



Strategic Plan 2009-2012



I. Overview and Institutional Context

The Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS), founded in 1940 as the Virginia Fisheries Laboratory, has grown over the past seven decades to become one of the nation's largest and most well-known marine science centers focused on coastal and estuarine research. In addition to the 40-acre main campus at Gloucester Point near the mouth of the York River, VIMS operates the Kauffman Aquaculture Center in the low-salinity waters of the Rappahannock River and a campus at Wachapreague in the high-salinity waters of Virginia's Eastern Shore. Each of these campuses is strategically located to provide rich living laboratories for research and teaching, and easy access to Chesapeake Bay, its tributary rivers and surrounding wetlands, and to the coastal ocean.

VIMS is part of the College of William and Mary but is unusual in its melding of three essential public functions: advisory and outreach services, cutting-edge research, and formal and informal education. The strengths of the Institute are in its diverse faculty, interdisciplinary approach to complex scientific questions, and provisions of practical solutions to problems in the marine environment. VIMS fosters an approach that encourages and facilitates synergistic interactions among its core disciplines that focus on scientific problems which range widely in scale from global to molecular. Much of the work at VIMS is directly applicable to current and emerging management and policy issues that are important to the State's economy, and to the health and sustainability of the Commonwealth's natural resources.

Two of the important attributes of VIMS are its size and its diversity. With over 500 employees (including 350 scientists, technicians and students), the Institute is large enough to assemble a competitive multidisciplinary research team from within the VIMS community. Nearly every marine science discipline and sub-discipline is represented on the faculty, including marine biology and ecology, marine geology, marine chemistry and geochemistry, physical oceanography, aquaculture, genetics, immunology, toxicology, and coastal management, policy and economics. Examples of current programs of research and advisory service are in areas of water quality monitoring and assessment, benthic/shallow-water habitat stressors and restoration, phytoplankton ecology, shellfish and finfish diseases, fisheries stock assessment, estuarine processes and numerical modeling, shoreline evolution, harmful algal blooms, sediment transport, contaminant monitoring and risk assessment, coastal and ocean observing systems and technology, polar oceanography, and climate change.

Graduate education at VIMS is conducted through the School of Marine Science at the College of William and Mary. VIMS has a vibrant student body of approximately 115 graduate students that is split about equally between those seeking M.S. and Ph.D. degrees. In a given year fifteen percent of the student body may be international. Up to 20 graduate courses are taught at VIMS each year, and typically an additional 5 graduate/undergraduate courses are offered on the main campus by VIMS faculty. VIMS faculty also participate in education programs that more broadly serve the public: REU Program (NSF Summer Intern Program); DREAMS (NSF/NOAA program for undergraduates); the Bridge (NOAA program for K-12 educators); the Hall-Bonner Program (NSF program for under-represented PhDs); the National Ocean Sciences Bowl (NOAA program for high school students); the Governor's School (VA program for high school students), and, public-oriented VIMS After-Hours Lecture Series and Discovery Labs.

The importance assigned to advisory service and outreach at VIMS can equal that of research and graduate education, a feature that is unique among marine institutes. Beginning as early as the 1940s, there was consensus among scientists, elected officials, and members of the seafood industry that unbiased science was necessary to balance the needs of the environment, the social infrastructure that may affect the integrity and health of the estuarine environment, and the elements of the environment that support economic development. The Virginia General Assembly formally recognized the

importance of separating scientific advice from management and thereby established VIMS as the advisory agency. As such, VIMS is identified in 26 separate sections of the Code of Virginia where the mandated advisory service is defined and outlined. The diverse constituency includes the State Legislature and Legislative Study Commissions, the Secretary of Natural Resources, the Virginia Marine Resources Commission, the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, the Virginia Department of Health, numerous municipalities and Planning District Commissions, maritime and other industries, and perhaps most fundamentally, the citizens of the Commonwealth.

II. VIMS Mission

The Virginia Institute of Marine Science has a three-part mission of research, education and advisory service, each encompassed within an overarching goal of achieving and maintaining a national and international position as a premier coastal marine science institution. This mission involves making seminal advances to our understanding of marine systems through research and discovery, translating that knowledge into practical solutions to complex issues of societal importance, and providing new generations of researchers, educators, problem solvers, and managers with a marine science education of relevance and unsurpassed quality.

Meeting this mission requires that VIMS: 1) address cutting edge scientific questions, 2) develop and apply technologically-advanced approaches to these questions, 3) communicate research results and new technologies to both professional and public audiences, 4) provide consultative assistance to facilitate the application of new knowledge to practical problems, and 5) train future generations of young scientists to continue this tradition.

III. The Planning Process

Beginning in summer 2007, VIMS Dean and Director John Wells conducted a series of meetings with departments, centers and other administrative units to inform them of the strategic planning initiative and to seek advice on how the planning process should proceed. A 12-member Steering Committee for Strategic Planning was then appointed that included representatives from the VIMS Council (an outside advisory body), the Academic and Faculty Councils, the academic departments and centers, and one representative each from the professional faculty, classified employees and graduate students (Appendix A).

In early fall 2007, VIMS obtained strategic planning and facilitation services from the Performance Management Group at Virginia Commonwealth University (PMG@VCU). PMG personnel have considerable experience working with public sector agencies on organizational planning and development activities.

Nine interactive work sessions were held with the Steering Committee over the course of approximately 8 months. These sessions resulted in:

- Development of a VIMS Vision Statement;
- Completion of a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis relative to each aspect of the VIMS Mission;
- Analysis of current best practices that should be retained, practices and policies that should be eliminated, and initial development of new initiatives that should be implemented;
- Identification of strategies for improving the quality and impact of research, education and advisory services; and,
- Identification of broad goals and objectives with suggested strategic actions to meet the goals.

VIMS faculty and staff were invited and encouraged to provide input on the draft Vision Statement and SWOT analysis. Seventy-four responses were received including 325 written comments. Approximately one-half of the faculty responded and provided many of the written comments. This information was summarized and presented to the Steering Committee prior to development of strategies for action.

PMG staff and the VIMS Director collaborated on assimilating all of the information into an integrated strategic planning document. This document is intended to serve as a planning guide during the next four years as VIMS seeks to build upon and strengthen its strong reputation and track record of success, and to become the most distinctive and exciting institution possible. It is recognized that the plan is not a substitute for the necessity of exercising administrative prerogative and that, to be effective, there must be provisions for updating the plan annually.

IV. VIMS Vision Statement

Increased World Class Recognition: The Virginia Institute of Marine Science will be regarded as one of the top-tier marine science institutes in the world and an exceptional employer for marine science professionals. VIMS will be recognized as the single most authoritative and credible source for the latest research information and advice regarding mid-Atlantic estuarine and coastal environments. VIMS research activities will foster improvement of the environmental health of Chesapeake Bay, lead to more intelligent development of coastal areas, and produce graduates who can and will make a difference at the local, regional, national and international levels.

Full Support for the Three-Part Mission: Resources will be available and allocated to fully support all three components of the VIMS mission, to include:

- Conducting discipline-specific and interdisciplinary research in estuarine, coastal and oceanographic science;
- Educating and training students, coastal decision-makers and citizens; and,
- Providing advisory services to resource managers, policy makers, industry and the public.

Staff throughout the organization will have a strong sense of shared purpose and understand how the three parts of the mission interrelate in mutually supportive ways.

Integrated Thematic Research Centers: Cutting-edge technical research centers will augment the core of VIMS research activities. The topic-specific research centers will serve as focal points for scientific and advisory services, and for leveraging resources. Centers will be staffed by multi-disciplinary teams of researchers and students that reflect critical core competencies of VIMS. The centers will provide opportunities for collaborative partnerships that span the globe.

Mutually Beneficial Business Partnerships: The VIMS campus will serve as the hub of a regional business center comprised of industry and research partnerships. The flow of research from this endeavor will act as an economic engine that supports teaching and research activities. Business partnerships will demonstrate the value of ongoing research activities that contribute to the economic well-being of the Commonwealth.

Expanded Facilities to meet Critical Needs: A VIMS Campus Master Plan, developed through a comprehensive needs assessment (including the Eastern Shore Laboratory), will guide the coordinated development of critical facilities. Facilities will reflect sustainable construction practices and environmentally sensitive design and maintenance standards. An on-site conference center, housing for visiting researchers and students, dining facilities, storage space, and a revitalized boat basin and aquaculture center will be added to support research, teaching and advisory service. The VIMS

campus will have well-designed and attractive entryways and a unified image that reflects its world class reputation.

Increased Revenue Streams: VIMS will have a productive and expanded development program that helps identify and secure major financial contributions to support research, education, and public outreach. Major development constituencies will be engaged in VIMS activities, and a targeted communications program will create greater awareness among key constituents. Additional funds will be freed through creative and effective cost saving measures, and new sponsored inter-institutional research opportunities will be explored aggressively.

Expanded Educational Opportunities: The graduate marine science program will continue its track record of sustained excellence. VIMS will collaborate with the main campus to develop graduate and undergraduate programs of mutual benefit. A VIMS postdoctoral scholars program will be in operation. Numerous professional development and training opportunities will exist for VIMS faculty and staff.

V. Weaknesses, Challenges and Opportunities

■ **Diversifying and enhancing the funding base:** The funding formula at VIMS has changed dramatically over the past two decades. Now more than one-half of the total VIMS operating budget is derived from grants and contracts, and an astonishing 85% of the research expenditures are from external (non-state) sources. Although the state budget has grown considerably in recent years, much of this money has necessarily been directed to general operations of the institute, rising energy costs and, on occasion, new state initiatives. VIMS has a goal of raising significant new funds from private and corporate development activities to support a wide range of immediate needs, and to provide budgetary flexibility to meet unforeseen challenges.

■ **Establishing the institution in a leadership role in monitoring, modeling and research in Chesapeake Bay:** VIMS already provides top-notch basic and applied research, and collaborates with other institutions, agencies and organizations that have programs in the Bay. However, there is a need for better focus, coordination and dissemination of information at both state and federal levels, and a pressing need for better assessment and verification of progress in Bay cleanup efforts. VIMS is well-positioned to assume a leadership role in this mission because of our advisory mandate, our unbiased and balanced approach to science, and our diversity and strength in research.

■ **Enhancing the advisory service mission to become more proactive:** Because VIMS is on-call as the Commonwealth's scientific advisor, there are many "crisis-mode" requests. They can range from telephone calls that seek answers to specific questions (e.g. regarding a fish kill) to requests for spinning up large research programs that may be active for years or even decades (e.g. oyster restoration). The advisory function at VIMS seeks to become involved in emerging issues well before they reach crisis level, to educate state and federal agencies about the importance of *a priori* research and planning, and to educate the public about value of science in their daily lives.

■ **Forging new and effective partnerships with industry:** The VIMS-Industry Partnership has provided over the last several years a sample of the possibilities that exist for collaboration. Our relationship both with large corporations and small local firms has led to joint proposals, initiatives and several collaborative projects. We believe that there are vast unexplored opportunities for industry collaboration on environmental, economic, military and educational projects, all with mutual benefits derived from the complementary strengths of the partners.

■ **Leading discussions at the Federal level regarding the next generation of marine research:**

Scientists are well aware that science does not “just happen” and that programs at the Federal level owe their origins not only to national needs but also to forward-thinking ideas that often result from leadership at academic institutions. VIMS has the talent and desire to be a significant voice in these discussions that steer science. VIMS faculty already serve each year on dozens of invited panels, commissions and committees, both state and federal, and serve as a vital link to Federal managers in Washington. Since 2005 W&M has no longer employed a government relations/lobbying firm to assist with the Washington “connection” and those activities now fall to the significantly understaffed VIMS administration.

■ **Sustaining excellence in graduate marine science education:** Maintaining excellence will require vigilance and commitment to an education that is innovative, relevant and on the frontiers of the discipline. It will also require creating an endowment for graduate student support so that financial assistance is at least at the level of our peer institutions. Inherent in a quality education is the requirement that time for both masters and doctoral degrees be kept to a reasonable length without affecting the quality of the graduate experience, and that there is long-range plan for recruitment of high-quality students that our peer institutions are seeking to attract. Very good opportunities exist for further collaboration with W&M (both graduate and undergraduate), and there is considerable interest in adding new courses for W&M undergraduates that would be taught in the summer at the Eastern Shore Laboratory.

■ **Improving the condition of buildings and facilities:** VIMS faculty and staff continue to be scattered throughout the campus in small outdated buildings, some well beyond their useful life and slated for demolition. The quality of laboratory space has improved dramatically with the completion of the new Marine Research Building Complex; however, the overall Facilities Condition Index, as reported to the State Council of Higher Education, shows too many buildings that are “fair to poor”. Especially troubling is the lack of adequate Maintenance Reserve funds to maintain buildings, thus requiring a default strategy of deferred maintenance. Escalating energy costs at a time of state budget cuts is currently presenting a huge challenge.

■ **Maintaining a safe, sophisticated and effective research vessel fleet:** The underpinning of most research programs at VIMS is access to the water. Safety and reliability have become driving functions in vessel operations, and new complex science questions affect types of vessel platforms that are suitable to the meet the institutional mission. VIMS owns and operates an aging fleet of approximately 30 vessels that range in length from 16 ft to 80 ft. Several of the larger vessels are in need of replacement but, at present, the costs are prohibitive (~\$4-6 million for vessels in the 50-80 ft size class). Moreover, research vessels are extraordinarily expensive to maintain and operate, such that decisions made now, especially for the larger vessels, will have significant financial implications for decades into the future.

■ **Managing long-term data sets:** Information and its communication are fundamental to all three components of the VIMS mission. Build-out of ocean observing systems at VIMS has created new data management needs and stretched internal capabilities for staying at the cutting edge of information acquisition and delivery. Moreover, many of the old fisheries and water quality data sets are still in paper form. Developing a suitable system for long-term archiving with adequate backup systems now confronts the Institute. In addition, VIMS must enhance the quality and access as well as search capabilities of the data archive.

VI. Goals, Objectives and Strategic Actions

Goal One: Create an institutional climate and agenda to enhance the quality and impact of research, education and advisory services.

Objective: Focus research efforts on projects that foster collaboration and have a high rate of return to VIMS. Projects should have a direct and strong relationship to VIMS' core mission, provide an opportunity for high-quality results with impacts, and contribute to the reputation and sustainability of the institution.

Strategic Actions:

- Focus on issues that offer a high collaborative value such as the effects of climate change and environmental impacts of declining water quality. Create cross-disciplinary research centers or clusters that are focused on common research goals.
- Create a white paper program that pursues a proactive approach to identifying critical environmental issues and opportunities in Virginia, and that offers VIMS' positions on emerging topics of high impact.
- Review annually the plans, priorities and performance metrics of major funding agencies to better anticipate and plan for responding to their strategic needs.

Objective: Increase the diversity of education products and opportunities.

Strategic Actions:

- Continue to strengthen mutually-beneficial educational ties to William and Mary through collaborative course offerings.
- Create a VIMS post-doctoral program that has a dedicated source of funding.
- Establish a visiting scholars program to expand learning and research opportunities.
- Develop and provide professional training and/or certification programs for K-12 science teachers and working professionals.
- Create a professional training graduate student path for science teachers and environmental management professionals.
- Establish collaborative links to other educational institutions that complement and expand upon course offerings and resources available at VIMS.
- Develop short courses and workshops for coastal decision-makers.
- Explore ways to increase the number of available teaching assistantships.
- Utilize more fully the opportunities and facilities available at the Eastern Shore Laboratory for teaching.

Objective: Develop partnerships that maximize and enhance research, teaching and advisory capabilities.

Strategic Actions:

- Establish a formal business structure to facilitate the development of mutually beneficial commercial partnerships in fields such as aquaculture, pharmaceuticals, biosensors, alternative energy and other areas of opportunity to partner with the private sector.

- Expand venture capital opportunities and create a “seed fund” program to help faculty and staff explore new ideas and initiatives that offer potential for revenue generation. Engage the VIMS Council to assist with business opportunities.
- Develop a program for faculty out-placement during the summer months and during paid sabbaticals.

Goal Two: Closely align compensation and recognition with the provision of high quality services that are directly linked to the VIMS mission.

Objective: Ensure that all faculty and staff are clearly linked to the fulfillment of the VIMS mission in a way that addresses the long-term strategic goals of the institute.

Strategic Actions:

- Review and approve all work profiles at the appropriate Department Chair and the VIMS Director levels to ensure adequate distribution of human resources to provide advisory, research and educational services.

Objective: Review and, where appropriate, establish new incentives for seeking and obtaining research funding tied to institutional priorities.

Strategic Actions:

- Assess new models for faculty contracts that re-evaluate contract periods, grant-supported salary obligations, research overload, and other options that may have mutual benefits to VIMS and to the faculty.
- Resist implementation of across-the-board spending cuts when funding levels are reduced. Target reductions to those programs that do not provide as high a return on investment as others and/or do not support institutional priorities.
- Use a proportion of the ETF monies to match purchases of the most productive programs.

Objective: Ensure that participation in and contributions to advisory service activities are recognized and rewarded in a manner comparable to that for research and education.

Strategic Actions:

- Clearly define what constitutes advisory services, integrating state mandates with academic research pursuits.
- More effectively utilize faculty expertise across the Institute to serve the advisory mission.
- Establish a mechanism for providing financial rewards or bonuses to faculty and staff who provide outstanding advisory services.
- Establish an efficient and effective advisory service tracking system.

Objective: Establish incentives for participating in and providing high-quality educational opportunities.

Strategic Actions:

- Decrease reliance on faculty research grants and contracts for graduate student support.

- Provide opportunities for faculty and staff to improve teaching effectiveness through professional training courses.
- Establish a mechanism for providing financial rewards or bonuses to faculty and staff who provide outstanding educational services and/or obtain outside funding for education programs.
- Include student input into course evaluation questions to provide the best possible feedback on teaching effectiveness.

Goal Three: Ensure that faculty, staff and students have the resources they need to provide research, education and advisory services.

Objective: Strategically explore upgrading and expansion of facilities, and opportunities for obtaining private funds to meet future needs.

Strategic Actions:

- Establish a standing committee of faculty, staff and students to address infrastructure limitations and to prioritize areas of highest need. The committee should consider, at a minimum, needs for:
 - Housing for visiting scholars and students (12-20 rooms)
 - Commons area to facilitate collegial interactions and exchange
 - Dedicated meeting space for training and lectures
 - Boat basin expansion and Aquaculture Park
 - Vessel replacement, especially the Fish Hawk and Bay Eagle
 - Parking lot upgrades and signage
 - Technology enhancements
 - Maintenance of existing facilities and equipment
 - Use of environmentally appropriate and sustainable landscaping and building practices
 - Land acquisition for future expansion
- Revise the VIMS Master Plan to reflect prioritized needs and establish a capital improvement plan and funding campaign. Engage the VIMS Council in taking a leadership role on a project-by-project basis.
- Expand development and communications programs to support increasing private resources and endowments over time.
- Engage the VIMS Council and VIMS Foundation Board to participate in the upcoming W&M campaign to help build resources for VIMS.

Goal Four: Clearly communicate the value of VIMS in helping to protect Virginia’s environment, furthering knowledge through research, and preparing future scientists and professionals.

Objective: Develop a public outreach and education marketing program targeted to stakeholders, current and potential funders and the citizens of the Commonwealth.

Strategic Actions:

- Use the VIMS website to more effectively communicate VIMS research accomplishments including return on investment for advisory activities.
- Produce a VIMS Annual Report and develop science communication programs modeled after other successful programs.
- Advertise the quantitative metrics of research success, including publications, formal presentations, grants and citations and make it readily available both internally and externally.
- Leverage connections of VIMS Council members to reach key audiences.

Objective: Strengthen relationships with state and federal partners and key decision-makers for critical stakeholder groups.

Strategic Actions:

- Conduct regular visits with members of the General Assembly and sister state agencies to communicate success, assess needs and cultivate additional opportunities for cooperation and collaboration.
- Conduct regular visits with federal partners and stakeholders to communicate success, assess needs and cultivate additional opportunities for cooperation and collaboration.
- Engage on a regular basis industry and foundation partners as well as other stakeholders, calling on the expertise and assistance of the VIMS Council.

Goal Five: Make strategic investments in faculty and staff to achieve greater efficiencies and enhance capabilities.

Objective: Improve administrative capacity to support advisory, research and education services.

Strategic Actions:

- Objectively evaluate the need and develop a plan for increasing administrative and technical support in key areas of the Institute to improve their efficiency and effectiveness.
- Improve administrative management tools, such as the general fund and advisory service tracking systems, to provide on-line, up-to-date information for faculty and staff.
- Restructure the Office of Research and Advisory Services to be more proactive, further investing in issue-based projects, a white paper program, and strengthening the internal management.
- Invest in development staff who will identify and pursue additional avenues for generating funding for VIMS through the VIMS Foundation with particular emphasis on naming opportunities and unrestricted and restricted endowments.

Objective: Identify ways to further develop high-performing faculty and staff.

Strategic Actions:

- Conduct a talent inventory of all faculty, especially those who hold tenured and tenure-eligible positions, and staff to identify and prioritize strengths and gaps in research, education and advisory services.

- Identify areas of critical need and strategic development relative to VIMS' mission, and hire accordingly as faculty and staff retire.
- Achieve sustainability and effectiveness by hiring research faculty, when appropriate, into positions that do not have explicit and irrevocable teaching responsibilities.
- Identify and cultivate faculty and staff who demonstrate management and leadership capabilities, then develop a succession plan that will support their professional development and prepare them for increased responsibility and decision-making.

VII. Plan Implementation

Strategic actions form the basis for implementation of the VIMS Strategic Plan. These actions provide a structure that will shape plans and guide efforts towards achieving the broader goals set forth above. However, it is clear that not all of the strategic actions can be undertaken simultaneously and that prioritization is essential to success. Prioritization will bring discipline to the process, allow for more effective tracking of progress and will help create a realistic relationship between actions to be taken and the timeframe for successful completion.

A new round of significant and potentially damaging state budget cuts will make implementation of some strategic actions especially challenging. With a high percentage of the state operating budget tied to salaries and benefits of permanent employees, there is limited flexibility for moving funds from one program to another and for creating new initiatives that require additional funds. Thus, high priority strategic actions, listed below as year-one plans, are those that do not require a new source of funds or significant reprogramming of existing funds.

Year One Plans:

- *Create a white paper program that pursues a proactive approach to identifying critical environmental issues and opportunities in Virginia, and that offers VIMS' positions on emerging topics of high impact.* This effort has already been initiated with a collection of white papers focused on the impacts of climate change on coastal waters and aquatic habitat. These white papers will serve as a model for establishing a formal mechanism for other topics to be addressed using a similar format. (Responsible Office: Research and Advisory Services).
- *Utilize more fully the opportunities and facilities available at the Eastern Shore Laboratory for teaching.* The ESL provides a rich laboratory for teaching and training, and there is considerable interest in expanding summer course offerings. The primary hurdle has been funding. Discussions are underway, and final resolution is in sight, to establish an automatic transfer of tuition and fees into the VIMS budget for all courses taught at the ESL during summer school. (Responsible Office: Dean of Graduate Studies).
- *Establish a formal business structure to facilitate the development of mutually beneficial commercial partnerships in fields such as aquaculture, pharmaceuticals, biosensors, alternative energy and other areas of opportunity to partner with the private sector.* Members of the VIMS Council have been working informally with the Office of Research and Advisory Services to explore establishment of business partnerships. This holds considerable promise and, with continued leadership by the VIMS Council, can be developed into a plan during the next year. (Responsible Offices: Research and Advisory Services; VIMS Council).
- *Assess new models for faculty contracts that re-evaluate contract periods, grant-supported salary obligations, research overload, and other options that may have mutual benefits to VIMS and to the faculty.* This strategic action has been elevated to year-one priority because

of back-to-back state budget cuts. The VIMS Faculty Council, in consultation with the Dean and Director, has recently undertaken an exhaustive review of academic contract models, some of which may be applicable to faculty at VIMS. A formal report and recommendation will be forthcoming during the next one-year. (Responsible Offices: Faculty Council; Dean and Director).

- *Establish a standing committee of faculty, staff and students to address infrastructure limitations and to prioritize areas of highest need.* The intent of this strategic action is to enhance communication and broaden the representation in discussions of infrastructure needs and, because it is unlikely that state funding will be available for a new campus master plan, to also provide advice on the best and highest use of the limited footprint at VIMS. (Responsible Offices: Dean and Director; Planning and Budget).
- *Use the VIMS website to more effectively communicate VIMS research accomplishments including return on investment for advisory activities.* A significant redesign of the VIMS web site, undertaken simultaneously with strategic planning, is now close to completion. The website offers a new “look and feel”, enhanced content management and better tracking options for reporting advisory service activities. (Responsible Offices: Communications; Research and Advisory Services).
- *Produce a VIMS Annual Report and invest in communications to support development functions.* VIMS produces brochures and other documents written for targeted audiences, such as the Investors’ Report, but does not have an Annual Report that provides highlights of institute activities and accomplishments of faculty, staff and students. An Annual Report can serve as a marketing tool and help establish a VIMS “brand”. (Responsible Offices: Communications; Development).

Ongoing Multi-Year Plans:

Several strategic actions that have been identified in the plan are already underway and will be continued as multi-year activities.

- *Continue to strengthen mutually-beneficial educational ties to William and Mary through collaborative course offerings* (Responsible Offices: Academic Council; Dean of Graduate Studies).
- *Conduct regular visits with members of the General Assembly and sister state agencies to communicate success, assess needs and cultivate additional opportunities for cooperation and collaboration* (Responsible Offices: Dean and Director; Research and Advisory Services; Planning and Budget).
- *Invest in development staff and participate in W&M campaign planning to identify and pursue additional avenues for generating revenue for VIMS with a particular emphasis on naming opportunities and unrestricted endowment funds* (Responsible Offices: Development; VIMS Council; VIMS Foundation Board; Dean and Director).

Implementation Committee:

An administrative office has been assigned to take the lead in implementing each strategic action. A committee will be appointed to review quarterly with the Dean and Director the progress on strategic plan implementation. Because the strategic plan is a “living document” the intent is to update the plan annually and to incorporate it more fully into day-to-day plans and operations of the Institute.

Appendix A**VIMS Steering Committee for Strategic Planning**

Name	Department	Representing
Charlie Brinley	Council Member	VIMS Council
Cameron Blandford	Council Member	VIMS Council
Elizabeth Canuel	Physical Sciences	Faculty/Academic Council Chair
Carl Hershner	CCRM	Faculty/Faculty Council Chair
Linda Schaffner	Biological Sciences	Faculty
Kim Reece	EAAH	Faculty
Carl Friedrichs	Physical Sciences	Faculty
John Olney	Fisheries Science	Faculty
Willy Reay	CBNERR	Research Faculty/Center Director
Lyle Varnell	DRAS	Professional Faculty
Maria Minko Gill	Sponsored Programs	Classified Staff
Heidi Geisz	Biological Sciences	Graduate Student