



STRATEGIC PLAN 2035
GROUNDED &
GROUNDBREAKING





Dear Auburn Family,

Auburn University stands at a pivotal moment. We are a remarkable university with tremendous potential for greatness. We are poised to achieve even greater heights. As we embark on the next chapter in our institution’s history, it is crucial that we are guided by a strategic road map that embodies our aspirations for the future and leverages our collective strengths. Over the past decade, Auburn has experienced extraordinary success in connecting student, faculty and staff talent, research, fundraising and community service. For example, we improved the educational opportunities and health care available to underserved communities. Other examples include our efforts to advance cybersecurity and AI initiatives, while promoting our work with key industries to create meaningful partnerships.

Auburn remains steadfast in its commitment to fostering a dedicated and engaged community of students, faculty, staff, alumni, and partners. However, we are at a crucial point in our advancement. We need to be fully committed to deliberately and vigorously pursuing our goals. We endeavor to exemplify excellence and elevate the Auburn Experience through exceptional student-centered education, transformational research, impactful creative works and scholarship, and far-reaching extension and outreach activities that enhance the quality of life and foster economic growth. Achieving these goals requires every member of the Auburn Family to dream bigger, be bolder, and pursue excellence. Our quest to be an engine of prosperity is backed by extraordinary institutional dedication and unlimited potential to catalyze positive change.

In fall 2023, Auburn University embarked on a strategic planning effort to recognize our core strengths, address our challenges, and seize unique opportunities for distinction. This work led to a dynamic plan that offers a bold vision for Auburn’s future. It is a profoundly ambitious vision that celebrates the distinctiveness of our institution and leverages our role as a leader in higher education. Our 10-year plan outlines a vision that charts the course for our future. You have supported this university with your time, treasures, and talents, and I ask for your continued engagement as we embark on our next chapter. Your commitment will help lead our beloved university to achieving our aspirational goals.

War Eagle!

Christopher B. Roberts
President

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A dark blue, semi-transparent background image of the Auburn University clock tower, featuring a weather vane on top and a clock face visible in the lower section.

AUBURN'S STRATEGIC PLAN IS GUIDED BY THE GOAL OF AMPLIFYING OUR INFLUENCE DURING A TRANSFORMATIVE PERIOD WITHIN OUR SOCIETY

Founded in 1856 and designated as a land-grant institution in 1872, Auburn University has been a cornerstone of higher education, serving Alabama, the nation, and the world. The university offers exceptional academic programs that empower our graduates to tackle society's most pressing challenges while advancing and preserving knowledge and fostering responsible citizens and community members. For nearly two centuries, our commitment to excellence in education, research, and service has driven our efforts to enable our graduates to become leaders and continues to inspire our work.

Building upon our rich history and extraordinary progress in recent years, Auburn University's Strategic Plan 2035: Grounded & Groundbreaking outlines a thoughtful path for the next decade, addressing the most critical challenges that lie ahead. Informed by our stakeholders, we have crafted five signature goals with associated subgoals, action items, and key performance indicators that will guide our focus, efforts, and investments.

Motivated by our dedicated students, faculty, staff, and alumni, Auburn's new plan is guided by the ultimate goal of advancing our mission during a transformative period within our society. Our plan centers on delivering exceptional education, conducting impactful research, scholarship, and creative works for the public good, and contributing to the welfare of our state, region and beyond. As a respected academic institution, we proudly embark on our next chapter, embracing *The Auburn Creed* and drawing strength from the distinctive spirit of the Auburn Family.

“Auburn is a remarkable university with tremendous potential for greatness, and we are at a crucial point in our advancement. I believe that if we fully commit ourselves deliberately and vigorously to pursuing high-level goals, we can achieve our aspirations.”

-President Christopher B. Roberts
2023 Installation Address

During his 2023 Installation, President Roberts unveiled his vision for the university’s forthcoming strategic plan, emphasizing that its success hinges on robust engagement from all university constituents. Articulating his dream for Auburn, he stated our plan would be anchored on three fundamental pillars that form the foundation of our institution’s future:

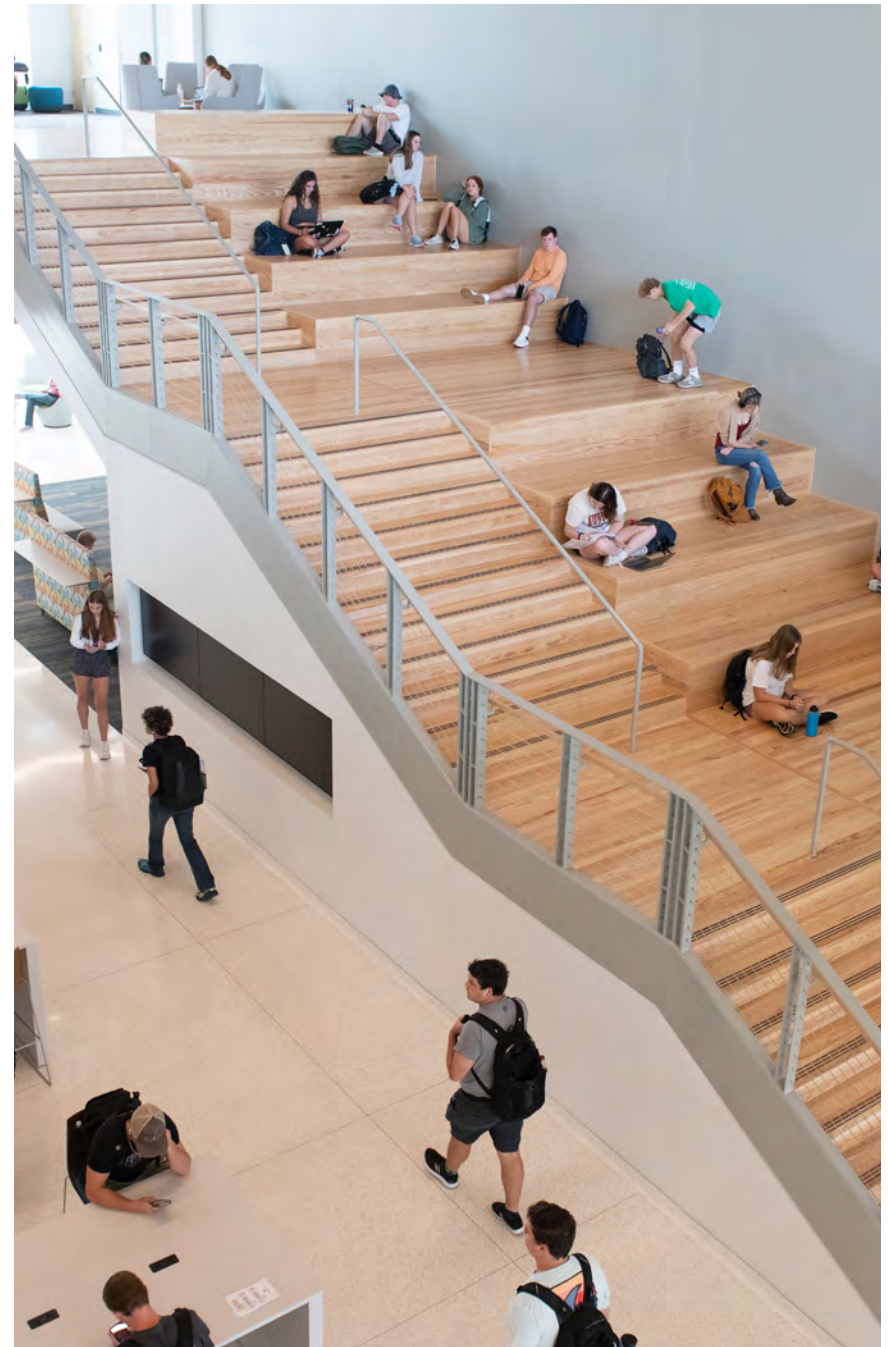
- > We will be known for creating the best student-centered experiences in the nation.
- > We will increase our research and creative scholarship and grow our extramural funding portfolio.
- > We will promote a culture of excellence and innovation by fostering a campus environment where everyone feels welcomed, valued, respected, and engaged.

VISION

Auburn University has established a bold and distinctive vision and an associated set of priorities to achieve elevated levels of excellence that will position us as one of the top public institutions of higher education.

As a land, sea, and space-grant institution, we will be a dedicated and engaged community of faculty, staff, students, alumni, and partners who exemplify excellence and epitomize the Auburn Experience through exceptional student-centered education, transformational research and creative scholarship, and extension activities that improve the quality of life and foster economic growth.*

* Approved by AU Board of Trustees as part of the Auburn University Strategic Plan in fall 2024.
Updated in spring 2025.



An aerial photograph of the Auburn University campus during the "golden hour" of sunset. The central focus is the iconic Old Chapel, a large red brick building with a prominent clock tower and multiple gables. The campus is lush with green trees, some of which show early autumn yellowing. A large, well-maintained green lawn in the foreground has a few students sitting on it. In the background, other campus buildings and a distant city skyline are visible under a warm, orange-hued sky.

GOALS

ONE: EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EXPERIENCE

TWO: IMPACTFUL RESEARCH AND CREATIVE SCHOLARSHIP

THREE: COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE AND INNOVATION

FOUR: CATALYTIC ENGAGEMENT

FIVE: DISTINCTIVELY AUBURN

GOAL ONE: EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EXPERIENCE

WE WILL:

- A.** Deliver rigorous, robust, and relevant academic programs as the foundation of the Auburn Experience, which will position all graduates for lifelong professional success while preparing them to lead purposeful lives and make significant contributions to society.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Increase the quality and profile of all academic programs as reflected by high rankings, strong reputation, and competitive demand for Auburn graduates among prospective employers.
- Provide students with the opportunities to take courses that advance their academic, professional, and personal goals within their chosen fields of study and through a distinctive and adaptive Core Curriculum.
- Cultivate holistic student experiences that foster a multi-disciplinary mindset and build a foundation for life-long learning and societal contributions.

- B.** Attract, hire, mentor, reward, and retain world-class educators who contribute to the Auburn Experience by inspiring students through an appropriate combination of substantive and practical knowledge, employing the most effective pedagogies, and utilizing technologies that enhance learning.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Strategically recruit faculty to deliver, elevate, and sustain Auburn's mission of student-centered education.
- Make Auburn a destination of choice for accomplished faculty through strategic resource allocation that supports competitive compensation packages and relevant support for hiring initiatives.
- Improve faculty retention and career advancement through robust endowments, competitive compensation, rewards and recognition, professional development, and opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration.
- Empower faculty to deliver effective curricula by providing resources that promote exceptional instruction through pedagogical advancements and meaningful advising.
- Embrace a portfolio approach to faculty composition, whereby individual faculty talents and strengths are capitalized upon and rewarded, empowering faculty to maximize their contributions to Auburn's mission.

GOAL ONE: EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EXPERIENCE

C. Provide an extensive array of high-quality student success services and programs that are signature contributors to the Auburn Experience.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Commit to proactive and consistent academic advising and professional mentoring for all students to support optimal levels of academic progression, retention, and achievement.
- Deliver high-quality, comprehensive career development programming to all students that complements their education and leads to successful first destinations and lifelong career outcomes.
- Engage in effective approaches to student health and well-being by strengthening social connections, physical wellness, mental health support, and other resources.

D. Emphasize that every student creates their own distinct Auburn Experience through participation in high-impact practices such as internships, cooperative education, research, student and professional organizations, programs of study beyond and study abroad, leadership, social impact projects, and service learning.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Ensure all students complete at least one high-impact practice by supporting, investing in, and growing opportunities.
- Capitalize on existing and develop new partnerships with public and private entities to create opportunities for students to engage in experiences that support their academic outcomes and career success.
- Grow opportunities for students to develop a global mindset through national and international experiences, such as study abroad, exchange programs, exposure to international scholars/students, and other similar experiences.

GOAL ONE: EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EXPERIENCE

E. Offer a vibrant campus culture characterized by abundant and engaging student life programs, on- and off-campus experiences, intercollegiate athletics, and co- and extra-curricular activities to complement the Auburn Experience.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Foster an exceptional, well-rounded student experience characterized by strong academic programs and high levels of participation in campus leadership, activities, and athletic and social events.
- Focus on creating and sustaining a campus environment where every student feels welcomed, valued, respected, and engaged.
- Provide students with high-quality academic and co-curricular facilities that encourage connections to campus and help define an overarching Auburn Experience.
- Solidify a lifelong commitment to Auburn while students are enrolled and as they transition to becoming alumni.



GOAL ONE: EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EXPERIENCE

F. Make the Auburn Experience accessible to exceptional graduate and undergraduate students from the state, the nation, and the world by strategically recruiting, enrolling, retaining, and graduating students who demonstrate high levels of academic achievement and other indicators of ability.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Revise and enhance our undergraduate and graduate enrollment management framework to develop a comprehensive and transparent enrollment plan that aligns with Auburn's mission, especially in disciplines that address state, regional, and national priorities.
- Enhance access for Alabama's students to pursue an undergraduate Auburn education by focusing on affordability, retention, success, and social mobility while doubling strategic recruitment efforts for talented and deserving individuals.
- Develop innovative recruitment, enrollment, and engagement strategies for new graduate students that position Auburn as a destination of choice for post-graduate education.
- Provide an exemplary academic and research experience by offering graduate students competitive financial packages and enhanced professional development and mentorship.
- Increase investments in merit and need-based financial support, including additional scholarships, that provide competitive financial aid packages that support access to the university's academic, professional, and social experiences.
- Work with various entities to help coordinate a variety of student housing options for Auburn University students.
- Strengthen existing and create new pathway programs to bring exceptional graduate and undergraduate students from the state, country, and the world to Auburn.
- Enhance enrollment marketing efforts to be highly responsive and multi-channel, creating a personalized, proactive, and tailored recruiting experience.

GOAL ONE: Exceptional Student Experience Key Performance Indicators		I	E	N	NM
Institutional Reputation and Rankings					
US News and World Report Ranking - Best Colleges			•	•	
The Times Higher Education Ranking (International)			•	•	•
QS (Quacquarelli Symonds) Ranking (International)			•	•	•
Number of Academic Programs Ranked or Considered Top Tier			•	•	•
Named Faculty Awards (Professorships)	•				•
First Destination Success - Undergraduate*	•				
First Destination Success - Graduate*	•				•
Six-Year Graduation Rate			•	•	
First-Year Retention Rate (First-Time Freshmen)			•	•	
Number of National Prestigious Scholars Awarded	•		•	•	•
Undergraduate Degree Recipients Completing a High-Impact Practice (%)					
Community-Engaged Course	•				
Internship	•				
Auburn Abroad	•				
Co-Op	•				
Undergraduate Research	•				
Leadership	•				•
Number of Students Involved in One or More Student Organizations	•				•
Number of Active Student Organizations	•				•
Students Receiving Scholarships or Grant Aid (%)					
Merit-Based			•	•	
Need-Based	•				
Student Enrollment in Pathway Programs					
Auburn First	•				•
Path to the Plains	•				•
Average Federal Indebtedness of Graduates			•	•	
Completion of Core Curriculum Review (Ongoing)					
Completion of Faculty Handbook Review (Ongoing)					

* Measures job placement, graduate and professional school admission, etc., six months post-graduation.

I = Internal Metric E = External Metric N = National Metric NM = New Metric

GOAL TWO: IMPACTFUL RESEARCH AND CREATIVE SCHOLARSHIP

WE WILL:

- A.** Double our overall research, scholarship, and creative works and increase their impact while building leadership in focused areas of distinction.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Elevate Auburn University's national and international leadership in strategic areas of emphasis while adapting and responding to changing external needs and internal capabilities.
- Increase extramural funding by aggressively pursuing grants and contracts to grow scholarly output, graduate-level education, and undergraduate research opportunities.
- Double levels of scholarly output and creative works through significant growth across disciplines within the university.

- B.** Leverage Auburn's unique strengths through team science and collaboration with local, regional, and national agencies and the private sector to address the most pressing challenges impacting quality of life, economic prosperity, and security.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Collaborate with funding agencies and national laboratories to establish new initiatives, centers, and institutes, significantly boosting extramural funding.
- Emphasize the growth of Auburn's instructional and research sites in Huntsville, Birmingham, Orange Beach, and other related markets to capture applied research opportunities in defense, aerospace, biotech, environment, and healthcare sectors.
- Increase interdisciplinary and multisector research activities by engaging scholars and partners around key areas of distinction.

GOAL TWO: IMPACTFUL RESEARCH AND CREATIVE SCHOLARSHIP

C. Attract, mentor, reward, and retain exceptional faculty scholars and research professionals of national and international renown who are considered subject matter experts by the public, organizations, industry, government, and academia.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Grow the number of research-engaged faculty and full-time research professionals with primary emphases on selected areas of distinction.
- Recruit faculty scholars of national and international renown.
- Increase mentoring resources, emphasizing prestigious young investigator programs and large-scale multi-institution funding opportunities.
- Upgrade existing and build new core research facilities that support research, design, production, measurement, and high-performance computing to allow faculty to compete at the highest levels.
- Implement new electronic research administration systems and streamline administrative processes.
- Elevate the visibility of exceptional faculty through dedicated programs that promote faculty for national and international recognition and leadership.



GOAL TWO: IMPACTFUL RESEARCH AND CREATIVE SCHOLARSHIP

D. Amplify the translation of research by commercializing novel products and services for economic growth across the state, region, and nation.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Significantly increase the value and number of industry-sponsored contracts to fully engage Auburn researchers in translating research into practice.
- Sustain and develop new public-private partnerships in areas such as advanced manufacturing, space, aviation, defense, healthcare, environment, and workforce development.
- Redouble efforts to recruit private and public sector partners to Auburn's Research Park who are actively engaged with our education and research programs.
- Expand innovation programs and commercialization processes to translate faculty and student research and creative works into economic growth and innovation opportunities.

E. Communicate our research, scholarship, and creative work achievements to internal and external stakeholders, enhancing Auburn's stature as a preeminent institution.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Create targeted communication strategies highlighting Auburn research at high-profile public events and in high-impact, diversified news outlets.
- Provide broad-based training and assistance for researchers to enhance the dissemination of their work to the public via various platforms such as presentations, interviews, articles, and publications.

GOAL TWO: Impactful Research and Creative Scholarship Key Performance Indicators					I	E	N	NM
National Science Foundation (NSF) HERD* Survey Ranking						•	•	
Total R&D Annual Expenditures as Measured on NSF HERD						•	•	
Total Extramural Funding (Annual)					•			
Federally Funded Research						•	•	
State Funded Research					•	•		
Industry Funded Research					•	•		
Scholarship								
Articles					•			
Citations					•			
Books					•			
Chapters					•			
Conference Proceedings					•			
Creative Works					•			•
Intellectual Property					•			•
COACHE** Faculty Survey (Biannual)								
Support for Research					•	•		
Support for Obtaining Grants					•	•		
Support for Maintaining Grants					•	•		
Auburn-Affiliated Research Centers and Institutes					•			
Average Amount of Research Laboratory Space Per Faculty Member (SF)					•			•
Total R&D Expenditures Per SF (reported biannually to NSF)					•	•	•	•
Research Space Quality – Superior/Satisfactory Condition (Reported Biannually to NSF)					•	•	•	•
Capital Projects Involving Research Laboratories (Completed)					•	•	•	•

* HERD: Higher Education Research and Development

I = Internal Metric E = External Metric N = National Metric NM = New Metric

** COACHE: Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education, comprised of five-point Likert Scale items

GOAL THREE: COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE AND INNOVATION

WE WILL:

A. Cultivate a culture of excellence and enablement that embodies Auburn University's core values and bold aspirations.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Enhance the human resources framework to optimize university resources in hiring practices.
- Promote an environment where employees are motivated towards excellence while advancing the university's shared success.
- Amplify our culture of collaboration to minimize silos and to foster a stronger culture of cross-functional effectiveness.
- Leverage Auburn's unique institutional strengths to ascend as a top employer in higher education.

B. Foster an environment where all faculty, staff, and students are welcomed, valued, respected, and engaged.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Cultivate a vibrant and resilient university-wide culture that is supportive, respectful, and celebrates employee excellence by encouraging and rewarding innovation.
- Strategically shape the success of the university's current and future workforce by investing in employee professional development and well-being.

GOAL THREE: COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE AND INNOVATION

- C.** Enhance programs to effectively attract, mentor, reward, and retain high-performing employees and create opportunities for continuing education, leadership development, and career advancement.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Create new pathways to recruit and retain exceptional employees, including building internal pipelines to prepare the next generation of Auburn's workforce.
- Invest in employee development programs that enhance the leadership skills of supervisors and professional staff.
- Strengthen incentive structures to recognize excellence and reward exceptional achievements among high-performing employees, such as endowments for faculty and staff.

- D.** Continuously improve institutional processes and systems that support the university enterprise and operate at the highest levels of effectiveness and efficiency.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Improve our business plans and processes to increase efficiency and effectiveness in all aspects of the university's operations.
- Develop and implement a continuous cycle of examining, updating, streamlining, and eliminating unnecessary business practices to ensure efficient and effective operations.
- Cultivate a dynamic culture that embraces knowledge-sharing of solutions and adapts nimbly to evolving circumstances.

GOAL THREE: COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE AND INNOVATION

E. Build, maintain, and upgrade the physical and technological infrastructure at all levels to support Auburn's tripartite mission of instruction, research, and extension.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Enhance the quality and lifespan of university facilities through a renovation and replacement program that prioritizes systematic inspection and preventive maintenance.
- Provide faculty, researchers, and extension professionals with state-of-the-art facilities and resources to deliver exceptional programs with significant impact.
- Strengthen the university's IT infrastructure to incorporate advanced tools that connect, integrate, and leverage data across multiple systems to support decision-making and innovation.



GOAL THREE: Commitment to Excellence and Innovation Key Performance Indicators					I	E	N	NM
COACHE* Faculty Survey: Would Work at Auburn Again (Biannual)					•	•		
COACHE Faculty Survey: Overall Job Satisfaction** (Biannual)								
Teaching					•	•		
Research					•	•		
Service					•	•		
Named Awards for A&P and Staff					•			•
Employees Participating in Aspire Auburn Leadership Development					•			•
Employee Engagement Survey – Campus Climate								
Faculty					•			•
Administrative and Professional					•			•
Staff					•			•
Employee Engagement Survey – Satisfaction								
Business Processes					•			•
Employee Benefits					•			•
Human Resources					•			•
Information Technology					•			•
Customer Satisfaction Rating for Facility Services and Operations					•			•

* COACHE: Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education

** COACHE Survey consists of five-point Likert Scale items

I = Internal Metric E = External Metric N = National Metric NM = New Metric

| BELIEVE in EDUCATION

GOAL FOUR: CATALYTIC ENGAGEMENT

WE WILL:

- A.** Be a premier resource for providing impactful solutions to social, health, technological, economic, and environmental challenges through our deep bench of subject matter expertise and our far-reaching network of extension assets.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Become a national model for university engagement that amplifies Auburn's reputation as a leading institution delivering active and impactful research, instruction, extension, and outreach programs.
- Leverage the growth of Auburn's instructional and research sites in Huntsville, Birmingham, Orange Beach, and other related markets to bring Auburn's expertise and resources to these communities, positively impacting their economic development.

- B.** Build synergistic partnerships where Auburn's strengths contribute to and are complemented by strategically selected industries, organizations, research centers and institutes, universities, and governmental and non-governmental entities.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Channel existing and emerging initiatives into a coordinated partnership framework, facilitating productive interaction with the university that capitalizes on our extension and outreach capabilities.
- Enhance industry and corporate relations, engagement, and connections through a campus-wide coordinated university partners program to ensure Auburn is an institution of choice for premier state, regional, and national companies.
- Identify and foster new partnerships and collaborations to maximize mutual benefit and facilitate solutions that address the current and future needs of Alabama's communities.
- Ensure Auburn's preparedness and responsiveness to emerging and current stakeholder needs through ongoing assessment, continuous improvement, and dissemination of findings and outcomes.

GOAL FOUR: CATALYTIC ENGAGEMENT

- C.** Drive innovation and economic advancement in the region by applying new knowledge and technologies, supporting new enterprises, promoting workforce advancement, and catalyzing overall economic growth.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Strengthen Auburn's economic contributions to the State of Alabama by broadening community engagement to advance economic growth, provide innovative educational opportunities, and transform health and wellness resources.

- D.** Employ next-generation extension and outreach approaches to increase the delivery of forward-looking programs that inform and educate the public and engage with the citizens of Alabama and beyond to advance education and lifelong learning.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Create distinctive programs that shape the future workforce related to essential competencies and critical resources.
- Recognize and reward faculty, staff, and partners in extension and outreach and expand opportunities to network at the local, state, national, and international levels.
- Design and implement a continuous evaluation process to measure the outcomes and return on investment in Auburn's extension and outreach programs.
- Utilize Auburn's presence in every county of the state through its Alabama Cooperative Extension System (ACES) sites to serve those communities.

GOAL FOUR: CATALYTIC ENGAGEMENT

E. Broaden and deepen Auburn's engagement with and impact on the local community.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Elevate Auburn University's partnerships with the City of Auburn and the Auburn Chamber of Commerce by identifying and replicating successful models and developing new programs that bring industries to the city and the Research Park.
- Create more opportunities for residents of the city and region, particularly Auburn alumni who have returned after successful careers elsewhere, to engage in the university's activities, events, and people.



GOAL FOUR: Catalytic Engagement Key Performance Indicators					I	E	N	NM
Auburn University Economic Impact (Biannual)								
Overall Contribution to Alabama's Economy						•	•	
Economic Impact						•		
Auburn Graduates in the Workforce					•	•		
Jobs Created					•	•		
Carnegie-Designated Community Engaged Institution						•	•	
Collaborative Agreements with Federal Agencies					•			•
Collaborative Agreements with State Agencies					•			•
Collaborative Agreements with Companies					•			•
Extramural Funding for Outreach and Extension Activities					•			•
ACES* Annual Contracts and Grants					•	•		

* ACES: Alabama Cooperative Extension System

I = Internal Metric E = External Metric N = National Metric NM = New Metric



GOAL FIVE: DISTINCTIVELY AUBURN

WE WILL:

- A.** Honor, preserve, and celebrate the values and rich traditions that distinguish Auburn University and are foundational to an enduring Auburn Experience.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Highlight and promote Auburn's values and traditions through engagement with the campus community and external stakeholders such as parents, alumni, and partners.
- Articulate, communicate, and celebrate the values and traditions that distinguish Auburn University.
- Promote involvement and affinity among Auburn alumni and stakeholders, recognizing the value of their varied contributions.

- B.** Build national and international visibility through comprehensive branding, marketing, and communications that articulate the university's identity, reputation, and influence.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Create and implement a comprehensive branding plan coordinated at the university, college, and unit levels.
- Inform national and international audiences of Auburn's accomplishments and reputation as an academic institution with formidable athletic programs.

I BELIEVE_{in} AUBURN^{and} LOVE it

GOAL FIVE: DISTINCTIVELY AUBURN

C. Strengthen and grow the Auburn Family by sharing institutional pride and affinity in our academic, campus life, and athletic pursuits while cultivating lifelong networks and connections.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Strengthen the worldwide Auburn Family by connecting our alumni to campus and providing them with opportunities to engage with the university.
- Grow the Auburn Family by identifying those who may not have a direct connection to the university but who feel an affinity to our values and traditions
- Continue to promote the individual and collective successes of academics and athletics.

D. Invest in our priorities by completing a transformational philanthropic campaign that energizes our stakeholders.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Develop, implement, and sustain a comprehensive campaign aligned with Auburn's expectations and ambitions.
- Engage, educate, lead, and support campus constituents to develop and articulate specific campaign initiatives and goals to grow philanthropic investment in their programs.
- Inspire donors to maximize their philanthropic impact while identifying new markets for philanthropic investment in the university.
- Attract transformational giving from non-alumni and philanthropic foundations for Auburn's signature programs and initiatives, including interdisciplinary projects that leverage our expertise and commitment to solving real-world problems.
- Enhance and grow alumni commitments to Auburn throughout their lifetime.

GOAL FIVE: Distinctively Auburn Key Performance Indicators	I	E	N	NM
Student Satisfaction Survey: Would go to Auburn Again	•	•		
Conference/National Championships Competed or Won *	•	•	•	•
Multi-Year Athletic Academic Progress Rate (APR) of 980 or above**	•	•	•	•
Student-Athlete Graduation Success Rate (GSR) of 85% or above	•	•	•	•
Brand Health Index	•	•		•
National Earned Media	•	•		•
Audience Engagement Across University Platforms	•	•		•
Total Donors	•	•		
Auburn Philanthropic Capacity (Households)	•	•		
Planned/Estate Giving (% of Total Annual Giving)	•			
Major Gifts to the University (Donors)	•	•		
Total Annual Gifts and Commitments	•	•		
Annual Funds Raised (Gifts under \$25,000)	•	•		
Alumni Participation in Comprehensive Campaign	•	•		

* At least 75% of athletics programs making the post season.

** APR is a real-time measure of eligibility, retention, and graduation of student-athletes competing on every NCAA Division I athletics team; 18 sports are accounted for in APR.

I = Internal Metric E = External Metric N = National Metric NM = New Metric





WAR EAGLE!



AUBURN UNIVERSITY STRATEGIC PLAN 2035:
GROUND & GROUNDBREAKING

We will leverage our remarkable individual and collective strengths and our values embodied in *The Auburn Creed* to stand and be recognized as a **truly impactful and transformative university.**

STATEMENT FROM THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES



On behalf of the Auburn University Board of Trustees, I am pleased to support Auburn University's Strategic Plan 2035: Grounded & Groundbreaking. This living document is a thoughtful, deliberative framework that builds on our countless achievements, addresses emerging global challenges, and enhances the profound impact of our institution's mission.

This plan comes at a pivotal moment in our institution's history. Shaped by input from the Auburn Family, this collaborative effort has yielded ambitious goals that reflect our core values and aspirations. As we embark on this journey, we will remain agile and maintain an open dialogue with our stakeholders to ensure our progress is monitored, evaluated, and transparent.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to every member of the Auburn Family who contributed their time and ideas to this process. Auburn's continued success would not be possible without your unwavering support.

War Eagle!

Quentin P. Riggins
President *Pro Tempore*

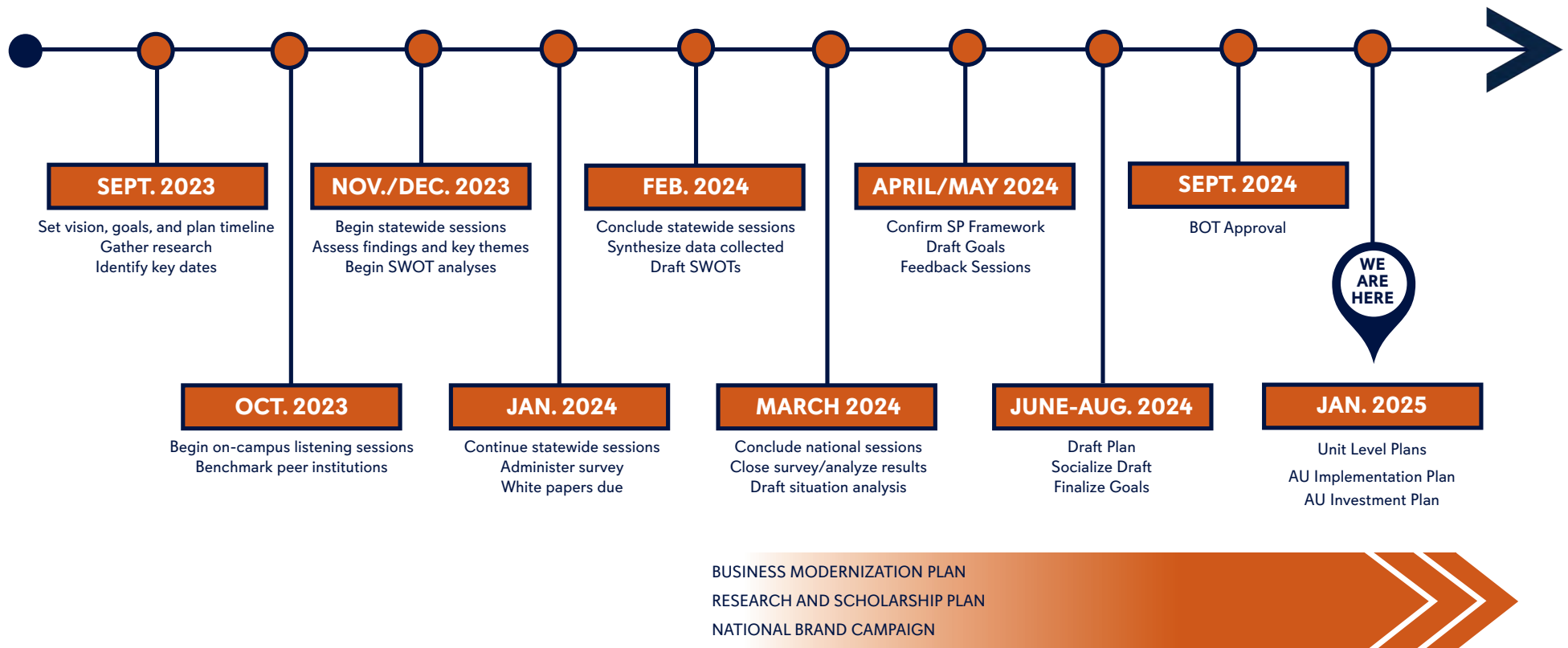


APPENDICES

TIMELINE

Auburn University's Strategic Plan 2035: Grounded & Groundbreaking, was developed during the 2023–2024 academic year by a Steering Committee composed of Auburn students, faculty, staff, administrators, trustees, and alumni. This plan results from thought-provoking listening sessions, bold conversations, careful research and data collection, and the assessment of current initiatives. Serving as a critical guide for Auburn's future, the plan identifies opportunities to strengthen our institutional capacity and foster a culture of enablement and innovation.

Following its approval by the Auburn University Board of Trustees, the university will begin an implementation process to advance our key goals and action items while simultaneously launching business modernization and institutional branding plans. These complementary efforts lay the foundation for the university's upcoming capital campaign and will enable the university to undertake the necessary and critical work to achieve our strategic goals and key aspirations.



STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS



During the 2023-24 academic year, the Strategic Planning Steering Committee intentionally assessed our institution based on thematic priorities, identifying key elements and foundational aspects. As we look toward 2035, these insights both build upon our achievements and guide our efforts as we address new challenges

and pursue new opportunities. While Auburn's strategic plan requires adaptability, responsiveness to real-time information, and the ability to navigate developments effectively, we are confident it will also enable our institution to evolve and flourish.

Auburn University's strategic planning efforts began in Fall 2023 with the following objectives:

- Commit to a comprehensive and inclusive process
- Engage internal and external stakeholders
- Assess areas of strategic opportunity
- Identify institutional priorities that align with strategic growth areas
- Develop data-informed goals and objectives
- Provide necessary time to achieve progress and goal attainment

President Roberts selected Provost Vini Nathan, Dr. Kerry Inger, and Dr. Hari Narayanan to co-lead the strategic planning process, which commenced with establishing the Strategic Planning Steering Committee. This group, comprising 26 members from the campus community, represented a broad range of Auburn constituents, including members of the Auburn University Board of Trustees, senior administration, and college leadership, as well as faculty, staff, alumni, and shared governance leaders.

LISTENING SESSIONS

Initially, 20 listening sessions were conducted on campus, addressing both specific and general topics. These were supplemented by additional sessions targeting specific groups to gather more detailed information and follow up on particular themes. In total, 36 on-campus sessions were held, engaging more than 500 participants.

To reach those stakeholders beyond campus, listening sessions were organized within each Alabama congressional district. Each session included representation from the Board of Trustees and attracted a diverse range of participants, including alumni, industry leaders, Cooperative Extension System employees, parents, and other members of the Auburn Family. A total of 18 statewide sessions were held, involving nearly 300 participants. Recognizing Auburn's influence beyond Alabama, additional nationwide sessions were held in four selected cities: Nashville, TN; Houston, TX; Atlanta, GA; and Washington, DC. In total, eight nationwide sessions were conducted, with over 100 participants.

Listening session participants were provided with materials, including the status of goals from the prior strategic plan and other pertinent information, to review before the session to encourage deep reflection on Auburn's current status and future direction. Each listening session was structured with participants asked to respond to the following questions:

1. What, in your opinion, are Auburn's core strengths and competencies?
2. Where, in your opinion, does Auburn have the capacity to improve?
3. What is your vision for Auburn a decade from now?
4. What, in your opinion, are the barriers that may prevent us from achieving our goals?

Participants provided meaningful, thoughtful, and critical opinions and ideas that have been incorporated into the current strategic plan.

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

WHITE PAPERS

Stakeholders were invited to submit a white paper describing a strategic initiative they believe warrants consideration as part of the strategic planning process. Nearly 40 white papers were submitted and evaluated, many of which are reflected in the plan's goals and action items.

STRATEGIC PLANNING SURVEY

To gain additional insight and ideas from stakeholders and further engagement in the strategic planning process, a survey was developed and Auburn stakeholders were invited to provide input. More than 1,800 respondents completed the survey, reflecting a broad sample of the Auburn Family. The results were analyzed and incorporated into committee deliberations, confirming key themes from the listening sessions and identifying additional areas of emphasis.

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND THREATS

The Strategic Planning Steering Committee identified nine key areas of emphasis and established work groups for each:

- Student Experience and Academic Success
- Research, Scholarship, and Creative Works
- Faculty Excellence
- Administrative and Professional Employees and Staff
- Extension and Outreach
- Facilities
- Big Ideas (based on white papers)
- Strategic Enrollment
- Institutional Excellence

Each work group conducted a comprehensive SWOT analysis, incorporating themes from listening sessions, survey results, and a wealth of data, information, and insights gathered from various sources. This data-driven approach provided a structured framework to identify opportunities, set priorities, and

recognize factors that may challenge the institution over the next decade. The committee consistently kept the university community informed through updates from the co-chairs and updates on the strategic planning website. Additionally, university leadership actively participated in strategy sessions, and the Board of Trustees received regular updates during workshops.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs)

Through a range of Key Performance Indicators, or KPIs, we will track our progress and calibrate our efforts to meet our strategic goals. The KPIs were carefully selected to provide important quantitative and qualitative metrics to document, assess, and report our progress on the outcomes, expectations, and advancements described in the Strategic Plan. Certain metrics are reported annually, and others are reported at recurring intervals. In addition to annual progress updates, the university will complete a comprehensive assessment of our progress and KPIs every three years during the 10-year plan.

Auburn's KPIs are organized into four broad categories that are not mutually exclusive:

Internal Metrics:

Internal data that provide comparative benchmarks through trend analyses.

External Metrics:

University data shared with various external stakeholders, yielding peer comparisons where available.

National Metrics:

Data that yield national and international comparisons, such as rankings, research awards, financial expenditures, and other performance indicators. Includes university data submitted to the National Center for Education Statistics.

New Metrics:

Newly identified or existing measures aimed at tracking and assessing progress towards specific goals.

GOAL ONE: Exceptional Student Experience KPIs					I	E	N	NM	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Institutional Reputation and Rankings														
US News and World Report - Best Colleges Ranking			•	•					99	97	93			
The Times Higher Education Ranking (International)			•	•	•				601-800	601-800	501-600			
QS (Quacquarelli Symonds) Ranking (International)			•	•	•				--	1061	835			
Number of Academic Programs Ranked or Considered Top Tier			•	•	•				--	--	--			
Named Faculty Awards (Professorships)	•				•				--	--	267			
First Destination Success - Undergraduate*	•								84.5%	84.7%	TBD			
First Destination Success - Graduate*	•				•				--	91.1%	TBD			
Six-Year Graduation Rate			•	•					81%	79%	TBD			
First-Year Retention Rate (First-Time Freshmen)			•	•					92%	93%	TBD			
Number of National Prestigious Scholars Awarded	•		•	•	•				13	7	11			
Undergraduate Degree Recipients Completing a High-Impact Practice														
Community-Engaged Course	•								86%	88%	90%			
Internship	•								48%	52%	67%			
Auburn Abroad	•								7%	8%	14%			
Co-op	•								6%	4%	3%			
Undergraduate Research	•								18%	19%	17%			
Leadership	•				•				--	--	--			
Number of Students Involved in One or More Student Organizations	•				•				19,043	20,164	21,249			
Number of Active Student Organizations	•				•				629	639	587			
Students Receiving Scholarships or Grant Aid														
Merit-Based			•	•					20%	20%	TBD			
Need-Based	•								16%	16%	TBD			
Student Enrollment in Pathway Programs														
Auburn First	•				•				737	1,067	1,239			
Path to the Plains	•				•				37	62	147			
Average Federal Indebtedness of Graduates			•	•					\$20,468	\$19,965	\$19,838			
Completion of Core Curriculum Review (Ongoing)														
Completion of Faculty Handbook Review (Ongoing)														

* Measures job placement, graduate and professional school admission, etc., six months post-graduation.

I = Internal Metric E = External Metric N = National Metric NM = New Metric

GOAL TWO: Impactful Research and Creative Scholarship KPIs					2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
	I	E	N	NM						
National Science Foundation (NSF) HERD* Survey Ranking		•	•		96	TBD	TBD			
Total R&D Annual Expenditures as Measured on NSF HERD		•	•		\$304.4M	\$349.3M	TBD			
Total Extramural Funding (Annual)	•				\$240.5M	\$300.1M	TBD			
Federally Funded Research		•	•		\$158.2M	\$194.9M	TBD			
State Funded Research	•	•			\$3.2M	\$2.6M	TBD			
Industry Funded Research	•	•			\$13.3M	\$11.6M	TBD			
Scholarship										
Articles	•				8,030	8,282	TBD			
Citations	•				127,469	148,997	TBD			
Books	•				370	365	TBD			
Chapters	•				484	435	TBD			
Conference Proceedings	•				1,422	1,539	TBD			
Creative Works	•			•	--	--	--			
Intellectual Property	•			•	189	172	TBD			
COACHE** Faculty Survey (Biannual)										
Support for Research	•	•			--	3.27	--			
Support for Obtaining Grants	•	•			--	3.12	--			
Support for Maintaining Grants	•	•			--	3.05	--			
Auburn-Affiliated Research Centers and Institutes	•				40	43	58			
Average Amount of Research Laboratory Space Per Faculty Member (SF)	•			•	279.4	275.4	277.1			
Total R&D Expenditures Per SF (reported biannually to NSF)	•	•	•	•	\$732	--	--			
Research Space Quality – Superior/Satisfactory Condition (reported biannually to NSF)	•	•	•	•	89%	--	85%			
Capital Projects Involving Research Laboratories (Completed)	•	•	•	•	\$3.8M	\$24.9M	\$2.8M			

* HERD: Higher Education Research and Development

** COACHE: Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education, comprised of five-point Likert Scale items

I = Internal Metric E = External Metric N = National Metric NM = New Metric

COMPREHENSIVE AND HOLISTIC REVIEW OF UNIVERSITY PROGRESS

GOAL THREE: Commitment to Excellence and Innovation KPIs					2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
I	E	N	NM							
•	•				--	67%	--			
COACHE Faculty Survey: Would Work at Auburn Again (Biannual)										
COACHE Faculty Survey: Overall Job Satisfaction** (Biannual)										
Teaching	•	•			--	3.82	--			
Research	•	•			--	3.40	--			
Service	•	•			--	3.28	--			
Named Awards for A&P and Staff	•			•	--	--	--			
Employees Participating in Aspire Auburn Leadership Development	•			•	--	--	--			
Employee Engagement Survey – Campus Climate										
Faculty	•			•	--	--	--			
Administrative and Professional	•			•	--	--	--			
Staff	•			•	--	--	--			
Employee Engagement Survey – Satisfaction										
Business Processes	•			•	--	--	--			
Employee Benefits	•			•	--	--	--			
Human Resources	•			•	--	--	--			
Information Technology	•			•	--	--	--			
Customer Satisfaction Rating for Facility Services and Operations	•			•	4.56	4.67***	8.86			

* COACHE: Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education

** COACHE Survey consists of five-point Likert Scale items

*** Survey format was updated in June 2023 from a 5-point to a 10-point scale to better align with client experience industry standards. Data have been adjusted to reflect a full year.

I = Internal Metric E = External Metric N = National Metric NM = New Metric

BELIEVE in work, HARD work

GOAL FOUR: Catalytic Engagement KPIs					I	E	N	NM	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Auburn University Economic Impact (Biannual)														
Overall Contribution to Alabama's Economy									--	\$6.3B	--			
Economic Impact									--	\$2.5B	--			
Auburn Graduates in the Workforce									--	\$3.8B	--			
Jobs Created									--	30,296	--			
Carnegie-Designated Community Engaged Institution									Yes	Yes	Yes			
Collaborative Agreements with Federal Agencies									--	--	--			
Collaborative Agreements with State Agencies									--	--	--			
Collaborative Agreements with Companies									--	--	--			
Extramural Funding for Outreach and Extension Activities									--	--	--			
ACES* Annual Contracts and Grants									--	--	--			

* ACES: Alabama Cooperative Extension System

GOAL FIVE: Distinctively Auburn KPIs					I	E	N	NM	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Student Satisfaction Survey: Would go to Auburn Again									93.5%	93%	TBD			
Conference/National Championships Competed or Won *									19 of 21	19 of 21	19 of 21			
Multi-Year Athletic Academic Progress Rate (APR) of 980 or above**									15 of 18	15 of 18	TBD			
Student-Athlete Graduation Success Rate (GSR) of 85% or above									93%	94%	94%			
Brand Health Index									--	--	53.17			
National Earned Media									\$34.1M	\$20.8M	\$23.9M			
Audience Engagement Across University Platforms									1.3M	1.6M	2.7M			
Total Donors									--	--	28,672***			
Auburn Philanthropic Capacity (Households)									--	34,135	25,240***			
Planned/Estate Giving (% of Total Annual Giving)									25%	33%	30%***			
Major Gifts to the University (Donors)									1,030	944	954***			
Total Annual Gifts and Commitments									\$213.4M	\$176.2M	\$190.6M***			
Annual Funds Raised (Gifts under \$25,000)									\$37.5M	\$40.4M	\$43.6M***			
Alumni Participation in Comprehensive Campaign									--	9%	8%***			

* At least 75% of athletics programs making the post season.

** APR is a real-time measure of eligibility, retention, and graduation of student-athletes competing on every NCAA Division I athletics team; 18 sports are accounted for in APR.

*** As of 9/15/2024

I = Internal Metric E = External Metric N = National Metric NM = New Metric

COMPREHENSIVE AND HOLISTIC

REVIEW OF UNIVERSITY PROGRESS

STEERING COMMITTEE

Constituted on behalf of President Christopher B. Roberts

Dr. Vini Nathan, Co-Chair, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, Office of the Provost

Dr. Kerry Inger, Co-Chair, Harbert College Advisory Council Professor, School of Accountancy, Harbert College of Business

Dr. Hari Narayanan, Co-Chair, Chair, Department of Computer Science & Software Engineering and Watson Professor, Ginn College of Engineering

Mr. Quentin Riggins, President *Pro Tempore*, Auburn University Board of Trustees

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Dr. Jason Hicks, Dean, College of Liberal Arts

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Mr. JD Jones, 2023-24 President, Student Government Association and Undergraduate Student, Biomedical Sciences, College of Sciences and Mathematics

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Mr. Mike Phillips, Professor and Director, Alabama Cooperative Extension System

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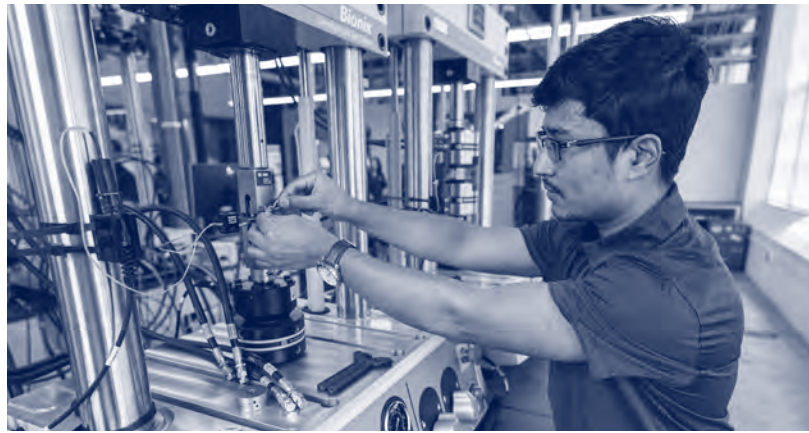
Dr. Steven Taylor, Senior Vice President for Research and Economic Development, Office of Research and Economic Development

Dr. Chippewa Thomas, Director of Faculty Engagement, Office of University Outreach

Mr. Robert Wellbaum, Senior Vice President for Advancement, Auburn Advancement

Dr. Bobby Woodard, Senior Vice President for Student Affairs, Division of Student Affairs









The Auburn Creed

I believe that this is a practical world and that I can count only on what I earn. Therefore, I believe in work, hard work.

I believe in education, which gives me the knowledge to work wisely and trains my mind and my hands to work skillfully.

I believe in honesty and truthfulness, without which I cannot win the respect and confidence of my fellow men.

I believe in a sound mind, in a sound body and a spirit that is not afraid, and in clean sports that develop these qualities.

I believe in obedience to law because it protects the rights of all.

I believe in the human touch, which cultivates sympathy with my fellow men and mutual helpfulness and brings happiness for all.

I believe in my country, because it is a land of freedom and because it is my own home, and that I can best serve that country by "doing justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with my God."

And because Auburn men and women believe in these things, I believe in Auburn and love it.

- George Petrie
1943



Auburn University Strategic Plan 2035: GROUNDED & GROUNDBREAKING

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