



FOCUS 2030
THE STRATEGIC PLAN
FOR ALABAMA STATE UNIVERSITY

Advancing the Legacy and Bridging Communities
through Commitment, Collaboration and Creativity



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UNIVERSITY**

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Alabama State University is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges to offer baccalaureate, masters, doctoral and professional degrees.

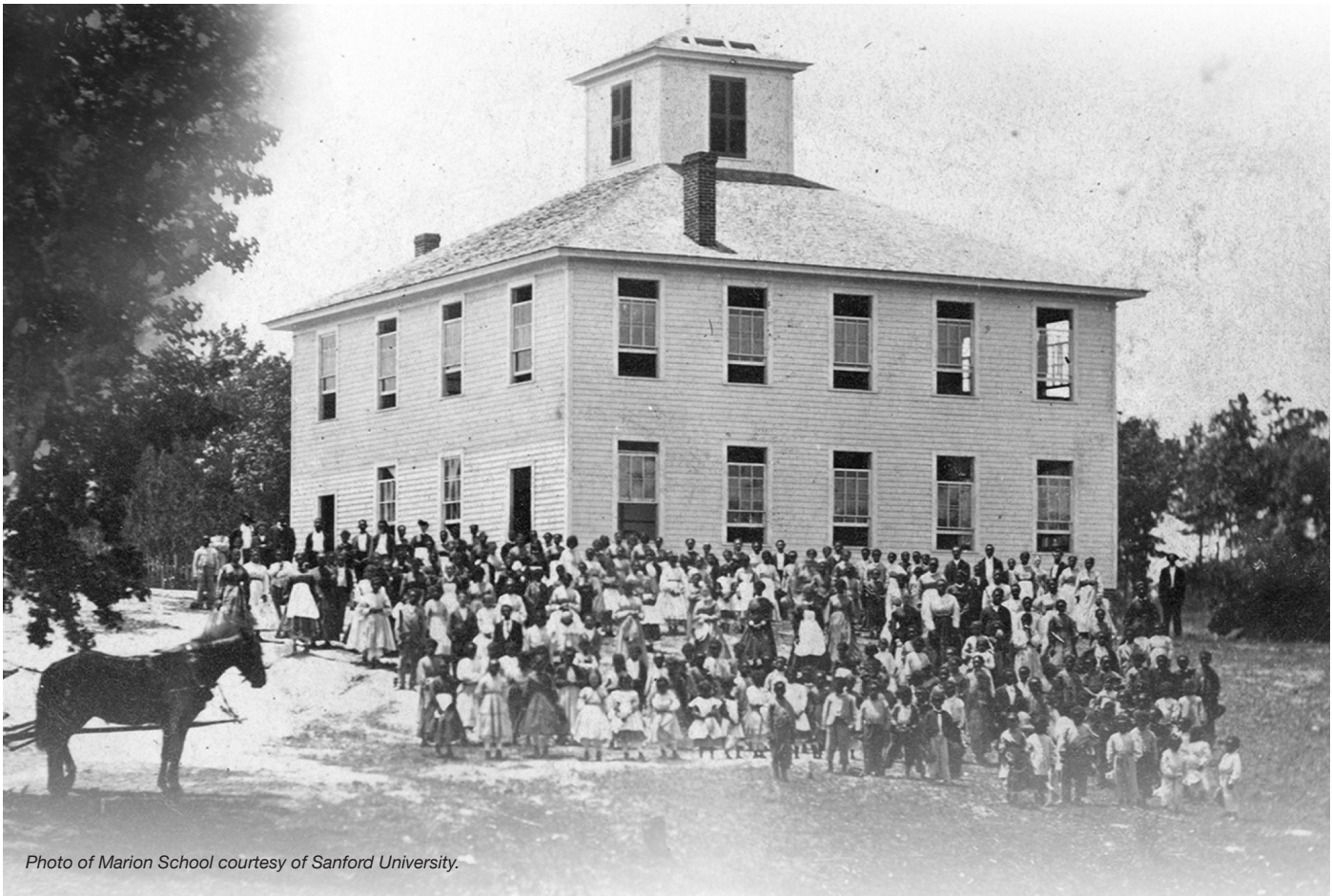


Photo of Marion School courtesy of Sanford University.

ALABAMA STATE UNIVERSITY'S RICH HISTORY

Alabama State University (ASU) has more than 150 years demonstrating a legacy of perseverance, growth and hope.

The ASU movement began with the impetus to establish a school for black Alabamians. The Civil War resulted not only in the end of slavery but also in the opportunity for blacks to have the right to education. With the Northern victory, black Southerners with the assistance of Northern white missionaries and the leaders of African-American churches set out to establish educational institutions for the freedmen. ASU was born in that movement.

Blacks in the Black Belt of Alabama, the heart of the Confederacy, founded Lincoln Normal School at Marion in 1867. As a descendent of that school, ASU is one of the oldest institutions of higher education founded for black Americans. The men who comprised the Board of Trustees were Joey

Pinch, Thomas Speed, Nickolas Dale, James Childs, Thomas Lee, John Freeman, Nathan Levert, David Harris, and Alexander H. Curtis. Under their leadership, the blacks of Marion raised \$500 and purchased a suitable building site on which a school building was constructed.

From its humble beginnings, the school moved to Montgomery and after several name changes and political, as well as racial resistance, the school emerged as a state college and now a University with a global vision of providing academic excellence for its students.

Throughout its existence, ASU has made significant contributions to the history of the state and nation, especially with the involvement of students and employees in the Civil Rights Movement. The

Montgomery Bus Boycott, the first direct action campaign of the modern Civil Rights Movement, awakened a new consciousness within the university and the community responded to the call for participants. Even though officials, in a state committed to segregation, retaliated against the school with a decrease in funding, ASU continued to persevere and flourish so that today it is a model of diversity and equal opportunity for all. At the same time, ASU is a beacon in the legacy of black leadership and the preservation and celebration of African-American culture.

The University's rich history provides a firm foundation for the launch of ASU's 2021-2030 Strategic Plan. While the University remains proud of its legacy, the institution is focused on advancing its vision into "the promise of a bright future."

Focus 2030: Advancing the Legacy and Bridging Communities through Commitment, Collaboration and Creativity is a comprehensive plan, focusing on elevating our University to new levels of prominence. Focus 2030 is the roadmap for Alabama State University's path to achieving the institution's vision and better positioning the University to adapt to ongoing societal change.

This strategic plan is the result of a collaborative process comprised of an array of internal and external stakeholders. *Transcend, The Fearless Company*, provided facilitative guidance in the multi-stage process to leverage the deep knowledge and expertise of ASU faculty, staff, students and administrators. Surveys, interviews, workshops with the Board of Trustees, the President, Cabinet members, and members of a select Strategic Planning Working Group (SPWG) resulted in the development of this plan. The process utilized included a shared vision for the future of ASU that drives concrete actions and measurable progress toward goals, leading to the creation of a living plan, a meaningful review of organizational directives, candid discussions of opportunities and challenges, and leveraging previous accomplishments when envisioning the future of Alabama State University.

Despite being faced with challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic while undergoing its

reaffirmation process with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), University stakeholders remained dedicated to the development of a clear plan and focus for the future, reflecting the institution's goals, values and legacy. Consequently, this plan builds on more than 150 years of rich history of an institution that has served as a catalyst for teacher education, nationally recognized leaders in research, and a plethora of creative ideas and initiatives.

This document is a roadmap for achieving ASU's vision of becoming a Doctoral/Professional University, according to the Carnegie Classification. The intention of this plan is to illuminate the way forward for ASU to commit the time and resources to establish a robust ecosystem (funding, training and support) required to meet the challenges of a rapidly changing higher education landscape. The plan documents how ASU will navigate its place among higher education institutions, allowing the University not only to survive the challenges of the day, but also to thrive. Additionally, it serves as the bedrock for prioritizing actions to position ASU as the institution of choice for students, researchers and partners in fulfillment of our mission as an HBCU committed to excellence and as a global competitor within higher education.

As ASU navigates the years 2021 – 2030, those charged with implementing this plan will take practical and achievable steps for the next 10 years using this living document as a guide. As the University elevates its global excellence in teaching, research and service, the institution will achieve its vision and ensure optimal alignment with student education and skills acquisition to meet the needs of potential employers and society at large.

The framework utilized in the development of this plan includes anchors of purpose, institutional goals, objectives and metrics to evaluate this comprehensive plan that will contribute to the betterment of ASU and assure a unified approach that faculty, staff, students and external stakeholders can embrace.

ALABAMA STATE UNIVERSITY

2021-2030 STRATEGIC PLAN

Advancing Our ASU Legacy: Bridging Communities
through Commitment, Collaboration and Creativity

Vision

Alabama State University (ASU) will achieve global recognition through excellence in teaching, research and service. ASU will advance its current Carnegie Classification to a Doctoral/Professional University. ASU aspires to be a national leader in developing students through a transformational educational experience with global impact. As a community builder and partner, ASU will continue to have a measurable impact on society through innovative education and scholarly research.

Mission

Alabama State University is a student-centered public HBCU committed to excellence in teaching, research and service. ASU provides a nurturing, holistic learning environment focused on developing students, on campus and virtually, to be global change agents. ASU embraces CommUniversity and philanthropy to create dynamic relationships for positive community impact.

Values

PRIDE

We are committed to sustaining ASU's rich history as an epicenter of Modern- Day Civil Rights and social justice initiatives.

INTEGRITY

We are committed to honest and ethical standards, as we hold ourselves to transparent systems, structures and mechanisms.

IMPACT

We are committed to building partnerships and collaborations to contribute to external community impact and the development of our students.

DIVERSITY

We are committed to fostering a culture of diversity and inclusion within our community.

LOYALTY

We are committed to building upon our proud traditions that will impact the lives of alumni and generations to come, with a promise to give back.

ASU Anchors

The seven anchors of Alabama State University's Strategic Plan are the priorities directly linked to the mission.

- 1) **Academic Excellence**
- 2) **Student Success**
- 3) **Fiscal Growth and Institutional Integrity**
- 4) **CommUniversity**
- 5) **Continuous Improvement and Growth**
- 6) **Philanthropic Growth**
- 7) **Marketing and Communication**

ANCHOR 1: ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Goal: Lead a comprehensive academic enterprise to cultivate program expansion, research and service that supports faculty and students.

Objective 1: Sustain and improve program quality and instruction

Strategy 1: Use assessments and data to improve teaching and learning

Strategy 2: Maintain existing accreditations and identify accreditations for selected academic programs

Strategy 3: Enhance a culture of student-centered learning through strengthened pedagogical approaches for increased teaching effectiveness

Strategy 4: Integrate service-learning into the curricula

Strategy 5: Expand experiential learning opportunities for students

Objective 2: Ensure the continued competitiveness of the academic portfolio

Strategy 1: Regularly conduct program evaluations through the program viability review cycle

Strategy 2: Review, update and align academic programs

Strategy 3: Develop new degree, certificate and micro-credential programs to support workforce development

Objective 3: Support and strengthen research and creative activities

Strategy 1: Increase opportunities to support faculty scholarly development

Strategy 2: Develop a faculty mentorship program

Strategy 3: Enhance the intellectual and creative environment through special programs and grant opportunities

Strategy 4: Promote academic scholarship by increasing access to and sharing faculty research and creative activities

Objective 4: Expand delivery of online courses and programs

Strategy 1: Enhance online infrastructure

Strategy 2: Strengthen online academic student support services

Strategy 3: Increase virtual credit-bearing and non-credit bearing program offerings

Strategy 4: Increase marketing of and enrollment in online courses and degree programs

Objective 5: Strengthen and grow graduate programs

Strategy 1: Create undergraduate pathways leading to graduate programs

Strategy 2: Develop professional graduate degree programs that address market needs in Alabama and support achieving a Carnegie Classification status as a Doctoral/Professional University

Strategy 3: Implement new strategies for improving graduate student recruitment, student retention and the overall reputation of the Graduate School

Strategy 4: Expand new recruitment efforts aimed at growing international student populations in graduate programs

ANCHOR 2: STUDENT SUCCESS

Goal: Foster an inclusive student-centered culture of seamless enrollment; holistic student engagement and development; academic excellence; and career preparation toward meaningful and gainful employment.

Objective 1: Promote continuous improvement of student success strategies through data informed assessments

- Strategy 1:** Employ cross-functional collaborations to gather, analyze and utilize institutional data
- Strategy 2:** Update Retention Plan to incorporate high-impact practices to reduce attrition among undergraduate students
- Strategy 3:** Establish a Retention Dashboard to track progress internally and in comparison with peer institutions

Objective 2: Increase student persistence toward timely degree completion through comprehensive academic support initiatives

- Strategy 1:** Create a sustainable Student Success Center to meet the academic support and student development needs of ASU's undergraduate students
- Strategy 2:** Implement a First- and Second-year experience program (F/SYE) geared toward college preparedness and major to career readiness
- Strategy 3:** Coordinate major to career activities and opportunities with the F/SYE program, Major Colleges and the Office of Career Services
- Strategy 4:** Provide intrusive and effective Academic Advising to bolster intentional, caring and supportive relationships with students
- Strategy 5:** Ensure a robust academic tutoring program to support students at all levels, particularly first-year students

Objective 3: Maintain a University-Wide Retention Taskforce to engage academic affairs and student affairs in leading campuswide efforts that promote student enrollment and academic success

- Strategy 1:** Enhance engagement of degree-granting Colleges in the University-Wide Retention Taskforce
- Strategy 2:** Establish and track degree-granting Colleges' retention goals and benchmarks
- Strategy 3:** Devise strategies to close the retention gap between 2nd to 3rd and 3rd to 4th year cohorts
- Strategy 4:** Utilize technology to track, monitor and report students' progress

Objective 4: Sustain a holistic environment that is responsive to students' mental health, financial needs, and overall well-being

- Strategy 1:** Promote mental health wellness through effective counseling services and outreach programs
- Strategy 2:** Evaluate and infuse appropriate technologies and practices for improved communication and enhanced timely support for students
- Strategy 3:** Allocate fiscal resources to assist eligible students who are in need of additional financial support to maintain enrollment
- Strategy 4:** Advocate for additional funding from local, state and national governments and private sectors to support increased financial assistance for students with limited financial resources

Objective 5: Build a comprehensive recruitment and enrollment plan to broaden ASU's outreach to traditional and nontraditional students

- Strategy 1:** Increase and sustain partnerships with Community Colleges to promote transfer student enrollment
- Strategy 2:** Develop an outreach program focused on adults returning to complete a degree
- Strategy 3:** Enhance recruitment approach, including collaborating with outside partners, to develop strategies and attract diverse future students
- Strategy 4:** Increase dual enrollment opportunities for high school students
- Strategy 5:** Develop beneficial international partnerships and Memoranda of Understanding to increase pipelines for enrolling international students
- Strategy 6:** Utilize the University-Wide Enrollment Management Committee to diversify the recruitment approach by developing data-informed strategies for using peers, alumni and other stakeholders across multiple mediums.

Objective 6: Create an engaging and fulfilling Student Life experience

- Strategy 1:** Provide enriching and meaningful student-centered extracurricular and co-curricular experiences to build student connections
- Strategy 2:** Strengthen student support services through online and in-person resources and programs
- Strategy 3:** Create a mentorship program matching students with faculty, staff, and/or alumni
- Strategy 4:** Foster a campus culture that advocates and affirms all historically marginalized student populations through developing intentional diversity and inclusion initiative programs

ANCHOR 3: FISCAL GROWTH AND INSTITUTIONAL INTEGRITY

Goal: Grow a fiscal ecosystem and management approach that ensures organizational sustainability.

Objective 1: Strengthen ASU's fiscal position

- Strategy 1:** Enhance the internal review process to identify strategies to improve efficiencies
- Strategy 2:** Ensure responsible oversight and management of fiscal affairs
- Strategy 3:** Strengthen protocols and business processes to ensure audit compliance
- Strategy 4:** Increase institutional reserves
- Strategy 5:** Provide regular training and consultations to ensure adherence to fiscal policies and procedures
- Strategy 6:** Secure appropriate insurance coverage

Objective 2: Increase alternative sources of revenue

- Strategy 1:** Maximize use of campus facilities for revenue generation.
- Strategy 2:** Increase ticket sales for intercollegiate sports
- Strategy 3:** Expand the program and educational offerings to appeal to business, military, government, nonprofit and general public interests
- Strategy 4:** Increase number of contracts and grants submitted and awarded

Objective 3: Limit institutional exposure to risk and maintain institutional compliance

Strategy 1: Conduct consultations to reduce institutional risks

Strategy 2: Offer professional development opportunities to increase awareness and knowledge of sexual harassment, discrimination and state ethic laws

Strategy 3: Strengthen contract review and execution processes/protocols and ensure compliance by all campus stakeholders

Strategy 4: Provide accurate and timely submissions for audit, accreditation, state, federal and organizational reports and requirements (i.e., ACHE, NCAA, NCES, NSF, Title III, SACSCOC, Financial Aid and Grants and Contracts)

ANCHOR 4: COMMUNIVERSITY

Goal: Build meaningful partnerships to support ASU's vision and contribute to the larger community.

Objective 1: Establish and sustain impactful community partnerships and involvement

Strategy 1: Promote ASU programs and intellectual resources through leadership of and participation at the local, state, national and international levels

Strategy 2: Increase community engagement with ASU through events, athletic contests, partnerships and common interests

Strategy 3: Expand community involvement opportunities for faculty, staff and students

Strategy 4: Build the internal capacity to support organizing and tracking CommUniversity activities

Objective 2: Enhance partnerships with government, businesses and community organizations to expand our local, national and global impact

Strategy 1: Establish a community advisory board to build and lead strong networks of supporters and partners

Strategy 2: Collaborate with local and regional chambers of commerce, workforce and professional associations to identify potential partnerships

Strategy 3: Identify viable public-private partnership opportunities that align with ASU's strategic goals

Strategy 4: Lead and participate in selected policy and higher education initiatives

Strategy 5: Establish a Center for Social Justice which provides teaching, research and outreach to promote equity, diversity and inclusion

Objective 3: Leverage the University's diverse alumni base to impact the community through strategic and meaningful involvement

Strategy 1: Mobilize alumni to serve as ambassadors for the University

Strategy 2: Advance community impact by connecting with networks, relationships and resources of ASU alumni

ANCHOR 5: CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT AND GROWTH

Goal: Seek opportunities to continually improve, strengthen and advance ASU.

Objective 1: Ensure institutional improvement by building a culture of quality customer service

Strategy 1: Establish an ASU Quality Customer Service Model based on best practices

Strategy 2: Communicate quality customer service expectations for ASU stakeholders

Strategy 3: Provide professional development and accountability structures to ensure effective implementation of the ASU Quality Customer Service Model

Strategy 4: Institutionalize the collection of and response to customer service feedback from all stakeholders

Objective 2: Implement a robust continuous improvement process to reduce costs and improve services for all colleges, divisions and units

Strategy 1: Evaluate and modify existing policies and procedures for all academic and administrative areas to ensure clarity, improve functionality, and confirm alignment with state and federal laws

Strategy 2: Develop a Continuous Improvement Academy to increase the usage of assessment and evaluation strategies for program and unit improvement

Strategy 3: Coach all instructional and non-instructional units in the development of continuous improvement plans aligned with the strategic plan

Strategy 4: Create a dashboard and provide annual reports to the ASU community regarding progress toward achieving the Strategic Plan goals

Objective 3: Strengthen the grant management and support functions at ASU

Strategy 1: Maintain and establish policies and procedures to ensure accountability in the grant management process for institutional compliance and optimal performance

Strategy 2: Enhance the internal capacity to track and manage grant activities, foster interdisciplinary collaboration and increase faculty and staff expertise to successfully compete for grant funding opportunities

Strategy 3: Identify and foster relationships with external entities to increase access to funding opportunities

Objective 4: Develop a robust human resources program

Strategy 1: Track and monitor completion of performance evaluations for full compliance annually

Strategy 2: Review Human Resources policies and procedures to ensure incorporation of changes in state and federal laws

Strategy 3: Provide professional development opportunities to improve the performance evaluation process

Strategy 4: Establish metrics for employee performance and accountability

Strategy 5: Create a recognition program to reward employees for their meaningful contributions to the University

Strategy 6: Develop standard onboarding, separation, training and leadership development processes for employees and supervisors

Objective 5: Create and sustain a technological environment that is supportive of academic and administrative needs

Strategy 1: Strengthen the IT infrastructure to allow for flexibility to adopt and seamlessly implement technological enhancements

Strategy 2: Engage University stakeholders to create a robust system of technology-related training, communication, accountability and decision-making

Strategy 3: Enhance cloud computing for the improved delivery of shared, on-demand computing services over the Internet to offer faster innovation, flexible resources and economies of scale

Strategy 4: Implement and make available a suite of applications and business analytics to provide insights

Strategy 5: Implementation of project management functions for efficient and effective operations

Strategy 6: Bolster stakeholder confidence and satisfaction with IT services through the reliability of the IT infrastructure and responsiveness

Objective 6: Upgrade campus facilities for campus revitalization and expansion

Strategy 1: Develop a Facility Capital Improvement Plan

Strategy 2: Update Campus Master Plan for Land Use and Expansion

Strategy 3: Strengthen Facility processes to improve forecasting and prioritization of facility needs

Strategy 4: Develop comprehensive training programs to deepen staff's knowledge and skills to implement current trends in facility upkeep

Objective 7: Enhance the Department of Public Safety's holistic approach to maintaining a safe campus for faculty, staff, students and external stakeholders

Strategy 1: Leverage public safety partnerships and technologies to increase efficiencies and better serve the campus and surrounding community

Strategy 2: Develop a public safety training center, in collaboration with external partners, to provide professional development for internal and external stakeholders

Strategy 3: Engage with campus stakeholders to provide public safety awareness sessions, encourage multilateral communication and collaborate on joint projects to strengthen confidence in campus safety

ANCHOR 6: PHILANTHROPIC GROWTH

Goal: Advance ASU's strategic priorities by creating a culture of philanthropy among ASU's stakeholders to increase fundraising.

Objective 1: Enhance the University's fundraising infrastructure and capacity to generate increased support.

- Strategy 1:** Develop a robust annual giving program to generate support for ASU's strategic priorities
- Strategy 2:** Launch a Capital Campaign to support ASU's strategic priorities
- Strategy 3:** Implement fundraising activities to increase corporate and foundation contributions
- Strategy 4:** Expand internal capacity to support donor cultivation, stewardship and fundraising efforts
- Strategy 5:** Establish policies and procedures to improve fundraising coordination among ASU units and alumni initiatives

Objective 2: Develop intentional engagement strategies with stakeholders to increase financial support

- Strategy 1:** Reinvigorate the pipeline to transform students into engaged alumni
- Strategy 2:** Strengthen alumni relationships with the University through increased direct engagement strategies that link alumni, nationally and internationally, to improve the alumni giving rate
- Strategy 3:** Expand philanthropic communications to deepen relationships with alumni, students and corporations

ANCHOR 7: MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

Goal: Promote, strengthen and protect Alabama State University's brand, relevance and accomplishments.

Objective 1: Integrate marketing strategies and best practices throughout the institution's divisions, colleges and centers

- Strategy 1:** Develop a marketing plan that advances the University's brand across a broad spectrum of marketing/media platforms
- Strategy 2:** Establish clear marketing protocols to ensure division, college and unit marketing and branding align with institutional standards
- Strategy 3:** Strengthen ASU's brand by expanding integrated marketing campaigns through traditional and digital platforms
- Strategy 4:** Utilize the University's public radio station, WVAS, as a platform for engaging potential and established stakeholders, and for providing specific ASU-oriented programming
- Strategy 5:** Market the University's diverse facilities as venues for public events and activities as a means of public engagement

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Objective 2: Strengthen and advance the University's public profile through the development of a strategic communications plan

Strategy 1: Create a robust communications plan for internal and external stakeholders

Strategy 2: Strengthen ASU's media presence by promoting ASU's cadre of experts among our faculty and staff

Strategy 3: Prioritize continuous maintenance and content updates of the University's website as a key communications tool

Strategy 4: Leverage the University's compelling and unique "stories" (faculty, staff, students, alumni, history and academics) in creative articles and videos for dissemination across traditional and digital platforms

Strategy 5: Strengthen approaches to and intentionality of internal communications to improve awareness, collaboration and service

SCORECARD

Alabama State University will review and evaluate its anchors to determine our success using objective measures. An annual scorecard will be published to share ASU's continuous improvement using the following metrics:

Academic Excellence

- 1. Quality programs and instruction:** pass rates for courses, student course evaluations, number of accredited programs
- 2. Academic portfolio:** program enrollment numbers, new programs established
- 3. Faculty engagement and productivity:** number of peer reviewed publications/creative activities, grants awarded, tenure and promotion rates
- 4. Online programs:** online program enrollment and completion
- 5. Graduate programs:** number of graduate programs, graduate program enrollment and completion

Student Success

- 1. Continuous improvement:** retention dashboard, Retention Plan
- 2. Student persistence:** 1st to 2nd year retention rates
- 3. Retention Taskforce:** retention rate after the 2nd year
- 4. Holistic Environment:** student satisfaction with student support services
- 5. Recruitment plan:** new student enrollment numbers for specific populations
- 6. Student life:** number of program participants, student satisfaction with student life

Fiscal Growth and Integrity

- 1. Fiscal position:** fiscal efficiencies created, amount of institutional reserves, audit findings
- 2. Alternative sources of revenue:** alternative revenue generated, grants submitted and awarded
- 3. Institutional compliance and risk mitigation:** number of timely and accurately submitted external reports, percentage staff completing required trainings

CommUniversity

- 1. Community partnerships and involvement:** number of community partnerships, ASU stakeholder community engagement/volunteer activities
- 2. Enhance local, national and global impact:** number of partnership agreements signed and operational, number of policy/higher education engagements
- 3. Alumni:** number of alumni serving as Ambassadors or creating CommUniversity activities

Continuous Improvement and Growth

- 1. Quality customer service:** customer satisfaction
- 2. Continuous improvement:** assessment report quality, assessment completion
- 3. Grants management:** number of grants submitted and awarded
- 4. Human resources:** number of completed performance evaluations, number of employees recognized, employee satisfaction

- 5. Technological environment:** number of technology improvements, employee and student satisfaction with technology services
- 6. Campus facilities:** number of facility improvements/new projects completed, employee and student satisfaction with campus facilities
- 7. Campus safety:** number of training sessions provided, employee and student satisfaction with campus safety

Philanthropic Growth

- 1. Infrastructure and Capacity:** year over year fundraising, capital campaign funds, annual percentage of corporate contribution
- 2. Culture of philanthropy:** annual alumni giving rate, annual number of donors, endowment value

Marketing and Communications

- 1. Integrated marketing strategies:** number of campaigns launched
- 2. Communication:** number of positive media stories, digital media followers and website clicks, student and employee satisfaction with internal communication

Note: Scorecard metrics are subject to change.



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