Begin by saying thanks—to the faculty, staff, and students of the university who showed a preference for reaching out and trying to make things better—and not simply those involved in the awards of the same name. Grateful for the work of the leadership team—that includes the entire administrative council. Grateful to the faculty senate and the staff council for their work in support of the university. Grateful for the work of the strategic planning steering committee as well as Dr. Gary May, Lou Jourdan and Keith Miller for their support for moving this work forward. And as all of you know, we are grateful to Valerie Lancaster and Brenda Carr in my office to move the president forward daily—no small task.

We often focus on our challenges, and the year was not without challenges—but I start with some broader issues that demonstrate real accomplishments now, and prepare us for even greater accomplishments in the future. In strategic planning, we have shared Dr. May’s outline of where we have been and where we will go next—led by the nearly 100 volunteers to move through real benchmarks and goals our progress over the next 5 years. I believe we will have to change our vision for the next planning cycle. I believe that we will be an acknowledged national model of community engagement and for ways in which our students will be able to connect their academic experiences to learning in courses and in external environments to public private and non-profit work environments, and professional and graduate programs. We remain one of the top workplaces in Atlanta. Our first year class was the largest in our history. We are close to an announcement of a million dollar grant to support student success—and this before adding Dr. Melody Carter to assist us in becoming more systematic in this area. We celebrated the 25th anniversary of Spivey Hall. We had our first Day for Dreams fund raising event, and our third round of university professorships supported by that external funding. Supply chain fellows likely serve as a foundation for increased connectedness with the Aerotropolis alliance. Our film work has been seen as a model to support the growing film presence in Georgia—Captain America has recognizable scenes from main street in the UC—and to reflect the place we are, one student member of the strategic planning committee was named both all-conference and academic all-conference in track and field—and with good fortune will finish her masters work this term.

Challenging year in many ways—we shared early in the year that prior declines in enrollment led to a reduction in likely general funding—even though we were fortunate enough to receive an additional
1.3 m for roof work. The reduction was the first time in 7 years—and we plan to be on track over the next 2 years. And we cannot lose sight of the fact that we live in a very much changing external environment for higher education. State legislatures are growing more conservative—and with that changes in ways in which our actions, especially associated with costs of education, will continue to be scrutinized. At the same time, students and their families are increasingly concerned about preserving a challenging and secure place to learn—under conditions in which free expression and secure learning can sometimes be seen as creating tensions. (**Campus carry)**But even under these circumstances, I am convinced we are heading in the right directions, because we draw on support and ideas where we can find them—in our community, from our students, faculty and staff—and from that open environment I believe we will be the essential institution in the social, economic political success for the southern crescent. And thus we will remain committed to a principle identified by Robert Gates in his work A Passion for Leadership: “the best way to get access to and use internal talent and ideas for specific steps to implement [change] is to get people from different parts of the organization working together outside their normal bureaucratic environment.loc 973)

Thanks for all you do.

**Status Update on Strategic Planning Process**

**May 3, 2016 Faculty Meeting**

1. Looking to year 2022. Purpose is to position the University for continued success during what is expected to be a period of dramatic change in higher education
2. Beginning work in January, completed initial draft of strategic plan document
	1. Guided by 22-person Steering Committee representative of campus
	2. Shared with campus at each stage of document development, asking for feedback
	3. Conducted feedback sessions with internal stakeholder groups
		1. Extended Cabinet
		2. Admin Council
		3. Faculty Senate
		4. SGA
		5. Alumni Board
		6. Staff Council
	4. Currently gathering input from external stakeholder groups, such as Chambers of Commerce, Corporate Partners, Foundation Board, etc.
	5. Called for volunteers to help with project initiatives (good response)
3. Preparing to move into next phase: Operationalizing the strategic project initiatives.
	1. Selecting leaders for projects
	2. Staffing the project teams, drawing from the list of volunteers
	3. Drafting action plans / metrics
4. Next milestone: Extended cabinet retreat in mid-June
	1. Project teams present drafts of action plans
	2. Review Strategic Plan document for additional edits
5. Plan to finalize Strategic Plan document and communication materials in July
6. Launch CSU Strategic Plan 2022 in August with start of new academic year