2013-2018

AUBURN UNIVERSITY STRATEGIC PLAN

AUBURN
UNIVERSITY

TABLE OF CONTENTS

OVERVIEW

INTRODUCTION

The following document represents the culmination of Auburn University's most recent strategic planning process, initiated by the President and led by the Provost during the 2012-2013 year. The document identifies five strategic priorities, supported by numerous measurable goals and commitments developed from ideas provided by members of the Auburn Family. Designed to guide Auburn University over the next five years, this plan provides a framework for excellence in all aspects of the institution's mission.

Building on the accomplishments of the University's 2008-2013 Strategic Plan, this new plan outlines several emerging priorities that will allow Auburn to capitalize on its strengths, enhance the quality of its contributions, and promote the success of its students, faculty, and staff. Through the strategic commitments outlined here, Auburn University will more fully realize its vision of becoming a preeminent land-grant university. The following plan carefully acknowledges the strengths Auburn must exert and the targeted opportunities it must grasp over the next five years to ensure continued institutional progress toward that vision.

VISION, MISSION, AND VALUES

Auburn University is a comprehensive land-grant university with national and international distinction in the areas of instruction, research, and community engagement. In addition to its prestigious programs in traditional STEM disciplines, Auburn maintains exceptional academic programs in agriculture, humanities, social sciences, and the arts. Often recognized for its pioneering research programs and strong academic reputation, Auburn offers an array of prominent professional programs and houses several nationally recognized multidisciplinary centers and institutes designed to facilitate the discovery of new knowledge.

As the state's largest land-grant institution, Auburn University has made key contributions to Alabama not only through its on-campus programs of instruction and research but also through its state-wide outreach, public service, and engagement programs. The University maintains consistent rankings as an institution of excellence and remains a institution of choice for prospective faculty, staff, and students. The development of the 2013-2018 Strategic Plan reaffirms the core values articulated in Auburn's official statement of vision and mission, first approved by the Board of Trustees in 1997 and reaffirmed in 2013.

VISION

Auburn University will emerge as one of the nation's preeminent comprehensive land-grant universities in the 21st century. Central to all its functions will be the University's historic commitment of service to all Alabamians as the State becomes a part of a global society with all of its challenges and opportunities. The University will be widely recognized for the quality of its undergraduate, graduate and professional educational programs, the effectiveness of its research and outreach programs, and the broad access to the University provided through the innovative use of information technology. The University will ensure the quality of its programs through the careful focusing of its resources in areas of institutional strengths. One constant will remain unchanged at the University--that

intangible quality Auburn men and women call the "Auburn Spirit."

MISSION

Auburn University's mission is defined by its land-grant traditions of service and access. The University will serve the citizens of the State through its instructional, research and outreach programs and prepare Alabamians to respond successfully to the challenges of a global economy. The University will provide traditional and non-traditional students broad access to the institution's educational resources. In the delivery of educational programs on campus and beyond, the University will draw heavily upon the new instructional and outreach technologies available in the emerging information age.

As a comprehensive university, Auburn University is committed to offering high-quality undergraduate, graduate, and professional education to its students. The University will give highest priority for resource allocation for the future development of those areas that represent the traditional strengths, quality, reputation, and uniqueness of the institution and that continue to effectively respond to the needs of students and other constituents. Consistent with this commitment, the University will emphasize a broad and superior undergraduate education that imparts the knowledge, skills, and values so essential to educated and responsible citizens. At the same time, the University will provide high-quality graduate and professional programs in areas of need and importance to the state and beyond. To accomplish these educational goals, Auburn University will continue to compete nationally to attract a faculty distinguished by its commitment to teaching and by its achievements in research, both pure and applied. The University will strive to attract a faculty that will bring distinction and stature to the undergraduate, graduate and professional programs offered by the University.

Because research is essential to the mission of a land-grant university, Auburn University will continue development of its research programs. The primary focus of this research will be directed to the solution of problems and the development of knowledge and technology important to the state and nation and to the quality of life of Alabama citizens. The University's research programs will make important contributions to instructional programs through the involvement of graduate and undergraduate students and the renewal of the faculty. Research will also provide the knowledge base for outreach programs.

In carrying out its research mission, the University will emphasize established areas of strength and will focus available resources in those areas of research and doctoral study that are, or have the potential to develop into nationally and internationally recognized centers of excellence. Extension and outreach programs are fundamental to the land-grant mission because these programs directly affect the lives of all citizens in the state. The University will maintain the strengths of its traditional outreach programs and will increasingly involve the broader University in outreach programs that respond to the changing needs of the society in which we live. The University will continue to seek new and innovative ways to reach out to the people it serves.

INSTITUTIONAL VALUES

As made clear in this statement of Vision and Mission, Auburn University aims to provide students with an unparalleled academic experience in the company of a distinguished faculty, many of whom are national and international leaders in their fields of study. Auburn recognizes and values the breadth of knowledge and experience necessary for the engagement, leadership, and success of our faculty, staff, and students. Auburn's core values are consistently demonstrated by our continued efforts to develop new partnerships and collaborations that address the changing needs of the individuals, communities, and industries we serve.

Even as the 2013-2018 Strategic Plan identifies new strategic priorities and goals, Auburn University remains committed to the core institutional values expressed in the Auburn Creed. In the academic realm, those practical values include:

- a commitment to offering high-quality academic programs;
- recruiting and retaining first-rate, hard-working faculty and students;
- providing students with unique professional development opportunities;
- preparing graduates who expect to excel in their careers;
- maintaining strong and relevant research programs; and
- serving as a resource for the citizens of Alabama.

The 2013-2018 Strategic Plan infuses these values into all elements of the organization's strategic priorities, goals, and commitments. As they have in the past, these perpetually relevant values will continue to guide the University's strategic directions over the next five years and unite the components of the plan into an expression of a single cohesive agenda.

2008-2013 STRATEGIC PLAN ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Following his arrival as President in 2007, Jay Gogue engaged in a comprehensive planning process designed to lead the University's efforts through the first decade of the 21st Century. The process offered members of the Auburn Family an opportunity to discuss the strategic vision for the University and identified potential challenges. The outcome of these efforts was a plan that outlined 59 key priorities across the following six major areas:

1. Elevating Academics
2. Building the Research Foundation
3. Expanding Extension Impact
4. Developing our People
5. Committing to Continuous Improvement
6. Building Financial Resources

At the conclusion of the five-year planning period in 2013, Auburn University had successfully completed 80 percent of these identified priorities, despite substantial and unprecedented economic pressures placed on Alabama's state budget soon after the plan was inaugurated. The recent economic recession resulted in major reductions to federal and state support for higher education, requiring institutions like Auburn to revise some of their customary approaches and become more efficient in their operations. Auburn's accomplishments between 2008 and 2013 can now serve as a foundation for the institution's future and higher aspirations.

Some of the notable accomplishments from the 2008-2013 Strategic Plan include:

- Auburn University's academic reputation for excellence was enhanced by substantially increasing the quality of Auburn's incoming students (the average ACT increased from 24.9 in 2007 to 26.9 in 2012). The University enrolled over 150 National Merit Scholars in 2011.

- The competitiveness and prestige of Auburn University's Honors College were increased. Efforts to recruit more high-ability students resulted in a steady enrollment increase from 476 students in 2007 to more than 1,000 students in 2010.

- The institution's undergraduate General Education Program was revised and comprehensive student learning outcomes were developed for all university graduates. The learning outcomes ensure that key skills are incorporated into all curricula.

- A strategic investment was made to increase Auburn's writing resources for students and to foster a stronger culture of writing and writing instruction. The "Writing in the Disciplines" requirement ensures significant writing beyond the Core Curriculum is included in every major.

- Auburn University maintained its enviable place as a Top 50 Public University and one of America's best colleges as profiled by *U.S. News and World Report*, reaching a rank of 37th in 2013.

- Learning Communities and Service Learning Projects at Auburn University were substantially developed to improve academic success and promote stronger graduation rates. Each of Auburn's academic colleges offering undergraduate degrees maintains at least one learning community, with an emphasis on public service as a key aspect of each.

Auburn University and Auburn University at Montgomery initiated several successful collaborations in academic programming, outreach, and international initiatives. Notable and innovative collaborations included a Seamless Admissions Program, a joint Master of Science program in Nursing, programs in cyber systems and information security, and a partnership in the Alabama Reading Initiative.

To enhance its research activities, in 2010 Auburn established the Auburn Research and Technology Foundation, a 501C (3) foundation. In conjunction with this effort, construction of the first building in the Auburn Research Park was completed in 2010. In early 2011, construction was completed on the second building that houses the Auburn University MRI Research Facility. In August 2012, the Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine in Blacksburg, Virginia, announced plans to open a branch campus in the Auburn Research Park. Housed in a new facility, the campus will feature classrooms, small-group learning rooms, laboratories, and a technology center. This collaboration holds promise to support Auburn's Health Sciences Initiative.

Because outreach and public engagement are key components of Auburn University's mission, the institution implemented several initiatives that supported local K-12 programs. These efforts increased the number and improved the readiness of high school students to attend college.

Recognizing that learning in a university rests upon the foundation of faculty expertise, Auburn successfully established nearly 100 new professorships to acknowledge the efforts of distinguished faculty who have enhanced the institution's capabilities and reputation by their superior teaching and mentoring, innovative research, and an impressive record of service.

Because the needs of faculty, staff, and students evolve and change, so must the campus facilities that support the institution's mission. Anticipating a need to update many academic, administrative, and residential building over the coming years, we established a much-needed prioritization process to support the orderly refreshment of our campus facilities. At the same time, we began a scheduled update of the Campus Master Plan, which provides a framework for physical development of Auburn's campus and offers forward-thinking guidance for the replacement of older buildings and the location of

new buildings, campus landmarks, and landscape features.

Following completion of the "It Begins At Auburn" capital campaign in 2008, the University began immediately to plan for its next comprehensive campaign. In 2011, Auburn announced plans for a new billion-dollar campaign. The campaign's goals include generating new funds to support scholarships, research, and other opportunities for excellence designed to elevate learning.

2013-2018 STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS
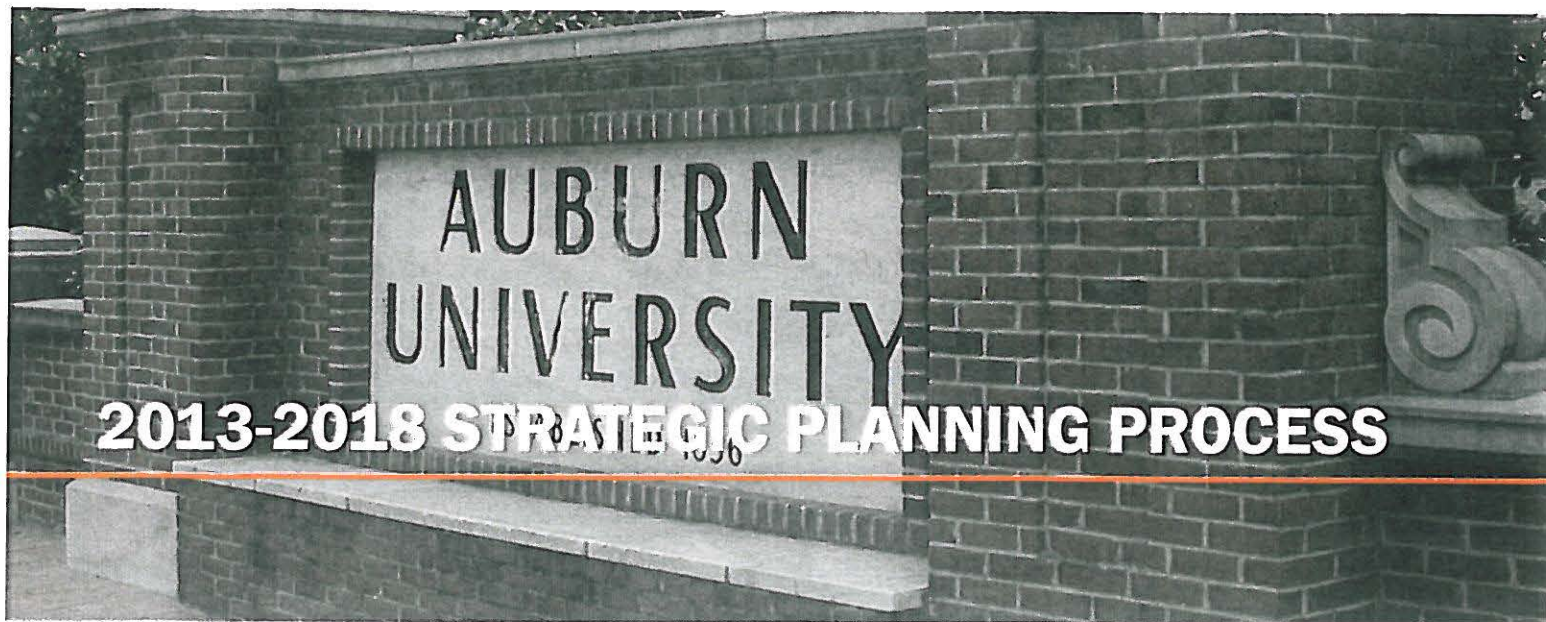
Auburn's current strategic planning process began in fall 2012 with four primary objectives:

1. To engage members of the campus community and those beyond in an inclusive process of discussion and visioning;

2. To provide a strategic foundation designed to expand the institution's ability to fulfill each area of its mission;

3. To reaffirm our institution's commitment to ongoing strategic directions; and

4. To identify priorities and strategies that could uniquely advance the University.

Using a bottom-up approach, this process engaged key members of the Auburn Family in a constructive and comprehensive dialogue that significantly enriched the University's strategic planning endeavors. The design of the strategic planning process thus focused on developing a viable plan benefiting from the feedback of Auburn's stakeholders, both on and off campus.

Following a charge from President Gogue, Provost Timothy R. Boosinger convened a Strategic Planning Steering Committee, consisting of 25 representatives of the University's senior administration, faculty, staff, and student body, including elected leaders of key governance groups.

To organize its work, the Strategic Planning Steering Committee identified key areas of emphasis, forming five key work teams. Each work team focused on

completing a strategic analysis in one of the following areas:

- Student Success
- Faculty Success
- Research Enterprise
- Outreach and Extension
- Revenue Enhancement and Business Operations

Each strategic analysis included (1) an assessment of Auburn's current performance benchmarked against aspirational peer institutions, (2) a situational analysis to describe the internal and external environments, and (3) an identification of key opportunities and potential barriers to success. Following completion of this SWOT analysis by each work team, the planning process then broadened to engage groups of institutional stakeholders from across the state.

Beginning in January 2013, the Strategic Planning Steering Committee conducted several off-campus listening sessions to collect ideas for Auburn's future. Held in each legislative district of the state, these facilitated sessions were well attended and included representatives from the University Senate, the Board of Trustees, alumni, the Cooperative Extension System, and elected officials. Participants received preliminary information including accomplishments from the 2008-2013 Strategic Plan and a composite of the SWOT analyses completed by the work teams. Participants were asked to respond to the question *"What should Auburn University aspire to be in 2018?"*

In total, 12 listening sessions were completed with more than 150 participants providing substantive feedback and ideas that have been incorporated into the 2013-2018 Strategic Plan.

Following the off-campus sessions, the Strategic Planning Steering Committee conducted 28 on-campus listening sessions at the Auburn and Montgomery campuses. In total, these sessions involved more than 350 participants representing faculty, staff, and students. The on-campus focus groups provided a tremendous amount of data for the Strategic Planning Steering Committee to consider as they began drafting the strategic priorities.

To involve even more people, a structured Strategic Planning Survey was administered in late spring to further solicit the opinions of Auburn faculty, staff, students, parents, alumni, administrators, community partners, and other members of the Auburn Family. This survey provided an opportunity for the Strategic Planning Steering Committee to test the appeal of ideas developed earlier in the process. The survey results affirmed key themes and provided additional areas of emphasis for the Steering Committee.

Finally, themes emerging across the whole planning process were shared with members of the campus community during an open forum held in late spring. The forum offered an opportunity for faculty, staff, and students to refine many of the strategic priorities and ideas developed.

Throughout the planning period, the university community received regular updates on the strategic planning process through monthly letters sent by the Provost to the faculty and made available on the Provost's website. Elected faculty leaders attended each statewide listening session and provided additional updates to the University Senate. An initial draft of the strategic plan–outlining priorities, goal, and commitments–was presented to President Gogue and a team of university leaders who had not served on the Steering Committee for review and feedback. These individuals provided additional viewpoints and considerations for the final list of strategic directions.

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND THREATS

Early in the planning process, the Strategic Planning Steering Committee conducted an analysis of Auburn's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT). Opinions and comments on this analysis were solicited from faculty, staff, students, alumni, community members, elected officials, and members of the Auburn Family. Essential in developing priorities, the SWOT analysis helped to pinpoint environmental factors likely to challenge the institution over the next five years as well as external opportunities to support new and ongoing initiatives.

Strengths

The development of strategic priorities must be grounded in a reliable assessment of our institution's current strengths. Our strengths include:

- Auburn University maintains a strong undergraduate academic reputation and high quality of incoming students, resulting in a consistent top 50 ranking by *U.S. News and World Report*. It has won accolades for academic programs including Engineering, Architecture, Business, and Education.

- Auburn's campus provides a friendly small-town atmosphere in close proximity to Atlanta, enabling it to remain a desirable higher education institution among prospective students from surrounding states (40 percent out-of-state enrollment).

- Auburn University has a historically strong or a developing national and international reputation for research in the areas of Cyber Security, Energy and the Environment, Fisheries and Allied Aquacultures, Health Sciences, STEM Education, and Transportation. Most recently, Auburn's establishment of the Research and Technology Foundation (ARTF), the Auburn Research Park, and an Auburn University Research Center in Huntsville have added new potential for growth in the institution's research enterprise.

- Auburn University maintains a strong institutional brand with very loyal alumni support and participation in Auburn Clubs, resulting in strong community relationships throughout the state. Alumni connections to their former academic programs are strong and a high percentage of alumni report a positive academic experience and career placement upon graduation.

- Auburn University has an enviable track record of strong fiscal management and is actively engaged in the next institution-wide development campaign.

- Auburn University boasts a stable, experienced faculty, with a high proportion of full-time and tenured faculty who enjoy a satisfying academic work environment. The campus administration supports a strong shared governance process.

- Auburn University provides excellent and well-maintained campus facilities, many of which are new. The campus has outlined a prioritization process for replacing older buildings as part of the Campus Master Plan.

- Auburn University maintains a substantial commitment to serving K-12 education and engages in numerous community partnerships throughout the state.

- In collaboration with Alabama A&M University, Auburn operates the Alabama Cooperative Extension System that takes research-based applications and knowledge into every corner of the state.

- The Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station continues to emphasize interdisciplinary projects through the development of new institutes and centers.

Weaknesses

In assessing the University's relative weaknesses, it is important to identify deficiencies that can be targeted and minimized:

- Although Auburn University successfully recruits academically prepared students, its current four- and six-year graduation rates lag behind those of leading peers despite tuition restructuring to enable students to complete more hours per semester at no additional charge. Additionally, advisor-student ratios remain high in many of the colleges.

- While the institution has weathered the recent historic decreases in state funding, significant new revenue streams other than tuition have not been identified. With fiscal uncertainly, a continued area of weakness involves lower salaries for Auburn's ranked faculty than for their counterparts at peer institutions (ranked 13th among 24 SREB peers in 2012), a discrepancy which could diminish the institution's ability to recruit and retain faculty.

- Although Auburn University alumni report high levels of participation in Auburn Clubs, relatively few alumni provide philanthropic support of their alma mater.

- While it conducts more funded research than most American colleges and universities, Auburn currently produces lower levels of research revenue and productivity than the very best peer institutions nationally. Reasons cited for this include inconsistent research administrative support, insufficiency of resources to encourage and support collaborative and interdisciplinary programs, and lower research expectations than those at aspirational peer institutions.

- Auburn University currently offers no formal course designation and little academic credit for service learning, and engagement in extension and outreach is not uniformly encouraged at the departmental levels. Many campus disciplines are not engaged in extension programs, appointments, or continuing education.

Opportunities

It is important to recognize some of the numerous external factors that carry the potential to benefit the institution in crucial ways:

- New techniques for cost analysis and budgeting are emerging in higher education. Opportunities exist to examine strategic enrollment increases in targeted programs.

- Potential exists for instructional, research, and outreach partnerships with higher education institutions throughout the state to enhance programmatic opportunities and activities that would address pressing social needs, particularly in underserved communities throughout Alabama.

- Growth in demand for eLearning opportunities (including distance education) has created new markets for both start-up and traditional institutions of higher education. Carefully planned hybrid or distance education programs at the undergraduate and professional Master's level may expand Auburn University's reach and provide a new source of net revenue, particularly in nontraditional and international markets. Even for on-campus students, growth in web-enhanced technologies, such as enabling Auburn's ePortfolio project, present new ways for students to envision, organize and display their learning and accomplishments.

- The importance of active and collaborative learning has become widely accepted in higher education. Enhancing learning communities and common courses for first-year students may better integrate campus programs and support services (academic

and non-academic) and can impact students earlier in their academic career, when it may matter the most.

Globalization is making possible many new international partnerships among institutions of higher learning. Opportunities exist to increase students' global awareness and international competence through increased connections with alumni who are making a global impact, new international student enrollment, and enhanced integration of study abroad opportunities with curricular and co-curricular experiences.

Leading academic research and development enterprises have developed new methods to support and coordinate faculty research expertise. Growth and improvement of Auburn University's research leadership and support services may seed future opportunities and promote faculty success.

While expertise in a field of study remains the defining feature of a successful faculty member, faculty roles and the concept of scholarship have evolved, making it possible to tailor assignments for faculty and to maximize what Auburn faculty currently do best and what they might do even better in the future, such as engaging undergraduate students in their own research projects.

Alumni and friends have untapped potential to support Auburn University's mission through their philanthropy. Strengthened financial support of Auburn should result from the Leadership and Public Gift phases of the current comprehensive campaign.

Threats

Threats include those environmental factors that carry the potential of hindering Auburn's success:

Public higher education is becoming increasingly privatized, resulting in increased cost to students and families. While the demand for high quality college education remains undiminished, universities will experience increasing pressure to restrain the growth in costs to students while improving quality through such means as providing experiences in research for all undergraduates. Failure to respond to this challenge could affect student demand and financial stability.

Auburn University faces competition for desirable students both from other Alabama institutions and from out-of-state. The projected supply of capable in-state high school graduates is level. Meanwhile, Auburn faces increasing competition for out-of-state students, both from less expensive alternatives in students' home states and other institutions that are seeking to increase their own out-of-state enrollments and even, potentially, from online education providers.

The University's intercollegiate athletics programs are large and have been financially self-sustaining. However, since most intercollegiate sports do not produce revenue, financial downturns in one or two sports can affect the entire intercollegiate athletics program and the University more generally.

Other auxiliary or separately funded activities of the University face similar challenges to operate without continuing general funds. Without access to revenues from student tuition and fees, ACES and the Agricultural Experiment Station are especially vulnerable to declines in state appropriations.

Like other public research universities, Auburn University faces stiff competition for the best faculty from advantaged private institutions at a time when federal and other sources of funding for academic research and development are becoming more precarious. Loss of research-active faculty or of sources of research funding could harm the institution's ability to carry out one part of its mission.

2013-2018 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES, GOALS, AND COMMITMENTS

The following Strategic Priorities, Goals, and Commitments identify several new directions and areas of emphasis that will support the University as we progress toward our chosen future. The identified priorities will advance Auburn University through seizing new opportunities and the strategic commitments reinforce the institution's capacity for excellence.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The five broad Strategic Priorities outline the university-wide directions and growth we will undertake to achieve the overall vision for Auburn University. The priorities serve as a guide for our strategic activities:

> Strategic Priority 1: Enhance Student Success and Diversify Enrollment
> Strategic Priority 2: Support Faculty Excellence and Strengthen Auburn's Reputation
> Strategic Priority 3: Enhance Research, Scholarship and Creative Work
> Strategic Priority 4: Enhance Public Engagement
> Strategic Priority 5: Focus Resources on Institutional Mission and Priorities

STRATEGIC GOALS

The corresponding Strategic Goals define our unique areas of focus and outline the steps we will undertake in order to achieve our Strategic Priorities.

STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS

The identified Strategic Commitments represent Auburn University's ongoing efforts and obligations.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1
Enhance Student Success and Diversify Enrollment

"We will make student success a priority, recruiting able, hardworking students from Alabama and beyond, keeping them on track for timely graduation, and providing them with a powerful learning experience."

Auburn University has earned a strong reputation for providing students with a challenging, attractive, and practical academic experience. Over the next five years, we will continue to strengthen our programs to enhance students' academic, social, professional, and personal success. Through integrated academic and student life programs, we will provide students with integrated curricular and co-curricular experiences that will equip them to become prominent leaders in their professions and communities as successful global citizens.

Auburn is already a top institutional choice among talented students because of its strong academic programs, capable faculty, attractive facilities for learning, residential life and recreation programs, and unparalleled campus environment. We will maintain, assess and improve this environment for student success over the next five years, as described in the Strategic Commitments below.

Supported by these measures, our primary strategic efforts over the next five years will be (1) to diversify our enrollment profile, (2) to harness the immense capacities of technology, (3) to enrich our learning experience, and, most of all, (4) to improve our retention and graduation rates. To retain students and help them attain timely graduation, we will articulate clear academic expectations and provide ample support.

Through new eLearning programs, including distance education, Auburn will increase its capacity and extend innovative academic opportunities to talented students beyond its Auburn and Montgomery campuses. We will enhance the diversity of our campuses, increasing minority and international student enrollments. We will also continue to expand student learning opportunities abroad.

STRATEGIC GOALS

1. **The University will emphasize student retention and achievement by encouraging and expecting timely degree completion and by clearing pathways to student success.**

   A. Improve retention and graduation rates to surpass regional averages for flagship public universities.

   B. Implement engagement strategies that will help students make the transition to college and encourage them to remain at Auburn for their entire college education.

   C. Review existing academic policies and develop new ones that will encourage students to complete their degree requirements within a reasonable period of time.

   D. Develop a Freshman Advising Center for undecided students.

   E. Adjust institutional scholarship and financial aid practices to improve student retention, encourage students to complete their degrees, and reduce average time to degree.

   F. Design admissions practices that more effectively align with the enrollment capacity of high demand, high cost programs while meeting the University's other enrollment goals.

   G. Enhance career counseling and career advising to reduce the number of changes in academic majors and strengthen student career readiness for post-graduate success.

2. **The University will strengthen the student experience and broaden its influence by serving new groups of students and emphasizing the academic importance of diversity. We will support the talents of all qualified students and prepare them to thrive in an increasingly global environment.**

   A. Continue to recruit high-ability students from Alabama.

   B. Maintain strong appeal to out-of-state students, while extending recruitment to promising new markets that are farther afield.

   C. Internationalize the undergraduate student population by increasing the number of students from countries that are actively engaged in the future of Alabama's economy. Develop summer language immersion programs for incoming undergraduate students whose first language is not English.

   D. Actively recruit capable low-income, first-generation, and underserved students who currently may not be considering a nationally competitive university for their college education and increase scholarship opportunities for these students.

   E. Support efforts to increase the quality of transfer students and develop partnerships with two-year colleges to attract talented transfer students.

   F. Increase the percentage of undergraduate and graduate students from underrepresented groups.

3. **The University will redefine its role in the development of eLearning programs (including distance education), meeting the needs of current and new Auburn students in ways that are consistent with the University's academic standards.**

   A. In a small number of fields, carefully identified through market research, make available fully online new undergraduate and graduate programs for degree completers and working professionals.

   B. Expand undergraduate enrollment through offering fully online distance education degree programs.

   C. Fully implement Auburn's innovative Professional ePortfolio project.

   D. Strengthen the institution's academic culture for eLearning programs (including distance education) and expand access to state-of-the-art eLearning technologies and related support.

   E. Design budget models that will encourage and support the development of financially sustainable eLearning programs (including distance education).

   F. Create incentives that will increase the number of faculty active in eLearning programs (including distance education).

   G. Establish a consortium between Auburn University and Auburn University at Montgomery to leverage online course offerings and to enable students at both institutions to earn credit and complete their degrees more quickly.

   H. Commit to designing all eLearning programs (including distance education) using universal design principles to ensure accessibility.

   I. Commit to a common mobile platform to facilitate broad adoption of eLearning strategies.

STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS

   A. **Enhance academic support services and student development programs.**

      1. Prepare students to excel academically, personally, socially, and professionally through integrated approaches to student success.

      2. Regularly assess academic and student support services to ensure that they are relevant, responsive, effective, and efficiently coordinated.

      3. Regularly assess the effectiveness of academic advising.

4. Expand academic support services for all students.

5. Develop on-campus housing strategies to accommodate all interested first-year students.

6. Continue to promote student athlete academic success and comply with all NCAA rules.

B. Strengthen professional and career preparedness.

1. Develop clear and consistent web-based materials to help students select appropriate degree programs.

   • Clearly communicate expected student learning outcomes for each program, assess how well students are attaining those outcomes, and use the results to improve learning in each program.

   • Provide accurate information about career and post-graduate opportunities usually available to students completing each program.

2. Revise first-year orientation programs to emphasize not only academic success, but also career and professional development.

3. Increase the number of high-impact student experiences–such as internships, undergraduate research, Cooperative Education, or study abroad–that are available to all students.

   • Ensure that all colleges and schools support these activities.

   • Where possible, enable students in all colleges and schools to participate in Cooperative Education.

   • In each undergraduate major, make it possible to complete through study abroad at least one course applicable to degree requirements.

   • Increase the number of students engaged in undergraduate research.

4. Better prepare interested students for graduate and professional study.

   • Provide realistic and purposeful counseling about the costs and benefits of graduate education.

   • Increase the availability of graduate and professional school admissions test-preparation programming.

   • Increase the availability of information on how to apply to graduate and professional schools.

   • Improve career services for graduate students, with an emphasis on training in academic ethics and research skills.

5. Establish interdisciplinary degrees between various departments that focus on "gaps" in existing degree options.

C. Enhance graduate student programming and support.

1. Advance the national and global reputation of Auburn University's graduate and professional programs.

2. Add new professional development programs for graduate students, including programs preparing students for non-academic careers.

3. Develop endowment resources to fund competitive graduate stipends in key doctoral programs.

4. Develop new interdisciplinary research opportunities for graduate students.

D. Develop state-of-the-art academic facilities.

1. Develop a state-of-the-art classroom facility and technology-enhanced laboratories to support innovative teaching and research.

2. Identify resources to improve existing academic spaces and develop necessary funding for new facilities that will support our mission of providing outstanding teaching and learning.

3. Raise the funds required to build a Performing Arts Center to support student learning and enhance community life.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2
Support Faculty Excellence and Strengthen Auburn's Reputation

"We will strengthen faculty vitality and achieve high levels of productivity, engagement and satisfaction, leading to the attainment of professional and institutional goals."

Auburn's academic achievements depend upon the expertise, engagement and success of the faculty. Unlike many other universities, Auburn is fortunate to have a faculty made up of full-time professors who hold the terminal degree in their disciplines and who have made deep investments in our academic community.

It is essential that we preserve and enhance faculty vitality. Engaged faculty strengthen our University's reputation and broaden its impact in all areas of our mission. The vitality of our faculty can best be enhanced by building a strong intellectual community that depends on the continually advancing expertise of each faculty member. To enhance that community during the next five years, we will place a key emphasis on attracting, retaining, and developing a diverse faculty committed to increasing Auburn's competitiveness and enhancing our academic reputation.

In our efforts to strengthen, refresh, and diversify our faculty, Auburn will develop the necessary resources to address salary compression issues and offer regionally competitive salaries for faculty. We will continue to enrich opportunities to support faculty at various stages of their work-life, including recruitment, promotion and tenure, rewards and recognition, and training for faculty at all stages of their careers. In addition, we will develop the resources necessary to provide stronger professional development opportunities for all faculty, including those on non-tenure track appointments.

Our principal strategic investment in faculty success over the next five years will be to enhance faculty vitality. The University will increase its scholarly productivity and develop significant opportunities for increased collaboration and multidisciplinary activity. We will identify expectations for the productivity of our faculty in research and creative work, and we will support individual faculty members by taking into account their unique strengths and contributions. We will apply the yardstick of best practices to our academic work environment for faculty, and we will adopt new policies designed to sustain the health of that working environment.

STRATEGIC GOAL

4. The University will increase productivity by supporting faculty vitality and ongoing faculty development. We will create an even stronger environment for academic work and will expect that work to flourish in teaching, discovery, application, and public service.

   A. Define vitality as it relates to Auburn faculty, construct a faculty vitality framework with appropriate metrics, and link faculty evaluations to this framework.

   B. Devise incentives for outstanding faculty accomplishments, including scholarly achievement, innovative teaching, outstanding public engagement and service to the institution, the public or the learned professions.

STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS

A. Recruit and retain the best faculty to become an institution of first choice for academic work.

   1. Adopt or strengthen practices proven to maintain a satisfied and productive faculty workforce.

   2. Increase salary and benefit packages to be closer to regional averages for flagship public universities.

3. Ensure that the standards used in the hiring, assignment, and promotion of faculty support excellence in all aspects of the University's mission.

4. Establish and implement teaching loads based on national standards for the disciplines represented at Auburn.

5. Continue to increase the number of joint appointments.

6. Maintain high ratings for Auburn as an academic workplace.

7. Identify opportunities to enhance faculty success at all phases, including mid- and late-career faculty.

B. Strengthen University-wide professional development programs for faculty.

1. Identify and enhance viable programs for mentoring and professional development through the Biggio Center.

2. Develop required training programs for faculty transitioning into academic leadership roles.

C. Cultivate an exciting intellectual environment by increasing opportunities for greater faculty dialogue and engagement.

1. Foster the intellectual community through regular campus conferences, workshops, and presentations to support interdisciplinary collaboration and focus on problems that cut across many academic areas.

D. Enhance faculty diversity.

1. Assess and revise current recruitment policies and practices to develop more diverse candidate pools.

2. Review the effectiveness of current diversity initiatives and develop an updated diversity plan that incorporates diversity standards in all aspects of the institution's culture.

E. Improve support for non-tenure track faculty.

1. Examine the potential to increase Auburn's responsiveness through increased recruitment of talented non-tenure track faculty.

2. Review the non-tenure track faculty compensation, benefits, and employment conditions to ensure they are appropriate and competitive.

3. Develop academically sound performance incentives for non-tenure track faculty, including reward and recognition programs.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3
Enhance Research, Scholarship and Creative Work

"We will conduct innovative research and offer more and better student research experiences."

A cornerstone of Auburn's mission is the generation of new knowledge, new applications, and new perspectives through research and scholarly activity. Despite recent financial challenges, Auburn has maintained high levels of productivity in research, scholarship, and creative work relative to most public universities. Due in part to efforts undertaken in the last five years, the foundation for a stronger and larger research enterprise has been built. Over the next five years, Auburn will become increasingly competitive with the most productive universities in its research and creative scholarship activities, especially in areas that address national priorities, resulting in enhanced national and international recognition. We will develop our strategic research initiatives by building on our existing strengths and developing programs that will translate our discoveries into practical solutions for the state, region, and world.

To accomplish these goals, we will challenge the Auburn community to strengthen its research culture and increase research expectations. We will develop programs of distinction and support those scholarly activities that enhance the intellectual vitality of our faculty, the learning of our students, and the outreach and public service engagement provided to the state of Alabama. We will continue to foster interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary collaborations, while enhancing the research experiences of our undergraduate and graduate students.

STRATEGIC GOAL

5. **The University will make significant increases in its scholarly and creative contributions by 2018. We will measure our results and increase our share of the nation's academic research and development.**

   A. Continue to increase the number and quality of extramurally funded proposals submitted.

   B. Provide increased central grant writing support to enhance the quality of grant submissions.

   C. Increase extramural funding from major sources, including government, foundations, and industry.

   D. Charge deans and department chairs to support the generation of extramural research funding.

   E. Increase research expectations for faculty and recognize outstanding faculty achievement.

   F. In each discipline where Auburn grants the PhD, increase our share of scholarly productivity among the nation's doctoral programs in that field.

6. **Build upon institutional strengths to reflect national research priorities in the areas of cyber security, energy and the environment, health sciences, food systems and security, STEM education, and transportation.**

   A. Develop new initiatives that will further Auburn's contributions to the economic advancement of Alabama.

   B. Hire clusters of research-active faculty in areas of institutional strength and priority.

   C. Increase the number and expand the scope of institutional and public-private partnerships to conduct and promote Auburn research.

STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS

A. Increase student opportunities for and participation in research and creative scholarship.

B. Designate the Office for the Vice President for Research as the Office of the Vice President for Research and Economic Development.

   1. Make the Office of Research the focal point for state economic development activities and the recruitment of new businesses to Alabama.

   2. Provide research-based economic development assistance to businesses and industries seeking to create new enterprises or expand existing ones.

C. Strengthen interdisciplinary research and scholarship.

   1. Increase institutional proposal submissions and awards by at least 10 percent each year in each college and school.

   2. Increase the number and quality of submissions from areas where extramural grant support is low.

   3. Develop true partnerships with health professions education entities, such as VCOM, in furthering out Health Sciences initiatives.

D. Support core research facilities and infrastructure.

   1. Analyze laboratory and research space utilization to determine appropriate allocation metrics and identify opportunities to make fuller use of research facilities.

   2. Enhance research administration to facilitate the needs and growth of the Auburn research enterprise (including technology transfer and the research foundation).

   3. Develop processes that will optimize the utilization of research facilities and promote the sharing of research equipment.

   4. Secure resources to bolster research infrastructure and encourage collaborative and interdisciplinary programs.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4

Enhance Public Engagement

"We will become a national model of public engagement by elevating Alabama's economy and quality of life."

Auburn's Outreach and Extension activities provide a valuable resource to Alabama. Increasing our community partnerships will connect the priorities of the state with the capacity of our campus. We will conduct ongoing needs assessments with Alabama's citizens to identify opportunities to develop new partnerships both within the University and across the state. Key areas of emphasis will include improving the health and wellness of our citizens, increasing service opportunities for Auburn students, delivering research-based educational programming relevant to community needs, and developing opportunities for non-credit educational programs that will broaden our impact.

In addition, we will increase our collaborations with other land-grant institutions within Alabama to create positive interactions among our academic and research programs and address the broader educational, economic, quality of life, and wellness needs of our citizens.

STRATEGIC GOAL

7. **The University will increase its educational programs for Alabama residents across their lifespan, honoring its land-grant role as a campus without borders. We will enlarge our programs for the state's young people and extend our services to communities and working adults.**

   A. Market Outreach and Extension programs to alumni, supporting their lifelong learning and professional education.

   B. Engage Auburn students in public service programs as undergraduates, and make it possible for them to continue this engagement as alumni.

   C. Deliver Outreach and Extension programs to Alabama residents to enhance their work force readiness, economy, wellness, and quality of life.

STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS

A. **Enhance local economic and leadership development in communities across the state and beyond.**

   1. Build upon existing programs to improve workforce readiness, particularly in underserved communities.

   2. Strengthen partnerships with other land-grant institutions, including Tuskegee and Alabama A&M Universities, in order to develop new economic and educational programs that will benefit Auburn University, the state of Alabama, and the world.

B. **Enhance the quality of life for Alabama's citizens by delivering programs to improve health and wellness.**

   1. Develop stronger connections between the health sciences initiatives and the academic units to improve the health and wellness of citizens throughout Alabama, particularly in underserved communities.

   2. Engage Alabama's K-12 and community college system to enhance the state's quality of life and economic vitality, with special attention to underserved populations in the Black Belt counties and in Hispanic communities.

C. **Increase recognition for Outreach and Extension scholarship in Auburn's promotion and tenure process and academic culture.**

   1. Enhance Outreach and Extension programs to create stronger synergies with academic programs and to expand student opportunities for service learning and volunteerism.

   2. Evaluate and improve the way in which Auburn administers its Outreach and Extension continuing education programs.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 5
Focus Resources on Institutional Mission and Priorities

"We will achieve institutional excellence by aligning resources with strategic priorities and investing in our people."

As Auburn continues to address the unprecedented financial challenges that have confronted higher education across Alabama, we will remain committed to our pursuit of excellence across all areas of our mission. Key to our success is the efficient and effective stewardship of our institution's resources, including the careful alignment of funds with identified priorities that advance the University's mission.

While Auburn's mission and strategic goals are focused on teaching and learning, on research and application, and on extension and outreach, none of these can be attained without adequate resources and the determination to put those resources to work for the public good. The University will support a new resource allocation process defined by practical planning, budgeting, assessment, and accountability. Resource allocation decisions will be guided based on identified strategic priorities, productivity, cost-benefit analysis, and a commitment to innovation. Stewardship of resources must include the University's principal source of revenue, student tuition and fees. For many years, generous state investment in public higher education made it possible for Alabama residents to study at Auburn for a fraction of the true cost. The days of abundant public support probably are gone forever. This means that in the future Alabama residents, like out-of-state students, will pay a larger share of what it costs to provide instruction and career preparation in many disciplines, including expensive subjects like engineering, architecture, and the health sciences.

Auburn has been providing millions of dollars in financial aid to needy and meritorious students from its own unrestricted resources. These are dollars that could be used to heat and cool laboratories, hire instructors, add information resources to the library, or limit tuition increases. Because financial aid must continue to be available if Auburn is to fulfill its role as a land-grant university and because unrestricted dollars also are urgently needed to maintain the

institution's fabric and improve its services, Auburn faces a critical need for private gifts to support true scholarships for needy and meritorious students.

STRATEGIC GOAL

8. The University will achieve excellence in organizational stewardship by aligning investments with institutional priorities.

   A. Invest resources among academic and non-academic units in keeping with strategic priorities. Ensure alignment of resources with strategic objectives for the following areas:

   - Student success
   - Faculty success
   - Research, scholarship and creative work
   - Outreach and Extension
   - Faculty and staff compensation
   - Capital project funding, both for new facilities and renovation of existing facilities
   - University programs and initiatives
   - Space and land use management
   - Institutional marketing that targets key areas of the institution
   - Maintain the institution's strong bond rating
   - Other strategic requirements

   B. Examine all strategic priorities and cross-subsidies to ensure continuing adequacy of financial and physical resources and consistency with Auburn's mission and strategic plan.

   C. Develop a comprehensive plan for building continuing education and eLearning programs (including distance education) as sources of net revenue aligned with strategic priorities.

D. Identify and redesign major academic, administrative, and business processes to reduce costs while improving service and effectiveness.

STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS

A. Maintain institutional access through careful management of enrollment and cost of attendance.

1. Develop a strategic approach to tuition, scholarships, and enrollment as it relates to net revenue generation.

2. Seek out donors willing to advance the public good by funding scholarships.

3. Revise the scholarship awarding process to enable Auburn to increase its competitiveness among prospective high school students.

4. Implement guidelines to increase the number of graduate assistants funded through extramural grants.

B. Achieve excellence in support staffing and performance.

1. Identify and develop the necessary resources to accomplish salary goals for non-faculty employees.

2. Ensure that the standards used in the hiring and promotion of staff and A&P employees support excellence in all aspects of the University's mission.

C. Elevate the campus environment and facilities to support institutional programs.

1. Continue to develop campus facilities in accordance with the Campus Master Plan and the Land Use Management Plan.

2. Continue to develop and implement economic and environmentally sustainable strategies to reduce institutional energy use.

3. Reduce the University's energy intensity index (energy use per square foot) by 20 percent by 2020 from the 2006 baseline.

D. Invest in the development of Auburn's workforce.

1. Improve personnel policies and HR practices for the hiring, retention, professional development, promotion, and termination of faculty and staff.

2. Improve the employee performance review process and better align the timing with salary increases.

3. Strengthen recognition and reward programs for staff who demonstrate outstanding accomplishments.

E. Enhance marketing and communication to strengthen the University's reputation.

1. Support a comprehensive branding plan designed to enhance awareness of Auburn's accomplishments in teaching, research, and public service.

2. Strengthen communication initiatives designed to increase the visibility of Auburn's contributions to the state of Alabama and beyond.

F. Increase philanthropic support of Auburn's mission and plan for excellence through the next comprehensive campaign.

1. Cultivate important funding opportunities during the Leadership and Public phases of the next Comprehensive Campaign to achieve the goal of $1 billion in gifts and pledges.

2. Substantially increase alumni participation in philanthropic support of the institution's goals.

3. Strengthen the culture of student giving.

G. Continue to support competitive athletic programs in keeping with the University's vision, mission, and values.

1. Auburn Athletics will compete for championships, consistently finishing in the top 10 percent of the annual NACDA Directors' Cup Standings.

2. The President of Auburn University and Auburn Athletics will maintain institutional control and promote compliance with NCAA and SEC rules and regulations, in particular with regard to major violations.

3. Auburn Athletics will remain financially independent through sound fiscal management.

4. Auburn Athletics will complete a strategic operations and facilities plan.