

SECTION ONE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS (UVI)

Accreditation History: Since its inception in 1963, the University of the Virgin Islands (UVI) has completed three periodic review reports and five self-study reports, the latest in 2007. The current *Periodic Review Report (PRR)*, which is discussed below, covers the period 2007-2012. As was requested by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE), UVI submitted a monitoring report and a progress letter in 2008 and 2009 respectively as updates on the University's actions on addressing issues of concern. The National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission (NLNAC) accredits the associate and bachelor degree programs in nursing. The School of Business is a member of the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP). Similarly, the School of Education is also in the process of seeking accreditation from the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) (Section One: Appendix 1.1: Acronyms).

History and Description: UVI is a public, liberal arts institution located in the United States Virgin Islands. The United States Congress awarded UVI land-grant status in 1972 and named it one of America's Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) in 1986. As of Fall 2011, the main campus on St. Thomas offers 32 degree programs. The St. Thomas campus contains academic facilities, administrative and student service buildings, residence halls, the Eastern Caribbean Center (ECC), the Community Engagement and Lifelong Learning center (CELL), the Reichhold Center for the Arts, and the William P. MacLean Marine Science Center. Some units of the Research and Public Service (RPS) component are responsible for research development or community outreach. These are the Virgin Islands Small Business Development Center (VI-SBDC) and The Center for Marine and Environmental Studies (CMES). The CMES is present on both campuses.

The Albert A. Sheen Campus located on St. Croix is home to 15 degree programs and includes academic facilities, a student life complex, the Delta M. Jackson Dorsch Complex, the Cooperative Extension Service (CES), and Agricultural Experiment Station (AES). The Virgin Islands Small Business Development Center (VI-SBDC), the Virgin Islands University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (VIUCEDD), and the Community Engagement and Lifelong Learning Center (CELL) have offices located off campus.

The St. John Academic Center is located on the island of St. John and provides classroom and library services to support academic programs. It shares the building occupied by CES and the VI-SBDC programs. In addition, the University maintains the Virgin Islands Environmental Resource Station (VIERS), a part of the CMES, on Lameshur Bay in St. John.

In 1986, the College of the Virgin Islands became the University of the Virgin Islands as a result of Act No. 862 passed by the 4th Legislature of the Virgin Islands. UVI's fourth president, who ended her tenure in 2009, led the institution through the 2007 site visit and subsequent monitoring report and progress letter. The process continued when the fifth and current president assumed the presidency in August 2009. Interdisciplinary applications, an international focus,

interactive teaching, research, and creativity as well as practical applications of knowledge are embedded in UVI's mission:

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.

The mission, as well as UVI's current strategic plan, *VISION 2012*, is available at http://www.uvi.edu/sites/uvi/Pages/About_UVI-Mission.aspx?s=PS .

UVI is the only public institution of higher education in the U. S. Virgin Islands and serves its neighboring Caribbean islands as well. Its size enhances its ability to offer a wide array of programs and services, while still providing a personal, meaningful experience for its students. The total semester enrollment, though it fluctuates periodically, averages 2,600 students on both campuses. The University offers 10 associate degrees, 21 bachelor's degrees, and 7 master's degrees. Some degree programs are offered on both campuses, thus the 47 degree programs mentioned on page 1 are not additive. Additionally, UVI offers 16 American Council on Education (ACE) accredited certificate programs through UVI CELL. The degree programs are offered through five schools and colleges: The College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, the School of Business, the School of Education, the School of Nursing, and the College of Science and Mathematics. Faculty members are at the heart of the University. In addition to being effective teachers, they are accomplished scholars, with many being active participants in their fields. At the 2011 fall semester, full-time faculty totaled 105, with 73% holding doctoral degrees and 46% tenured. Of the 120 part-time faculty, 25% held doctoral degrees. The administration's objective is to increase the number of full-time faculty, thus reducing the high number of part-time faculty.

UVI's by-laws entrust governance to the University's Board of Trustees (BOT). Currently, there are 17 voting trustees, including representatives from the faculty, alumni, and student body. UVI has been well positioned to implement one of the most ambitious and relevant strategic plans in its history—*VISION 2012*. As this report indicates, UVI has made great progress in the last five years to address issues mentioned in its last *Self-Study* and to enhance the overall qualities expected in MSCHE's *Characteristics of Excellence (COE)*.

ABOUT THE *PERIODIC REVIEW REPORT*

Writing the Report

The Accreditation Self-Study Committee (ASSC) began preparing for the *PRR* in 2010 by creating the six task forces to respond to the standards embedded in the six sections. Each task force was assigned a chairperson who convened the meetings, delegated responsibilities, and completed the section report. The process continued with the collection of data and information, which were organized, analyzed, and interpreted for the final report. Drafts of the *PRR* were circulated and discussed prior to the completion of the finished report.

This *PRR* documents the University's response to the demands of the period, 2007-2012, and presents these accomplishments in the context of the standards of accreditation set forth in *COE* (2006). The report also provides continued coverage of the topics presented in the *Self-Study Report* with specific attention to the areas identified such as governance, documentation of new positions, completion of a new *Faculty Policy Manual*, and assessment. By addressing these university-wide issues, this report gives credence to the belief that effective teaching, research and scholarly activity, and public service are often interrelated dimensions of institutional excellence (*COE*).

UVI's Administration and Governance

The Office of the President is the lead component for the executive management of the institution. It comprises the Office of the Liaison to the Board of Trustees, the Internal Auditor, and the President's administrative and managerial staff. The President's Cabinet meets bi-monthly to discuss and decide policies and develop strategies for the achievement of institutional priorities. UVI is committed to principles of shared governance. The University Senate is the primary campus body through which UVI's administrative and governing policies as well as other matters that have far-reaching implications for the constituency groups and the University are reviewed and recommendations are made to the President. The Senate is composed of a combination of faculty, students, staff, and administrators who meet monthly to review proposals and policies that affect the working and learning environment of the University. The various constituency groups, such as the faculty, Staff Council and Student Government Associations play a critical role in reviewing, debating, and scrutinizing policies before they are voted on by the University Senate.

The Provost Component includes the offices, programs, and centers that focus on teaching and learning. These include the five degree-awarding colleges and schools, the general education program, advising and testing, Financial Aid, the Center for Student Success, the Sports and Fitness Center, the Wellness Center, Caribbean Exploratory Research Center for Excellence, Community Engagement and Lifelong Learning Center, Virgin Islands University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities, Research and Public Service, and Access and Enrollment Services. Together with the heads of the academic offices and senior staff in the provost's office, the deans make up the Academic Affairs Council with whom the provost meets monthly. The leaders of residence life, the counseling center and health services, along with other senior staff in Student Affairs, make up the team that helps to set goals and priorities in conjunction with the Chief and Associate Campus Administrators for Student Affairs on behalf of students.

UVI's Faculty, Staff, Students

In Fall 2011, UVI employed 225 faculty (full- and part-time) members and 383 administrative and support staff members. The Fall 2011 student enrollment was 2,635. Of these, 2,420 were undergraduate students and 215 were graduate students; 29% were male, 5% were non-degree seeking students, and 6% were non-resident students.

Major Institutional Changes since the Previous Decennial Evaluation

A leadership change occurred at UVI in August 2009 with the departure on July 31 of the former President who led the development of the most recent 2007-2012 Strategic Plan *VISION 2012*. The current President continues to work on the implementation of the plan. Other University changes since the last evaluation include the appointment of a new provost, vice president for Institutional Advancement, vice president for Administration and Finance, internal auditor, executive director for the Center for Student Success, and deans of newly named colleges and schools. In accordance with Standards 4 and 5, this administrative structure facilitates “learning and research/scholarship,” fosters “quality improvement,” and supports UVI’s “organization and governance” (COE 18) through its adherence to the recommendations made by MSCHE, as well as diligently monitoring the changes implemented.

Strategic Plan

The focus of *VISION 2012* is academic excellence, institutional improvement, and financial sustainability. *VISION 2012* is one of the most significant initiatives of UVI in the past five years, which has been the basis for the assessment of institutional effectiveness. This strategic plan, discussed in detail in Section Six, will culminate in the University’s 50th anniversary celebrations. During this Jubilee year, UVI is engaging the Virgin Islands community as well as the wider community through its outreach programs to alumni and supporters. The University provides implementation updates on the Plan to the Board of Trustees three times a year, and annual Closeout Reports are approved by the Board.

Financial Strength

The world financial crisis has had a negative impact on higher education, and this includes UVI. As Section Four indicates, UVI’s projected enrollment has not materialized in keeping with *VISION 2012* even though more students from private schools are now enrolled when compared to prior years. Over the period, however, the University has been able to maintain financial stability even in the face of challenging economic times.

Continued Academic Excellence

Academic excellence is central to UVI. As such, the University continues to provide students with a high quality academic experience. The results of assessment and national rankings all demonstrate that UVI provides an education that lives up to its mission. The emphasis of *VISION 2012* on academic excellence ensures that this will continue to be a top priority of the institution. The new partnerships, centers, and faculty discussed in Section Three are examples of how opportunities for improved academic excellence are already being realized.

A Culture of Assessment

Section Five demonstrates that academic programs now have more meaningful assessment plans. Overall, programs have made important progress on implementation of their plans, thus conforming to Standards 7 and 14. UVI’s assessment processes have been ongoing with assessment of general education courses and student proficiency in English through the English Proficiency Exam (EPE). However, since the last *Self-Study*, renewed efforts in the assessment of student learning have been made. Institutional assessment has also been improved. In the past five years, the institution has created written assessment plans and ways for continued assessment. Section Five highlights UVI’s methods to document proposed results as it advances

institutional effectiveness as is described in *VISION 2012*. Several Measures of Accomplishment are directly linked to the strategic objectives of *VISION 2012*, which identify the timeliness, responsible parties, and anticipated impact of each initiative to the strategic objectives and form the basis by which annual progress on the strategic plan is assessed each fiscal year during the Closeout Reports.

Organization of the Report. The *Periodic Review Report* includes the following:

Section One: Executive Summary

Section Two: Response to Recommendations. This section provides an update on recommendations made by the visiting team related to shared governance, adoption of a new *Faculty Policy Manual (FPM)*, and dissemination of roles and responsibilities under the new administrative structure. In this section, we focused on progress made in these areas, with additional suggestions for the tasks not yet accomplished.

Section Three: Major Challenges and Opportunities. This section identifies UVI's major challenges and opportunities through interviews with key University personnel and input from other units. It also highlights some of the major challenges and opportunities as they relate to the *COE*. Included is information about opportunities presented by UVI's leadership, as well as UVI's plan to launch its second capital campaign in the history of the University.

Section Four: Enrollment and Finance Trends and Projections. This section presents UVI's enrollment, projected student enrollment, and financial condition. Related supporting documents also appear in the "List of Tables, Figures, and Appendices." These provide financial information submitted to the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) as well as audited financial statements for the last three years and the UVI budgets for fiscal years 2009-2011.

Section Five: Assessment Procedures and Processes. This section describes the procedures in place for addressing institutional effectiveness and learning outcomes as well as assessment of institutional goals related to programs such as general education. It also provides examples of how institutional assessment has led to improvement at the University.

Section Six: Institutional Planning and Budgeting Processes. UVI's budget process is guided by its strategic plan. This section highlights the planning and budgetary processes and demonstrates how the two processes work together to ensure that UVI's mission is realized. This section also includes a brief conclusion about the institution's overall progress in light of the expectations for the *Periodic Review Report*.

SECTION TWO

INSTITUTION'S RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS

The University of the Virgin Islands underwent its last self-study in 2006-2007. Every effort was made to use the self-study process as a way to examine the extent to which the institution's mission was being realized. The process, therefore, became an extension of the University's planning process. Representatives from various sectors of the institution participated in the work of the Steering Committee or one of its task forces. Others participated by providing suggestions, feedback, and advice. This section of the *Periodic Review Report* responds to the recommendations of the visiting team as well as UVI's recommendations.

The 2007 report from the MSCHE to UVI contained several recommendations that have been grouped under the title: "Increased Shared Governance." There are two additional recommendations, which are being treated separately: "Adoption of a *Faculty Policy Manual*" and "Dissemination of Roles and Responsibilities" under the new administrative structure. The Monitoring Report documented the development and implementation of a new faculty policy manual in accordance with Standard 10, as well as actions taken to satisfy the requirements of the MSCHE. The following section introduces the changes made.

Increased Shared Governance

Since the submission of the Monitoring Report in late February 2009, UVI has taken several additional steps towards the expansion and institutionalization of shared governance at the University. The most significant actions are as follows:

1. **University Senate:** The UVI Senate was created in Spring 2009. It consists of representatives from administration—non-voting members of the President's Cabinet—staff, students, and faculty, with representatives chosen by the respective constituent bodies. The Senate considers a wide variety of issues important to the University and makes recommendations directly to the UVI President. The various constituency groups, such as the faculty, Staff Council and Student Government Associations, play a critical role in reviewing, debating, and scrutinizing policies before they are voted on by the University Senate.
2. **CPAC and TPAC:** The St. Croix Campus Presidential Advisory Council (CPAC) and the St. Thomas Campus Presidential Advisory Council (TPAC) serve as campus-based bodies that allow the particular campus community to collectively explore innovative solutions to meet the specific needs of each campus in areas such as student life, school spirit, process improvement, quality of life, and special events, among others. Students, faculty, staff, and administrators are represented on these councils.
3. **University Budget Committee (UBC):** The University Budget Committee was reconstituted in Fall 2009. It consists of representatives from administration, staff, students, and faculty with representatives chosen by the respective constituent bodies. The UBC makes recommendations to the UVI President concerning the allocation of incremental funds, which make up approximately 2.5% of the University's operating budget. The UBC holds open forums to explain their recommendations to the entire community. If the President rejects any of the recommendations from the UBC, an open forum is convened for the President to

explain the rationale for the rejection and share with the community the final budget recommendations. On two occasions in the last two years the UBC has been charged with examining the entire university operating budget and making recommendations for reductions, reallocations, and consolidations.

4. **Inclusion of Constituency Group Representatives on Search Committees and Other Key University Committees:** Search committees and other key committees are made up of constituency representatives from across the University. This approach to shared governance brings a variety of perspectives to the process and enables the University to engage in informed conversations and make decisions that represent the collective input of University stakeholders.
5. **Formulation of Leadership Team:** As a way to garner the inclusive ideas of leaders at various levels of the University, the Leadership Team was created. The group consists of cabinet, deans, faculty executive committee, senate, staff council executive committee, and the officers of both student government associations. The group participates in the formulation of the annual Presidential Goals and offers insights on general administrative matters. This group has also participated in trainings on shared governance and leadership.
6. **Faculty Evaluation:** Following the adoption of a new *Faculty Policy Manual*, a process for peer-evaluation of faculty was created. In each academic unit (the five schools and colleges), a Retention, Promotion, and Tenure (RPT) Committee consisting of faculty (chosen by the faculty in the unit) was formed. The RPT Committee plays the primary role in annual evaluation of faculty and a significant role in evaluation for promotion and tenure. Additionally, a University-wide Promotion and Tenure (UPT) Committee was created. The UPT Committee, which consists of faculty chosen by and from the UVI faculty body, has a significant role in the evaluation of faculty for promotion and tenure. The UPT replaces an earlier faculty committee (“FRAC”) whose charge included evaluation for tenure only.
7. **UVI Staff Council (UVISC):** This body comprises 13 officers—four of whom are in the UVI Senate—representing regular, professional, and administrative staff (over 380) from both the St. Thomas and St. Croix campuses. Its by-laws, approved by the entire staff community in June 2007, require an election of officers, which was first held in September 2007 and the officers were formally affirmed in October of that year. There have been two elections since then. The officers meet monthly and general meetings are held quarterly. In the spirit of the shared governance process, the UVISC has provided representatives (elected by the membership) on the various university task forces, search committees, and other committees. The UVISC has had several town hall meetings with the President to discuss issues affecting staff. These town hall meetings have been well-received by the staff community as they had the opportunity to witness that the shared governance process is well-embraced by the University administration. In 2010, the University provided the UVISC with a recurring operating budget.

In its first retreat, the UVISC submitted some issues to be addressed by the administration, issues which included hiring practices, evaluations, salary increases/cost of living allowance, policy manual, staff representation on the UVI Board of Trustees, and full participation of

staff at general staff meetings. The issues were addressed by the President and shared with the entire staff community. In summary, the UVI Staff Council plays an important role in the shared governance process at UVI. It will continue to be a major player in ensuring that the staff has a voice in the shared governance process.

8. The Student Government Association (SGA) on each campus is well represented and participates actively in the governance of the institution with student representation on all university committees and in the senate.
9. Representatives from all areas of the University are involved in the recruitment of students.
10. The Faculty Association meets on a monthly basis and reviews matters related to the academic and administrative aspects of the University. The Faculty Executive Committee (FEC) meets on a regular basis with the Provost in order to facilitate discussion of faculty matters.
11. The University has a faculty union, which is currently engaged in discussion with the administration.
12. Open Forums and Communications: It has been a standard practice in the last three years to convene open forums for the entire university in order to discuss major challenges and opportunities. There have been open forums on budgetary matters, employee benefits, proposed solar energy project and other critical issues. Communications from the President seeking input and reactions in regards to policy and organizational changes are common and contribute to the shared governance process.

The Progress Letter requested by this recommendation was submitted to Middle States in August 2008 and the Monitoring Report in February 2009 (Section Two: Appendix 2.1: Progress Letter and Monitoring Report).

Adoption of a New *Faculty Policy Manual*

Following a joint process involving both the UVI administration and faculty, the UVI Board of Trustees approved a new *Faculty Policy Manual (FPM)* in November 2008. Since that time a standing committee, consisting mostly of faculty but also with administrative representation, has been formed to review issues surrounding the new *FPM* and to recommend changes as necessary. The progress letter requested was sent to MSCHE in August 2008. (Section Two: Appendix 2.1).

Dissemination of Information about Roles and Responsibilities

The MSCHE recommendation is as follows:

“Given the significant reorganization with new persons in new positions, the University must develop strategies to acquaint the campuses and alumni and all stakeholders with the roles and responsibilities associated with each position within the new reorganization structure. These strategies might include posting this information on the WEB for easy retrieval by campus members as well as an orientation workshop about the new structure.”

Information concerning the Campus Executive Administrator's (CEA) position was provided in a February 27, 2009 Monitoring Report submitted by the previous UVI President to MSCHE (Section Two: Appendix 2.1). The written documents describing the roles and responsibilities of each of the pertinent positions are available on the UVI Human Resources webpage with a link to the Office of the President page under the Cabinet tab.

Responses to UVI's Recommendations

UVI's recommendations addressed such issues as evaluations of administrators, cabinet members, and members of the BOT, which have been addressed in FY 2008-2009 and 2010-2011. Additionally, UVI recommended that opportunities for professional development be provided for the administrative leadership team as well as faculty. It recommended that data be used effectively for further restructuring and that students and faculty be adequately served by the academic leadership. The final recommendations focused on the implementation of outcomes assessment, requesting that the results be used in program reviews and to improve student learning. Attempts have been made to address the recommendations, as is seen in the chart in Section Two: Appendix 2.2 (UVI's Responses to its Own Recommendations).

Conclusion

The progress that UVI has made in addressing the recommendations made by the visiting team as well as its own recommendations within the *Self-Study* has been encouraging. This process has enabled the University to focus its attention on areas in need of improvement. Additionally, the *Self-Study* served as an important resource for those who developed the strategic plan. As this section demonstrates, the recommendations from the *Self-Study* are now integrated into the formal goals and objectives of the institution.

SECTION THREE MAJOR CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The University of the Virgin Islands, similar to other institutions of higher learning, continues to face major challenges and opportunities. Some of these relate specifically to the institution's infrastructure; thus, UVI is positioning itself to meet the challenges and embrace the opportunities. Other challenges, however, are global, such as the recession that affects the world. Lack of adequate financial resources affects the University directly and indirectly. These issues are explained and clarified in the ensuing paragraphs.

In gathering the information about Challenges and Opportunities facing the University of the Virgin Islands at this time, the members of the task force read reports from sub-committees working on other sections of this document, reviewed previous Middle States reports and recommendations, reviewed the University's current strategic plan, and interviewed key personnel, including the President, the Provost, the Director of Enrollment Management, the Vice President for Institutional Advancement, the Vice Provost for Research and Public Service, and the Special Assistant to the President. In the interviews, the participants were asked to address challenges and opportunities relevant to their areas of expertise or oversight, including enrollment projections, finance projections, institutional effectiveness, student learning and linkages between institutional planning and budgeting. In addition to information gathering, the subcommittee addressing major challenges and opportunities itself served as a focus group, representing academic units and faculty, information technology and libraries, human resources, and administration.

Major Challenges

A major challenge for all areas of the institution is the shrinking budget and the global economic crisis (Standard 3: Institutional Resources). This will greatly inhibit the institution's ability to launch new initiatives and maintain and upgrade existing programs.

The University, like many other institutions, has made much progress in adopting a clear and implementable assessment plan. It is important to note that there has been some progress made in this regard, which will be addressed later in Section Five of this document. The institution has already adopted the Nichols model, which is being used as a guide for the assessment of institutional assessment and student learning outcomes assessment. In addition, there is an Executive Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment, who is leading the efforts on behalf of the institution. This has led to some stability and accountability with respect to assessment. Additionally, those units that have external accreditation efforts have also worked to strengthen the assessment efforts.

Challenges with respect to assessment occur in some of those areas that don't necessarily fall under one academic unit. This is true for general education efforts. Data that have been collected for many years do exist. With proper analysis such data could lead to information that is pertinent to assessing the impact and effectiveness of some of the general education efforts. Although the initial move to assessment was aimed at the bachelor degree programs, learning outcomes have also been developed for associates and masters level programs.

In the area of the use of technology to deliver and aid instruction, great strides have been made over the last several years. Some challenges still exist in the delivery of videoconferencing classes. However, the university is committed to improving the videoconference platform to better support teaching and learning opportunities for students.

Another challenge is the competition for students, not just from institutions offering traditional programs on the mainland, but from institutions that offer online degree programs and those that are fully online institutions (Standard 8: Student Admissions and Retention). In the past few years, this has had a great impact on enrollment, particularly at the graduate level. There are also changing demographics, including a declining school population, which is a result of a declining birthrate in the Territory and a declining “in-migration” pattern. In addition, many students have full-time or part-time employment, as well as family constraints. This is an ongoing challenge for the University. Although these combined forces affect their academic performance negatively, UVI is committed to addressing many of the students’ needs. The global economic crisis, however, may encourage more students to stay close to home. These students may include not just those from the Territory, but also those from the Eastern Caribbean. The University already has a market that views UVI favorably in St. Martin, St. Kitts and Nevis, and in the British Virgin Islands. For those students who do not qualify for federal aid, scholarships are limited. This especially impacts the recruitment of international students.

Current Opportunities

The most important opportunity for the institution at this time is the focus on building a great university and the recruitment of persons to fill various leadership roles on campus (Standard 5: Administration). Positions that, in the past, were filled on an interim basis by persons holding other positions were filled with highly qualified persons. The prevailing economic situation has caused some positions to revert to interim due to persons leaving for other opportunities. In addition, the new administration offers an opportunity to start anew with faculty and staff, especially with respect to the shared governance structure. The shared governance structure provides an additional opportunity for moving the institution forward and can serve to elevate morale through participation in decision making and information sharing to all constituents. This is important for all the segments involved: faculty, staff, students, and administration.

Another opportunity comes in the form of the alignment of priorities and resources through the development of the institution’s new strategic plan 2012-2017 (Standard 2: Planning, Resource Allocation, and Institutional Renewal). The strategic plan development process presents many opportunities, including focusing renewed and expanded efforts on assessment. The way in which the plan is developed, presented, and assessed will help to set the tone for years to come.

The adoption of the new *Faculty Policy Manual* presents new opportunities for the institution, relating to transparency. There are also new evaluation procedures, including the implementation of faculty development growth plans for faculty. An opportunity, and also a challenge, is the negotiation of the collective bargaining agreement, currently being undertaken by members of the administration and representatives from the faculty.

Institutional practices are being implemented to encourage more openness and transparency, especially in areas of great importance. A revised budget process is in place, with Budget Committee representatives from constituency groups and those appointed by the President. Each component and each school/college submits and presents budget requests to the committee. The hearings are open to the University community and well publicized on campus through electronic media. Presentations to the University Budget Committee have to show links of the budget request to the strategic plan of the University. This encourages alignment of priorities within the institution.

The creation of a Center for Student Success (CSS) in 2011 has provided an opportunity to impact enrollment, especially in the area of retention and persistence. The Center provides services for the consistent monitoring of students with the required assistance available. More information is included in Section Five.

A great opportunity exists as the institution works to launch its second capital campaign. Each component was asked for input and requests that contributed to setting priorities for the capital campaign. This also moves the institution closer to proper alignment of budget to institutional priorities. Additionally, there is the opportunity to embed appropriate evaluation and assessment approaches, thus improving institutional effectiveness across the University.

Increased technological capacity provides an opportunity for stronger marketing, more development of online and hybrid courses and programs, and strengthening of advising through greater access to information.

Other opportunities for the institution include the development of new Memorandums of Understanding with Eastern Caribbean States and territories, the growth and expansion of the Caribbean Green Technology Center, new and online degree programs, the Sokoloff Entrepreneurship Program, the Center for the Nurturing and Preservation of Virgin Islands and Caribbean Culture, expansion of classroom and office spaces on the Albert A. Sheen campus, and the completion of a new residence hall on the St. Thomas campus.

SECTION FOUR

ENROLLMENT AND FINANCE TRENDS AND PROJECTIONS

This section of the report provides an analysis of the enrollment and finance projections for the next two years, as well as the assumptions on which the projections are based.

VISION 2012, the University's current strategic plan, was approved by the Board of Trustees in 2006 and covers the period 2007-2012. It is a blueprint that UVI follows as it continues to improve the level of excellence in the delivery of educational programs and services.

Enrollment

The University's Strategic Plan *VISION 2012* includes strategic objectives directly related to the mission of Access and Enrollment Services (ACES). The objectives require that ACES increase enrollment, alter the demographics of the student population and improve the academic preparedness of incoming freshmen (Section Four: Figure 4.1: Summary of Enrollment Objectives). The target of 2,700 students initially set for fall 2009, would have increased head count enrollment by 4% per year. That target, however, was not realized until a year later. The headcount as of Fall 2010 was 2,733 students, which represented a 5% increase from Fall 2009. Enrollment for Fall 2011 was 2,635 students. The growth on the Albert A. Sheen Campus (formerly the St. Croix campus) among undergraduate students was up 6% from the previous year compared to a 4% growth on the St. Thomas campus. This represented two consecutive years in which the growth on St. Croix outpaced that of St. Thomas.

The impact of the growth realized through increased enrollment has been felt in the areas of both physical and human resources. Existing capacity limitations in the areas of instructional spaces, faculty office spaces, video conference facilities, and residence halls are among the physical resources that have impacted enrollment growth in recent years. However, the University has broken ground on a new residence hall facility on the St. Thomas campus and has partnered with the Research and Technology Park to utilize space in a facility, currently under construction, which will provide additional classrooms including videoconferencing facilities, laboratories, and faculty offices on the Albert A. Sheen Campus. The University continues to work on addressing the imbalance with respect to the proportion of full-time and part-time faculty on both campuses. There has been some movement in this area, but there is much work still to be done to arrive at an optimal proportion of full-time to part-time faculty.

There has also been an emerging trend in the credit-taking behavior of students that is impacting the University's resources. Between the period of Fall 2008 and Fall 2010, there was a 14% increase in Credit Hour Production (CHP). The increase in the CHP resulted in a greater demand for both human and physical resources, specifically faculty and infrastructure. The continued collaboration between the Office of Access and Enrollment Services and the recently established Center for Student Success will play a major role in achieving the enrollment target of 3,000 by 2017, as identified in the new strategic plan.

Other factors that contributed to the overall growth in enrollment included aggressive recruitment efforts by ACES staff at the local high schools and the Shadow our Students (SOS) program on both campuses. The SOS program provides an opportunity for high school students to spend a day on campus shadowing UVI students and attending classes. ACES anticipated an

annual 1% increase in male students as a percentage of the student population each year and planned to diversify the student population by the inclusion of more students from the eastern Caribbean and the U.S. mainland.

The coordinated recruiting effort of ACES resulted in increases in the yield on admitted students, the number of transfer students and the retention rate (Section Four: Figure 4.2: Admissions Yield). To continue this trend, ACES engaged students and faculty in a University-wide recruiting effort in the following ways:

- Call centers operated by student ambassadors
- Letters from the dean of the respective school or college to welcome admitted students
- The implementation of “mix and mingle” events with admitted students sponsored by the Campus Executive Administrator (CEA) on the Albert A. Sheen Campus.

A few of the inherent challenges of recruiting local high school students are as follows:

- Combating the “get off the rock syndrome.” Some VI graduates want to leave the Virgin Islands (“the rock”) to pursue their education to experience a different place or culture.
- Overcoming the promotion of mainland institutions at private and public schools. In some instances private school counselors steer their advisees away from UVI and towards “more prestigious” institutions.
- Mitigating the aggressive recruiting of VI high school students by stateside institutions. Select institutions have long-term connections with VI high schools and recruit annually.

To assuage these tendencies of VI graduates to choose “off-island” educational institutions, ACES continues to promote the National Student Exchange (NSE) program, which allows UVI students to spend up to a year at a participating institution at UVI’s tuition rates. To counteract the promotion of U.S. mainland institutions recruiting teams are promoting the Boston University School of Medicine’s early admissions program and the engineering dual degree program in collaboration with Columbia University, the University of Florida, and the University of South Carolina. Additionally, UVI’s Honors Program recruits students with high SAT scores. Through programs such as UVI’s Emerging Caribbean Scientists, students may participate in summer research programs at prestigious universities such as Johns Hopkins, University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, University of Pennsylvania, and the University of South Carolina Medical School.

Based on FY2010 data, undergraduate enrollment has trended upward while graduate enrollment has remained static or declined. To bolster graduate enrollment, UVI has been promoting new programs in Psychology and Marine Science (Figures 4.3 & 4.4: Distribution of Graduate Enrollment 2007 & 2011). The Master in Public Administration (MPA), Master in Business Administration (MBA), and Master of Arts in Education (MAE) degrees have shown flat enrollment perhaps reflecting the saturation of the marketplace. However, the institution has not yet conducted a study to determine the factors impacting the enrollment trends in these graduate programs.

Efforts to attract transfer students have been relatively successful, with the enrollment of transfer students moving from 85 in 2007 to 110 in 2010, then at 78 in 2011 (Section Four: Figure 4.5: Transfer Enrollment). The primary strategy employed to improve transfer enrollment has been a

series of articulation agreements with regional junior colleges. The arrangements where students complete the last two years of their bachelor’s degree at UVI have been more successful than the remote cohort model where students pursue courses primarily through video conference connection. Generally, the latter cohort approach has resulted in declining enrollment and nonpayment of tuition. Within the last year the Provost’s office has reviewed these articulation agreements to ensure sustainability. The targeted recruitment of the Caribbean Diaspora continues to grow in an attempt to attract students in the U.S. who have ties to the region.

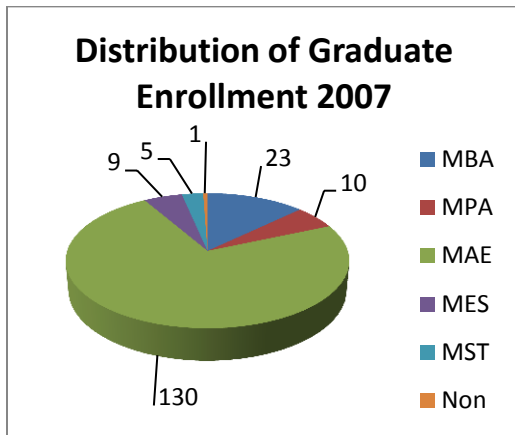


Figure 4.3: Distribution of Graduate Enrollment 2007 (See page 53 – Appendix 1.1)

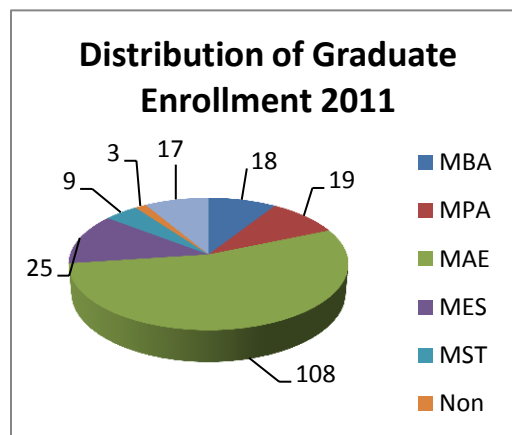


Figure 4.4: Distribution of Graduate Enrollment 2011 (See page 53 – Appendix 1.1)

The University also planned to increase enrollment by reducing attrition. The report of the President’s Task Force on Improving Retention and Graduation Rates, dated April 23, 2010, concluded that UVI’s students leave college because of one or more of the following:

- Inadequate student preparation for college-level work
- Lack of financial resources and financial aid including knowledge of the application process
- Lack of motivation and commitment to earning a degree.

Existing data are inconclusive regarding whether interventions by the Center for Advising and Tutoring Services (CATS) have significantly increased retention. A review of first-year retention rates from 2007 through 2011 shows fluctuation between 70% and 75%. The targeted first-year retention rate was 76% based on a 4% increase from base year 2005 as indicated in the ACES Plan. The President’s Improving Retention and Graduation Rates Task Force recommended the creation of a collective approach to improve retention and graduation rates, which resulted in the establishment of the Center for Student Success (CSS) whose primary and new focus is a holistic approach to student retention. CSS, under the guidance of an interim director, began operations in July 2011 and has begun the process of involving faculty and Center staff in identifying and helping at-risk students. CATS has been subsumed under the CSS and collective efforts are in place to help students succeed at the University.

As an open enrollment/low selectivity admission institution, the University was not in a position to use increased selectivity in admissions as a strategy to increase the level of academic preparedness among entering freshman. In 2011 the Summer Bridge Program was implemented to assist students requiring remediation courses in advance of their enrollment in Fall 2011. The

report indicates that a total of 79 students participated in the Program; 37 on the Albert A. Sheen Campus and 42 on the St. Thomas Campus. Students were given instructions in math, reading, writing and public speaking. In addition, various seminars were held to provide students with exposure to college services and sharpen the skills necessary for college success. More than 70% of the students on St. Thomas successfully tested out of Math 023; while 47% tested out of MAT024. Sixty-eight per cent and 26% of the students on the St. Thomas campus tested out of ENG100 and ENG101 respectively. Analysis of the results on the Albert A Sheen Campus indicated that 60% of the students passed out of ENG100; 39% passed out of ENG101 and 29% passed out of MAT023. Sixty-seven (67) students from the program enrolled in various UVI Program for the 2011 fall session; 40 from the St. Thomas Campus and 27 from the Albert A Sheen Campus. Plans for the 2012 Summer Bridge include increasing the number of participants to 120 and developing programs for adult (non-traditional) students and high school juniors. Consideration should be given to using mean SAT scores along with high school grade point average or placement exam results to assess the extent that recruiting efforts are resulting in freshman students with higher levels of academic preparedness.

On St. John, there has also been a significant investment in learning resources during this past academic year with the creation of the St. John Academic Center to allow students and residents access to resources, technology, and educational programs similar to those of students on both the St. Thomas and St. Croix campuses. The facility provides three classroom spaces with both videoconferencing and face-to-face instructional capabilities. Long-range plans include provision of the additional amenities of the individual campus libraries to facilitate student success as well as individual and group study space for students. Within this same period, a 40% increase in the number of St. John residents who enroll in at least one class and a 15% increase in the retention rate of students who reside on St. John are anticipated. Annual assessment results will help capture these data.

In its efforts to increase enrollment and attract high-ability students, the University has deployed various strategies with Eastern Caribbean institutions over the course of the past seven years. The success of this model has been seen in MOUs with Clarence Fitzroy Bryant College (CFBC) in St. Kitts and Dominica State College (DSC) in Dominica. Students from these institutions pay 1.75 times the UVI resident rate, which represents a significant savings to non-resident students and an opportunity for UVI to attract some of the brightest students from the Eastern Caribbean in its upper level courses. In Fall 2010, there were 46 students enrolled at UVI under the terms of the MOU with CFBC and four students from Dominica State College as transfer students under the MOU articulation.

The task force recommended that the University continue to build on the success of this model and extend similar MOUs throughout the region. It also recommended that the University maintain the present rate structure of 1.75 times the resident rate and promote the model throughout the Eastern Caribbean. Following on the heels of the recommendation, the UVI Board of Trustees approved the rate structure on June 11, 2011, a move which paved the way for renewal of the expired MOU with CFBC. In Fall 2011, UVI launched the recently approved Hotel and Tourism Management program, which provides an opportunity to promote the same pricing model with Eastern Caribbean institutions.

Enrollment Growth

UVI is the only public institution of higher education in the Territory and is considered relatively affordable in comparison to most four-year institutions on the U.S. mainland. If this trend emerges, the University will be challenged to meet the growing demand with limited infrastructure and human resources. The University projects an enrollment growth to 3000 students by the fall semester of 2017, which is consistent with its projected enrollment growth for 2012 under *VISION 2012*. The prevailing economic situation has hampered the ability of students to pay and has resulted in a drop in enrollment to 2,635 students in Fall 2011. Annual enrollment increases are projected at an annual 3% growth from a base of 2,600 for Fall 2012; 2,678 for Fall 2013; 2,758 for Fall 2014; 2,841 for Fall 2015; 2,926 for Fall 2016; and 3,014 for Fall 2017.

Finance

The University is funded by diverse streams of revenues that supplement its tuition and fees, including government appropriations, federal and local sponsored programs, private grants and investment income. Prior to Fiscal Year 2011, the University enjoyed years of robust support from the Government of the Virgin Islands through annual appropriations. The support assisted the University with addressing rising compensation, energy and operating costs. However, the University of the Virgin Islands, like other public universities in the United States, has recently been faced with significant financial challenges in the face of reduced support from the local government. The University's government appropriations were reduced by \$3M in Fiscal Year 2012, as shown in the table below, forcing the University to rely on other revenue sources or cost reductions to balance its operating budgets since FY2011.

UVI Government Appropriations FY2007-2012

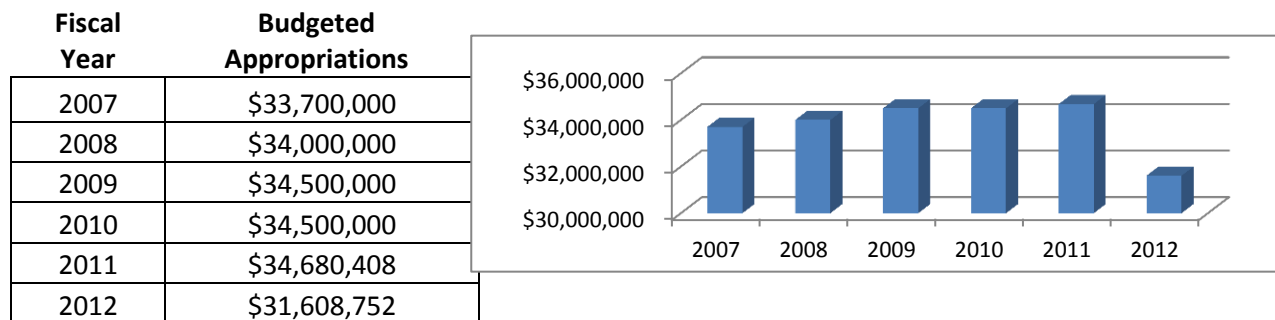


Figure 4.6: UVI Government Appropriations FY2007-2012

Included in the annual appropriations to the University is an amount for operations which covers labor expenditures, teaching materials, equipment for classrooms, repairs and improvements to University buildings and other legitimate expenses of the University. The University also receives funding for debt service and scholarship/tuition assistance for various student programs. Historically, the line items in support of these programs have remained intact while the operating appropriation has been reduced over the last two fiscal years. Reductions in operating appropriations have had a significant impact on the University's operating budget as these have historically contributed an average of sixty-percent (60%) to the University's operating revenues. Thus any reductions in this revenue category translate to reductions in the University's operating expenditures. The table below shows the percentage contribution from appropriations, tuition and fees and other revenue sources to the total operating revenues from Fiscal Year 2007 through 2011.

Sources of Operating Budget Revenues							
Fiscal Year	Actual Operating Appropriations	%	Tuition & Fees	%	Other	%	Total
2007	\$29,227,207	62%	\$9,628,318	21%	\$8,004,438	17%	\$46,859,962
2008	\$29,729,702	63%	\$9,874,410	21%	\$7,766,644	16%	\$47,370,756
2009	\$30,157,333	61%	\$11,080,708	23%	\$7,888,690	16%	\$49,126,732
2010	\$30,163,762	60%	\$11,417,707	23%	\$8,995,650	18%	\$50,577,118
2011	\$28,331,349	58%	\$12,364,019	25%	\$8,573,394	17%	\$49,268,762

Figure 4.7: Sources of Operating Budget Revenues

In spite of the fiscal challenges, the University continues to balance its operating budget. Through the shared governance process, more specifically, the University Budget Committee (UBC), the University community is engaged in developing the University's operating budget annually. Also, one of the *VISION 2012* strategic goals is a balanced budget annually. Thus, when revenue reductions are projected, the University Budget Committee is charged with finding ways to reduce the University's operating expenditures or increase revenues, a process which lately has been a quite a challenge given the present economic climate.

While budgets are plans or forecasts, audited financial statements represent actual results and are reviewed by an outside independent auditing firm. UVI financial statements for the fiscal years ended September 30, 2008, 2009 and 2010 as included in Section Four: Appendix 4.9: Financial Statements for FY2008, 2009, 2010. The University uses the audited financial statements to conduct periodic reviews of its financial condition for presentation to management and the Board of Trustees. Several key performance indicators (KPI) measure the level of government support through the appropriations, revenues from operations and the percentage contribution of tuition and fees to the total operating revenues, to name a few.

The University also uses the financial indicators to compare its performance to its peer institutions. Included in Section Four: Appendix 4.10 is the KPI report, which was presented to the University's Board of Trustees at its March 10, 2012 meeting (KPI Report Presented to the BOT March 2012). Pages 19 and 20 of the KPI report present the summary of changes in net assets for fiscal years 2009 and 2010. Over the past two years, UVI has experienced an increase in net assets which indicates that the University is financially healthy. The overall financial health materially improved in FY2010. Net assets increased by \$4.6M in FY2010 compared to a modest \$.26M in FY2009.

Due to the Government of the Virgin Islands' (GVI) continued financial challenges, the University's FY2012 operating budget was reduced to absorb an across-the-board salary reduction of eight percent (8%) for all employees. Act 7261 of the 29th Legislature of the US Virgin Islands enacted the Virgin Islands' Economic Stability Act of 2011, which mandated that the salaries of all government employees, including the University of the Virgin Islands, be reduced by 8% for two (2) years effective July 4, 2011. Thus the University's operating budgets for fiscal years 2012 and 2013 are reflective of this reduction. This was further compounded by notice of a reduction of \$3.5M in appropriations from the GVI for FY2013. Through the shared governance process the UBC is engaged in proposing a balanced budget for FY2013.

The operating budgets covering the University's strategic plan, *VISION 2012*, are as follows:

UNIVERSITY OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS					
OPERATING BUDGET					
FISCAL YEARS 2007 THROUGH 2011					
FISCAL YEAR	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
REVENUE TYPE	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET
Tuition & Fees	\$9,324,756	\$9,604,496	\$10,434,496	\$10,797,076	\$12,367,507
Appropriations	\$29,519,056	\$29,819,056	\$30,319,056	\$30,319,056	\$28,607,552
Government Grants & Contracts	\$310,000	\$510,000	\$810,000	\$1,210,000	\$970,000
Private Grants & Contracts	\$1,115,447	\$1,465,447	\$1,240,447	\$790,447	\$1,040,447
Investments	\$250,000	\$125,000	\$125,000	\$250,000	\$250,000
Sales & Services Education	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$4,000
Sales & Services Auxiliary	\$4,924,973	\$4,924,973	\$5,609,632	\$5,609,632	\$5,739,156
Other Revenues	\$264,252	\$264,252	\$264,252	\$264,252	\$264,252
Total Revenues	\$45,712,484	\$46,717,224	\$48,806,883	\$49,244,463	\$49,242,914
EXPENDITURE TYPE	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET
Labor	\$22,350,934	\$22,478,584	\$23,040,813	\$23,350,555	\$23,804,732
Fringe Benefits	\$6,992,191	\$7,281,475	\$7,746,107	\$7,801,441	\$8,233,174
Direct Expenditures	\$12,917,931	\$13,519,163	\$14,607,265	\$14,735,483	\$14,292,526
Capital Expenditures	\$408,471	\$421,474	\$410,873	\$355,159	\$329,255
Transfers	\$986,860	\$986,860	\$986,860	\$986,860	\$986,860
Non-Mandatory Transfer	\$1,469,187	\$1,521,787	\$1,412,487	\$1,412,487	\$1,412,487
Transfers In	\$581,907	\$507,881	\$602,478	\$602,478	\$173,154
Total Expenditures & Transfers	\$45,707,481	\$46,717,224	\$48,806,883	\$49,244,463	\$49,232,188
Net Operating Position	\$5,003	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$10,726

Figure 4.8: UVI Operating Budget FY2007-2011

In consideration of the financial challenges plaguing the University and to ensure the University's financial viability, we continue to pursue revenue generating strategies. We are exploring and projecting an increase of 5% in tuition rate and 2% in enrollment for fiscal years 2014 through 2016. This would yield an average annual increase in tuition revenues of \$807,480. We also project that by Fiscal Year 2014 the GVI's finances would improve and we would be able to secure funding to restore the 8% salary reduction imposed during fiscal year 2011. Through the University's capital campaign, we also project increases in annual giving of \$250,000 during fiscal years 2015 and 2016. Of significance during FY2012 is the development of the University's strategic plan for FY2013 through FY2017. Though in draft, the plan informs the resource allocation process and ensures that through the identification of funding sources and effective planning the University's mission is maintained and strategic goals are realized. Discussions are currently in place to determine the source of funding for the strategic goals.

The projected budget outlined above will spur additional coordination of budget and planning efforts to allocate limited funds most effectively. These efforts include provisions to further assess opportunities for revenue generation and expenditure reductions. The University's administration, with assistance through the shared governance process, continues to balance strategic planning efforts against identifying opportunities for cost savings. Going forward the

challenge will be finding savings while maintaining the academic integrity and effectiveness of the University and preserving the University's core mission.

Current Budget and Future Financial Projections

The following table presents the current budget (FY2012) and budget forecast for Fiscal Years 2013 through 2016:

**UNIVERSITY OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS
BUDGET PROJECTIONS - FISCAL YEARS 2013 THROUGH 2016**

REVENUES	<u>FY2012 Revision Number One Approved Budget (BOT)</u>	<u>FY2013</u>	<u>FY2014</u>	<u>FY2015</u>	<u>FY2016</u>
<u>Tuition & Fees</u>	<u>\$12,954,604</u>	<u>\$12,954,604</u>	<u>\$13,706,454</u>	<u>\$14,514,444</u>	<u>\$15,377,044</u>
<u>Appropriations</u>	<u>\$26,412,808</u>	<u>\$22,898,637</u>	<u>\$22,898,637</u>	<u>\$24,648,637</u>	<u>\$24,648,637</u>
<u>Government Grants & Contracts</u>	<u>\$970,000</u>	<u>\$970,000</u>	<u>\$970,000</u>	<u>\$970,000</u>	<u>\$970,000</u>
<u>Private Grants & Contracts</u>	<u>\$1,040,447</u>	<u>\$1,040,447</u>	<u>\$1,040,447</u>	<u>\$1,290,447</u>	<u>\$1,540,447</u>
<u>Investments</u>	<u>\$250,000</u>	<u>\$250,000</u>	<u>\$250,000</u>	<u>\$250,000</u>	<u>\$250,000</u>
<u>Sales & Services Education</u>	<u>\$4,000</u>	<u>\$4,000</u>	<u>\$4,000</u>	<u>\$4,000</u>	<u>\$4,000</u>
<u>Sales & Services Auxiliary</u>	<u>\$6,076,908</u>	<u>\$6,076,908</u>	<u>\$6,076,908</u>	<u>\$6,076,908</u>	<u>\$6,076,908</u>
<u>Other Revenues</u>	<u>\$304,252</u>	<u>\$304,252</u>	<u>\$304,252</u>	<u>\$304,252</u>	<u>\$304,252</u>
<u>Total Revenues</u>	<u>\$48,013,019</u>	<u>\$44,498,848</u>	<u>\$45,250,698</u>	<u>\$48,058,688</u>	<u>\$49,171,288</u>
EXPENDITURES	<u>FY2012 Revision Number One Approved Budget (BOT)</u>	<u>FY2013</u>	<u>FY2014</u>	<u>FY2015</u>	<u>FY2016</u>
<u>Instruction</u>	<u>\$11,865,798</u>	<u>\$11,256,514</u>	<u>\$11,256,514</u>	<u>\$11,720,591</u>	<u>\$11,720,591</u>
<u>Research</u>	<u>\$652,601</u>	<u>\$611,392</u>	<u>\$611,392</u>	<u>\$636,598</u>	<u>\$636,598</u>
<u>Public Service</u>	<u>\$960,298</u>	<u>\$899,659</u>	<u>\$899,659</u>	<u>\$936,750</u>	<u>\$936,750</u>
<u>Academic Support</u>	<u>\$3,215,443</u>	<u>\$3,012,399</u>	<u>\$3,012,399</u>	<u>\$3,137,330</u>	<u>\$3,137,330</u>
<u>Student Services</u>	<u>\$3,748,393</u>	<u>\$3,511,695</u>	<u>\$3,511,695</u>	<u>\$3,656,473</u>	<u>\$3,656,473</u>
<u>Institutional Support</u>	<u>\$11,502,528</u>	<u>\$10,981,183</u>	<u>\$10,981,183</u>	<u>\$11,433,908</u>	<u>\$11,433,908</u>
<u>Operations/Maintenance of Plant</u>	<u>\$8,070,181</u>	<u>\$6,688,739</u>	<u>\$6,688,739</u>	<u>\$6,964,498</u>	<u>\$6,964,498</u>
<u>Student Aid</u>	<u>\$546,350</u>	<u>\$546,350</u>	<u>\$546,350</u>	<u>\$546,350</u>	<u>\$546,350</u>
<u>Auxiliary Enterprises</u>	<u>\$5,855,709</u>	<u>\$5,485,941</u>	<u>\$5,485,941</u>	<u>\$5,712,112</u>	<u>\$5,712,112</u>
<u>Transfers</u>	<u>\$1,449,355</u>	<u>\$1,449,355</u>	<u>\$1,449,355</u>	<u>\$1,449,355</u>	<u>\$1,449,355</u>
<u>Total Expenditures & Transfers</u>	<u>\$47,866,656</u>	<u>\$44,443,227</u>	<u>\$44,443,227</u>	<u>\$46,193,965</u>	<u>\$46,193,965</u>
<u>Net Operating Position</u>	<u>\$146,363</u>	<u>\$55,621</u>	<u>\$807,471</u>	<u>\$1,864,723</u>	<u>\$2,977,323</u>

Figure 4.9: UVI FY2012 Budget & Budget Projections FY2013-2016

SECTION FIVE

ORGANIZED AND SUSTAINED PROCESSES TO ASSESS INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AND STUDENT LEARNING

Institutional effectiveness is defined by UVI as “the degree to which the University fulfills its mission and accomplishes its stated goals by assessing outcomes and providing evidence of improvement based on analysis of results.” The University must assure its constituents and stakeholders of its capacity and capability to assess its effectiveness and to act on that assessment as crucial indicators of institutional quality. This is integral to meeting the standards for MSCHE accreditation, individual program accreditations, and various other reporting requirements.

The mission of the University and its stated goals, objectives, and strategic thrusts must be kept in mind as one assesses the success of its programs and activities. The strategic plan developed by the University for 2007-2012 provides for four strategic areas of focus: Educational Excellence, Institutional Improvement, Financial Sustainability, and Community Engagement. The following discussion examines how successfully the University managed the goals and objectives outlined within the area of Institutional Improvement in the context of external trends (market, economic, financial, and technological), an internal assessment of perceived strengths and weaknesses, and critical success factors as were disclosed through annual reports.

Review and Assessment

With respect to assessment, in Fall 2010, the President established the Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment Advisory Board (IEAAB), comprising the President, Provost, heads of components and other administrators, Special Assistant to the President/Executive Director for Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment, student representatives, staff representatives, and faculty representatives selected by their respective schools and colleges. The Provost and Faculty Chair were named co-chairs of the IEAAB to further align and integrate faculty and administration leadership of the assessment planning and implementation oversight. Prior to the establishment of the IEAAB, the Strategic Planning Committee provided oversight on the assessment of institutional effectiveness. The IEAAB, however, has assumed a much broader role in the assessment of institutional effectiveness and is responsible for policy direction of the University as it relates to strategic planning, institutional assessment, student learning outcomes assessment, institutional research, and results accountability. The specific responsibilities of the IEAAB may be summarized as following:

- Building capacity for assessment and continual data-driven improvement.
- Facilitating systematic assessment of academic and operational performance relative to University priorities.
- Providing rigorous and responsive reviews and analyses of a broad array of data to support institutional decision making.
- Providing relevant training and feedback to support application of practical methods of measurement and evaluation.
- Providing effective management and leadership of accreditation-related activities.

Leadership for the implementation of the strategic plan continues to rest with the Office of the President. The Strategic Planning Steering Committee, now subsumed under the IEAAB (Section Six: Appendix 6.6: Institutional Effectiveness at UVI), meets at least four times per year to review progress made and recommend amendments as necessary. Cabinet members are assigned to each measure of accomplishment, singly and at times jointly, and are required to complete the measure using existing or new resources, including grant fund, Title III, VI-EPSCoR, UVI, and institutional fundraising. Cabinet members are also required to present regular updates to the IEAAB. These updates are further presented to the BOT Planning Committee for approval and then to the full BOT. Efforts are on-going to ensure that these reports are made available to the university community on a regular basis. *VISION 2012* Closeout Reports are provided annually.

In cases where the University determines that a particular measure of accomplishment may need to be revised, changed, or replaced, the BOT has granted authorization to the University to implement those adjustments. As of June 2011 of the 42 FY 2010-2011 measures of accomplishment, 15 have been achieved, 19 are greater than 50% complete, 7 are less than 50% complete, and 1 is on hold pending further review. Additionally, when the current President arrived in 2009, a full review of the plan was undertaken to determine the continued relevance of the measures of accomplishment. Some measures were revised, some deferred, some added, and others deleted with the approval of the BOT.

The Office of Capital Projects is charged with monitoring the implementation of the master plan. Updates are shared with the University's administration as well as the BOT via the Building and Grounds Committee. Periodic reviews are also conducted as part of the due diligence process with respect to securing financing for the capital projects.

AREA FOCUS # 1: EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Introduction

Educational excellence is one of four strategic areas of focus on which *VISION 2012* was built. The goal is to create a learner-centered experience that fosters academic excellence and student success through innovative teaching and high quality academic and student support programs. Within this area, as with the others, there are several strategic objectives and measures of accomplishment that were developed for the plan period, 2007-2012. This report examines the major developments and impact that they have had on the institution. It will also look at the current status of the implementation plans and the challenges ahead.

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS AND IMPACT

1. *Establish a collaborative Center for Excellence in Teaching.*

The Center for Excellence in Teaching & Learning (CETL) was launched on the St. Thomas and St. Croix campuses in the spring of 2009 and spring of 2011, respectively. It was developed through the collaborative efforts of Information Technology Services (ITS) and the Provost's Component to meet the joint objectives of the ITS Plan for Curriculum and Technology Support and the Academic Master Plan. The Center serves as a technology training lab for faculty and staff and is complete with wireless access, laptops, projectors, copier, printers, fax machines, and desktop computers. In addition, there are podcasting tools, clickers (student response systems)

and other resources for maximizing course delivery and enhancing the quality of the learning environment.

Since its opening, CETL has continued to expand and increase its role of faculty support in teaching excellence. Faculty usage has grown from 190 in AY2009 to 373 in AY2010 to 502 in AY2011 (See chart below).

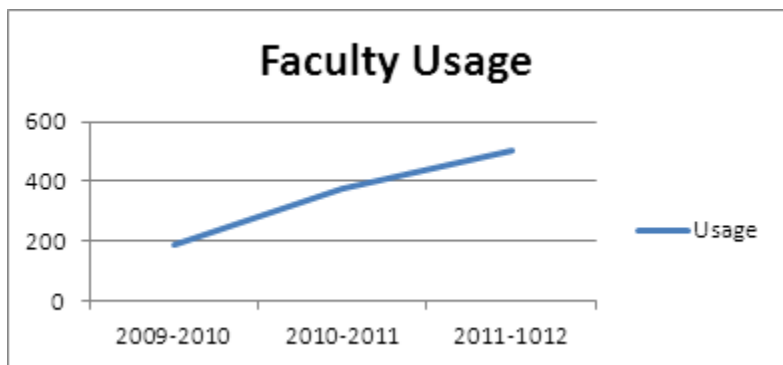


Figure 5.0: Chart Showing Faculty Usage

The CETL and the Information and Technology Services staff have documented a number of accomplishments to include the following:

- The percentage of faculty using instructional technology for purposes of teaching and learning reached 98%; the goal was 80%.
- The introduction of Adobe Connect expanded virtual classroom options and provided faculty training to build capacity and encourage use of the software application.
- The percentage of faculty trained to build capacity for using UVI's technology reached 56.8%; the goal was 50%.
- The delivery of major training sessions to prepare faculty for developing hybrid instruction.

The results of the CETL training can be seen in an increased use of technology for course delivery. Seventy-five percent of the faculty trained in Blackboard during the second semester of the 2011 academic year, and 75% of the faculty trained in Adobe Connect Pro during the same period utilized the technology. We continue to work on growing faculty awareness of the CETL and its services and believe with the increase in usage there will also be a greater awareness. The ITS Customer Service Survey in FY 2011 indicated that 40% of survey participants were aware of the CETL location on the St. Thomas campus.

2. Create academic learning environments that promote student success and enhance student-learning outcomes.

The University's efforts to promote student success and enhance student-learning outcomes have been heightened within the past two years. In the 2002 *Periodic Review Report* to the MSCHE, the University reported that it did not have an outcomes assessment plan or structure in place at the time. Notwithstanding, the University routinely assessed students and faculty on the basis of various decentralized assessment tools that included standardized placement tests, course-related tests, and faculty evaluations. This topic is expanded in Assessment of Student Learning later in this section.

UVI has made significant investments in its learning resources in recent years. During the fiscal years 2008 to 2010, \$411,124 was invested in products and services to enhance the University's Learning Resources and Student Technology Service areas. The enhancements included libraries, computer labs, and smart and video conference rooms. The impact has been realized in the following areas:

- Greater use of library resources due to expanded database subscriptions
- 24/7 access to computer labs
- Increased number of smart classrooms
- Improved quality of presentations in smart and video conference rooms.

The level of student satisfaction with the software and hardware enhancements was evident in the 2011 Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory and the 2011 Graduating Senior Exit Survey, both of which were administered by the Office of Institutional Research and Planning. The Noel-Levitz composite report indicated a higher level of student satisfaction with the accessibility and adequacy of computer labs compared to Spring 2008. Students on the St. Thomas campus also indicated a higher level of satisfaction with library resources and services compared to the same period in 2008. Graduating seniors provided very positive responses to the questions on computer services and library facilities on the Senior Exit Survey composite report. Seventy-three percent of the survey respondents indicated that they were either satisfied or very satisfied with the computer services. An overwhelming 89% indicated that they were either satisfied or very satisfied with the library facilities and services.

3. Change name designation of academic divisions to schools and colleges.

In a letter to the Chair of the Academic, Research, and Student Affairs Committee (ARSA) of the Board of Trustees dated February 10, 2010, the University President identified the name change of the academic units from divisions to schools/colleges as a requirement to move UVI's policies and practices in line with best practices.

The name change was embraced by faculty, deans, provost, UVI Senate, and the ARSA Committee. On March 13, 2010, the UVI Board of Trustees (BOT) approved a change in name from academic divisions to schools/colleges as follows:

- School of Business
- School of Education
- School of Nursing
- College of Science and Mathematics
- College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences.

4. Acquire reaffirmation of accreditation for the Nursing Program.

Program accreditation is essential to the continued viability of the nursing program at UVI, ensuring that the program or school has been evaluated and periodically reviewed by a qualified independent body that has found it to be meeting required standards. It also ensures that the program or school is engaged in an on-going self-examination and focusing on the future.

The baccalaureate program in the School of Nursing is based on the St. Thomas campus. In Spring 2011, the School had its reaffirmation visit by the National League for Nursing Accreditation Commission (NLNAC), which recommended reaffirmation of the program for an additional eight years, with conditions.

Three areas in the program required improvement: Collection and use of student learning outcomes data, pass rates on national licensure exams, and program satisfaction measures from graduates and employers. The nursing faculty developed a follow-up plan to address the areas of concern. Highlights of the plan included the following:

- Data collection and aggregation would consistently take place at the end of every semester in every course in the generic and RN-BSN programs.
- Discussions and decisions about results of aggregated data collected will follow at the beginning of each of the following semesters and at Program Curriculum meetings. Discussions and results will consistently be included in minutes of the meetings.

In an effort to improve the performance on the licensure exams, the School of Nursing has taken the following actions:

- Implementation of Conditions for Issuance of Certificate of Readiness. Seniors are expected to achieve a predicted probability of passing National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN) at the identified benchmark stipulated by the faculty. Seniors who do not achieve this benchmark will not receive a Certificate of Readiness, which is a program requirement for graduation. Students must demonstrate readiness to successfully complete the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX). Seniors who have not achieved the required benchmark after completing the Accessible Technology Initiative (ATI) Comprehensive Predictor Exam, as prescribed, may elect to enroll in another structured program of review, approved by the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) Dean and faculty, and present objective evidence of success at the completion of that review. Objective evidence of success would be an achieved score on a proctored exam equivalent to the stipulated benchmark.
- Implementation of mandatory attendance requirement. Attendance at sessions dedicated to preparation for taking the RN Comprehensive Predictor test prepared by ATI is required.

With respect to the program satisfaction measures from employers and graduates, the School of Nursing has been consistently collecting data from these groups since 2009. A follow-up report on the status of the initiatives outlined in the plan is due to the NLNAC in two years from the receipt of the reaccreditation action from NLNAC.

5. Achieve American Council on Education (ACE) accreditation for CELL.

Since its inception in 2002, CELL has been dedicated to furthering the education of career-minded individuals. CELL has established public/private partnerships with government and industry to offer professional and lifelong training opportunities. In November 2007, CELL received accreditation from the American Council on Education (ACE) for 16 of the courses offered. Though a very small percentage—CELL offers over 300 courses on line—the courses received college credit equivalencies, which reflected the quality and depth expected in an

academic course. The accredited courses were rated at the baccalaureate level, both upper and lower divisions. In addition to the ACE accreditation, CELL has also partnered with the American Management Association (AMA) and the International Association of Continuing Education and Training (IACET) to offer high quality programs. In FY 2010, CELL began offering on-line courses, which resulted in the extension of the Center's reach beyond the confines of the traditional classroom setting. CELL realized a 40% increase in revenues during that period, which was due primarily to the on-line offerings.

6. *Develop strategies to address gender disparities at UVI.*

The strategy to alter the demographics of entering freshmen focused on two attributes: gender and residency. The University began an extensive outreach program to attract male students by reaching out to local high schools to convince male students to stay in school and to aspire to attend college. The Office of the President spearheaded a male enrollment initiative to increase the proportion of males in the student population. The growth in male enrollment has been substantial yielding a 6.5% per annum increase and has met the goal of a 1% increase in male students as a percentage of the student population each year. This objective measure, however, does not reflect the ambitious nature of the proposed shift in gender of the student population.

The University plans to grow its overall enrollment by 3%. This means that male enrollment would have to increase by a greater percentage to meet the objective as stated. This objective could also be met by a substantial decrease in female enrollment, which would not be desirable. The strategic plan did not express a definitive target for diversification of residency of the student population. Since 2005 nonresidents have averaged from 7% to 12% of the undergraduate enrollment. Based on those statistics there has not been a significant shift in the residency of the student population. As of Fall 2010, male enrollment stood at 27%. This represented a 4% growth from that of Fall 2006. In 2011, male enrollment stood at 29%.

As part of the University's ongoing efforts to attract and retain male students, the convened the inaugural meeting of the Focus Group on Male Student Recruitment, Retention, and Graduation in November 2009. A core group of male students was invited for a dialogue about strategies that both the administration and students could utilize to attract, retain, and engage male students in university life. The group selected the name Brothers with a Cause (BWC). In February, 2010, articles of association and bylaws were approved by BWC, which commenced its recruitment efforts.

The goal of BWC is to increase the recruitment, retention, and graduation rates of young men within the UVI service area through strategic intervention at the K-12 and higher education levels. Some of the areas of focus include:

- Peer tutoring and other supplemental academic services
- Community outreach to secondary schools
- Goals, core values, and aspirations
- Cultural, academic, spiritual, and social experiences
- Development of a mentorship program for junior high and high school boys
- Development of male organizations on campus (fraternities, brotherhoods, etc.).

To date, BWC has elected officers, developed a logo and banner, recruited members, and

sponsored activities including two two-day Male Empowerment “Man Up” conferences, held on the St. Thomas and St. Croix campuses in February 2011 and February 2012. Both events attracted more than 3,000 young males annually who gathered for two days to discuss pertinent issues. BWC also spearheaded three “Academic Jams” before final exams in Fall 2010, Spring 2011, and Fall 2011 on both campuses. This initiative consisted of counseling, group study, and peer tutoring sessions in key university subject areas.

One of the outreach activities launched last summer was a partnership between the Department of Education and BWC for young males who, based on their academic performance during the 2010-2011 school year, were in jeopardy of not being promoted from the 7th to the 8th grade. The program, Junior University, ran from July 5, 2011, through August 5, 2011. Along with mathematics and reading skills, the 50 students who were targeted for this program were mentored by members of BWC. There are also plans to launch a Big Brother Program for students in public high schools in the near future.

CURRENT STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION PLANS

Center for Student Success

With the financial resources in place and an interim executive director at the helm, the Center for Student Success (CSS), initially scheduled to begin operating in FY 2009, was launched during the summer of 2011 through the support of the Student Aid and Fiscal Responsibility Act (SAFRA) and the Foundation for the University of the Virgin Islands (FUVI) grant programs. The Center’s focus is on ensuring the academic success of students pursuing careers in the physical and natural sciences, nursing and allied health professions, mathematics, computer science, information technology and sciences, and engineering. Although these careers are in high demand in the labor market, the University has been challenged with the retention of students in these areas. It has also faced challenges with the six-year graduation rates.

The model that the University has developed for the Center for Student Success creates integration and collaboration among various units and programs of the University to develop a synergy that is expected to be far more effective than the paradigm of individual units working independently to deliver support services. The Executive Director reports directly to the Provost. He has oversight responsibility for Campus Advising and Tutorial Services (CATS) as well as the Freshman Development Seminar program (FDS). The Office of Counseling and Placement, the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL), the Information Technology Services (ITS) Component, the Division of Student Affairs, the schools and colleges, and other units will collaborate with the Center to deliver the services aimed at improving retention and graduation rates. The overall policy direction of the Center resides with the Center for Student Success Advisory Council (CSAC).

At the end of the first and third years of operation, the Center for Student Success will undergo internal and external evaluations in accordance with Title III requirements. These evaluations will assess the extent to which the Center has met internal and external standards, as well as its objectives. In addition to the items highlighted in this section, the following were accomplished:

- Adoption of a policy to award honorary degrees
- Completion of the Wellness Center and the Brewers Bay Bathhouse

- Launch of a new master's degree in counseling psychology
- Implementation of the P-16 Collaborative to improve the quality of education across the territory
- Launch of the Caribbean Green Technology Center and the UVI Goes Green Initiative
- Institutionalization of the Seven Management Values introduced by the President during his convocation address in 2010. These management values will be implemented to improve the delivery of programs and services and enhance our ability to address daily challenges (Section Six: Appendix 6.3: Seven Management Values).

CHALLENGES

ACBSP Accreditation

The School of Business continues to pursue accreditation from the Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP). In Spring 2011, a team of peer reviewers conducted an accreditation site visit of the School of Business. The team noted both strengths and weaknesses of the School's programs in their official report. The School of Business responded to the report and has been informed that ACBSP will defer the application for accreditation for at least another year. The reasons cited for the deferment were the unavailability of sufficient data documenting student learning outcomes as well as inadequate relationships with the business community, and not enough faculty engaged in scholarship. It is expected that this information will provide the faculty with a clear road map on the requirements to improve teaching and learning in business education. Testing instruments for specific courses will be created and then used to track student performance over the course of the next three years. The assessments commenced in Fall 2011.

In the area of faculty scholarship, ACBSP noted that only 4 out of 20 faculty members are consistently publishing. Within the next two years, ACBSP requires that 10 faculty members consistently publish. That figure increases to 16 within the next three years. In light of the current lack of consistent publishing, the School of Business has developed a plan to enhance faculty scholarship.

NCATE Accreditation

The School of Education (SOE), having been granted candidacy status by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) at its October 2011 meeting, continues to pursue accreditation. In the Fall 2007 semester, the SOE expressed its intent to seek NCATE accreditation under the leadership of a coordinator who spearheaded the process. However, given instability in the leadership of the SOE and an inadequate number of faculty, there had been a number of challenges attaining candidacy. Between the periods of 2006 and 2011, there had been six Deans/Interim Deans in the SOE which contributed to the lack of significant progress in achieving accreditation. Despite these challenges, and under the leadership of a new Interim Dean, a newly appointed Assessment Coordinator, and the support of the unit's dedicated faculty, the SOE continues to work diligently toward becoming NCATE accredited. A visit by NCATE's Board of Examiners is planned for the Fall 2013 semester.

AREA FOCUS # 2: INSTITUTIONAL IMPROVEMENT

Introduction

Institutional Improvement relates to enhancing the capacity and performance of internal operations at UVI. This entails improving customer service delivery and improving operational results through redesigning administrative and educational processes. These include, but are not limited to, upgrading internal communications infrastructure systems and developing and implementing an integrated planning, assessment, and evaluation system.

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS AND IMPACT

1. Develop centralized measures of effectiveness and outcomes.

Centralized outcomes assessment and institutional effectiveness activities monitor how well the University is responding to the goals, objectives or areas of focus in the approved strategic plan. The University's electronic databases of student, human resources, and financial matters that facilitate the analyses of trends or snapshot data are found in BANNER. Such data enable the institution (1) to compare present performance with past performance and (2) to compare UVI with similar institutions, whether they be Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities (APLU) formerly National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges (NASULGC), or insular colleges.

The overarching goal for Institutional Improvement is to “Insure that the strategic goals and objectives are met by enhancing the capacity of the University to achieve results through innovative, effective teaching strategies, and high quality academic and student support programs.”

2. Actively and consistently enhance the University's image and reputation internally as well as externally.

The institution works at attaining this goal through its support of superior performance by investing in staff and faculty training and professional development and comprehensive compensation. The University is proud of the quality of research being conducted by its faculty particularly in the College of Science and Mathematics, its internationally recognized aquaponics program, and the many awards received by students. Additionally, it attempts to improve internal communication infrastructure and align these with the goals of *VISION 2012*. The University's efforts at strengthening relationships with all stakeholders, especially with alumni through outreach, support, and education, have resulted in an increased number of alumni contributors, which has exceeded the initial goal of 13% by 3%.

Another major activity is the development of a Risk Assessment Management Plan for the University. Senior leadership at the University received risk identification and assessment training and engaged components across the institution in identifying and assessing risk in their areas. A Risk Assessment Management Plan was approved by the University's Board of Trustees and the administration makes regular reports to the full Board through the Planning Committee of the Board on an annual basis.

AREA OF FOCUS # 3: FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Introduction

UVI received approximately 58% of its operational support from the Government of the Virgin Islands in FY 2011. The remaining 43% consists of tuition and fees, 21%; indirect costs, 10%; while auxiliary income and Foundation subventions account for the rest. This breakdown exposes the vulnerabilities in UVI's financial structure.

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS AND IMPACT

The world's economic crisis has severely reduced the flow of tourism dollars into the Territory's coffers from which UVI draws the largest percentage of its operational support. The territorial situation has become so grave that in the third quarter of 2011, the government required UVI to reduce its budget by 3%, followed by a further reduction of approximately 1% in the fourth quarter. In July 2011, the 29th Legislature of the Virgin Islands enacted legislation which the Governor signed into law requiring the units of government and all its instrumentalities receiving governmental support to cut salaries by 8% and impose a hiring freeze for a two-year period. Intervention by the University's administration resulted in an exemption from the hiring freeze that the legislature passed.

While the financial resources available to UVI have dwindled, initiatives for fulfilling its mission of student-centeredness and success have expanded. Beginning in 2007, the University has increased program offerings, established a wired physical facility on St. John to cater to students there, created a Center for Student Success, adopted male and female initiatives across the institution, established a Center for the Teaching of Entrepreneurship and created a Center for the study of Professionalism and Spirituality. In addition, the institution has recently embraced a green energy initiative with a view to creating alternative energy sources that would benefit the institution, the territory, and beyond.

Initial funding for most of these initiatives has come from external sources like the local business community and Title III. For example, the recently added Hotel and Tourism Management degree was made possible from seed money from the local tourism community; the proposed Center for Entrepreneurship in the School of Business received funding in the amount of \$5 million from a local businessman; both the Center for Student Success and the St. John facility were started with Title III funding.

The issue of sustainability for these initiatives arises because the funding for most of them must be absorbed institutionally at some time in the near future. With the economic picture of the territory as gray as it is at present, UVI will have to exercise the utmost financial prudence to sustain the scope of its mission.

In an effort to offset its energy consumption costs, the University has embarked on a UVI Goes Green Campaign which includes among other measures a provision to establish a 5MW Photovoltaic energy producing system. It is anticipated that by 2015, the institution will have the capacity to produce approximately 50% of its energy needs from alternative energy sources.

CURRENT STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION PLANS

UVI is aware of the challenging path ahead, and its past successes in maintaining and achieving its goals are heartening. Two characteristics of the UVI experience are harbingers of its future flexibility and resilience.

The first is the refinement of the institutional budgeting process, which embraces the entire campus community and involves the transparent preparation, presentation, and defense of proposed budgets by all units from the President down. The proposed budget undergoes town hall vetting before it proceeds to the Board of Trustees for final approval.

The second is UVI's past performance in fiscal prudence. In the *PRR* of 2002, the institution adopted a goal of financial sustainability with several objectives and measures of accomplishment. The stated goal was as follows: *Enhance and diversify the University's financial base through the development of new revenue streams and realization of cost savings.*

The supporting objectives for this goal were:

1. Meet internal and external demands, institutional goals, and cost reductions by improving operating financial management systems.
2. Increase annual giving targets and ensure capital campaign objectives are appropriately linked to institutional, student, and academic needs.
3. Increase mission-centered grant acquisitions that support and promote research and community development (Section Five: Appendix 5.1: *Vision 2012* FY2012-11 Close out Report).

CHALLENGES AND THE WAY AHEAD

Notwithstanding the adoption of transparent budgeting processes and its successes in financial planning, UVI must find new sources of revenue and adopt creative cost-cutting measures that do not compromise its mission. The entire institution must begin a conversation about the key aspects of its mission that it will pursue and absorb its scarce resources. In the process, hard decisions are being taken about programs and initiatives, but the alternative presents a more stark reality.

FOCUS AREA #4: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Introduction

The goal of Community Engagement is well expressed in *VISION 2012* to “Become a leader and partner with the community to address social, economic, environmental, political, educational and cultural issues impacting the U.S. Virgin Islands through a range of higher education initiatives.” This strategic goal supports the desired future state to enhance the lives of the people of the U.S. Virgin Islands and the wider Caribbean through educational initiatives. The University of the Virgin Islands addresses two of the major elements of its mission as a land-grant university through the strategic efforts of the units in the RPS Unit.

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS AND IMPACT

1. *Continue addressing critical issues that will improve public education in the territory by working with the VI Department of Education* (Section Five: Appendix 5.2: Collaboration with VI Department of Education).

- The first cohort of Master's in Mathematics for Secondary Education Teachers, a collaborative effort with the VI Department of Education, completed the requirements for graduation in May 2008.
- CELL entered into an agreement with the VI Department of Education to provide a PRAXIS II preparation course for teachers. During the first cohort of the program, 37 elementary school teachers in St. Thomas and St. Croix participated in the program. Also the funding to continue the SAT Prep course was secured from the Prosser ICC Foundation.
- Assisted in the development of the USVI State Plan for Education.
- Expanded collaborations relative to pipeline from K-12 to UVI.
- The President's Task Force on Improving Education Quality in the U.S. Virgin Islands was established to conduct a comprehensive analysis and provide recommendations regarding intervention programs for improving the academic readiness of students attending both public and non-public schools in the U.S. Virgin Islands to enhance academic success at UVI. The taskforce report was completed in 2010. Funding was also identified and timely implementation of the selected strategies and recommendations commenced in 2010 (Section Five: Appendix 5.3: Report of President's Task Force).
- In 2008, 426 students from Virgin Islands schools were enrolled at UVI. That number dropped to 391 in 2009, to 386 in 2010, and increased to 396 in 2011.

2. *Enhance the quality and relevance of programs by increasing collaboration with education, business, health, human services, art, labor and other community sectors.*

Colleges and Schools Advisory Boards have been established and members appointed for the following: Science and Mathematics, Business, Education, Nursing, Humanities and Social Sciences. These collaborations provided outputs that support the development of the Territory and aid in the improvement of the skill base of the workforce.

3. *Address issues impacting the community by expanding consulting services, directed research, and technical support.*

The Research and Publication Services (RPS) unit consists of nine different units, each with its own specific function, as has been mentioned earlier. The RPS sub-units are assessed on their abilities to bring meaningful experiences and non-formal university educational exposure to the wider Virgin Islands community. The unit is headed by the Vice Provost for RPS, who works with nine directors, each one heading a department which has a distinct staff and budget, and conducts activities often dictated by its respective funding sources (Section Five: Appendix 5.4: RPS Units, Other Units, and Organizational Chart).

The director of each unit is identified on the appended organizational chart. Annually, the staff activities are assessed hierarchically with the Vice Provost for RPS conducting the assessments of the directors for productivity, and, simultaneously, goals for the upcoming year are

established. The overall programs are predicated on strategic plans, which are annually modified based on goals achieved and new challenges placed under the unit. The strategic plans have been tailored to fit the *VISION 2012* framework of UVI. The Eastern Caribbean Center (ECC) conducted a population and housing survey for the Office of the Governor during this period and also conducted the 2010 Census, hiring about 750 part-time employees. This makes UVI the only university in the nation to be involved in the US decennial census.

4. *Support community skill development and success by expanding certifications, workforce training, continuing education, lifelong learning, professional development, and consulting services.*

In addition to the expanding influence of the CELL program, (Section Five: Appendix 5.5: CELL) the 26th Legislature of the U.S. Virgin Islands assigned the University \$500,000 to conduct a public education program to educate the U.S. Virgin Islands' community about the planned 5th Constitutional Convention. UVI embarked on the public education project and established a website, www.itsourfuture.vi, to house critical information pertaining to the project.

ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING

Analytical Frame: UVI's 23 Long-Term Goals to Have Been Achieved by 2012

This section presents the progress achieved and challenges confronted from 2007 to 2012 while implementing strategies towards achieving the 23 long-term goals for student learning outcomes assessment listed in Figure 5.7. Additionally, this narrative discusses various challenges faced and actions taken so far to address these challenges, and the next steps planned for continuing to close the gaps in goal achievement. There will also be a discussion on completed assessment plans, examples on closing the loop, and general education assessment.

In 2007, 23 long-term goals for student learning outcomes assessment were established with an aim of achieving all goals by 2012. The far right column of Figure 5.7 below presents those 23 long-term goals to be achieved by 2012, as conceived in 2007. The achievement of all of these 23 long-term goals would have earmarked UVI's establishment of a "culture of assessment." Relative to each long-term goal, the far left column of Figure 5.7 describes UVI's state in 2007. At that time, UVI was at an embryonic stage of development in the implementation of student learning outcomes and in the establishment of a "culture of assessment." The middle column of Figure 5.7 describes where the University is in 2012, with respect to each projected 2012 goal. In general, Figure 5.7 shows that UVI has been successful at either achieving or making significant progress towards achieving most of these 23 goals. Goals either not achieved or showing marginal progress are highlighted in italics and bold print in the middle column of Figure 5.7.

CURRENT STATUS OF 2012 LEARNING ASSESSMENT GOALS DEVELOPED IN 2007

STATE OF STUDENT LEARNING ASSESSMENT IN 2007	OUR CURRENT STUDENT LEARNING ASSESSMENT STATUS IN 2012	THE 2012 STUDENT LEARNING ASSESSMENT GOALS DEVELOPED IN 2007
(NOTE: THESE GOALS AREN'T NUMBERED SEQUENTIALLY BECAUSE THEY'RE CLUSTERED TO ALIGN WITH SPECIFIC STRATEGIES)		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assessment in an embryonic state; 2. Sparse and sporadic use of assessment to improve student learning; 3. Few understood value/limits of assessment; 4. Few Degree Programs had devised and implemented assessment plans; 5. Few Assessment Plans had learning objectives, measures, success criteria; 6. Few Faculty used assessment results to improve learning 7. Faculty, administrators and staff at UVI weren't aware that assessment efforts are for improving student learning; <p>Deans were not leading UVI faculty to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. develop measurable objectives for each of the program's educational goals; 9. ensure that direct/indirect measures of student learning are aligned with the program's learning objectives; <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. be actively involved in interpreting the assessment results and "closing the loop"; <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 13. UVI did not communicate to students the purposes of assessment efforts from Freshman Orientation until graduation; 14. The Provost did not annually negotiate an assessment program budget that was enough for the technological and physical space resources needed for a viable assessment program and professional development; 15. Deans didn't possess funds for expenses associated with the School's/College's assessment activities and initiatives; 16. UVI didn't provide Deans with resources to fund the improvements evidenced by assessment results; 18. Faculty didn't have syllabi learning objectives aligned to Program Learning Objectives; 20. Assessment data were not UVI's basis for making changes; 21. Assessment data didn't inform academic program reviews & accreditation self-studies. 22. Proposed program improvements, evidenced by assessment results, didn't inform the routine School/College and institutional planning, budgeting processes, and funding priorities; 23. UVI didn't assess student learning at each transition point from the students' entry to exit. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Most UVI Governing bodies & leaders were not knowledgeable of assessment; 12. There will be student representation on University & School/College assessment committees 17. Considerable program-level data about student and program performance didn't exist; 19. Many assessment information sources (e.g., assessment newsletter, resource manual, website) did not exist to be available to faculty. Website was new; 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assessment is more embedded; 2. More widespread use of assessment to improve student learning; 3. Some understand value/limits of assessment; 4. All Bachelor Degree Programs have devised and implemented assessment plans; 5. All Assessment Plans have learning objectives, measures, success criteria; 6. <i>Some Faculty have used assessment results to improve learning – others are yet to do so;</i> 7. <i>Efforts are ongoing to improve the awareness of faculty, administrators and staff at UVI to realize that that assessment efforts are for improving student learning;</i> <p>Except for #10, Deans have led UVI faculty to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. develop measurable objectives for each program's educational goals; 9. ensure that direct/indirect measures of student learning are aligned with the program's learning objectives; <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. <i>be actively involved in interpreting the assessment results and "closing the loop"; UVI is making progress in communicating to students the purposes of assessment efforts from Freshman Orientation until graduation;</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 14. The Provost has successfully negotiated an annual assessment program budget that's enough for the technology and resources needed for a viable assessment program and professional development; 15. Deans have access to funds for expenses associated with the School's/College's assessment activities and initiatives; 16. UVI provides Deans with resources to fund the improvements required by assessment results; <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 18. <i>Some faculty have aligned syllabi learning objectives to Program Learning Objectives;</i> 20. <i>Assessment data has begun to be a basis for making changes; more closing the loop needed;</i> 21. Assessment informs <u>some</u> academic program reviews & all accreditation self-studies. 22. <i>Proposed program improvements, evidenced by assessment results, not well aligned with routine School/College/institutional planning, budgeting processes, and funding priorities;</i> 23. <i>Some UVI Schools/Colleges assess student learning at each transition point.</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. <i>Many UVI Governing bodies & individual leaders continue to be informed about assessment;</i> 12. <i>Students are yet to be placed on School/College assessment committees;</i> 17. Some program-level data about student and program performance now exists; 19. A few assessment information sources exist (e.g., forms, website, sample plans; Learning Management System; and electronic file s); 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assessment a way of life; 2. All use assessment to improve student learning; 3. All understand value/limits of assessment ; 4. All Degree Programs will have devised and implemented assessment plans; 5. Assessment Plans will have learning objectives, measures, success criteria; 6. Faculty will use assessment results to improve learning ; 7. Faculty, administrators and staff at UVI will realize that assessment efforts are for improving student learning; <p>Led by School/College Deans, UVI faculty will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. have developed measurable objectives for each of the program's educational goals; 9. ensure that direct/indirect measures of student learning are aligned with the program's learning objectives; 10. will be actively involved in interpreting the assessment results and "closing the loop"; <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 13. UVI will communicate to students the purposes of assessment efforts from Freshman Orientation until graduation; 14. The Provost will annually negotiate an assessment program budget that is enough for the technological and physical space resources needed for a viable assessment program and professional development; 15. Deans will use School/College funds for expenses associated with the School/College's assessment activities and initiatives; 16. UVI will provide Deans with resources to fund the improvements evidenced by assessment results; 18. Faculty will have syllabi learning objectives aligned to Program Learning Objectives; 20. Assessment data will be UVI's basis for making changes; 21. Assessment data will inform academic program reviews & accreditation self-studies. 22. Proposed program improvements, evidenced by assessment results, will inform the routine School/College and institutional planning, budgeting processes, and funding priorities; 23. UVI will assess student learning at each transition point from the students' entry to exit. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. The UVI Governing bodies & individual leaders will be knowledgeable of assessment; 12. There will be student representation on University & School/College assessment committees; 17. Considerable program-level data about student and program performance will be available ; 19. Assessment information sources (e.g., assessment newsletter, resource manual, website) will be available to faculty.

Figure 5.7 – Current Status Of 2012 Student Learning Assessment Goals Developed In 2007

Challenges to Student Learning Outcomes Assessment

Three of the most salient challenges to student learning outcomes assessment experienced in the earlier years after the site visit included the following: ongoing conversations between faculty and administration regarding faculty unionization efforts, frequent turnover of deans, and the investment of limited institutional resources in this area.

The following indicates what progress has been achieved in implementing student learning assessment during this time period:

1. With the exception of the professional accreditation constrained Schools of Nursing and Education, each college and school adopted the Nichols 5-Step approach to assessment planning and implementation;
2. In support and reinforcement of strong dean leadership, the Committee on Learning Assessment for Student Success was restructured to consist of the deans and the Director of Student Learning Outcomes Assessment;
3. Faculty the Schools of Education and Business and the Colleges of Science and Math and Liberal Arts and Social Sciences received training in student learning outcomes assessment from the director;
4. Some UVI faculty attended assessment conferences with the director;
5. Some degree programs in schools and colleges did develop and implement assessment plans.
6. Some general education outcomes were assessed, although closing the loop actions were not performed.
7. The Student Learning Assessment Committee was renamed the Committee on Learning Assessment for Student Success, as per the Student Learning Assessment Committee MSCHE 2007 Site Visit Team recommendation.

Actions Taken So Far to Address These Challenges

In 2009 and in 2012, the administration instituted several actions that have improved UVI's overall institutional culture in general and initiated the establishment of a culture of assessment in particular. This effort has accelerated the institution's progress in achieving many of the 23 long-term goals for student learning assessment in 2007.

In particular, the President's actions include the following:

- Initiated an institutional culture change at UVI by immediately introducing his Seven Management Values. One of these Seven Management Values explicitly specifies the importance of assessing all facets of the Institutional Effectiveness,
- Instituted several mechanisms to improve the quality of communication, trust, transparency, shared governance, and decision-making at UVI;
- Established the Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment Advisory Board (IEAAB). The IEAAB provides representative and cross-functional leadership and oversight of all of facets of UVI's strategic, institutional effectiveness, and assessment planning and implementation. The IEAAB consists of the President, Provost, other Cabinet members, Deans, Faculty Chair, Directors of Student Learning Outcomes Assessment and Institutional Research, Staff Council President, Special Assistant to the President, student representatives, and faculty representatives selected by their respective schools and colleges.

- Provided strongly vocal and institutionalized support for assessment by establishing assessment as one of the Seven Management Values (Section Six: Appendix 6.3).

The Provost's actions include the following:

- Required both the director and the deans report on the status of outcomes assessment at the monthly Deans' meeting with the Provost.
- Directed each dean to establish outcomes assessment as a permanent agenda item of monthly meetings with his/her faculty.
- Directed each dean to establish an engaged assessment committee in his/her respective school or college (note: although some type of assessment committee existed in each UVI school/college, the engagement levels varied significantly).
- Required each dean to lead the school or college to develop explicit learning outcomes for each bachelor's degree program and multiple measures for each learning outcome.
- Directed each dean to lead the school or college to develop learning outcomes and assessment plans for each master and associate degree program because these hadn't been done in previous assessments.
- Directed each dean to lead the school or college to develop curricula maps to degree learning outcomes.
- Provided consistent, vocal, visible senior management support for student learning outcomes assessment at all important meeting contexts: President's Cabinets, faculty convocations, faculty meetings, Deans' meetings, and Academic Component meetings.
- Spearheaded UVI's institutional culture change into a culture of assessment by raising assessment's level of visibility and importance, and holding deans directly accountable.
- Successfully negotiated an annual assessment program budget substantial enough to sustain a viable assessment program, including assessment-related training and development of faculty.
- Established a General Education Committee to review the current general education assessment practices.
- Changed the charge of the English Proficiency Exam (EPE) Committee to use the administration of the exam as an assessment activity and not just a graduation requirement.

The Gaps in Goal Achievement:

Gap #1 Some faculty have used assessment results to improve learning—many have not done so;

Gap #2 Many faculty, administrators and staff at UVI aren't aware that assessment efforts are for improving student learning, as opposed to satisfying an accreditation mandate;

Gap #3 Many faculty are not actively involved in interpreting the assessment results and closing the loop;

Gap #4 UVI does not adequately communicate to students the purposes of assessment efforts from Freshman Orientation until graduation;

Gap #5 Not all faculty have aligned syllabi learning objectives to Program Learning Objectives;

Gap #6 Assessment data have begun to be a basis for making changes, although more closing the loop is needed;

Gap #7 Proposed program improvements, evidenced by assessment results, not well aligned with routine school/college/institutional planning, budgeting processes, and funding priorities;

Gap #8 Not all UVI schools and colleges assess student learning at each transition point from the students' entry to exit;

Gap #9 Many UVI governing bodies & individual leaders are not knowledgeable about assessment;

Gap #10 There are no students on University/School/College assessment committees.

Next Steps Planned for Closing the Gaps in Goal Achievement.

Gaps #1, #3, and #6 reveal the need for more emphasis to be placed on closing the loop. Two actions are planned to address this need: 1. Offer closing the loop training of faculty and assessment coordinators in each school and college, and 2. Place more accountability upon the deans to lead their faculty to use assessment data to improve learning outcomes. The Provost will hold the deans accountable to have their faculty use assessment results to close the loop. The Director of Student Learning Outcomes Assessment will provide some of this training and coaching to faculty. Also, the director will make additional closing the loop training available to faculty by bringing assessment trainers to UVI and enabling faculty to attend assessment conferences off island.

Additional training via the director will occur through the newly formed Faculty Assessment Learning Community (FALC). FALC was formed in May 2012. The UVI Faculty Assessment Learning Community comprises a group of UVI faculty active in implementing student learning outcomes assessment with the following objectives: 1. The mission to promote the establishment of a UVI "culture of assessment"; 2. A common purpose to improve student learning outcomes through working collaboratively and interdependently to learn together how to continuously improve assessment knowledge, skills, capabilities, methods, processes, and approaches; and 3. A common commitment to share best practices, new ideas, experiences, and knowledge with each other and the UVI faculty community in order to achieve the aforesaid mission and purpose.

Gaps #2, #5, and #8 also indicate a need for more hands-on assessment training. The Director of Student Learning Outcomes Assessment will provide this hands-on assessment training to faculty in each school and college. FALC represents an additional source of faculty training and development in assessment. Since FALC members are expected to become assessment champions and leaders among their peers, they'll provide direct assessment training and coaching of their college/school colleagues.

Gaps #4 and #9 are communication issues. The Director will develop and deploy a communications strategy targeted at students and various UVI governing bodies like the University Senate, Faculty Association, Student Government, Provost's Academic Component, and the Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment Advisory Board.

Finally, Goal #8 will become more achievable once UVI has matured in closing the loop as a routine activity, rather than an imposed requirement. Once faculty and administrators experience closing the loop's true benefits and improvements, they'll use more assessment-based evidence to their proposed program improvement, planning, budgeting, and funding priorities decisions. In the meantime, the Provost and Director will continue to communicate the importance of using assessment results to inform program improvement decisions and model these behaviors as well.

Several Examples of Completed Assessment Plans

Appendix 5.11 provides three examples of completed assessment plans in the Nichols format. Figure 5.8 below illustrates the substantial progress achieved since 2010 in engaging schools and colleges in widespread planning and implementing student learning assessment plans. The number of assessment plans implemented with at least one cycle increased from 6 out of 18 during the period 2007-2009 to 17 out of 18 during the period 2010-2011.

Admittedly, the quality of completed assessment plans varies, especially in the closing the loop area. Nevertheless, this recent achievement represents the first time in UVI's history such a widespread faculty engagement in assessment has been achieved. Our strong senior leadership team assures us this widespread faculty engagement will be sustained and will increase.

Noted assessment scholar James Nichols says, "The implementation of outcomes assessment should not be seen as a big bang approach but as a series of baby steps of continuous improvements" (Nichols, 2005). In this sense, UVI's strategy was to focus first on achieving widespread assessment of bachelor degree programs. Now, we are having schools/colleges include associate and master degree programs in their assessment efforts.

Assessment Plans and Implementation by Schools and Colleges

Assessment Plans and Implementations By Schools and Colleges 2007-2009 vs. 2010-2011						
Note: 2011-2012 Assessments are being implemented but not completed at this time						
	Bachelor Degree Program Assessment Activities Since Re-Affirmation					
	Specified Degree Program Learning Outcomes?	Wrote Assessment Plan?	Implemented Assessment Plan?	Closed the Loop At Least Once?	# Assessment Cycles Completed 2007-2009?	# Assessment Cycles Completed 2009-2011
School of Nursing						
Nursing BS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	2*	2*
*National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission assessment compliance-not the Nichols Model						
School of Business						
Business Admin. BA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	1	2
Accounting BA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	1	0
School of Education						
Elementary Education BA	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	0	1**
Inclusive Early Child Education BA	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	0	1**
**National Council for Accrediting Teacher Education assessment compliance-not the Nichols Model						
College of Science & Math						
Biology/Marine Biology BS/BA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	1	1
Chemistry BS/BA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	0	1
Math BS/BA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	0	1
Computer Science BS/BA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	1	1
College of Liberal Arts & Social Sciences						
<i>SOCIAL SCIENCES MAJORS</i>						
Psychology BA	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	0	1
Social Science BA	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	0	1
Social Work BA	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	0	1
<i>HUMANITIES MAJORS</i>						
Communication BA	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	0	1
English BA	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	0	1
Humanities BA	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	0	1
Music Ed. BA	Yes	Yes	No	No	0	1
Speech Communication & Theatre BA	Yes	Yes	No	No	0	0
TOTAL					6	17

Figure 5.8: Assessment Plans and Implementation by Schools and Colleges

Several Examples of Closing the Loop Actions Implemented in Colleges/Schools

In the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, assessment results for the Communications BA identified a need to improve students' oral communications and presentation skills. Faculty noted that when giving a formal presentation, students didn't apply the skill of code switching from speaking in dialect to speaking Standard English. The Communications faculty decided to offer its new Voice and Diction course every semester. Additionally, faculty agreed to embed repetitive student uses of PowerPoint presentations development into every Communications class. Finally, faculty agreed to add new modules on adding live media to PowerPoint, another weakness identified in the assessments.

The School of Nursing faculty reacted to deficient student performance on nursing licensure exam (e. g. the NCLEX-RN exam), which is an assessment measure. Effective Spring 2011, the School now requires all Associate of Science in Nursing (ASN) students to score within the 90th percentile on the Assessment Technologies, Inc. (ATI) NCLEX-RN Predictor exam in order to pass the Management Course and graduate from the ASN program. The NCLEX-RN pass rate for the Spring 2011 graduating class was 100%.

To ensure its Bachelor of Science in Nursing students would achieve the 90th percentile on the NCLEX-RN, the School now requires them to receive a Certificate of Readiness as a part of the application packet to sit the NCLEX-RN licensure exam. The School of Nursing provides a Certificate of Readiness to BSN seniors or graduates once their scores indicate that they have achieved a score within the 90h percentile.

Another example of closing the loop comes from the School of Business. As a result of faculty reaction to assessment results, i.e., low Major Field Test (MFT) scores in quantitative analysis, the SOB now requires all business administration and accounting majors to take DSC 410 (Quantitative Methods). Similarly, in reaction to the relatively low scores of accounting majors on non-accounting-related MFT areas, SOB faculty now require all accounting majors to take BUS 436 Business Strategy, along with all business administration majors already taking this capstone course. Both of these requirements are now published in the *UVI Catalog* for accounting majors. The requirement for business administration majors to take DSC 410 will be published in the *2012-2013 UVI Catalog*. Since these changes are newly instituted, an assessment of their impact will be performed in the future.

In the College of Science and Math, a new course in Scientific Critical Thinking was developed with grant support and taught in the fall of 2011 to biology majors. Analysis of prior assessment results for the Biology program indicated a need for students to sharpen their critical thinking skills and adequately prepare and deliver a better-organized oral presentation. In reaction to the 2010-2011 general education assessment of the quantitative skills, wherein only 54% of students taking Math 140 met the minimum score of 15 out of 20, math faculty have adopted what they believe to be a better textbook. Additionally, math faculty agreed to better align their instruction with the learning outcomes and a common final exam assessment, beginning in Fall 2012.

General Education Assessment

Some general education assessment occurred during the 2007 to 2011 time frame. Consistent with the 2007 UVI Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan, we continued to implement the CLA exam for general education assessment. To assess critical analysis and reasoning and written communications, the CLA Exam was administered three times between 2007 and 2011 and is currently being administered in 2012 (Figure 5.9: Assessment of General Education Skills, below).

General Education Assessments	Assessment Means	2007-2009	2009-2011
written communications	CLA* Exam	2	1
quantitative reasoning	Embedded Testing	0	1
technological competence	Computer Literacy Exam	2	2
critical analysis and reasoning	CLA* Exam	2	1
information literacy	Information Literacy Exam	1	1
* Collegiate Learning Assessment administered by the Council to Aid Education - assesses critical thinking, analytical reasoning, problem-solving, and written communications skills.			

Figure 5.9: Assessment of General Education Skills

Figure 5.10 below shows that UVI implemented systemic assessments for seven of its nine General Education Goals. Systemic assessments for GenEd Goals 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, and 9 were done, while Goals 1, 2, and 5 were not assessed (see Figure 5.10 for details).

The CLA exam was administered for general education assessment of GenEd Goals 3, 4, and 6, in 2007, 2008, and 2011. The 2007 and 2008 results both revealed nearly identical implications: that UVI was achieving its mission for the student demographic it serves. For two consecutive years, UVI's CLA results showed a value-added increase in CLA scores that were two standard errors above the expected CLA score. These results ranked UVI's value-added increases in the 99 percentile of all universities and colleges that participated in the CLA exam those years. In short, UVI does make a substantial difference in improving the problem solving, analytical reasoning, written communications, and critical thinking skills of its students during their four years of education. In 2011, UVI administered the CLA for its graduating seniors only. Since UVI's freshmen were not tested, it is not possible to compare the 2007 and 2008 CLA results in terms of estimated value-added. The 2011 UVI seniors taking the CLA performed at the level predicted by the CLA.

The Computer Literacy Exam (CLE) and the English Proficiency Exam (EPE) are implemented biannually to assess computing and written communications skills (GenEd Goals 3 and 4). UVI Library implements an Information Literacy assessment once every two years to assess GenEd Goal 9. National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) [NSSE](#) is administered once every two years to provide UVI assessment data related to: Goal 3 (11c and 11d); Goal 4 (11f and 11g); Goal 6 (11g), Goal 7, and Goal 8. Finally, in 2010-2011, the College of Science and Math began an annual assessment of general education level math competency. No assessments have been implemented for GenEd Goals 1 (knowledge of VI, US, and Globe), 2 (knowledge of nature and earth), and 5 (health and wellness).

UVI General Education Goal		NSSE Item Code #	Other Assessments
1	Knowledge of the history, geography, and demographic characteristics of the U.S. Virgin Islands, the Caribbean, the United States, and the world	Not Applicable	None
2	Knowledge of natural phenomena and of the earth in its place in the universe as well as an appreciation of scientific inquiry	Not Applicable	None
3	Highly developed communication skills	11c and 11d	Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA); English Proficiency Exam (Biannually)
4	Quantitative and computing skills	11f and 11g	Computer Literacy Exam (Biannually); GenEd math assessment
5	Personal health and wellness skills	Not Applicable	None
6	Critical thinking, logic, and moral reasoning skills	11e, 11m and 11n	Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA)
7	Self-awareness, interpersonal, leadership, and team skills	11h, 11k, 11j, 11l, 11p	None
8	Second language skills, multi-cultural and inter-cultural skills and understanding of aesthetic expression in literature and art	11l (cultural skills)	None
9	Information management and research skills	Not Applicable	Information Literacy Exam (Biannually)
NSSE Codes: 11c writing clearly and effectively; 11d speaking clearly and effectively; 11e thinking critically and analytically; 11f analyzing quantitative problems; 11g using computing and information technology; 11h working effectively with others; 11j learning effectively on your own; 11k understanding yourself; 11l understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds; 11m solving complex real-world problems; 11n: Develop a personal code of values and ethics; 11p developing a deepened sense of spirituality.			

Figure 5.10: Systemic Assessments of General Education Goals

However, UVI is still challenged to resolve the 2007 MSCHE Evaluation Team’s concern regarding the general education curriculum “*not having sufficiently clear procedures and mechanisms for an assessment and revision cycle.*” UVI performs general education assessments by routinely administering a variety of surveys and national assessments. However, the University needs to systemically react to these data to closing the loop.

The main reason for the disconnection between data collection and data interpretation and closing the loop is the lack of “ownership” of general education. Nearly all of the general education curriculum courses are distributed in the various departments of the Colleges of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences and Science and Math. Without ownership being clearly instituted, there has been little analysis, interpretation, and closing the loop activities following these general education assessments performed since 2007. In 2010, the Provost began addressing the general education issue by establishing a General Education Review Committee (GERC). GERC recommends hiring a Coordinator for general education. The Provost is in the process of identifying and hiring an administrator to manage the general education function at UVI.

Another assessment related challenge identified by the General Education Review Committee was the fact that each goal’s description contained multiple skills and knowledge competencies. When unpacked, there are actually 24 specific skills and knowledge competencies identified as general education learning outcomes. Hence, the Task Force recommends streamlining and simplifying these 24 learning outcomes into 9 to 12 assessable general education learning outcomes. Finally, when investigating the existing routines, processes and activities of the University that already involved assessments of these general education learning outcomes, the Task Force discovered that such assessment data collections were occurring but in a disjointed manner. We realize we need a more systemic method to assess our nine General Education Goals and close the loop. The Provost is hiring a new Coordinator of General Education who will have administrative responsibilities that include overseeing General Education assessment.

Additionally, the Faculty Assessment Learning Community will help UVI evolve into an assessment culture of evidence and accountability. In its first year, FALC will focus on exploring and learning ways to improve closing the loop.

Conclusion

It is well understood that the benefit of assessment for academic units and institutions is to inform practice decisions. Although at different levels, most academic units are actively engaged in the use of assessment data. UVI is still evolving towards exhibiting a culture of assessment. We admit that we are not there yet, but we are proud of our recent progress in engaging faculty in both the colleges and professional schools. UVI’s progress in its evolution into an assessment culture is evident in its progress in achieving many of the 23 long-term goals established in 2007.

Nevertheless, more progress is required. We must extend and sustain these assessment processes to include assessing all of our associate and master degree programs. The dean of each college and school has faculty developing assessment plans for the respective associate and master degree programs that will be implemented in Fall 2012. We must provide more assessment training to schools and colleges, especially in closing the loop. Also, we must react to our NSSE, CLA, EPE, CLE, and additional general education assessment data by systemically analyzing and interpreting these data to identify improvements and closing the loop.

UVI’s administration has provided a new direction, tone, and support, and has demonstrated and modeled commitment to student learning assessment. As a result, the University is well-

positioned to achieve significant progress in building a culture of assessment and evidence for years to come.

SECTION SIX

LINKED INSTITUTIONAL PLANNING AND BUDGETING PROCESSES

The University of the Virgin Islands officially launched its current strategic plan *VISION 2012* (Section Six: Appendix 6.1: *VISION 2012*) on October 16, 2006. *VISION 2012*, which covers the period 2006 to 2012, culminates in the University's golden anniversary with a grand celebration to mark the accomplishments of the University over the past seven years and the launching of the new Strategic Plan 2012-2017. The *VISION 2012* plan has impacted many facets of the University and continues to serve as a guide for its direction.

Strategic Planning

After launching *VISION 2012*, the University engaged in numerous activities that culminated in the approval of the plan on March 13, 2006. Some of the activities included approval of the planning process by the Board of Trustees (BOT), conducting surveys, convening town hall meetings, and approval of the plan by the full Board of Trustees. Overall, contributors to the plan included the Strategic Planning Steering Committee (administrators, faculty, staff, and students), BOT, President's Cabinet, faculty and staff, students, alumni, and the community at large.

An important element of the plan was the establishment of supporting unit plans, which were created or updated consistent with *VISION 2012*. These plans, included in their entirety in the appendices, are as follows:

- Academic Master Plan
- Access and Enrollment Services Plan
- Master Plan
- Technology Plan to achieve *VISION 2012*
- Development Plan (Capital Campaign Plan)
- Comprehensive Development Plan.
- Research and Public Service Master Plan.

Over the last three years, the University has become more intentional about linking its plans to the resource allocation process. *VISION 2012* was approved as a general strategic document without the associated cost estimates and draft work plans for the many objectives and measures of accomplishment outlined in the plan. Although previous budget committees referred to *VISION 2012* during the resource allocation process, it was not until Fiscal Year 2007-2008, that the University's strategic planning and resource allocation processes were integrated in a formal way. Budget requests were linked to *VISION 2012*, and allocations were informed by the linkages described.

Subsequently, in 2009-2010, the new President revised the budgeting process, and a new University Budget Committee (Section Six: Appendix 6.2: Budget Process Framework), was formed in context of the shared governance process. The University Budget Committee (UBC) also linked the Seven Management Values mentioned before in Section Six (Section Six: Appendix 6.3) to the resources allocation process in addition to *VISION 2012*. The UBC has been charged with ensuring that the budget process aligns available resources to the component

and constituent priorities, which are based on *VISION 2012*, the institutional values, vision, mission, and measures of accomplishment.

In 2010, a further charge (Section Six: Appendix 6.4: UBC Charge Phase II) was given to the UBC to undertake a review of the entire University's resource allocation processes to include 100% of all allocations and not only the approximately 2.5% that the UBC usually allocates, and to identify opportunities for improvement in the fundamental approaches to resource allocation. A number of recommendations (Section Six: Appendix 6.5: UBC Phase II Report) were presented to the President by the 2009-2010 UBC for consideration and implementation.

Budget Development Process

The University's budget process is evolving to meet the following objectives:

1. Identify opportunities for stakeholder input through the functioning of a UBC and presentations to the UBC by various constituencies.
2. Align available resources to the component and constituent priorities, which are based on *VISION 2012*, the institutional values, vision, mission, management values, and measures of accomplishment.
3. Be vision and value driven, open, accountable, responsive, and strategic.

The goals the University utilizes in forming strategies and making decisions related to short and long term budget planning are delineated in Section Six: Appendix 6.6: Institutional Effectiveness at UVI.

In October of each year the Administration and Finance component issues a Budget Call package inclusive of a Budget Cover Memorandum and Budget Assumptions. Included in the package is an attachment, which lists the *VISION 2012* strategic objectives/measures of accomplishment for the upcoming budget year as well as the remaining years of the strategic plan. This provides the opportunity to accommodate the planning and provisioning of those strategic objectives/measures of accomplishment which require resources, a linkage which is strengthened as the prioritization of planning initiatives is developed. Respondents to the Budget Call are asked to identify the strategic objective/measures of accomplishment for which they are requesting funds and to indicate the intended outcome. The UBC reviews the budget requests and ensures that the items selected for funding are aligned to the University's strategic plan to the extent possible. The listing of items selected for funding by the UBC is included here as a representative sample (Section Six: Appendix 6.7: UBC FY2012 Budget Recommendations).

Specific examples of linked strategic planning and resource allocation processes include:

1. Allocation of funds in support of additional faculty lines to the Schools of Business and Education in support of their bid for ACBSP and NCATE accreditation.
2. Funding support for the University's shared governance structure. The Staff Council and Senate have been established and function as integral parts of the institution's decision making process.
3. Funding allocation to improve security on campus. The university community now has an improved sense of security while on campus.

Academic Master Plan

The Academic Master Plan 2006-2009 (AMP) (Section Six: Appendix 6.8), which is listed as a measure of accomplishment in *VISION 2012*, recognizes numerous budgetary implications. The AMP is written in a form consistent with the strategic plan and does not include any budgetary estimates for the activities and a task outlined in the document, and is thus not intentionally linked to the budgeting process. Over the years, however, the Provost and, now under the new budget process, the Deans make a case for the allocation of resources in support of academic programs and personnel.

Several references are made in the AMP to the need for enhancing revenues; however, the discussion is limited to RPS, ECC, CELL, UVI-CEDD, and athletics (AMP, p. 37). Other references are made to the need to insure that all new programs have in place a plan for sustainability, such as what was done with the development of the budget for the new Master's degree in Psychology.

Access and Enrollment Services (ACES) Plan

The Access and Enrollment Services (ACES) Plan (Section Six: Appendix 6.9), which is an output of the AMP, is comprised of short-term strategies, which cover the period November 2006 through September 2007 and the implementation of the long-term strategies which cover the period October 2007 through September 2009. The Vice Provost for Access and Enrollment annually submits requests through the University's budget process for funding of the items included in the ACES Plan. Through the University's budget development process, a recruiter position was funded in FY2011 to aggressively recruit students in accordance with ACES Plan.

Master Plan

The implementation strategy of the University's Master Plan (Section Six: Appendix 6.10) has three phases:

1. Phase I – Improve Image and Accessibility – 2000-2005
2. Phase II – Improve Academic and Research Facilities – 2005-2010
3. Phase III – Expand Student Resident and Support Facilities – 2010-2015

The implementation strategy was compiled first by recognizing those capital projects already underway then complementing it with work to address current priorities. Funding for the University's Master Plan is primarily provided through bond financing. Proceeds from the 1999 and 2004 bond issues supported the construction of the Campus Dining Pavilion, Sports and Fitness Center, and Administration and Conference Center on the St. Thomas campus and North West Wing, Evans Center improvements and Research and Extension Service building improvements on the St. Croix campus. These projects were identified in Phases I and II of the Master Plan.

During spring 2010, the University community engaged in the process of assessing the University's facilities' needs. The immediate outcomes of the process were: (1) ranking of the needs on the two campuses, (2) rationale for the facilities, (3) the development of concept parameters, (4) the estimation of costs, and (5) the financing strategy. The University is currently in the construction phase of a new residence hall on the St. Thomas campus and expanded academic and administrative facilities on the St. Croix campus.

Technology Plan to Achieve *VISION 2012*

The Information Technology Services Plan (ITS Plan) (Section Six: Appendix 6.11) represents the ITS participation in the UVI Strategic Plan, *VISION 2012*. The plan describes ITS' goals and initiatives by reviewing UVI's strategic goals "through the ITS lens." In terms of processes, the ITS planning preceded the UVI strategic planning initiative, largely taking place in the contexts of planning and funding requests under Title III, EPSCoR, UVI-RTP collaboration, etc. The ITS Plan, therefore, is more an articulation of approved and ongoing ITS plans within the context of UVI's strategic goals than a presentation of new goals, objectives, or strategies.

Allocation of the funds budgeted for the developments in the ITS Plan attest to the linkages between the planning and resource allocation processes in externally funded initiatives. The central place of these external funds in ITS operations does, however, exemplify a weakness in the linkages of these external processes and planning-resource allocation of UVI funds. This weakness arises from the ongoing personnel requirements of technology development and the lack of ongoing funding to maintain grant funded initiatives. Title III has historically provided between \$700K and \$900K annually to ITS, some of which has been used for support personnel associated with deployment of new services/technologies funded through this program. In general, it is planned that external funding will be replaced by UVI funding in phases over a period of several years as the support for the development is institutionalized.

Development Plan (Capital Campaign Plan)

One of the strategic goals of *VISION 2012* for fiscal year 2009 was the creation of the University's Capital Campaign Plan, which is updated annually with assistance from the Office of the President. It was noted that investment totaling \$360,000 is necessary for the implementation of the Capital Campaign Plan. Due to administrative changes, the Development Committee of the Board of Trustees delayed action on the plan until 2011. The new Vice President for Institutional Advancement is currently working directly with the BOT's Development Committee to develop sound fundraising goals and prepare for the launch of the Capital Campaign.

Comprehensive Development Plan (Title III Grant)

Prior to the commencement of each five-year grant cycle, the University formulates a Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP), which indicates how it intends to utilize Title III grant funding for the five-year period. The plan is required to be consistent with the University's strategic plan. Faculty and staff are invited to submit proposals which are to be consistent with the strategic plan and any of the fifteen Legislatively Allowable Activities to be considered for inclusion in the CDP. The final CDP and funding requests are submitted to the US Department of Education for review and approval.

Each year UVI is awarded approximately \$1.8 million in Title III support. Over the years, Title III has allowed UVI to provide services it may not have otherwise been able to provide. Some of these services include the upgrade of the Marine Science laboratory, establishment of computer labs in the libraries on both campuses, the development of the Freshman Center and the expansion of the Freshman Center to include the Campus Advising and Tutorial Services (CATS) to serve all students.

Research and Public Service Master Plan (Section Six: Appendix 6:11A)

The Research and Public Service (RPS) component provides and facilitates responsive research and outreach programs that are designed to improve the quality of life in the U. S. Virgin Islands, the wider Caribbean and beyond. RPS functions as a cost effective and out-come oriented “learning organization” whose outputs support the mission of the University of the Virgin Islands in the areas of research and public service. The role of RPS is central to the mission of the University as it connects the University to the community by offering programs and activities that are germane to the needs of the community and projects the University as a responsible community citizen.

As it formulated its master plan, the RPS identified major goals allied with its mission. These goals are as follows:

- Goal A: To lead and collaborate with the community by expanding consulting services, directed research and technical support.
- Goal B: Increase scholarly research and outreach activities that enhance student learning, respond to community needs, and/or generate new knowledge that meets peer-reviewed standards.
- Goal C: Enhance and diversify the University’s financial base through the development of new revenue streams and realization of cost containment, cost avoidance and strategic and technical allocation of resources.
- Goal D: Ensure that RPS strategic goals are met by enhancing the University’s capacity to achieve results.

Conclusion

The University has in place a mechanism for linking the Strategic Plan to institutional resources. Lessons learned from one year are improved upon during the ensuing year’s process. Efforts are on-going to improve the mechanism and further institutionalize management reform across the University (Section Six: Appendix 6.12: Management Reform—The UVI Approach) to ensure that resource allocations are inextricably linked to the strategic plan, human resources development, management structure, and assessment – both institutional and student learning outcomes.

Strategic Plan 2012-2017 is presently being developed through the University’s shared governance process (Section Six: Appendix 6.13: Collaborative Strategic Planning at UVI). This process calls for the full involvement of university stakeholders in extensive data gathering exercises, developing common themes, serving on the Planning Task Force, presenting concept papers, hosting vision and goals conferences, and conducting cost estimate exercises on the recommended measures of accomplishment.

UVI is committed to significant increases in the extent to which it is guided by meaningful planning, responsible resource allocation, strategic human resources interventions, assessment, and use of assessment results to improve links between planning, resource allocations, and institutional renewal.

OVERALL CONCLUSION

The University of the Virgin Islands is guided by the principles of MSCHE’s *Characteristics of Excellence*, which state that “An institution of higher education is a community dedicated to the pursuit and dissemination of knowledge, to the study and clarification of values, and to the advancement of the society it serves.” A review of UVI five years after its *Self-Study* reveals that the University continues to work at exemplifying this ideal. As UVI continues to implement its strategic plan—*Vision 2012*—it is clear that it is working diligently at living up to the expectations it has set for itself. Although UVI is in the throes of financial constraints, its forward-looking administrators, faculty, staff, and students understand the merits of austerity and will forge on despite the limitations. UVI is poised to build on its strengths and address identified weaknesses. It is for these reasons that the University is grateful for this opportunity the *Periodic Review Report* has presented for us to reflect on our progress to date, and we anticipate continued success, which we will demonstrate to Middle States in the future.

