



EAST TENNESSEE STATE
UNIVERSITY

STRATEGIC PLAN

2016-2026



East Tennessee State University Strategic Plan 2016-2026 **Approved by ETSU Board of Trustees 3.27.17**

This plan is intended to be the guiding document for academic and administrative units when developing and prioritizing their strategies for achieving the strategic goals of the university and to guide budgeting and resource allocation decisions. The hope is that decision-making will become a more decentralized process that will encourage innovation among the units.

ETSU Vision

Developing a world-class environment to enhance student success and improve the quality of life in the region and beyond.

ETSU Mission and Values

ETSU provides a student-centered community of learning, reflecting high standards and promoting a balance of liberal arts and professional preparation, and continuous improvement. The university conducts a wide array of educational and research programs and clinical services including a comprehensive Academic Health Sciences Center. Education is the university's highest priority, and the institution is committed to increasing the level of educational attainment in the state and region based on core values where:

PEOPLE come first, are treated with dignity and respect, and are encouraged to achieve their full potential; **RELATIONSHIPS** are built on honesty, integrity, and trust; **DIVERSITY** of people and thought is respected; **EXCELLENCE** is achieved through teamwork, leadership, creativity, and a strong work ethic; **EFFICIENCY** is achieved through wise use of human and financial resources; and **COMMITMENT** to intellectual achievement is embraced.

ETSU endorses the value of a liberal education and provides enriching experiences in honors education, student research and creative activity, study abroad, service-learning, and community-based education.

ETSU honors and preserves the rich heritage of Southern Appalachia through distinctive education, research, and service programs and is actively engaged in regional stewardship.

ETSU affirms the contributions of diverse people, cultures, and thought to intellectual, social, and economic development.

ETSU offers students a total university experience that includes cultural and artistic programs, diverse student activities, a variety of residential opportunities, and outstanding recreational and intercollegiate athletic programs.

ETSU awards degrees in over one hundred baccalaureate, master, and doctoral programs, including distinctive interdisciplinary programs and distance education offerings that serve students from the region and beyond.



Executive Summary

Through a combination of primary and secondary data review, the University Planning Committee identified six major areas of focus to guide priority development and budget allocations for 2016-2026. These items and their subordinate points are not intended to define all activities the university should undertake, but rather to provide a framework for planning and decision-making at the appropriate level. The six key areas are:

1. Supporting a strategic growth agenda that maximizes the student experience both inside and outside the classroom
2. Ensuring the diversity and inclusion of people and ideas
3. Empowering employees to make ETSU a great place to learn, work, and grow
4. Supporting Excellence in Teaching
5. Expanding the foundation for scholarly (research and creative activity) excellence and innovation in all disciplines
6. Leading the region forward through community engagement and service

Through a focus on activities designed to have a positive impact on improving each of these areas, the committee believes ETSU can realize the vision established by the Committee for 125.

University Planning Committee Charge and Membership

Charge:

Involving many segments of the university community, the Committee will:

1. Identify major institutional goals and objectives, incorporate existing plans for achieving these goals, review these plans to determine their appropriateness and sufficiency for planning, and coordinate planning with the budgeting process.
2. Assure that the university's strategic planning process includes a format for submitting information that will ensure overall consistency and accountability and is done in a timely manner.
3. Provide feedback and support for integrating strategic planning with institutional effectiveness and budgeting processes.
4. Review TBR and THEC planning mandates and associated reporting requirements and ensure that they receive appropriate attention.
5. Strive to align the university's vision, mission, values, and strategic goals and submit to the Interim University Council for the approval of any proposed revisions thereof.
6. Review and align results from the Committee for 125 with planning processes and report on these matters to the Interim University Council.
7. Ensure that the university community is informed in a timely manner about major planning decisions, including the rationale for these decisions and their implications for the university.



ETSU Strategic Planning Committee January 2016 – May 2017

Co-Chair: Dr. Wallace E. Dixon, Jr., Professor and Chair of Psychology, College of Arts & Sciences/Co-Chair: Dr. Mike Hoff, Planning and Decision Support

Membership

Ms. Pooja Shah, President, ETSU Student Government Association

Ms. Makenzie Fulmer, Secretary, ETSU Graduate & Professional Student Association

Dr. Larry Calhoun, Dean, College of Pharmacy

Dr. Bethany Flora, Assistant Professor of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis, College of Education

Dr. Jeff Howard, Dean of Students

Dr. B.J. King, Senior Associate Vice President for Finance and Administration

Dr. Lorianne Mitchell, Associate Professor, Department of Management & Marketing, College of Business and Technology

Dr. David Roane, Professor and Chair, Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences, College of Pharmacy

Mr. Michael White, Associate Athletic Director for Communications (MBB, FB)

Dr. Ramona Williams, Vice Provost for Enrollment Services and Management

Dr. Randy Wykoff, Dean, College of Public Health

Historical Context

ETSU was founded in 1911, opened on October 2, 1911, and consisted of eight departments. This was made possible by the Normal School Law of 1909: 'For the education and professional training of teachers for the public schools of the state.' In a broader sense, the act focused squarely on improving living conditions in the regions of the three normal schools.

Four general principles recognized by our first president, Sidney Gilbreath:

1. Support goal of regional service
2. Scholarship
3. The study of education as a science, practice in teaching
4. A knowledge of the conditions and needs of the State.

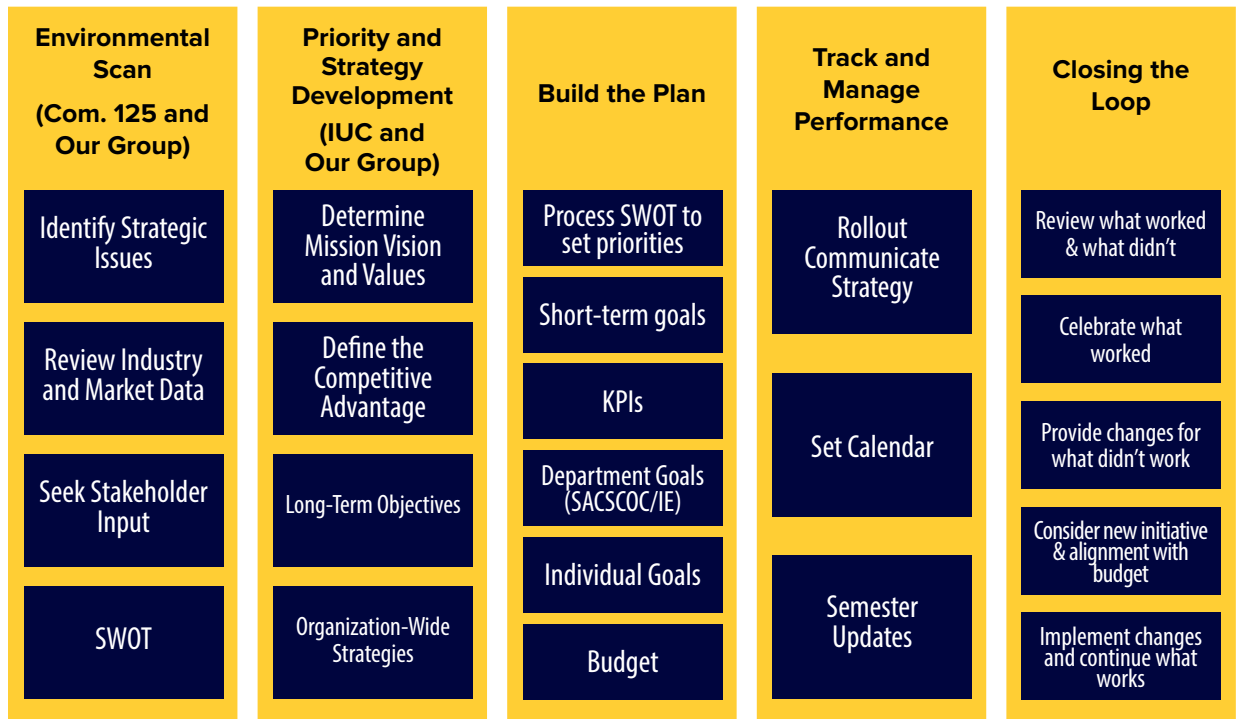
These principles still guide ETSU today, just as they did at our founding in 1911. We have changed in many ways physically, programmatically, and demographically, but these principals are part of the fabric of ETSU, and the recommendations that follow are aligned to these principles. This document tells a story of an institution that started with 29 students and seeks to enroll 18,000, an institution that seeks to become the primary driver of our region toward prosperity, through teaching, research, and service.

Planning Purpose and Background

The previous planning cycle ended in 2015. That plan, though largely successful, needed substantive review to prepare ETSU for the next decade. The current planning cycle was conducted in three phases. The Committee for 125 completed its work in 2013 and provided a narrative vision of what ETSU should look like in the year 2036. In 2014 and 2015, four substantive review committees were formed to review ETSU's administrative services, academic program inventory, research, and service. Later in 2015, the president formed the Interim University Council; this committee is charged with acting as an internal board to make decisions and expand shared governance. The IUC formed, at the request of the president, the University Strategic Planning Committee. The UPC is a group of skilled and representative campus actors who were charged with synthesizing the reports from the Committee for 125, Academic Program Inventory, the Research Strategic Plan, and the Community and Public Service Review Committee into a single strategic framework for the campus to guide decisions and budget processes for the next 10 years. What follows here is the summary of 10 months of activity and the proposed strategic agenda for ETSU through 2026, at which point we will need another major effort to propose strategies for the final 10 years to achieve the full vision of 125:

"In 2036, when a visitor approaches Johnson City, the presence of East Tennessee State University looms large. It is seen in the far outskirts of the city on "Welcome to ETSU" signs; in the high-tech, manufacturing and health care corridor that embraces the region; and in the vibrant college town of Johnson City, where campus and community are synonymous. The message is clear – ETSU is the preeminent player in the region, contributing to the overall high quality of life, innovation, industry and business, health, well-being, vitality and diversity through education, arts and culture and athletics. These themes define its overall 'Culture of Excellence,' whose attributes guided visioning and planning for ETSU's 125th anniversary."





The process over the past 10 months began with a series of small group sessions designed to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges of ETSU. The committee then met and spent two sessions organizing the results into a survey that could be shared with the campus to refine the results into a manageable list. The survey was sent to all faculty, staff, and students. The planning committee received 946 responses to the SWOT/C survey and incorporated the results into the planning process.



After reviewing all the committee reports, the current unit plans, data relative to the status of the current institution, the state-mandated metrics and rationale, and the SWOT/C, the committee developed a framework that the committee believes would successfully guide decision-making toward 2026. Once that process was completed, the committee conducted a two-hour session with faculty asking for their activities for each of the broad strategy areas. Those recommendations were reviewed and found to be closely aligned with the activities identified by the UPC. Finally, the committee used that information to review the goals proposed by the president and their alignment with the outcomes of Complete College Tennessee and the Drive to 55. The committee found good alignment with those goals, and the results are presented in the closing section of this report. To best represent the process for implementing the strategic plan, our recommendations are separated into operational improvements needed to ensure success and the strategic framework.

Operational Recommendations

During the review of unit strategic plans, the reports from previous committees, and the feedback received during the planning process, the committee noted some recommendations were of an operational rather than a strategic nature. The committee felt compelled to include the following operational recommendations designed to ensure the university can realize the aspirational goals of the plan within the planning horizon:

1. Provide adequate support and staffing for the transition to an institutional board of trustees per the FOCUS Act, allowing ETSU to make decisions within its unique mission.
2. Organizational Recommendations:
 - a. Align the academic and organizational structure to the strategic plan.
 - b. Furthermore, while the committee recognizes the authority of the president when setting the leadership team of the institution, and in no way wants to mandate the composition of such a group, it should be noted that we would recommend serious consideration of two appointments to the president's executive team: the Vice Provost of Research and Chief Diversity Officer.
3. Resource Realignment: The Administrative Services Review Committee highlighted several areas of improvement, and the Academic Portfolio Review Committee identified several data points needed to improve the assessment of the academic units; however, we believe that a more specific committee must be convened to identify areas of reallocation. ETSU has seen a significant drop in revenue generating FTE over the past five years while increasing personnel and operational costs. To implement the strategic framework, we must identify sources of funds that can be used to ensure success. The committee believes that this realignment will provide the best possible foundation for success.



Strategic Framework

- 1. Supporting a strategic growth agenda that maximizes the student experience both inside and outside the classroom**
 - a. Student life
 - i. Prioritize funding for academic and administrative programs, at both the university and college level, that are designed to create an engaged campus experience
 - ii. Increase opportunities and participation by students in intercollegiate athletics, club sports, and intramurals
 - b. Scholarships
 - i. Increase stipends for Graduate Assistantships and Fellowships to nationally competitive levels while ensuring a balanced approach of both merit and need-based undergraduate financial aid
 - ii. Increase mission-centered financial aid that has an additional impact on the region, particularly in the areas of the arts and public service
 - iii. Expand the university's geographical footprint through revision of its tuition policy as it relates to out-of-state students
 - c. Academics
 - i. Increase opportunities and participation by students in high-impact educational practices—e.g., first-year seminars and experiences, learning communities, collaborative assignments and projects, undergraduate research, diversity/global learning (augmented by experiential learning in the community and/or study abroad), service-learning/community-based learning, internships, and capstone courses and projects
 - ii. Promote a balance of workforce and academic outcomes by prioritizing funding for the creation of professional master's and doctoral programs
 - iii. Increase opportunities for students to interact with faculty outside the classroom
 - iv. Expand the number of fully online programs, focusing on programs with high demand and strong potential for attracting non-traditional students
 - d. Recruitment
 - i. Increase both undergraduate and graduate applications for admittance to ETSU with a focus on increased yield rates
 - ii. Increase the number of enrolled students who enter the university as first-time freshmen, first-time transfer students, participants in distance-learning cohorts (in-state and out-of-state), students in cost centers at Sevierville and Kingsport, dual enrollment students, and graduate students
 - iii. Promote a more diverse student body by establishing benchmark percentages for targeting the enrollment of diverse groups, with the goal of 33 percent of new enrollment growth at ETSU being from traditionally under-represented students
 - ix. Develop a marketing plan that leverages our academic and athletic achievements to expand the core market area for ETSU enrollment from 75 miles to 300 miles
- 2. Ensuring the diversity and inclusion of people and ideas**
 - a. Establish a diversity task force that will be responsible for developing and implementing a strategic plan for diversity and inclusion to be integrated with the strategic plan and implemented in 2017-18

- b. Focus on defining diversity and defining inclusion and expanding our view of diversity beyond race or nationality. Areas of focus:
 - i. Students
 - ii. Faculty/Staff
 - iii. Student life
 - ix. Community around ETSU

3. Empowering employees to make ETSU a great place to learn, work, and grow

- a. Employee well-being
 - i. Implement a Human Resources organizational structure and philosophy that supports faculty and staff in a way that aligns with ETSU's values and promotes employee well-being and professional development as the top priority
 - ii. Take adequate measures to ensure campus safety and annually review those measures and the campus perception to continually improve campus environment
- b. Decentralized budget model
 - i. Transition to a decentralized budget model by 2018-19 with the goal of incentivizing units based on student outcomes and obtaining extramural funding at the college level
 - ii. Commit to a budget imperative of allocating at least a 2.5 percent salary pool annually for market-salary equity adjustments each year of the plan and review current salary tables for adjustment to incrementally increase base hiring salary in high-need areas
- c. Professional Development
 - i. Establish and cultivate a formal mentoring program where funded faculty-endowed professors and other established faculty mentor junior faculty, post-doctoral fellows, and senior doctoral students
 - ii. Expand the Presidential Fellows program to become a leadership institute that benefits both faculty and staff to aid in succession planning and employee development
- d. Awards and recognition
 - i. Increase opportunities to recognize in a meaningful way the impact of our faculty and staff upon ETSU and the community

4. Supporting Excellence in Teaching

- a. Provide support and resources for addressing recommendations of the Work Group on Teaching that garner formal university endorsement
- b. Develop academic staffing plans, workload policies, and monitoring protocols that support education, research and scholarship, and service and that reflect both peer standards of practice and support by academic administration at the department, college, and university levels
- c. Support strategies for enhancing curricular, pedagogical, program delivery (including calendars), and infrastructure that encourage innovations that reflect commitment to student engagement, learning, and academic success
- d. Define and pursue strategies to eliminate silos that limit interdisciplinary programming and encourage inter-college and inter-departmental collaboration

5. Expanding the foundation for scholarly (research and creative activity) excellence and innovation in all disciplines

- a. Provide support and resources to colleges for stimulating and facilitating collaborative and interdisciplinary research among the colleges and encourage hiring college-level research officers who will act as a college-level resource for sponsored programs administration
- b. Target deficiencies in baseline space needs identified in the ETSU Facilities Master Plan (2014) to ensure the strength, quality, and growth of scholarly activities
- c. Review the availability of research instrumentation and determine whether new core facilities should be established to reduce ongoing expenditures and ensure availability to all faculty
- d. Increase the numbers of tenured/tenure-track faculty with terminal degrees and active research programs
- e. Expand research support (start-up funds) for incoming faculty and “bridge support” for faculty who lose funding but have high probability for new funding
- f. Develop interdisciplinary centers of research to promote sharing resources and increase depth of funding proposals

6. Leading the region forward through community engagement and service

- a. Create and provide appropriate resources to identify and depict clearly mission-based community and public service provided at ETSU by faculty, staff, and students
- b. Assure that ETSU maintains ongoing annual reporting of activity sufficient to address SACSCOC reporting and adherence to the expected standards for warranting inclusion in the Carnegie Community Engagement Classification
- c. Create opportunities for students to engage with the community that promote community and public service and active citizenship
- d. Engage in service activities that promote economic development in the region
- e. Through the Academic Health Sciences Center and interdisciplinary partnerships, expand our engagement in research and service opportunities that promote the health and wellness of the region and pursue the opportunities associated with the potential merger of the regional health care systems
- f. Reflect commitment to the Arts Initiative through construction and occupancy of a Performing Arts Center, expanded programming as envisioned in the Arts Initiative, and expanding the number of art and cultural service opportunities available to students in partnership with the external community
- g. Emphasize the university’s role to foster research and economic development in the region





Summary and Strategic Goals

The story of ETSU began in 1911 with a focus on being of service to the state and the region in the areas of education and scholarship and has grown to include leadership in the health sciences. This plan is an extension of the 106-year tradition of improving the lives and well-being of the people in our region and beyond. While our core focus is on the people in our region, the agenda for higher education begins at the state level. The Tennessee Higher Education Commission has as its focus for the next decade: access, student success, quality, and resourcefulness and efficiency. This plan aligns with those core areas and strengthens our place within the statewide higher education agenda in Tennessee.

The Focus Act has provided an opportunity to be the author of our own story over the next decade. This plan establishes a framework that prepares ETSU to maximize the benefit of its own board of trustees.

This plan is not the first chapter of the ETSU story, but it is an outline for what will be one of the boldest chapters in our history. Between now and 2026, we will add many pages to the next chapter of ETSU's story; the content of which remains unknown, but the conclusion of this next chapter will result in an ETSU that will...

Have 18,000 students enrolled on campus, online, or at a remote location.

Have 3,500 out-of-state and international students enrolled.

Have 2,000 transfer students enrolled.

Graduate 60 percent of first-time, full-time, degree-seeking students within six years.

Retain 85 percent of first-time, full-time, degree-seeking students from fall to fall.

Receive 12,000 freshman applications with an average ACT of 24.

Be an Insight into Diversity: Higher Education Excellence in Diversity institution.

Receive \$60 million for research and other extramurally sponsored activities.

Receive \$25 million in annual giving to ETSU.

Have a 10 percent alumni giving rate.

House 3,500 students on campus, with another 2,500 living within two miles of campus.

Have market-salary equity for faculty, staff, and graduate student salaries/stipends.

Be recognized as a Chronicle Great College to Work For.

Be a recipient of the Carnegie Community Engagement Classification from the Carnegie Foundation.



EAST TENNESSEE STATE
UNIVERSITY

www.etsu.edu