



SHENANDOAH™
U N I V E R S I T Y

Shenandoah 2025 Survey Analysis

Office of Institutional Research and Assessment

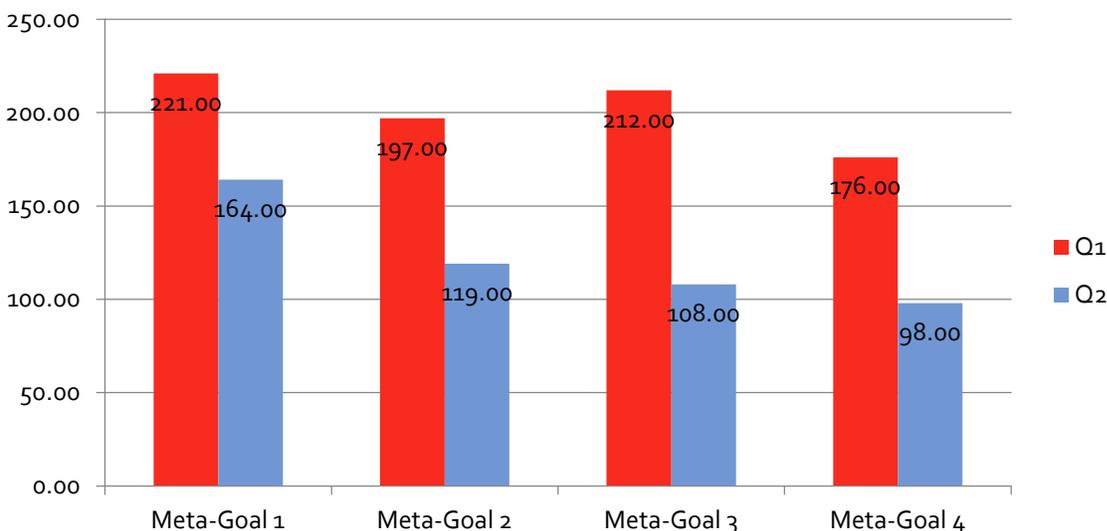
Executive Summary

The following is an analysis of the Shenandoah 2025 Strategic Planning Survey. The survey consisted of eight qualitative questions designed to gather feedback from faculty, staff, and students. Participants were asked to give feedback regarding the four new meta-goals initiated by the institution in 2014-2015. For each meta-goal, two questions were asked:

1. What specific action item would you recommend to help Shenandoah University achieve this goal?
2. Are there specific methods to assess the outcomes of the action items you listed above?

The survey was distributed to all Shenandoah University e-mail addresses. There were 274 responses to the survey, a response rate of approximately 6%. Not all participants answered each question (Figure 1), and participation varied with each meta-goal. Analysis was two-fold. The results were examined by multiple readers to determine key phrases. These phrases were then grouped into themes. At the same time specific responses were extracted from different lenses (i.e. faculty, programming, instruction) to provide additional insight (Appendix 1).

FIGURE 1 – SURVEY QUESTION RESPONSES



Meta-Goal 1

Engage Students in Transformative Learning: Shenandoah University will focus on rigorous, innovative programs and engaged student learning.

Over two-hundred participants responded to the first question regarding meta-goal one. When asked about action items for the institution, three themes emerged from the data:

META-GOAL 1

“Seek innovative, collaborative programs”

1. Inter-disciplinary Education

This was perhaps the most common theme throughout the responses. Individual comments revealed that faculty, staff and students believe that interdisciplinary education should be part of the curriculum. This included such items as co-teaching, cross-listing of courses, as well as purposeful interdisciplinary programs that would help students succeed in their chosen careers.

2. Program Development

Many individuals felt that the institution should develop more programs at both the graduate and undergraduate level. This could be seen in such comments as “creating programs that function outside of the typical liberal arts” and “diversify the Liberal Arts by coming up with more degree options.” It was clear that the intent was not just random degree offerings, but targeted programs that would help increase student success. In addition, the need for more sections of current courses was conveyed, as well as the need for more faculty.

3. Continued Development/Refinement of Facilities

The data indicated that a lack of technology and facilities in general were a potential barrier for the institution. Again, these were more targeted comments concerned with moving the institution forward such as “sophisticated space for Skype-internet learning” and “advanced technology classroom.”

Other items that were mentioned and should be considered included hiring additional faculty, faculty training and pedagogy methods, admissions standards, and making the College of Arts and Sciences the liberal arts heart of the University.

When asked about specific assessments that could be done many of the responses revolved around outcomes of the aforementioned themes. Increased enrollment, number of programs, and completed capital projects were all common responses.

Meta-Goal 2

Prioritize Student Success: Complementing transformative learning is Shenandoah University's unwavering commitment to student success. Shenandoah University will dedicate its time, ideas and resources to provide the highest level of quality in career and graduate school preparation, life preparation, and degree completion.

One-hundred ninety seven individuals responded to the question regarding action items for this meta-goal. There was more consensus in this section, with one or two individual areas taking precedence over other possible themes.

1. Develop and staff a world-class career center.

Responses varied as to the methodology, but most individuals agreed that there needs to be more resources allocated to career services. Comments such as “rework the career center to be more involved in the entire academic process” and “expand the career center and partner with the local community” were common.

2. Integrate career planning/preparation into the curriculum

Many individuals felt that career preparation could be better integrated into the curriculum. Resume building, internships, and career planning were all mentioned throughout the responses. Individuals felt the institution could improve by “developing career specific guidelines” or “establish programming throughout the year that helps students work through career planning”

Other areas mentioned included strengthening advising, adding a more rigorous remediation program, and utilizing community resources.

Specific methods of assessment for this meta-goal focused on job attainment, graduation rate, and student surveys. The number of internships and preparation for graduate school were also mentioned. One specific comment advocated using “a 1,3,5,10 survey process that measures outcomes in such areas as job satisfaction and career preparation.”

Meta-Goal 3

Build a World Class Learning Environment: With the master plan as a guide, Shenandoah University will aggressively seek to provide facilities and infrastructure that inspire transformative learning and student success. Shenandoah University is committed to building and renovating environmentally friendly multiuse spaces to serve its students and community.

Responses to this section increased over the previous section. As expected, the responses to these questions revolve around facilities and capital projects.

1. Continue to construct new buildings while maintaining and renovating current space.

There were a wide range of comments in this section, from positives such as “I believe that Shenandoah has a beautiful campus and I don’t believe the current administrators would do anything that won’t make it more beautiful”, to negative such as “I don’t believe this is a

priority. The University recently built two building that aren't being fully utilized." There was wide support for such projects as a new athletic center, concert hall, and residence halls. There were also calls for renovations to current facilities: "please renovate Gregory Hall", "reconfigure most classrooms so encourages more interaction." Often, technology was mentioned as something that has been overlooked as well as providing space for interdisciplinary education and team-based discussions.

Other areas mentioned included parking, a tutoring center, a conference center, and unique learning spaces that could be easily modified for different uses.

Specific assessment methods for this area revolved around capital project planning. Also mentioned were surveys of potential students and parents to determine areas that could be made more attractive for future students. Another option would be utilization reports for high-traffic or student use areas.

Meta-Goal 4

*Achieve an Adaptive and Sustainable Financial and Educational Model:
Shenandoah University will improve the value equation to the student while increasing the University's financial viability in a changing educational market*

The final questions had fewer responses (176), but there was more agreement with the potential actions.

1. Increase financial aid

There were many responses that were concerned with the debt load of the students and making sure Shenandoah remained affordable. Comments supporting this include "Tuition is extremely high. All students should receive some sort of grant" and "Strive to make a Shenandoah Education accessible to lower and middle class families."

META-GOAL 4

"Scholarships,
scholarships,
scholarships"

2. Increase funding through community and alumni support

There was a call for increased efforts in these areas to raise money for both scholarships and capital projects. One comment recommended tripling the endowment, another comment encouraged the University to "seek out community and regional partners."

Another action that was mentioned was to decrease tuition. The concern was that there are students who will not consider a private college due to the high perceived tuition rates. This may be mitigated by better education of prospective students as to the net cost, financial aid, and available scholarships.

Assessment methods for this meta-goal included measuring the amount of need met by financial aid, tuition benchmarking, endowment campaigns, and analyzing the income of potential students.

Conclusion

Overall the survey offered many different perspectives, including several beyond the themes mentioned here. Additional areas that were mentioned but did not rise to the level of a theme are found in Appendix 1. This shows the diverse opinions shared by students, faculty and staff. While they may have different ideas of how to achieve success, it is obvious that the population is vested in and is looking forward to helping the University be successful.

Appendix 1 - Additional Feedback

Meta-Goal 1: Engage Students in Transformative Learning: Shenandoah University will focus on rigorous, innovative programs and engaged student learning.

Themes: Inter-disciplinary education, Program Development, Continued Development/Refinement of Facilities

Alternate Themes: Long-term learning and not short term memorization, Make CAS the liberal arts heart of the University, Opportunities to learn outside of the classroom, Increasing entrance requirements while establishing a standard GPA, Increase academic challenges in order to increase rigor

Key Phrases by Area:

Faculty	Instruction	Programming	Technology	Students
More opp. For faculty development	More research opportunities for students	More business courses	Reconsider iM Learning	Stop making it easy for students to pass-increase rigor
Obtain quality faculty	Add curriculum planning	Require community service	Support technology in all programs	Increase students interactions among schools
Fac. and students communication	Create opportunities for Internships	Develop math lab	Create an advance tech. classroom	
Hire new and energetic faculty	Collaborative projects: Fac./student	Continue FYS program	Web page 101 required for all	
Advisors take more interest in stud.	More co-teaching	Mandatory course for new students	Keep up with current technologies	
Hire more full time faculty	Require internships for each major	Create honors program	Update IC equipment	
	Encourage cross-disciplinary curriculum.	CAS needs more grad. Lev. programs	Provide more training for faculty in BB	
	Team-teaching for courses	CAS to serve as liberal arts heart	Provide more online courses	
	Provide learning outside classroom	Students take more gen ed courses	iM Learning is expensive	
	Increase rigor of programs	Inter-disciplinary courses	Create instruction technology posit.	
	Make curriculum about learning	Refine distance education		
	Increase critical thinking opportunities	Provide more degree options		
	Connect CAS with global problems	Cross-discipline studies		
	Inquiry-driven instruction	Develop law and medical schools		
	More diverse instruction			
	Less emphasis on written assignments			

Meta-Goal 2: Prioritize Student Success: Complementing transformative learning is Shenandoah University’s unwavering commitment to student success. Shenandoah University will dedicate its time, ideas and resources to provide the highest level of quality in career and graduate school preparation, life preparation, and degree completion.

Themes: Develop and staff a world-class career center, Integrate career planning/preparation into the curriculum

Alternate Themes: Improve advising, redefine Learning Services Center, add rigorous programs, utilize rich community resources through internships and mentors.

Key Phrases by Area:

Staffing	Community Relationships	Programming	Advising	Entrance to SU
Add staff to learning services	Seek global companies to offer career opportunities	Add honors programs	Strengthen advising	Need to start at the beginning, admit strong students
Establish office of Community Engagement , tracking, researching	Publish internships	More programming for at risk population	Stop outsourcing advising, train faculty	Raise admission requirements, our students come unprepared and then we question why they aren't successful
Reduce dependency on adjuncts hire more full time faculty	Partner with Peace Corps and armed services	Require 3 rd year students to take a life-skills course	My daughter did not even know she had an advisor	
Add staff and resources to Academic Center	Use community mentors, use parents in particular fields	Improve General Education	Business school does not have advisors	
Build new Career Services Center, provide more staff members	Establish strong relationships with HR departments in our area	Create programs that teach critical thinking	Advisors need to work with students so they are not ashamed to go to enrichment center for help	
Hire more experts in the field	Locate companies willing to work with students and then possibly hire after graduation	Develop a rigorous preparatory program – at risk freshman	More advising opportunities for freshman	
Expand the Writing Center with more help		Improve Career Center functions and what they offer	Require freshman to meet with advisors and mentors	
Hire experienced career counselors		More courses devoted to leadership across disciplines	We really need to focus on advising if we want our students to be successful	
Need more personnel in Admissions		Real life training seminars		

Meta-Goal 3: Build a World Class Learning Environment: With the master plan as a guide, Shenandoah University will aggressively seek to provide facilities and infrastructure that inspire transformative learning and student success. Shenandoah University is committed to building and renovating environmentally friendly multiuse spaces to serve its students and community.

Themes: Continue to construct new buildings while maintaining and renovating current space

Alternate Themes: Construct new buildings based on student needs, parking is still an issue with many responses related to the creation of a new parking garage.

Key Phrases by Area:

Construct New Buildings	Renovate: Fix what we have	Integrate Technology	Parking
Build a new Athletic Center (numerous responses)	We really need to renovate the residence halls	Make sure technology is up to date in all buildings, not just a select few	Face it, parking is a problem and we are now talking about constructing new buildings
Build a new Concert Hall (numerous responses)	Ensure what we already have is working before constructing new buildings	Would love to have a media center -Need better equipment	Construct a new parking garage without taking up green space
Create more housing for graduates	Address capital improvements to existing structures	Technology infrastructure is weak	Parking is a problem
Handicapped accessible buildings	Arts and Sciences (Gregory) needs to be improved. The building is old and it smells	Integrate technology so all campuses can communicate	More parking and stop acting like it is not an issue
We want liberal arts to be the core of the university, we need a new building for arts and sciences	Prepare welcoming environments for the buildings we have	Increase number of faculty teaching technology and provide more training	The Millwood closing was a start but the more students you add the greater the need for parking
Build a tutoring center	We should fix our own buildings first	We really need a multi-media work space	More parking please!
Would love to have a comprehensive wellness center	Renovate spaces to function as primary learning environments that are conducive to engaged student learning	Technical integrative classrooms - I would like to see a technology building	Construct several additional parking facilities on campus.
Create a new Media Center	Make sure your current facilities are up to the standards you want first.	Better technology AND mandatory education and use of said technology by faculty members.	
		Again, mobile learning. We have been on board for five or six years? We could advance further down the path of using the technology to facilitate student learning and success.	

Meta-Goal 4: Achieve an Adaptive and Sustainable Financial and Educational Model
 Shenandoah University will improve the value equation to the student while increasing the University’s financial viability in a changing educational market.

Themes: Increase financial aid, increase funding through community and alumni support

Alternate Themes: Tuition is too high; need to discover ways to decrease tuition rates.

Key Phrases by Area:

Tuition	Scholarships	Modify Existing Programs
The tuition at this school is extremely high	Partner with community to offer scholarships to low income families	Shorter programs
Lower fees, not just tuition. Technology fee is outrageous	Issue more grants or partial scholarships	Offer different program models that will not be as expensive
Lower tuition to be competitive with state standards	Make education accessible to lower income families	Raise the value of all programs, don’t just promote health sciences and Conservatory
Increase endowment	Raise more funds for scholarships: Involve students	Educate students: Importance of financial stability and debt and cost of education
	Increase the number of scholarships offered	
	Seek out regional and community members to help fund programs	
	Seek grants to cover costs of textbooks. This little bit will help.	
	Make connections with independent businesses for fund provision	