UVA WISE
UNIVERSITY of VIRGINIA'S COLLEGE at WISE

# COPLAC Summer Summit 2026

*"The Contemporary Liberal Arts: Technology, Innovation, and Engagement"*

June 21–23, 2026

**University of Virginia's College at Wise (UVA Wise)**

## Sunday, June 21, 2026 — Registration & Opening

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| **2:00 PM** | **Registration Opens**<br>*David J. Prior Convocation Center* |
| **3:00 PM – 4:15 PM** | **Board of Directors Working Meeting**<br>*C.M. "Bill" Gatton Hospitality Suite- DJP Convocation Center* |
| **4:45 PM – 5:45 PM** | **Board of Directors Business Meeting**<br>*C.M. "Bill" Gatton Hospitality Suite– DJP Convocation Center* |
| **5:45 PM – 7:30 PM** | **Summit Opening Reception & Dinner**<br>*DJP Convocation Center – Welcome Remarks by Chancellor Donna Henry* |

## Monday, June 22, 2026 — Workgroups & Plenary Sessions

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| **8:00 AM** | **Registration & Breakfast**<br>*Slemp Student Center Atrium & 5th Floor Rhododendron Room* |
| **9:00 AM** | **Opening Remarks**<br>*Dogwood Room (5th Floor) Provost Johnson* |
| **9:15 AM – 10:30 AM** | **Keynote Address**<br>*Dogwood Room — Josephine Rodriguez* |
| **10:30 AM** | **Morning Break & Transition to Workgroups**<br>*Slemp Student Center* |

## Monday, June 22, 2026 — Workgroups & Plenary Sessions (Continued)

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| **10:45 AM – 12:15 PM** | **Workgroup Sessions — Round 1**<br>Parallel tracks run simultaneously across Pippin-Wyllie Hall breakout rooms. |
| **12:15 PM – 1:30 PM** | **Networking Lunch**<br>*Rhododendron Room* |
| **1:30 PM – 3:30 PM** | **Workgroup Sessions — Round 2**<br>Parallel tracks resume to formulate strategy blueprints and action items. |
| **3:45 PM – 4:30 PM** | **Plenary Report-Out**<br>*Dogwood Room*<br>Each group presents a 10-minute synthesis to all summit attendees. |
| **4:30 PM – 5:15 PM** | **Campus Action Planning**<br>*Dogwood & Rhododendron Rooms*<br>Campus teams meet independently to align summit insights with institutional goals. |
| **5:30 PM – 6:00 PM** | **Networking Reception**<br>*Dogwood Room* |
| **6:00 PM – 7:30 PM** | **Dinner & Informal Collaboration**<br>*Dogwood Room* |

## Tuesday, June 23, 2026 — Closing & Regional Excursions

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| **7:30 AM** | **Continental Breakfast**<br>*Dogwood Room* |
| **8:15 AM** | **Closing Remarks & Key Takeaways**<br>*Dogwood Room — Provost Johnson* |
| **8:30 AM – 1:00 PM** | **Optional Regional Excursions - Weather Permitting**<br>*Transportation departs from Smiddy Loop (Returns by 1:00 PM)* |
| | Selected choices include: High Knob, Devil's Bathtub, or Cave Exploration<br>*(may change due to weather conditions)* |

## MONDAY WORKGROUP TRACKS

### Workgroup 1: Technology — Becoming an AI Learning Institution

**Location:** Pippin Wyllie 113 | **Facilitators:** Mario Martinez, Isaac Martinez
**Panelists:** Jeff McClurkin, Karen Carter, Jeff Baylor, Gurkan Akalin

***Guiding Question:*** *Given the growth of technology-enhanced learning and generative AI-supported curricula, what opportunities do COPLAC institutions have to establish ethical and effective best practices for teaching and institutional change?*

**10:45 AM – 11:15 AM: Welcome & Panel Discussion**
A high-level multi-perspective overview of AI and Higher Education to engage the audience.

**11:15 AM – 12:15 PM: AI Foundations, Ecosystems, & Roadmap**
Reviewing emerging impacts and establishing Step 1 of architecting a personalized strategic roadmap.

**1:30 PM – 2:15 PM: The AI Playbook Overview**
Introduction to institutional framework components using real-world higher education application models.

**2:15 PM – 3:30 PM: Building Your AI Playbook & Wrap-up**
An application-based design sprint to identify concrete, actionable goals for participants' institutions.

**TARGET DELIVERABLES:**

- A strategic and responsible framework for strategic AI campus integration.
- Initial outline blueprints and customized building blocks of your institutional AI Playbook.

## Workgroup 2: Innovation — Public-Private Partnerships

**Location:** Pippin Wyllie 112 | **Facilitators:** Gary Johnson, Randy Rose

***Guiding Question:*** *What opportunities exist for COPLAC institutions to develop public-private partnerships that meet community needs and address regional challenges?*

**10:45 AM – 11:00 AM: Welcome and Framing**

Public liberal arts colleges occupy a distinctive community-rooted position that makes them natural anchors for regional partnership(s).

**11:00 AM – 11:20 AM: Brainstorming and Sharing**

Participants share an existing (or a potential) public-private partnership from their campus—what it is, why it came into existence (or is believed to have potential), and whether it worked (or might).

**11:20 AM – 11:50 AM: UVA Wise's Division of Strategic Engagement and Government Relations**

Provide a brief overview of the Division and one or two specific partnership examples.

**11:50 AM – 12:10 PM: Small Group Challenge Mapping**

Groups of 3-4 identify the most pressing regional challenges their institutions face.

**12:10 PM – 12:15 PM: Readout and Theme Synthesis**

Share challenges and most promising partnerships.

**1:30 PM – 2:00 PM: Reconnect and Narrow Focus**

Facilitators recap morning themes and ask the group to select 1 partnership opportunity for deeper discussion.

**2:00 PM – 3:00 PM: Partnership Workshop**

Campus teams sketch and map out a specific partnership idea, including the community need that would be addressed.

**3:00 PM – 3:15 PM: Lessons Learned at UVA Wise**

Example of "lessons learned".

**3:15 PM – 3:30 PM: Prepare Report-Out**

Identify key insights from the sessions and the single most exciting COPLAC-level idea.

**TARGET DELIVERABLES:**

- An adaptable partnership-design canvas template for small liberal arts colleges.
- A crowdsourced inventory of existing COPLAC regional partnerships.
- Campus-specific prototype models and a joint proposal for Board consideration.

## Workgroup 3: Engagement — Student Retention Strategies

**Location:** Pippin Wyllie 223- Campbell S. Edmonds Lecture Hall| **Facilitators:** Trisha Folds-Bennett, Teresa Swan Tuite, Heather Evans, Tonya Nations

***Guiding Question:*** *How can we design engaging, integrative, and creative educational/experiential experiences that capture students' curiosity and sustain their attention, ultimately leading to improved retention and graduation rates?*

**10:45 AM – 11:10 AM: Welcome and Framing**
Focusing on first-generation and transfer demographics through high-impact experiential learning frameworks.

**11:10 AM – 11:35 AM: Research-Informed Approaches to Experiential Learning**
Designing fresh, highly compelling engagement practices.

**11:35 AM – 12:10 PM: Innovation in Engagement**
How might the smaller, often resource-restrained, COPLAC campuses design engagement practices?

**12:10 PM – 12:15 PM: What's Next?**

**1:30 PM – 1:55 PM: Program Audit: What's working, what's missing?**
Inventory high-impact practices.

**1:55 PM – 2:35 PM: Whole Group Discussion: design principles for COPLAC engagement**
What makes engagement programs work at public liberal arts institutions?

**2:35 PM – 3:10 PM: Campus Design Sprint**
Drafting or refining an actionable program improvement slated for launch in the upcoming academic year.

**3:10 PM – 3:25 PM: Prepare Report-out**
Designing fresh, highly compelling engagement practices.

**3:25 PM – 3:30 PM: Wrap-up and Commitment**
Participants state one concrete follow-up step.

**TARGET DELIVERABLES:**

- Campus-specific engagement blueprints complete with explicit success metrics.
- A unified set of COPLAC high-impact engagement design principles.
- A shared multi-institutional collaboration proposal for cross-campus programs.