

Vision Working Groups: Areas of Focus

The **Mission, Values and Mason Graduate Working Group** will be responsible for a critical component of this strategic visioning work— *identifying concepts that should be captured by our mission statement, our core values, and signature characteristics of a Mason Graduate.*

1. What are the concepts that should be captured by our mission statement?
2. What are the guiding principles or values that we rely on when we are at our best?
3. What can we learn from George Mason's work and ideals that are consistent with our unique history and values?
4. What should be the signature characteristics of a Mason graduate?

The **Student Value and Affordability Working Group** will be responsible for a critical component of this strategic visioning work— *analyzing cost trends in higher education and the drivers behind those trends, analyzing Mason's current tuition policy, and value for and returns on investment for our students.*

1. What are the broader trends for the costs of higher education for students we need to consider? What are the principal drivers of these cost trends? How will these trends impact our student population, including the demographic of undergraduate and graduates students that we serve?
2. What costs does Mason incur to educate a student? And, what are the sources of funding to cover those educational costs? What can we do to more effectively manage our resources?
3. What are current trends in financial aid and what should be our commitment for academically prepared deserving students?
4. What is the existing capacity of our facilities? What might be done to utilize them more efficiently?
5. What factors do students and their families value in making an investment in education?
6. What are other universities doing to address trends in terms of tuition policy and other levers we can control? What should we be doing about these trends?
7. How can we measure the returns to students from their investment in education and how does Mason compare to other Virginia universities?
8. What is Mason financial aid policy for undergraduates and for graduate student? What should it be to help achieve Mason's goals to support the enrollment of academically prepared, financially challenged prospective students and having sufficient revenue to enable Mason to fulfill its mission?

The **Funding and Resources Working Group** will be responsible for a critical component of this strategic visioning work— *evaluating our current sources of funding, assessing best practices, and exploring ways to maximize our brand and social capital.*

1. What are the current trends in higher education fundraising and how do we compare to other institutions?
2. How can we best partner with business, state and federal government, and local constituencies to generate new resources?
3. How can we best communicate our value to Virginia’s elected leaders to ensure adequate funding?
4. How can we make a compelling case for private support from current and future stake holders (alumni, parents, community leaders, and business leaders, local/national foundations)
5. What are best practices that we or other universities engage in to build their social capital? What could we do?
6. What are the current strengths and weaknesses of our brand? How does brand affect the ability to raise funds?
7. What are possible non-philanthropic, non-tuition, and non-state generated resources that we might pursue?

The **Global Strategy Working Group** will be responsible for a critical component of this strategic visioning work— *assessing our current global engagement, evaluating best global engagement practices, and factors to consider in enhancing our global engagement and mindset*

1. How should we define and think about “global”? Does it represent a paradigm distinct from “international”? What characteristics and capabilities found at Mason embody this approach?
2. How can we help our students develop the global mindset they need to succeed in a global marketplace, and how do we assess and measure progress towards this goal? What experiences can we offer them through our own programs or in partnership with other institutions that will enhance their capabilities as global citizens?
3. How can we be more competitive in attracting talent and resources from around the world to Mason? What areas of the world should we focus on and why? How do we identify and leverage broader global trends to our advantage?
4. What are other universities doing to enhance their global capability and connections? What business models, relationships, partnerships can help us achieve our goals while minimizing our exposure and risk?
5. What institutional factors at Mason foster and inhibit our global work? What services, policies, and systems enhance our global capabilities?
6. How can we best leverage our locations to develop a competitive global presence and prominence?
7. What factors should Mason consider in evaluating whether to develop an international presence or to pursue particular global partnership opportunities?
8. What role should we play in addressing the world’s most urgent and complex problems? Where do we add a distinctive competitive advantage or capability?

The **Online and Executive Education Working Group** will be responsible for a critical component of this strategic visioning work— *analyzing our existing capacity, best practices and opportunities in online and executive education.*

1. What are other universities doing to leverage learning technologies and effectiveness to increase their reach? To enhance degree completion?
2. What are our current executive education offerings and where do we have strength to offer additional programming? How do these offerings compare to those of our competitors?
3. What do the businesses and government in the National Capital region need in online and executive education?
4. What are the trends in both executive education and online education we need to be aware of? How and where should we target our efforts so we can ensure that we add distinctive value in these areas?
5. What opportunities in on-line education, continuing and executive education can we leverage to further our mission and generate additional resources?
6. How can we use technology to enhance student learning and outcomes?

The **Program Innovation and Growth Working Group** will be responsible for a critical component of this strategic visioning work— *analyzing Commonwealth, national and global expectations for higher education, our current capabilities, and possible future areas of innovation and growth.*

1. What are the big and important issues that are confronting the region, the Commonwealth, the nation, and the world? How are we addressing these issues? For example, the Commonwealth passed legislation, "Preparing for the Top Jobs of the 21st Century: The Virginia Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2011." How might we address this issue?
2. How can we identify emerging fields we should be paying attention to and pioneer?
3. What are other universities doing to provide innovative and economical paths to teaching and learning and degree completion?
4. What are our strengths and weaknesses in learning/teaching innovation and what could be done to strengthen/build that capacity? What are the institutional barriers that inhibit innovation?
5. What factors should we consider in evaluating new or existing program offerings?

The **Regional Strategy Working Group** will be responsible for a critical component of this strategic visioning work— *analyzing regional economic drivers, our current capacity to support regional development, and factors to consider in developing our regional campuses.*

1. What are the economic development dynamics (e.g., key industries that will drive growth) and strategic plans/visions for each of the jurisdictions where we operate? What is their vision for the future? Are there key initiatives that have momentum in these regions that we can help support and integrate into our plans for development?
2. What type of regional strategy would support their plans? In what ways can we align ourselves to help them achieve what they want and also achieve our vision?

3. What are the criteria we need to consider in evaluating prospective and existing uses of distributed campuses?
4. What are the greatest opportunities to link our educational mission with opportunities to shape regional development strategy in the regions that represent our geographic footprint?
5. How does our current regional footprint connect Mason to the Commonwealth, the nation, and the world?
6. How do other universities work with their regional partners to spur economic development and job growth?

The **Research Working Group** will be responsible for a critical component of this strategic visioning work— *analyzing Mason research strengths, research opportunities, and best research practices*.

1. What are our current strengths in research? What area can we build on where we already have critical mass?
2. What societal challenges and areas of research focus will be most important in our national and global future?
3. What is the short-term and long-term outlook for research funds from federal sources, business and foundations? What can we do to attract these funds?
4. What are the best practices in translational research, commercialization, incubation?
5. How can we partner better with businesses, not-for-profits, and government to build our research capacities?
6. How do we compare with support provided for PhD students and leading research faculty at peer and other Virginia research institutions?
7. Given our educational mission, what models and domains of research will be most relevant and impactful for our institution? How can we best integrate research into our undergraduate and graduate mission?
8. What are our current infrastructure strengths and what infrastructure will need to be in place to meet our needs and goals in the future?