



STRATEGIC PLAN 2035



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MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Middle Tennessee State University stands ready to fulfill its mission and embrace new opportunities in the second quarter of the 21st century.

The University remains committed to academic quality and student success, fueled by innovative practices and active engagement in civic, cultural, and economic affairs.

In the next decade, we will enhance our creative and research profile, strengthen the University community, and enrich our collaborations with external partners.

The MTSU Strategic Plan 2035 is a comprehensive framework developed in dialogue with students, faculty, staff, alumni, and community members as well as University leaders and Board of Trustees.

It will be our guide for developing annual activity plans with specific action steps and measures to track progress.

Please join us in shaping better futures for our students and our communities.

Sidney A. McFhee



MISSION

Middle Tennessee State University offers exceptional academic programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels that prepare students to thrive in their chosen profession and prioritize student success. As one of Tennessee's largest comprehensive universities, MTSU places high value on outstanding teaching, research, creative activity, and public service that support the emerging needs and challenges of our state, nation, and world.

PURPOSE

To fulfill its mission as a comprehensive, public institution of higher education, the University's diverse community of students, faculty, and staff

- educates and challenges students through a broad array of high-quality, affordable bachelor's, master's, specialist, and doctoral programs grounded in a common core of arts and sciences;
- collaboratively promotes excellence through innovative teaching and learning, research, creative activity, service, and engagement;
- fosters a student-centered environment conducive to lifelong learning, personal development, and success for all students, including first-generation, Pell-eligible, transfer, veteran, non-traditional, and international students;
- enhances access through unique programs, distance learning, and advising to meet the needs of a diverse student population;
- supports student learning through effective teaching and advising, experiential and integrative learning, emerging technologies, research, and co-curricular and extra-curricular activities;
- attracts and retains exceptional faculty and staff and develops resources to support excellence in instruction, research, creative activity, and public and professional service;
- develops and sustains academic partnerships, entrepreneurial activities, and public service to support instruction, research, and communities throughout the region;
- promotes ongoing engagement with its alumni, partners, and friends; and
- serves as an emerging center for international study, understanding, and exchange.





PURPOSE Cont.

Middle Tennessee State University educates students to

- think logically, critically, and creatively;
- make sound judgments informed by ethical, moral, and aesthetic values;
- acquire knowledge of a discipline or a group of related disciplines;
- examine, analyze, and shape the rapidly changing world through scientific knowledge, creative undertakings, and an understanding of culture and history;
- communicate clearly and precisely and understand the proper role of free expression and civic engagement in our society; and
- demonstrate the effective and adaptive use of current and evolving technologies.

VISION

To provide the highest quality education and student experience, enabling members of our community to excel in professional, scholarly, and public life.

In 2023 and 2024, the University Planning Committee and Strategic Planning Committee updated institutional mission and vision statements and drafted the Strategic Plan 2035. Members of the MTSU community provided input through participation in 18 listening sessions and submission of more than 4,800 survey and online response forms. Respondents included students, faculty, and staff, as well as alumni, donors, and trustees. From this feedback, several important themes emerged, and they are divided below into those that can be leveraged, meaning they are a strength or present an opportunity, and perceived weaknesses or threats that the University should address.

EMERGENT THEMES TO LEVERAGE

Institutional strengths and opportunities that should be sustained and leveraged through planning:

- A comprehensive portfolio of excellent and distinctive academic programs, including several signature programs with national prominence and significance.
- Talented, diverse, and dedicated faculty and staff who focus on delivering quality educational experiences and nationally recognized student support services.
- Gifted and committed students from diverse backgrounds and experiences who themselves accomplish national and international acclaim.
- An engaged and supportive family of individual, community, and industry partners.
- An educational enterprise that is affordable and accessible and that provides substantial value to its students, the local community, state, and region.
- Safe, accessible, and impressive new facilities and a campus community located in a vibrant and growing geographic region.

EMERGENT THEMES TO ADDRESS

Continuing and developing issues the institution must plan for in the future:

- As the core enterprise of the University, sustained academic excellence should be assured through persistent provision of superior faculty, up-to-date facilities, and effective and impactful instructional methods.
- To remain competitive and attractive, the institution should continue to enhance its online and graduate offerings while seeking expansion into in-demand professional programs and identifying sources of financial support for students.
- There is a need to make residential and nonresidential student and campus life more vibrant, attractive, and engaging, and additional enhanced student housing options should be a significant factor in that endeavor.
- We should communicate effectively with all stakeholders and clarify our institutional brand to effectively articulate both the value of education as a pathway to prosperity and how MTSU contributes to student growth and achievement.
- To sustain MTSU's longstanding legacy as an institution with excellent faculty and staff, MTSU should recommit to becoming an employer of choice through studying and addressing factors impacting employee satisfaction and retention.
- The institution should successfully advocate for increased public funding, engage additional private support, and ensure that future expenditures align with strategic priorities.
- The institution should streamline or revise administrative policies, processes, and practices that could hinder our ability to innovate and to successfully function as a high research activity institution.

MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY STRATEGIC PLAN 2035

| Priority | Increase the institution's creative and research profile and be a top choice for students | | Strengthen the community so all learners and workers thrive |
|-------------|--|---|--|
| Strategy | Deliver impactful academic offerings and experiences | Elevate the institutional research infrastructure and reputation | Ensure holistic academic and career supports for all students |
| Initiatives | Continually refine the inventory and delivery of dynamic curricular programs to ensure ongoing and emerging needs are met | Fully support development of new research/scholarship-focused degree programs | Continually assess and adapt learner support structures to ensure students are equitably and optimally supported |
| | Solidify our reputation as a recognized leader in instructional excellence through enhanced faculty professional development and innovative pedagogies | Invest appropriately in faculty and their scholarship | Expand, coordinate, and communicate support services through intentional onboarding and offboarding processes |
| | Continuously update campus facilities, equipment, and technology | Adjust policies and staffing structures to support excellence in research and creative activity | Fully integrate internships, applied experiences, and career services into the student learning experience |

| | | Cultivate sustainable partnerships | |
|--|--|--|---|
| Support wellness, belonging, and engagement | Enhance faculty and staff support structures | Strengthen community and industry collaborations | Improve institutional advocacy and communication |
| Expand and promote comprehensive orientation and ongoing support systems for our diverse community of students, faculty, and staff | Update philosophies, policies, and practices to align with current employment marketplace realities | Conduct campus and community assessments to inform and improve development of partnerships | Strengthen, disseminate, and ensure consistent use of the university's overall marketing and branding strategies |
| Update and add new housing and support space options to facilitate engagement in campus life | Vigorously pursue competitive compensation rates for employees | Increase industry connections by leveraging and expanding existing internship programs | Create and invest in a strategic funding enhancement plan that effectively engages state, alumni, and donor partners |
| Ensure dynamic and inclusive programming and services to meet the needs of residential and nonresidential students | Create robust onboarding and ongoing professional development programs that include transition plans for all roles | Develop integrated communication systems that foster collaboration with the community | Enhance our comprehensive recruiting strategy and more effectively articulate the multifaceted value of the MTSU educational experience |

IMPLEMENTATION CYCLE

December/January
**Midyear
Progress Reports**
presented to
Planning Committee

April
**Plan for Next AY/
Progress Report on
Closing AY**
presented to
Planning Committee



September
**Prior AY
Accomplishments
and Current AY Plans**
presented in
Campus Forum

ANNUAL IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

| Date | Milestone | Notes |
|--------------|---|---|
| April 1 | Annual Activity Plans (AAP) for each initiative established for Next AY | Reported to Priority Chairs > Vice Provost for Planning and Effectiveness |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AAP should include metrics/key performance indicators (KPIs). Priority Chair/VP/Provost submit AAP funding requests for consideration during annual budgeting processes. | |
| | Report on Closing AY Progress for each initiative | Reported to Priority Chairs > Vice Provost for Planning and Effectiveness |
| April 15 | AAP for Next AY / Progress Reports presented for approval by Planning Committee | Presented by Vice Provost for Planning and Effectiveness |
| September 10 | Campus Forum: Present report of Prior AY Accomplishments AND Current AY AAP | |
| December 15 | Midyear Progress Reports due | Reported to Priority Chairs > Vice Provost for Planning and Effectiveness |
| January 30 | Midyear Progress Reports presented to Planning Committee | Presented by Vice Provost for Planning and Effectiveness |

Note: In fall 2029, Strategic Plan leadership should conduct an in-depth process to determine if any revision to priorities, strategies, or initiatives are needed. Any changes should be approved and communicated to implementation leaders for consideration in the development of 2030 and subsequent Annual Activity Plans.

BROAD METRICS AND INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

| Strategy | Metrics / Indicators |
|--|--|
| Deliver impactful academic offerings and experiences | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive portfolio of majors/concentrations • Undergraduate enrollment • Graduate enrollment • Annual number of on-campus instructional development programs delivered • Faculty participation in instructional development offerings • Funds spent on facility additions/improvements • Funds spent on instructional technology infrastructure and equipment |
| Elevate the institutional research infrastructure and reputation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of new research/scholarship programs developed • Research-track faculty positions (change) • Research/creative activity funds allocated to faculty • Research and development (HERD survey) funding • Terminal degree research/scholarship graduates |
| Ensure holistic academic and career supports for all students | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persistence and retention rates • Graduation rates • Participation in academic support services (tutoring, Scholars Academy, DAC, and other programs) • Number of students enrolled in academic internships • Career Center tracked internships/experiences • Student interaction with Career Development Center activities |
| Support wellness, belonging, and engagement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student engagement (participation) with counseling and related services • Student response to <u>NSSE</u> "Quality of Interactions" and "Supportive Environment" indicators • University housing capacity (growth) • University housing renovation funds expended |

| Strategy | Metrics / Indicators |
|--|---|
| Enhance faculty and staff support structures | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retention rates for faculty and staff • Number of faculty and staff professional development programs delivered on campus annually • Number of faculty and staff attending professional development training annually • Develop, implement, and regularly review employee satisfaction survey results • Number of employees receiving market salary adjustments or funds dedicated to such increases • Number/dollar amount of adjustments to salary bands |
| Strengthen community and industry collaborations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create community/industry collaborative • Adopt CMS platform across divisions • Career Services industry partnerships (jobs and internship postings, Career Fair employer attendees) |
| Improve institutional advocacy and communication | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased state funding allocations • Increased alumni donors and amounts • Increased overall donors and amounts • Increased admissions applications (undergraduate and graduate) • Increased enrollment yield of admitted students (undergraduate and graduate) |

For the latest updates on the MTSU Strategic Plan 2035, scan the QR code or visit mtsu.edu/strategicplan.



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