



**FORT VALLEY  
STATE UNIVERSITY**  
EMPOWER *the* POSSIBLE.



# 2020-2025

STRATEGIC PLAN

UNLEASHING 21ST CENTURY INNOVATION,  
TRANSFORMATION AND EXCELLENCE

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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As we celebrate the 125th Anniversary of Fort Valley State University, one of the most significant and exciting developments in my four years at FVSU is the creation of a new strategic plan focused on our students, academic programs and partnerships. Our Strategic Plan continues the progress we've made at Fort Valley State University and also recognizes the hard work, dedication, and dynamic contributions of many of the people who positioned the University for this next giant leap. Our new plan is important for several reasons.

**First**, it is a public declaration of our priorities and the principles we stand on. **Second**, it is a statement of accountability. Many individuals and groups shared their ideas, insights, and passions in the development of this plan. We expect our students, faculty, administrators, staff, alumni, community and business leaders, and other stakeholders to hold us accountable for achieving the goals in the plan. **Third**, it provides a compass for FVSU's future. With this plan, FVSU is positioning itself to play an increasingly pivotal role in enhancing student success and contributing to the economic vitality of our region. Our strategic priorities, goals, and strategies were determined with this vision in mind.

The strategic plan is the result of hard work by the Strategic Planning Committee and months of collaboration by key stakeholders, including faculty, staff, administrators, students, alumni, friends, and community and business partners. This plan is designed to



be dynamic in nature. Throughout the next five years, we will evaluate whether our execution of the plan

**“This is among the most exciting times in the long history of FVSU.”**

is meeting expectations and adjust accordingly; particularly, if warranted by extraordinary circumstances such as COVID-19.

This plan is our commitment to creating globally competitive students who are critical thinkers, by providing an academically rich and engaging environment in which students can study, learn, and develop through their interaction with fellow students, faculty, staff, administrators, and community leaders. The goals in this plan focus on several key areas:

1. Enhancing the quality and distinctiveness of the FVSU

educational experience for all students.

2. Promoting excellence, innovation, and creativity throughout all areas of the University.
3. Upgrading FVSU's infrastructure and facilities enhancements.
4. Enhancing FVSU's image and organizational identity as a 21st century HBCU and 1890 Land-Grant institution.

I thank members of the Strategic Planning Committee for their fine work in producing an excellent Strategic Plan for FVSU. I anticipate looking back at this plan years from now with a sense of pride in what can be accomplished through commitment, collaboration, creativity, and hard work.

This is among the most exciting times in the long great history of FVSU. I know the entire University community is looking forward to the opportunity to take part in this transformational effort.

I am delighted to share with you the Fort Valley State University 2020-2025 Strategic Plan, and I look forward to pursuing the many exciting opportunities it identifies.

**PAUL JONES, PH.D.**  
**PRESIDENT**



# MESSAGE FROM THE CO-CHAIRS

We are privileged to serve as co-chairs of the committee. There is no better time than now to be a part of the Wildcat Family. With the 125th Anniversary of Fort Valley State University upon us, we are celebrating a momentous time for jubilee and reflection of our history. As Georgia's only 1890-land grant institution, a comprehensive institution within the University System of Georgia, and a Historically Black College and University, Fort Valley State University continues to make strides.

In two of the past four years, Fort Valley State University has been ranked as the nation's top producer of African-Americans in mathematics. FVSU ranks third in the state of Georgia in the number of African-Americans with bachelor's degrees in engineering technologies and engineering-related majors. During this past decade, FVSU has been the top producer of African-Americans in the state of Georgia who go on to attend medical school. We are the host of Georgia's only Veterinary Technology bachelor's degree program. Additionally, Fort Valley State University's Cooperative Developmental Energy Program (CDEP) offers students the opportunity to obtain a STEM degree from FVSU and an engineering degree from one of five partnering institutions.

As a part of the University's continued quest for excellence, the 2020-2025 Strategic Plan will help guide our vision and trajectory for the next five years. President Jones charged the Strategic Planning Committee with leading this process and called for the creation of a bold, visionary but actionable plan. The Strategic Planning Committee, working with the consulting firm, MGT, engaged in a broadly consultative process that engaged our constituents and stakeholders. The process was inclusive and transparent, and updates on the Committee's work and invitation for feedback from the community were made available through a dedicated strategic planning website: <https://www.fvsu.edu/about-fort-valley-state-university/strategicplan2025>. Furthermore, the Strategic Planning Committee invited nominations for individuals to serve on

critical strategic planning workgroups (members are listed in Appendix B).

Over the past 10 months, we convened focus groups, surveyed the campus community, and called on students, faculty, staff, alumni, and community partners to provide their input and recommendations. The feedback was robust, helping to generate an inclusive, mission-focused and forward-looking strategic plan that will benefit our campus for decades to come. We are honored to assist in the process of combining innovative ideas with mission- and vision-oriented guidelines. We believe the resulting strategic plan will continue to encourage and build on the strengths and opportunities of Fort Valley State University for years to come.

The Strategic Planning Committee members are proud and honored to serve in this challenging endeavor of planning for the exciting future of Fort Valley State University. We are immensely grateful for the collective response to the call to action. On behalf of the Strategic Planning Committee, we extend our sincere gratitude to our students, faculty, staff, alumni, and community partners for their contributions to this very important endeavor. Thank you!



**DR. OLUFUNKE FONTENOT**  
Interim Chief of Staff  
Office of the President  
Co-Chair, Strategic Planning Steering Committee



**DR. FELICIA JEFFERSON**  
Associate Professor  
Department of Biology, FVSU  
Co-Chair, Strategic Planning Steering Committee

On behalf of FVSU, we are delighted to share with you the outcome of several months of thoughtful deliberation and reflection: **a bold and comprehensive Strategic Plan for the next five years.**

The Fort Valley State University 2020-2025 Strategic Plan outlines the critical steps we will take to secure FVSU's future. Like many institutions, we have concerns about student success, retention and graduation, program relevance, excellence, and accountability. Therefore, we used these themes in developing FVSU's 2020-2025 Strategic Plan. Our goal was to develop a forward thinking, ambitious agenda to guide us through the next five years as we work to provide accessible, affordable, high-quality learning opportunities, which meet students' lifelong needs and contribute to the cultural, social, and economic development of the region and the state.

We are grateful for the support, determination, and combined efforts of those who provided input, advice, and guidance.

We find inspiration and excitement in opportunities and challenges over the next five years. With this plan, FVSU is positioned to meet challenges, create opportunities, and above all, enhance the success of our students in a knowledge-and-service based global economy.

This plan, which is described in greater detail throughout this document, is intended to be a living, breathing document that will guide us as we work to recruit, retain, and graduate our students; as well as, adapt and adjust to crisis such as COVID-19. As we emerge from the strategic planning process, we do so with a renewed commitment to the future of Fort Valley State University.

**DR. OLUFUNKE FONTENOT**  
**DR. FELICIA JEFFERSON**

# STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE MEMBERS



**| DR. OLUFUNKE A. FONTENOT, CO-CHAIR**

| FVSU, Interim Chief of Staff

**| DR. FELICIA JEFFERSON, CO-CHAIR**

| FVSU, Associate Professor, Department of Biology

**| DR. GOVIND KANNAN**

| FVSU, Vice President for Economic Development and Land-Grant Affairs

**| DR. SARWIN DHIR**

| FVSU, Professor, Department Chair of Agricultural Sciences

**| DR. GREGORY FORD**

| FVSU, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences

**| DR. ANDREW LEE**

| FVSU, Professor, Director of Undergraduate Research, Visual and Performing Arts and Media Studies

**| DR. MEIGAN FIELDS**

| FVSU, Associate Professor, Behavioral and Social Sciences

**| MR. JESSE KANE**

| FVSU, Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management

**| MS. GRACY M. BARKSDALE**

| FVSU Alumni (Criminal Justice 1983), Attorney, Atlanta, Georgia

**| MS. JILLIAN BOWEN**

| Community Representative, Peach County Development Authority

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In August 2019, Fort Valley State University (FVSU) initiated a strategic planning process to develop a new strategic plan to assist FVSU in making strategic choices about its future. A Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) was formed and charged with guiding the process and completing the strategic plan. The purpose of this process was to align the plan with FVSU's mission, vision, and values and to identify goals and strategies to support FVSU's strategic direction. This document describes how FVSU will respond over the next five years to the needs of a diverse student population and the social and economic needs of the region and state.

The strategic plan is intentionally focused on student success and operational excellence and is a declaration of FVSU's commitment to connecting with students, challenging them to succeed, and challenging FVSU to provide them with the tools they need to succeed. This plan focuses resources to maximize results by ensuring quality and excellence in all aspects of FVSU's academic and administrative operations. The plan is aligned with FVSU's mission, vision and values, and captures many of the initiatives that have been discussed and worked on in recent years. This plan brings these initiatives together under one coordinated set of goals and strategies. It also aligns FVSU's operations, processes, and systems under one unified exceptional student experience agenda. This enables FVSU to become best in class by developing informed and creative students capable of contributing to a knowledge-and service-based global economy. FVSU's 2020-2025 Strategic

Plan is premised on building on its strong foundation as a comprehensive 21st century 1890 Land-Grant HBCU

institution positioned to continue to meet the educational needs of a racially, culturally, and economically diverse student population.

**"This plan focuses resources to maximize results by ensuring quality and excellence in all aspects of FVSU's academic and administrative operations."**

This plan boldly challenges FVSU to position the University to become a destination for academic excellence, serving students from the region and state, and beyond. It requires optimizing resources to achieve greater effectiveness, efficiency, and responsiveness in meeting the needs of students. It is aggressive, and focuses on strategic priorities which are critical in maintaining a distinctive, competitive, and student-centered institution. Most important, the Strategic Plan recognizes that in order for FVSU to remain relevant, it must evolve in ways that track both the pace of change and the diversity and needs of students in order to sustain the growth that is so critical to its future.

## WHY A NEW STRATEGIC PLAN?

To build on FVSU's historic legacy and continue to thrive and become more competitive will require creative adaptation to changes inside and outside of higher education. The challenges and opportunities confronting FVSU require enhanced institutional capacity to address extraordinary circumstances, such as COVID-19, while staying on course to achieve strategic goals and mobilizing the University around those goals. The FVSU 2020-2025 Strategic Plan prioritizes the work of the University for the next five years. It was developed with careful consideration of the feedback received from key stakeholders, faculty, staff, students, alumni, and the community; and is the

result of a vigorous and often times passionate series of conversations and discussions about who we are and what we should become. Moving forward, we will measure everything we do against our mission, vision, and values and remain focused on serving our students. As you review the plan, you will note our goals and strategic initiatives for the next five years contribute directly to addressing our strategic priorities.

### **STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

The highest priority for FVSU is to continue to strive toward institutional excellence and provide an exceptional student experience. This plan affirms FVSU’s commitment to excellence in all aspects of operations and education service delivery. Within this context, four major strategic priorities emerged from the input, gathering and feedback during the development of the Strategic Plan. These strategic priorities serve as the organizing framework for the Strategic Plan. Customer service and enhancing FVSU’s identity and excellence are common threads that run through all four strategic priorities and are essential to achieving the central theme of the plan—student success. For each priority, one or more strategic goals were identified, and action steps and strategies were created to achieve those goals. The strategic priorities, goals, and strategies are the foundation of FVSU’s 2020-2025 Strategic Plan.

## **STRATEGIC PRIORITY ONE EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EXPERIENCE**

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## **STRATEGIC PRIORITY TWO OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE**

.....

## **STRATEGIC PRIORITY THREE OPERATIONAL IDENTITY**

.....

## **STRATEGIC PRIORITY FOUR ENGAGEMENT AND COLLABORATION**



# MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES

## MISSION STATEMENT

Fort Valley State University, founded in 1895, is an HBCU and 1890 Land-Grant institution providing excellent academic programs that integrate quality instruction, research, extension, and student learning experiences responsive to the needs of a culturally and economically diverse student population equipped to excel in the 21st-century global community.

## VISION STATEMENT

Fort Valley State University aspires to be the University of choice for students, faculty, staff, and future

employers, recognized nationally and internationally for its excellence in teaching, research, service, exemplary academic programs, and globally competitive students.

## VALUES

**Intellectual Excellence** ► FVSU is committed to the highest standards of excellence by creating stimulating learning environments that promote intellectual growth, innovation, discovery, and life-long learning.

**Student-Centered** ► Our top priority is students and providing them with an enriching, stimulating, and supportive

environment.

**Diversity** ► We respect all people, cultures, ideas, beliefs, lifestyles, and perspectives.

**Integrity and Collegiality** ► We hold everyone accountable for their actions and engaging in honest, ethical behavior.

**Engagement** ► We serve as an important strategic partner and resource by promoting educational attainment, cultural enrichment, and economic development.



# INTRODUCTION

To position FVSU for the future, a strategic planning process was launched in 2019 to develop a new strategic plan to guide FVSU over the next five years. The strategic plan is an essential tool for enabling FVSU to adapt and take advantage of the opportunities presented by a dynamic and rapidly evolving higher education marketplace. The plan also represents windows of opportunity and a commitment to positioning FVSU to meet the changing needs of students, the region and state.

The challenges and opportunities confronting FVSU suggest the need for enhanced institutional capacity to act as a unit; that is, to chart strategic directions and mobilize the entire University around these directions. This plan challenges FVSU to optimize its resources and utilize strategic approaches to maximize efficiency, effectiveness, collaboration, and responsiveness in meeting the changing needs of students. It is aggressive, and focuses on strategic priorities which are critical in maintaining a student-centered and student-focused institution. This plan also aligns with the University System of Georgia (USG) goals related to student success, access and affordability, responsible stewardship, community impact, economic competitiveness and greater collaboration with education and business partners.

When viewed in its totality, the FVSU 2020-2025 Strategic Plan is a roadmap for guiding FVSU's future. The strategic plan prioritizes the work of the University for the next five years. The development of FVSU's strategic

plan tapped the ideas and expertise of a wide range of stakeholders to help determine FVSU's future direction. It was developed with careful consideration of the input received from faculty, staff, administrators, students, alumni, community partners, and other key stakeholders. This input resulted in a series of vigorous and often-times passionate conversations and discussions about FVSU's future. Most important, it was a highly inclusive process that invited diverse input and discussion at every level. The plan is shaped with the understanding that change is a part of the higher education landscape, and FVSU must remain flexible in adapting to a rapidly changing environment, including a major crisis such as COVID-19. In such a dynamic environment, it is presumed that action steps may look different from year to year. At the same time, we remain steadfast in our mission and vision, and will maintain our core values.

Four major priorities emerged during the development of the strategic plan. The four priorities along with the goals and strategies are the foundation for the FVSU 2020-2025 Strategic Plan.

## PLANNING PROCESS OVERVIEW

In August 2019, the Strategic Planning Committee (SPC), consisting of administrators, faculty, staff, and community partners initiated the strategic planning process. FVSU awarded a contract to MGT of America Consulting, LLC (MGT), a national higher education management consulting and research firm, to facilitate the development of

**“This plan challenges FVSU to optimize its resources and utilize strategic approaches to maximize efficiency, effectiveness, collaboration, and responsiveness in meeting the changing needs of students.”**

FVSU's strategic plan and to work in partnership and collaboration with the SPC throughout the strategic planning process. In conjunction with the appointment of the Strategic Planning Committee, the strategic planning process was a major agenda item at the annual Administrative Retreat in June 2019. For the strategic planning portion, there was a vigorous

and sometimes passionate discussion about FVSU's future and its challenges and opportunities. A similar discussion took place at the Faculty and Staff Institute in August. The results from the Leadership Retreat and the Faculty and Staff Institute were used as an important starting point for the SPC.

The strategic planning process began with a series of meetings between the SPC and MGT to address the scope, parameters, and expected outcomes of the strategic planning process. Over a period of several months, the SPC worked in partnership with MGT to complete the strategic planning process, which was organized around a series of activities and tasks that were completed by the SPC and MGT. The SPC served as a sounding board, contributing thought provoking perspectives on a variety of issues pertinent to FVSU's future and the development of the plan. A process was launched to gather broad input regarding FVSU's strengths and assets, as well as challenges and opportunities. The input gathering was designed

to obtain a deeper understanding of opinions and perspectives about FVSU in order to develop goals to address future challenges and opportunities. Diverse input for this plan was gathered through a series of meetings, an online survey, key informant interviews, and focus groups with students. During this same period, the SPC met to review the results and to delve into the specifics of issues that emerged. The SPC primarily focused on how FVSU can better serve students and the broader community by strengthening partnerships and collaboration and being more responsive to the changing needs of students and community stakeholders. The outcome of the discussions was a consensus on mission, vision, values, strategic priorities, goals, and other components of the strategic plan.

The SPC and consulting team completed the following major actions:

- ▶ Conducted an environmental scan/SWOT analysis, focusing on strengths, challenges, threats, and assets, and PEST factors (Political,

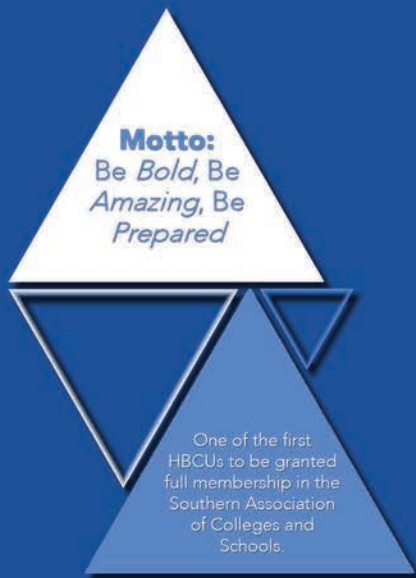
Economic, Social, Technological), which may affect FVSU within the next five years.

- ▶ Conducted an online survey to solicit input from faculty, staff, students, and alumni.
- ▶ Conducted focus group sessions with students.
- ▶ Revised FVSU's Mission, Vision, and Values.
- ▶ Drafted strategic priorities and strategic goals.
- ▶ Identified action steps and strategies to achieve strategic goals.

A draft of the strategic plan was prepared and forwarded to the President for review. Following the review process, the strategic plan was revised and submitted for approval in April 2020.



Fort Valley High and Industrial School was founded 125 years ago as a bridge to prosperity for the first generations of free black men and women in America. Mr. John Wesley Davison was its first principal.



## FVSU AT-A-GLANCE

- ▶ Founded in 1895
- ▶ 1890 - Land Grant Institution
- ▶ Over 2,700 enrolled students
- ▶ 1,365 - acre campus
- ▶ 12 Division II athletic programs
- ▶ Student - Faculty ratio: 23 : 1

## TOP MAJORS

- ▶ Biology
- ▶ Criminal Justice
- ▶ Psychology
- ▶ Management
- ▶ Veterinary Technology

## ACCREDITED BY THE

**Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges**  
to award Associate, Baccalaureate, Masters, and Education Specialist degrees.

## RANKED NUMBER 1



**Public HBCU in Georgia**  
Source: US News and World Report, 2019



**In the U.S. for Online Student Economic Mobility in 2017**  
Source: SR Education Group



**Affordable Online Master's Degree Rehabilitation Counseling in the U.S.**  
Source: bestcounselingdegrees.com



**Most Affordable Online College for Psychology**  
Source: onlineu.org



**TOP 5**  
**Blue Machine Marching Band's Halftime Show in the U.S.**  
Source: HBCUSports.com



**TOP 10**  
**On the List of "Best Value HBCU Graduate Schools."**  
Source: bestvalueschools.com

# HIGHER EDUCATION LANDSCAPE

## HIGHER EDUCATION

Nationally, higher education is undergoing dramatic and very fundamental changes creating the need for institutions to reexamine the delivery of education services in order to be responsive to a more diverse population that places different and often greater demands on them for 21st century relevance. The environmental factors shaping higher education, have changed significantly compared to five years ago. The social, technological, economic, educational, political, lifestyle, and environmental factors that impact the future of higher education present both challenges and opportunities. The COVID-19 outbreak in 2020 is illustrative of how environmental factors can quickly reshape the higher education landscape. Also, in many states, funding for higher education has been severely impacted, particularly in states which have implemented performance-based funding. In many instances, funding uncertainty has created a mismatch between revenue and program needs, requiring a substantial reallocation of existing resources and a different approach to fiscal management and education service delivery.

In addition, other key environmental factors include:

- ▶ Increased competition (nationally and internationally) for students, faculty, and other resources among traditional and non-traditional providers of higher education. Today's higher education marketplace is more fluid and diverse in terms of delivery models

and methods.

- ▶ Greater demands for education, technological innovation in education design and delivery, and on-demand education.
- ▶ Dramatic and sweeping changes in the traditional model for financing public higher education suggest competing alternative futures ranging from slow decline to enhanced excellence.
- ▶ Increasing concerns about the cost of higher education, student loan debt, and questions about the value of higher education and a college degree.

While the above factors are important, the ongoing revolution in information and communication technologies looms as perhaps the most critical factor in transforming higher education in a way that impacts instruction, teaching, research, service, and other dynamics. In many respects, the future is dependent upon how technology is managed and utilized to support student learning and engagement. Today's students use technology in ways that could not have been imagined just a few short years ago, and technology is re-shaping all aspects of academic and administrative operations. Higher education institutions that are positioned to take advantage of these technologies in ways that do not diminish core academic strengths are better positioned

to thrive in the higher education marketplace.

Data from the Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE) suggest gradual growth for the nation's colleges and universities, particularly given the changing student, demographic changes in our economy due to globalization, and even greater demands for an educated, ready to work workforce. In surveying the future landscape of higher education, ASHE cited several key factors that loom large for colleges and universities, including FVSU:

- ▶ A need to provide access to a new generation of students so they can take their place as productive members of the community.
- ▶ A need to provide a more highly trained and educated workforce.
- ▶ A need to help students succeed and complete their programs.
- ▶ A need to maintain quality in the face of rising costs and declining financial resources.



To address these needs and other critical factors, colleges and universities must embrace the changing higher education landscape that requires rethinking the future, while staying true to preparing students and learners to enter and thrive in a technologically advanced, information-based, and continuously evolving workplace. Many institutions are redefining their futures by assessing how others are navigating a changing and much more competitive landscape. Most importantly, colleges and universities are leveraging their strengths and assets as they look ahead and envision a future focused on institutional financial health and institutional growth and stability.

## HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) have not been immune to the environmental forces reshaping higher education. The 101 HBCUs across the nation have strengths and assets, yet they, too, face significant challenges that threaten their survival and existence. Many HBCUs are facing too much debt with too few students, and too few dollars coming in from alumni and other sources. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), more than 6,000 fewer students attended HBCUs during the 2018-19 school year. The 2018-19 enrollment of 291,767 was down from the 298,134 at HBCUs in the previous year, and was the lowest since 2001, when there were 289,985 students at HBCUs. Some institutions, such as Cheyney University which has lost 38 percent of its student body, are on the verge of collapse. Contributing factors impacting HBCUs include the following:

- ▶ HBCUs lost \$50 million when the Department of Education made it

more difficult to acquire the PLUS Loan that many schools relied on.

- ▶ Increased competition from predominately white institutions and the appeal of online colleges like DeVry University and the University of Phoenix.
- ▶ The lack of contemporary technology and facilities.
- ▶ HBCU retention rates, which are as low as 50 percent in some HBCUs.

Some HBCUs have reluctantly embraced the changing higher education landscape that requires rethinking the future while staying true to their traditional and historical mission. In an environment where competition is intense, it has become more difficult for HBCUs, which tend to have fewer resources than their counterparts to graduate students who are prepared to enter and thrive in a technologically advanced, information-based, and continuously evolving workplace.

More than in the past, HBCUs face difficult questions about their relevance and future. As predominately white institutions and online colleges aggressively recruit for students, it is no longer a given that HBCU alumni will send their children to an HBCU. The factors mentioned above create challenges and opportunities for many HBCUs, not only for resources to operate, but also in terms of leadership. Currently, there are approximately ten openings for HBCU presidents across the nation. Although the pace has slowed considerably, when resignation or termination of presidents and chancellors affects a third of all HBCU campuses annually, leadership stability is a serious issue; and some HBCUs have had multi-year streaks of replacing presidents. This dynamic

has a ripple effect, which can adversely impact recruitment of students, faculty, and staff, alumni support, fund raising, and accreditation.

Fortunately, many HBCUs are not relying solely on their past reputations, and are redefining their future and assessing how other institutions are navigating this competitive landscape. This is particularly true for some 1890 Land-Grant institutions, which have traditionally pursued a threefold mission of extending access to higher education, cultivating fields like agriculture and engineering, and contributing to economic development. Some have developed national reputations for cutting edge research and providing research-based educational opportunities that respond



to changing needs. Most importantly, some are focusing on their strengths and assets as they look ahead and envision a better future that requires them to be vigilant and aggressive in ensuring their institutional financial health and well-being. Much to their credit, 1890 Land-Grant institutions such as FVSU have hired visionary leaders who bring a fresh mindset and outlook about institutional growth and viability, accompanied by a transformative vision that projects HBCUs as centers of educational excellence, opportunity, scholarship, and discovery.

# ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

An essential component of this strategic plan, the environmental scan/SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis, was designed to account for FVSU's internal and external environments and to identify key factors, issues, and trends that may impact FVSU over the next five years. These are times of rapid change. A noted humorist once said, "Even if you're on the right track, you'll get run over if you just sit there." An important part of the process was collecting both quantitative and qualitative data from multiple data sources, including faculty, staff, students, alumni, and other stakeholders. Overall, the environmental scan/SWOT analysis recognized several important factors:

1. FVSU's internal and external

environments influence its ability to deliver on its mission and goals. Several distinct arenas (political, economic, social, and technological) are now very much interconnected and part of FVSU's environment.

2. The analysis of environmental factors is essential in order to provide evidence and guidance for strategic goals and priorities.
3. External trends/issues combined with internal factors help shape strategic priorities and strategies that will chart FVSU's direction and focus for the next five years.

## STAKEHOLDER INPUT

Overall, the environmental scan/SWOT analysis demonstrated that there is broad-based support for FVSU

among its major stakeholders and FVSU has major assets and strengths, which can be maximized in positioning FVSU for the future. Also, there is enthusiastic support for FVSU's current leadership and the direction in which FVSU is heading. FVSU provides a strong sense of family and community, which is valued by students, faculty, and alumni. Like all institutions, FVSU faces challenges as it moves into the future. However, there is confidence FVSU is fully capable of confronting its challenges and taking full advantage of potential opportunities. What follows is a compilation of factors identified in the environmental scan/SWOT analysis.



# SWOT ANALYSIS

- STRENGTHS
- WEAKNESSES
- OPPORTUNITIES
- THREATS

# 80%

agree that FVSU offers a sense of family to students and is a good place to learn

# 68%

agree that FVSU is a major player in the region's economic development

# 70%

felt that student housing facilities are appropriate to meet student needs

## STRENGTHS

- ▶ Over 80 percent of SWOT survey respondents agree that FVSU offers a sense of family to students and is a good place to learn.
- ▶ Student focus group participants were overwhelmingly positive about their experience at FVSU.
- ▶ Several respondents to the SWOT survey commented "FVSU provides students with an opportunity to enhance their lives and become successful, productive citizens while exposing them to global perspectives." Similar comments were made by several respondents in response to the question "as an institution, what does FVSU do very well?"
- ▶ Slightly over 60 percent of SWOT survey respondents agree that FVSU provides cutting edge academic programs and is academically rigorous.
- ▶ Community partners expressed support for FVSU and a willingness to collaborate with FVSU on mutually beneficial opportunities.
- ▶ Approximately 68 percent of SWOT survey respondents agree that FVSU is a major player in the region's economic development.
- ▶ The FVSU Business and Industry Cluster (comprised of representatives from business, industry, and government) has been established to help industry partners achieve research, outreach, philanthropic, and hiring goals.
- ▶ FVSU funding for research surpasses research funding of other USG institutions.
- ▶ Slightly over 60 percent of respondents to the SWOT survey agree that student activity facilities are appropriate to meet student needs.
- ▶ 70 percent of SWOT survey respondents felt that student housing facilities are appropriate to meet student needs and 66 percent felt that student service facilities are appropriate to meet student needs.
- ▶ Alumni tend to be very supportive and deeply committed to FVSU's future.

• **"FVSU provides students with an opportunity to enhance their lives and become successful, productive citizens while exposing them to global perspectives."**

# 80%

identified customer service as a major area of weakness



FVSU lacked the visibility and name recognition of other HBCUs.

# 60%

indicated FVSU's Internet reliability and capacity are inadequate to meet the needs of students, faculty, and staff

## WEAKNESSES

- ▶ There are very strong opinions and perceptions that poor customer service and inefficient processes and systems adversely impact the student experience and overall culture.
- ▶ Over 80 percent of respondents to the SWOT survey identified customer service as a major weakness or threat and a major opportunity for improvement.
- ▶ According to comments provided by faculty and staff, failure to consistently adhere to written policies and procedures adversely impacts operations.
- ▶ Student focus group participants felt that significant improvements were needed in residence halls and places on campus where students tend to congregate.
- ▶ Student focus group participants cited examples of inefficiencies in procedures and processes related to financial aid and maintenance in residence halls that adversely impact students and their perceptions of FVSU. A common comment from students was "cut down on bureaucracy in administrative areas."
- ▶ Community partners lacked awareness of FVSU's contributions and overall capacity to play a major role in the region.
- ▶ Overall ratings of FVSU's reputation in the SWOT survey results were less than excellent.
- ▶ Student focus group participants generally felt that FVSU was not very well known and lacked the visibility and name recognition of other HBCUs.
- ▶ 60 percent of respondents to the SWOT survey indicated FVSU's Internet reliability and capacity are inadequate to meet the needs of students, faculty, and staff.
- ▶ Leadership instability was viewed as a major concern.

:"cut down on  
bureaucracy in  
administrative areas."





Expanding online programs was viewed as a viable enrollment growth strategy

# 80%

identified collaborating with other agencies, institutions, industries, and the military as an opportunity.



FVSU's economic impact in the region is not widely known or communicated.

## OPPORTUNITIES

- ▶ Expanding online programs was viewed as a viable enrollment growth strategy by SWOT survey respondents, focus group participants, and alumni.
- ▶ Utilizing best practices and technology to improve efficiency and effectiveness of operations was cited as an opportunity for improvement by students, faculty, and staff.
- ▶ Alumni, faculty, staff, and students have very strong opinions and perceptions about FVSU's future direction and focus. Some feel very strongly about FVSU maintaining its historical HBCU identity, while others feel much differently.
- ▶ The differences in opinions and perceptions are quite evident in the comments in the SWOT survey related to FVSU leveraging its status as an 1890 Land-Grant institution and HBCU.
- ▶ Differences in opinions and perceptions were also quite evident in the opinions and perceptions shared during the Administrative Conference and Faculty/Staff Institute.
- ▶ Some alumni are very adamant about retaining FVSU's historical mission and identity, including voicing a strong dislike for FVSU's current branding and logo. Other alumni voiced strong opinions that FVSU cannot and must not "stand still," but must change its direction and focus in order to remain competitive for students, resources, and support.
- ▶ Over 80 percent of SWOT survey respondents identified collaborating with other agencies, institutions, industries, and the military as an opportunity with great potential impact.
- ▶ Marketing effectively was cited as a critical factor in FVSU's future success.
- ▶ Over 80 percent of respondents to the SWOT survey identified increasing visibility through marketing and branding as a major opportunity.
- ▶ Community partners identified increasing visibility and awareness of FVSU's contributions as a significant opportunity for improvement. In addition, FVSU's economic impact in the region is not widely known or communicated.

▶ Student focus group participants indicated FVSU's facilities are critical to the student experience. Overall, students felt that FVSU is an attractive campus that could be made much more so, and there were significant opportunities to modernize and upgrade where students live, eat, and learn.

**“Overall, students felt that FVSU is an attractive campus that could be made much more so...”**



Inability to market effectively was cited as a major threat

80%

cite budget constraints and dependence on tuition dollars as major threats



Internet reliability and capacity are inadequate to meet the needs of students, faculty, and staff

## THREATS

- ▶ There are very strong opinions and perceptions that poor customer service and inefficient processes and systems adversely impact the student experience.
- ▶ Inability to market effectively was cited as a major threat to FVSU's future success.
- ▶ According to comments provided by faculty and staff, failure to consistently adhere to written policies and procedures adversely impact operations and is a threat to FVSU's future success.
- ▶ Well over 80 percent of SWOT survey respondents cite budget constraints and dependence on tuition dollars as major threats.
- ▶ Overall ratings of FVSU's reputation in the SWOT survey results were less than excellent.
- ▶ Student focus group participants generally felt that FVSU was not very well known and lacked the visibility and name recognition of other HBCUs.
- ▶ 60 percent of respondents to the SWOT survey indicated FVSU's Internet reliability and capacity are inadequate to meet the needs of students, faculty, and staff.

• **"failure to consistently  
• adhere to written policies  
• and procedures adversely  
• impact operations..."**



# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND GOALS

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

A diverse range of issues and factors have significant implications for FVSU's future. However, no single factor is more important or more critical than providing an exceptional student experience to support enrollment growth, as well as increase retention and graduation. Attention must be paid to critical issues that impact our ability to fulfill our mission; including ensuring that institutional enhancements support growth and create an

environment responsive to student needs and FVSU's commitment to excellence. For FVSU to thrive, it must vigorously recruit students and retain students through graduation. While retaining and graduating students is extremely critical, it is important to re-examine FVSU's academic program mix to ensure alignment with the students FVSU would like to recruit and retain. In addition, attention must be paid to all aspects of student life in order to create an environment conducive to students desiring to remain at FVSU

through graduation and beyond.

Four major strategic priorities were identified to serve as the guiding framework for FVSU's 2020-2025 Strategic Plan. FVSU's strategic priorities are designed to focus attention and actions to maximize FVSU's strengths and opportunities, and to minimize vulnerabilities and threats that may adversely impact FVSU's future.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1

# EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EXPERIENCE



### GOAL ONE

Enhance and improve technological experiences of students by maintaining a physical and virtual campus that supports teaching, learning, creative activities, and scholarship.

### GOAL TWO

Implement continuous improvement in customer service delivery to help improve student recruitment, retention, graduation, and student success.

### GOAL THREE

Engage all units of the University in streamlining communication that impact education service delivery.

### GOAL FOUR

Increase the number and diversity of students who graduate and are equipped to succeed and excel in a knowledge and service-based economy.

## RATIONALE

Exceptional student experience recognizes that FVSU's primary mission is educating students and is key to FVSU's future growth and success as a 21st century HBCU and 1890 Land-Grant institution. Exceptional student experience recognizes the importance of maintaining an institutional structure and culture that support student success and reinforces academic excellence, teaching, research, and service. It recognizes that one of FVSU's major strengths is the family-like atmosphere that students, faculty, and staff cite as a positive feature of FVSU's culture. This priority also recognizes that exceptional student experience does not take place in a vacuum. FVSU's organizational, administrative, and academic operations affect students, along with the faculty and staff responsible for creating the student experience. Examples of these efforts include maintaining facilities that are attractive, modern, and comfortable; determining ways to better support students on their way to graduation; and ensuring FVSU best meets students' physical, social, and emotional needs that impact student success and the overall student experience. The exceptional student experience must include providing experiential learning opportunities that comprise strengthening and maximizing educational, business, and community partnerships which provide opportunities for students to reach their educational and career goals.

## MEASURES OF SUCCESS

- ▶ Year-over-year enrollment growth.
- ▶ Year-over-year progress in retention and graduation rates.
- ▶ Career and graduate/professional school placement.
- ▶ Year-over-year improvement in student engagement and satisfaction.
- ▶ Increased alumni attachment and support for FVSU.

**GOAL 1.** Enhance and improve technological experiences of students by maintaining a physical and virtual campus that supports teaching, learning, creative activities, and scholarship.

**KEY RESULTS & METRICS:**

- A. Responses on the Student Satisfaction Survey.
- B. Responses on the National Survey of Student Engagement.
- C. Digitalized processes.
- D. Better campus-wide access points.
- E. Self-registration of all students by Fall 2021.

**ACTION STEPS/STRATEGIES**

- ▶ Offer more enhanced methods to connect and challenge students through technology.
- ▶ Develop more training sessions focused on technology for instructors as a method to enhance classroom engagement.
- ▶ Implement a paperless process for documents that can be made paperless.
- ▶ Continue to implement key technological solutions to increase efficiencies and improve service to students (i.e. Call Center).
- ▶ Create an Online Student Services Self-Service Portal to allow for students to virtually complete tasks.
- ▶ Identify Wi-Fi dead spots so that additional access points can be added to enhance networking connectivity throughout campus
- ▶ Explore developing a systematic way of offering student access to Laptops, and or IPADS to enhance their academic experience.
- ▶ Increase the bandwidth of Wi-Fi across campus, particularly in academic spaces.
- ▶ Commit to improving campus infrastructure so that we are completely wireless by Fall 2022.

**GOAL 2.** Implement continuous improvement in customer service delivery to help improve student recruitment, retention, graduation, and student success.

**KEY RESULTS & METRICS**

- A. Year-over-year improvement in responses on the Student Satisfaction Survey.
- B. Year-over-year improvement in responses on the National Survey of Student Engagement.
- C. Improvements in retention and graduation rates by at least five percent over five years.

**ACTION STEPS/STRATEGIES**

- ▶ Ensure key campus offices are knowledgeable about student on-boarding

processes (admissions, registration, orientation, housing, etc.

- ▶ Require that all faculty and staff complete annual or bi-annual customer service training.
- ▶ Cross-train faculty and staff on the different admission processes
- ▶ Provide opportunities for students to give immediate feedback on positive and negative service experiences.
- ▶ Institute a recognition and/or incentive program for faculty and staff identified as models of quality customer service.
- ▶ Develop an early warning mechanism to identify students who may be experiencing academic challenges before they fail a class.
- ▶ Ensure students are aware of the services on campus that can assist them academically.

**GOAL 3.** Engage all units of the University in streamlining communication that impact education service delivery.

**KEY RESULTS & METRICS**

- A. Year-over-year improvement in responses on the Student Satisfaction Survey.
- B. Year-over-year improvement in responses on the National Survey of Student Engagement.
- C. By Fall 2021 implement a campus-wide strategic communication and marketing plan.

**ACTION STEPS/STRATEGIES**

- ▶ Develop a plan of action in coordination with the Office of Marketing and Communications to promote the institution through more radio and television commercials, videos of campus activities, emails, text messages, and student interviews.
- ▶ Disseminate information about initiatives developed by students resulting in positive outcomes (photos, articles, awards).
- ▶ Develop and publish a Master Calendar of activities for the campus (departmental events, student events, alumni events, community events).
- ▶ Install video message boards/digital displays throughout campus with daily events and FVSU news.
- ▶ Provide regular updates of accomplishments of students and/or faculty and staff to the campus community.

**GOAL 4.** Increase the number and diversity of students who graduate and are equipped to succeed and excel in a knowledge and service-based economy.

**KEY RESULTS & METRICS**

- A. Year-over-year improvement in responses on the Student Satisfaction Survey.
- B. Year-over-year improvement in responses on the National Survey of Student Engagement.
- C. Student placement in careers and/or graduate programs.
- D. Student Performance on Certification Exams (where applicable).
- E. Number of high-quality and cutting edge, learning opportunities in and out of the class.

**ACTION STEPS/STRATEGIES**

- ▶ Target scholarships to attract and compete for high achieving students.
- ▶ Fully implement the one-stop-shop enrollment center.
- ▶ Package and market distinctive academic programs and learning opportunities.
- ▶ Ensure every student achieves the outcomes of the LEAP initiative (Leadership, Engagement, Achievement and Professionalism).
- ▶ Increase the number of students who complete an internship/externship by expanding opportunities for experiential learning.
- ▶ Institutionalize Residential Learning Communities (RLCs) to create learner-centered pathways to meet the diverse needs of students.
- ▶ Provide more faculty development to ensure that the latest technologies are incorporated into instruction.
- ▶ Incorporate competency-based trainings for faculty and staff that impact student success.
- ▶ Incorporate more high impact practices for students mentorship, study abroad, undergraduate research, leadership programs, etc.
- ▶ Develop a programming model based on the holistic development of students.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2

# OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE



### GOAL ONE

Engage all units of the University in the design and implementation of a University-wide strategic communication strategy.

### GOAL TWO

Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of University operations through a systematic and ongoing process of planning, assessment, and review.

### GOAL THREE

Create and sustain a University-wide customer-centric culture to support operational excellence.

### RATIONALE

Operational excellence is about responsible stewardship and continuous improvement in FVSU's structure, operations, systems, and processes required to support and sustain the exceptional student experience. This dynamic recognizes that administrative and academic operations are interdependent and not mutually exclusive. For example, the Comprehensive Administrative Review plan (CAR) focuses on interdependencies by addressing duplication and redundancies to better achieve overall administrative efficiencies. The CAR plan and similar initiatives demonstrate the importance of continuous improvement in administrative and academic operations. Operational excellence ensures students are being treated as valued customers, and faculty and staff are subject to high quality internal customer service. Equally important, operational excellence means adhering to policies, procedures, and best practices in the stewardship of FVSU's assets and resources including human resources, vendors, suppliers, equipment, and facilities.

### MEASURES OF SUCCESS

- ▶ Year-over-year improvement in customer satisfaction of needs and services.
- ▶ Year-over-year improvement in Student Satisfaction Inventory.
- ▶ Improved communication.
- ▶ Implementation/utilization of best practices across all University operations.

**GOAL 1.** Engage all units of the University in the design and implementation of a University-wide strategic communication strategy.

**KEY RESULTS & METRICS:**

- A. By the end of year one, the President or his designee(s) will appoint the Communication Success Team.
- B. By the end of year one, benchmark data will be collected which addresses the three main communication objectives: What is the current state of the University's message dissemination to both internal and external stakeholders? What is the actual and/or perceived quality of current communication messages provided to internal and external stakeholders? Do the messages achieve their desired outcomes? How effective are the University's current methods of delivering messages to internal and external stakeholders?
- C. By the end of year one, the University will begin to implement the recommended changes designed to improve all mission-critical communication: (1) message dissemination; (2) quality of messages and desired outcomes; and (3) diversified delivery systems.
- D. By the end of year two, the University will continue to improve all mission-critical communication by at least 10 percent.
- E. By the end of year three, the University will continue to improve all mission-critical communication by at least 15 percent.
- F. By the end of year four, the University will continue to improve all mission-critical communication by at least 25 percent.
- G. By the end of year five, the University will realize a world-class, 21st century, student-centered model of excellence in its communication systems by achieving at least 35 percent of overall optimal productivity in all three areas: message dissemination; quality of communication content and the attainment of desired outcomes; and message delivery systems.

**ACTION STEPS/STRATEGIES**

- ▶ Appoint a Communication Success Team to help implement, monitor, and assess the effectiveness of the University's strategic communication strategy.
- ▶ Create an information flow chart displaying communication dissemination throughout the University and responsibility for communication dissemination: Office of the President; Office of Academic Affairs; Office of Student Affairs; Office of Business and Finance; Office of Institutional Advancement; Office of Institutional

Research; Human Resources; Athletics; Marketing and Communication; Colleges; Deans; Departments, etc.

- ▶ Identify the types of communication and timeframes considered to be mission-critical across all offices.
- ▶ Assess the quality of communication provided to internal and external stakeholders to determine the clarity and whether the desired outcome(s) was/were achieved.
- ▶ Upgrade the delivery of mission-critical communication to internal and external stakeholders. Consider using the University website to showcase message portals from major University offices: President's Corner, Provost's Corner, Dean's Corner, etc.
- ▶ Collaborate with other organizational excellence team members/groups such as operational excellence and customer service, to ensure the University websites stays current and relevant to mission-critical information.
- ▶ Upgrade the delivery systems to include videoconferencing/teleconferencing, webinars, video updates, links to blogs and social media, and chat capabilities to mirror communication expectations for the 21st century.
- ▶ Measure success/effectiveness using one or more of the following methods: the collection of benchmark data to assess the current state of the University communication process(es); document incremental evidence of improvements made by using rubrics, surveys, focus groups, interviews, etc.; make data-driven changes and or adjustments within the strategic communication strategy to ensure optimal productivity across all of the mission-critical communication provided to both internal and external stakeholders.

**GOAL 2.** Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of University operations through a systematic and ongoing process of planning, assessment, and review.

**KEY RESULTS & METRICS**

- ▶ By December 15, 2020, every college/division will have a manual that is specific to the college/division to include every department's identified operating processes and procedures. This manual should be sent to the Chief of Staff's Office no later than December 19, 2020.
- ▶ By December 1, 2020, publish a final "Operational Excellence Plan," that identifies campus-wide workshops and training.

- ▶ By December 1, 2020, the University leadership team or its designees will identify three university-wide competencies, two college/division competencies, two department specific competencies, and three job specific competencies.
- ▶ By February 1, 2021, identify an effective performance evaluation tool that includes competencies needed to sustain an effective operational system. The new tool should be used effective March 2021.
- ▶ By December 2022, the University should evidence a 5 percent increase in professional development/growth that shows a positive change in organizational culture and employee performance.
- ▶ By August 2023, initiate a campus-wide climate survey to determine how we are doing and continue addressing institution needs.
- ▶ By December 2023, the University should evidence a 15 percent increase in professional development/growth that shows a positive change in culture, interpreting and understanding policies and procedures and employee performance.
- ▶ By December 2024, the University should evidence a 25 percent increase in professional development/growth that shows a positive change in culture, interpreting and understanding policies and procedures and employee performance.
- ▶ By December 2025, the University should meet or exceed operations excellence benchmarks.

**ACTION STEPS/STRATEGIES**

- ▶ Develop and align organizational practices, policies, and procedures to ensure campus-wide understanding of the University's standard practices of operational procedures (SOP).
- ▶ Require every college division to develop and implement standard operating procedures (SOPs) to include primary processes and procedures for that area.
- ▶ Implement an "Operational Excellence Plan" that offers all employees organized professional learning to be provided throughout the year including new employee orientation, work-life balance/wellness, exceptional customer service, conflict resolution, interpreting and understanding institution guidelines and policies, manager/supervisor sessions, effective use of business systems/software, lecture series, and executive roundtable sessions.
- ▶ Require professional training for all employees related to their job

responsibilities on a continuous basis. Develop and implement a tool to measure the success of the operational excellence plan.

- ▶ Develop an effective performance management process including an evaluation that identifies three university-wide competencies that are critical to the institution, two college/division competencies that are critical to the college/division, two departmental competencies that are critical to the department, and three individual competencies specific to positions that are critical to the success of the organizational excellence of the University.
- ▶ Develop corrective action plans within 60 days of adverse audit or monitoring findings.

**GOAL 3.** Create and sustain a University-wide customer-centric culture to support operations excellence.

**KEY RESULTS & METRICS**

- A. Positive customer interactions with internal and external stakeholders.
- B. A knowledgeable workforce fully equipped to operationalize the products and services the University offers.
- C. By the end of year one, the President or his designee(s) will appoint the Customer Satisfaction and Customer Advocacy Team. (This team will determine the metrics and rubrics for measuring the success of each of the objectives.)
- D. By the end of year one, benchmark data will

be collected which addresses the four main customer satisfaction objectives.

- E. By the end of year one, the University will begin to implement the recommended changes designed to improve overall customer satisfaction.
- F. By the end of year two, the University will continue to improve customer satisfaction for internal and external stakeholders by 10 percent.
- G. By the end of year three, the University will continue to improve customer satisfaction for internal and external stakeholders by 20 percent.
- H. By the end of year four, the University will continue to improve customer satisfaction for internal and external stakeholders by 40 percent.
- I. By the end of year five, the University will consummate a world-class, 21st century, customer-centric culture by achieving 50 percent of customer service excellence.

**ACTION STEPS/STRATEGIES**

- ▶ Staff a Customer Service and Customer Advocacy Center to receive the bulk of the incoming calls for the University to address the fact that over 80 percent of respondents to the SWOT survey identified customer service as a major weakness or threat and a major opportunity for improvement.
- ▶ Develop several tiers of customer service support: Tier 1 Customer Service Team; Tier 2 Designated Representatives from mission-critical offices/departments/divisions in the University; Tier 3 All University employees.
- ▶ Provide campus-wide training for all

employees related to improving customer satisfaction and customer service.

- ▶ Measure on a regular basis whether the strategies designed to improve customer service are efficient and effective.
- ▶ Create a customer-centric awareness campaign across the University to instill the mission, vision, and values of the University.
- ▶ Ensure employees who work directly with students “understand the needs of different student personas.”
- ▶ Create and distribute products and materials that lend themselves to quick problem-solving capabilities; timeliness of responses to inquiries; and access to electronic frequently asked questions (FAQ).
- ▶ Conduct appropriate training with staff and faculty to improve customer service skills. Such training could occur annually during Faculty/Staff Institute; within each major office and college; within each department/division/program; and individually, if warranted.
- ▶ Measure success/effectiveness using one or more of the following methods: the collection of benchmark data to assess the current perceptions about customer service to document incremental evidence of improvements made by using rubrics, surveys, focus groups, interviews, etc.; and to make data-driven changes and or adjustments to maximize institutional progress towards optimal effectiveness and efficiency in customer care.





## STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3

# ORGANIZATIONAL IDENTITY

### GOAL ONE

Systematically promote FVSU's outstanding contributions and its role as a critical resource and valuable education and economic partner.

### GOAL TWO

Improve the FVSU experiences for constituents (alumni, current students, potential students, faculty, staff, and community partners).

### GOAL THREE

Foster an environment of trust and collaboration by promoting transparency and effective communication.



## RATIONALE

Enhancing FVSU's image and reputation as a world-class institution and communicating the value of FVSU's assets, programs, and services is essential and non-negotiable. Like other HBCUs, FVSU must reach consensus about what it means to be a 21st century HBCU and 1890 Land-Grant institution. Alumni and some faculty, staff, and students struggle with balancing FVSU's historical mission and FVSU's future, particularly with respect to its Land-Grant and HBCU status. Reaching consensus on organizational identity will have critical implications for FVSU's culture and prioritizing programs and initiatives aligned with FVSU's mission that support FVSU's values; as well as, how the Institution contributes to the economic, social, and cultural growth of the region. Most importantly, addressing organization identity will determine what it means for FVSU's student mix, academic programs, and messaging to recruit and retain students, faculty, and staff; networking and relationship building; and increasing alumni and external support.

## MEASURES OF SUCCESS

- ▶ Positive institutional image.
- ▶ Year-over-year enrollment growth.
- ▶ Annual number of donors and amount of contributions.
- ▶ Increased alumni support and alumni giving.
- ▶ Frequency of positive news coverage.

**GOAL 1.** Systematically promote FVSU's outstanding contributions and its role as a critical resource and valuable education and economic partner.

**KEY RESULTS & METRICS**

- A. Awareness and knowledge of FVSU regionally, nationally, internationally.
- B. Year-over-year increase in alumni engagement and giving.
- C. Third parties' delivery of FVSU key messages.
- D. Number of positive mentions in the media.
- E. Return on investment on e-marketing.

**ACTION STEPS/STRATEGIES**

- ▶ Develop and execute an overarching marketing strategy that creates greater awareness and informed advocacy, which enables FVSU to control its narrative.
- ▶ Promote awareness of FVSU's contributions and its role as a resource and valuable partner.
- ▶ Support the Alumni Office and National Alumni Association in the development and implementation of a comprehensive alumni engagement strategy to engage alumni as greater champions of FVSU.
- ▶ Strengthen systems and processes for obtaining and disseminating information to support student enrollment, increase visibility, and effectively communicate to key constituencies.
- ▶ Upgrade FVSU's website design and content, the release of information, and the way the website showcases FVSU.
- ▶ Implement a weekly column in the local newspaper to provide information about FVSU accomplishments, activities, and events.
- ▶ Restore FVSU's radio and television station to provide information and entertainment through these forums.

**GOAL 2:** Improve the FVSU experiences for constituents (alumni, current students, potential students, faculty, staff, and community partners).

**KEY RESULTS & METRICS**

- A. Year-over-year increase in students transferring to FVSU.
- B. Year-over-year improvement in employee and student satisfaction survey results.
- C. Year-over-year increase in alumni giving.
- D. Year-over-year improvement in retention and graduation rates.

**ACTION STEPS/STRATEGIES**

- ▶ Establish a process that indoctrinates incoming freshmen with a positive



experience about the University that lasts throughout their tenure.

- ▶ Expose students to more collegiate experiences (academic conferences, athletic competitions, and faculty-student interactions).
- ▶ Develop and execute multi-methods to bring the community back to the campus, whether through ongoing lecture series, conferences, or academic and social events.
- ▶ Engage alumni in a way that keeps them informed and makes them feel a part of the University more regularly and not just for homecoming.
- ▶ Increase the attendance at FVSU events, including academic presentations and social and sporting events.
- ▶ Strengthen strategic relationships with potential donors, supporters, and friends of FVSU.

**GOAL 3.** Foster an environment of trust and collaboration by promoting transparency and effective communication.

**KEY RESULTS & METRICS**

- A. Year-over-year improvement in climate and satisfaction survey results.
- B. Greater awareness and informed advocacy across the spectrum of FVSU's local, state, and national audiences
- C. Survey results from graduating students.

**ACTION STEPS/STRATEGIES**

- ▶ Design and conduct an annual climate and satisfaction survey to solicit opinions and perceptions from employees and students.
- ▶ Ensure key factors influencing the perception of FVSU's identity are accurate and timely information.
- ▶ Improve FVSU's image by challenging students, faculty, staff, and alumni to identify ways to positively represent the University.
- ▶ Showcase FVSU faculty, alumni, and students by way of its website, social media, newsletter, news reports, and other means of communication.
- ▶ Provide regular and timely information about FVSU and its affairs on its website and through other means of communication from the University.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4

# ENGAGEMENT AND COLLABORATION



### GOAL ONE

Enhance research and outreach programs in agricultural and natural resources, engineering technology, and youth, family, and community development to effectively address global food security and rural health and economic challenges.

### GOAL TWO

Develop infrastructure and programs to encourage creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship in students, faculty, and community members that result in creation of sustainable small businesses and development of regional economy.

### GOAL THREE

Align academic, research, and outreach service programs to better address the needs of business/industry groups and federal/state agencies and prepare students with marketable knowledge, skills, and experience.

### GOAL FOUR

Build mutually beneficial, diverse partnerships with community groups, K-12 schools, technical colleges, universities, veterans' organizations, government agencies, NGOs, and industry by effectively leveraging FVSU's strengths with an objective of providing better service to our stakeholders.

### GOAL FIVE

Strengthen relationships with Federal and State legislators by engaging our elected leaders, and amplify our outreach activities by educating the communities we serve on government and legislative issues that may impact their lives.

## RATIONALE

To effectively leverage FVSU's assets, programs, and services, FVSU must develop, nurture, and maintain diverse relationships, networks, and partnerships locally, statewide, and nationally. Within this context, it will be important for FVSU to promote its role as a vital resource and valuable partner by strengthening and expanding its outreach, engagement, and service to benefit the region and the state. This means developing and implementing mutually beneficial partnerships with public agencies, businesses, and industry by supporting a culture of engagement and collaboration that encourage and reward faculty and staff. This also means building new, and enhancing existing, partnerships that result in educational and community economic development outcomes that benefit FVSU. Stronger engagement and collaboration must include significantly improving and cultivating governmental relationships at every level. FVSU also must maximize the new Economic Development and Land-Grant Affairs Department and leverage its Opportunity Zone designation to become a more visible and vital partner in the revitalization and redevelopment of the downtown corridor that is the gateway to FVSU.

## MEASURES OF SUCCESS

- ▶ Mutually beneficial partnerships with business, industry, government, and community organizations.
- ▶ Increased community collaboration and interaction.
- ▶ Year-over-year increase in support for FVSU.

**GOAL 1:** Enhance research and outreach programs in agricultural and natural resources, engineering technology, and youth, family, and community development to effectively address global food security and rural health and economic challenges.

**KEY RESULTS & METRICS**

- A. Increase in agriculture technology adoption, agribusiness economic sustainability and profitability, nutrition and lifestyle changes, home buying capacity, better use of forestry land, etc., resulting from FVSU's research and outreach programs.
- B. Increased number of partnerships to advance research and outreach programs.

**ACTION STEPS/STRATEGIES**

- ▶ Develop new research and outreach programs across Agriculture and Natural Resources, Family and Consumer Sciences, Engineering Technology, Veterinary Sciences and Public Health, 4-H and Community Development, to effectively address local, state, and national needs by securing external funding from USDA, DoD, NSF, DoE, and industry.
- ▶ Incorporate technology in education, research and outreach programs.
- ▶ Develop a Center of Innovation and Entrepreneurship that ties in all departments in the University and create partnerships with Centers of Innovation throughout Middle Georgia. The Center will be tasked to pursue partnerships with Robins Air Force Base, Software Industry, Agriculture Industry, Middle Georgia K-12

schools, Middle Georgia STEM Alliance, technical colleges, universities, NGOs, international institutions, and USDA

Agriculture Research Service Labs to create opportunities for our undergraduate and graduate students. The Center will also expand the FVSU Business and Industry Cluster (comprised of representatives from business, industry, and government) to help industry partners achieve research, outreach, philanthropic, and hiring goals.

- ▶ Develop a matrix that shows how current programs of study impact other innovation industries.
- ▶ Establish a webpage to list all student research and internship opportunities both on- and off-campus, as well as state and national legislative internship/fellowship opportunities, and actively encourage students to apply. Encourage students to apply for state and national legislative fellowships and internships.
- ▶ Engage business and industry representatives in reviewing and revising curriculums.
- ▶ Create a Political Science-centered experiential learning program with local/regional community partners.

**GOAL 2:** Develop infrastructure and programs to encourage creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship in students, faculty, and community members that result in creation of sustainable small businesses and development of regional economy.

**KEY RESULTS & METRICS**

- A. Increase in the numbers of incubators

and innovations, patents and intellectual property rights, student entrepreneurs, new agribusinesses resulting from improved infrastructure, and innovation and entrepreneurship-based programs.

- B. Number of internships and community engagement opportunities for FVSU students.
- C. Number of business partnerships.
- D. Survey results from business and community partners.
- E. Number of faculty and students engaged in innovation and entrepreneurship activities.

**ACTION STEPS/STRATEGIES**

- ▶ Institutionalize the practice of engaging faculty, staff, and students in entrepreneurship activities.
- ▶ Develop and implement mutually beneficial partnerships for innovation and entrepreneurship opportunities.
- ▶ Fully maximize the resources and networks of the FVSU Business and Industry Cluster.
- ▶ Establish a sustained and comprehensive entrepreneurship-based program to engage faculty, staff, and students.
- ▶ Build new, and enhance existing, economic partnerships to enhance innovation, community economic development, and entrepreneurship.

**GOAL 3:** Align academic, research, and outreach service programs to better address the needs of business/industry groups and federal/state agencies and prepare students with marketable knowledge, skills, and experience.



## KEY RESULTS & METRICS

- A. Increase in the number of graduates securing industry jobs or developing new businesses related to their majors, getting accepted into graduate and professional schools, and securing leadership positions.
- B. Percentage of curriculum revision requests citing educational research, industry standards, and/or trends as a basis for change.
- C. Percentage of curriculum course development citing market/employment statistics as a basis for additions.
- D. Percent of departments adding new courses aligned with the needs of business/industry groups and federal/state agencies.

## ACTION STEPS/STRATEGIES

- ▶ Develop and promote new programs based on trends, data and best practices.
- ▶ Implement curriculum development, curriculum revisions, and program improvements through consistent use of assessment and “best practices” educational research.
- ▶ Recruit, recognize, and retain exceptional faculty who have demonstrated tangible success in their field of study.
- ▶ Institutionalize the practice of continuous learning and professional development of students, faculty, and staff.

**GOAL 4:** Build mutually beneficial, diverse partnerships with community groups, K-12 schools, technical colleges, universities, veterans’ organizations, government agencies, NGOs, and industry by effectively leveraging

FVSU’s strengths with an objective of providing better service to our stakeholders.

## KEY RESULTS & METRICS

- A. Increase in the number of new, meaningful partnerships that result in increased student enrollment, retention, and graduation, increased funding and research output, increased service learning, global education, internship, externship, job, and graduate education opportunities.
- B. Number of annual student internships.
- C. Annual number of students and faculty participating in partnerships.
- D. Percentage of faculty participating in partnership-based research or service activities.

## ACTION STEPS/STRATEGIES

- ▶ Develop and implement mutually beneficial targeted partnerships with elementary, secondary schools, community colleges, and business and governmental agencies.
- ▶ Build new, and enhance existing economic partnerships to enhance community economic development.
- ▶ Institutionalize a culture of service through university-wide initiatives that encourage and reward internal and external collaboration.

**GOAL 5:** Strengthen relationships with Federal and State legislators by engaging our elected leaders, and amplify our outreach activities by educating the communities we serve on government and legislative issues that may

impact their lives.

## KEY RESULTS & METRICS

- A. Increase in the number of campus programs engaging legislators and community groups, visits made to State Capitol and Capitol Hill, and educational programs conducted on and off campus resulting in an informed and engaged citizenry.
- B. Cultivation of legislative advocates/champions across party lines.
- C. Ongoing funding with recurring revenue sources for operations and capital purposes.
- D. Programs and facilities funded.

## ACTION STEPS/STRATEGIES

- ▶ Establish a legislative action work group to assist in developing and building support for FVSU’s legislative agenda.
- ▶ Engage key elected officials in supporting FVSU’s annual legislative agenda.
- ▶ Invite key legislators to FVSU to participate in forums related to FVSU’s legislative agenda.
- ▶ Identify alumni who have professional and/or personal relationships with key legislators.
- ▶ Utilize business partners who have relationships with key legislators to gain legislative access.
- ▶ Devote an annual percentage of FVSU’s operating budget to legislative action.





# IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

FVSU's 2020-2025 Strategic Plan will add value only, if it is implemented and utilized—**if it becomes a blueprint and roadmap for action.** To this end, FVSU's implementation plan will focus on execution of the action steps for addressing priorities, goals, and strategic initiatives, and will ultimately be integrated and aligned with the budget. The framework for implementation will be built around the following strategic priorities:

1. Exceptional Student Experience
2. Operational Excellence
3. Organizational Identity
4. Engagement and Collaboration

Ensuring FVSU's Strategic Plan is implemented will require regularly

monitoring of progress on goals and action items. A major decision point is designating the administrators, staff, and faculty who will have the responsibility and accountability for implementation. At least annually, campus-wide feedback should be solicited to help assess the degree to which the plan is meeting expectations and the extent to which progress is being made. The implementation plan will be adjusted to adapt to changing conditions and circumstances and to ensure the plan is embedded in FVSU's daily operations and becomes a tool that guides decision-making about priorities for resource allocation.

Outlined are several factors that should be considered to ensure implementation and monitoring on a continuing basis.

## STRUCTURE



## COMMUNICATION



## OPERATIONS





## STRUCTURE

Creating a structure for plan implementation is essential in order to be successful. At a minimum, the implementation structure should include assignment of implementation leaders responsible and accountable for carrying out and reporting on the action steps necessary to achieve the goals and strategies outlined in the Strategic Plan. A template will be designed and used as a working document for building the framework and structure to support implementation of the goals and strategies in the plan.

## COMMUNICATION

Communication about the strategic plan implementation is critical. Ideally, the entire plan should be available on FVSU's website. Updates on implementation progress and processes should be made periodically and should be accessible to the campus community.

## OPERATIONS

For implementation to be effective, it must be embedded into daily operations of academic and administrative units. The following practices will be important:

- ▶ Academic and administrative units should develop action plans aligned with the strategic plan.
- ▶ Regular updates on strategic plan implementation should be provided at Faculty Senate meetings and at the department, program, and administrative unit level.
- ▶ Strategic plan implementation should be an agenda item at the President's Cabinet, Deans and Department head meetings.
- ▶ A performance dashboard/scorecard should be utilized to monitor and report implementation progress.

# APPENDIX A: PRESIDENT'S CHARGE

I am pleased that you have accepted the invitation to serve on the Strategic Planning Committee for Fort Valley State University's 2020-2025 Strategic Plan. The strategic planning process will involve a broad-based participation, and the selection of the steering committee reflects the diversity of input that will help ensure the success of the process and a quality product. When completed, the plan will provide the framework for guiding our direction through 2025. Through the strategic planning process, we will rededicate our efforts in moving the University to a new level of excellence. The Plan will build on our strengths, and leverage our unique position to make Fort Valley State University a first choice destination for students, and a more competitive institution nationally. Everything we do as a University will be directed towards enhancing our quality and value to students, alumni, and the community. When complete, our Plan will help to distinguish Fort Valley State University as a world-class institution in the global higher education marketplace.

The University has retained MGT of America Consulting, LLC, a national consulting and research firm, to assist with the overall strategic planning process. Dr. Fred Seamon, Executive Vice President at MGT will serve as our consultant. Dr. Seamon will work in partnership with the SPC and the broader university community to develop a bold and visionary plan that will help launch our upward trajectory. Dr. Olufunke A. Fontenot, Interim Chief of Staff and Dr. Felicia Jefferson, Associate Professor will serve as co-chairs of the Committee.

As Committee members, you were selected for your vision and commitment to the mission of FVSU. You will work with Dr. Seamon in guiding the development of a plan that will identify institutional level goals and objectives that will guide our priorities and resource allocation in the next five years. The SPC, under the guidance of the consultant, will advise the President during the process, and present a plan for the president's approval by the end of March 2020.

Your role includes:

- ▶ Consult widely with students, faculty, staff, alumni, community partners, and other stakeholders to develop a vision and direction for Fort Valley State University for the next five years;
- ▶ Synthesize, integrate, and effectively communicate the input and ideas generated by the campus and external community and bring a broad perspective to bear on the process;
- ▶ Serve the broader University rather than sectional interest;
- ▶ Maintain the integrity of the process and exercise the highest level of professionalism.
- ▶ The following questions should guide your deliberations:
  - What does it mean to be a HBCU in the 21st century?
  - What should distinguish us from our peers?

- Is our existing model sustainable, if not, how should we change?
- What is and/or what should be distinctive about FVSU's curriculum?
- Are there new academic opportunities that should be developed or existing areas that should be revised or sunset?
- What role will/should diversity play in the next 3-5 years?
- What role should we play in economic development for the region?
- How do we make FVSU not just survive but thrive in the next five years?
- What is the optimal size of the student body?
- How can we better equip our students with the tools needed to be successful at FVSU and beyond?

## STRATEGIC PLAN GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following parameters will guide development of Fort Valley State University's (FVSU) Strategic Plan.

- ▶ The strategic plan must be bold but realistic and practical.
- ▶ The plan should be a bold, dynamic, i.e., a living, breathing



document that helps FVSU direct its efforts and resources toward a clearly defined vision for the future.

- ▶ The strategic planning process should be transparent and inclusive and consider or account for major “PEST” factors.
- ▶ The plan should address the most critical and strategic issues and priorities confronting FVSU.
- ▶ The plan should set forth a clear direction and goals for the next five years.
- ▶ The plan should not include unrealistic goals/actions that cannot be met or implemented.
- ▶ The plan should establish a vision for Fort Valley University’s future.

- ▶ What is the best possible future for Fort Valley State University?
- ▶ What does success look like for FVSU 10 years from now?
- ▶ The plan should build consensus on Fort Valley State University’s mission.
- ▶ Over the next 5 to 10 years, in what ways should FVSU’s mission evolve or change?
- ▶ The goals in Fort Valley State University’s plan should be bold, attainable, and supported by strategies, objectives, resource requirements, and accountability mechanisms.
- ▶ What are the most strategic goals?

- ▶ What are the major strategies for achieving goals clearly expressed in the plan’s objectives?
- ▶ What actions will be undertaken to implement strategies and achieve objectives?
- ▶ What benchmarks or milestones should measure FVSU’s progress?
- ▶ What resources will be needed to achieve desired outcomes?
- ▶ Where does the “buck” stop relative to implementing the plan?



# APPENDIX B: STRATEGIC PLAN WORKGROUPS

## Fort Valley State University, Strategic Plan 2020-2025 Strategic Priorities Workgroups

### EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EXPERIENCE

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