

The Virgin Islands Consortium

UVI Board Of Trustees Approve New Online Degree

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In the regular session of its quarterly meeting on March 3, on the Albert A. Sheen Campus on St. Croix and the Administration and Conference Center Building on the St. Thomas Campus, the [University of the Virgin Islands Board of Trustees](#) unanimously approved a bachelor of arts degree in interdisciplinary studies – strategic communications to be offered as part of the UVI Online program. the university said on Saturday.

With the inclusion of the BA in strategic communications, UVI, in collaboration with Level Playing Field (LPF), will offer 16 degrees in an online format this spring. Classes are expected to begin on March 15.

"I am confident that we will be able to meet that launch date," said UVI President David Hall. "There has been a lot of work that has had to occur in developing platforms for us to be able to host these programs." Several University systems had to be changed, including UVI's Banner system, financial aid and changes with the registrars' office, he said.

"We do have applicants who have been applying for these programs," said Mr. Hall. The actual numbers of those who have been accepted and that have been enrolled will be shared with the Board as the process continues.

The Communication Program of the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CLASS), the Curriculum Committee of CLASS, and the faculty of CLASS approved the strategic communications degree based on the Level Playing Field framework.

In December 2017, the board approved the creation of 15 online degrees. In February 2017, the board approved of a service agreement with Level Playing Field to provide instructional course design, technology infrastructure and academic support for online courses and degrees.

The University of the Virgin Islands has been working toward this goal for several years. The University's strategic plan, Pathways to Greatness, approved by the Board of Trustees in June 2012 with input from faculty, staff and students, required the institution to develop and offer online degrees.

As customary, Mr. Hall recognized those UVI employees or units that have performed exceptionally with the President's Appreciation Award. "One of the major accomplishments during this reporting period has been the development, approval and implementation of 15 online degrees," said Mr. Hall. "This is the most strategic development in the University that has the potential to address ongoing educational and revenue concerns or challenges in the territory and nationally."

"This has been a team effort led by Provost Camille McKayle but has included the tireless and creative work of various individuals," said Mr. Hall.

This quarter's award was presented to:

- Charmaine Smith, coordinator for Enrollment Services
- Cheryl Roberts, director of Financial Aid
- Dannica Thomas, director of Institutional Effectiveness
- Desha Brathwaite, database administrator
- Dr. Ameeta Jadav, director of Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning
- Dr. Kimarie Engerman, interim dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences
- Dr. Lucy Reuben, interim dean of the School of Business
- Dr. Sandra Romano, dean of the College of Science and Mathematics
- Dr. Stuart Ketcham, chair of the faculty
- Erik Pattison, director of network operations
- Monifa Potter, registrar
- Sharlene Harris, vice president of Information Technology, Library Services and Institutional Assessment

“These individuals represent the larger group of people who played a role and I am very honored to be able to designate them as the recipients of the President’s Appreciation Award for this Board meeting,” Mr. Hall said.

In the president’s report, Mr. Hall shared that 29 students had made 16 presentations at scholarly conferences, some along with faculty members. “This is a significant achievement,” he said, adding that students that get to present have greater potential in their careers.

There were 19 faculty publications during this period. “I really want to thank our faculty members for continuing to engage in scholarship and research,” Mr. Hall said. “That is always the hallmark of a University’s ability to keep knowledge alive and to keep expanding the boundaries of our knowledge.”

In his report to the board, Mr. Hall provided an updated on the recovery status of UVI. The University executed a contract with The Bourne Group, an architectural/engineering firm, to assess all damages to structures, prepare cost estimates for repairs and establish budgets, prepare scope of work and construction drawings for designated structures, and provide related expertise and consultation services to the University. The firm commenced its detailed assessment of the campus facilities on Feb. 5, and is projected to complete this phase on March 5. The second phase of the process, preparation of scope of work, is projected to take 60 days.

A number of facilities have been selected for priority consideration, some of which will be fast-tracked through the process consistent with the goal of addressing those facilities that have a direct and immediate impact on students and have revenue implications, he said in his report. The facilities in this group, not necessarily in priority order, include West Residence Hall, Rouppe House (Student Affairs), Faculty West Housing, School of Business, MacLean Marine Science Center, Caribbean Green Technology Center/GEOCAS, Quarters B, Nursing Classroom Building, President’s Guest House and Reichhold Center for the Arts.

While in executive session, the board approved a honorary degree candidate from St. Croix, approved a revised version of the current risk assessment plan, received an update report on the Comprehensive Emergency Plan, received an update on legal matters and approved executive session minutes from the Dec. 19, 2017 meeting.

The next scheduled meeting of the Board of Trustees will be held on Saturday, June 3, 2018.