**2023 SIX-YEAR PLAN NARRATIVE (Part II)**

**INSTITUTION:**  Radford University

**OVERVIEW**

The six-year plan should describe the institution’s goals as they relate to the Commonwealth’s goals as articulated in the *Pathways to Opportunity: The Virginia Plan for Higher Education*; the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2011 (TJ21); the Restructured Higher Education Financial and Administrative Operations Act of 2005; and the Governor’s objectives to prepare every graduate for success in life. Please use this opportunity to outline your institution’s plans and objectives, especially as they relate to the Commonwealth’s goals.

The instructions within the institutional mission and priorities section below ask for specific strategies related to affordability and access to quality postsecondary education that prepare students for success in life. Other sections offer institutions the opportunity to describe additional strategies to advance institutional goals and Commonwealth needs.

***Please be comprehensive but as concise as possible with responses; you are encouraged to use bullet points vs. prose. Consider this a starting point for the dialogue with OpSix; you will have the opportunity to further elaborate on the narrative in your review sessions later this summer.***

***Please save this narrative document with your institution’s name added to the file name.***

**SECTION A: MISSION & PRIORITIES**

***Key question: What are your institution’s unique strengths and how do those inform your strategic priorities?***

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| **A1. What is your institutional mission? Please share any plans you have to change your mission over the six-year period.** |
| Current Mission Statement: *As a mid-sized, comprehensive public institution dedicated to the creation and dissemination of knowledge, Radford University empowers students from diverse backgrounds by providing transformative educational experiences, from the undergraduate to the doctoral level, within and beyond the classroom. As an inclusive university community, we specialize in cultivating relationships among students, faculty, staff, alumni and other partners, and in providing a culture of service, support and engagement. We embrace innovation and tradition and instill students with purpose and the ability to think creatively and critically. We provide an educational environment and the tools to address the social, economic and environmental issues confronting our region, nation and the world.*   Radford University’s current strategic plan, 2018-2023 Strategic Plan: *Embracing the Tradition and Envisioning the Future,* is concluding in December 2023. While there are many successes to celebrate stemming from the initiatives taken under the plan, there are new challenges to address and opportunities to take advantage of moving forward. To that end, the University is preparing a two-year strategic plan (2024-2025) to guide operations and programs, taking advantage of proven high-impact practices across divisions. While the University has a lot to be proud of, including a diverse student population, strong academic programs, solid infrastructure and dedicated faculty and staff, there are obvious challenges that must be addressed ahead. The most critical issue of declining enrollment mirrors what many small, regional universities are experiencing across the country. The new two-year plan will focus on this critical issue as the University seeks to understand the cause and find solutions to the enrollment shifts.  During the last two years, the University has also experienced significant administrative transition. Key roles such as Vice President for Economic Development and Corporate Education, Vice President for Finance and Administration and Chief Financial Officer, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, Vice President for Enrollment Management and Strategic Communications and General Counsel have been recently filled. This transition constitutes a 70 percent change in senior leadership positions. The new administration is acutely aware of the challenges facing the University and is prepared to move forward in a strategic direction to bolster enrollment and continue to be a robust economic driver for the region and Commonwealth.   As a new two-year plan is carried out, a comprehensive five-year strategic plan will be developed in parallel to guide the University from 2026-2030. With an outcome-driven focus, the University will ensure students are recruited and retained to be successful in and outside the classroom. The University’s top priority is to remain affordable and accessible to students while offering high quality academic programs and educational experiences.  |

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| **A2. What are your institution’s greatest strengths and areas of distinctiveness that it should continue to invest in? What are your institution’s greatest opportunities for improvement?** |
| **Greatest Strengths/Areas of Distinctiveness**

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| **Access**  | The University prides itself on providing quality educational opportunities for students across the Commonwealth: 91% of undergraduate students are Virginia residents, 32% are first-generation, 35% are Pell Grant recipients, and 31% are ethnic minorities. Of the undergraduate student population, 13% represent all three categories.  |
| **Affordability**  | The University is currently the third most affordable four-year public institution and is often recognized nationally for its affordability. In addition to overall affordable rates, the University leverages multiple financial awards to ensure students' ability to meet their academic potential is not impacted by lack of financial resources.   |
| **Engaged Learning Opportunities**  | Radford University has a long history of faculty and students working side-by-side advancing their disciplines and collaborating with community partners to hone the skills, knowledge and dispositions needed to advance into successful careers of meaning and purpose.  Radford University is committed to the accessibility of transformative learning experiences for all our students. To this end, we are increasingly embedding engaged learning (including undergraduate research, case studies, simulations, civic engagement, and project-based learning) into our ongoing class level activities. Students in teaching and health care fields participate in high-quality practices with partners statewide. Many students also demonstrate engagement through the Honors College and Highlander Research Rookies Program that are further described below.   |
| **Geographic Location**  | Radford University is an economic engine within the Southwest Virginia region. The University leverages its natural resources to provide an environment where students can thrive as they live and learn. Committed to enhancing outdoor recreation and incorporating engaged learning, the University has backyard access to hiking, rock climbing, kayaking, paddle boarding, horseback riding, caving, backpacking and white-water rafting. The University strives to provide outdoor adventures, promote healthy self-discovery, and unlock student leadership potential all within the Southwest Virginia region.  |
| **Distinctive Programs meet workforce demands**  | Across all academic offerings, the University ensures students are focused on developing, honing, and communicating their career readiness skills so they can demonstrate and articulate these work-based competencies in ways that recruiters will understand and value. The NACE (National Association of College and Employers) competencies are embedded in undergraduate research programs, mapped to learning outcomes in a civic engagement program, infused in the signature Honors College course, and threaded through faculty development programming. Radford University has the only Competency-Based Education (CBE) offerings at a public university in the Commonwealth; this delivery format is specifically geared towards working professionals seeking a highly flexible learning modality. The CBE programs will continue to expand to support workforce development.   |
| **Fiscal and Plant Stewardship**  | The University is a financially sound institution that maximizes its available resources and operates within its means. The University manages resources effectively, as seen in the low debt burden ratio of the institution. Furthermore, the University places great emphasis on the proper maintenance and efficient management of its facilities, while recognizing the paramount importance of LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) in promoting sustainability. With a current LEED-certified square footage of 34%, the University demonstrates its commitment to environmentally responsible practices. The institution strategically undertakes new construction projects based on evolving needs and priorities. The University strives to create more energy-efficient, and environmentally responsible spaces for our campus community, contributing to a sustainable future.   |

  **Greatest Opportunities for Improvement**

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| **Stabilizing Enrollment**  | Stabilizing undergraduate enrollment at main campus is a top priority for the administration as well as a direct focus for the new Vice President for Enrollment Management and Strategic Communications. Undergraduate main campus enrollment has shown the most significant decline. As a result, the University will define the student profile, implement a comprehensive segmentation strategy, redefine the recruiting strategies, align the organizational structure, and increase investment in marketing and recruiting experiences. The Highlander Success Center, a collaborative unit that brings together advising, retention, first-year programs, and career and talent development services, has also developed a retention improvement plan. The University is implementing the Realizing Inclusive Student Excellence (RISE) Quality Enhancement Plan to improve student success in lower-division courses. Furthermore, the University is actively working with Virginia community colleges and other Virginia universities to create pathways and reciprocal partnerships that will attract and retain students in our strong academic programs.   |
| **Defining Brand Identity**  | Radford University finds itself in a unique situation where generally viewed favorably, the University lacks a discernible market position. Consequently, the institution has embarked on a project to redefine Radford University’s brand identity and refine its visual marks. The final branding and marketing recommendations are anticipated to be completed in fall 2023.   |
| **Broadening External Outreach**  | Radford University, through the newly founded Economic Development and Corporate Education division, is committed to cultivating relationships with industry partners, engaging in collaborative initiatives, and serving the community. Serving community partners by fostering connections to the programs, services, and networks will support innovation and economic growth, both within and outside the University.  |
| **Developing the Internal Workforce**   | The Education and General expenses of the University are predominately related to personnel cost. The faculty and staff are one of the University’s greatest assets and being a destination workplace in Southwest Virginia is an important aspiration for the University. The University is currently reviewing the compensation structure, enhancing flexible work options, and dedicating resources to professional development and career laddering to retain the high quality of our instructional and administrative talent.   |

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| **A3. What are the top 3-5 strategic priorities you are currently pursuing or planning to pursue in the next six years? Please explain how each strategy relates to the strengths and/or opportunities for improvement mentioned above and will ultimately drive better outcomes for students.** |
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| **Defining the University’s Distinctive Nature**  | Defining our distinctive nature will 1) clearly demarcate our value to the higher education system of the Commonwealth as well as the economic region 2) promote our strength around a highly engaged student experience, 3) promote the natural resources of our campus location, and by doing so 4) recruit students that will be academically successful in obtaining their educational goals.   |
| **Stabilizing Enrollment**  | By stabilizing enrollment, the University becomes a dependable structure to leverage economic development, attract and retain students, faculty/staff talent, and appropriately utilizes the existing academic infrastructure of our campuses.   |
| **Enhancing Economic Development & Outreach**  | Strategically partnering on economic development with the surrounding region will leverage the resources of both and create an array of internship, apprenticeship, and employment opportunities for students. These opportunities will also enhance the likelihood of graduates remaining in the Commonwealth.  |
| **Maintaining Affordability**  | Increasing efficiency and effectiveness will ensure the University remains affordable. This includes aligning staffing levels with the impact of the enrollment decline. Remaining affordable increases access to higher education for many families and may aid with stabilizing enrollment.   |

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| **A4. What support can OpSix provide to help you achieve those strategies? Please include both budget and policy requests and reference Part I of your submission where appropriate.**  |
| Boosting Undergraduate Enrollment through Access to Higher Education Like many institutions nationwide, Radford University has seen a significant decrease in undergraduate student enrollment in recent years. There are programs utilized by other states that the General Assembly and administration could establish to address declining enrollment at certain public colleges and universities. Successful implementation can increase educational attainment for Virginians, cultivate a homegrown workforce that raises the state’s economic competitiveness and can lower financial barriers to college. Examples include: • [NC Promise Tuition Plan](https://www.ncleg.gov/enactedlegislation/statutes/pdf/bysection/chapter_116/gs_116-143.11.pdf) - In-state undergraduate students enrolling at select North Carolina system institutions pay $500 per semester, with the state buying down the amount of any financial obligation resulting from the established tuition rate.  • [North Star Promise Scholarship](https://www.ohe.state.mn.us/mPg.cfm?pageID=2590) - Offers free tuition at Minnesota’s public colleges to in-state students whose families earn less than $80,000 annually. The program covers tuition costs left after state and federal grants and institutional scholarships have been applied. Authority to Offer Reduced Tuition to Out-of-State Students Radford University has the capacity to increase its enrollment of out-of-state students. The Commonwealth of Virginia could grant Radford (and other Level II institutions) the authority to offer a reduced tuition rate to out-of-state students in neighboring states.  Continue Investment in Need-Based Financial Aid  Providing additional need-based financial aid has proven to be the most prudent approach to offsetting increasing costs of higher education. This is especially critical at Radford University, where the proportion of undergraduate students eligible for need-based aid has grown from 50% to 62% in the last decade. During the same time, the percentage of unmet need for undergraduates has grown from 19% to 28%. The University requests continuing support from the state and an additional 10% ($5 million) in funding for need-based aid over the 2024 – 2026 biennium.  Support of Well-being Internships to Provide Career Development and Fulfill Critical Needs Radford University understands overall well-being is a critical element of enhancing productivity and ensuring students are successful in the classroom, graduate and begin a career in their chosen field. To bolster support resources and provide career preparation for students, funding is sought to create well-being internships for aspiring professionals in the wellness field. Well-being internships will provide skill development and real-world exposure while creating greater access for students to services such as collegiate recovery, first-generation and military resource centers. Details on specific funding requests for related initiatives can be found in section C3 and C4.  |

**SECTION B: STRATEGIC DEEP DIVE – ENROLLMENT VOLUME & COMPOSITION**

***Key question: How is your institution managing enrollment in light of state and national trends, and what are the financial implications?***

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| **B1. What do you see as the primary drivers of recent enrollment trends for your institution? Please reference any specific academic programs that have had a significant (positive or negative) effect on enrollment, if relevant.** |
| The University’s enrollment decline can be attributable to many factors, many of which align with national rhetoric. Factors such as the declining high school population and questioning the value proposition of a college education has a more direct impact for the institution given who the University has traditionally served. The growth of freshman class size, which includes students from the Commonwealth, at other institutions is directly impacting the pipeline of students traditionally served by Radford University. This is especially impactful as other public institutions expand to serve more Pell eligible and underrepresented populations. Several universities in surrounding states and proximate to Southwest Virginia are offering out-of-state (Virginia) students their in-state tuition rate or even less, including ETSU and WCU, making their institutions more affordable. Other factors such as free community college in the surrounding areas have impacted student’s first destination in selecting colleges. While these factors were predicted to impact enrollment, the COVID-19 pandemic expedited and continues to impact the decline. The University has seen undergraduate enrollment growth in allied health programs over the past five years, with gains in high demand areas of nursing, biomedical science, healthcare administration, medical laboratory science, and respiratory therapy. There have been increases in enrollment in the professional-oriented master's program in education (special education and literacy), business administration, and nursing administration. The growth in healthcare and master’s education-related programs is attributable to several factors. First, they demonstrate the historic strength of these programs in the identity of Radford University. Secondly, healthcare and education are some of the largest reliable employment areas for Southwest Virginia. Finally, our expanded footprint at Radford University Carilion in Roanoke allowed us to produce more graduates in health professions. Many of our undergraduate programs have seen declining enrollment, including biology, health and human performance, bachelor’s teacher education, criminal justice, and communications. Graduate programs with the most significant decline were healthcare administration (M.H.A.), psychology (M.S.), Nursing Practice (D.N.P.), education (M.S.), and social work (M.S.W.).  The decline in undergraduate enrollment reflects our overall loss of traditional first year students and is most pronounced in the disciplines that have been the strongest liberal arts and science majors. These percentage losses are proportionate to our overall decrease in enrollment. Graduate enrollment dropped during and after the pandemic in intensive in-person programs. The University is seeking to add additional online expedited asynchronous programs to meet working adults' needs.   |

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| **B2. Please summarize your enrollment management strategy moving forward and the specific actions (if any) you are taking to implement that strategy.** |
| Recruitment:  A strategic priority for fiscal year 2024 is the development of a formalized recruitment planning model. This model will be focused on actionable steps and accountability measures for immediate and mid-term effects on new student enrollment. The model will include the below points of focus: * Segmented Recruitment Communication Strategy – delivering impactful messages in a voice that resonates with our diverse student populations.
* Re–envisioned Recruitment Outreach – redefining our presence in areas where the University has declined in market share by enhancing our presence.
* Re-defined Campus Involvement - developing opportunities where campus partners can actively be involved in the recruitment process.
* Tailored Student Search Strategy – building effective pipelines and pathways to connect with prospective students.
* Controlled Admissions Processes – transitioning from outsourced admissions applications and communications to internally managed processes that allow for more customized and meaningful communications and connections.
* Revitalized Transfer Opportunities - increasing participation in Transfer Virginia and enhancing Virginia Community College System major pathways to make transferring more accessible to students

 Moving forward with a renewed focus based on the cornerstones noted above will allow the University to have intentional connections with prospective students and highlight how the University will meet their educational aspirations.  Retention:  The University is actively working on multiple short and long-term initiatives to increase student engagement, retention, and completion. Some are aimed at individual student success, while others seek to evaluate and update our degree portfolio to better meet the needs of students and the Commonwealth. Some examples include: * The Highlanders (Realizing Inclusive Student Excellence) RISE Together Quality Enhancement Plan seeks to improve teaching and learning in 100 and 200 level classes, with the goal of increasing course success and decreasing achievement gaps.
* The general education program is being refined to ensure that students have a broad-based liberal arts experience that complements their career-focused majors and exposes students to a wider range of options. The refined general education program will also facilitate transfer from VCCS (Virginia Community College System) to the University.
* The Highlander Success Center was recently formed by merging academic advising, retention, orientation and first-year programs, and career and talent development. The University is implementing a coordinated retention and completion plan to support student success.
* The University is working on a series of “pathway programs” to put Radford University at the center of students’ educational experience. We have a series of “accelerated” bachelor’s and master’s programs to encourage students to complete their professional education either in-person or on-line. The University will develop stronger partnerships with local community colleges to attract undergraduate transfer students, and to develop more graduate pathway agreements for students who want to continue their education in fields not served by University graduate programs.
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| **B3. How ambitious/realistic/conservative are the enrollment projections you most recently submitted to SCHEV? What are the greatest unknowns or risks that could lead enrollment to differ significantly from your projections? Please reference national and statewide enrollment trends/projections and cite any other data (e.g. regional trends, performance of prior enrollment strategies) that informed your projections.** |
| The most recently submitted 2B enrollment projections have been adjusted as we look to implement restructured enrollment strategies. In developing the new undergraduate student enrollment projections, current loss of market share was acknowledged, along with the decreases that have occurred in Pell eligible and underrepresented minority populations. Enrollment targets were defined to help us return to our fall 2022 new student enrollment goals within six years. * The greatest unknown are changes anticipated at other Virginia institutions that can significantly impact our applicant funnel. Small enrollment increases at large institutions across the state (GMU, JMU, VCU, and VT) due to admitting more students from their admissions funnels can negatively impact the University’s entering class sizes. This decrease in new freshman cohorts would in turn lead to fewer in-state students attending Radford University.

 * Additionally, due to the mobility of students who live in the Northern Virginia region and the presence of regional admissions recruiters from large flagship institutions across the nation, students continue to have more options to enroll at institutions in and outside of the Commonwealth.
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| **B4. Explain the implications of your enrollment strategy on your institution’s financials. Please consider impacts on both revenues (e.g., discounting, financial aid, net tuition revenue) and expenditures (e.g., costs to implement enrollment management strategies, costs of enrolling more students or students with different needs, cost-per-student impact of flat/decreased enrollment).** |
| Radford University is a tuition-dependent institution with tuition and fees comprising almost 50% of the E&G operating revenue. The impact of enrollment shifts is felt throughout the institution as ongoing operating budgets are adjusted to account for changes year-to-year and opportunities for growth are only available as funding and enrollment grows. As student headcount declines, investments in ongoing initiatives must be adjusted as well and the University is limited in its pursuit of select strategic initiatives. For FY2024, the University is projecting a $5.2 million reduction in tuition revenue due to a decline in enrollment. In future years, the impact could continue if enrollment is not stabilized. The impact of a loss of 100 undergraduate students is $1 million in tuition and $370,000 in auxiliary comprehensive fees to the University.  Anticipating potential enrollment declines, the University identified several strategic savings strategies in the FY2024 budget development process that reduced total expenses by $9 million. While the stewardship of all funds will remain a priority and savings opportunities will continue to be realized, the University cannot continue to offer high quality programs or build new opportunities by cutting at the core of the University.  The decline in enrollment has primarily occurred over the past eight years. There are several opportunities being explored to address the loss of revenue if the decline continues, including: * Right sizing the University to operate with a smaller workforce. Personnel expenses make up the largest cost category to the University and downsizing could result in significant savings but may also impact services provided.
* Condensing the footprint of the University and taking advantage of partnerships or consolidation of targeted properties for additional cost savings.
* Stabilizing enrollment through both internal efforts and external opportunities, including developing a state-wide strategy to address the anticipated shortfall of high school graduates in the commonwealth.

 To mitigate further enrollment declines, the University has employed strategies to include: * Review and revision of our enrollment strategy has been a focus for the undergraduate admissions leadership team.  In recent work with Ruffalo Noel Levitz (RNL), it was affirmed that students are actively seeking out information regarding colleges and universities through a variety of channels.  According to the RNL 2022 High School Planning Report, there are ten influential sources of information that students utilize in the college search process. Based on this ranking we are working to address opportunities in the following areas: a new institution website, creation of videos and photography to showcase campus facilities, a comprehensive communication strategy, and enhanced social media presence.

 In the most recent recruitment cycle the following initiatives were implemented to support new undergraduate enrollment: * Hired a Social Media Coordinator (SMC) to implement a holistic social media plan for the recruitment cycle. The SMC developed a working plan during the summer of 2022 and has been refining and updating the strategy quarterly based on positive impressions. Additionally, the SMC implemented a social media intern program that integrated current student content into the social media plan. In a to-date year-over-year comparison the undergraduate admissions social media channels have increased our posting frequency by 124%, our engagements by 678%, and our video views by 339%.
* Implemented a comprehensive call campaign to all admitted students. The Office of Admissions and Office of Financial Aid supported call initiatives to answer student questions, assist with registering for campus visits, or filing the FAFSA. This spring we saw a 13% increase in attendance at our admitted student events. Additionally, the number of students who have submitted a FAFSA has increased by 3%.
* Developed a student employment pilot program to support incoming students through the enrollment process. This peer-to-peer initiative connects current students with incoming students who are missing the necessary requirements to enroll in the fall semester. The student employees inform and assist incoming students to complete pre-enrollment requirements.

 For the upcoming recruitment cycle the following tactics are being implemented: * Increasing outreach at high schools and community colleges where we have seen fewer students enroll in the last three cycles and implement a revised communication and partnership strategy for working with school counselors.
* Realigning the recruitment team to provide additional staff in regions showing greatest declines (Northern Virginia and Tidewater regions).
* Implementing a segmented communication strategy to provide more specific information by student type throughout the enrollment experience. Specifically, the University is analyzing how to communicate with first-generation students, parents of high school students, transfer students, and military affiliated students most effectively.
* Launching new marketing and branding initiatives that will help elevate awareness about Radford University within the extremely competitive Virginia higher education landscape.

 In fall 2021, two online programs (RN-BSN and MBA) were launched in an accelerated format to meet market needs in the Commonwealth and nationally. As of spring 2023, enrollment has grown 347% in the RN-BSN program and 484% in the MBA program. Specifically, RN-BSN had 47 students at launch to 223 currently enrolled and MBA had 19 students at launch to 111 students currently enrolled.   The Vinod Chachra Innovative Mobile Personalized Accelerated Competency Training (IMPACT) Lab was launched to help meet the growing needs of industry and help working adults to upskill their talents in an innovative competency-based online format. The lab is also an opportunity to expand enrollment and diversify student profile by targeting adult learners. With certificates, credentials and micro-credentials in education, cybersecurity, data science, and geospatial intelligence, the IMPACT Lab gives adult learners flexible, affordable stackable credentials to meet their training and development needs.  |

**SECTION C: STRATEGIC DEEP DIVE – PROGRAM ALIGNMENT & PERFORMANCE**

**COMPLETION OUTCOMES**

***Key question: How is your institution supporting all students to succeed in completing their degree in a timely manner?***

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| **C1. What are your highest-priority completion outcomes targets, both overall and for particular student segments? Please include aspirational targets, realistic expectations, and qualitative targets and specify by when you are aiming to meet those targets (e.g., X% 6-year graduation rate for Pell students by 2030).** |
| Please see the following outcome targets:

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| **Population**  | **Current outcome**  | **Aspirational target**  | **Expected target**  | **Goal timeline**  |
| Undergraduate population 6-year graduation rate  | 54.0%  (Fall 2016 entering class)  | 60%  | 57%  | 2029-2030 (2023-2024 entering class)  |
| Undergraduate Pell student 6-year graduation rate   | 51%  (Fall 2016 entering class)  | 60%  | 55%  | 2029-2030 (2023-2024 entering class)  |
| First-generation students 6-year graduation rate  | 48%  (Fall 2016 entering class)  | 60%  | 54%  | 2029-2030 (2023-2024 entering class)  |
| Undergraduate transfer with associate degree, time to degree  | 2.7 years  (Graduating class 2021-2022)  | 2.4 years  | 2.5 years  | 2029-2030  |
| Graduate master’s degree population 3-year graduation rate  | 82.0%  (2013-14 entering class)  | 90%  | 86%  | 2029-30 (2025-26 entering class)   |

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| **C2. What specific strategies/actions are you planning to take to achieve those goals? How will you draw on successes/challenges from your prior completion outcome improvement strategies?** |
| The University has a priority of increasing student retention and completion, as shown by several of the following initiatives focused on undergraduate and graduate student success.  Undergraduate initiatives include: * Redesigned New Student Orientation Program (Quest) - Adding a new three-day orientation at the beginning of the fall semester, to highlight academic engagement, build skills, and to create a sense of belonging for new students when they move in and prior to classes starting.
* Collaboration and cohesive student support services – Creation of the Highlander Success Center as previously described.
* Enhance student learning and success - The University is implementing the RISE program to improve student success in lower-division courses and to reduce unequal outcomes.
* Promotion of Honors College - The College offers high-achieving students an enriched academic environment through a living-living community, cohort-based courses, and robust co-curricular programming. Freshmen have a high retention rate (~91% long-term average) and demonstrate a strong four-year graduation rate for our student population -- 70% (four-year average).
* Increase student employment opportunities - Increasing the number of paid work-based learning experiences, including internships, apprenticeships, and co-ops.
* Promotion of living-learning communities - Aligned with national data, students participating in our living-learning communities (LLC) achieve higher first-semester GPAs (3.08 vs. 2.69) and are retained at higher rates (81% three-year average) than their non-LLC counterparts (71% three-year average).
* Dedication of resources to the Highlander Research Rookies program – This program provides research experiences to select high-achieving incoming first year and transfer students to Radford University. Selected students take a 3-credit hour class to develop career skills employers want and are then paired with a faculty mentor after exploring their options in research and creative works. Students in the program work alongside their faculty mentor on average for five hours a week for three semesters, thereby maximizing opportunities for research-based engagement and learning. This program is an exemplar of student success outcomes with a 95% retention rate and an 88% four-year “success rate” of students who have either graduated or are continuing their undergraduate careers. (Please note the program has not been in place long enough to calculate the six-year graduation rate.)

 Graduate initiatives include: * Enrollment growth previously mentioned in the MBA program is attributable to the transition to a 100% online and asynchronous delivery, an accelerated path for completion, and frequent and multiple program start dates. Retention and persistence rates for these professional programs are above the national average of like partner programs.
* Based on Graduate Student Needs Assessment and Graduate Teaching Assistant surveys, the University has increased training workshops and seminars to assist students with teaching, research, writing, and presentation skills, as well providing more student engagement activities to increase their sense of belonging and wellness.
* The University increased the number of summer graduate assistantships significantly from 30 to nearly 200 positions in 2023. In addition to the practical learning, research and professional training opportunities these assistantships create, they also provide financial support and help ease the financial burden for students.

 The Graduate College has updated policies to provide relief for students who have experienced significant hardships and prevent them from completing their degree. The standards for graduate students on academic probation were adjusted in 2022 to provide more time for students to recover from probation, increasing the likelihood for students to continue and complete their graduate degrees. A new academic forgiveness policy will provide a second chance for students who might not have been able to recover academically from a significant life event (illness or serious family issue).   While many of these programs have been successful at increasing student success in specific populations, their impact on completion rates will continue to be monitored and tracked. Over the next two years, the University will be assessing each initiative, and investing in the infrastructure to create a cohesive program to increase overall student completion rates. New/Continuing Opportunities: To ensure all students have the support they need to be successful and matriculate in a timely manner, it is imperative to understand our unique student population and their individual needs. Radford University has historically served a broad range of students from varying backgrounds, with a high percentage identifying as first-generation and/or from underrepresented backgrounds. The following initiatives are proposed for funding.  First-Gen CenterThe First-Gen Center (formerly the Center for Opportunity and Social Mobility) opened in fall 2021. Continuing this initiative requires an annual investment of $375,000. The First-Gen Center is currently focused on: * Improving the educational journey of first-generation students.
* Decreasing the gap in retention and graduation rates between first generation students and their peers from families of college graduates.
* Aligning student support with principles of diversity and inclusion
* Ensuring students find a sense of belonging and support

 Dedicated Well-Being Internships Multi-dimensional (holistic) well-being is a critical element of enhancing productivity and ensuring students are successful in the classroom, graduate and begin a career in their chosen field. Through internships, training, and peer-to-peer programs access to support becomes available where sense of belonging and community exists such as collegiate recovery, first-generation and military resource centers among others while at the same time career focused skill building occurs. An investment of $275,000 would fund 10 undergraduate and 10 graduate opportunities. Student Engagement and Peer MentoringEngaging in campus activities, whether joining a student organization, attending an athletic event, working on campus, conducting research with a faculty member, or playing intramural sports is part of creating a sense of belonging and building one’s community or finding peers with similar interests. The earlier a new student gets involved can ease the transition to college. Radford University will enhance student engagement through innovative programming, student outreach initiatives and campus traditions. The location of campus in Southwest Virginia also provides a distinctive backdrop for expanded outdoor programs, events, and trips. An additional approach to building connections and helping students engage is peer mentoring. Connecting peers-to-peers offers shared experience, coaching and mentoring, reduced stigma, empowerment and autonomy, enhanced resource usage and treatment engagement and community building. A study of a mentoring program at Stanford indicated that students who received coaching and mentoring were five percentage points more likely to persist in college resulting in a nine-12 percent increase in retention (Bettinger & Baker, 2011). Implementing a consistent set of training components across mentor groups supports the accuracy of information disseminated and builds confidence and a support network within the mentors. Mentors are also better equipped to more effectively care for themselves. An investment of $350,000 would fund approximately 60 student mentors, two graduate assistants, and operating costs.  |

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| **C3. How will you use existing/recently provided resources to execute those strategies? Will you be requesting incremental state resources? Please state the request and rationale and explicitly tie to Part I of your planning template.** |
| The University is committed to programs in support of student health, well-being, and success. To that end, University funding has been directed to programs mentioned above through strategic allocation and savings strategies in other areas (see D5).  The First-Gen Center was initially funded through strategic start-up funds beginning in 2021 through 2024. Due to the success of the center and its outcomes, the University requests incremental state support of $375,000 to continue the program, focusing on the success of first-generation students. The funding would provide staffing and operating resources necessary to continue this much needed support into the future. Data collected over the last two years indicate that, since opening, awareness of the center has more than doubled (60% increase reported by survey respondents) and the number of visits to the center by students has increased 89%. The First-Gen Center has doubled the number of programs offered to students since opening and has seen a steady increase in the number of program attendees over the past two years. While only two years of data exist, every data point indicates a positive impact on first-gen students and a steady increase in the use and demand for the unique support offered through the center’s programs, services, and resources. Well-Being Internships would be a new initiative, previously unfunded. The University requests $275,000 of incremental state support to build the infrastructure and fund staffing necessary to implement this program in support of mental health and student learning opportunities. This would allow for paid internships focused on well-being, to provide interns with skill development, real-world exposure, networking opportunities, resume enhancement, financial support, and contribute to student retention and recruitment efforts. Simultaneously, the University would benefit by attracting and nurturing talented individuals, cultivating a positive brand image, and gaining fresh perspectives from aspiring professionals in the wellness field.  The Student Engagement and Peer Mentoring program would serve to strengthen retention across the institution and ease the transition for many students as they acclimate to the University.  Incremental state support in the amount of $350,000 would adequately fund the personnel and operating costs associated with this important initiative.  As a rural institution, Radford University students often need to relocate to larger population centers for internship opportunities. This creates a differential challenge for students due to their need to pay for housing for a semester, which compounds the financial challenges of our typical student profile. The University plans to explore opportunities to support these students by assisting with housing costs for an internship, making such work-based learning opportunities much more practical for our students.  |

**POST-COMPLETION OUTCOMES**

***Key question: How is your institution preparing all students for success beyond completion (e.g., career preparation)?***

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| **C4. Please explain how you monitor post-completion outcomes (e.g., employment rates, wage attainment, debt load, upward mobility). What data do you collect? What metrics are you monitoring most closely? What do the data reveal about your institution’s greatest strengths and areas for improvement with respect to post-completion outcomes? Please include any relevant data/reports in the appendix or as a separate attachment, including any data that captures outcomes by school/department/program.** |
| The University has traditionally used the First-Destination Survey from the Career and Talent Development office to track students after graduation. Additionally, graduate student enrollment is tracked through Clearinghouse reports. Over the next year, the University will define the career-ready outcomes for degree programs and experiential learning data and track employment or post-graduation education. The data revealed that most alumni are employed or attending post-graduate programs, with success across all majors. These data sources will be used to enhance the understanding of industries that employ the University’s alumni.   The University has also recently used data from the Clearinghouse to track alumni enrollment in post-graduate programs showing that over 2500 graduates since 2012 have enrolled nationally in graduate and professional programs. The results show that the majority of alumni who enroll in graduate programs are pursuing further education in professional degrees and are enrolled in competing institutions (public and private) in Virginia. Using this data, there are opportunities to encourage more students to matriculate to University offered professional graduate programs through clear accelerated pathways. The University also plans to create partnerships with sister public institutions for guaranteed admission pathways for graduate programs not offered at Radford.  |

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| **C5. What specific strategies/actions, including potential changes to your program portfolio or curriculum, are you planning to take to maximize the career readiness and job attainment of all students across programs of study, including increasing early career exposure for students (e.g., internships) during their time at your institution? How will you draw on successes/challenges from prior initiatives?** |
| The University will advance strategies in three areas to maximize career readiness and job attainment. These areas include curricular updates, infrastructure modifications, and partner development. Curricular Updates: * Modernize Academic Curriculum Lifecycle Process to include a cadence for the inception, establishment, maintenance, expansion, monitoring, and closing of academic programs that aligns with the strategic mission, enrollment trends, and needs of the Commonwealth.
* Refine general education curriculum to align with the NACE career readiness competencies more intentionally. This includes building faculty awareness and providing tools in understanding how to align course and project learning outcomes to NACE competencies in visible, transparent, and consumable ways for our students. Offering concrete examples, peer exchanges and grounding the work in the student success literature are all lessons learned.
* Further expand course-based, work-based, and work-integrated learning opportunities for our students.

Infrastructure Modifications: * Increase support for unpaid internship opportunities.
* Seeking funds to support student housing costs during work-based learning opportunities.
* Revise campus student employment opportunities to align with developing NACE competencies, leveraging available VTOP resources.
* Ensures students receive necessary assistance in understanding their education as marketable and transferable skills and developing the ability to communicate their stories.
* Review academic calendar to increase term flexibility supportive of work-based experiences.

Partner Development: * Merge initiatives of the Division of Economic Development and Corporate Education to expand the network of student internships and allied work-based learning experiences within Academic Affairs.
* Expand our co-op and apprenticeship opportunities. Internship and co-op preparation for students continues to evolve as we learn from our employer partners and student feedback. Tamson Six visited with Radford’s Leadership Council to begin planning around Apprenticeship programs.
* Leverage University offerings, such as: The Hub, which is an economic development center focused on partnering with the community to support workforce development; The Venture Lab, which is an interdisciplinary learn-by-doing lab for innovation and entrepreneurship; and Alumni Affairs who partners to development and expand student opportunities.

As we move forward with these strategies, we build on successes and lessons learned from our efforts to institutionally infuse NACE career readiness competencies.  |
| **C6. How do you intend to use existing/provided resources to execute those strategies? Will you be requesting incremental state resources? Please explicitly tie to Part I of your planning template.** |
| Many of these important academic initiatives include ongoing enhancements or are in exploration/evaluation stages. The University plans to strategically align funding resources to appropriately fund each priority as they are rolled out in the context of our two-year action plan and will not request specific state funding.    |

**WORKFORCE ALIGNMENT**

***Key question: How are your institution’s programs of study and degree conferrals aligned with the evolving talent needs of the Commonwealth?***

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| **C7. For which specific workforce needs is your institution best positioned to supply talent, based on regional, industry, or occupation alignment?** |
| Radford University alumni have the ability to be successful in multiple industries, because the undergraduate programs we offer are based on a strong liberal arts foundation and include significant experiential education aligned with NACE outcomes. Specifically, health care, education, biotechnology, information technology, communications/creative arts/marketing, entrepreneurship, food/beverage/nutrition, and outdoor recreation are regional industries in which alumni of Radford’s undergraduate and graduate programs are successful (based on data from the Virginia Economic Development Partnership).  |
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| **C8. What specific strategies/actions is your institution planning to take to better align your program offerings or degree conferrals to current and projected workforce needs? Please provide a list of specific programs you intend to sunset or grow in the next 6 years to increase alignment, partnerships/initiatives you intend to launch or deepen, etc. If you intend to launch any new programs, please explain why your institution is particularly well-suited to succeed in that area.** |
| Currently, academic departments are investigating the following new programs: •     Creative arts (B.A.): Creative arts is a popular minor that integrates arts with application. The new interdisciplinary major, building on the minor, combines courses from arts, business/marketing, and communication to prepare students for careers in social media, marketing, and design. •     Digital arts/illustration/animation (B.A.): The new digital arts undergraduate degree builds on our popular graphic design and e-sports minors; and design majors; to give students in-demand skills for game design, graphic design, and other commercial arts careers. •     Post-master's certificate in nursing education: Nursing education is a high demand area and will help us increase our ability to educate future nurses by increasing the number of nurses teaching and supervising in our programs.    Over the next six years, we expect to sunset the following programs: •      Associate of Applied Science in Occupational Therapy Assistant. This program was brought over in the merger with Jefferson College of Health Sciences and is being sunset with the last cohort being accepted in Fall 2022. Other associate degree programs related to the merger have been continued at Virginia Western Community College.  * Accelerated B.S. in nursing: Subsequent to Radford’s merger with Jefferson College, we are merging the Accelerated program with the B.S. in nursing, creating one degree program with traditional and accelerated tracks.

  Two additional education initiatives of note are being launched to address the teacher shortage in Southwest Virginia: •     The Virtual Academy for Provisionally Licensed Teachers: The online, self-paced courses allow provisionally licensed teachers to progress through the professional studies coursework required by the Virginia Department of Education to become fully licensed. Students can take the three credits courses at a reduced tuition rate, and courses can transfer to our master’s in education degree program if students choose to complete that credential.  •      Teacher Apprenticeship Program. This program will utilize online course delivery formats to support active teaching assistants (with some college credits or associate degrees), substitute teachers, community college students, and traditional University undergraduates complete required courses for a degree in Interdisciplinary Studies as well as teaching endorsements in Elementary Education (preK-6) and Elementary Special Education (K-6), in partnership with our local school districts.    Additionally, as stated in other areas of this document, we plan to create more academic pathways from the VCCS to our bachelor’s programs; accelerated bachelors and master's programs for our professional programs, and partnerships with Virginia public R1s for access to graduate programs not offered at Radford.  Under the University’s new executive leadership, we intend to do a comprehensive review of our portfolio of academic programs over the next year. Programs will be reviewed based on their student success rate, alignment with the mission of the institution, faculty expertise, use of our existing facilities, and the needs of the region and the state. Based on this assessment, some additional degree programs may merge, be re-designed, or be launched.  |

**SECTION D: STRATEGIC DEEP DIVE – FINANCIAL EFFECTIVENESS & SUSTAINABILITY**

**AFFORDABILITY FOR STUDENTS & FAMILIES**

***Key question: How is your institution accounting for and improving affordability for students and families?***

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| **D1. What specific strategies/actions do you plan to take to improve affordability moving forward across your overall student body and priority subpopulations, and what is the expected impact? Please account for a broad range of factors including the full cost of attendance, net price, time to degree, debt load, etc.** |
| Radford University remains committed to affordability, which is demonstrated by our ranking as the third lowest tuition and fee rate among Virginia’s public institutions. As an institution that primarily serves Virginia residents, our goal has been to provide as much need-based financial aid as possible to in-state students. As our Program 108 allocations increase, we have increased our individual student awards annually. For the 2022-2023 academic year, awards increased by 4.7%. For the 2023-2024 academic year, awards are increasing by 38% for our students who demonstrate the highest need. Preliminary data shows that we will meet the full need of 53% of our student body in fall 2023 in comparison to 49% in fall 2022. Private scholarship dollars are crucial in making Radford University more affordable by providing financial assistance to our students, reducing their reliance on student loans, and enabling them to pursue their educational goals. These scholarships alleviate the financial burden on students and their families, opening doors to higher education that might otherwise be out of reach. For the 2022-2023 academic year, $2.4 million in private scholarships was awarded to more than 840 students. In addition, $1.3 million was available to assist with programs directly impacting the student experience.   |

**REVENUE**

***Key question: How is your institution approaching pricing and revenue management? What are the implications on long-term top-line financial health?***

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| **D2. Please explain the rationale behind your full pricing (i.e. published tuition & fees, including mandatory non-E&G fees) and financial aid award strategy (i.e. net tuition revenue projections). What data informed your assessment of T&F increase feasibility (e.g., market comparisons, student capacity to pay) and estimates of discounts/ waivers/unfunded scholarships? What informed your strategy around financial aid awards, merit and need-based, particularly for various student segments by income level and academic preparation?** |
| As the University considers tuition and fee increases, remaining a top affordable choice within the state continues to be one of the top priorities. However, other key factors are considered as well, including: * Economic conditions locally, regionally, and nationally
* Upcoming legislative actions and funding directives
* Programmatic priorities
* Mandatory cost increases, contractual and other commitments
* Enrollment projections and trends

 With these considerations in mind, the University attempts to balance affordability for students and their families with the need for resources to deliver on our mission and offer the highest quality academic programs and educational experiences. Where possible, the University also offers extensive financial aid opportunities to offset price increases to ensure access to a wide range of students.  Our comprehensive merit scholarship strategy, the Highlander Distinction Program, was implemented in fall 2020. The scholarship program has been a significant investment on behalf of the University, totaling $11 million and serving 3,000 students since its inception. It has been funded using auxiliary funds and unfunded scholarships. The intent of the program is to support all qualified incoming new freshman with a scholarship that equates to a tuition and fee discount of 28-30%. Due to our significant decline in new student enrollment over the last three years, our discount rate for the program has been 30.2%, 31.1%, and 32.3%. A full analysis of the program is currently underway using three years of data to help us identify trends and opportunities.  The need-based aid strategy works within the guidelines of the VSFAP program rules with the intent to support the tuition and fee costs for as many eligible students as possible. An annual review of all recipients is completed to determine the feasibility of increasing individual awards. The target of the need-based aid analysis is to develop an award schedule that supports all qualifying students. (See D1).  |

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| **D3. What do you expect to be the impact of your pricing/discounting approach on enrollment numbers/mix (if any) and net tuition revenue moving forward and why?** |
| * The intent of our discounting strategy is to help stabilize traditional undergraduate enrollment and net tuition revenue.
* The Division of Enrollment Management is committed to recruiting students that will be successful at Radford University and working intentionally to rebuild our new student undergraduate enrollment. The enrollment targets in our submission do not project aggressive growth but a realistic return to target a sustained undergraduate enrollment supporting stabilization of net tuition revenue.
* Based on survey responses from students who applied but chose not to enroll at Radford University for fall 2023, we know that affordability is a consideration in the college selection process, but not always the final deciding factor. Of the 645 applicants who provided information about the University they are attending there are nine Virginia institutions where 47% of the respondents are attending that are more expensive than Radford University.
* The institution will continue to evaluate program opportunities to increase enrollment in non-traditional undergraduate students, such as our RN-BSN online program that was implemented in fall 2021.
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**COST EFFECTIVENESS**

***Key question: How has your institution maintained bottom-line financial health and focused investment on the levers that will drive improvements in student outcomes?***

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| **D4. Reflect on the categories/subcategories of cost that have recently experienced the most significant increases on an absolute or per-student basis. What have been the primary drivers of those increases? Please be specific and include supporting data.** |
| As with most institutions, the University has been impacted by salary and fringe benefit increases mandated by the Commonwealth. The University has also been impacted by the dramatic increase in supplies and materials, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic. Operating costs increased over $5 million between FY2020 and FY2022, with an increase of $4.7 million in contractual services and $600,000 in supplies.  |

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| **D5. What specific strategies/actions do you plan to take to contain/reduce key costs and improve fiscal health going forward while improving student outcomes? What are your objectives and what have been your results to date of any already-launched initiatives? What is the expected impact and timeframe of these strategies? Include any short-term costs that would need to be incurred to implement the strategies.** |
| The University has and will continue to employ the following cost saving and containment initiatives:  * The Faculty Early Retirement Program (FERP) provides special benefits to tenured faculty who voluntarily retire from Radford University. This opportunity allows the University to capture salary and benefit savings. To date, this program has created salary savings and/or reallocation of over $4 million.
* Saving strategy requests from each senior management area employed to eliminate non-mission critical costs have accounted for over $13 million in savings and/or reallocations in the last three years and will continue to be a strategy moving forward. This process engages campus leaders in open discussion on strategic priorities and identifies programming that will support those priorities and encourages sun setting of those programs that no longer align with institutional goals and objectives.
* As stated in C8 above, Academic Affairs will be conducting a holistic review of our academic programs in relation to our mission and the needs of our students, the region, and the Commonwealth. Although no specific changes are planned yet, our expectation is that the alignment of programs with needs should result in cost-savings and/or increased revenue through enhance enrollment.
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| **D6. Provide information about your institution’s highest-priority E&G capital projects and requests (including new construction as well as renovations) over the six-year plan period and how they align to your enrollment trajectory, student outcomes improvement plans, or other strategic priorities. Please also reflect on your current E&G facilities utilization (especially classrooms, labs and student service areas), particularly in light of any recent trends that might impact space needs (e.g., enrollment trends, shifting learning modalities). How has square footage per student changed over time and why? What efforts have you made to reassess and further optimize the use of your existing facilities, and what has been the impact of those efforts to date? What do you intend to do in the next six years to increase utilization?** |
| Over the next fiscal year, the University is strategically reviewing the current footprint of Radford and Roanoke campus space needs and requirements while maintaining the focus and commitment to the [University’s 2020-2030 Master Plan](https://www.radford.edu/content/dam/departments/administrative/president-office/2020-2030-master-plan.pdf).  For main campus, this review considers the Center for Adaptive Innovation and Creativity coming online in fall 2024 and the impact on academic departments and student support areas relocating from temporary placement due to the construction of the new facility. The University will use this opportunity to reduce leased space and ensure the current infrastructure is effectively and efficiently managed. Within the next six years, E&G priorities of main campus will be the renovation of current academic spaces to meet the academic demands of the spaces, proper accessibility requirements, and updating mechanical components as well as necessary safety and security infrastructure. The following projects currently fall within this need:  * Waldron Hall – Built in 2000 with approximately 60,000 square-feet, Waldron Hall currently houses high demand health sciences, healthcare, and human services programs. These programs include social work, occupational therapy and nursing. This space includes integrated learning spaces, traditional classroom space, interdisciplinary clinics, and a Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic.
* Peters Hall – Last renovated in 2003, Peters Hall currently houses the academic programs within the College of Education and Human Development, to include counselor education, teacher education and leadership and health and human performance. Peters Hall houses the Teaching Resource Center that provides instructional, curricular, and technological support for students, faculty and K-12 teachings across the Commonwealth and a fitness lab that incorporates a corporate fitness center and a performance training facility.
* McConnell Library - The footprint that forms the McConnell Library consists of an original 14,000 square-foot building built in 1931, a 47,500 square-foot addition built in 1965, and a 46,444 square-foot addition built in 1995. Both the 1965 and 1995 additions, which represent approximately 90 percent of the library's square footage and operations, remain in their original configuration with building systems and equipment that have far exceeded their expected useful life.
* Walker Hall - Built in 1935 as a dining facility, Walker Hall underwent expansion in 1964 and was partially renovated in 1992 and 2003. Walker Hall currently serves as our center for the University’s Information Technology Services consisting of IT Infrastructure, Enterprise Systems, Technology Support Services, Electronic Engineering and Communication Services, Web Strategy, and Interactive Media and Printing Services. Additionally, student support services like computer labs and the technology assistance service are housed in this building. Walker Hall offers great possibilities to realign space needs and help the University reduce its leased space.

  The academic and student support offerings in Roanoke are housed in the Carilion Roanoke Community Hospital (CRCH) and the Roanoke Higher Education Center. The CRCH is an active health care facility, which is part of the Carilion Clinic, a not-for-profit health care provider in Southwest Virginia. CRCH is a 10-story, 408,000 square-foot hospital, providing a variety of health care services. The University leases approximately 171,000 square feet in CRCH, including administrative, academic, laboratory, and other associated activities as Radford University Carilion (RUC). Both RUC and Carilion have identified the need for expanded facilities to provide for both anticipated academic program growth and increased need for regional health care services. RUC’s current space in CRCH allows little to no flexibility to serve potential academic program growth, while future Carilion health care capital demands will require reclaiming of current RUC space. Over the next year, the University will conduct an academic program planning study to determine the long-term space needs in Roanoke and will develop a long-term space plan to accommodate those needs.   |

**SECTION E: BUDGET REQUESTS**

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| **E1. Provide additional information for any budget requests in Part I of your planning template that are not described elsewhere in your narrative.** |
| The Virginia Military Survivor and Dependents Educational Program (VMSDEP) offers a vital pathway forward to college degree completion for the Commonwealth’s veterans and their families, with an estimated over 3,000 families now benefitting from the program. The related legislation mandates that each public institution provides a 100% waiver of tuition and mandatory fee costs for eight semesters. As highlighted in the past two years of SCHEV’s system-wide budget recommendations, successful program marketing and student support has resulted in exceptional and deserved program growth, now estimated as almost doubling between FY2021 and the next biennium. Unfortunately, no direct funding to institutions has been provided to offset the cost of tuition and fee waivers, estimated to grow to $78 million through FY2024. The expected cost of this program for the University in FY2024 is $1.3 million that includes tuition and E&G fee waivers. While the University fully supports the program and the intent to support veterans and their families in this way, it does represent an unfunded mandate that draws on current operating funds. The University requests incremental state support of $1.3 million to cover this initiative.  |

**SECTION F: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ANNUAL REPORT**

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| **F1. Provide a link to any report your institution has produced about its economic development contributions. You may also share it in the appendix or as an attachment** |
| Partnering with the New River Commission, the University is currently finalizing an Economic Impact Study that highlights the ways in which the University has been a key economic driver within the New River Valley and greater southwest Virginia region. This study is a continuation from our 2016 report and will cover the period of 2018 – 2022. The University will share the final study with members of Op-Six at completion currently anticipated for August 2023.  |

**SECTION G: FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INQUIRY, FREE SPEECH, ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND DIVERSITY OF THOUGHT**

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| **G1. Provide a copy of any policy or reports your institution has produced and provide information about annual training or orientation related to this topic.** |
| The University's [Free Expression Policy](https://www.radford.edu/content/dam/departments/administrative/policies/GeneralPoliciesandProcedures/GEN-PO-1007_FreeExpressionPolicy.pdf) provides a framework for a safe and supportive environment to promote free expression. This policy promotes and facilitates free expression, provides a secure environment for such expression, preserves order within the University community, and protects and preserves University property. President Danilowicz charged a campus-wide Task Force on Civil Discourse and Freedom of Expression in November 2022. An action plan (attached) for implementation was submitted to the President in April 2023. The Radford Board of Visitors considered the recommendations on June 9, 2023, and were supportive of the proposed efforts.  Radford University is one of the Constructive Dialogue Institute partners organized through SCHEV which will be used to develop faculty workshops for our UNIV 100 course (Introduction to Higher Education) which serves to orient students and sets them on track to be successful as students.   Tabletop exercises have been conducted on Freedom of Expression with the President and Board of Visitors during the livestreamed September 2022 and March 2023 Board meetings, as well with the University’s Continuity of Operations Planning team in May 2023.   |

**SECTION H: NEW SCHOOLS, SITES, AND MERGERS**

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| **H1. Provide information on any new instructional sites, schools, or mergers supported by all types of funding that your institution is considering or planning to undertake during the six-year period.** |
| Radford University is not considering any new schools, sites, or mergers at this time. The University is considering three different types of laboratory schools under the framework currently being advocated for by the Governor. We are exploring a SW Virginia Governor’s School for the Arts and Humanities in partnership with five regional school systems, a nursing tracked school in partnership with the regional school systems and community colleges, and a cybersecurity school in partnership with regional school systems. Discussions are active, and it is anticipated that at least one of these will be moved forward as a planning grant over the next two-year period.   |

**[OPTIONAL] SECTION I: RESEARCH**

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| **I1. [OPTIONAL] Highlight any strategic research priorities, programs, or key areas of investment (e.g., hiring plans, critical research agendas, interdisciplinary centers, business partnerships, commercialization efforts) and IP dissemination and commercialization priorities you intend to pursue over the next 6 years that have not already been mentioned in this narrative. What are the anticipated benefits to your faculty attraction/retention strategy, student value proposition, and the economic competitiveness of the Commonwealth?** |
| Radford University is not submitting information related to this optional section on research at this time. |

**[OPTIONAL] SECTION J: COLLABORATION**

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| **J1. [OPTIONAL] Outline any existing or potential initiatives you have not already highlighted in this narrative that feature collaboration across public higher education institutions (and other state agencies as appropriate) in furthering the goals outlined in sections B-D. What is the expected impact and in what timeframe? What is the timeline for the initiative and how far along is it? What (if anything) would be required from a budget or policy perspective to facilitate the success of the initiative?** |
| Radford University is not submitting information related to this optional section on collaboration at this time. |

**[OPTIONAL] SECTION K: STATE POLICY**

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| **K1. [OPTIONAL] Use this section to outline any state policy changes you have not already mentioned in this narrative that would enhance your ability to achieve greater success on the topics, strategies, and initiatives referenced in this narrative. What existing policies, if any, are hindering your ability to maximize outcomes and value for students? What new policies might create conditions that are more conducive to achieving those goals? What strategies or initiatives would these policy changes enable your institution to do or try that you are not yet able to do today? Please be as specific as possible.** |
| Radford University is not submitting information related to this optional section on state policy at this time. |

**[OPTIONAL] SECTION L: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

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| **L1. [OPTIONAL] Use this final section to provide any additional context and/or supporting materials you feel should be incorporated into the six-year planning process.** |
| Radford University is not submitting information related to this optional section at this time. |