Rice is a wonderful and unique community where wide ranges of perspectives, intellectual ideas, and cultures mesh together to create a beautiful mosaic. One of the best things about being a Rice student is the collaborative atmosphere and the ability for every single student to shape their own experience and impact Rice for years to come.

In the Spring of 2017, President Leebron announced the "Vision for the Second Century, Part Two" (V2C2), an initiative aimed at guiding Rice for the immediate future and for years to come. During this time undergraduate students, graduate students, faculty, alumni, staff and administrators all came together to provide broad direction for this vision. Members of the Rice community helped identify Rice's current strengths and provide feedback related to developing Rice as we move through our second century.

With the Student Association's "100 Ideas for Rice's Future" campaign, launched and completed in October 2017, we wanted to do something a little different. We told students that “no idea is too big - the sky is the limit for shaping Rice's future” and we sought concrete ideas that would support V2C2. Students responded in a big way. We received over 450 ideas in less than a month and by proposing specific and ambitious projects based on our perspectives as students, our goal was to shape the directions of V2C2 and future university initiatives towards meaningful impact on what Rice is today and what it can become tomorrow.

Additionally, in our 99th term, we hope that this document serves as a guide for the Student Association as we seek to enrich the undergraduate experience by engaging, inspiring, and advocating for all undergraduate students into our 100th year. Ultimately, this 100 Ideas for Rice’s Future report will serve as a platform for student ideas and an official student vision to guide Rice through our second century.

Whether you are a student, Rice graduate, administrator, staff, or faculty member it is my hope that this report gives you a glimpse of just how creative Rice students are and inspires you to advocate for improving Rice for years to come.

With warm regards,

Justin Onwenu
Student Association President 2017-2018
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SA Task Force Introduction

The Student Association 100 Ideas for Rice’s Future Task Force was established to engage students across campus in an effort to gather innovative ideas that would inform the Vision for the Second Century Part 2, provide a concrete student vision, and guide Rice over the next decade and beyond. In total, the task force received 453 ideas in a 3-week span. Students were encouraged to provide specific ideas related to 8 pillars (identified below). Pillars 1-6 were taken from the “Provide Transformative Undergraduate Education” section of the V2C2 report, while pillars 7-8 were taken from other areas of the V2C2 report and chosen due to their large impact on the Rice undergraduate experience.

1. Strengthening faculty-student engagement
2. Expanding research, creative works, and design projects
3. Globalizing Rice by increase the availability and variety of significant international experiences
4. Sustaining the excellence of Rice’s curriculum, course experience, and classroom environment
5. Incorporating a wide range of experiential opportunities into Rice’s educational program
6. Growing the use and creation of innovative spaces (design kitchens, collaborative hubs, etc)
7. Expand access, diversity, and inclusiveness
8. Engaging with Houston as a model 21st century city

Each idea was read and evaluated blindly and selected based on concreteness, originality, and alignment with V2C2. The final 100 Ideas were then polished to create short action statements.

In total, 18 students, listed below, were involved in the development of this initiative:

Justin Onwenu (Sid Richardson Class of 2018)  Maurice Frediere (Duncan Class of 2019)
Constantine Tzouanas (Wiess Class of 2019)  Tim Thomas II (Wiess Class of 2021)
Amanda Yang (Hanszen class of 2021)  Ariana Engles (Lovett Class of 2020)
Albert Nabiullin (McMurtry Class of 2018)  Isaac Goforth (Will Rice Class of 2018)
Xingyi Li (Lovett Class of 2020)  Paul Jiang (Martel Class of 2021)
Colton Cox (McMurtry Class of 2018)  Conor Rork (Brown Class of 2021)
Rushi Bhalani (Baker Class of 2019)  Philip Hedayatnia (Brown Class of 2020)
Sara Meadow (Sid Richardson Class of 2019)  Revathi Ravella (Wiess Class of 2019)
Ameesh Shah (Jones Class of 2019)  Deepu Karri (Sid Richardson Class of 2020)
Student Engagement

The 100 Ideas for Rice’s Future Task Force collected ideas from undergraduate students for 3 weeks through a variety of methods including pop up events around campus, social media marketing, club meeting engagement, and in-depth focus groups at each college. The graphs below demonstrate the wide spectrum of input and participation from undergraduates.
Faculty and Student Engagement

Vision Statement

“We must strengthen faculty-student engagement to ensure a transformative undergraduate experience. There is both strong current consensus and cultural tradition at Rice that supports this goal. Rice’s small size and residential college system have given us unique strengths to make these relationships happen in ways that define our distinctive institutional character.”

-V2C2 Report

Engagement with professors attracts many students to Rice. In our age of increasingly prevalent online learning platforms, Rice is in a strong position to leverage our reputation for phenomenal student-faculty interactions and low student-to-faculty ratios.

Student Ideas to Get There

Support increased social interaction between faculty and students

1. Offer one free lunch per student per semester at Cohen House, available for use in any small-group gathering with a faculty member. This would encourage students to reach out to their professors, as well as incentivize professors to join and become valuable mentors.
2. Organize student-faculty social and sporting events to foster interaction outside of the classroom.
3. Hold regular forums for students to socialize with faculty, receive advice, and learn about research in specific departments.
4. Include at least one faculty member in each O-Week groups as a mentor. Professors who are interested should be able to directly and frequently interact with O-Week groups.
5. Dedicate centralized space on campus for students and professors to socialize.

Other Areas

6. Ensure reasonable class sizes for effective communication of course material by hiring more faculty and offering more sections for large introductory courses.
7. Create greater incentives/rewards/stability for faculty looking to focus exclusively on undergraduate teaching.
Research, Design, and Creative Work Opportunities

Vision Statement

“We must expand the opportunities for undergraduate students to participate in scholarly research, creative works or design projects. We must assure that any student who wishes to can have these experiences. This is a time-intensive activity, requiring appropriate support for both faculty and students who engage in scholarly work together. Students from lower income families in particular may need additional assistance to enable their participation.”

-V2C2 Report

Most students don’t have the opportunity to participate in structured research and large-scale design or creative work projects before matriculating into Rice. Thus, it is extremely important that every single student has the opportunity to participate in these life-changing experiences when they come to Rice. These experiences enhance the Rice experience by bringing to life the questions posed in the classroom and encouraging a culture of lifelong learning.

Student Ideas to Get There

Support interdiscipliary collaboration for both research projects and general design projects

8. Hold a public health and innovation summit similar to a computer science hackathon by leveraging expertise in the Rice 360 program.

9. Create an academic journal to engage students in social science research, foster interdisciplinary communication, and provide opportunities for students to gain experience in their respective fields of study through writing, editing, and publishing works of social analysis.

Build and support students’ creative skills

10. Create workshops, one day trainings, and events on topics like Acrobat, CAD, 3D printing, sculpture, photography, etc. to improve student research and design skills.

11. Build a new prosenium theater with a costume shop, a scene shop, dressing rooms, and a fly space.

Increase the availability and accessibility of research opportunities

12. Create a centralized database with a host of research opportunities open on campus and in the Houston area to better connect students with researchers.

13. Reserve spots within REU programs for Rice students and look at creating an Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program (UROP) to build research skills.
14. Create a grant program whereby students submit a proposal for their work in order to receive funding to stay on campus and conduct research over the summer.

Globalizing Rice

Vision Statement

“Rice should increase the variety of significant international opportunities available to our students. The internationalization of the student experience is partly achieved by incorporating more global components in our curriculum and partly by the internationalization of our student body, elements on which we have made great progress and must continue to do. Even with these advances, internationally based educational and experiential opportunities remain vital, especially those that leverage strengths in particular areas.”

-V2C2 Report

The world is more connected today than at any other point in history. Human advances have changed the way that students, businesses, and families interact with each other. No matter what field a student enters, Rice graduates must be well positioned to take on this global economy. Rice can build on our existing global network to ensure that every single student has the opportunity to gain global exposure in an area that interests them. This will better prepare students for life beyond the hedges and enable them to become global leaders in the field of their choosing.

Student Ideas to Get There

Develop meaningful partnerships between Rice and other universities abroad while establishing Rice’s permanence abroad

15. Create an explicit partnership between Rice and international universities to support students’ international experiences. This would lead to an easier application process for students to study abroad at those universities, increased support for research partnerships, etc.

16. Mirror programs like the Singapore-MIT Alliance for Research and Technology, where professors have labs in both institutions.

17. Establish an international satellite campus to increase global impact and ease of access to international opportunities.
Improve the accessibility of study abroad opportunities for all students

18. Create a fund for students who would like to pursue short-term research projects over winter break.
19. Mandate that every department includes recommended times for studying abroad in academic plans so that students can stay on track academically and take advantage of international opportunities.
20. Expand summer opportunities like the Loewenstern Fellowship and Rice in Country.
21. Streamline and expand the transfer credit process for study abroad courses.
22. Encourage the Office of Academic Advising and Study Abroad Office to work together to ensure that engineers (and other majors with strenuous requirements) have the guidance necessary to pursue an international experience in their four-year academic plan.

Experiential Opportunities

Vision Statement
“We must more fully incorporate a wide range of experiential opportunities into our educational program, including: civic engagement; leadership development; entrepreneurial opportunities such as OwlSpark and the Liu Idea Lab (LILIE); and leadership roles in the colleges and the wide variety of student organizations on campus. Where appropriate, these should be integrated with classroom and research activities”

-V2C2 Report

The Student Association’s Rice Education of the Future Initiative established that a large portion of the most valuable experiences for students at Rice happens outside of the classroom. Rice must capitalize on this fact. Today, universities play an important role in connecting students to opportunities that would otherwise be difficult to obtain. To this end, Rice must leverage our reputation in the Houston community and around the country to offer students more hands-on, experiential opportunities.

Student Ideas to Get There

Connect students with opportunities and career paths after graduation

23. Add more experiential classes for students looking to go into investment banking. These classes should range from an in-depth focus on introducing students to complex modeling using Microsoft Excel and teaching students the basics of using Bloomberg Terminals.
24. Create more courses that have built-in real-world applications and experiments directly applicable to industry. Work to include trips through Houston to show why course-based concepts matter.

**Support students’ ability to learn outside of their major and expand general knowledge**

25. Establish a high-profile speaker series based on the Athenaeum at Claremont McKenna College or The Oxford Union Society.
26. Incorporate experiential components such as field trips and guest lectures into FWIS courses.

**Centralize resources for experiential opportunities**

27. Facilitate physician shadowing opportunities (beyond NSCI 399) by collecting a list of doctors willing to be shadowed by students.

**Expand and encourage experiential learning opportunities during semesters and breaks**

28. Work to make co-ops and internships more accessible by addressing barriers like strict course structures and encourage students to participate in these opportunities during the spring and fall semesters.
29. Create a two-week spring break or January term to enable students to use this time to engage in structured research projects, service opportunities, international travel, etc.
30. Encourage internship opportunities through grants to help pay for unpaid internships.
31. Provide educational sessions to teach students how to organize during a crisis

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**Improving Curriculum and the Classroom Experience**

**Vision Statement**

“We must continue to sustain the excellence of the curriculum, and in particular the excellence of the course and classroom experience. A broad-based education that fosters the development of critical thinking lies at the foundation of our undergraduate educational mission. Providing the very best in classroom teaching is therefore vital.”

-V2C2 Report

Although experiences outside of the classroom are increasing in popularity and importance, students come to Rice to be taught by renowned professors, to be exposed to a phenomenal
classroom experience, and to gain a widely respected degree in the field of their choosing. Expanding degree programs and ensuring students have the best classroom experience possible is crucial for maintaining Rice’s standard of excellence.

**Student Ideas to Get There**

**Expand degree programs**

32. Require a senior thesis or project that encourages students to make discoveries in their areas of academic interest.
33. Create interdisciplinary programs that combine fields in a more focused manner than double majors (e.g. machine learning, computational economics, etc.).
34. Review graduation requirements to enable more major mobility and customizability. More specifically, the School of Engineering curriculum should incorporate more flexibility for students to participate in otherwise inaccessible learning experiences.
35. Strengthen the School of Humanities by creating a journalism/communications major.
36. Better prepare students for careers in business by creating a business major.
37. Offer more language courses based on specific applications. For example, rather than just having Spanish I, II, and III, offer Spanish courses such as Spanish for business or Spanish culture.
38. Add a software engineering track for the computer science major.
39. Organize statistics, electrical engineering, and computer science departments to construct a more cohesive machine learning curriculum.
40. Incorporate courses in creative design, leadership, and business in the School of Engineering to ensure that engineers learn to lead within their chosen industries.
41. Create a B.S. degree in CAAM while further integrating the statistics and computer science departments.
42. Leverage Rice’s proximity to the Gulf of Mexico to create a marine science program.
43. Build a medical/nursing school while also maintaining Rice’s culture and student population.

**Improve the classroom experience**

44. Keep students more engaged in courses by training faculty in methods of kinesthetic (i.e., “hands-on”) learning.
45. Expand access to audio recordings for class readings to help students work more efficiently.
46. Increase the size of the computer science department to meet demand.
47. Improve the accessibility of professors by continuing to lower the student-to-faculty ratio.
48. Standardize expectations and experiences for large introductory courses.
Create stronger feedback loops between student course evaluations and teaching practices

49. Standardize teaching assistant grading practices.
50. Regularly study and evaluate teaching practices and their impact on students.
51. Broaden evaluations to help professors improve during the semester rather than only after the semester has ended.
52. Improve Degree Works and Schedule Planner to better allow four-year planning and help students determine if their plan satisfies all graduation requirements.

Innovative Spaces

Vision Statement

“We must provide the innovative and collaborative spaces we need as higher education evolves, and the breadth of our academic enterprise expands. Our campus has been a vital resource in bringing students and faculty together to collaborate and create. We have continually invested in the renovation of our colleges and in our teaching and research facilities because Rice students have a special connection with our campus, and it is important to maintain its beauty and vitality as well as functionality.”

--V2C2 Report

One of the first aspects of Rice that draws students to campus are our innovative spaces (beautiful colleges, groundbreaking facilities such as the OEDK, and other unique and interesting spaces). As Rice continues to grow in size and prestige, it is important that the Rice community has access to spaces that foster collaboration and innovation. Continuing to renovate existing buildings and invest in the creation of additional innovation spaces would receive wide support from undergraduate students and other members of the Rice community.

Student Ideas to Get There

Expand spaces to study

53. Renovate Fondren Library by updating technology and adding more collaborative spaces.
54. Create satellite study spaces outside of Fondren Library near the North and South residential colleges.
Expand spaces to come together
55. Build a larger student center to supplement the residential college system.
56. Expand food options within the Rice Memorial Center.
57. Build a dedicated student hub for clubs to have a place to perform and collaborate.

Expand spaces to create
58. Create more spaces for humanities and social sciences students where readings, workshops, creative writing classes, and interpersonal interactions can occur.
59. Schedule design workshops throughout the year within the Oshman Engineering Design Kitchen (OEDK) and other spaces.
60. Use the McMurtry Innovation Space as a model for other residential colleges.
61. Increase equipment and access for students in spaces such as the OEDK and McMurtry Innovation Space.
62. Expand access to innovative spaces to the entire student body so that these spaces can be used without needing to be in a club or an OEDK course.
63. Create a dedicated student collaborative center full of whiteboards, tables, and different study settings.

Create unconventional spaces
64. Implement a “Living Learning Community” where a group of students can apply to live together in order to explore a common interest. These students, particularly in their off-campus year, could complete a year-long project with the guidance of a faculty advisor.
65. Replace the Beer Bike track with a velodrome and supporting spectator stands to honor the historic tradition and improve safety for bike riders.
66. Build an innovation space centered around computers. This space could be used for work as well as gaming.
67. Create a nap room (i.e., a quiet, dark room with hammocks and nap pods) to improve productivity and help off-campus students.
68. Create a more accessible space that includes a larger and more professional stage for people to perform dance.

Bolster the culture of student input in the sustainable design of new buildings
69. Prioritize environmental sustainability in the design of all new buildings.
70. Foster collaboration between students, administrators, and architects by using the Multicultural Center Steering Committee as a model.
Diversity and Inclusion

Vision Statement

“We must implement policies and programs that (i) attract students from all socioeconomic backgrounds and assure their success, and (ii) build diversity in our faculty and staff and throughout our community. The diversity of our community supports our success in all facets of our mission. Our commitment to the goal of building a diverse community in all parts of the university reflects our fundamental ideals.”

--V2C2 Report

Students must be able to lead by understanding different perspectives and life experiences outside of their own. Increasing the diversity (e.g., socioeconomic, racial, ethnic, religious) of our campus will improve our productivity and success as a community while preparing students for life beyond the hedges. Rice must also recognize and work to address potential barriers that some student populations face in an effort to make our community more inclusive.

Student Ideas to Get There

Promote diversity
71. Create designated prayer rooms around campus (especially for minority faiths).
72. Hire a staff member with specializations in counseling LGBT students while also advising the Queer Resource Center, the Queers and Allies Club, and other LGBT groups on campus.
73. Establish a fund to better support cultural clubs.
74. Expand and increase the visibility of the Seeking Opportunities at Rice (SOAR) program in order to increase the representation of unrepresented, minority, and low-income students.
75. Create a scholarship fund for international students from underrepresented areas.
76. Recruit a more diverse population of international students with a focus on diversity in race, socio-economic, and geographic background.
77. Hire more women in STEM, specifically more women of color.
78. Promote more discussions on and awareness about disabilities, whether mental or physical, and strive to create a more inclusive campus for students inside and outside the classroom.
Increase financial accessibility

79. Reduce out-of-pocket expenses for students by subsidizing or fully funding class-required travel expenses, WebAssign, textbook costs, and costs of supplies (specifically for architecture, visual and dramatic arts, and engineering students).

80. Increase visibility and access for low-income students by creating a central website that directs these students to relevant resources.

81. Expand summer research opportunities and internship grants (e.g., Baker Institute’s Jesse Jones Summer in DC program, CCD Owl Edge Experience Fund).

82. Reduce out-of-pocket expenses by making Tetra points available for non-food items at the Rice Bookstore, Rice Bikes, and other Rice businesses.

83. Create activities (e.g., lectures, excursions) during breaks for students who are not financially able to travel back home.

84. Financially support students in need who must travel for interviews and graduate school visits.

85. Promote continued achievement and excellence by expanding merit-based financial aid through merit-based scholarships available for returning students.

86. Permit students to purchase a partial on-campus meal plans to decrease the cost of attendance.

Increase student support

87. Establish a mentorship program for low-income, first-generation, or underrepresented students whereby students are matched with a professor in their academic school who could provide guidance as they progress through the unfamiliar terrain of academia.

88. Introduce a program in which current students would pair up with new international students to ease their transition into Rice and Houston.

89. Expand on-campus housing and create an off-campus resource center for students.

Engaging Houston

Vision Statement

“Engage Houston as a Model 21st Century City. Leveraging our expertise, engage Houston as a focus and partner for research and education, collaborating with the city to help realize its aspirations as a model urban metropolis for the 21st century. Rice’s home city — with its diverse population, industry, urban and suburban footprints, and world-class facilities
represents a potential model for cities of the future. To that end, Rice should coordinate educational programs around urban issues and engage with Houston as an urban laboratory.”

-V2C2 Report

Rice should leverage our central location in the heart of the 4th largest city in the U.S. Houston has a wide range of restaurants, museums, industries, and is one of the most diverse and interesting cities in the world and is a hotbed of opportunity. Enabling students to engage with Houston by building institutional ties to the city will foster collaboration with important community stakeholders and better prepare students for life beyond the hedges.

Student Ideas to Get There

Connect students with companies and community partners

90. Capitalize on growing interest in the space sector by creating a Rice-NASA Scholars program, establishing an aerospace engineering program, and building ties with organizations such as NASA, SpaceX, and Blue Origin.

91. Use the Sears building to create a “Rice Design Center” that would contribute to our relationship with Houston while providing a unique and comfortable space for students to go off campus and engage members of the Houston community.

92. Better integrate Rice into Houston’s art community, particularly with regard to professional theatre.

93. Create a central “Rice Volunteers” organization where all members of the Rice community (e.g., undergraduate students, graduate students, faculty, staff and administrators) could be linked with volunteer opportunities in an effort to further develop ties in the Houston community.

94. Reimagine the Passport to Houston program by offering more transportation options (e.g., a free/subsidized rideshare program, Rice-Houston bus shuttles) and event subsidies.

Additional Key Areas Identified by Students

Vision Statement

Although these 100 Ideas for Rice’s Future initiative focused on pillars identified by the V2C2, students expressed a large amount of support for ideas and categories that did not align with the pillars above. The inclusion of the following categories and ideas is imperative for accurately representing the needs and sentiments of the undergraduate student population.
Promote environmental sustainability
95. Invest in environmental sustainability technology by updating and modernizing Rice’s energy infrastructure with solar panels.
96. Increase access to recycling and address food waste through composting.

Invest in athletics at Rice
97. Establish a standard of excellence in all that Rice does by improving our athletics program. Specifically, Rice should increase investment in athletics programs (e.g., coaching salaries, facilities) to help recruit talented staff and players while also increasing investment in staff dedicated to developing well-rounded scholar-athletes.
98. Improve the academic experience of student-athletes by addressing scheduling conflicts between courses and practices through a special/priority registration process.

Support health and wellness
99. Offer free or greatly subsidized STD testing at the Student Health Services Center.
100. Foster a culture that recognizes and addresses issues with mental wellbeing by funding an outsourced survey to evaluate the mental health of students as they enter and progress through Rice.