



**RADFORD UNIVERSITY BOARD OF VISITORS  
ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AND STUDENT SUCCESS COMMITTEE MEETING  
DECEMBER 4, 2025  
KYLE HALL ROOM 340  
RADFORD VA**

**MINUTES**

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT**

Dr. Betty Jo Foster, Chair  
Mr. William Davis, Vice Chair  
Ms. Jeanne S. Armentrout  
Ms. Joann S. Craig  
Mr. Jonathan D. Sweet  
Dr. Matthew Close

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Dr. Bethany Usher, Provost  
Dr. Bret Danilowicz, President  
Dr. Rob Hoover, Vice President for Finance and Administration  
Dr. Angela Joyner, Vice President for Economic Development and Corporate Education  
Ms. Penny Helms White, Vice President for Advancement and University Relations  
Communication  
Dr. Dannette Beane, Vice President for Enrollment Management and Strategic  
Communications  
Dr. Susan Trageser, Vice President for Student Affairs  
Additional Radford University administrators, faculty, and staff

**CALL TO ORDER**

Dr. Betty Jo Foster, Chair, formally called the meeting to order at 9:48 am in Kyle Hall Room 340 on the campus of Radford University.

**APPROVAL OF AGENA**

Dr. Betty Jo Foster, Chair, asked for a motion to approve the December 4, 2025, agenda. Ms. Jeanne S. Armentrout so moved, Mr. Jonathan D. Sweet seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Dr. Betty Jo Foster, Chair, asked for a motion to approve September 11, 2025, minutes. Ms. Joann S. Craig so moved, Mr. Jonathan D. Sweet seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

## **ACADEMIC AFFAIRS UPDATES**

### **Points of pride**

- Provost Usher began by giving us a sampling of the Points of Pride in Academic Affairs this semester. Highlights included the College of Education and Human Development's Doctor of Education Program winning the Carnegie Program of the Year, support for student success and experiential learning, leadership in the Virginia Government Simulations, Health Education Outreach, the RADTalks symposia, Arts in the Community, Teaching with AI, and Tartan Transfer Summit.

### **Two-Year Plan Update**

- Academic Affairs made great progress in the Two-Year Strategic Plan, with success in improving academic programming, stabilizing resources, and stabilizing enrollment. Significant accomplishments include:
  - Adoption of a new General Education program, to be implemented in Fall 2027
  - 81% of graduating students completing at least one high-impact experiential learning activity
  - Integration of Civil Discourse into the fabric of the institution, including Common Grounds conversations, annual speakers, and two Wake Forest Educating Character Grants that established the Center for Character and Public Impact
  - Shifts in academic programs to align with student interest, increasing efficiencies – including merging departments, ending underenrolled minors and a doctoral program.
  - Restructuring the Academic Affairs Leadership Team
  - Improved transfer pathways published (from 0 to 82)
  - Improved pass rates in 100 and 200 level courses
  - Improved First Time in College retention
  - Faculty to student ratio now and around 1 student to 18 faculty, faculty members stabilizing as student enrollment stabilizes
- Student Success (retention+graduation) is trending much better over the last five years, although there was some wobble in new freshmen and new transfers this year connected to changes in the admissions process.
  - Dr. Jerel Benton updated the committee on Retention and Graduation rates and what his team is doing to increase these rates.

### **Strategic Plan Goals**

- Moving forward, Academic Affairs has been deeply involved in the development of the 2031 Strategic Plan. In the division, the top priorities for the next 6 years are:
  - Increase experiential learning
  - Foster additional multidisciplinary research collaborations

- Lead Southwest and Southside Virginia in supporting healthy communities and producing health care talent
- Developing Radford Online academic strategy and portfolio
- Developing and intentional, streamlined curricular portfolio
- Support faculty work life (Culture of Care)
- Academic Affairs is planning for expansion of health care mission, with a new mobile health clinic, hiring a new Assistant Vice President for Health Sciences, and development of a Center for Rural Health. All in addition to planning for a new Health Care education home in Roanoke (details on building planning in Finance presentation)
- Academic Affairs is being responsive to student and community needs, and to SCHEV's potential program productivity review, with the curriculum lifecycle process and committee.

### **Personnel Updates**

- The Academic Affairs leadership team is almost complete, as searches are wrapping up for College of Humanities and Behavioral Sciences Dean, the AVP for Health Sciences, and the AVP for Radford Online. Dr. Agida Manizade was hired in the fall as the Assistant Provost for Graduate Affairs, completing a restructuring in that area.

### **Questions and Conversation**

- Mr. Jonathan D. Sweet asked if we were forming a Rural Health Clinic.
  - We will have a Center for Rural Health within all the other areas to compliment programs that already exist
- Mr. Jonathan D. Sweet asked if the Mobile Health Clinic would perhaps turn into a permanent location.
  - This could be a possibility, however; we want to collaborate and be methodical about it.
  - President Danilowicz shared that there will be more information coming for this at the March BOV Meeting.
- Ms. Joann S. Craig asked for clarification on the Passport Office located within the University.
  - Dr. Jeanne Mekolichick stated that anyone, even the public, can use this service. You would need to make an appointment. They can do the passport pictures and well as the processing
  - Mr. Jonathan D. Sweet asked if the area Clerk of Courts were aware of this service because they could refer to our office. Provost Usher isn't aware if they have been notified or not but stated it wouldn't hurt for us to do more advertising about this service.
- Ms. Joann S. Craig asked about the funding for the Mobile Clinic
  - Funds are from Grants
- Ms. Joann S. Craig about 'other freshman' listed in the slide for Undergraduate Student Success: Retention and Graduation
  - Provost Usher explained that there are less than 200 students in this category. It comes from freshmen that do not get enough credits to move into the 'sophomore' category.

- Mr. William Davis, Co-Chair, wanted to know more about the Civil Discourse Activities
  - Some happened in classes (UNV100)
  - Helping faculty make teaching this easier through the help of CITL
  - Held an Open Forum on Oct 15, 2025, after questions from the “Coffee with the President” event.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION ITEMS**

- Resolution to discontinue B.S. in Biomedical Sciences

Dr. Betty Jo Foster, Chair, asked for a motion to approve the Resolution to discontinue B.S. in Biomedical Sciences. Mr. William Davis, Vice Chair, so moved, Mr. Jonathan D. Sweet seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

- Resolution to create B.S. in Geospatial and Earth Sciences Program
- Resolution to discontinue B.A./B.S. in Geology
- Resolution to discontinue B.A/B.S. in Geospatial Sciences

Dr. Betty Jo Foster, Chair, asked for a motion to approve (as a block) the Resolution to create B.S. in Geospatial and Earth Sciences Program; Resolution to discontinue B.A./B.S. in Geology; Resolution to discontinue B.A./B.S. in Geospatial Sciences. Mr. Jonathan D. Sweet, so moved, Ms. Jeanne S. Armentrout seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

## **FACULTY SENATE REPORT**

Dr. Matthew Close, President of Faculty Senate, delivered updates.

- General Education – Committee’s have been formed and they are meeting. They are on tract to complete their work in the Fall of 2027
- AI Core Team was formed in Summer 2025
  - They recommended the creation of two AI task forces. One for Research and Scholarship and the other for Reaching and Pedagogy
  - Goal: “Help departments, programs, colleges, and universities respond effectively to the challenges and opportunities artificial intelligence (AI) presents for courses, curricula, and higher education in general.”
- COACHE Report
  - The report was available Summer 2025
  - The results are being reviewed by Faculty Senate Campus Environment Committee and Assistant Provost for Faculty and Curriculum
- UIGRC (University Internal Governance Review Committee (25-26)
  - Quadrennial review of shared governance documents and processes
  - Concluded May 2026

**ADJOURNMENT**

Dr. Betty Jo Foster, Chair, asked for a motion to adjourn the December 4, 2025, Academic Excellence and Student Success Committee Meeting. Mr. Jonathan D. Sweet so moved, and Ms. Joann S. Craig seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 10:47am.

**Business Affairs and Audit Committee**  
**10:30 a.m.**  
**December 4, 2025**  
**Kyle Hall, Room 340, Radford, VA**

**Minutes**

**Committee Members Present**

Ms. Jeanne S. Armentrout, Chair  
Ms. Joann S. Craig, Vice Chair  
Dr. Betty Jo Foster  
Mr. George Mendiola, Jr.  
Mr. Jonathan D. Sweet  
Mr. James C. Turk, Jr.

**Board Members Present**

Mr. Tyler W. Lester, Rector  
Ms. Jennifer Wishon Gilbert, Vice Rector  
Ms. Betsy D. Beamer  
Ms. Callie Dalton  
Mr. William C. Davis  
Ms. Mary Anne Holbrook  
Mr. Anthony Moore  
Mr. David A. Smith  
Dr. Matthew Close, Faculty Representative

**Others Present**

Dr. Bret Danilowicz, President  
Mr. Ryan Bowyer, Chief of Staff, Office of the President  
Mr. Brandon Buchanan, Staff Auditor  
Mr. Jorge Coartney, Associate Vice President for Facilities Management  
Ms. Crystal Cregger, Director of University Services  
Ms. Allison Gallimore, Manager of Business Operations, Finance and Administration  
Ms. Lisa Ghidotti, Executive Director of Government Relations and Strategic Initiatives  
Dr. Dannette Gomez-Beane, Vice President for Enrollment Management and Strategic Communications  
Dr. Rob Hoover, Vice President for Finance and Administration and Chief Financial Officer  
Dr. Angela Joyner, Vice President for Economic Development and Corporate Education  
Ms. Fallon Kreye, Procurement Specialist  
Dr. Donna McCloskey, Dean of the Davis College of Business and Economics  
Ms. Margaret McManus, University Auditor  
Dr. Jeanne Mekolichick, Associate Provost for Research, Faculty Success and Strategic Initiatives  
Mr. Derek Neal, Chief Executive Officer, Radford University Foundation

Mr. Ed Oakes, Associate Vice President for Information Technology Services and Chief Information Officer  
Dr. David Perryman, Associate Vice President of Strategic Communications  
Ms. Susan Richardson, University Counsel  
Mr. Barry Schmitt, Principle/Financial Advisor for Captrust (via Zoom for presentation only)  
Mr. Scott Shull, Director of Technology Support  
Ms. Lauren Snelson, Assistant Director of University Services  
Ms. Dawn Taylor, Audit Manager  
Ms. Leah Taylor, Assistant Vice President for Human Resources  
Dr. Susan Trageser, Vice President for Student Affairs  
Dr. Bethany Usher, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs  
Ms. Penny White, Vice President for University Advancement  
Dr. Andrea Zuschin, Director of Compliance and Title IX Coordinator

### **Call to Order**

Ms. Jeanne S. Armentrout, Chair, formally called the meeting to order at 10:55 a.m. in Kyle Hall, Room 340, Radford, Virginia. Ms. Armentrout welcomed everyone to the December meeting of the Business Affairs and Audit Committee.

### **Approval of Agenda**

Ms. Armentrout asked for a motion to approve the December meeting agenda, as published. Mr. Jonathan Sweet so moved, Mr. George Mendiola, Jr., seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Ms. Armentrout asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the September 11, 2025, Business Affairs and Audit Committee meeting, as published. Dr. Betty Jo Foster so moved, Mr. Sweet seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

### **Reports**

#### **University Auditor's Report**

University Auditor Margaret McManus presented an oral report on the September 2025 quarterly review of the University Discretionary Fund. She also presented audit reports on FY2025 Change and Petty Cash Funds, FY2025 Payroll Review, and the Quarterly Follow-up Audit Status Report. She also presented the Internal Audit Strategy. A copy of the reports was included with the board materials.

#### **Financial Update**

Vice President Rob Hoover presented an overview of Radford University financial processes; a review of internal budget processes; a list of priorities for Fiscal Year 2027; and an update on the Roanoke Academic Health Sciences Center. A copy of the reports was included in the board materials.

#### **Retirement Committee Update**

Principle/Financial Advisor for Captrust, Barry Schmitt provided an update on behalf of the Retirement Committee. A copy of the report was included in the board materials.

### **Action Item**

#### **Recommendation for Approval of the Discrimination and Harassment Policy Revision**

Vice President Hoover presented to the committee proposed changes to the Discrimination and Harassment Policy.

Ms. Armentrout asked for a motion to recommend the Discrimination and Harassment Policy revision as presented to the full Board for approval. Dr. Foster so moved, Mr. Mendiola seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

carried unanimously. A copy of the proposed resolution is attached hereto as *Attachment A* and is made a part hereof.

**ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to come before the committee, Ms. Armentrout adjourned the meeting at 11:49 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela Fitchett  
Executive Assistant to the  
Vice President for Finance and Administration  
and Chief Financial Officer



**Enrollment Management and Brand Equity  
Committee 1:15 p.m.\*\*  
December 4, 2025  
Kyle 340**

**Minutes**

**Committee Members Present**

Mrs. Jennifer Wishon Gilbert, Vice Rector and Chair  
Mr. Dale S. Ardizzzone, Vice Chair  
Ms. Betsy D. Beamer  
Ms. Callie M. Dalton  
Ms. Mary Anne Holbrook  
Mr. David A. Smith

**Board Members Present**

Mr. Tyler W. Lester, Rector  
Ms. Jeanne S. Armentrout  
Ms. Joann Craig  
Mr. William C. Davis  
Dr. Betty Jo Foster  
Mr. George Mendiola, Jr.  
Mr. Anthony Moore  
Mr. Jonathan D. Sweet  
Mr. James C. Turk

**Others Present**

Dr. Bret Danilowicz, President  
Dr. Dannette Gomez Beane, Vice President for Enrollment Mgt and Strategic Communications  
Dr. Bethany Usher, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs  
Dr. Robert Hoover, Vice President for Finance and Administration and CFO  
Dr. Susan Trageser, Vice President for Student Affairs  
Dr. Angela Joyner, Vice President for Economic Development and Corporate Education  
Ms. Penny White, Vice President for University Advancement  
Mr. Ryan Bowyer, Chief of Staff  
Ms. Susan Richardson, Legal Counsel  
Ms. Lisa Ghidotti, Executive Director of Government Relations and Strategic Initiatives  
Ms. Margaret McManus, University Auditor  
Dr. Rachel Williams, Dean of the College of Visual and Performing Arts  
Dr. Donna Weaver McCloskey, Dean of the Davis College of Business and Economics  
Dr. Wendy Downey, Dean of the College of Nursing  
Dr. Jeanne Mekolichick, Associate Provost, Office of Academic Excellence  
Dr. Jerel Benton, Assistant Provost for Student Success  
Dr. David Perryman, Associate Vice President, Strategic Communications

Mr. Derek Neal, Foundation Chief Executive Officer  
Ms. Sarah Tate, Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management/Director of Admissions  
Ms. Laura Turk, Executive Director of Alumni Relations  
Ms. Cecelia Crow, Director of Strategic Projects and Client Support  
Ms. Jessica Stone, Interim Assoc. V. P. for Enrollment Management/Director of Financial Aid  
Dr. Mathew Close, Board of Visitors Faculty Representative  
Mr. Cory Durand, Deputy Athletic Director

### **Call to Order**

Mrs. Jennifer Gilbert, Chair, formally called the Enrollment Management and Brand Equity Committee meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. in Room 340 of Kyle Hall.

### **Approval of Agenda**

Mrs. Jennifer Gilbert, Chair asked for a motion to approve the December 4, 2025 agenda for the Enrollment Management and Brand Equity Committee meeting, as published. A motion was made by Mr. David Smith and seconded by Ms. Mary Anne Hollbrook then carried unanimously.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Mrs. Jennifer Gilbert, Chair asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the September 11, 2025 meeting of the Enrollment Management and Brand Equity Committee meeting, as published. A motion was made by Ms. Mary Anne Hollbrook and seconded by Mr. David Smtih then carried unanimously.

### **Brand Identity Report**

Associate Vice President for Strategic Communications Dr. David Perryman began with an summary of the finalized University Communication Plan. Integrated with the new strategic plan, including updates to communication goals, audience analysis, and key messages, as well as new campaigns and activities. Four goals for the plan include strategic focus, awareness and engagement, reputation, and brand equity. New campaigns include “Culture of Care,” “Active Learning, Active Doing” and “Radford Proud.”

Associate Vice President Perryman communicated the plan is to “activate” Shaping Tomorrow – Together: Strategic Plan 2026-2031 which aligns goals, audiences, tactics, message, and sequence. Highlights include special design templates, a launch event with new video and presentations and a one-stop-shop website.

### **Enrollment Management Report**

Vice President for Enrollment and Strategic Communications Dr. Dannette Gomez Beane opened by highlighting that we exceeded many of our 2-year plan goals including enrollment stabilization, record number of visitors to campus, high achieving applicants and improved transfer pathways.

Vice President Beane gave a summary of the 2026-3031 Strategic Enrollment Plan that aligns with the University Strategic Plan which was a campus-wide, year-long discussion involving twenty-three university leadership groups, community members, students, and the Board of Visitors. Stabilization was achieved and sustainability is the goal using fall 2024 as the baseline with 7,812 students. Planning assumptions include 6,926 in person enrollment for all locations and continuing the Radford Tuition Promise, just to name a few. Strategic growth areas include nursing, Roanoke academic programs, club sports, pep band and select undergraduate programs. Vice President Beane, closed by stating that growth in these areas is incremental over the next six years.

### **Adjournment**

With no further business to come before the committee, Mrs. Jennifer Gilbert, Chair, asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting of the Enrollment Management and Brand Equity Committee meeting at 2:03 p.m. A motion was made by Mr. Dale Ardizzone and seconded by Mr. David Smtih then

carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Gina Stike  
Executive Assistant to the  
Vice President for Enrollment Management  
and Strategic Communications



**External Engagement Committee**  
**11:30 a.m.**  
**December 4, 2025**  
**Kyle Hall, Room 340**  
**Radford, VA**

**MINUTES**

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT**

Ms. Betsy D. Beamer, Chair  
Mr. George Mendiola Jr., Vice Chair  
Mr. William C. Davis  
Ms. Mary Anne Holbrook  
Mr. Anthony Moore

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT**

Mr. Tyler W. Lester, Rector  
Mrs. Jennifer Wishon Gilbert, Vice Rector  
Mr. Dale S. Ardizzone  
Ms. Jeanne S. Armentrout  
Ms. Joann S. Craig  
Dr. Betty Jo Foster  
Mr. David A. Smith  
Mr. Jonathan D. Sweet  
Ms. Callie M. Dalton  
Mr. James C. Turk

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Dr. Dannette Beane, Vice President for Enrollment Management and Strategic Communications  
Mr. Ryan Bowyer, Chief of Staff  
Ms. Lisa Ghidotti, Executive Director for Government Relations and Strategic Initiatives  
Dr. Robert Hoover, Vice President for Finance and Administration  
Dr. Angela Joyner, Vice President for Economic Development and Corporate Education  
Mr. Derek Neal, CEO Radford University Foundation  
Ms. Susan Richardson, University Counsel  
Dr. Bethany Usher, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs  
Ms. Penny Helms White, Vice President for Advancement and Alumni Relations

## **CALL TO ORDER**

Ms. Betsy D. Beamer, Chair, formally called the External Engagement Committee meeting to order at 11:57 a.m. Kyle Hall in Room 340, Radford, Va.

## **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Ms. Betsy D. Beamer, Chair asked for a motion to approve the December 4, 2025, agenda, as published., Mr. George Mendiola Jr., Vice Chair made the motion and Mr. William C. Davis seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Ms. Betsy D. Beamer, Chair asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the September 11, 2025, meeting of the External Engagement Committee meeting, as published. Ms. Mary Anne Holbrook made the motion. Mr. George Mendiola Jr., Vice Chair seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND CORPORATE EDUCATION**

Dr. Angela Joyner, Vice President of Economic Development and Corporate Education, provided an update on the Joint Commission Development Initiatives. Multiple collaborative projects are underway including Wicked Festival's student research on homelessness solutions with the City's Homeless Outreach Taskforce, East Main Street corridor revitalization efforts (featuring a bike trail connecting Tyler Avenue to Bisset Park and a planned retail study), and the amphitheater project which will be in the request for proposal phase for design and planning in early 2026.

Dr. Joyner further presented Economic Development's involvement in community-based projects such as the Pulaski County Experience Center and the Town of Pulaski Theater project. Economic Development has partnered with Erika Tolbert to provide students with opportunities to work on the Pulaski County historic theater. Two students are currently working on the project, with five additional interns planned to become involved.

The HUB@ Radford University continues to thrive, maintaining 35 CoWorks memberships and having administered 150 certification exams since February, with 106 of those in IT and cybersecurity. The facility has successfully hosted workshops including the Radford City Chamber's Business Over Breakfast and the New River Regional Commission Annual Dinner. The IT Talent Connect Summit held in September 2025 connected students with three major employers—Blue Sky AI, MC Dean, and Food City—in an effective small-group format, with plans to repeat the event in Spring 2026.

Adventure Works is an Outdoor Economy Summit being hosted at Radford University, celebrating the institution's designation as Blue Ridge Outdoors Magazine's Top Adventure College. This inaugural event will bring together regional stakeholders to explore how outdoor recreation drives economic growth, particularly in Virginia's rural communities.

The Emerging Technology Conference drew significant interest, with close to 100 attendees participating in the designated cybersecurity track and over 30 Radford University students, staff, and faculty attending the conference overall. Several Radford University faculty members served as presenters or participated on industry panels as well.

## UNIVERSITY ADVANCEMENT AND ALUMNI RELATIONS

Ms. Penny Helms White, Vice President of Advancement and Alumni Relations provided an update to the committee on the work regarding progress on several initiatives. The division continues to operate in alignment with Top Five Priorities to include athletic fundraising, donor growth and retention, planned giving, volunteer cultivation, and young alumni. These priorities remain the driving framework for all advancement, engagement, and fundraising initiatives across the division. In fundraising progress, the division has secured \$4.3 million toward the \$6 million annual goal.

An overview was provided on Homecoming 2025, which delivered a full schedule of signature events as well as newly introduced offerings. Attendance and engagement indicated strong participation from alumni, students, and community partners, reflecting continued enthusiasm for this event.

To enhance professional development and collaboration. Deans and Advancement frontliner fundraisers attended a CASE Conference held in Washington, D.C. in November. Participation supported enhanced professional development, stronger peer networking, and expanded collaboration within the division.

It was reported that the Athletics Feasibility Study has progressed into the Architecture & Engineering (A&E) phase. More detailed findings, along with projected next steps, are anticipated for presentation in early 2026.

Ms. Penny Helms White shared the results from Highlander Giving Day, which opened Tuesday, December 2 at 8:00 AM and concluded Wednesday, December 3 after 1 day, 9 hours, and 10 minutes.

Key outcomes included:

- \$83,885 raised
- 424 total donors
- 60% increase in dollars raised compared to the prior year
- Nearly 30% increase in total donors
- High faculty and staff participation
- Nearly 65% increase in alumni donors
- Over \$35,000 secured through challenges and matching gifts

Hunter Gresham, Senior Director of Advancement Communications and Donor Relations presented on her progress in implementing a comprehensive divisional communication plan and donor stewardship plan in alignment with the five divisional priorities.

Ms. Gresham reported that the University Magazine is now on a twice-yearly publication schedule, which is expected to enhance consistency and institutional visibility. Additionally, *The Wayfinder* electronic newsletter continues to be distributed monthly on the third Tuesday, ensuring timely communication with stakeholders.

An overview of the newly established donor recognition structure was provided, which introduces the following societies:

- Red Brick Society
- New River Society
- Society of 1910

- Moffett Circle
- McConnell Circle
- Tartan Fellows

These societies are designed to expand recognition pathways and strengthen engagement across giving levels. Moffett Circle donors and induction ceremonies for the Society of 1910, McConnell Circle, and Tartan Fellows took place on November 14 as part of the Day of Gratitude. Upcoming recognition for the Red Brick Society and New River Society is scheduled for the Volunteer Summit on January 24.

In closing, Ms. White recognized all the hard work of the Advancement and Communications team.

**ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 1:01 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

**Student Affairs and Athletics Committee**

**2:30 p.m.**

**December 4, 2025**

**Kyle Hall 340, Radford, VA**

**Minutes**

**Committee Members' Present**

Mr. David Smith, Chair

Ms. Callie Dalton

Mr. James Turk

Mr. Dale Ardizzone

Mr. Anthony Moore

Ms. Dominika Butler (Non-Voting Student Advisory Member)

**Board Members Present**

Mr. Tyler Lester, Rector

Ms. Jennifer Wishon Gilbert, Vice Rector

Mr. Dale S. Ardizzone

Ms. Jeanne S. Armentrout

Ms. Betsy D. Beamer

Ms. Joann Craig

Dr. Betty Jo Foster

Ms. Lisa Pompa

Mr. Jonathan Sweet

Ms. Mary Anne Holbrook

Dr. Matthew Close (Faculty Representative)

**Others Present**

Dr. Bret Danilowicz, President

Ms. Susie Kuliasha, Senior Executive Assistant for the Office of the President

Mr. Ryan Bowyer, Chief of Staff

Ms. Lisa Ghidotti, Executive Director of Government Relations

Dr. Dannette Gomez-Beane, Vice President for Enrollment Management and Strategic Communications

Dr. Rob Hoover, Vice President for Finance and Administration and CFO

Dr. Angela Joyner, Vice President for Economic Development and Corporate Education

Dr. Susan Trageser, Vice President for Student Affairs

Dr. Bethany Usher, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

Ms. Penny White, Vice President for University Advancement

Ms. Susan Richardson, University Counsel

Mr. Cory Durand, Associate Director of Athletics

Mr. Owen Starr, President, Student Government Association

Mr. Bruce Hayden, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs/Dean of Students

Ms. Tricia Smith, Associate Vice President for Student Life

Ms. Nancy Loosle, Associate Vice President for Campus Life RUC

Mr. Jerel Benton, Assistant Provost for Student Success

Dr. Kristy Wilson, Associate Director, Connected Communities  
Dr. Shannon Shastry, Director, Connected Communities  
Dr. Mecca Marsh, Interim Director, Fraternity & Sorority Life

### **Call to Order**

Mr. David Smith, Chair, formally called the meeting to order at 2:28 p.m. in Kyle Hall 340, Radford, Virginia, and welcomed everyone to the Student Affairs and Athletics Committee meeting.

### **Approval of Agenda**

Mr. Smith asked for a motion to approve the September , 2025 meeting agenda as published.  
Mr. James Turk so moved, Mr. Dale Ardizzone second and the motion carried unanimously.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Mr. Smith asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the September , 2025 Student Affairs and Athletics Committee meeting as published.  
Mr. Anthony Moore so moved, Ms. Callie Dalton seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

### **Student Government Association (SGA) Report**

Mr. Owen Starr, SGA President, presented an update on SGA progress and initiatives. He reported significant advancement toward membership goals, noting that focused recruitment efforts resulted in 45 active members, all Cabinet roles filled, and all class-specific Senate seats fully occupied.

The SGA Senate continued efforts to amplify student perspectives across the institution. Highlights included the administration of the “*What Do You Want Wednesday?*” (WDYWW) survey, expanded outreach at Radford University Carilion (RUC), and individualized meetings with students to better understand their needs and priorities.

The SGA Cabinet maintained strong emphasis on increasing student engagement and school spirit. Initiatives included coordinating transportation for students to attend Athletic events and implementing a series of engagement-focused programs designed to strengthen campus involvement.

### **Student Affairs Report**

Dr. Susan Trageser, Vice President for Student Affairs, provided an overview of Division-wide progress toward established two-year goals, noting strong advancement in the areas of outdoor experiences, well-being, student employment, and student engagement.

Dr. Trageser shared a highlight video of the 2nd annual Tartan 5K, reporting participation growth from 124 registrations in 2024 to 150 in 2025. Participants expressed overwhelmingly positive feedback, and planning is underway for the third annual event scheduled for Friday, September 18, 2026.

She emphasized the continued focus on cultivating a Culture of Care for both students and staff. Programs such as Fresh Check Day played a vital role in enhancing mental health awareness, connection, and well-being across campus.

Dr. Trageser highlighted the early impact of Connected Communities, the Division's newest unit launched in June 2025. Operated under the guiding message "*come as you are*," the unit centers its work on belonging, identity development, and holistic student support.

Connected Communities celebrated National First-Gen Week with programming honoring first-generation students and their allies. The week concluded with Courage to Rise, a collaborative event with the Military Resource Center to open Veteran's Appreciation Week. She noted that 62% of RU-affiliated military students are first-generation. The unit also continues to offer the Laptop Loaner Program to support students with limited technology access or emergent academic needs.

In alignment with Student Affairs' commitment to expanding student employment, Connected Communities is creating targeted program interventions, strengthening communication strategies, and hiring transfer and commuter students as part-time staff to further engage these populations. Both Connected Communities locations—Heth Hall and Trinkle Hall—have experienced heightened daytime student presence, as well as significant growth in space reservations for student organization meetings, events, and gatherings, including those hosted by faith-based groups.

Dr. Trageser recognized the leadership and intentional efforts of Dr. Shannon Shastry, Director, and Dr. Kristy Wilson, Associate Director, for their work in establishing the early success of Connected Communities.

Lastly, Dr. Trageser reported strong early-semester engagement across Student Affairs programming. Within the first four weeks of the term:

- 97% of first-time students engaged in at least one Student Affairs initiative
- 87% of new transfer students engaged during the same period

### **Intercollegiate Athletics Report**

Mr. Cory Durand, Associate Director of Athletics, provided an overview of Athletics related to facilities and capital improvements, competitive excellence, and important dates and initiatives.

An update was provided on the softball stadium renovation project. The new ASTROTURF artificial softball field has been completed. The remaining components of the project include installation of a new videoboard by Fairplay, scheduled for early January, and installation of new padded walls along the sides and outfield of the stadium. The project is expected to be fully completed prior to the softball team's first home competition, with a grand opening planned for early March.

Several competitive accomplishments across Radford Athletics were highlighted. The Women's Soccer program claimed its seventh Big South Regular Season Championship, all under the leadership of Head Coach Ben Sohrabi. The team advanced to the semifinals of the Big South Tournament and earned multiple postseason honors, including Big South Midfielder of the Year awarded to Lilly Short, Big South Defender of the Year and Big South Newcomer of the Year awarded to Amani Green, Big South Coach of the Year awarded to Ben Sohrabi, and additional Big South All-Conference recognitions for six student-athletes.

Men's Cross Country completed the season with a fifth-place finish in the Big South, and Hayat Khan was recognized as the Big South Scholar-Athlete of the Year. Women's Cross Country finished third

overall, with Delaney Eller earning Big South Newcomer of the Year honors. The Volleyball program concluded the regular season in sixth place and advanced to the semifinals of the Big South Tournament. Men's Soccer finished sixth overall in the Big South. It was noted that Head Coach Chris Barrett has resigned, and the University is currently conducting a national search for the program's next head coach.

Updates were also provided on basketball programs. Men's Basketball currently holds a 3–7 overall record and is scheduled to host several home games during the month of December, including contests against Saint Francis, Coppin State, VMI, and Shenandoah. Women's Basketball currently holds a 5–5 overall record, with remaining non-conference games against Ohio, Concord, Hampton, and Virginia Tech. It was also noted that Head Coach Mike McGuire has achieved the most wins by any head coach in Radford Basketball history, men's or women's.

Lastly, Mr. Durand concluded with several upcoming athletics-related events and initiatives, including Basketball Alumni Weekend on January 24, 2026, which will include an Alumni Volunteer Summit and a men's and women's basketball doubleheader; RAD48, scheduled for February 3–5, 2026; and the Big South Basketball Championship, scheduled for March 4–8, 2026, in Johnson City, Tennessee.

### **Adjournment**

With no further business to come before the committee, Mr. Smith adjourned the meeting at 3:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephanie Galyean-Goff  
Executive Assistant to the  
Vice President for Student Affairs



Executive Committee  
8:00 a.m.  
December 5, 2025  
Kyle Hall, Room 340, Radford, VA  
Minutes

### **Board Members Present**

Mr. Tyler W. Lester, Rector  
Ms. Jennifer Wishon Gilbert, Vice Rector\*  
Mr. Dale Ardizzone  
Ms. Jeanne Armentrout\*  
Ms. Betsy Beamer\*  
Dr. Betty Jo Foster\*  
Mr. David Smith\*  
\*Appeared remotely due to winter weather storm.

### **Board Members Absent**

None

### **Others Present**

Dr. Bret Danilowicz, President  
Dr. Ryan Bowyer, Chief of Staff  
Ms. Lisa Ghidotti, Executive Director of Government Relations  
Ms. Susan Richardson, University Counsel  
Ms. Susie Kuliasha, Senior Executive Assistant to the President

### **Call to Order**

Rector Tyler W. Lester called the meeting to order at ~ 8:00 a.m. in Kyle Hall, 340.

### **Approval of Agenda**

Rector Tyler W. Lester requested approval of the agenda. A motion was made by Mrs. Betsy Beamer, was seconded by Dr. Betty Jo Foster, and approved unanimously.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Rector Tyler W. Lester requested approval of the minutes from the September meeting. Mr. Dale Ardizzone said the draft minutes stated two board members (Ms. Callie Dalton and Mr. James C. Turk) were present and they were not. Vice Rector Gilbert said omissions from the draft minutes had been corrected. The correction was noted. A motion was made by Mrs. Betsy Beamer to approve the

September 2025 minutes. The motion was seconded by Vice-Rector Jennifer Wishon Gilbert and approved unanimously.

### **Executive Order 48 Resolution**

Rector Tyler W. Lester referenced Executive Order 48 on Page 5 of the Executive Committee Packet. Under the executive order, Governor Youngkin directed the secretary of education, the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE), and the State Council of Higher Education of Virginia (SCHEV) to develop resources that will help local school divisions, colleges and universities prevent, track, report, and follow up on incidents of anti-religious bigotry. Rector Lester reminded the Board that all public schools are required to adopt resolution by the end of 2025. Rector Lester invited discussion of this resolution and there was none. A motion was made by Mrs. Betsy Beamer to approve the resolution, was seconded by Vice-Rector Jennifer Wishon Gilbert, and approved unanimously.

### **Committee Discussion**

#### Report from the Student Affairs and Athletics Committee

Mr. David Smith, Chair, reported that the committee met on December 4. Goodwill and engagement through Student Affairs are very important to campus. Our approach is concise, appropriate, and Dr. Trageser's leadership is admirable. Work of the Student Government Association (SGA) continues in an upward trend and SGA President Owen Staff is very dedicated. Athletics is moving along with Fall sports wrapping up; student athletes are doing well in the classroom; and leadership of Director Robert Lineburg is much appreciated. Specific information regarding the December 4 meeting may be found in those committee minutes.

#### Report from the External Engagement Committee Report

Ms. Betsy Beamer, Chair, reported that the committee met on December 4. She presented highlights of external engagement and partnerships, noting *Outdoor Summit with Venture Works* (??) and *Unhoused*, a poster presented at Winter Card on December 4. Both are great examples of relationship building in our communities and Dr. Joyner's engagement is outstanding. Ms. Beamer gave updates on Advancement and Alumni Relations, citing appreciation for the many details related to donor societies. The report from Ms. White was excellent and alumni participation is very impressive. Specific details regarding both of these updates may be found in the committee minutes. No items were presented by the committee for Board vote and approval.  
Meeting Dates for 2027

Rector Tyler Lester referred members to Page 7 of the meeting packet and noted the proposed dates: March 18-19, 2027; June 3-4, 2027; July 18-20, 2027 (retreat); September 16-17, 2027; and December 2-3, 2027. A motion to adopt was made by Dr. Betty Jo Foster and a second by Vice Rector Jennifer Gilbert.

### **Meeting Minutes Philosophy**

President Bret Danilowicz introduced the topic and noted there are essentially two methods of capturing the minutes: verbatim, or transcript; or bullet, a high-level perspective. Dr. Bowyer invited board members to provide feedback regarding transcript style or a high-level perspective. Dr. Betsy Beamer recommended caution with brevity and to not compromise transparency. Rector Tyler Lester referenced the board of visitor website where a full board meeting can be viewed. He further stated that minutes are meant to be a summary, capturing the important takeaways, with a good base, and avoiding overload.

### **By-laws Discussion**

Rector Tyler Lester reminded board members of a previous request to begin a process of periodic reviews of the By-laws. He expressed appreciation to all who provided feedback, adding today would be a time for

discussion. Ms. Susan Richardson has conducted a review of the By-laws, and reviewed feedback from the Board. Ms. Richardson reported a few minor word changes that do not coordinate with Virginia Code. Board comments include the following:

- 1) from Section 1A and electronic communication
- 2) from Section B and exemption to participation
- 3) two-year term limit of a faculty representative

Regarding numbers 1 and 2 above, Ms. Susan Richardson confirmed the language is from Virginia Code and recommended no change. Rector Lester asked for questions and comments; receiving none, Rector Lester noted that during the upcoming full board meeting, he will mention the legal issues raised.

Rector Lester said Mr. George Mendiola proposed five amendments with excellent detail regarding the structure of the By-laws and a more efficient flow.

Rector Lester referenced ongoing discussion regarding student representation on the Board and invited comments. Ms. Beamer referenced the process to elect a president of the student government association is held with the student body. Ms. Beamer continued with the importance of the Board of Visitors to maintain the chance to select the student representative to the Board. Members Foster, Gilbert, Smith, and Armentrout agreed the leadership opportunities are extremely important. Rector Lester noted alignment on this topic and moved it to a status of “defer.”

A third item concerned structure of the executive committee, more specifically to not just include those appointed by the rector. Ms. Beamer said the committee chairs work hard to attain knowledge and make informed decisions and serve as members of the executive committee. Dr. Foster agreed that communication with committee members is vital. Mr. Smith added if others are permitted to attend meetings of the executive committee, transparency and inclusion exist and noted further noted he does not believe the process is broken.

The fourth item was term length for the rector and vice rector. A recommendation from Mr. Mendiola was to change to a two-year term in even-numbered years. President Danilowicz offered the following framing comment: there is a need to repair the challenge we had this year. President Danilowicz expressed caution with two-year terms and said while the concept makes sense, there is high risk in appointing someone you have just met. Ms. Armentrout agreed it is a good concept and aligning with board terms is a big challenge. Board Member Smith added “it” can limit the number of people to consider; a one-year term opens it up to everyone. Board Member Foster added it may be limiting when someone is putting themselves up to serve as rector and vice rector. Rector Lester said regardless of a final approach, a very good conversation about formalizing in the By-laws has begun.

Rector Lester noted the final recommendation from Board Member Mendiola is to have a board member serve as secretary. Following a question from Ms. Beamer, Ms. Susan Richardson noted this is not a requirement from Virginia Code. Following additional discussion among board members, it was agreed that more information would be required on this topic. Rector Lester noted the amendments submitted by Board Member Mendiola have been discussed.

### **Adjournment**

With no further business to come before the Board, Rector Lester adjourned the meeting at approximately 9:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Ryan Bowyer, Ed.D.  
Chief of Staff



Quarterly Meeting  
9:00 a.m.  
December 5, 2025  
Kyle Hall, Room 340, Radford VA  
Minutes

**Board Members Present**

Mr. Tyler W. Lester, Rector

Ms. Jennifer Wishon Gilbert, Vice Rector\*

Mr. Dale Ardizzone

Ms. Jeanne Armentrout\*

Ms. Betsy Beamer\*

Ms. Joann Craig

Ms. Callie Dalton\*

Mr. William C. Davis\*

Dr. Betty Jo Foster\*

Ms. Mary Anne Holbrook\*

Mr. George Mendiola, Jr.

Mr. Anthony Moore

Mr. David A. Smith\*

Mr. Jonathan Sweet\*

Mr. James C. Turk\*

\*Appeared remotely due to winter weather storm in Radford Virginia.

**Board Members Absent**

**Others Present**

Dr. Bret Danilowicz, President

Dr. Dannette Gomez Beane, Vice President for Enrollment Management and Strategic Communications

Dr. Rob Hoover, Vice President for Finance and Administration

Dr. Angela Joyner, Vice President for Economic Development and Corporate Education  
Ms. Susan Richardson, University Counsel  
Dr. Susan Trageser, Vice President for Student Affairs  
Dr. Bethany Usher, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs  
Ms. Penny Helms White, Vice President for Advancement and Alumni Relations  
Ms. Lisa Ghidotti, Executive Director of Government Relations and Strategic Initiatives  
Dr. Ryan Bowyer, Chief of Staff  
Dr. David Perryman, Associate Vice President for Strategic Communications  
Ms. Susie Kuliasha, Senior Executive Assistant to the President

### **Call to Order**

Rector Tyler Lester called the meeting to order at approximately 9:40 a.m. in Kyle Hall, 340. He noted the weather emergency required some Board members to appear remotely. Those are noted with an asterisk above.

### **Approval of Agenda**

Rector Lester requested approval of the agenda. The approval of the agenda was motioned by Mr. Dale Ardizzone, seconded by Mr. Anthony Moore, and approved unanimously.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Rector Lester requested approval of the minutes from the September 2025 quarterly meeting. Dale Ardizzone noted an adjustment to the minutes which were adopted. The September 2025 minutes were motioned by Mr. Dale Ardizzone seconded by Mr. Anthony Moore and approved unanimously.

### **The Radford Experience**

Rector Lester asked Vice President of Student Affairs, Dr. Susan Trageser, to introduce Ms. Kate Hudson, a junior elementary education major from Blacksburg, Virginia. She shared reflections on her incredible student journey, which included participating in Advocacy Day, serving as a Quest assistant and later as a Quest student director, joining alumni ambassadors, serving as a peer health educator, and receiving incredible support and mentorship from faculty and staff. She expressed gratitude for faculty, staff, donors and student support offices, and affirmed that Radford University has provided transformative opportunities that shaped her academic preparation, leadership development, and career pathways.

### **President's Report**

President Bret Danilowicz provided a report on recent Radford University activities and performance. A copy of the President's remarks are attached as Attachment A and are made a part hereof.

## **Government Relations Update**

Ms. Lisa Ghidotti, Executive Director of Government Relations and Strategic Initiatives, provided an overview of the November elections, and update on the gubernatorial transition and how Radford University's strengths and initiatives align with the Spanberger Administration's potential higher education priorities, and a preview of the 2026 General Assembly budget and potential higher education legislative changes.

## **Strategic Planning 2026-2031 Update**

Strategic Planning Committee co-chairs Dr. Sharon Roger Hepburn and Dr. Angela Joyner presented an update on the development of the new six-year strategic plan, *Shaping Tomorrow – Together*, which is scheduled to launch in January 2026. Drs. Joyner and Hepburn reviewed the current status of the mission statement, reviewed updated language throughout the plan, discussed strategy refinement, considered the operational strategies and actions from each of the five divisions, announced AchieveIt as the tracking solution, and finally reviewed the launch strategy.

A resolution was presented to the Board to officially approve *Shaping Tomorrow – Together*. This was motioned by Mr. James Turk seconded by Mr. Dale Ardizzone and approved unanimously.

## **Board Software Presentation**

Dr. Ryan Bowyer, Chief of Staff, presented Board Effect as an option for Board Management software. Following the presentation and questions, Rector Lester offered support for Dr. Bowyer to implement the software.

## **2025 COACHE Survey Report**

Dr. Matt Close, Faculty Senate President, presented an overview of the 2025 COACHE Survey. The COACHE survey is administered every three years. A copy of his slides are attached as Attachment B and are made a part hereof.

## **Report from the Academic Excellence and Student Success Committee**

Dr. Betty Jo Foster reported that the committee met on December 4, 2025.

Dr. Foster reported that discussion centered on the Academic Points of Pride and the successes of the two-year strategic plan specifically related to improving academic programming and stabilizing both resources and enrollment. Expansion of a health care mission, including a new mobile health clinic and the center for rural health was discussed in depth.

Of particular note, the College of Education and Human Development's Doctor of Education program won the Carnegie program of the year award.

Four resolutions were presented: A) resolution to discontinue B.S. in biomedical sciences; B) resolution to create B.S. in geospatial and earth sciences; C) resolution to discontinue B.A./B.S. in geology; and D) resolution to discontinue B.A./B.S. in geospatial sciences. Resolution A was motioned by Mr. James Turk, seconded by Mr. William Davis, and approved unanimously; Resolutions B, C, and D were taken as a slate; they were motioned by Ms. Jeanne Armentrout, seconded by Ms. Joann Craig, and approved unanimously.

### **Report from the Business Affairs and Audit Committee**

Ms. Jeanne Armentrout reported that the Business Affairs and Audit Committee met on December 4.

Ms. Armentrout reported that Ms. Margaret McManus, University Auditor, gave an overview of 4 audit reports: a quarterly review of the university discretionary fund, FY25 change in petty cash funds, a payroll review, and the status of all the quarterly follow up audits that are currently being monitored.

Ms. Armentrout reported that Dr. Rob Hoover, Vice President for Finance and Administration, gave an overview of the financial picture of the University, discussed how the budget will be built for FY 2027, discussed FY 2027 academic priorities, and gave an update of the Roanoke Health Sciences Center.

Ms. Armentrout reported that Mr. Barry Schmitt, Principle and Financial Advisor of CapTrust, gave an overview of one of the retirement plans that are in place.

Ms. Armentrout reported that the discrimination and harassment policy had been updated, largely in response to Governor Youngkin's Executive Order 48 and other regulatory requirements. As this is a Board-level policy, the committee brought forth the policy updates via a resolution. This was motioned by Ms. Jeanne Armentrout, seconded by Jonathan Sweet, and approved unanimously.

### **Report from the Enrollment Management and Brand Equity**

Ms. Jennifer Wishon Gilbert reported that the committee met on December 4, 2025.

**University Communications Plan Update:** Dr. David Perryman shared the finalized strategic communications plan. Major goals include strategic focus, awareness and engagement, reputation, and brand equity.

**Enrollment Update:** The committee reported that enrollment goals have been exceeded, including enrollment stabilization, a record number of visitors coming to campus, high academic standards continuing to be met, and improved transfer pathways to Radford University.

No action items were presented by the committee for Board vote and approval.

### **Report from the External Engagement Committee Report**

Ms. Betsy Beamer, Chair, reported that the committee met on December 4. She presented highlights of external engagement and partnerships, in particular noting the impactful work of the Joint Commission. Ms. Beamer then gave updates on Advancement and Alumni Relations. Hunter Gresham, Senior Director of Advancement Communications and Donor Relations, updated the Board on strategies related to donor retention, recruitment, and communication. Specifically, she updated the Board on the final Donor Societies that were revealed at the incredibly successful Day of Gratitude. Other specific details regarding both of these updates may be found in the committee minutes.

No action items were presented by the committee for Board vote and approval.

### **Report from the Student Affairs and Athletics Committee**

Mr. David Smith, Chair, reported that the committee met on December 4. He presented highlights from the meeting, which included a robust presentation from the Student Government President, Mr. Owen Starr. Membership goals have been exceeded by the SGA. He reported that then Susan Trageser, Vice President for Student Affairs, and Mr. Cory Durand, Deputy Director of Athletics, gave updates from their respective areas. Other specific information regarding these updates may be found in those committee minutes.

No action items were presented by the committee for Board vote and approval.

### **Foundation Report**

Mr. George Mendiola, Jr., Board Liaison to the Radford University Foundation, provided an update. He reported that for the quarter ending September 30<sup>th</sup> 2025, the Foundation saw a 3% growth in combination of investments and contributions. He reported growth in the Foundation's assets.

No action items were presented by the committee for Board vote and approval.

### **Executive Committee Report**

Rector Lester facilitated a robust discussion regarding the Board of Visitors by-laws. Each Board member who submitted feedback had an opportunity to give an overview of their proposed amendments. Board members had an opportunity to ask questions and engage in thoughtful dialogue about those proposed amendments. Rector Lester concluded this conversation by stating he would work with President Danilowicz and Legal Counsel Susan Richardson to finalize any language and amendments to the by-laws and that an official vote to any changes would occur at the March 2026 meeting.

Rector Lester put forth two resolutions. The first related to Governor Youngkin's Executive Order 48. It was motioned by Jeanne Armentrout, seconded by Jonathan Sweet, and approved unanimously. The second was related to the official 2027 Board of Visitors Meeting Dates. This was motioned by Dr. Betty Jo Foster, seconded by Vice Rector Jennifer Wishon Gilbert, and approved unanimously.

### **Student Representative Report**

Ms. Dominika Butler ("Dom"), Student Representative to the Board, provided an update on her initiatives focused on improving student communication, promoting campus resources, and strengthening engagement with the RUC campus.

No action items were presented by the committee for Board vote and approval.

### **Closed Session**

Dale Ardizzone motioned and seconded that the Board convene a closed session pursuant to §2.2-3711(A) items (1) and (8) of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act for discussion of personnel matters related to the President's performance plan and personnel matters involving a public officer and consultation with legal counsel. The motion carried, and the Board entered closed session.

### **Reconvened Session and Resolution of Certification**

Upon return to the open session, the Board approved the Resolution of Certification affirming that only matters lawfully exempted under FOIA and identified in the motion were discussed in closed session. The resolution passed by roll call vote.

### **Adjournment**

With no further business to come before the Board, Rector Lester adjourned the meeting at approximately 1:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ryan Bowyer, Ed.D.

Chief of Staff

## APPENDIX A

### **December 2025 President's BOV Remarks**

Thank you, Rector Lester. And good morning to all our board members. It's been great to have you on campus this week, and I sincerely appreciate your dedication to guiding our university during this important time in our history.

I always look forward to our December meeting with the Board of Visitors because it allows us to look back on the calendar year and celebrate all that we have accomplished ... and to give thanks to all those who have helped us along the way.

This is particularly true of our strategic planning efforts, as we deliver a final report on our two-year strategic plan ... and embark on the next chapter in our university's history with the new six-year plan. (I'll share more thoughts on these milestones in just a moment.)

### **Celebrating Recent Successes**

I would like to take a few minutes now to celebrate some of our recent accomplishments before focusing on our strategic planning efforts. I hope you will be as inspired as I am by many of the contributions that helped us get to where we are today.

### **Enrollment**

As I noted in September, Radford has now posted two consecutive years of enrollment growth, including a 28% jump in new freshmen, a 39% increase in transfer students, and the highest number of new graduate students in our history.

Over 92% of our students are Virginians — and 94% of our graduates are employed within six months. That is a return on investment the Commonwealth can be proud of.

This year's total enrollment puts us more than 300 students ahead of where we were in Fall 2023 — an increase of about 4%. With larger freshman and sophomore classes now in the pipeline, we are well-positioned for enrollment stability over the next few years.

This good news about our enrollment is resonating with the many stakeholders I've met with this fall — from elected officials to partners in our Tartan Transfer and New River Valley Governor's School initiatives.

### **Tartan Transfer Summit**

As Provost Usher mentioned in her remarks yesterday, Radford University and our eight community college partners attended the first annual Tartan Transfer Summit at the Highlander Hotel in October. The event had three highlights.

- First, we celebrated the one-year anniversary of the Tartan Transfer MOU signing last fall.

- Second, we reaffirmed our shared commitment to the region — with the goal to help community college students experience smooth and successful transitions as they transfer to Radford to complete their undergraduate degrees.
- And third, we divided into groups to discuss what we've learned over the past 12 months and generate even better ways of facilitating the transfer process. These group sessions were held by the colleges' advisors, by student success and admissions officials, and by the presidents and chief academic and enrollment officers. All participants were focused on strengthening the bridges we have built so that students across the commonwealth will continue to cross these transfer bridges with confidence.

Participants came away from the summit with a renewed sense of commitment, a stronger sense of partnership and greater confidence in our ability to improve the program.

### **Council on Undergraduate Research**

Our Office of Undergraduate Research continues to do amazing work with our students that epitomizes one of our five brand pillars: Active Learning and Active Doing. This year, Radford University had four teams selected for the Council on Undergraduate Research's Scholars Transforming Through Research program. Our teams were among just 38 teams chosen nationwide. This gave us the largest single-institution representation this year and extended our distinction as the *only* institution in the nation to participate in the program every year since its launch.

This best-in-the-nation recognition speaks volumes about the talent and curiosity of our students, as well as the dedication of our faculty who mentor them through research projects. The student-faculty collaboration is also focused on serving others, as the STR program is designed to shape conversations with decision-makers in communities and ultimately help solve real-world problems and issues.

### **Commitment to Local Communities in SWVA**

At our September meeting, I talked about Radford University's enduring commitment to economic development, business climate and quality of life throughout Southwest Virginia. Since that time, I'm happy to say, we've continued to strengthen this commitment through a whole host of innovative programs and new partnerships. And my overarching message to our partners and communities is a simple one: **Education is economic development.**

That's the message I shared with the New River Valley Regional Commission when I spoke at their meeting in October. And there are myriad ways this message is coming to life in our activities throughout the region.

You see it in the new Certification Center and CoWorks@TheHUB, which open doors of opportunity to students, business professionals and local organizations, while bringing them together under one roof at The HUB for "productive collisions."

We can see it starting to take shape in the Collaborative Health Education and Outreach efforts Provost Usher described yesterday, where students from a broad range of health and human services work side-by-side in a unique interprofessional model. In that setting, they learn to collaborate, communicate and provide unified care to those who need it most in our rural and underserved communities.

And we will see it when we open the doors for the New River Valley Governor's School for the Arts and Humanities next fall. In this unique partnership, Radford University will host the new school with public school districts in Floyd, Montgomery, Giles and Pulaski counties, as well as Radford City and the New River Valley Community College. Advanced high school students across Southwest Virginia will enjoy rigorous learning that integrates university coursework with hands-on learning experiences. These will take the form of mentorship opportunities and real-world career applications with local arts and humanities businesses and non-profit organizations. Those same students will earn up to 30 university credits in the arts and humanities while still in high school — potentially allowing them to enter Radford or other Virginia colleges and universities with sophomore standing.

I know that CVPA Dean Rachel Williams has been meeting with our partners to hammer out the many fine details required to launch the new school. She has also been attending open houses at the participating schools to meet students and their parents and guardians to answer their questions. The partnership is in the process of selecting an executive director who will manage the daily activities of the new school.

So, you can see that the sky is the limit when it comes to boosting economic development in Southwest Virginia through innovative education.

### **Competitive Sports**

As we think about ways to enhance the Radford experience, Competitive Sports — which make up all our club sports and intramurals — will play an increasingly important role. This includes everything from competitive cheer, rugby and ultimate frisbee, to pickleball and women's flag football ... our two newest club sports added this year.

On a personal note, this fall I attended the Southern Rugby Conference championship semifinal game between Radford and College of Charleston. It was the first playoff contest Radford had hosted in more than 10 years. The Highlander team was led onto the field by Piper Geoff Pollock — who also chairs our department of philosophy and religion. They were greeted with the cheers of players' parents, siblings and grandparents; rugby team alumni; Radford students and employees; and local community members. It was a great example of the many benefits club sports bring to our university. Oh, and we won the match!

Because these sports give students a strong sense of community and boost overall engagement in the university, they will be featured more prominently in our recruiting

efforts, which Dr. Gomez Beane discussed yesterday. In the long run, as more students participate in these activities, they will provide another tie to enrollment stability and will improve our retention and graduate rates.

### **Introduced New Spirit Song**

This fall, as part of a larger initiative to boost school spirit, the university launched a spirit song competition open to all students, employees and alumni. A committee with broad representation across the university reviewed submissions and selected the winning song, “Rise, Highlanders, Rise.”

Congratulations to Miodrag Lovric for his winning composition!

It will serve as a rallying cry that unifies students, employees and alumni in one powerful voice that embodies who we are and who we aspire to be. In the years to come, I’m hopeful that the spirit song will be heard in spaces where Highlanders perform, compete, work and play.

### **Athletics**

We’ve had a number of exciting achievements and honors in the realm of Athletics since we last met. You will hear more about this through the committee reports, so I’ll only provide a few highlights here.

Earlier this month, the NCAA recognized former women's basketball player and head coach **Charlene Curtis** posthumously with the Gerald R. Ford Award. The award honors an individual who has provided significant leadership as an advocate for intercollegiate athletics throughout the individual's career.

The NCAA also recognized former student-athlete and Radford’s current baseball head coach, **Alex Gerra**, with the Award of Valor. The award is presented to an individual who — when confronted with a situation involving personal danger — averted or minimized potential disaster by courageous action or noteworthy bravery.

Radford University will be receiving two of the 14 awards given out nationally by the NCAA. These awards will be formally presented at the NCAA National Convention in Washington, D.C. on January 14. I will attend and help celebrate with our honorees and their friends. We owe a big thank you to Holly Cline, our Faculty Athletics Representative, for coordinating the nominations for our awardees.

And, of course, we’ve enjoyed great Athletics events the last two evenings — with the men’s basketball game against the University of Southern Mississippi on Wednesday night and the women’s basketball game against Navy last night. Thank you for helping to cheer on our Highlanders!

## **Legislative Work this Fall**

On the legislative front, I continued to meet with members of the General Assembly throughout the fall to update them on the university's enrollment and upcoming 2026 General Assembly priorities. In addition, we were pleased to host Delegate Jason Ballard in late September. Delegate Ballard presented the Student Government Association with a copy of the commending resolution he introduced during the 2025 General Assembly in honor of the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Radford's Advocacy Day.

We also hosted Delegate David Reid on campus in November to keynote the university's Veterans Day Ceremony. During his visit, Delegate Reid also spoke with a political science class and toured the Co-Gen facility and McConnell Library to learn more about the proposed renovation.

### Senate Finance and Appropriations Committee

We were honored to host the Senate of Virginia on campus last month for the Senate Finance and Appropriations Committee's Annual Meeting, which took place in Kyle Hall. Attendees included the Senate of Virginia, Governor-elect Spanberger, Lt. Governor-elect Hashmi, Delegate Watts, officials from the Youngkin Administration, legislative and budget staff, and lobbyists.

As part of the two-day annual meeting, Radford University hosted a presidential reception for the Senate and their guests in the Artis Center; and a meet-and-greet for the Senate and Governor-elect Spanberger. I had an opportunity to greet the Governor-elect and welcome her to campus, and I look forward to working with her and her administration. Highlanders across campus engaged in the meeting — from the students who serve as Tartan Blazers greeting guests throughout the day — to students and faculty who watched the meeting in our overflow room and visited the Virginia 250 Mobile Museum Experience parked outside. Our campus community had a meaningful glimpse into public service, civic leadership and state government.

Planning for the meeting started last June, and it was truly a campus-wide effort across divisions. I want to extend heartfelt thanks to Lisa Ghidotti who led the planning efforts, alongside our Radford teams across Finance and Administration, including Facilities, Catering, University Services, Information Technology and RUPD. I'm also grateful to Academic Affairs — especially Dean McCloskey and Dean Williams — for graciously hosting the meeting in Kyle Hall and the reception in the Artis Center, as well as the Registrar's Office for relocating classes to other facilities on campus due to heightened security measures.

Advancement and Alumni Relations and Enrollment Management and Strategic Communications also made valuable contributions, creating new branding elements and numerous signs for guests, transporting committee members and their staff around campus in golf carts, planning the reception, and coordinating student ambassadors to work the meeting and

entertain at the reception. Our students helped welcome and engage all SFAC visitors to campus, with a special thanks to Dominika Butler, Corohn Gregg and our Tartan Blazers.

### 2026 General Assembly

Lisa Ghidotti will provide an overview of the November elections and the upcoming General Assembly session in her Government Relations report this morning. But I'd like to point out that we've provided talking points in your meeting materials about the university's state priorities heading into January.

### Advocacy Day

Radford Advocacy Day plans are underway, and it will be held February 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>, with a legislative reception on the evening of the 3<sup>rd</sup>. We hope that you are able to join us for all or part of the two-day event. Ryan Bowyer will be following up with you about your participation.

### **Thoughts about Two-Year Strategic Plan**

So, let's turn now to the two-year strategic plan that we're wrapping up this year. As you may recall, the plan was designed as a focused bridge between long-term vision and immediate action. We launched it in 2023 with the board's approval, and it focused on four priorities:

1. Defining Radford's distinctive nature,
2. Driving regional economic development,
3. Stabilizing enrollment, and
4. Streamlining resources to increase efficiency and effectiveness.

This shorter two-year horizon allowed Radford to respond quickly to changing conditions in higher education while staying true to our mission and values as an accessible, innovative, student-centered institution.

I'm proud of the results we've achieved in the past two years. You received a detailed two-year plan report in your board materials, along with a postcard that has a QR code linking to the two-year plan website. But I would like to provide several highlights of that effort from my perspective.

We successfully elevated the distinction of our university through a range of tactics in the areas of branding, academic programming, student services and alumni success.

Through brand perception surveys and website redesign, we increased general brand awareness and boosted strength of awareness, reputation and pride among key external and internal audiences. Most notably, we boosted prospects' rating our reputation as Good or Excellent by 16% and increased website engagement for active users.

“Active Learning and Active Doing” is a hallmark of the Radford experience and one of our brand pillars. In the past two years, we expanded our experiential learning offerings and aligned them with learning outcomes as defined by the National Association of Colleges and Employers. Last year, 82% of our graduating students completed some kind of work-based learning capstone, including internships, teaching practicums, clinical rotations and undergraduate research.

I’m pleased to say that these and other efforts focused on graduating “job-ready students” are working — as 94% of our graduates last year were employed within 6 months of graduation.

We also highlighted alumni success as a distinctive feature of our university, converting success stories on the website, social media, e-newsletters and online magazines into measurable engagement— with a 25% increase in our alumni social followers and more than 100,000 alumni enjoying our new e-newsletter.

To become a stronger conduit for regional economic development, we implemented a new business model for The HUB and expanded our CoWorks and Certification Center offerings — as I mentioned earlier.

We also led or partnered on more than \$5 million in new grant awards for economic development initiatives. And with the help of a VTOP Capacity-Building Grant, we have been able to grow paid internships for students to nearly 800 per year.

Several successful tactics have helped us stabilize enrollment. These include:

- Dramatically increasing the campus visits for prospective students and their families,
- Launching a direct admission model that now accounts for roughly two-thirds of enrolled new freshmen, and
- Implementing the Radford Tuition Promise, which increased First Time In College yield by 9% while using less aid than budgeted.

We’ve also taken important strides in retention and progression by:

- Strengthening transfer pathways with over 80 Virginia Community College System guides and a new self-service tool,
- Improving student success in 100- and 200-level courses, and
- Enhancing the professional development of our staff to improve the quality of the services we deliver to students while boosting their satisfaction with those services.

By tightening budgeting practices and pushing accountability to local units, the university generated positive net revenue and achieved a \$10 million Educational and General Fund carryforward. We also increased efficiency through the use of new technologies, which allowed us to dramatically reduce email and phone traffic, while cutting manual work by almost half.

By expanding volunteer roles and refining their engagement, we grew our alumni volunteer base, advanced planned giving and grew overall giving. These results reflect deeper, more strategic relationships with donors who are investing in our long-term future. Through the successful TOGETHER campaign, which raised more than \$106 million, we broadened our base with many first-time and small-gift donors, strengthened planned giving and laid groundwork for future initiatives.

And finally, by modernizing hiring and onboarding, introducing career ladders and expanding training and leadership development, we reduced voluntary turnover in Classified Staff, grew participation in professional development and earned strong satisfaction ratings. These results will allow us to build a more skilled, better-supported and future-ready workforce across the university.

I would like to thank our vice presidents and Provost Usher, along with their many employees, for achieving these fantastic results. We are a stronger university because of the work we've done over the past two years, and we are well-positioned for the bold course we've charted for our future.

### **Thoughts about New Six-Year Strategic Plan**

Which leads us to the next exciting chapter in our university's story: our new six-year strategic plan, *Shaping Tomorrow - Together*.

I'm extremely pleased with the strides we've taken in developing the university's new strategic plan, which will launch next month, and which Dr. Angela Joyner and Dr. Sharon Roger Hepburn will tell us more about in just a moment.

It has been an inclusive and collaborative effort, led by the co-chairs for the strategic planning committee, Drs. Joyner and Roger Hepburn, and made possible by the contributions of the planning committee members, subcommittee members and implementation plan participants.

I am deeply grateful to all of you for the time, energy and insights you have invested in this effort.

So, as you can see, Radford University is at an inflection point in our history. We have come a very long way in the past two years and are positioned for even greater things.

The roadmap we have plotted for the next six years will allow us to fulfill our mission of Empowering Brighter Futures and Building Stronger Communities — united by a culture of care that provides services, resources and opportunities to support our well-being.

Thank you and Go Highlanders!