

**POLICY DISCUSSION  
BOARD OF VISITORS  
UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA  
June 9, 2006**

BOARD OF VISITORS  
POLICY DISCUSSION

Friday, June 9, 2006  
2:15 - 2:45 p.m.  
Board Room, The Rotunda

AGENDA

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UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA  
BOARD OF VISITORS AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

BOARD MEETING: June 9, 2006

COMMITTEE: Full Board - Policy Discussion

AGENDA ITEM: Actions Related to Restructuring Act

BACKGROUND: The Restructured Higher Education Financial and Administrative Operations Act (2005) provides a framework for institutions of higher education to gain greater autonomy in certain administrative functions, including capital outlay management and lease approval, information technology, human resources, procurement, and finance and accounting. On November 7, last year, the Board of Visitors approved the University's Management Agreement which outlines the specific authorities granted pursuant to the Restructuring Act. The Management Agreement has been approved by the Governor and by the General Assembly.

Two areas require further Board action prior to July 1st, the effective date of the Management Agreement. The Policy Governing Information Technology requires that the Board adopt new policies related to specific areas within information technology as described below. The Policy Governing Human Resources for Participating Covered Employees and Other University Employees provides for development of a new University human resources system which is to be approved by the Board of Visitors.

DISCUSSION:

*Information Technology*

Although the University already has many IT policies, standards, and guidelines in place, it does not have policies that specifically state the industry best practices with which its IT activities are aligned. To meet provisions of the Management Agreement, the University worked collaboratively with Virginia Tech and the College of William and Mary to draft new policies focused on four areas:

1. IT project management and auditing
2. IT security
3. IT infrastructure, architecture, ongoing operations
4. IT Accessibility

These new policies (refer to the Attachment on page 11) will serve as umbrella policies for existing and future IT policies of the Academic Division, the Medical Center, and the College at Wise.

The *University Information Technology Project Management Policy* underscores the institution's commitment to delivery of IT solutions within budget, on schedule, within scope, and in such a way as to best contribute to accomplishing the University's strategic mission. The policy references a specific, nationally-recognized project management organization as the institution's source for project management guidance. The policy also references industry best practices, consultant expert guidelines, and known industry-accepted standards in the area of project auditing. The policy additionally reinforces the need for project managers to possess professional project management credentials and/or an appropriate level of project management training or experience.

The *University Information Technology Security Program Policy* underscores the institution's commitment to safeguarding its computing assets in the face of growing security threats. The policy cites a code of practice published by an international standard-setting organization, as well as applicable regulations, such as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, as the authoritative sources for guidance for IT security management. The policy also references selected professional organizations within higher education and healthcare as sources for additional effective security practices.

The *University Information Technology Infrastructure, Architecture, and Ongoing Operations Policy* underscores the institution's commitment to applying best practices appropriate for the higher education environment when making decisions affecting IT infrastructure and architecture and conducting ongoing operations activities. As part of policy implementation, the University will maintain a current list of national and international IT standards and guidelines that influence our strategic IT infrastructure and architecture decisions and ongoing operations activities.

The *University Information Technology Accessibility Policy* underscores the institution's commitment to IT procurement, development, and maintenance strategies that result, when feasible, in giving individuals with disabilities access to and

use of University information and data. The policy cites IT accessibility standards specified in the Federal Rehabilitation Act, as well as widely used Web accessibility guidelines developed by a national consortium, as the sources for guidance.

### *Human Resources*

The Restructuring Act provides the University and the College at Wise with the opportunity to design and implement a human resources system for those employees currently subject to the Virginia Personnel Act and the human resources system administered by the Virginia Department of Human Resource Management (classified staff and wage employees). The Management Agreement provides that all employees hired after July 1, 2006, and all non-salaried (wage) employees will be members of the University Human Resources System (for staff of the University's academic division) or the College Human Resources System (for staff of the College at Wise) as appropriate together with any employees hired prior to July 1, 2006, who elect to become members of the University or College systems.

Initially, the University and the College Human Resources Systems will be identical to the current state system. This action does not affect the current system governing Academic Division General Faculty, College General Faculty, or the current human resources system for Medical Center employees - all of which shall continue. The University and College will develop revisions to the University and College Human Resources Systems as permitted by law in order to better address the needs of their employees and management. Such changes must be approved by the Board, unless specifically delegated to the President and the Chancellor or their designees. In addition, the University, consistent with Virginia law regarding employee relations, will periodically discuss with and receive comments from groups of employees in various categories and levels of employment within the institution on the elements of the Human Resources System during the development and operation of the System.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Approval by the Board of Visitors

APPROVAL OF UNIVERSITY INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY RESTRUCTURING POLICIES

WHEREAS, in accordance with the Restructured Higher Education Financial and Administrative Operations Act of 2005, the 2006 General Assembly passed HB1502 and SB675, known as Management Agreements with certain institutions of higher education; and

WHEREAS, the legislation requires the Board to adopt specific information technology policies, standards and guidelines; and

WHEREAS, the University of Virginia is committed to conducting its information technology activities according to industry best practices, appropriately tailored to the specific circumstances of the institution; and

WHEREAS, the attached policies will serve as umbrella policies for existing and future information technology policies of the Academic Division, the Medical Center, and the College at Wise;

RESOLVED that the attached policies on information technology are approved and are specifically referenced as:

1. University Information Technology Project Management Policy
2. University Information Technology Security Program Policy
3. University Information Technology Infrastructure, Architecture, and Ongoing Operations Policy
4. University Information Technology Accessibility Policy

APPROVAL OF UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA AND THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA'S COLLEGE AT WISE HUMAN RESOURCES RESTRUCTURING POLICIES

WHEREAS, in accordance with the Restructured Higher Education Financial and Administrative Operations Act of 2005, the 2006 General Assembly passed HB1502 and SB675, known as Management Agreements with certain institutions of higher education; and

WHEREAS, the Management Agreement includes the "Policy Governing Human Resources For Participating Covered Employees and Other University Employees", which sets forth the features of a University Human Resources System, as well as a College

Human Resources System for The University of Virginia's College at Wise, to include classification and compensation, benefits, employee relations, leave and release time, equal employment opportunity, non-discrimination, employment, and separation; and

WHEREAS, the Rector and Visitors of the University recognize the hard work and dedication of employees and wish to ensure that their rights and interests are protected through human resources systems that are fair and equitable; and

WHEREAS, the Management Agreement provides that University and Wise staff employees hired after July 1, 2006, and all wage employees will be covered by a new University Human Resources System or College Human Resources System; and

WHEREAS, initially the University and the College Human Resources Systems will be identical to the current state system existing on June 30, 2006; and

WHEREAS, it is intended that the provisions of the University and College Human Resources Systems will be modified to better address the needs of an institution of higher education and to improve efficiency, effectiveness, and competitive position;

RESOLVED that the Board of Visitors approves the establishment of the University Human Resources System and the College Human Resources System effective July 1, 2006 in accordance with Chapter 933, Exhibit Q, "Policy Governing Human Resources for Participating Covered Employees and Other University Employees" of Chapter 3 known as the "2006 Management Agreement Between the Commonwealth of Virginia and The University of Virginia."

#### *Additional State Goal*

**BACKGROUND:** On June 11, 2005, the Board committed to meet a set of eleven state goals as outlined in the Higher Education Restructuring Act. Another goal was added during the 2006 General Assembly Session.

**DISCUSSION:** During the 2006 General Assembly Session Delegate Phillip Hamilton introduced HB346 which adds campus safety and security to the several state goals that public institutions participating in the Restructured Higher Education Financial and Administrative Operations Act must commit to the Governor and

General Assembly to meet. The language of the bill specifically reads

"12. Seek to ensure the safety and security of the Commonwealth's students on college and university campuses."

ACTION REQUIRED: Approval by the Board of Visitors

APPROVAL OF COMMITMENT TO MEET AN ADDITIONAL STATE GOAL INCLUDED IN THE RESTRUCTURED HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS ACT

WHEREAS, on June 11, 2005 the Board of Visitors approved a resolution committing the University to meet a set of eleven statewide goals as specified in Chapter 4.10, Section 23-38.88 B. of the Restructured Higher Education Financial and Administrative Operations Act; and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly in 2006 passed HB346 which added a twelfth goal, "Seek to ensure the safety and security of the Commonwealth's students on college and university campuses;"

RESOLVED that the Board of Visitors of the University of Virginia commits to the Governor and General Assembly to meet the additional state goal related to safety and security; and

RESOLVED FURTHER that the Board of Visitors requests the President to transmit this resolution to the Governor and to the Secretary of Education.

UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA  
BOARD OF VISITORS AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

BOARD MEETING: June 9, 2006

COMMITTEE: Full Board - Policy Discussion

AGENDA ITEM: Graduate Fellowships

BACKGROUND: Graduate students are a vital part of the research and education mission of the University. To become a preeminent research university requires outstanding graduate students. Graduate students contribute to the creation of new knowledge, the education of undergraduate students, and the productivity of faculty, which in turn brings recognition to the University. Graduate student enrollment (not including professional students in the Law and Medical Schools) was 4,699 students for fall 2005 which represents nearly one quarter of the total student body. Enrollment of graduate students has increased by 17 percent since 1999, undergraduate student enrollment increased by 7.5 percent over the same period.

In the recent past, graduate education at the University has been administered by the individual schools. Coordination and promotion through a centralized effort was deemed essential to bring graduate education to the same level of national prominence as our undergraduate and professional schools. Ms. Roseanne Ford (Professor, Chemical Engineering) was hired to lead this newly centralized effort in May 2004 under the auspices of the Office of the Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies.

In this increasingly competitive market, greater financial support for graduate students is needed to attract the best and brightest students to the University of Virginia. An *ad hoc* committee of the Faculty Senate prepared a report on graduate student funding in 2002. In the report, they urged the University to adopt the philosophy that graduate student support is part of the cost of maintaining a first-rate research university. The report from the President's Commission on Diversity and Equity also noted that, "We cannot address diversity among our graduate students if we cannot compete for the best graduate students because our tuition and stipend offers are simply not competitive with peer institutions."

The 2020 Commission on Science and Technology, citing the essential role of graduate students in the research enterprise,

recommended an aggressive strategy to recruit and support the nation's best graduate students that included a \$100 million fund for graduate fellowships, tuition remission and health-insurance benefits.

The commitment by the Board of Visitors to recruit ten high profile faculty members in key research areas will provide much needed visibility and momentum for attracting top quality graduate students to UVa. To complement this initiative, competitive stipend and tuition offers must also be in place for these graduate students.

DISCUSSION: Compensation packages for graduate students typically include tuition and fees, a stipend (fellowships and/or wages earned in an academically-related position), and health insurance benefits. We report on stipends which, for the purposes of this report, are comprised of fellowships and/or wages earned in an academically-related position. In our view, stipends should allow students to devote full attention to their studies without the necessity of seeking outside employment.

Average stipend amounts for PhD students in each department and the contribution toward that amount in the form of a fellowship, graduate teaching assistant wages, graduate research assistant wages, graduate administrative assistant wages and other wages were tallied.

Stipend data were aggregated across departments for the Humanities, Social Sciences, Sciences & Mathematics and across schools for other groupings. For graduate students in Nursing, Education, Humanities, and Social Sciences the average stipends fell below the estimated cost of living in Charlottesville. Although average stipends in the sciences and engineering appear high in comparison to the humanities and social sciences, it is more informative to compare stipends within a particular discipline with those offered by peer institutions. For example, although the average stipend level in Biology is one of the highest among the sciences at UVa, stipend levels for Biology teaching assistants ranked 6<sup>th</sup> out of 11 among our SCHEV peers according to 2003-2004 data from the *Chronicle of Higher Education*.

At the departmental level, average stipends range from \$11,294 in History to \$22,397 in Biomedical Engineering. Analysis of stipends for individual students indicates a wide variation in funding: some receive less than \$1,000, while

others receive more than \$30,000 in a calendar year. Thus, average stipend calculated across departments does not tell the whole story. In our analysis we have included the mean, mode, and median, as well as the 25<sup>th</sup> and 75<sup>th</sup> percentiles of the distribution of stipends within a department.

The number of doctoral students who do not earn a stipend is 557 out of a total of 2,808 students (20 percent). In 24 of 38 programs more than 85 percent of the students receive a stipend. The reasons most cited for a student not receiving a stipend are: beyond the typical time-to-degree in the program, external employment, not in good academic standing, and insufficient departmental funds.

To compete in the marketplace for the best and brightest students seeking a graduate education, we must provide financial scholarships that allow students the freedom to focus on laboratory discovery, creative thinking, and interdisciplinary ideas that demand their full attention without distraction of financial concerns. A large endowment (\$200 million) devoted to graduate student support will transform research and scholarship and enhance all missions of the University. Similar efforts have already been initiated at peer institutions:

- *Stanford* raised \$200 million between 1997-2000 to endow 300 fellowships for graduate students in science and engineering. In April 2000 the endowment reached \$200,427,275, and provided \$13,000 for tuition costs and an annual stipend of \$18,500 to each Stanford Graduate Fellow.
- The *University of Wisconsin at Madison* has a campaign to raise \$200 million to endow 400 Distinguished Graduate Fellowships.
- *Berkeley* in March 2001 reportedly raised more than \$181 million to support professorships and graduate fellowships.
- *UCLA's* current campaign is to raise \$100 million to fund fellowships and scholarships in the UCLA College, and \$50 million for fellowships and scholarships in UCLA's professional schools.
- *University of Southern California's* president announced a \$100 million Graduate Fellowship Endowment.

- The *University of Minnesota* has an agreement from Glaxo Wellcome PLC to match any gift over \$25,000 for their 21<sup>st</sup> Century Graduate Endowment.

**ATTACHMENT - IT Policies**

## University Information Technology Project Management Policy

**Contact Office:** Office of Information Technologies

**Oversight Executive:** Vice President & CIO

**Applies to:** University Academic Division, Medical Center, and College at Wise

**Reason for Policy:** The University is committed to continuously improving the delivery of information technology (IT) solutions within budget, on schedule, within scope and in such a way as to best contribute to accomplishing the University's strategic mission. This policy furthers that goal by establishing the common and consistent application of project management best practices in the management of IT projects. A uniform project management framework promotes consistency and better control of IT projects, thereby reducing risks and increasing project successes.

### **Definitions:**

*IT Project* - a project having as its primary purpose the creation of a unique information technology product or service. Research projects, research initiatives, and instructional programs are not included in the scope of this policy.

*PMI* - Project Management Institute

*Project* - a temporary endeavor undertaken to create a unique product, service or result (PMBOK, 2000 edition).

*Project Management* - the application of knowledge, skills, tools and techniques to mitigate risk, control budget, and manage scope of tasks.

**Policy Statement:** Information technology projects are managed in accordance with best practices promoted by the nationally recognized Project Management Institute (PMI), appropriately tailored to the specific circumstances of the University. For example, project managers possess professional credentials and/or an appropriate level of project management training or experience. Projects that engage leading IT consulting or software development firms to assist with project management may apply additional best practices provided by these firms.

Methods used for project auditing, such as Independent Verification and Validation (IV&V), are aligned with industry best practices, consultant expert guidelines, and known industry accepted standards such as Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) Standard 1012-2004 for Software Verification and Validation, International Standards Organization (ISO) 9000-2000 series, and Software

Engineering Institute Capability Maturity Model (SEI-CMM). These methods are tailored to the Higher Education environment by internal departments and in coordination with consultants as warranted.

Exclusions: The scope of this policy does not extend to research projects, research initiatives, or instructional programs.

An overview of the University's IT Project Management Framework, along with procedures, templates, and tools are posted at: <links to be added>

- Academic Division's IT website
- The Medical Center's IT website
- The College at Wise's IT website

**Procedures:** N/A

**Related Information:**

[Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers \(IEEE\) Standard 1012-2004 for Software Verification and Validation](#) – Software Verification and Validation (V&V) processes determine whether the development products of a given activity conform to the requirements of that activity and whether the software satisfies its intended use and user needs. Software V&V processes includes analysis, evaluation, review, inspection, assessment, and testing of software products.

[International Organization for Standardization \(ISO\) – Quality Management Principals \(ISO 9000:2000\)](#) – ISO 9001:2000 specifies requirements for a quality management system for any organization that needs to demonstrate its ability to consistently provide products that meet customer and applicable regulatory requirements and aims to enhance customer satisfaction.

Project Management Institute – The world's leading not-for-profit professional association in the area of project management. <http://www.pmi.org/>

Project Management Institute. October 2004. A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK Guide) - Third Edition.

[Software Engineering Institute - Capability Maturity Model Integration \(SEI-CMMI\)](#) – The CMM outlines the methods to obtain software process maturity. Several levels of maturity can be reached as an organization's software project management evolves from that of chaotic non-repeatable performances to repeatable mature disciplined software processes. The model focuses on key attributes of each improved maturity level and provides guidance on the best practices used to achieve each level. The goal is to reach an efficient and disciplined approach to software management.

**Background:** The Commonwealth of Virginia Restructured Higher Education Financial and Administrative Operations Act of 2005 grants institutions additional authority over financial and administrative operations, on condition that certain commitments to the Commonwealth are met. The University of Virginia's Management Agreement with the Commonwealth provides full delegated responsibility for management of the institution's information technology project management and project auditing activities. This delegation includes the authority to conduct these activities in accordance with industry best practices appropriately tailored for the specific circumstances of the University, in lieu of following Commonwealth-determined specifications. This policy documents the industry best practices with which the University will align its project management and project auditing activities.

## University Information Technology Security Program Policy

**Contact Office:** Office of Information Technologies

**Oversight Executive:** Vice President & CIO

**Applies to:** University Academic Division, Medical Center, and College at Wise

**Reason for Policy:** The University has a highly complex and resource rich information technology environment upon which there is increasing reliance to provide mission-critical academic, instructional and administrative functions. Safeguarding the institution's computing assets in the face of growing security threats is a significant challenge requiring a strong, persistent, and coordinated program that leverages widely accepted, effective security practices appropriate for the higher education environment. This policy states the codes of practice with which the University aligns its information technology security program.

**Definitions:** N/A

**Policy Statement:** The University's information technology security program is based upon best practices recommended in the "Code of Practice for Information Security Management" published by the International Organization for Standardization and the International Electrotechnical Commission (ISO/IEC 17799), appropriately tailored to the specific circumstances of the University. The program also incorporates security requirements of applicable regulations, such as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act, and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act. Professional organizations, such as the national EDUCAUSE Association and the Virginia Alliance for Secure Computing and Networking, serve as resources for additional effective security practices.

The ISO/IEC 17799 Code of Practice and other sources noted above are used to guide development and ongoing enhancement of additional information technology security policies as needed. All policies governing information technology security can be found in the University's [policy directory](#) and at:

- The Academic Division's IT policy [website](#)  
See, for example:
  - [Ethics in Computer Usage Policy](#)
  - [Responsibilities for Computing Devices Connected to the Network Policy](#)
  - [IT Risk Management Policy](#)
  - [Electronic Data Removal Policy](#)
  - [Administrative Data Access Policy](#)
- The Medical Center's IT policy [website](#)

- The College at Wise's IT policy website <link to be added>

**Procedures:** N/A

**Related Information:** "Code of Practice for Information Security Management" (ISO/IEC 17799) – This international standard defines guidelines and general principles for the effective management of information security within an organization. It is a risk-based framework widely used to guide establishment of security standards and management practices.

[EDUCAUSE Association](#) – EDUCAUSE is a nonprofit association dedicated to the advancement of higher education through the effective use of information technology. Members include representatives from institutions of higher education, higher education technology companies, and other related organizations.

[International Organization for Standards \(ISO\)](#) – The world's largest developer of standards, the organization is made up of representatives from governmental and private sector standard bodies, e.g. the American National Standards Institute.

[International Electrotechnical Commission \(IEC\)](#) – The IEC is a global organization that develops and published standards addressing electrical, electronic and related technologies. Membership comes from government, the private sector, consumer groups, professional associations, and others.

[Virginia Alliance for Secure Computing and Networking \(VA SCAN\)](#) – VA SCAN was formed to help strengthen information technology security programs within Virginia. The Alliance was organized and is operated by security practitioners and researchers from several Virginia higher education institutions, including the University of Virginia.

**Background:** The Commonwealth of Virginia Restructured Higher Education Financial and Administrative Operations Act of 2005 grants institutions additional authority over financial and administrative operations, on condition that certain commitments to the Commonwealth are met. The University of Virginia's Management Agreement with the Commonwealth provides full delegated responsibility for management of the institution's information technology security activities. This delegation includes the authority to conduct these activities in accordance with industry best practices appropriately tailored for the specific circumstances of the University, in lieu of following Commonwealth-determined specifications. This policy documents the industry best practices with which the University will align its security activities.

## University Information Technology Infrastructure, Architecture, and Ongoing Operations Policy

**Contact Office:** Office of Information Technologies

**Oversight Executive:** Vice President & CIO

**Applies to:** University Academic Division, Medical Center, and College at Wise

**Reason for Policy:** It is critically important that the University of Virginia's information technology (IT) infrastructure, architecture, and ongoing operations support the mission of the institution. To help ensure this need is met, decisions affecting these areas must reflect standards, guidelines, and practices found to be effective in the higher education environment. This policy establishes the nationally recognized codes of practice with which the University aligns its IT infrastructure, architecture, and ongoing operations.

**Definitions:** N/A

**Policy Statement:** The University maintains a list of specific standards and guidelines that should influence decisions affecting key components of its IT infrastructure, architecture, and operations. These standards and guidelines align with industry best practices, appropriately tailored for the specific circumstances of the University, as described by EDUCAUSE, Internet2, and others within higher education, as well as those from healthcare and selected technology industries. It is not the intent of this guidance to in any way inhibit research or other institutional endeavors that by their nature may require the use of cutting-edge technology not yet appropriate for normal use. The guidance is descriptive rather than prescriptive to achieve flexibility where needed. The ultimate goal is to create logical relationships between information technology resources and the mission of the university and its units.

This policy applies to all university information technology, whether owned and operated by the university, or used for university business through contractual arrangements.

An overview of the framework for infrastructure, architecture, and ongoing operations, along with the standards and guidelines are posted at: <links to be added>

- Academic Division's IT website
- The Medical Center's IT website
- The College at Wise's IT website

When decisions are made regarding IT infrastructure, architecture, and ongoing operations, the decision maker should consult this information for guidance.

**Procedures:** N/A

**Related Information:** The following is a sampling of higher education sources for IT best practices and evolving trends:

The [Campus Cyberinfrastructure Working Group](#) of *Net@EDU* helps educational institutions develop institutional strategies and plan their resource deployment in this emerging and evolving technological landscape and helps their users harness and optimize the power and capabilities of new integrated IT tools and systems for educational and research applications in higher education.

[EDUCAUSE](#) is a nonprofit association whose mission is to advance higher education by promoting the intelligent use of information technology. <http://educause.edu>

[Health Level Seven](#) is an international standards-setting organization operating in the healthcare arena, specifically in the area of clinical and administrative data.

[Internet2](#) develops and deploys advanced network applications and technologies for research and higher education, accelerating the creation of tomorrow's Internet.

The [National LambdaRail](#) develops and deploys a fiber optic network infrastructure for the purpose of advancing research, clinical, and educational goals.

The [Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council](#) is a non-profit association of colleges and universities; professional and commercial organizations; data, software and service providers; and state and federal government agencies.

**Background:** The Commonwealth of Virginia Restructured Higher Education Financial and Administrative Operations Act of 2005 grants institutions additional authority over financial and administrative operations, on condition that certain commitments to the Commonwealth are met. The University of Virginia's Management Agreement with the Commonwealth provides full delegated responsibility for management of the institution's information technology infrastructure, architecture, and ongoing operations. This delegation includes the authority to conduct these activities in accordance with industry best practices appropriately tailored for the specific circumstances of the University, in lieu of following Commonwealth-determined specifications. This policy documents the industry best practices with which the University will align its infrastructure, architecture, and ongoing operations.

## University Information Technology Accessibility Policy

**Contact Office:** Office of Information Technologies

**Oversight Executive:** Vice President & CIO

**Applies to:** University Academic Division, Medical Center, and College at Wise

**Reason for Policy:** This policy is established to support the University of Virginia community in promoting equal access opportunity to information technology by the application of accessibility standards, guidelines, training, tools and methods consistent with higher education and their medical centers. The aim is to provide this opportunity in a setting that fosters independence and meets the guidelines of the Americans with Disability Act (ADA) and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This policy sets forth accessibility standards and guidelines that reflect best practices for achieving the accessibility of information technology for use by persons with disabilities.

### **Definitions:**

*Accessibility:* refers to the University objective that everyone within the University community, regardless of physical disability, will have the opportunity for appropriate access to information technology.

**Policy Statement:** The procurement, development, and/or maintenance of information technology and user support services for persons with disabilities align with accessibility standards specified in Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act and in "Web Content Accessibility Guidelines" from the World Wide Web Consortium, appropriately tailored to the specific circumstances of the University and its Medical Center.

Accessibility standards are designed to evolve and change, as newer technologies are introduced and user needs change. At the same time, the standards maintain a consistent framework for accessibility training and support services. University information technology development, maintenance, training, and support personnel who are responsible for information technology procurement, programs, and services possess an appropriate level of technical knowledge related to accessibility standards for persons with disabilities.

An overview of information technology accessibility issues and tools is provided at:  
<links to be added>

- Academic Division's IT website

- The Medical Center's IT website
- The College at Wise's IT website

**Procedures:** N/A

**Related Information:**

U.S. Government – Americans with Disability Act and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 [Section 504](#) standards

U.S. Government – the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 [Section 508](#) standards

The [World Wide Web Consortium](#) (W3C) is an international organization that develops inter-operable technologies (technologies that can communicate with each other), e.g., specifications, guidelines, software, and tools, to lead the Web to its full potential. W3C is a forum of information, commerce, communication, and collective understanding. Of particular relevance are the [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 1.0](#) Copyright © 1999 W3C (MIT, INRIA, Keio) and the [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0](#) Copyright © 2005 W3C ® (MIT, ERCIM, Keio), All Rights Reserved. W3C liability, trademark and document use rules apply.

**Background:** The Commonwealth of Virginia Restructured Higher Education Financial and Administrative Operations Act of 2005 grants institutions additional authority over financial and administrative operations, on condition that certain commitments to the Commonwealth are met. The University of Virginia's Management Agreement with the Commonwealth provides full delegated responsibility for management of the institution's information technology architecture, infrastructure, and ongoing operations, of which IT accessibility is a part. This delegation includes the authority to conduct these activities in accordance with industry best practices appropriately tailored for the specific circumstances of the University, in lieu of following Commonwealth-determined specifications. This policy documents the industry best practices with which the University will align its IT accessibility activities.