

Richard T. Robertson School of Communication
Strategic Plan: 2024 – 2029
Virginia Commonwealth University
(Final version adopted March 7, 2025)

Goal: Inspire and empower students to become professionally successful, transformative innovators and thought leaders in a changing communication environment. Elevate the reputation of the Robertson School to reflect excellence in all our pursuits.

Strategy 1 Enhance student learning experience with a student-centric, industry-relevant, and forward-thinking curriculum

Tactic 1.1 Create student-run organizations that utilize student work

Metric 1.1A Create an integrated communication agency for advertising, media production and public relations students; create a cross-platform newsroom for journalism students.

Metric 1.1B Discuss and plan 2025-2026 and 2026-2027; launch Fall 2028.

Tactic 1.2 Increase student course engagement

Metric 1.2A UGSC and concentrations review curriculum to ensure "a student-centric, industry-relevant, and forward-thinking curriculum."

Metric 1.2B Undergraduate curriculum changes to be considered during 2025-2026 and 2026-2027; to be implemented no later than Fall 2028.

Metric 1.2C Undergraduate Studies Committee (UGSC) creates a 100-/200-level skill-based common core class effective for the 2027-2028 academic year.

Tactic 1.3 Engage students with industry experts

Metric 1.3A Employer Coordinator and Director formalize the Industry Council Engagement Plan and start implementing the plan by August 16, 2025.

Metric 1.3B: Employer Coordinator will host at least three events per semester that partner with industry leaders, engaging a minimum of 25 students per event, starting in Fall 2025.

Metric 1.3C: Career Development Advisor will work to expand internship partnerships by at least five additional partnerships per year, with an emphasis on highly regarded media companies and organizations, to provide consistent, high-quality opportunities for students, starting in 2025-2026.

Tactic 1.4 Increase collection of student feedback

Metric 1.4A Assessment and Accreditation Committee to explore more methods of gathering student feedback in 2025-2026.

Metric 1.4B Director to provide resources to support surveys of students as proposed by Assessment and Accreditation Committee, with surveys to begin 2026-2027.

- Tactic 1.5** [Engage School alumni regarding curriculum](#)
- Metric 1.5A Career Development staff to oversee regular surveys of recent alumni beginning in Fall 2025.
- Metric 1.5B Career Development staff and UGSC Chair to create online and in-person engagement opportunities to gather curriculum feedback beginning in Spring 2026.
- Tactic. 1.6** [Explore the creation of a communications research graduate certificate and/or master of science program by 2028.](#)
- Metric 1.6A Create a task force in Fall 2025 to conduct research on market demand for research programs, including focus groups, with findings due by the end of the semester.
- Metric 1.6B If market demand is found, assign a task force to create a curriculum in spring 2026 and have faculty members vote on the course plan; acquire Graduate Council and university-wide approvals in Fall 2026; submit proposal to SCHEV by June 1, 2027; new program(s) to launch by Summer 2028.
- Tactic 1.7** [Expand and develop undergraduate signature/capstone programs](#)
- Metric 1.7A Concentration coordinators to lead concentration discussions about needed personnel, resources, etc. to expand existing signature/capstone programs, and possibly develop new programs, during 2025-2026.
- Metric 1.7B Investigate needed resources and faculty incentives for involvement in national-level student competitions, possibly in connection with signature/capstone programs, during 2025-2026.
- Metric 1.7C Expanded signature/capstone programs to be implemented in 2026-2027 and 2027-2028.
- Metric 1.7D Create award coordinator positions for each undergraduate concentration group (i.e., advertising, journalism, media production, public relations) with compensation; discuss in 2025-2026, to implement Fall 2026.
- Tactic 1.8** [Implement the School Assessment Plan](#)

Strategy 2 Investigate and strengthen student recruitment and retention efforts

Tactic 2.1 [Investigate and implement external-reaching undergraduate recruitment efforts](#)

Metric 2.1A Increase undergraduate enrollment 5% annually, beginning in 2027-2028.

Metric 2.1B Perform systematic review of all recruitment efforts for the past several years, including the \$1000 student scholarships; determine total spent costs and ROI; report to faculty for further discussion.

Metric 2.1C Branding and Outreach Committee manages at least three high school visit or other outreach events beginning Fall 2025.

Metric 2.1D Develop and implement a Robertson Summer Media Camp experience with 30 prospective students in Summer 2027.

Tactic 2.2 [Investigate, implement and strengthen recruitment and retention in Foundation courses with non-mass comm students](#)

Metric 2.2A Conduct study of current recruitment and retention efforts in MASC Foundation courses that include non-mass comm students (e.g., MASC 101, MASC 201, etc.) by end of 2025-2026.

Metric 2.2B UGSC to discuss strengthening and standardizing recruitment and retention efforts in these courses, and bring to faculty for discussion, during 2025-2026.

Metric 2.2C Implement efforts during 2026-2027, with the goal of increasing recruitment by 5% and holding retention steady annually by 2027-2028.

Tactic 2.3 [Investigate, implement and strengthen retention in Foundation courses with only mass comm students](#)

Metric 2.3A Conduct study of current retention efforts in MASC Foundation courses that include only mass comm students (e.g., MASC 203, 204, etc.).

Metric 2.3B UGSC to discuss strengthening and standardizing retention efforts in these courses, and bring to faculty for discussion, during 2025-2026.

Metric 2.3C Implement efforts during 2026-2027, with the goal of increasing retention by 5% annually by 2027-2028.

Tactic 2.4 [Implement recommendations in 2024-2025 Graduate Academic Program Review \[\\(link to review\\)\]\(#\)](#)

Strategy 3 Uphold a diverse and inclusive program that embodies domestic and global diversity and that empowers those traditionally disenfranchised in society, especially as grounded in race, ethnicity, gender, ability and sexual orientation.

Tactic 3.1 [Implement the \[School Equity, Inclusion and Diversity Plan\]\(#\)](#)

Strategy 4 Support teaching, research/scholarship, service and professional development for faculty and staff

Tactic 4.1 [Implement the School Strategic Plan for Research and Professional Scholarship](#)

Tactic 4.2 [Optimize faculty and staff work loads](#)

Metric 4.2A Investigate and implement workload allocations that ensure faculty members can effectively contribute to achieving the school's goals and support a balance between teaching, research/scholarship and service; complete by Fall 2027.

Metric 4.2B Investigate and implement workload allocations that ensure staff members can effectively contribute to achieving the school's goals; complete by Fall 2027.

Tactic 4.3 [Strengthen teaching development](#)

Metric 4.3A Develop annual grants to support teaching initiatives that align with the School's mission, vision and unique value proposition, beginning in 2025-2026.

Metric 4.3B Create and implement best-practices teaching workshops for faculty; to occur once per semester; incentivize participation; beginning Fall 2027.

Metric 4.3C Create and implement best-practices teaching workshops for all adjunct faculty; to occur once per semester; incentivize participation; beginning in 2026-2027.

Metric 4.3D Create and implement best-practices orientation and review for all teaching assistants; to occur once per semester; beginning Fall 2026.

Strategy 5 Foster a collaborative culture and implement policies that ensure an effective, supportive working and learning environment

Tactic 5.1 [Strengthen the faculty evaluation process and rubrics](#)

Metric 5.1A Personnel Committee to review and update the faculty annual evaluation rubric to create clear, objective, and transparent expectations for annual reviews; first review in Fall 2025, to be reviewed every two years; review to be approved by School vote.

Metric 5.1B Personnel Committee to create a clear, objective, and transparent peer-evaluation rubric for service productivity; first review in Spring 2026, to be reviewed every two years; review to be approved by School vote.

Metric 5.1C UGSC and GSC to investigate evaluating teaching beyond student course evaluations.

- Tactic 5.3** **Improve intra-School communication**
- Metric 5.2A Create and implement climate surveys of School faculty and staff to determine sense of community and communication opportunities; to be completed in 2025-2026.
- Metric 5.2B Review and implement faculty and staff survey results in 2026-2027.
- Metric 5.3C Create regularly occurring forums where faculty and staff discuss topics within their area of expertise (e.g., projects, initiatives); one forum to occur each semester beginning Fall 2025.
- Metric 5.3D Celebrate faculty and staff work with regular emails and during School meetings.
- Metric 5.2E Celebrate student work at the beginning of each semester by updating prints in hallways and creating new displays of work for screens; to begin Fall 2025.
- Tactic 5.4** **Optimize physical spaces and culture for collaborative working and learning**
- Metric 5.4A Survey faculty, staff and students regarding current spaces, unmet needs and ideas, including possibility of Robertson Student Success Center and Student Lounge; complete, analyze and present to faculty by end of 2025-2026.
- Metric 5.4B Implement simpler suggestions by end of Fall 2026; investigate complicated suggestions for possible implementation; by beginning of Fall 2027.

Strategy 6 Elevate external branding and community outreach efforts to strengthen the School's presence and impact

- Tactic 6.1** **Develop and communicate School's mission and vision to reach measurable communications goals**
- Metric 6.1A Hire a communications staff member to begin 2026-2027; will develop a communications plan with defined targets for earned, shared and owned media; will be responsible for social media, website, hallway displays and external newsletter.
- Tactic 6.2** **Enhance potential employer/internship provider, community and development engagement programs**
- Metric 6.2A Career Development staff to develop annual event for area media employers and internship providers by Spring 2026.
- Metric 6.2B Implement annual event, workshop and/or program that promotes community engagement; begin Fall 2027.
- Metric 6.3C Implement annual event targeted to development prospects; by Spring 2028.
- Tactic 6.3** **Engage School alumni**
- Metric 6.3A Investigate and design effective engagement strategies that includes both high engagement and high reach tactics; investigate by end of 2025-2026; launch strategies in 2026-2027.

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