

BUILDING THE VISION TOGETHER THROUGH EFFECTIVE, MEANINGFUL STRATEGIC PLANNING

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INTRODUCTIONS

- **Julia Bailey**, *Career Advisor, VCU Career Services*
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SESSION OUTLINE

- Value of Strategic Planning
- Our Motivation
- Our Approach
- Elements of our Plan
- Kickoff Retreat: Long-Term Visions Statements & 3-Year Goals
- Working Groups: Strategies, Action Steps, & Metrics
- Finalizing the Plan Together
- Visualization
- Progress & Check-Ins

POLL QUESTIONS

- Does your office currently have an active strategic plan in place?
 - If you do, how many of you were directly involved in creating or editing the plan?
- Where does/did the primary motivation to create a strategic plan for your office come from?
- If you have a strategic plan in place, how often does your team check in on progress related to your goals?

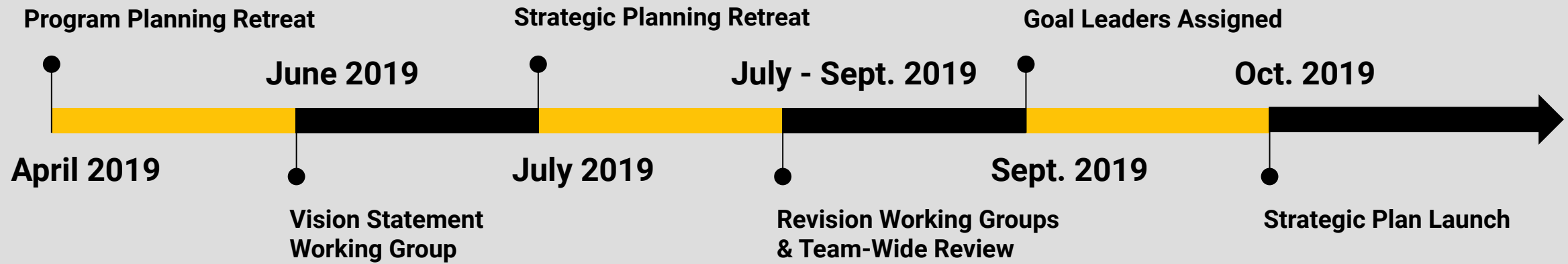
VALUE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING

- Sets Direction and Vision for the Future
- Guides Decision-Making and Resource Allocation
- Supports Thoughtful Prioritization
- Encourages Team Alignment, Unity, Fit
- Helps Define External Image and Tell an Effective Story

OUR MOTIVATION

- New Director (Fall 2018) and Mostly New Team (Summer 2019)
- Desire for strategy and direction under new leadership
- Preparing for new academic year
- Challenges with previous strategic planning process and accountability

OUR APPROACH



ELEMENTS OF OUR PLAN

VCU Quest 2025 Goals			
Student Success <i>Innovation/Eship, Retention & Grad Rates, Career Readiness, Employer Engagement, Decrease Debt</i>	National Prominence <i>Graduate & Professional School Pipelines, Visibility & Recognition, Recruitment</i>	Urban & Regional Transformation <i>Workforce Development, Emerging Industries, Attracting Employers, Talent Retention</i>	Diversity Driving Excellence <i>Commitment to diversity, inclusion + equity, Advocacy/dialogue</i>

- Quest 2025 & Student Success
- Priorities - Students, Employers, Staff (3-Year Focus)
- Long-Term Vision Statements (10-Year Focus)
- Goals (4 total; 3-Year Focus)
- Strategies (3-5 per Goal)
- Action Steps & Metrics (including When & Who)
- What we didn't do, include, or focus on
 - Rewriting Mission, Vision, and Values
 - Bringing in an outside consultant/facilitator



KICKOFF RETREAT: LONG-TERM VISION STATEMENTS

- Defining core areas of practice (7)
 - Advising
 - Programming & Campus Partnerships
 - Employer Development
 - Marketing & Branding
 - Technology & Resources
 - Professional Staff Development
 - Student Staff Hiring & Development
- Small group first drafting (2-3 people each)
 - Looking ahead to the next 5-10 years, come up with a 1-2 sentence long-term vision statement for your focus area, considering the following questions:
 - What do we want VCU Career Services to look and feel like? What will we regularly offer and be known for? How large is our reach, and where will we focus? Who and what do we want to work towards becoming together?
 - As you imagine what we can be and accomplish in the future, please remove potential barriers related to resources from your thinking (time, money, space, hierarchy). Dream as big as you feel our students, alumni, on- and off-campus partners, and team need to get where we are going.

KICKOFF RETREAT: LONG-TERM VISION STATEMENTS

- Kickoff Retreat: VISION STATEMENTS
 - Individual feedback on first drafts
 - Small group revisions
 - Large group wordsmithing
 - Final edits and sharing

KICKOFF RETREAT: GOALS 2019 - 2022

- Kickoff Retreat: GOALS
 - Individual ideation
 - Small group discussion – mixed teams
 - Large group Post-Its → Themes → Prioritizing → Wordsmithing
- Finalization after retreat
- Quest 2025 – University strategic plan alignment

	VCU Quest 2025 Goals			
VCU Career Services Strategic Goals (2019-2022)	Student Success <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare our students to be creative innovators and entrepreneurs who make a difference in an increasingly diverse and connected world Enhance the university culture supporting student success, including improved retention and graduation rates Strengthen student academic & career planning, readiness & employer engagement Decrease student debt through targeted initiatives 	National Prominence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop pipeline of highly diverse students for entry into graduate and 1st professional programs 	Urban & Regional Transformation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advance innovations for high quality education and workforce development Prepare students to be career-ready for innovative and emerging industry sectors. Elevate VCU's contributions to the region's economic and cultural vitality Serve as an innovation and entrepreneurship engine providing new sources of talent and attracting industry and new 	Diversity Driving Excellence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advance institutional excellence through a commitment to diversity, inclusion and equity fostered through a culture of appreciation and respect Work in innovative ways to inspire change and promote dialogue and action on diversity, inclusion and equity within and across units
1. Infuse career and professional development into campus culture.	X	X	X	X
2. Utilize technology to better connect and expand access to career and industry resources.	X	X	X	X
3. Enrich VCU Career Services employer engagement and opportunities through data and analytics.	X		X	X
4. Research and design a funding strategy to support student experiential learning and professional development.	X	X	X	X

WORKING GROUPS & FINALIZING THE PLAN TOGETHER

- 4 Working Groups
 - Aligned with each of the 4 goals
 - Self-selected
- Strategies, Action Steps, Metrics
 - Meeting frequency and structure
 - Staying productive
 - Delegation document

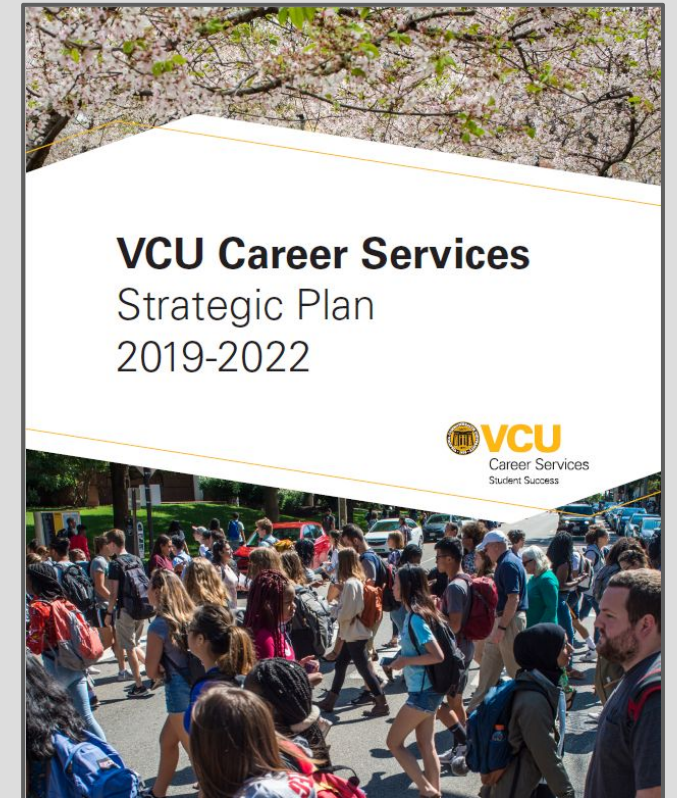
<i>GOALS</i>	<i>STRATEGIES</i>	<i>ACTION STEPS</i>	<i>METRICS</i>	<i>PROJECT LEAD & CONTRIB.</i>
Goal 1	Strategy 1	Fall 2019		1.1 Lead: Contrib:
		Spring & Summer 2020		1.1 Lead: Contrib:
		Fall 2020		1.1 Lead: Contrib:
		December 2020/Jan. 2021		1.1 Lead: Contrib:
		Spring 2021		1.1 Lead: Contrib:

STRATEGIES, ACTION STEPS & METRICS TIMELINE



VISUALIZATION

- Full Plan PDF
 - For sharing internally, as well as with campus and external partners
 - Don't be intimidated if you don't have a graphic designer
 - Team photo!
- One-Pagers for team and prospective hires:
 - Long-Term Vision Statements & Goals/Strategies/Quest 2025 Alignment
 - Posted in staff member offices so they are readily accessible
- Website & Google/Shared Drive
 - Goals, Strategies, Action Steps
 - Reminders/refreshers all in one place



PROGRESS & CHECK-INS: TEAM

- Goal Leads (4)
 - Director & 3 Sr./Associate Directors
- Timeline and progress chart (Excel)
 - Year 1: Lots of benchmarking and research
 - Goal meetings and email check-ins
- Retreats and set meetings for team-wide check-ins
 - January 2020
 - Summer 2020
- Making Adjustments
 - Staffing, timelines, impact of COVID-19

PROGRESS & CHECK-INS: INDIVIDUALS

- Individual and collaborative tasks
- Staying on track
- Annual review goal

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- Of what you've heard, what could you see working well from our process with your own team?
- What about the process we've shared seems most intimidating or challenging to implement within your own organization?
 - What could you do within the next few weeks to address those challenges proactively or seek the support you may need?
- What is a goal you can set for yourself related to strategic planning to move you forward in the next two weeks?

CONCLUSION

- How strategic planning has been (and stays) meaningful and effective for our team
- Why you should try it, even if you don't feel ready
- We will send everyone a copy of our strategic plan (PDF)
- Questions or Comments?
 - Email sreynolds4@vcu.edu or baileyje@vcu.edu