



# Strategic Plan 2022

Positioning the University for continued success during a period of dramatic change in higher education



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*A senior unit of the University System of Georgia*

## PRESIDENTIAL REFLECTIONS



**Thomas J. Hynes, Jr.**  
President  
Clayton State University

The work of our Strategic Plan 2022 reflects the collective commitment of the Clayton State University community. We build on the achievement of our recent plan as demonstrated by our gained Carnegie classification as a community engaged campus.

For us, this strategic plan is not a mere exercise. It speaks to the heart and soul of our dynamic culture. It represents what we stand for and how we approach our work to promote learning and student success. Through our plan, we remain committed to making the dreams of our University community real. And we will continue to cultivate an environment of engaged, experience-based learning, enriched by active community service. In brief, we participate in the creation of Georgia's next generation of citizens.

Public higher education nationally wrestles with forces of disruption. But in the framework of those disruptions, we seek to find ways within Strategic Plan 2022 to invest resources that advance Governor Nathan Deal's Complete College Georgia initiative, and the University System of Georgia's strategic priorities required to transform components of higher education ([www.usg.edu](http://www.usg.edu)).

For the purposes of our plan, the strategic planning process accomplishes three things according to Nathan Garber & Associates: (1) clarify desired outcomes, (2) select broad strategies and (3) measure progress.

It is our desire and vision to become a national model for community engagement while fostering a learning environment that equips our students for success as citizens.

We have selected strategies that will:

- Extend our commitment to be intentional in aligning classroom learning to workplace and professional applications. Academic and career support strategies will accelerate progress toward graduation and increase internships that enhance students' future success.
- Meet student needs to bridge gaps towards success, including academic and student life programs—such as assistance with child support for many of our students.
- Focus on, career-based learning through our academic and non-academic programs and clusters of learning outcomes across the professional, pre-professional and liberal arts curricula.
- Develop resources necessary for University success through the completion of the institution's first comprehensive fundraising campaign.

- Redirect and focus our grant support strategies that will enhance University activities that support student and faculty success and learning.
- Develop a comprehensive communication campaign that will expand the audience who is familiar with the University's academic excellence and achievements.
- Develop leadership opportunities for faculty, staff and students who are central to the success of the University.
- Help us to become intentional about internal communication and make inclusiveness for students, faculty and staff a growing reality, not a repeated cliché.

Finally, as we implement these strategies, it will be essential that we measure our progress so we can recognize and celebrate our achievements over the next five years.

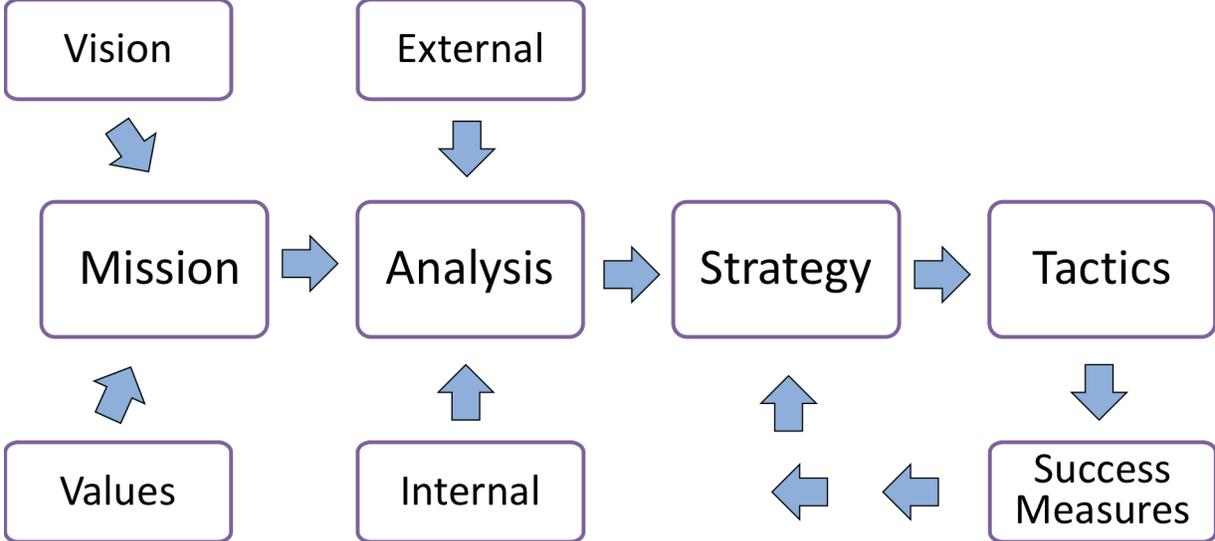
We have already begun to position the University in the higher education environment. We will continue to do this without neglecting the reality that the pace of change in the global economy requires that we prepare students who can adapt to that change as a result of learning at Clayton State University. And through that learning and adaptation, make dreams real for all those we serve.

**OUR PROCESS**

Iterative and interactive, with broad participation across all stakeholder groups

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**Strategic Planning Process Model**



## **OUR VISION**

Aspirational, what we want to become, what we want to be known for

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To become a national model for university-based community engagement and for equipping students with the knowledge, skills and motivations for learning and success.

## **OUR MISSION**

Operational, what we do for a living in pursuit of the vision

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Through teaching, scholarship and service, we provide an environment of experience-based learning, enriched by active community engagement that prepares an increasing number of students from all walks of life to succeed in a diverse society.

## **OUR CORE VALUES**

Cultural, our shared beliefs that guide our priorities and behaviors

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<b>Key Word</b>	<b>Value Statement</b>
Collegiality	We treat each other with respect and work together in a spirit of inclusiveness, collaboration and teamwork to serve others and reach common goals.
Excellence	We give our best effort and seek continuous improvement in all our activities.
Innovation	We are open to new ideas and creative methods for solving problems.
Integrity	We promote ethical behavior, taking responsibility for our attitudes, actions and results.
Transparency	We support open, honest and continuous communication.

## STRATEGIC ANALYSIS<sup>1</sup>

Key factors influencing our ability to fulfill our mission and realize our vision

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With the assistance of a team from the Georgia Tech Enterprise Innovation Institute, we conducted open data collection sessions across a wide variety of internal and external stakeholder groups. The data were aggregated and grouped into common themes, presented below in the framework of a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis<sup>2</sup>.

### Strengths

- Diverse student body
- Qualified, committed faculty
- Engagement in community
- Advantageous location
- Outstanding value to cost

### Weaknesses

- Limited resources
- Young, small alumni base
- Historical perceptions
- Marketing and recruiting

### Opportunities

- Regional economic development
- Online programs
- International programs
- Non-degree programs
- Dual enrollment

### Threats

- Declining state resources
- Pace of change – workforce
- Rapid growth of competitors
- Changes in local economy

Opportunities and threats describe the external environment in which we must operate, dealing with factors beyond our direct control. Strengths and weaknesses describe capabilities and resources within our control. Our challenge then is to capitalize on our strengths to exploit our opportunities, while overcoming our weaknesses and protecting against today's threats until we can convert them into tomorrow's opportunities.

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<sup>1</sup> The Ga. Tech Enterprise Innovation Institute provided consultation on the external/internal analysis.

<sup>2</sup> The detailed SWOT analysis is available on the CSU strategic planning website.

## **EXTERNAL ANALYSIS**

Major trends in the external environment that may impact our future

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### **New Standards of Public Accountability**

A key factor in the strategic planning process relates to public and political concern about the rising costs of higher education and the difficulty of finding quality jobs for the graduates who are burdened with large student loan debts. Demands are rising for a greater return on investment in higher education and greater transparency about student outcomes. In the future, as part of new standards of public accountability, universities and colleges will be expected to answer questions such as:

- ✓ Is the college affordable?
- ✓ What do students need to learn?
- ✓ Are the students learning?
- ✓ What is the graduation rate?
- ✓ How long does it take to graduate?
- ✓ What is the average student debt?
- ✓ How many get good jobs?
- ✓ What is the return on investment?

### **Other Environmental Trends Related to Higher Education<sup>3</sup>**

- Revenue from key sources continues to fall, putting many institutions at severe financial risk due to flat or declining:
  - enrollments (demographic trends – fewer high school graduates),
  - state funding and appropriations,
  - investment returns on endowments,
  - philanthropic gifts, and
  - government research grants.
- New business and delivery models focused on providing competencies and convenience while reducing cost and time are gaining traction.
- The globalization of education is accelerating, which means new competition for international students and more mobility for U.S. students.

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<sup>3</sup> Source: Boston Consulting Group, “Five Trends to Watch in Higher Education,” April 2014

## **INTERNAL ANALYSIS<sup>4</sup>**

Examination of internal strengths/ weaknesses in the context of key opportunities

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### **Engagement in the community**

Clayton State University is one of the largest academic resources in the metro-Atlanta Southern Crescent. The rapid expansion and success of our Quality Enhancement Program, Partnering Academics and Community Engagement (PACE), coupled with our growing involvement in local chambers and non-profit groups, demonstrates that we can enhance our student learning and career preparation opportunities in conjunction with providing assistance to our community partners. Strategic initiatives focused on this aspect of our mission must capitalize on our supporting strengths, and develop our current weaknesses into additional strengths.

#### **Supporting Strengths**

- Experienced, committed faculty
- Diverse, skilled student body
- Rapidly growing reputation for PACE
- Strong leadership support
- Academic programs in Film and Entertainment, and Supply Chain

#### **Weaknesses to Overcome**

- Historical reputation as junior college
- Lack of infrastructure for matching needs to resources
- Resource constraints

### **Growing demands in regional workforce**

Increasing economic development on the south side, including the Atlanta aerotropolis, Porsche, Pinewood Studios, and Ft. Gillem/ Ft. McPherson supply chain expansions, provide outstanding opportunity for us to enhance and expand our programs providing high demand workforce skills and excellent job-placement opportunities to our students, alumni, and neighbors.

Threats we must prepare against include first-to-market competitors, major universities with expanding online presence and diminishing resources.

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<sup>4</sup> Perceptions based on focus group sessions with faculty, staff, and students, supplemented by retreat data from the President's Extended Cabinet and discussions with the Strategic Planning Steering Committee.

## STRATEGIC POSITION

Our strategic position in the marketplace and basis for differentiation

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Clayton State is a student-friendly university, with a heart for community engagement, serving the educational needs of the South Metro Atlanta area. We seek to differentiate ourselves in the marketplace through the combination of the following seven elements:

1. Our superior value, providing a quality education at an affordable price.
2. Our focus on distinctive high demand career programs.
3. Our student-centered faculty who provide a relationship-based educational experience in a smaller class environment.
4. Our proactive professional academic and career advisors supported by data analytics and an innovative career planning process.
5. Our diverse student body, offering significant opportunities for interaction with people from all walks of life.
6. Our safe and beautiful campus convenient to metropolitan Atlanta.
7. Our systematic approach to community engagement.

“Though online pedagogies continue to improve and are likely to produce cognitive learning superior to those of the traditional classroom lecture, the most lasting, transformative learning is personal, the result of an intimate, lasting connection with a great teacher.”

Clayton Christensen  
*The Innovative University*

## **STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND SUPPORTING INITIATIVES**

Major tactical projects at the institutional level keyed to strategic priorities

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### **1. Increase enrollment, retention, and graduation rates**

- a. Strategic Enrollment Management Plan: Create a multi-faceted plan designed to increase enrollment, retention and graduation rates for all student populations.
- b. Support Services for Student Success: Continue development of support services associated with student success.

### **2. Increase external funding**

- a. Comprehensive Campaign Plan: Develop and implement a comprehensive campaign for external funding.
- b. Targeted External Grant Support: Obtain external support for University-wide strategic initiatives.

### **3. Build brand through community engagement and program development focused on career preparation and success**

- a. Partnering Academics with Community Engagement (PACE): Continue development and implementation of PACE.
- b. Exploration, Discovery, Goal Setting and Experience (EDGE): Increase student participation in internships and other learning opportunities such as job shadowing and mentoring. Students will participate in career-development opportunities along each step of their college paths and learn about the critical knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes that employers seek.
- c. Laker Solutions: Create a cross-discipline consulting group consisting of students and faculty serving community businesses, non-profits, and chambers of commerce with emphasis on economic development.
- d. High Demand Scan: Develop an on-going scanning system for identifying future workforce and employment needs and strategically mapping to curricula development and maintenance. Include investigation of possible doctoral and professional graduate programs to address unmet market needs. Direct efforts toward complete academic programs as well as specific content clusters.

- e. Visit Spivey Hall, Discover Clayton State: Build the Clayton State brand through targeted messaging of mutual interest to Spivey Hall's patron and stakeholder network.
- f. Faculty and Staff Development 2022: Identify and implement programs to support and recognize continuous learning and growth for faculty and staff.

**4. Promote the brand through an integrated marketing communication program.**

- a. Strategic Marketing Plan: Develop and implement a comprehensive marketing and communication campaign.
- b. Institutional Communication Audit: Conduct an audit of the Universities internal communication channels and processes.

**5. Advance innovation in experiential teaching styles, methods of delivery, and research**

- a. Enhance Teaching Seminar Program: Identify and implement meaningful faculty development programs to support the adoption of experiential teaching methods, scalable technology and the scholarship of teaching and learning.
- b. Support Systems for Innovations in Teaching: Develop mechanisms to support the implementation of high impact pedagogy and quality online courses to enhance student learning.

**6. Continue investing in infrastructure improvements.**

- a. IT and Physical Infrastructure: Continue to invest and, where needed, to expand the infrastructure necessary to support the other strategic initiatives.

## **IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

A disciplined system to ensure execution and follow-through

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Each strategic initiative will be supported by a tactical project team consisting of the following elements:

- Project leaders with experience and passion for the initiative
- A cross-discipline team of five to seven members
- A project action plan outlining the team charter, tasks, target dates, assignments, and deliverables
- Appropriate University resources
- Success measures and goals

Periodic status updates from each team will be scheduled with the President and members of his Cabinet across the academic year.

In addition, to ensure the whole campus is engaged and helping move the strategic priorities forward, each college and division will be asked to identify and implement one or more projects within their area of control to support the strategic plan.

## **REPRESENTATIVE SUCCESS MEASURES**

Representative examples of 5-year goals, demonstrating the type of outcomes we plan to achieve by academic year 2021- 2022

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- Grow total fall enrollment to 7,800 (11% increase).
- Increase first-time, full-time freshman cohort one-year retention rate to 75%.
- Establish a graduation metric for all student populations to be used as a measurement of success, in addition to the first-time full-time metric currently utilized, which will lead to the establishment of strategies tied to graduating a greater percentage of students.
- Provide a system of childcare access and support services for parents and families.
- Initiate and complete the University's first comprehensive campaign to support identified institutional priorities.
- Increase the number of funded grant proposals by 400%.
- Increase by 8% the courses that incorporate community engagement pedagogy through our Partnering Academics and Community (PACE) initiative.
- Increase percentage of undergrad graduates participating in internships, co-ops, practicums, externships and/or clinicals to 95% through our Exploration, Discover, Goal Setting, Experience (EDGE) initiative.
- Fulfill ten community or economic development consulting project requests per year through cross-discipline consulting groups consisting of students and faculty.

Additional measures will be developed and tracked for each strategic initiative and tactical project. In addition, each college and division will continue to maintain and be accountable for measures of excellence at the operational level.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Appreciation for the enthusiastic engagement by campus and community

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### **Plan Development:**

- Members of the Strategic Planning Steering Committee
- Members of the President's Extended Cabinet
- Participants in focus groups for the SWOT analysis facilitated by the Georgia Tech Enterprise Innovation Institute
- Responses from faculty, staff and students to Dr. Hynes' periodic updates and calls for input
- Leaders and team members for the strategic project initiatives

### **Plan Refinement:**

#### Internal Stakeholder Groups

- Administrative Council
- Faculty Senate
- Student Government Association
- Young Alumni Council
- Staff Council

#### External Stakeholder Groups

- CSU Foundation Board
- Chamber of Commerce Presidents from Clayton, Fayette, and Henry counties
- County officials from Clayton, Henry and Fayette counties
- Public school officials from Clayton, Fayette, and Henry counties
- City officials and community leaders from cities of Morrow, Forest Park, and McDonough

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[www.clayton.edu/strategic-plan-2022](http://www.clayton.edu/strategic-plan-2022)