



**Associate Vice Provost for Institutional Research and Decision Support  
Leadership Profile**



**VCU**

**VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY**



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Virginia Commonwealth University invites applications from experienced and accomplished leaders to join its team as Associate Vice Provost for Institutional Research and Decision Support.

**Position primary purpose and general responsibilities:**

Reporting to the Provost, the Associate Vice Provost plays a critical role in organizational decision-making by leading the university's institutional research, data analysis, and reporting efforts. The Associate Vice Provost provides strategic leadership of the Office of Institutional Research and Decision Support, with opportunities to enhance and strengthen partnerships across campus to elevate institutional data collection, analysis, maintenance, synthesis and presentation. The leader performs both strategic and project management functions and actively coordinates the development and implementation of advanced analytic strategies and processes such as predictive modeling. Specific functions include serving as the primary conduit for office project requests and ensuring prompt, accurate and insightful preparation of all reporting material.

The AVPIRDS leads the comprehensive institutional research program at VCU and plays an essential role in the development and promotion of the culture of information and use of data and information to inform decision-making and action at the university. The specific responsibilities for this position are to:

- Lead the Office of Institutional Research and Decision Support in collecting, retaining and promoting the university-wide strategic use of key institutional data
- Analyze quantitative and qualitative data and assist in interpreting all of the university's data for presentation to the university community at various levels.
- Design, develop and deliver reports and tools that provide concise, accurate and relevant information at appropriate level of detail for strategic priorities and operations.
- Oversee external and national benchmark reporting activities including, but not limited to, external government organizations, U.S. News & World Report, Princeton Review, IPEDS and the State Council of Higher Education of Virginia (SCHEV). In addition, provide data and analysis to support university and program accreditation needs.
- Cultivate practices to communicate with regular frequency analyzed data in aggregate form to senior leaders and relevant university offices
- Ensure the office serves as the central point for disbursing official university data to external parties and as the central contact point for federal and state research and assessment data requests
- Serve on university wide strategic planning, institutional effectiveness and learning outcomes assessment committees
- Lead and support successful implementation of campus data governance initiatives
- Collaborate with other data-generating units to ensure a consistent and comprehensive data narrative across the university
- Respond to data, table and reporting requests from university constituencies

- Facilitate the central development of tools, reports and other self-service means to enhance users' experience and facility with data and information
- Work with provost's staff and president's staff to determine campus institutional research and quality improvement priorities
- Support campus strategic planning efforts including performance metrics, action plans and strategies
- Facilitate the central development of tools, reports and other self-service means to enhance users' experience and facility with data and information
- Foster the practice of ongoing and regular assessment and evaluation to ensure data quality and analytical methodology reflects best practices
- Serve as a respected ambassador for the university and contribute to the body of institutional research knowledge through participation in higher education organizations

**Minimum hiring standards:**

- Advanced degree, doctoral preferred
- Demonstrated experience working in and fostering a diverse faculty, staff and student environment or commitment to do so as an employee at VCU
- Demonstrated understanding of institutional effectiveness and research
- Significant experience in quantitative research and reporting
- Demonstrated leadership abilities; outstanding oral and written communication skills, with emphasis on public speaking and presentation skills; relationship-building and organizational skills
- Experience managing teams, handling tight deadlines and leading several significant analytic projects simultaneously.
- Understanding of and adherence to data governance policies and best practices
- Work experience with an enterprise resource planning environment and institutional operational data stores and data warehouses
- Ability to exercise professional and scientific judgment and assume responsibility for decisions, consequences and results

**Preferred hiring standards:**

- Experience in leading studies on the academic environment, including faculty performance and university/student success metrics
- Familiarity with effective data governance strategies
- Extensive experience with predictive analytics and forecasting models, along with strong knowledge of research design and causal inference.
- Experience with building and expanding information systems in an academic setting or agencies for institutional accountability

## Virginia Commonwealth University

Located in the heart of Richmond, the capital of Virginia since 1779, Virginia Commonwealth University serves an integral role in the economic health of the city and the state, educating the current and future workforce, reaching out to the community, advancing research, and enhancing patient care.

VCU was founded in 1838 as the medical department of Hampden-Sydney College, becoming the Medical College of Virginia in 1854. In 1968, the General Assembly merged MCV with the Richmond Professional Institute, founded in 1917, to create Virginia Commonwealth University.

Today, VCU offers comprehensive undergraduate, master's, doctoral and professional programs and encompasses one of the largest academic health centers in the nation. With \$335 million in externally funded research awards for the 2020 fiscal year, VCU is one of only 71 institutions in the country with an academic medical center to be designated by the Carnegie Foundation as "Community Engaged" with "Highest Research Activity." Its centers and institutes of excellence support the University's research mission and involve faculty from multiple disciplines in the arts, public policy, biotechnology, and health care discoveries. VCU enrolls more than 29,000 students in more than 200 degree and certificate programs in the arts, sciences, and humanities. Twenty-two of the programs are unique in Virginia, many of them crossing the disciplines of VCU's 11 schools and five colleges. VCU has a full-time instructional faculty of more than 2,500 who are nationally and internationally recognized for excellence in the arts, business, education, engineering, the humanities, the life sciences, social work, and all the health care professions.

With more than 23,000 employees and \$6 billion in economic impact, VCU and VCU Health also have a significant impact on Central Virginia's economy.

Through the guidance of its strategic plan, Quest 2028, VCU is working to meet the demands of diverse populations through impactful research and creativity, rigorous study, and extensive community engagement and is taking its place among the nation's premier urban, public research universities.

VCU and the VCU Health System have been honored with prestigious national and international recognition for top- quality graduate, professional and medical-care programs, reflecting a commitment to be among America's top research universities, supporting students, faculty, and the VCU community.

### Strategic Plan – Quest 2028: Once VCU Together We Transform

Quest 2028: One VCU Together We Transform sets the projected course and strategic aims for the next 6 years. Above all, the 2028 strategic plan focuses on the joint effort of an inclusive public

research university and health care system to broaden education and healthcare access and produce exceptional educational and healing results.

VCU will pursue four overarching, integrated themes in support of its mission and vision and in its continued drive for distinction and impact:

- Diversity Drives Excellence
- Student Success
- Research and Innovation to Address Societal Challenges
- Thriving Communities

[Read the full Quest 2028 VCU plan.](#)

## 2022-2023 Budget

The FY2023 budget for Virginia Commonwealth University advances the University's strategic goals while seeking to minimize the financial impact on students. Over the course of FY2022, the University completed a recalibration of the University strategic plan. The goal of the recalibrated plan is to accelerate VCU's development as the inclusive, accessible, and truly public research university of the future.

The proposed budget includes funding that reflects national concerns, including inflation, challenges with employee recruitment and retention, and the follow-on impact on enrollment from the pandemic. However, the budget for the upcoming year also highlights further progress in both returning university operations to pre-pandemic status and advancing VCU as a hybrid university. In FY2023, the University will provide growing and more diverse online instruction, increased virtual student support services including academic advising, financial counseling, and mental health services, as well as support faculty and staff development online.

Over the past three years, as part of VCU's commitment to access and student success, the Board of Visitors has adopted budgets freezing tuition at FY2019 levels. This unprecedented action has been possible only due to growth in state funds, the availability of significant one-time federal and state pandemic relief monies, along with an infusion of funding from one-time sources and budget reallocations from across the University. Unfortunately, this is not sustainable for a fourth year; however, the University is seeking to minimize the impact on students by holding the undergraduate resident tuition and fee increase to 3.4%. Additional information regarding all tuition and fees can be found in Section III of the full document: [2022-2023 University Budget Plan, Tuition, and Fees.](#)

The FY2023 budget includes actions to advance the University strategic plan in promoting diversity and inclusion, accelerating student success, expanding research, and supporting faculty and staff.

These budgetary actions include:

**Faculty, Staff, and Adjunct Support:** Providing competitive salaries for VCU’s faculty, staff, and adjuncts is an integral part of ensuring VCU’s status as a prominent and equitable university. The budget plan includes a five percent merit increase (reflecting proposals incorporated in the pending state budget) along with funding to support standard faculty promotions and adjunct pay increases. Note that as a University-wide action, the five percent merit will impact all funds across the University ensuring that employees, whether working in instruction, research, athletics, or student services, benefit from increased compensation.

**Student Access and Success:** VCU’s graduation rate continues to exceed that of its peer national institutions. Recognizing the importance of affordability in this success, the 2023 budget will put in place new permanent funds to support existing financial aid as well as increase financial aid supported from both institutional and state sources. As a part of VCU’s Culture of Care initiative, funding has also been provided to grow student support services, such as the VCU Writing Center.

**Research Support:** Following the successful launch of the One VCU Strategic Research Priorities Plan, continued growth in research funding is anticipated in FY2023. This budget recognizes the advancement of VCU to among the top 60 ranked institutions, and includes significant new funds from the state in support of research at the Massey Cancer Center, as well as gift funding for the inaugural year of the Stravitz-Sanyal Institute for Liver Disease and Metabolic Health.

**Diversity Driving Excellence:** One of the key questions raised in the recalibration was “how to better weave diversity, equity and inclusion into everything we do at VCU?” The FY2023 budget includes funding to expand the VCU faculty cluster hires supporting increased faculty diversity and collaborative interdisciplinary teaching and research.

Visit <https://budget.vcu.edu> for additional information.

## University Mission

Virginia Commonwealth University and its academic health sciences center serve as one national urban public research institution dedicated to the success and well-being of students, patients, faculty, staff, and community through:

- Real-world learning that furthers civic engagement, inquiry, discovery, and innovation.
- Research that expands the boundaries of new knowledge and creative expression and promotes translational applications to improve the quality of human life.
- Interdisciplinary collaborations and community partnerships that advance innovation, enhance cultural and economic vitality, and solve society’s most complex challenges.
- Health sciences that preserve and restore health for all people, seek the cause and cure of diseases through groundbreaking research and educate those who serve humanity.
- Deeply ingrained core values of diversity, inclusion and equity that provide a safe, trusting, and supportive environment to explore, create, learn, and serve.

## University Vision

As a pre-eminent national public, urban university, and academic health center, VCU will be distinguished by its commitments to inclusion, access, and excellence; innovative and transformative learning; impactful research; exceptional patient care; and beneficial community impact.

## Accreditation

VCU is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges to award baccalaureate, master's, doctoral and first-professional degrees. [Read more.](#)

This position is a full-time, 12-month position with an opportunity for a faculty appointment in an academic unit dependent upon the candidate's area of academic expertise and qualifications.

## Nominations and Applications

This position is a full-time, 12-month position with an opportunity for a faculty appointment in an academic unit dependent upon the candidate's area of academic expertise and qualifications.

Priority consideration will be given to materials received by **March 20, 2023**. Applications should include a 1) current CV and 2) a letter of interest that addresses the responsibilities and qualifications described above.

Buffkin/Baker, an executive search firm, is assisting the university in the search. Inquiries of interest, nominations, and applications should be submitted electronically, in confidence, to:

Mr. Martin M. Baker, Managing Partner  
Dr. Pelema Ellis, Associate Partner  
Buffkin / Baker  
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