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UVI Board Approves Major Governance Reforms, Research Policies and Budget Actions

Meeting on March 7, UVI's Board of Trustees approved new research integrity policies, a revised Internal Audit Charter, a key Foundation appointment, and several executive-session actions tied to budgeting, facilities and institutional growth.

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The University of the Virgin Islands Board of Trustees used its March 7 meeting to advance a broad set of institutional actions, beginning with measures aimed at strengthening governance, research oversight and long-term planning, while also reviewing strategic progress across enrollment, student success, partnerships and community engagement. According to a release issued Wednesday, the board's actions touched on internal audit standards, sponsored research policies, foundation leadership, executive-session approvals and the university's broader push

under its G.R.A.N.D. Momentum Strategic Plan.

Meeting in regular session at the Medical Simulation Center on the Albert A. Sheen Campus, trustees reviewed institutional progress aligned with the university's strategic plan and approved several governance actions tied to research integrity, institutional oversight and philanthropic engagement.

Among the most significant formal actions taken during the public session was the unanimous approval of three policies developed through the Office of Sponsored Programs. Those included the Administrative Policy for Allegations of Research Misconduct, the Human Research Protection Program Policy, and the Proposal Review and Submission Policy. According to the university, the policies establish institutional procedures for research integrity, the protection of human research participants, and the review and submission of sponsored research proposals.

Trustees also approved a revised Internal Audit Charter recommended by the Audit Committee. The university said the updated charter aligns UVI's internal audit governance structure with current global auditing standards and clarifies the independence, accountability and oversight responsibilities of the Office of Internal Audit.

Another key action was the approval of Cleve E. Warren as a public member of the Board of Directors for the Foundation for the University of the Virgin Islands. The appointment was recommended by the foundation's board and, according to UVI, is intended to strengthen fiduciary oversight and advance the foundation's mission of supporting the university's academic and institutional priorities.

Warren currently serves as chief investment officer and chief investment and advancement relations officer for the Florida State College at Jacksonville Foundation. He previously served as that institution's chief financial officer and interim vice president for administration and finance. A retired U.S. Army lieutenant colonel, Warren also brings experience in finance, economic development and higher education governance, including service as chair of the Florida A&M University Board of Trustees and chair of the Jacksonville Transportation Authority.

In addition to the public action items, the board received several committee reports highlighting institutional progress and strategic priorities. The Planning Committee provided updates on key performance indicators tied to the university's strategic plan.

During her report, UVI President Dr. Safiya George told trustees the university continues to make progress in academic excellence, student success, research competitiveness and institutional transformation.

Among the milestones she highlighted were continued growth in UVI Online enrollment, which the university said is expanding access to higher education for working adults and non-traditional students. She also pointed to improvements in student success initiatives, including strengthened retention strategies and increased early registration participation among students.

Dr. George also highlighted expanded experiential learning opportunities for students, including growth in the Presidential Internship Program across multiple university departments. She further noted strengthened regional and international partnerships, including recruitment outreach and academic engagement initiatives in the Caribbean and Africa.

Another point emphasized during the president's report was the work of the School of Education and its programs, which UVI said are serving approximately 800 community members through

professional development workshops, teacher preparation partnerships and educational outreach programs. According to the university, these efforts are helping strengthen the territory's education workforce pipeline and contribute to improved educational outcomes across the region.

“These outcomes reflect the dedication of our faculty, staff, students, alumni and partners who continue to advance the mission of the University,” said President George. “Together, we are strengthening UVI's role as a driver of workforce development, innovation and opportunity for the Virgin Islands and the broader Caribbean region.”

During her report, George also recognized members of the university's audit team with the President's Award for what UVI described as exceptional work supporting the university's audit processes and strengthening institutional accountability and financial oversight.

President George commended the team for its diligence, professionalism and commitment to maintaining high standards of integrity and transparency in the university's administrative operations.

The audit team members receiving the President's Award were Zeldon Hicks, Leoneal Furet, Radiant R. Daly, Sharleen A. Fahie, Austin Rogers, Imogene Hodge-Ottley, Arlene Auguste, Devery Phipps, Robert Chen, Earlyn Casimir, Louise Richards, Shauna Matthew, Valderie Abramsen and Brandon A. Chambers.

The board later entered executive session to discuss confidential matters and reported actions taken before adjournment.

While in executive session, trustees approved an amendment to the Honorary Degree Policy, approved three honorary degrees, approved a Letter of Intent with Nova Southeastern University, approved the establishment of an Assistant Vice President of Facilities position, approved UVI representation on the University of Saint Martin Foundation Supervisory Board, approved the Fiscal Year 2026–2027 Appropriation Budget Request, and approved a policy related to the Quasi-Endowment Fund.

The board also received updates on personnel matters and legal matters.