to available resources and on-campus support. We must fully fund and staff campus support offices to meet the specific needs

of our students (for example, the Learning Assistance and Resource Center (LARC) currently cannot provide enough tutors to meet the needs of students in high demand core courses such as economics).

Another challenge regarding the university's ability to adequately meet the academic needs of a diverse student body is the one-dimensional method some faculty use to deliver instruction: lengthy lectures accompanied by multiple choice assessments. Our faculty may fully understand their content; however, some may not be skilled in a variety of pedagogies to meet a wide range of learning styles. Research indicates that today's students respond more positively in learning environments in which they are highly engaged and active participants. Radford University has an opportunity to enhance faculty teaching through its Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning (CITL) and Technology Support Services within the Division of Information Technology. Specifically, our faculty can receive professional development on effective pedagogical practices for today's learners using on-campus resources. Faculty with expertise in instructional design, differentiation, and learner development could provide ongoing professional development for our campus community.

Radford University could also increase the use of high impact practices to engage a larger and more diverse group of students. We do utilize several high impact practices on our campus such as internships, student research, scholar-citizen initiatives, and study abroad. However, a small percentage of our students are engaged in these activities. We know that participation in such activities produces more positive learning outcomes for students. In addition, these students could develop mentoring relationships with faculty and/or alumni being a part of a research team or participating in an internship. Mentorship, engagement, and access to support services provide numerous benefits. All of these factors are key to a student's success and retention, and making these more available to a wider population is an opportunity.

Another challenge that most universities like Radford University must address is the declining funding from the state for student financial aid, grants, and scholarships. As a result, many students are forced to work part-time jobs to support themselves, and in some situations, their families, while they are in school. Some Radford University students work as many as 30 hours/week, which does not allow adequate time to study and prepare for courses. Their work schedules often limit which courses they can take as well as the amount of time they can participate in high impact academic experiences or social activities that engage them in the university. Employment opportunities for these students on and in close proximity to campus may help.

Another financial challenge Radford University students experience is not having enough money to purchase materials essential to their success. Not having textbooks and other material goods essential to classes, or enough money to repair or replace a personal computer, are examples of some of the financial hardships our students experience. We must create opportunities for students to be able to access the materials and resources they need to be successful. For example, computer labs and other public computer spaces need to be continuously analyzed to ensure every student has access to a computer and software that is needed for their curriculum. Perhaps lab fees could be expanded to provide needed material goods for classes (e.g., canvasses for art), with variations by discipline.

Campus engagement is vital to student success. New students coming to campus often need a full year to learn how to navigate the campus environment, balance school and social time, and develop strong study habits. The sophomore year is when students begin to feel comfortable engaging in extra-curricular activities. At Radford University, a second-year experience for residential sophomores could be created during the second-year housing contract. Students who live and work on/near campus and stay involved in campus activities lead more robust campus lives and thrive better than students who commute and have heavy off-campus obligations.

Strategic Enrollment Growth

Identifying, reaching, and maintaining a targeted size and student profile is critical to the short and long-term stability and success of Radford University. With competition from other Virginia and online institutions, Radford University must develop a comprehensive enrollment strategy that identifies and targets select populations of potential students. Determining our target market will help focus recruitment efforts. We can become known for empowering students to succeed and become their best selves. We should also identify other forms of social and intellectual “capital” that students gain from a Radford University experience and market these benefits, in addition to the increased salary associated with a college degree.

To some extent the university faces a dilemma—increasing enrollments while enhancing its academic reputation. The question hinges in part on how selective Radford University will be in admitting students. One option is to continue to use the existing admission standards, which require that appropriate supports are in place to help students succeed. A second possibility is to lower admissions requirements, and provide the higher levels of support required to help students with potential succeed. A final path is to raise the bar, making it harder to get into Radford, thereby enhancing selectivity, creating a stronger academic reputation.

To attract transfer students, Radford University should nurture connections at all levels in the community college system so their faculty and counselors are aware of and champion our programs. Radford could gain a unique competitive advantage by providing face-to-face advising and information about program requirements to first year community college students who are interested in transferring later to a four-year institution. Some students who transferred from community colleges with associate degrees have shared (1) their bachelor’s degrees took longer than two additional years because they were unaware of specific program requirements, (2) they have had to delay completing their degrees because some departments did not offer courses regularly, and (3) some departments did not acknowledge completed general education requirements because the community college was delayed in processing completion of an associate’s degree. Solutions for delays should be explored and eliminated or minimized whenever possible.

In addition to, and sometimes overlapping with the community college students, other groups are opportunities for targeted recruitment efforts. These include veteran groups in specific geographic areas, homeschool students, employees who are seeking to use life experiences to enhance and fill gaps in their educational credentials, and adult learners wanting a career change.

Attractive educational opportunities are needed for effective recruiting. Attractive websites and website support to maintain these is needed. New and enhanced traditional and innovative

programs can include the following: competency based education, accelerated and/or individualized degree programs; new or enhanced graduate and undergraduate programs in emerging fields; expanded online program options, including hybrid courses with intensive on-campus opportunities; and inter-professional certificates, certification programs, and recertification programs.

Economic Development and Community Partnerships

As a comprehensive regional university, our state mandate is to use our physical and intellectual resources to not only educate traditional students but to enhance the region in multiple ways. Our challenge is identifying ways we can meet this mandate within our resource constraints in a way that not only enhances the region but also enriches our academic mission and helps define our identity. Specifically, we must develop strategies that address the commonwealth's plan for economic development by supporting the creation of new businesses, jobs, and capital investment, thereby increasing growth. These strategies must focus on the priorities of the various federal, state, and regional funding sources while avoiding the duplication of existing efforts. They should also target the outcomes most valued by the communities we serve.

The lack of internal and external information about our current outreach programs as well as many of the needs of the surrounding area should be addressed by conducting an internal scan of the current state of partnership efforts. This scan can serve as a platform for building new initiatives. New opportunities for Radford University to contribute to southwest Virginia can arise from an external scan of the region's needs. In doing so, we should balance the needs of the City of Radford with those of the larger region.

Currently, individual faculty develop service-learning projects for courses that could form larger community partnerships. These activities should be coordinated at the university level. The Scholar Citizen Initiative office provides funding for many of the projects. Integrating community needs with opportunities for faculty and student engagement creates synergy between learning for students and public service. Community partnerships that provide a service and real-world experience such as community enrichment activities for families (e.g. science fairs, planetarium shows, or live theatre) foster better use of campus facilities and generate new revenues as well as take advantage of the university's unique resources and capabilities.

State and regional economic development has relied heavily on recruiting existing companies to the region. Because the number of successful businesses within the region has declined, starting and growing new businesses have become significant needs. This requires outreach initiatives that target the critical components of entrepreneurial growth. Providing credit and non-credit educational programs, which offer the knowledge and skills needed to start, manage, and grow a business, may increase the number of new businesses and enhance the success rate of those startups. Radford University could then work with partners to enhance the availability of financing, as well as provide assistance and training in obtaining capital.

Virginia's strategic plan for economic development stresses the importance of a more highly educated workforce. Radford University can provide technical assistance, education, and data collection and analysis to enhance the growth of existing businesses and the workforce. Regional economic growth can be facilitated by providing training and technical assistance to increase

local companies' ability to embrace globalization and engage in international trade. Using the higher education centers (Abingdon, Martinsville, and Roanoke) as spaces to deliver professional development and outreach services will help meet the needs of our region. Developing educational programs and experiences that attract professionals from other countries and arranging for local companies and professionals to participate in study abroad should also be embraced. Broader arts and humanities programming can also enhance the attractiveness of the region to companies looking for locations.

Radford University could develop initiatives that enhance the quality of life in the region and therefore help attract and retain employers. These opportunities can be framed within the context of existing colleges, such as the improvement of medical care, mental/behavioral health care, public education, arts, and recreation and tourism. A unique opportunity is to enhance the area and town/gown relations, and to improve outdoor recreation, and facilities. The university and city might benefit mutually from the establishment of an Interdisciplinary Economic Development Council.

Philanthropic Giving and Alumni Engagement

Strategically identifying and engaging/reengaging past donors, retired faculty/staff, current faculty/staff, current students, alumni, corporations and others is an opportunity. This might occur through the targeted use of social media in areas of interest, sightseeing trips designed for alumni, networks for staying in touch with classmates, support services for alumni (such as job placement assistance), engagement of alumni in student recruiting, and letting alumni tell "our story" through our marketing.

The university should strategically identify major areas of giving, diversify revenue sources and find innovative ways to engage alumni. The size of the Radford University alumni base is a factor in regard to the level of fund raising we can expect. However, there are innovative ways to increase the level of alumni engagement that will lead to increased philanthropic giving.

Some constituencies may not give to Radford University because of financial constraints, a feeling of disenfranchisement, or concern over the use of their donations. An opportunity exists to educate alumni on how donations are prioritized and used, plus the control they have on their individual donations. Also, it is important to understand what the various potential contributors value. Endowments and scholarships need to be solicited with vigor to allow for more affordable tuition, increased enrollment, and ultimately a larger alumni base. Donors with special interests could foster globalization projects, as with the Kirk Scholars program. Corporate sponsorships could have a profound impact on revenue and the brand of the university.

Some individuals prefer to give their time and talents as opposed to their treasures. Radford University needs to identify these people and find ways to channel their contributions to benefit the university. When alumni come back to campus, we should find opportunities to bring them into our classrooms. They can share what motivates them to remain engaged and to support their alma mater. By engaging alumni in multiple ways, financial contributions are likely to follow.

Conclusion

As discussed in this white paper, Radford University has challenges and opportunities specific to brand identity, academic excellence and research, student success, strategic enrollment growth, economic development and community partnerships, and philanthropic giving and alumni engagement, as well as some overarching themes impacting all of the above. It should be emphasized that the university is well positioned to overcome whatever challenges that may exist and to take advantage of the many opportunities that have been presented. Such growth will position Radford University at the forefront of regional comprehensive universities in the nation.

This white paper is intended to document the challenges and opportunities facing the university and to help guide the strategic planning process. While subgroups for each of the key areas of the strategic plan will gather their own data and further expound on what is included in this document, establishing specific strategic goals to address the current challenges and opportunities will be critical to the future success of the university.

It is the desire of the members of the Challenges and Opportunities subgroup that this white paper will serve both as a source of data and a reminder for the other subgroups as work continues to shape a strategic plan that will take Radford University to heights never before realized while accomplishing its mission, following its vision, and standing by its core values.

Reference

CAST (2015). Our work. *Center for Applied Special Technology*. Retrieved from: <http://www.cast.org/our-work/about-udl.html#.WKxeghBpSXQ>.

Appendix A

The following bulleted lists are provided as a synopsis of what is captured in the white paper.

Challenges

- Understanding the needs and expectations of diverse stakeholders
- Evolving external and internal cultural climate
- Economic challenges
- Issues related to infrastructure
- The number of people/agencies we have to answer to as a university
- Current environment of anti-intellectualism
- Values of internationalism
- Need for inclusivity
- Culture of Radford University
- Competition for scarce resources
- Cost of instructional resources is rising
- Funding from the state and federal government is declining
- Inadequate support for faculty, staff and administrative activities in some areas
- Need for one time funding: invest in opportunities that will impact the University's long term performance
- Idea of revenue generation will require a culture shift for many
- Finding ways to move to revenue models within the current laws, policies and bureaucracy
- Faculty perception that upper administrative positions are paid at a higher percentile than faculty positions
- Perceived inequities between colleges and departments across the university
- Accessibility in all its varieties
- Cybersecurity
- Geographic location of the University
- Our current brand and brand portrayal
- Perception that RU is a party school
- Perception that RU is not academically rigorous
- Developing a balance between increasing enrollments/retention and academic reputation
- Faculty development in instructional delivery and universal design for learning
- Identify existing and potential programs, which are/could become signature programs and centers of excellence
- Lack consensus on what research is or should be in our institutional context
- Changing societal expectations with regard to traditional university models
- Academic readiness of some students
- Restrictions on providing remedial coursework
- Financial challenges
- Meet the diverse learning needs of our students
- Many of our campus support offices are under-resourced and unable to meet the specific needs of our students
- One-dimensional method some faculty use to deliver instruction
- Students are forced to work part-time jobs to support themselves
- Social scene at Radford may be inadequate for certain students
- Differing opinions on what Radford University's student profile should be
- Lack of internal and external information about our current outreach programs
- Size of the RU alumni base

Opportunities

- Understanding the needs and expectations of diverse stakeholders
- Evolve external and internal cultural climate
- Optimize the use of technology in core components of our mission
- Increase internationalization by pursuing study abroad options
- Recruitment of international students
- Recruitment of more diverse faculty, staff and student populations
- Analyze different tuition and fee models
- Differential tuition according to major
- Discounts for students in the region who are not Virginia residents
- Fee differentials for various amenities
- Different tuition rates for online courses and for out-of-state students
- Generate more credit hours
- University facilities and intellectual capital could be used to facilitate research
- Strategies for using intellectual property
- Increase sales of internal services
- Fees for the use of facilities
- Increase the year-round use of facilities
- Develop new technology and intellectual property
- Expand continuing education
- Expand clinical services
- Creation of a “Big Ideas Think Tank”
- New entrepreneurial financial management models
- Use Radford University’s faculty, staff and students’ expertise and scholarship
- Enhanced communication and greater transparency
- An analysis of current procedures should continue in order to identify inefficiencies and develop streamlined innovative processes
- Cultivate Cybersecurity academic program
- Increase faculty involvement in student success
- Help students discover their voice, vocation and passions
- Brand should address the unfavorable elements of existing climate
- Pave the way to reinforce the favorable elements of existing brand
- Anchor a brand campaign around traditions and traditional activities
- Steer brand identity towards who we are and who we want to be
- Change the perception that Radford University is not an academically excellent university
- Create synergy among teaching, research and public service
- Provide additional preparation through Quest or summer bridge programs
- Utilize feedback and mentoring from the exiting students to help new, entering students
- Adjust traditional pedagogies to newer instructional models and alternate delivery methods where appropriate
- Encourage greater use of High Impact Practices
- Increase Undergraduate research
- Increase Internships
- Provide writing-intensive courses
- Provide service learning
- Provide Learning communities
- Become a leader in interdisciplinary study
- Focus on high value research
- Incorporate Outcome-based education into the curriculum
- Incorporate Competency Based Education into the curriculum
- Increase our ability to serve not only non-traditional students but also veterans and other student populations with particular needs

- Offer an accelerated degree programs
- Offer inter-professional certificates
- Offer more certification/recertification programs
- Offer Individualized programs
- Develop systems to identify students who are having difficulties early so they can connect to available resources and on-campus support
- Deliver information in multiple ways or differentiate to meet the intellectual needs of a wide range of learning styles
- Increase student research
- Scholar-citizen initiatives
- Create a faculty/student mentor program
- Increase opportunities for campus activities engagement
- Increase access to a variety of support services
- Provide additional social and entertainment opportunities for students
- Increase student engagement in the academic community
- Provide opportunities for peer to peer connections
- Establish community clinics (e.g., Nursing)
- Enhance university centers/clinics that integrate training, research and outreach (e.g., COSD, Center for Assessment and Psychological Services)
- Establish charter schools
- Enhance relationships with community colleges
- Develop new or enhanced graduate and undergraduate programs in emerging fields
- Expand online program options, including hybrid with intensive on-campus opportunities
- Increase summer opportunities
- Increase out-of-state tuition waiver options for graduate students
- Use our physical intellectual resources to not only educate traditional students but to enhance the region in multiple ways
- Conduct an internal scan of the current state of partnership efforts
- Develop service-learning projects for courses that could form larger community partnerships
- Start and grow new businesses
- Target the critical components of entrepreneurial growth
- Provide credit and non-credit educational programs
- Work with partners to enhance the availability of financing
- Provide technical assistance, education, and data collection and analysis to embrace globalization and engage in international trade
- Use higher education centers as spaces to deliver professional development and outreach services
- Provide educational programs and experiences that attract professionals from other countries
- Develop initiatives, such as the arts, that enhance the quality of life
- Enhance the area and town/gown relations
- Enhance outdoor recreation
- Establishment of an Inter-Disciplinary Economic Development Council
- Strategically identify major areas of giving
- Diversify revenue sources
- Find innovative way to engage alumni
- Educate alumni on how donations are prioritized and used
- Pursue with more vigor endowments and solicitation for more student scholarships
- Embrace globalization with international online learning and corporate engagement
- Engage/reengage past donors, retired faculty/staff, current faculty/staff,

current students, alumni, corporations
and others

- Develop strategic partnerships to achieve economic development and outreach

goals to include federal, state, regional,
city, county, and university economic
development agencies, commissions,
programs, and departments.

Appendix B

Members of the Challenges and Opportunities Subgroup

Angela Devore	Director of the Disability Resource Office
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Jennifer Mabry	Associate Professor in Psychology
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Laurie Cubbison	Professor in English
Maneesh Thakkar	Associate Professor in Marketing
Mike Biscotte	Director of Facilities Planning and Construction
Ned Okie	Professor in Information Technology
Paul Ely	Assistant Director of Capital Outlay Projects
Richard Bay	Professor in Art
Robyn Toran	Student in Athletic Training
Tammy Wallace	Associate Dean, College of Education and Human Development
Danny Kemp	Co-chair, Vice President for Information Technology & CIO
Leslie Daniel	Co-chair, Associate Professor in Special Education

Operational Issues (Additional Document: Not intended for inclusion in the White Paper)

Our subgroup uncovered challenges and opportunities related to the efficient administration of the university. These are not specifically strategic issues, but addressing the following will support Radford University's strategic plan.

An analysis of current procedures should occur to identify inefficiencies and develop streamlined innovative processes, leading to savings in time and money. Red tape, insufficient staffing, and administrative roadblocks are perceived as creating inefficiencies for faculty, staff, and students. The process for paying vendors, processing paperwork, and other administrative tasks is not always clear in terms of who is responsible and what needs to be completed. The approval for various tasks, such as travel, should be reassessed to identify the best, most efficient levels of delegated authority and responsibility.

Maximizing efficient use of space allows for greater opportunities for instruction, administrative needs, and internal and external events. Conducting an analysis of our need for energy and other utilities will lead to greater efficiencies, reduced costs, and a more sustainable physical environment. Radford University can be a leader in green building efforts.

An opportunity exists for more seamless integration of academic and non-academic calendars and activities. Conflicts arise between academic and non-academic departments when the scheduling of various activities conflicts with the academic calendar. Examples include the scheduling of events which cross two class blocks (e.g. a 3:00-4:00 meeting on a Tuesday), the scheduling of certain facilities and human resources tasks in relation to the first or last day of the semester (e.g., tearing down apartment offices during exam week), and the availability of support during Wintermester (e.g., librarian support at the end of December when students are in the midst of projects).