



BOARD OF VISITORS

Student Enhancement & Engagement and Digital Learning Committee

September 18, 2026

DRAFT MINUTES

The Student Enhancement & Engagement and Digital Learning Committee of the Board of Visitors of Old Dominion University met on Friday, September 18, 2026 from 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. in the Board Room of the Kate and John Broderick Dining Commons.

Present from the Committee:

Susan Allen, Chair
Claire Wulf Winiarek, Ph.D., Vice Chair
P. Murry Pitts (*ex officio*)
Robert S. Corn
Charlene A. Moring, Esq.
Cade Franklin (*Student Representative*)
Tatyana Lobova, Ph.D. (*faculty Representative*)

Absent from the Committee:

Andrew Hodge (*ex officio*)
Captain Janet H. Days, USN (Ret.)

Also present from the Board:

Robert A. Broermann
Mark T. Fleming, M.D.
Karla C. Johnson
The Honorable Martha Mugler

Also present were:

Alfred Abuhamad, M.D.
Karen Andrewlavage
Evelyn Ashley, Ph.D.
Alonzo Brandon
Kirk Dewyea
Kenneth Fridley, Ph.D.
Annie Gibson

Victoria Martin, Ed.D.
Megan Moore
Brian Payne, Ph.D.
Pearson, Ph.D.
John Pratt
Stacy Purcell, Esq.
Chad Reed

Melanie Graham, Ph.D.
Brian O. Hemphill, Ph.D.
Adam Henken
Brandi Hephner LaBanc, Ed.D.
Aaron Hodnett
Stephanie Jennelle
Carrie John
LaToya Jordan
Mary Jo Karlis
Susan Kenter, Ph.D.
Kate Ledger
Chrysoula Malogianni, Ph.D.

Nina Rodriguez Gonser
Tina Russell, DBA
Ashley Schumaker
Wood Selig, Ed.D.
Garrett Shelton
Francisco Siercke
Jennifer Simmons
Fred Tugas, Ed.D.
Bridget Weikel, Ph.D.
JaRenae Whitehead-Cooper
Allen Wilson, Esq.
Katie Winstead Reichner, Ph.D.

- I. Call to Order – Committee Chair Susan Allen called the meeting to order at 8:58 a.m.
- II. Approval of Minutes – Upon a motion made by P. Murry Pitts and seconded by The Honorable Martha Mugler, the minutes of the Student Enhancement & Engagement and Digital Learning Committee meeting held on Friday, June 12, 2026 as presented were approved by all members present and voting.
- III. Report from Brandi Hephner LaBanc, Ed.D., Vice President for Student and Campus Life

Vice President of Student and Campus Life Brandi Hephner LaBanc reported strong progress toward the university's first-time, full-time retention goal. Retention for the Fall 2025 cohort reached 79.5%, exceeding the strategic plan's 2025 goal of 77% and improving 9/10ths of a percentage point over the prior cohort. She attributed these gains to employing targeted outreach, proactive data usage through the implementation of Old Dominion University's first retention dashboard, and engaging campus partners in early interventions. Vice President Hephner LaBanc shared that the lessons learned from these successes are already informing strategies for the Fall 2026 cohort, including expanded cohort-based community building, financial literacy requirements, an early-risk watchlist, and a weekly retention operations calendar.

Vice President Hephner LaBanc then reported on the positive impact of early and sustained student engagement on retention. The Monarch Experience, Old Dominion University's weeks of welcome, offered students 127 events over 32 days involving 20 sponsoring university departments. According to Fall 2025 cohort data, attending just one event boosted retention five percentage points above non-participants. Furthermore, retention climbed steadily with episodic student involvement, reaching 87.2% for students attending 10 or more events and 94.2% for those attending 30 or more. She also outlined retention gains linked to involvement in student organizations. Students involved in student organizations were retained at a rate of 84.5%, rising to 94% for those who moved from participation to greater engagement through holding officer positions.

Bridget Weikel, Ph.D., Associate Vice President for Well-being and Belonging, reported on Old Dominion University's commitment to becoming a Health Promoting University, formally announced by President Hemphill in May 2026. Dr. Weikel described how the initiative embeds health and well-being into institutional policies, practices, and environments through a People,

Place, and Planet framework. She described its university-wide executive sponsorship and implementation.

Garrett Shelton, Chief of Police and Assistant Vice President for Public Safety, highlighted critical public safety enhancements, including the deployment of 157 emergency response stations across all university campuses and the appointment of an Assistant Director of Threat Assessment to strengthen proactive threat mitigation. He shared that the department has completed 15 well-attended Active Threat “Run, Hide, Fight” training sessions, with six more scheduled, and welcomed its first public safety counseling intern to provide dedicated in-house mental health and trauma support.

IV. Report from Nina Rodriguez Gonser, Executive Vice President for Enrollment, Transformation, and Technology

Executive Vice President for Enrollment, Transformation, and Technology Nina Rodriguez Gonser provided an update on Forward-Focused Digital Transformation, highlighting coordinated University-wide efforts supported by President Hemphill, Provost Payne, and Executive Vice President Schumaker.

Senior Associate Vice President of Digital Innovation Chrysoula Malogianni, Ph.D. highlighted the Secure Research Enclave, MonarchSphere, and the University’s partnership with Google Cloud. Executive Director of Research and Cloud Computing John Pratt reported more than 2.66 million compute hours, nearly 19,800 research computing jobs, 124 AI-driven research projects, and 61 active cloud researchers since January 2026. GeoSEA is a research force multiplier that helps researchers expand the scope of their work. GeoSEA represents a \$5.5 million funded research portfolio, with an additional \$3.8 million pending.

Dr. Chrysa Malogianni emphasized that transitioning to accelerated eight-week online courses involved more than shortening courses from 15 to eight weeks; it required redesigning the institutional infrastructure to support them. Assistant Vice President for Digital Learning and Strategic Operations Jennifer Simmons reported that 892 courses were transformed with 532 faculty participating; 495 faculty completed 1,087 trainings, and more than 15 Faculty Digital Innovation Grant projects were supported. More than 530 courses were taught in Forward-Focused classrooms, with more than 3,000 pieces of technology installed and 208 faculty trained.

Executive Vice President Rodriguez Gonser reported that the Fall 2026 first-time student class totals 3,034, an increase of 12 percent. Students with GPAs above 3.7 increased nearly 15 percent, while Perry Honors College participation increased 287 percent. The class is 51.1 percent Pell eligible, 44.2 percent first-generation, and 66.4 percent students of color. New first-time campus students increased 11.5 percent, new first-time online students 23.4 percent, new online transfers 41 percent, and new online graduate enrollment 46.7 percent. Student credit hours increased by more than 11,000.

Executive Vice President Rodriguez Gonser noted that the eight-week model provides six annual entry points. 766 students, including 361 new and 405 returning ODU students, are registered for the second eight week fall term only. Total enrollment surpassed 24,200, the highest level since 2020, with the final Fall census scheduled for mid-October.

V. Adjournment – There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:25 a.m.