

# Virginia State University and Richard Bland College

Virtual School of Technical and Professional Studies

**Executive Summary**

February 25, 2022

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# Principles of the Virtual School Vision



During Task 1: Environmental and Market Analysis, VSU and RBC defined elements of the Virtual School Mission by determining the target audience and how to best meet their needs and the needs of the state.

## **EQUITABLE** Close access and completion gaps

VSU and RBC seek to establish an online school aimed at a **diverse population of Virginians** and differentiated by a **high-touch, student support value proposition**

## **AFFORDABLE** Lower cost to students

The Virtual School could **offer innovative products tailored to meet the needs of target students** and ensure affordability by **pricing offerings competitively according to the market**

## **TRANSFORMATIVE** Expand prosperity

The Virtual School is considering offerings that are based on growing jobs in Virginia to **prepare students for careers in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Technical Jobs**

## **TARGET AUDIENCES AND NEEDS**

The Virtual School aims to serve the adult learner market, specifically degree completers, those seeking career changes, and military personnel as well as student seeking educational flexibility

## **NON-TRADITIONAL OFFERINGS**

The Virtual School will offer competitively priced degrees and nontraditional offerings such as certificates and micro-credentials to provide options for students who hope to obtain necessary credentials as quick and cost effectively as possible

## **21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY TECHNICAL JOBS**

Virtual School offerings will be directly connected to labor market demand for occupations that are expected to grow in the Virginia Commonwealth

# Target Audiences and Needs



As a junior college and an HBCU, RBC and VSU have track records of delivering high-quality education to historically underserved audiences. The Virtual School will continue to focus on the underserved, while also broadening the audiences that each partner institution currently addresses.

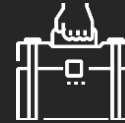
## DEGREE COMPLETERS

- Credit for Prior Learning and Experience
- Sense of Belonging



## CAREER MOVERS

- Clear Professional Pathways
- Strong Career Services and Advising



## VIRTUAL SCHOOL STUDENT

- High-Quality Offerings
- Online Delivery

## CAREER ADVANCERS

- Quick, Affordable Options that Provide Additional Credentials
- Flexibility to Balance Coursework with Work



## MILITARY MEMBERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

- Special Access to Institutional Support and Dedicated Resources
- Variety of Options
- Military Discounts



## APPLICATION AND ADMISSIONS

During the applications and admissions process, the target audience will make decisions based on affordability and in some cases, the ability to transfer in credit based on previous learning

## ENROLLMENT AND RETENTION

The target audience will seek flexible scheduling and shorter duration, high-quality offerings. These needs combined with high-touch student support will promote high student retention in the Virtual School.

## GRADUATION

With the Virtual School's goal of offering programs and courses tied to labor market needs, Virtual School students will require career services support to help them make the transition to a new occupation.

# Non-Traditional Offerings



To meet the needs of the target audience, the Virtual School should consider lower cost, non-traditional offerings that will provide flexible, more affordable options alongside traditional degree programs.

## MICRO-CREDENTIALS

Online providers have seen an increase in enrollment for micro-credential offerings as students seek alternative, non-traditional options to demonstrate competency in a particular area.



**Only 13% of surveyed institutions currently offer micro-credentials indicating low supply for current demand<sup>1</sup>**

## CUSTOM EMPLOYER OFFERINGS

More corporations seek to partner with higher education institutions to develop career-specific curriculum to meet their workforce needs and create pathways to specific professions.



**13% expected annual growth in employer-university collaborations<sup>2</sup>**

## CERTIFICATES

Enrollments in certificate offerings increased in 2019 and 2020 while associate and bachelor's degree programs declined indicating more interests in noncredit certificates.



**5% growth in postbaccalaureate certificate programs in 2020<sup>3</sup>**

## COMPETENCY-BASED EDUCATION

Competency-based education has increased in popularity, providing students the flexibility to progress through academic programs at their own pace.



**73% of surveyed institutions noted they were in the process or interested in adopting competency-based education<sup>4</sup>**

1) UPCEA, Demographic Shifts in Educational Demand and the Rise of Alternative Credentials, 2017

2) 4) <https://medium.com/emerge-edtech-insights/mass-collaboration-between-employers-and-universities-is-the-future-of-higher-education-part-1-ed840467bfd5>

3) National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, November 2020

4) 2) <https://www.air.org/sites/default/files/2021-07/State-of-the-Field-Findings-from-2020-Postsecondary-CBE-Survey-July-2021.pdf>

# 21<sup>st</sup> Century Technical Jobs



The Virtual School will be focused on providing direct pathways to in-demand careers through consistent assessments of the market and the alignment of programs and course offerings to labor market needs.

CIP Code	Program	Example Occupation	Typical Level of Education	Median Salary
11.0202	Computer Programming, Specific Application	Software Developers	Bachelor's Degree	\$112,736
11.1001	Network and System Administration / Administrator	Web Developer	Associate's Degree	\$80,787
52.1031	Management Science	Operations Research Analyst	Bachelor's Degree	\$106,246
52.1399	Management Science and Quantitative Methods	Operations Research Analyst	Bachelor's Degree	\$106,246
14.0901	Computer Engineering	Web Developer	Associate's Degree	\$80,787
27.0304	Computational and Applied Mathematics	Data Scientist	Bachelor's Degree	\$92,414
51.2706	Medical Informatics	Software Developers	Bachelor's Degree	\$112,736
11.0802	Data Modeling/ Warehousing & Database Admin	Database Administrators and Architects	Bachelor's Degree	\$109,970
51.2706	Information Technology	Information Security Analyst	Bachelor's Degree	\$116,376
43.0116	Cyber/Computer Forensics and Counterterrorism	Information Security Analyst	Bachelor's Degree	\$116,376
49.0101	Aeronautics/Aviation/Aerospace Science & Tech.	Avionics Technician	Associate's Degree	\$70,158

# Division of Responsibilities



During Task 2: Operational and Organizational Considerations, VSU and RBC discussed the division of responsibilities and decided on potential areas where an external partnership could be beneficial.

Value Chain Stage	Success Factors
Ideation and Market Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Faculty Engagement</li> <li>Market Alignment</li> </ul>
Opportunity Identification & Confirmation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Marketing &amp; Communicating Value</li> <li>Leveraging Partnerships</li> </ul>
Proposal, Evaluation, & Approval	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effectiveness of Approval Process</li> <li>Offering Time-to-Market</li> </ul>
Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Program Quality</li> <li>Student Experience</li> </ul>
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student Satisfaction</li> <li>High-tough Student Support</li> </ul>
Management and Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student Career Placement</li> <li>New and Repeat Business</li> </ul>

Virtual School Function	Primary Responsibility Organization		
	VSU	RBC	External Partner
Program Ideation		✓	
Market Assessment			✓
Marketing			✓
Offering Approval	✓	✓	
Curriculum Design		✓	
Instructional Delivery		✓	
Information Technology	✓		
Student Registration	✓		
Student Advising and Support		✓	
Career Services			✓
Human Resources	✓		
Finance		✓	

# Virtual School Financial Model



During Task 3: Financial Modeling, VSU and RBC discussed how decisions from Task 1 and Task 2 would impact Virtual School financials including offering pricing and expected faculty and staff ratios.

Questions Answered through Financial Model

- 1 How does the level of enrollment and number of faculty affect the potential net results of the Virtual School operations?
- 2 What sources can be considered for support of operations for the Virtual School?
- 3 Which variable and fixed costs must be considered in determining a program's full cost?
- 4 What is the overall return on investment of various programming portfolio mixes / strategies?

		Year:					
		1	2	3	4	5	CAGR
<b>Sources</b>	Tuition and fees	1,521,738	2,487,794	3,052,914	3,598,573	3,771,429	25.5%
	Contra-tuition / financial aid	(352,656)	(680,626)	(861,337)	(1,031,441)	(1,062,384)	31.7%
	Contra-source (OPM Partnership)	-	-	-	-	-	--
	Grants and contracts	125,000	128,750	132,613	136,591	140,689	3.0%
	Gifts	-	-	-	-	-	--
	General funds	1,094,222	1,127,049	1,160,860	1,195,686	1,231,557	3.0%
<b>Total Operating Sources</b>		<b>2,388,304</b>	<b>3,062,967</b>	<b>3,485,049</b>	<b>3,899,410</b>	<b>4,081,290</b>	14.3%
<b>Uses</b>	Salary and wages	1,023,750	1,615,784	2,001,741	2,398,465	2,595,967	26.2%
	Employee benefits	176,468	278,052	343,893	411,606	445,597	26.1%
	Faculty training	43,800	22,557	12,547	12,205	4,774	-42.5%
	Infrastructure and technology	178,000	188,088	194,401	200,914	204,349	3.5%
	Program development costs	2,800,000	-	-	-	-	--
	Supplies and materials	7,200	11,235	13,760	16,365	17,740	25.3%
	Marketing expenses	225,459	114,434	138,315	163,390	175,568	-6.1%
	Library, resources, and materials costs	30,000	30,900	31,827	32,782	33,765	3.0%
	Other general expenses	24,500	27,622	29,818	32,083	33,597	8.2%
	<b>Total Operating Uses</b>		<b>4,509,176</b>	<b>2,288,672</b>	<b>2,766,302</b>	<b>3,267,810</b>	<b>3,511,356</b>
<b>Net Operating Results</b>		<b>(2,120,872)</b>	<b>774,295</b>	<b>718,747</b>	<b>631,600</b>	<b>569,934</b>	--

**VSU and RBC can make adjustments to the provided model assumptions as decisions around offerings and staffing are finalized to determine overall financial impact of the Virtual School.**

# Two Pathways for Virtual School Implementation



## Pathway for New Offerings

	Phase 1: Design and Readiness	Phase 2: Offering Development	Phase 3: Virtual School Launch	Phase 4: Growth and Expansion
	Spring 2022 – Fall 2022 1-8 months	Fall 2022 – Summer 2023 9-17 months	Fall 2023 18-21 months	Post-Launch/Ongoing
<b>Pathway for New Programs and Courses</b>	Define set of offerings, student support structure, & scope of external partnership	Develop offerings and establish processes to support operations	Launch first term and set plan for evaluation and future planning	Continue to expand offerings and program types

## Rebrand Existing Offerings

	Phase 1: Student Support Development	Phase 2: Establish Processes for Business Ops	Phase 3: Virtual School Launch	Phase 4: Growth and Expansion
	Spring 2022 1-3 months	Summer 2022 4-6 months	Fall 2022 6-9 months	Post-Launch/Ongoing
<b>Rebrand Existing Programs and Courses</b>	Design student support structure and marketing strategy for Virtual School	Develop processes to support business operations	Launch first term and set plan for evaluation and future planning	Continue to expand offerings and program types

# Implementation Roadmap - Overview



KEY ACTIVITIES

	Phase 1: Design and Readiness	Phase 2: Offering Development	Phase 3: Virtual School Launch	Phase 4: Growth and Expansion
	Spring 2022 – Fall 2022 1-8 months	Fall 2022 – Summer 2023 9-17 months	Fall 2023 18-21 months	Post-Launch/Ongoing
Purpose	Define set of offerings, student support structure, & scope of external partnership	Develop offerings and establish processes to support operations	Launch first term and set plan for evaluation and future planning	Continue to expand offerings and program types
Academic Affairs	Establish new offering approval policies and determine resources needed	Approve and develop new offerings in accordance with policy standards	Deliver courses for inaugural term of Virtual School; request student feedback	Evaluate student feedback for how to improve delivery and plan for new offerings
Student Support	Form student support services: advising, career services, health services, etc.	Work with OPM and define criteria for external career services support	Aid first cohort in academic and career planning; request student feedback	Evaluate student feedback for how to improve student support
Technology and Partnerships	Lead discovery for OPM and determine scope of potential partnership	Prepare IT resources for instruction and LMS for student and course content	Support delivery of courses through management of student and course content	Assess need for updated IT resources and faculty, staff, and student IT needs
Administrative	Establish processes for student registration, finance, and human resources	Prepare workflows for Virtual School Launch	Execute registrar, finance, and human resource operations in support of VS	Forecast enrollment and financial outcomes for budget planning

# Implementation Roadmap – Academic Affairs



KEY ACTIVITIES

	Phase 1: Design and Readiness	Phase 2: Offering Development	Phase 3: Virtual School Launch	Phase 4: Growth and Expansion
	Spring 2022 – Fall 2022 1-8 months	Fall 2022 – Summer 2023 9-17 months	Fall 2023 18-21 months	Post-Launch/Ongoing
<b>Purpose</b>	Define set of offerings, student support structure, & scope of external partnership	Develop offerings and establish processes to support operations	Launch first term and set plan for evaluation and future planning	Continue to expand offerings and program types
<b>Academic Affairs</b>	Establish new offering approval policies and determine resources needed	Approve and develop new offerings in accordance with policy standards	Deliver courses for inaugural term of Virtual School; request student feedback	Evaluate student feedback for how to improve delivery and plan for new offerings
<b>Student Support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage faculty to help design streamlined approval process and criteria for programs and courses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review proposed offering against policy criteria</li> <li>Work with instructional designers (and OPM) to develop offering content</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Begin delivery of Virtual School courses</li> <li>Solicit feedback from students for ways in which to improve delivery and course content</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuation ideation of new programs and courses for Virtual School</li> <li>Maintain ongoing training for online instruction</li> </ul>
<b>Technology and Partnerships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define faculty qualifications needed to teach for Virtual School</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follow processes for SCHEV/SACSCOC and discipline-specific accrediting bodies for approval and accreditation as well as other regulatory bodies</li> </ul>		
<b>Administrative</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Select initial offerings</li> </ul>			

# Implementation Roadmap – Student Support



KEY ACTIVITIES

	Phase 1: Design and Readiness	Phase 2: Offering Development	Phase 3: Virtual School Launch	Phase 4: Growth and Expansion
	Spring 2022 – Fall 2022 1-8 months	Fall 2022 – Summer 2023 9-17 months	Fall 2023 18-21 months	Post-Launch/Ongoing
<b>Purpose</b>	Define set of offerings, student support structure, & scope of external partnership	Develop offerings and establish processes to support operations	Launch first term and set plan for evaluation and future planning	Continue to expand offerings and program types
<b>Academic Affairs</b>	Form student support services: advising, career services, health services, etc.	Work with OPM and define criteria for external career services support	Aid first cohort in academic and career planning; request student feedback	Evaluate student feedback for how to improve student support
<b>Student Support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Design student support services including level of staff support, mechanisms for requesting and receiving support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish connections with local employers</li> <li>Design online mentoring program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Align students with mentor or advisor to map our academic and career plans</li> <li>Communicate suite of support services to students and ways to access</li> <li>Solicit feedback</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review student feedback to assess if adjustments to support structure are needed</li> </ul>
<b>Technology and Partnerships</b>				
<b>Administrative</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with Technology team and faculty to assess potential for OPM partnership</li> </ul>			

# Implementation Roadmap – Technology



KEY ACTIVITIES

	Phase 1: Design and Readiness	Phase 2: Offering Development	Phase 3: Virtual School Launch	Phase 4: Growth and Expansion
	Spring 2022 – Fall 2022 1-8 months	Fall 2022 – Summer 2023 9-17 months	Fall 2023 18-21 months	Post-Launch/Ongoing
<b>Purpose</b>	Define set of offerings, student support structure, & scope of external partnership	Develop offerings and establish processes to support operations	Launch first term and set plan for evaluation and future planning	Continue to expand offerings and program types
<b>Academic Affairs</b>	Conduct exploratory conversations with OPM and evaluate options for potential partnership	Prepare IT resources for instruction and LMS for student and course content	Support delivery of courses through management of student and course content	Assess need for updated IT resources and faculty, staff, and student IT needs
<b>Student Support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partner with faculty and Student Support team to evaluate potential for OPM partnership</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with faculty to ensure they have resources for instruction</li> <li>Configure LMS and import offering content</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide technical support for students and faculty</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct maintenance of IT resources</li> <li>Review IT infrastructure to determine if updates are required</li> <li>Manage archives of content and update as necessary for new programs and courses</li> </ul>
<b>Technology and Partnerships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish technology support for students</li> </ul>			
<b>Administrative</b>				



# Implementation Roadmap – Administrative

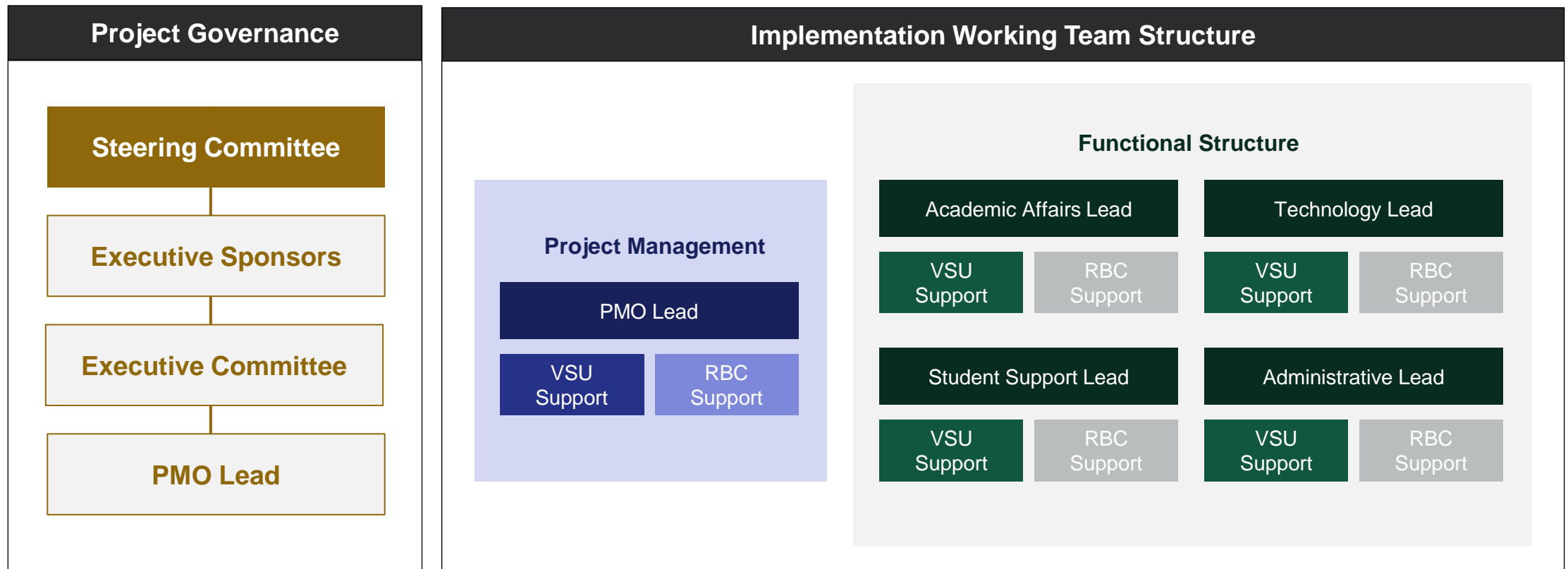
KEY ACTIVITIES

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<b>Purpose</b>	Define set of offerings, student support structure, & scope of external partnership	Develop offerings and establish processes to support operations	Launch first term and set plan for evaluation and future planning	Continue to expand offerings and program types
<b>Academic Affairs</b>	Establish processes for student registration, human resources, and finance	Prepare workflows for Virtual School Launch	Execute registrar, finance, and human resource operations in support of VS	Forecast enrollment and financial outcomes for budget planning
<b>Student Support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Design process for student registration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Setup and test flow of information for registrar and financial system</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Track student program and course registrations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project enrollment and aid in development of enrollment strategy</li> </ul>
<b>Technology and Partnerships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with Academic Affairs team to determine additional personnel need</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and execute marketing plan for Virtual School (possibly in partnership with OPM)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collect information on courses taught by faculty members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forecast projected financial results</li> </ul>
<b>Administrative</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determine ideal split of revenues and costs between VSU and RBC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with Academic Affairs to form pricing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Receive student payments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop budget for next year of Virtual School</li> </ul>



# Implementation Team Structure

VSU and RBC can structure the implementation team with strategic direction provided by the executive sponsors and executive committee and the operational aspects handled by the functional teams.





# Implementation Team Responsibilities

The implementation of the Virtual School will be complex and require execution of responsibilities by the various functional teams, guided by a Project Management team consisting of internal or external support.

	Team	Example Members	Responsibilities	Time Commitment	Frequency of Interaction
Strategic	<b>Executive Sponsors</b>	Presidents and Provosts	Vision, strategic direction and alignment, scope, schedule, cost, policy, competing priorities, organizational roadblocks	0.05 FTE	Monthly
	<b>Executive Committee</b>	VPs of Academic Affairs, Finance	Business strategy issues, budget issues, project integration issues, campus impact, resistance issues, success criteria	0.10 FTE	Bimonthly
	<b>Project Management</b>	Dirs. of Distance/ Online Education	Strategic and tactical decision making, escalation of high risk/high impact issues, oversight and guidance	0.50 FTE	Weekly
Operational	<b>Academic Team</b>	Faculty Representatives	Program and course design, student experience, student learning outcomes	0.60 FTE	Daily
	<b>Technology Team</b>	Directors of IT	Configuration values, technical solutions, business process designs, OPM partnership management		
	<b>Student Support Team</b>	Director of Student Affairs/Success	Student experience, career services and student placement		
	<b>Administrative Team</b>	Directors of HR, Finance, Registrar	Business process design, enrollment forecasting, budget forecasting		

**In addition to institutional senior leadership, the executive committee can appoint Board of Visitors members, external partners, and other key stakeholders to aid in the progression of the Virtual School implementation.**