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AU Strategic Question Theme Summary

The following document summarizes action recommendations from the faculty forums and online website. Each is a 1-page "executive summary" of the recurring themes from each strategic question, not a comprehensive rendition of all the comments received.

1. On defining the future mission/vision/values of AU

- Mission statement and SP need to be living documents that are reviewed periodically
- Development of the plan is a collaborative process
- Future focused
- Simple enough to fit on one side of a 3x5 card
- Simple enough to be remembered by everyone
- Be excellent in fewer programs instead of average in many
- Allocate resources to truly excellent programs
- Be bold enough to focus on fewer programs but improve the ones we keep.

We Value and produce students with

- The highest degree of life-changing instruction
- The quest and discovery of knowledge
- Edification of the person...for the betterment of our society and the worlds as we are able to impact it.
- Teaching students to think critically, see beyond their own horizons, and commit themselves to the betterment of their fellow human beings.
- Honesty
- Leaders who give back, loyal, positive thinking, not self seeking, intellectually curious, and useful to society
- Value and understand the importance of diversity, flexible thinking and reflection care about the citizens they serve.

What are AU's core competencies?

- Education, in the ***practical arts and in thinking***
- AU prepares well-balanced graduates who are informed, open to new ideas and have the ability to think
- Business
- Linking land grant heritage to a modern society
- International focus (fluency in a foreign language, the ability to adapt to a globally connected world)
- Devoted and successful alumni
- A quality, on-campus residential undergraduate experience
- Creative combination of research and instruction that advances knowledge educates students and serves the public good across a wide range of disciplines.

What will the Auburn brand mean in 10 years?

- Quality and excellence in teaching, research and outreach
- World-class undergraduate education
- A global institution with world class research, academics, collaboration, presence, and athletics
- *Graduates well prepared to succeed in world that extends far beyond the boundaries of the State of Alabama*
- An ever-improving ability to recognize and serve the need
- Variety and sophistication of campus offerings
- International distinction in graduate education
- True engagement State of AL helping it add value and become more competitive in education and business

- Maintaining the AU creed. Continued focus on "spirit", hard work, education. It's what makes us distinct.
- Character of the students who graduate from AU
- A comprehensive land-grant university that improves the lives of all citizens
- Strong sense of family
- Development of practical problem solvers
- Loyalty and commitment of faculty and staff
- Value/affordability
- Emphasis on relevant research that combines outreach and practical application to the lives of our community, nation, and the global society as well.
- AU will combine the strengths of a LGU with a metropolitan campus-AUM to redefine a new American university
- The sophistication of an international University in a small-town



On defining the proper balance between research, instruction and outreach/public service

Surprisingly, relatively process participants seem to grasp that the AU stool requires 3 legs to stand. An overwhelming number of responses focused inward, believing their group is grossly underrepresented and ignored. Leadership is required to define these balances and to establish a common set of expectations. .

- **Each college must develop its own strategic plan in support of its mission.** Investments should then be placed in those areas that promote the college plan. It is important that the colleges' plans and that of the university are consistent and mutually supportive.
- **All three must be balanced and the reward system linked to it.** AU leadership must continually stress the relationship among these and go the extra mile to inform and educate the BoT, the legislature, and state residents *AU delivers a complete package of instruction, world-class research and outreach.*
- **Balance points may change over time to address the needs they each serve.** The "proper" balance between research, instruction, and outreach/public service may become increasingly linked to funding rather than to idealistic goals about higher education.

On developing cross-disciplinary interaction on overlapping fields of study and technologies

- **Develop Institutes driven by a common mission. Regional real issues such as water resource management, see which areas within various schools and colleges are potential resources and contributors and use a real problem to generate interaction, discussion and produce solutions.** Give these schools and colleges a tough problem and stress the need for measurable applicable solutions. Example: water use and conservation: those who design and build our environment and devices. Those who grow our food, those who teach / foster healthy practices and lifestyles, those who design new technologies to produce safe water effectively.
- Targets for collaboration and cross-disciplinary teaching and research should be developed by each Department
- Provide incentives for faculty to participate in large multi-disciplinary center research.
- Facilitate more cross-disciplinary communication ...often it is a matter of not knowing what else is going on, rather than a lack of willingness.
- Funding and resources for PI's. After that is gone, PI's return to home depts.
- A funding mechanism with competitive grants and peer review would do much to foster meaningful collaborative work on our campus.

On defining and fulfilling a future Land-Grant Role

- **Start with a global perspective.** AL and its residents must be able to compete in a global economy and for that they must understand linked issues in other parts of the world.
- **Address social and economic challenges and promote economic vitality.** Require all faculty to connect their research with real problems facing the State of Alabama.
- **Get in tune with the State's needs and expectations.** We must establish assessment tools to measure how well we're doing. Auburn needs to reach out to the political and business community, understand their needs and craft responses within our capabilities and skills. AU can not afford to be viewed as irrelevant to those who fund us--the legislature, business, government, the public.
- **Address AL needs for a decent educational and healthcare system.** If we want to attract good jobs to the state, we must offer an environment that supports the needs of the knowledge workers who are the employees of these industries. *This is much larger than agriculture and forestry, or even the extension system.*
- **Leverage the proposed Ag Institute.** Identify key issues, direct Division 3 and 4 funds toward them, and invite faculty from throughout the university to compete for funded projects to meet identified needs. Use Division Three and Four money to support needed research and outreach.

On defining a better balance between athletics and academics

- **The AU brand, primarily a product of athletics, is one of our most valuable, income-producing assets**
- Athletics should pay the university revenue percentages that are consistent with other Division I schools.
- Doing well in sports generates recognition and stimulates giving to all aspects of the university.
- The plan should provide a long-term vision for reducing the importance of athletics.
- Athletics should reinforce a positive image ,visibility, awareness also integrity, dedication, commitment
- Striving to succeed in any area, athletics or academics is a very important lesson to learn.
- AU's reputation can enhance Alumni Giving and provide a sense of pride to current and to former students
- The athletic dept budget must be transparent and totally accessible to the general public
- There should be zero tolerance for NCAA infractions. Equivalent to academic cheating.
- Revenues from athletics should accrue to the general AU fund, not to the AU AD
- Student athletes' education must come before their commitment to their sport



2. Toward proactive alignment of strategy with emerging demographic and market trends

- **Become more "outward looking," realizing that there's a whole world outside of this county and this state.** Many of AU's programs have national and international dimensions, but we don't seem to publicize the work that goes beyond the state boundaries.
- **Streamline decision-making.** Frequently, the continuing education/outreach units of an institution is the unit which can most rapidly respond to immediate needs. This is possible when there is a central organizational structure with sufficient resources and authority to mount rapid responses. AU is not set up this way. We have to go to a lot of tents to see if a response can be made.
- **Reward flexibility.** Provide incentives for faculty to develop alternative scheduling (weekends, weeklong, etc.) Make it easier to do international activities by streamlining paperwork. Encourage national and international collaborations with financial incentives
- **Establish Institutes** with funding, resources and administrative support that can assimilate initiatives to address emerging and future needs
- **Ensure Auburn faculty has overseas experiences** to connect with international colleagues, stay abreast of global trends, and bring relevant experiences back to students in the classroom. Global perspectives must be modeled by our faculty.
- **Require an international component within every student's experience:** coursework, language studies, an examination of global issues within one's major, international travel, interaction with internationals on our own campus. Some exposure to international issues should be a part of every AU student's experience.
- **Establish regular exchanges with Universities in other parts of the world.** Reduce red tape, liberalize tuition plans, actively encourage participation, and increase the visibility of international education.
- **Become world class at industry contact and learning what they are looking for.** We must look at the market needs for education and hire professors from industry that have experience in business to prepare students for what is really needed in their field.
- Anticipate and develop programs that meet the needs of second careers and the elderly by expanding evening, afternoon, and early morning classes, as well as distance education.
- Focus should be placed on Alabama industry for individuals needing Professional Development and who do not have a four year degree. Auburn should explore whether or not it wants to target this area. AU will need to evaluate demographic and market trends and decide who the target market for this University includes.
- The proposed "Institute for Alabama" should conduct an annual survey of the research, instructional, and outreach needs of Alabama, prioritize our applied research and outreach needs, then focus Division 3 and 4 funds on priority projects designed to meet these needs. Each year new needs should be identified as they emerge, new priorities should be established, and new projects should be funded to address these priorities. This process should also include regular Environmental Scans.
 - Priority projects can be put out for competitive proposals from throughout the University. Those proposals chosen for funding should list deliverables, and recipients of the funds should be held accountable for accomplishing stated goals.
 - Projects could be multi-disciplinary and multi-year in nature; the key is using the funds wisely to address the priority needs of the state.
 - Similarly, new Division 1 and 2 money could be used each year to support instructional programs (on the AU and AUM campuses respectively) that are shown to be meeting priority educational goals of the state.
- **Conduct regular environmental scans**
- Emphasize continuous learning over encyclopedic knowledge and step-by-step instruction.
- Focus Auburn's instructional programs on "the returning student." Individuals who have already established households and careers, but who want to finish their undergraduate degrees--or earn advanced degrees--can be reached through distance education. These students will boost enrollments without putting additional strains on our campus infrastructure. Successful distance education programs in business and engineering are programs in other colleges. Our differential tuition rate makes it feasible to deliver such programs when demand is high and faculty resources are available.



3. On defining the future size and composition of the AU student body

- **Gradually increase admissions standards to elevate the quality of our student body.** The standards at Auburn must be high enough to make the best students want to be part of it.
- **Recruit and support students from outside Alabama and the USA.** Partnering with institutions in other countries to permit studies abroad is vital. Future Auburn graduates must be prepared to live and work anywhere in the world.
- **Focus on incoming student aspirations for a competitive edge in a global market.** These are students we have to go get, and we have to create opportunities for as many of our students to go abroad as much as possible. Visiting teams of recruiters traveling to other countries could help, particularly in Asia where such personal visits are considered essential.
- It is time for the administration to decide how large and diverse the university realistically can or wants to be. It appears AU has many more qualified students than it can reasonably accommodate
- We are approaching our current campus capacity of 20,000 undergraduate students very rapidly. We can afford to be more selective at this point and to cap our undergraduate enrollment at 20,000. We need to grow our graduate and professional programs.
- Auburn could grow to around 24,000 undergrads and 4,000 graduate students. All of that would need to be tempered by continuously tougher standards for admittance.
- 25,000 students based on the best that apply, focused on our core competencies such as engineering, AG and Architecture. A stable size gives us a better ability to improve quality over time.



4. On defining future collaboration and competition

- **Partner on the areas where we are little weak, and seek to fill gaps where AU strengths compliment the weaknesses of other institutions.** AU can offer the best in specific areas, while others can offer strength in others. Forge relationships with other institutions to strengthen our own programs.
- **Consider joint appointments** with other universities to optimize limited resources. AU needs to start thinking of UAB more in terms of collaboration rather than reinventing everything they do. Satellite collaboration with some courses should be explored.
- **AU and Alabama, need to be distinguished as the Research Universities.** We are clearly the top tier in the state, and we need to make our differentiator, research, clear. Increase collaboration with the University of Alabama System to create more joint outreach and research programs.
- **Brag more about student/alumni successes.** Position AU as one of the "big 2" in the state. PR by Troy, AUM and others makes us look like we do not exist. We depend on and rest on our athletic prowess but we are truly outstanding academically.
- **AU and AUM must evolve into the Auburn University System.** Cost savings, sharing of academic programs, ease of transfer between campuses, credit for courses taken on either campus--all are ideal opportunities for collaboration.
- Develop coordinated efforts between basic biomedical sciences and industries to solve problems specific to Alabama needs. Development of blood pressure treatments to address this problem in the Black Belt is one specific opportunity. Treatments can range from molecular methods to optical/engineering approaches, and could combine many methodologies.
- Most of the research output in this state comes from UA-B, with lesser contributions from AU, Alabama, and UA-H. The state is not going to be able to support three or four research universities, and if it has to choose one, UA-B has the strong position. Given these facts, might it be possible to create an Alabama Research University Cooperative
- **The Land Grant mission must be reemphasized.** The Institute proposal is a reaffirmation of that distinctive difference
- Auburn has particular strength in its **biomedical and vet-medical training** programs, and the associated research. We should seek methods and approaches to expand those capabilities.
- **Troy State is a chief competitor.** AU must be distinguished through the quality of our research and on-campus instruction. Clemson and SEC schools were perceived to be other significant competitors.



On exploiting entrepreneurial opportunities on the I-85 corridor

- **Recognize that students need real-world training AND theoretical training.** Opportunities can be provided by arranging cooperative training arrangements with companies in the area. This is effectively done already for the Biomedical training program, through 'shadowing' internships for undergrads at EAMC.
- **Conduct a needs analysis with the local auto community.** AU can work with AUM units that have "boots on the ground" to identify problems, issues and opportunities for which AU resources are keys in addressing those issues.
- Business and Engineering Outreach can provide continuing education and graduate education to employees, particularly middle management.
- **Strengthen connections with Hyundai** and its home city in Korea
 - Develop a joint AU/AUM executive MBA program designed for auto manufacturers and suppliers.
 - Create a research/outreach office at AUM focused on auto engineering and industrial consultation.
 - The College of Engineering could serve as a research function for those automotive suppliers that are too small to have in-house R & D units.
- Define clearer roles and responsibilities. Reduce/eliminate redundancy between AU and AUM
- **Provide an incubator for business start ups.**
- **Focus on Montgomery opportunities**
 - Act as a clearinghouse to direct entrepreneurs to appropriate support areas of the University
 - Demonstrate/communicate how AU contributes to economic development in the region.
 - Refine and extend the acceptance of entrepreneurship as a mode for the University.
 - Develop and expand University/private business partnerships
 - Solicit corporate funding for these marketing efforts.
 - Facilitate regional cross state-cross university working groups
 - Create a network of links through the Research Technology Park.
 - Involve State development/training agencies
- **Act!** The I-85 Corridor initiative has already identified several focus areas which the university could address. It's time to back that project up with some real resources.



5. On preserving the distinctive identity of AUM as we move to one system in practice

- **Build on the strengths of each institution.** Economic development advantages are different for each institution. Having both in one system enhances the ability for each to be competitive and creates one strong educational system. Auburn and AUM need to represent what is best about both of them.
 - AUM must focus on the non-traditional market segment for undergraduate and graduate education, while providing a close-to-home alternative for urban students from central Alabama.
 - AUM should model flexibility for the main campus by being more willing to abandon product lines that don't sell, and more willing to make big experiments.
 - AUM's advantages are the personal touch, being a smaller university, and providing evening classes for those who work
 - AUM can exploit the advantages of a location close to the Capital where it can provide student training in policy, business, and leadership
 - AUM must maintain its identity as an institution that maintains high standards for teaching excellence.
 - AUM must continue to be responsive to constituents and managing its affairs with a high degree of service and understanding with relatively limited resources.
 - These strengths should be preserved by **maintaining management autonomy while creating new lines of partnership and communication within the system.** An example would be the University of Tennessee system where each campus Chancellor (President in AU system terms) has line authority over direct reports, while those reports have productive collaborative relationships with system administrators in relative and respective areas of function. The system's benefits would be compromised should excessive authority begin to erode AUM's ability to respond to its market.
- **Set expectations that faculty at AU and AUM will communicate and become productive together.** The political science programs are good examples. Nursing provides a different model that might work for other areas. Look for the best results regardless of previous initiatives.
- **Explore "jointness" that is beneficial to both groups of students and faculty.** A student should be able to concurrently take classes at either campus and get a degree from "Auburn University."
- Avoid a "one-size fits all" mentality when it comes to performance evaluations of faculty or standards for promotion and tenure. Recognize the student, faculty and community differences of AU and AUM when making decisions and policy.



6. On strengthening research and graduate studies

- **Establish more interdisciplinary groups and research interfaces that embrace contemporary challenges.** Identify and prioritize problems that need to be resolved and form research teams to address them.
- **Expand the rewards for superior researchers and graduate students.** Recommendations included:
 - Paying graduate student stipends
 - Paying or subsidizing a portion of graduate student insurance.
 - Promoting AU successes to private industry to increase available research dollars.
 - Marketing AU successes
 - Providing summer support for graduate students
 - Providing competitive funds for grad student recruitment
 - Developing tuition waivers for GRAs
 - Providing extramural research incentives for faculty and grant/contract opportunities
 - Offering fellowships, tuition waivers, and graduate teaching assistantships.
- **Establish a solid base of funding.** Faculty need more support in terms of dollars and staff to be more productive in research. Other major universities provide more internal, on-going support for faculty research, including hard-dollar funding and more technicians.
- **Expand grant writing assistance** Hire grant writers that work out of the Office of Sponsored Programs who will help faculty write proposals for more than \$200,000. (i.e. templates, workshops, someone to mentor new faculty and graduate students. Every college should have a designee to help with the process

Maximize Research Park Opportunities

- Select quality clients that do quality "cutting edge" work. Be bold.
- Make it an economic engine by spinning our small businesses
- Include research for people, educational, health, and community needs
- Link research to state, local and national needs so AU research is meaningful to the public and legislators.
- Collaborate with venture capitalists to ensure companies receive future funding and stay in the area.
- Apply the expensive lessons learned by institutions who have been on this path ahead of AU
- Remove the "silo" atmosphere that has engulfed this project. There are perceptions of VPR obstructionism from those who would like to be part of this initiative
- Define the legal/financial boundaries of entrepreneurial activities that may derive from the research park (or any other opportunity of a new and creative nature that may arise).

Establish greater consistency over the use of grad students as instructors

- Establish clear minimum qualifications for the use of grad students as instructors
- Define the types and levels of courses they are eligible to support
- Define maximum contact hours
- Establish training, standards and goals for their use
- Formally review TA teaching effectiveness. Include student evaluation in this review
- Develop greater tolerance of cultures and teachers with different accents
- Tenured profs must take more active role, even when GTA are in the classroom.
- Require a compulsory training period for graduate students from overseas who are about to teach. TAs must be proficient/competent English communicators
- Explore new areas of graduate study at AU. There are some areas that have tremendous growth potential, outside what AU has traditionally done. Encourage departments to start new programs and get beyond the ACHE restrictions that seem to impede progress.
- Create a University Plan that actively markets graduate education to our students. It is wasteful and expensive for departments to develop independent marketing materials for the graduate program.
- Provide suitable facilities, space, and equipment to support productive research programs. This can be done through centers with shared equipment and through specific support of individual programs.



7. On AU becoming a more diverse and inclusive faculty, administration and student body

- **The AU community must demonstrate it grasps why diversity is essential.** It isn't because some judge told us we had to do this, or because a particular ethnic group has more political clout than others. Valuing diversity is as much about discussing and respecting divergent ideas as it is about hiring people with different skin colors. It's vital to make these valuable experiences instead of a bureaucratic check off.
- **Recognize the recognition of the worth of all people--regardless of group identity--and include them in AU activities and decisions.** Demonstrate how diversity allows for different ways of thinking that could not occur without it...this allows for creativity in teaching, research and outreach. Highlighting departments that are culturally diverse and showing these benefits would be the best testimonial.
- **Put all diversity initiatives under a single umbrella.** Leadership for this function must report into the President, not the Provost, if the initiative is truly to be embraced university-wide. Accountability at the Dean/VP level will accelerate progress.
- **The BoT and President must set expectations for meaningful diversity progress.** Mentoring and positive role modeling, especially by senior administration must become the norm, not the exception. Demonstrate a commitment to diversity through individual accountability starting at the top
- **Set priorities and deliver annual progress reports.** Everything cannot be done at once. Set short, medium and long-range objectives, then provide the necessary human and capital resources to accomplish them. Charge each College with working to accomplish the goals and reward the individuals, organizations, units, departments who reach them.
- **Abandon the belief that only Auburn people can understand Auburn**
- **Enlightened department heads must understand and promote the value of diversity...**departments that have diverse faculty could be highlighted for their accomplishments that exist as a result of that diversity
- **Succession planning needs to be formally instituted.** This could include mentoring programs, which have been included as a part of the diversity strategic plan.
- **Deans, Dept. Heads and VPs should identify minority candidates with leadership potential.** Evaluate their near-term plans and put them into positions through reasonable search processes. Be sure that more than just straight white Baptist men are being groomed for administrative positions. Mentor existing faculty/administrators who show interest and potential. It needs to happen at the lowest administrative level possible but their needs to be monitoring to
- **More need-based AND merit-based scholarships would better enable us to recruit qualified but economically disadvantaged students.** We don't want to establish economic barriers for highly-qualified students of any ethnic groups. Let's build our scholarship funds, then use these funds to attract the "best and brightest."
- **Recruit in counties that typically do not send students to Auburn**
- **Reorganize the undergraduate Core** so that it requires a course in some kind of diversity/ethnic studies.
- Provide more formal career counseling programs for faculty and staff through the Provost's Office and HR.
- Staff and Administrative positions on the campus need to be encouraged to utilize available development opportunities.
- Educate faculty members who may unknowingly encourage separatism.
- Expose existing students to various cultures and people.
- Clean up Auburn's reputation of attracting a racist group within the fraternities and sororities.



8. On recruiting and retaining superior administrators, faculty, students, and staff

- Stop thinking like members of a labor union. It is not administration vs. faculty as in management vs. labor
- We need to act like a university that wants to be number one just like the football team.

Students

- Get more active by increasing visibility with high school guidance counselors
- Offer comparable student credit for their AP/IB high school courses as our competitors
- Understand why we lose applicants; why student's don't choose AU
- Address the notion of a "dual enrolled" student on AU applications
- Raise Auburn's visibility on a national level academically
- Increase our endowment for merit scholarships and need-based scholarships
- Improve the Honors College. Recruit and reward the best teachers for participating in it
- Set tuition for the following academic year as early as possible, not just before the fall semester begins

Administrators

- Conduct open, competitive national searches for senior administrators with participation by key campus constituencies. This will provide confidence in the process and generate support for the successful candidate.
- Conduct searches with appropriate due diligence and background checks of candidates
- Make a genuine commitment to AU's core values and belief in collaboration and shared governance
- Actively engage and listen to the faculty concerns
- Stop micro-management from the Board. Until a substantial subset of the BoT is no longer linked by their business interests we aren't going to be in a position to attract the best and brightest.

Faculty

- Recruit excellent faculty and administrator candidates from outside Auburn, with fresh ideas
- Help the new deans to recruit the best, by offering competitive salaries.
- Provide training that develops skills to become successful leaders and dept heads
- Consider what candidates are looking for in a work environment and employee/employer relationship
- Recognize that teaching and leadership are different competencies. The quality of publications and research are poor predictors of ability to lead faculty and staff. Too often, scientists rather than leaders are selected as administrators
 - Offer on-campus child care facilities
 - Increase the endowment for faculty chairs and professorships.
 - Move toward shorter term Department Chairs
 - Provide sabbaticals
 - More family-friendly assistance to attract female candidates
 - Provide more flexible working schedules and assistance with child and elder care.
 - Offer more chairs and endowed positions
 - Assist dual career couples with relocation
 - Offers must take into account more specific qualities and specialization of a candidate, and less existing departmental or college norms.
- Students tell me the best professors are the ones that have outside experience they can bring to the classroom.
- A servant-leadership mentality would help. If our Trustees supported and empowered our administrators, and if both groups supported our faculty, we would have no trouble recruiting and retaining good people.



9. Incentives that would encourage excellence from students, faculty, A&P, staff, administration and trustees

- **The AU Community needs to believe performance standards apply to all levels.** Faculty need to see that accountability is asked of the administrators and trustees as well as of themselves. Realistic expectations, communicated to all within the unit are important.
- **Auburn needs to take a stand on dealing with weak performance.** Merit system should be encourage weak performers to work and reward strong workers for their hard work. Weak performers should be offered an opportunity to improve performance and increase outcomes or they should be removed.
- **Failure to perform employee reviews must have negative consequences at all levels**
- Include input from people above and below that person on the org. chart in reviews.
- **All units and departments should articulate clearly what the basis for merit raises is.** Some departments in my College which define in great detail what constitutes meritorious teaching, service, and research. In other departments those things have never been defined by the head and so although faculty may know that 60% of their annual review is based on their teaching, they don't know how the head evaluates that performance relative to merit increases.
- **Academic freedom is a requirement for academic excellence**
- **Trustee should agree on present and future competencies** and since this is a global world we live in, more of our trustees should come out of state. This would bring new perspectives to help move AU forward. They clearly need to be skilled in the area of governance, finance, Sarbanes Oxley, and have a vision for the future.
- **Incorporate outcomes.** The goals and associated outcomes must directly relate to the overall university strategic plan. Individuals who did not meet or exceed their stated outcomes would not receive a merit increase. Individuals must be held accountable for the results they produce.
- **Recognize and reward those faculty members who secure external resources.** Let faculty to keep a fixed portion of extramural funding....like West Virginia University's plan
- Institute post-tenure evaluations with different levels for promotion with each level bringing its salary increases
- **Each unit and college must take its annual evaluations of faculty seriously and fairly reward faculty for their work.**
- The process should include self-evaluation, and a plan for further development.
- All measures of productivity in a faculty member's job assignment need to be recognized at the dept, college, and university levels.
- Independent studies, directed readings courses, and thesis/dissertation committee work should routinely and consistently be factored into faculty workloads and merit raise equations.
- **Administrators must be trained on how to conduct a performance evaluation.** Outcomes should be tied to financial rewards.
- Provide some perks for good performance and following the business model. Improve facilities, working conditions, provide sabbatical leaves for faculty. Reduce teaching loads.
- Specific goals and benchmarks should be developed for assessing the performance of graduates...at graduation, ten years later, twenty years later, etc. Objective measures should be developed. For example, at graduation measure performance on GRE, etc; measure performance or graduating class in prestigious scholarship competition; etc. Ten years later, define measures of 'success' to determine how well the graduates have performed and how important Auburn University has been to them.
- **Actively listen and say thank you...it costs nothing.** How are we encouraging excellence? Assuming we have a professor, or a janitor, who has a terrific idea for Auburn University; how would the individual go about making sure the President (or a designated official) is at least aware of the idea? Recognizing that most good ideas relating to organizational improvement and change come from within, the lack of any 'system' to encourage development of change ideas is tantamount to turning a deaf ear.
- Supplement the salary of faculty who receive funding with a percent of grant awards



10. On achieving and maintaining long-range financial stability for AU

- Our fund-raising campaign is the key. Those who profess to "love Auburn" must show it with tangible donations, pledges, and bequests.
- Continue to lobby to get laws changed so that state budgets are not based upon sales taxes, instead are based on property taxes.
- **Faculty who seek and obtain funding must be recruited aggressively and those who are here and are successful must be encouraged.** Those capable of supporting their research with funding must be aggressively supported. State universities have done this in many cases and they should be emulated. Penn State provides a useful model as an example of a state-affiliated university.
- **A significant endowment will be central to establishing excellence as state revenues shrink**
Raising such an endowment is predicated on AU getting its governance house in order and sending the message that it is willing to address and fix past mistakes.
 - Our constituency fails to understand the role endowments play in the life of a great university. We, and our constituency, need to be able to look farther than their 5-8 years at the university and work for the long run.
 - **Focus on planned giving.** Educating our donors/prospects to the value of endowments and increasing emphasis on planned giving is our best answer to this question.
- **Increase collaboration and alternatives for flexible fund raising.** Move away from competition between colleges and be more collaborative. More cooperation between Development Office and the various deans' offices is vital. Endowment management practices need to be clearly understood by the development staff and the deans.
- **Present a clear vision of what we want to be, the greater endowments will become.**
- **Increase trust between donors and the University**
- Review what appears to be a very consecutive investment strategy

On increasing donor flexibility to enable directed contributions to specific areas of interest and campus need

- Increase donor flexibility to direct where their money goes. Provide a list of needs, and make them aware they can direct the money to any area.
- Enable colleges to stay connected to their graduates and form teams across colleges when it makes sense. Help colleges to identify needs and market them in meaningful ways. Encourage colleges to share strategies that work.
- Fundraising at AU is constituency based. Development officers from each college work with donors to determine their areas of interest areas. Donors should be encouraged to give to those areas of need within the college. The deans and development officers have to sell the donors on their needs.
- Donors, to a significant extent, are highly attracted to projects that allow for some degree of self-aggrandizement. The opportunity for some type of recognition, in my experience, is a greater motivator than is the project. A lecture series may not be an attractive project to donors in its own right, but a Class of 1954 Lecture Series might have great appeal to that group of alumni. I don't see much evidence on campus that projects are being pushed as group projects to classes or other groups of alumni. I know from personal experience, where this tactic is used, members of the group usually take on the role of the development officer in soliciting participation by group members.
- Direct funds to more than athletics



On balancing the emphasis on athletics and academics in expanding endowments

- Each can aid the another. Athletics should work with colleges to do joint asks whenever possible and colleges could do the same. We need to stress the connections.
- Let our athletic donors know that it is possible for them to support academics as well
- **Athletics can pay a bigger share.**
- **Provide opportunities for them to work more closely together.** Athletics naturally attracts the high-profile big donor. Provide those who give to athletics an incentive to understand the academic need as well and split their gift. Provide opportunities for high-profile coaches join the campaigns for academic dollars.
- **The athletic dept should be a vehicle for expanding endowments;** it must assist and participate in raising the emphasis on academics. The driver of the University should be the academics. The passenger should be athletics.
- Nationwide statistics show that educational endowments are strengthened significantly when athletics endowments increase. It's the rising tide concept. The country has realized this for years, but AU seems to have trouble with the concept.
- **Require every student to attend at least one session of summer school.** This could take advantage of excess capacity (e.g., classrooms, dormitories, etc.) and generate additional revenue through summer tuition. This could result in students graduating earlier, thus providing space for more entering students.
- Price tuition to be consistent with the market and accommodate access through scholarships. Based on student applications for admission, it appears that AU tuition is under-priced.
- Tuition decisions should be made at least a year in advance to assist parents with their planning.



11. On demanding greater overall accountability

- **Stop micro-management from the Board.** Until a substantial subset of the BoT is no longer linked by their business interests AU won't attract the best and brightest.
- **Address the culture of "good old boys" who make most of the hiring decisions** in central administration and in colleges/schools. Until decision-makers recognize merit and value more than past service, good intentions, and personal contacts, the wrong people will continue to be placed into critical positions of authority, stopping the flow of good ideas and harming the morale of all who work here.
- **Everyone must be accountable**
 - Everyone must undergo some form of evaluation, including the BOT and President. Publish an annual report of what has been accomplished vis-à-vis the strategic plan. When goals not met, a rationale should be provided and an explanation of what will be done differently to achieve the unmet goal. There should never be a question in ANYONE's mind where we are in terms of completing objectives set forth.
 - AU Trustees should not expect support for greater accountability from faculty in the form of tenure review if they are unprepared to operate with greater openness, transparency and accountability themselves.
 - **Use the ones we've got.** Plenty of good programs are on the books, such as annual faculty reviews, the HRM annual reviews for staff and A/P. These programs need to be taken seriously and implemented consistently across the University.
 - **Get serious about removing folks who are not performing their jobs.** There aren't so many of these, but the "bad apples" are known, and give all a bad image. Rehabilitate or remove them.
 - **Faculty needs to do a better job of self-policing.** Academic freedom and tenure are essential mechanisms to attract and retain excellent faculty, and to assure their continued ability to search for the truth. Academic freedom should never be used to protect underperformers and scoundrels.
 - **Get serious about requiring performance reviews on everyone** and having as a component of those reviews how that person's actions (or lack thereof) have an impact on the mission of the department, division, and overall University. Evaluations should be implemented in a positive and constructive manner as coaching opportunities
- **The plan must clearly identify who is responsible for "driving" each goal.** Establish metrics to determine progress toward each goal; serve as the basis for allocation of resources; reward those who use resources wisely to make measurable progress; and finally, sanction those who waste resources in a non-productive manner
- If faculty, A&P, and staff are to be held responsible, they must be given direct control over plan implementation. Otherwise, "accountability" is a way of scape-goating the powerless for the failures of the powerful.
- Include and track a few clear goals. The larger and more complex the strategic plan the less likely it is to be used. To get buy-in the plan must be reasonable in scope and time demands.
- Evaluations and reviews should include feed back from up and down the chain. A scorecard is an outstanding idea as long as the measures are worthwhile.
- Post tenure review is a great idea, but must bring with it compensations and penalties
- Management should reserve the right to manage, but that good management ensures that adequate input is solicited and allowed from all stakeholders.
- Include constituent groups in the evaluation process.
- Central administration and BOT has to, at some point, stabilize and make accountability actually count.



12. On ensuring continuing program quality and relevance

- Program review become routine and the routine should be specified in the strategic planning process. Many departments already conduct reviews for accrediting agencies and we are all responsible for yearly assessments. These are bottom-up activities and perhaps could be part of program review.
- Majors must be updated or developed to meet emerging needs. Departments, colleges and schools need to continually assess their strategic needs relative to their job markets.
- **We must learn to move faster.** Issues must be processed through curriculum committees faster if we want to respond, at least in the classroom, to changing demands. Our processes and approvals are slow and too complicated.
- Coordinate program review with external peer and accreditation reviews
- **Cost effectiveness should be a priority.** Sound business principles must be used Is there a strong need to continue to provide financial resources to a department/major which has shown a long and consistent pattern of very few students?
- Review should result in recommendations for program improvement--or even discontinuation. *"If we as faculty would take seriously our charge to review programs for quality, effectiveness, and centrality--and make recommendations with real punch--then we would not need externally imposed reviews. I don't think we've done our job, so we must get started in earnest."*
- Program quality and quantity must be evaluated. e.g., publication numbers coupled with impact factors of the journal, total page numbers etc
- Programs must be accountable for actively shaping their future in the context of an analysis of their current position within AU.
- Processes must be designed with full participation of the faculty to understand specific program traits. Some areas of research have traditionally high publication rates, while other do not. Some are conducive to patenting others are not.
- Identify strengths, weakness and potential solutions to problems areas for the program.
- Recognize ongoing quality improvement programs that already exist in certain colleges/schools/departments. It should respect and work with those existing processes. E.g. all educational programs in engineering have very elaborate and successful continuous quality improvement programs that are reviewed at a national level to determine accreditation.
- Realistically consider the political pain of discontinuation programs with small, but vocal supporters
- Program review should be integral to a continuing planning process, with politics removed from the equation. There must be assurances that the administration and BoT are committed to making the plan and review work and not simply respond to individuals' demands and agree to pet projects.
- **Credibility is key to the success of the plan and process.** This credibility presently lacking. Few believe that the administration or BoT will support program decisions that are consistent with the plan and expect them to support (or not support) programs based on individual likes, perceptions and prejudices.
- Program review should not be a threatening process but a partnership of people or units for the advancement of AU. Inclusiveness and partnership will increase awareness and understanding of the challenges facing various programs and the each unit's circumstances.
- **Include industry/stakeholder representatives in program reviews to give us insight and feedback** on our graduates and the value they bring. Our educational programs must prepare our students to earn a living in today's market. We have not kept up with the changes in technology or needs in industry. A review should allow us to make those changes and focus on core competencies.
- Study of other national and international education programs and their successes can also provide us with valuable insight. In outside industry, we benchmark against the best in our industry.



13. On addressing future issues of campus planning, infrastructure and campus character

- The city and Auburn need better control traffic congestion between the city and university
- Plan and budget for the full maintenance costs that accompany new building projects
- Focus on energy and resource conservation activities. As a major research university creating some of the technologies others will use to protect and conserve limited resources, we should be in the forefront of implementation.
- The plan must be integrated. The parking plan must support the transit plan and vice versa. Continued development of perimeter parking and use of transit system is only solution given decision to move towards a pedestrian campus.
- Involve our architecture program
- **More on (and off) campus trails and bicycle lanes are needed.** AU and the City of Auburn should combine efforts to locate 'green ways complete with walking and bicycling trails along Parkerson's Mill Creek, Wire Road, Lem Morrison to South College, North and South Donahue to facilitate walking and cycling to campus. The concentration of apartment complexes on Longleaf lends itself to a trail along the creek to campus. There is a TON of federal dollars in addition to the earmark to make this happen.
- Ensure that all of these features are handicap accessible.
- Money earned through parking, tickets and towing should be earmarked for funding transit solutions instead of going to the general fund. This could make a HUGE difference.
- **Develop better parking/transit solutions to Game day football challenges.** Define what AU is willing to do as it relates to the planning, design and construction of buildings and landscaping and their specific impact on how the campus is utilized on Game day.
- **Student populations should not exceed the space available to educate them.** Either the buildings have to be adequate to house programs or they must refrain from enrolling students who can't be accommodated. Program directors should be responsible for compliance.
- Stagger projects to minimize the temporary blight on campus that results from all of the construction.
- Just a few trips to our SEC institutions will provide an indication of where AU needs to be. Many institutions will even share studies and research of what modern campus infrastructures are today and the future.
- There needs to be some sort of input from other people than the highest administration.



On assuring the entire campus is accessible to those with disabilities

- **The disabilities office needs a formal connection with the AU planning office.** Every plan for new construction, remodeling, street closure, or access restriction should be reviewed formally to ensure that there are no restrictions to access.
- **Recognize all disabled people can't ride the bus.** There will always be a need for some disabled parking,
- Develop emergency evacuation plans for disabled faculty and staff
- Make certain that we have institutional compliance with requirements, then exceed them
- There are two types of accessibility - accessibility to facilities and accessibility to all activities in the academic setting. Each building should be audited to determine if it is accessible to persons with varying disabilities i.e. sight impairments vs. physical limitations. Physical facility modifications should be made consistently. Modifying academic activities to include accommodations for disabled students is more challenging and must be looked at on an individual basis.

On enhancing the quality of life at Auburn

- Whatever happened to "Hey Day"? We need to look back at the past at some of the other traditions that used to be uniquely Auburn that have gotten lost in the shuffle.
- **Support a new performing arts center and a significant performance arts program**
More fitness/exercise facilities are needed for faculty and staff during the work day. Examine wellness discounts on insurance costs for those who use them regularly.
- **Build space in the Haley Center for a day-care.** Foy Union is a possibility. Graduate Students enrolled in elementary education or other similar majors could staff the facility. A child care center could be a training facility for curriculum in early childhood education, perhaps in a similar arrangement to that between the university and the Hotel-Dixon Conference Center.
- **Provide a space to share academic ideas and scholarship.** A faculty club, a place to convene is needed. The university, through the faculty club or similar social organizations, could organize group trips to places of interest. This would stimulate informal interactions with colleagues across all colleges of the university.
- A centrally located cafeteria that serves nutritious meals



14. On productivity enhancements possible with an integrated information technology strategy

- **Eliminate Duplication of centrally provided services (multiple email systems especially)**
- **Our processes and approvals are slow and too complicated.**
- **Develop an service-orientation to IT.** OIT serves the university community, not vice versa. They need to survey needs and respond. Not explain why it is impossible.
- **Focus on networks and increasing wireless access across campus, not hardware.** Students will be bringing their own hardware to campus. They will need more connectivity, networking, wireless, and software/netware that support what they bring whether it's PC or Mac-based.
- **Falling behind in the adoption of leading edge technology is not an option.** Lagging will mean forfeiting our reputation as a high-quality research university. Our students and faculty expect strong IT support, and we must provide it. Replace technology in cycles of three to four years. This will likely include providing technological resources for all teachers, both tenured and adjunct faculty.
- Multimedia classrooms with internet connectivity will be essential to future teaching
- Distance education programs are growing in importance and popularity among both "nontraditional" and "millennial" students. We need to be ready. We have a lot of opportunities for "distance" teaching and or participation through video conference but have limited access.
- Technology needs should target resident instruction.
- Preventing students from plagiarizing using the internet
- Develop commercialization of Instructional products for an external market.
- Develop corporate sponsorships to provide fee-based wireless coverage, bandwidth, access points to students. Rely less on AU-owned and administered systems that rapidly become obsolete. Develop long-term partnerships with high technology companies willing to provide these solutions to the university
- **Develop a common vision for instructional technology and communications technology.** We need a coordinated approach to more advantageous and exciting applications to our teaching and learning environments.
- **Pair older and newer faculty as "reverse mentors"** Newer faculty can teach us "old hands" how to make effective use of technology in our teaching and research, while we older folks can help the newer faculty "learn the ropes" and prepare themselves for tenure review.
- Integrate technical competencies with the teaching and learning center. Establish ongoing training programs that keep all faculty current in the latest technology.
- Provide access to current technology and provide regular training and development opportunities. Resources (and release time) have to be budgeted that allow faculty/staff/administrators and professionals to participate.
- Define the role of the distributed It units and the central IT unit
- Define to what extent students will share the cost of technology in the form of fees or tuition
- Video conferencing and electronic file maintenance is old technology. We should be using it to address campus wide space problems instead of complaining about parking spaces.



15. On increasing Auburn University's visibility through the state, the region and the world

- **Cease Fire!** It is impossible to create a sustained program of positive stories when the campus continues to be a non-stop source for stories that generate controversy across the state and nation. All of our teaching, research and outreach efforts are trivialized by news coverage generated of the never-ending warfare between Auburn's many armed camps.
- Deliver the message that the state of Alabama is better for having Auburn University. We are not telling the story. We need to do a better job of telling the story ourselves. **Every day something positive should be in the news about what we are doing at AU.** Communications and Marketing must more aggressive about getting more positive stories published.
- **Consolidate our messaging.** Each college currently operates as a separate business when it comes to marketing materials. No other corporation or business allows their trademark, materials or marketing to be so inconsistent and uncoordinated. Be professional. Hire an outside marketing firm to create an image and a marketing plan for the next 5 years and stick to it.
- **Bring back "where would Alabama be without Auburn.** Measure the impact that we currently have, and communicate how we are adding value and quality of life, not only to those directly connected to Auburn, but to the state, region and planet. Leverage this with the proposed Ag Institute.
- Articulate how this applies to people in their daily lives. We produce graduates who are the teachers, pharmacists, etc in YOUR community; we perform research that brings you better products, safer environments, etc.; we working to elevate the prosperity of the whole community improving the quality of life for you and your less fortunate neighbor.
- **Track and communicate the success of AU graduates.** Make sure our marketing efforts publicize these success stories. Quantify and publicize impacts that our graduates have on our state through their careers (e.g. how many AU graduates are consulting engineers that design improved highways, reduce pollution, protect water quality, etc.). Promote six degrees of separation concepts: AU alum are important people who know important people.
- A well defined plan that may include Editorial board visits by the President on an annual basis in state and selected out of state major newspapers, remarks to specific groups (Business Council of AI, etc), If you will, an annual report on AU with focus on the successes of the students, research and AU's contribution to the state and the world. It begins with leadership and the CEO sets the tone.....impressions are critical and long lasting.
- Indoctrinate undergraduates from day one by letting them see the benefit that this institution provides in so many walks of life. AU is the springboard for many a fortune 500 CEO. but it is also the ground from which school teachers and others who touch the average and below average in the socio-economic strata.
- We must continue to be respected as the "can do" university that provides leadership beyond our size and wealth
- Clearly explains the limits of how AU service activity are funded and that partial taxpayer support of AU doesn't guarantee AU is on call 24-7 to provide free services.
- Develop the same kind of link with national public radio (NPR) as Troy has with its NPR station. and as other universities do across the state.
- Much of the goodwill we have in the state comes from the association of AU with football. We need to speak out that AU is not only about football.
- **The image we want to project is one where bright students and faculty work together in an academically rich environment to learn, teach, do research, and solve problems important to the people of Alabama and the world.** News stories on academic contributions, research, bright students, national rankings, and the like will help us in this regard.
- **The world operates on a global economy, business operates on a global perspective, AU needs to think in the same manner.** Much of the new business recruitment to the state is from international companies. They do not recognize or care about state political geographic lines. Our students will spend their lives in the global economy. Increasingly we must world citizens.



17. Additional thoughts and comments

I truly appreciate the opportunity to contribute to the planning process. Thanks for making this an open and transparent process, and for seeking input from all segments of the University. This is a far better approach than having our Trustees gather in some back room and write the plan all by themselves.

Yes, but will the Trustees pay any attention to our input?

Do they truly value the expertise of the stakeholders of this university?

DRAFT