

# Executive Summary

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## Blueprint for Academic Excellence Provost AY2021-2022

### Highlights

The Office of the Provost enacts the core purpose of the university by providing academic excellence for undergraduate, graduate, and professional students and by nurturing excellent and diverse faculty in their pursuit of research, scholarship, and creative works. This year, the Office of the Provost supported this aim by: a) assisting our faculty as they adapted to teaching in the online environment, b) fostering the development of new undergraduate and graduate programs, c) hiring 60 tenure-track and 66 non-tenure-track faculty, d) hiring a new Vice Provost for Interdisciplinary Studies, e) hiring a new Senior Associate Provost for E-Learning. The Office of the Provost has maintained academic and research excellence during a dramatic spring pivot to a remote environment and a shift in how both teaching and research were conducted due to the pandemic.

### Mission Statement

The mission of the Office of the Provost is to enact the core purpose of the university, which is to educate students and create new knowledge. The Office of the Provost challenges and enables our students from all backgrounds and at all levels of university education to become innovative thinkers and transformative leaders by providing students with the highest-quality education, including knowledge, skills, and values necessary for success in a complex and changing world. The curricula and courses are designed and continuously improved to ensure academic excellence for all undergraduate, graduate, and professional students. The Office of the Provost recruits, retains, and enables excellent and diverse faculty to engage in the aggressive pursuit of research and scholarship, including artistic creation, in order to improve our world and to increase the reputation of UofSC among its peer high-research-activity universities. In support of the core purpose of UofSC as a state public university, the Office of the Provost works to ensure that our educational offerings are accessible and affordable for all students, to increase the diversity of our students and our faculty to form an inclusive community of scholars, and to foster interdisciplinary research efforts to maximize its impact on the state and the nation.

Updated: 07/01/2010

### Vision Statement

The Office of the Provost at the University of South Carolina aspires to support faculty members, graduate students, and undergraduate students who reflect the diversity of the state of South Carolina and the country. We seek to be a university that operates and performs in a fashion consistent with an AAU university in terms of research and academic excellence while working together to provide a transformative education for all and impactful research. We embrace a commitment to diversity, inclusion, equity, access, and affordability. We aim to exemplify what it means to be a flagship public university.

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# Executive Summary

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## Values Statement

**Impact.** Have an impact on South Carolina, the nation, and the world through innovative research, transformative teaching, the pursuit of knowledge, and the open exchange of ideas.

**Excellence.** Achieve excellence in all of our endeavors.

**Integrity.** Instill and model the highest standards of honesty, professional responsibility, and scholarly ethics.

**Collaboration.** Partner with individuals, institutions, and communities to enhance the impact of our efforts.

**Diversity and Inclusion.** Create and sustain a diverse, inclusive, and civil community in word and in deed where everyone is valued and supported.



# Goals - Looking Back

## Goal 1 - Building Inclusive and Inspiring Communities

<b>Goal Statement</b>	Create and sustain an inclusive learning, living, and working environment where all members of the university's community feel that they are welcomed, valued, and supported.
<b>Linkage to University Goal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attract, inspire, challenge and enable our students to become innovative thinkers and transformative leaders.</li> <li>• Assemble and cultivate a world-class faculty and staff.</li> <li>• Create new pathways to research excellence to become AAU eligible.</li> <li>• Cultivate a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive campus culture where every individual, regardless of background, has the full opportunity to flourish and thrive.</li> <li>• Harness the power, attributes and institutional diversity of an integrated and interoperative university system that enhances access, success and affordability for every eligible SC student.</li> </ul>
<b>Alignment with Mission, Vision, and Values</b>	This is in direct alignment with the mission and vision.
<b>Status</b>	Progressing as expected (multi-year goal)
<b>Action Plan</b>	
<b>Achievements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fostered a welcoming community and an inclusive university culture. Expanded Living/Learning Communities. Dirk Brown led a pilot living-learning community on entrepreneurship and innovation in Fall 2019. And 320 students applied for 50 slots.</li> <li>• Continued to build on the 2018 pilot on First Year Interest Groups. We expanded the initiative to ten groups of 19 students placed in linked course work.</li> <li>• Continued participation in the American Talent Initiative that targets support for students from low-income families. Completed transfer of boot camp pilot program for students in HRSM Summer 2019. Examination of assessment data will determine how to scale up the program and maximize its impact.</li> <li>• Joined the APLU Powered by the Publics initiative with a focus on how to close the graduation gaps in selected student populations including underrepresented minorities.</li> <li>• Inaugural member of APLU's Institutional Change Network to improve STEM faculty diversity and retention.</li> </ul>
<b>Resources Utilized</b>	Supplement for the Faculty Principal of the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Community and student fees from Housing to facilitate programming.

# Goals - Looking Back

<b>Goal Continuation</b>	
<b>Goal Upcoming Plans</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continue to enhance the Grace Jordan McFadden Professors Program and other initiatives to foster success of URM graduate students in collaboration with CADO.</li><li>• Develop action plan to improve diversity and retention of URG faculty (IChange Network).</li><li>• Continue to refine and expand the MAP program to enhance recruitment of international graduate students.</li></ul>
<b>Resources Needed</b>	
<b>Goal Notes</b>	

# Goals - Looking Back

## Goal 2 - Demanding Institutional Excellence

<b>Goal Statement</b>	Develop and support the physical, fiscal and personnel infrastructure to support the education, scholarship and outreach goals of the University through strategic planning, implementation, and evaluation; budget development; professional development available to all faculty; and provision of adequate academic space.
<b>Linkage to University Goal</b>	
<b>Alignment with Mission, Vision, and Values</b>	This is in direct alignment with the mission and vision.
<b>Status</b>	Progressing as expected (multi-year goal)
<b>Action Plan</b>	
<b>Achievements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expanded training opportunities for faculty to develop online courses and enhance pedagogy through Center for Teaching Excellence.</li> <li>• Provided timely and accurate data (OIRAA): specific and general-purpose documentation for all compliance reporting; reviewed source coding for all data warehouse Education Data Record (EDR) reports and made modifications accordingly.</li> <li>• Developed a dynamic academic program inventory that will link data and other metrics to USC official academic program inventory.</li> <li>• Provided constituents access to official university data (OIRAA): new mechanism for internal and external constituents to access official university data, including more complete historical data-sets and online dashboards.</li> <li>• Supported system-wide continuous compliance and accreditation strategies (OIRAA) with report generation and draft sections for much of SACSCOC self-study.</li> <li>• Reviewed and revised about 60 university policies and procedures.</li> <li>• Continued and expanded training for faculty administrators.</li> <li>• Continued to implement an incentive-based, measured growth budget model to create sufficient revenue and align resources with initiatives.</li> </ul>
<b>Resources Utilized</b>	
<b>Goal Continuation</b>	
<b>Goal Upcoming Plans</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OIRAA: continue developing data systems to provide more efficient access to data analytics and data visualization tools.</li> </ul>
<b>Resources Needed</b>	
<b>Goal Notes</b>	

# Goals - Looking Back

## Goal 3 - Educating the Thinkers and Leaders of Tomorrow

<b>Goal Statement</b>	Support the educational mission of the University through enhanced advisement and student success activities, innovative and creative development and delivery of curricula, expanded academic enrichment, and promotion of accessible student services.
<b>Linkage to University Goal</b>	
<b>Alignment with Mission, Vision, and Values</b>	This is in direct alignment with the mission and vision
<b>Status</b>	Progressing as expected (multi-year goal)
<b>Action Plan</b>	
<b>Achievements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Under the direction of the University Advising Center, professional advisors with training in all advising technologies advised all incoming freshmen.</li> <li>• Expanded the Winter Term to 14 fully on-line courses in Jan 2019 and it was subscribed fully.</li> <li>• Implemented Palmetto Pathways in the Fall 2019 and that program in combination with the Gamecock Gateway program and various transfer articulation agreements has enhanced the education of our transfer students.</li> <li>• CTE, OYT, and Office of Distributed Learning have partnered to run innovation brain-storming sessions this year with various groups of faculty, staff, and students.</li> <li>• Rolled out My UofSC Experience to new students and advisors in the Fall 2018 and continues this year. Students and their advisors can see the extent and types of engagement by the students and discuss how to maximize their undergraduate education.</li> <li>• Continued enhancement of professional development and scholarly initiatives for graduate students, building collaborations with many entities across campus, and utilizing online resources.</li> </ul>
<b>Resources Utilized</b>	
<b>Goal Continuation</b>	Ongoing
<b>Goal Upcoming Plans</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measure enrollment growth of a highly competitive and diverse student population.</li> <li>• Continue direct recruitment and support of academic unit initiatives to expand strategically graduate enrollment and doctoral degrees conferred.</li> <li>• Provide academic enrichment activities to improve the educational experience for all graduate students.</li> <li>• Advocate for increased funding for stipends, tuition abatement, and health insurance for improved quality of life for graduate.</li> <li>• Explore how training and resources for 3MT and similar programs can be used to enhance the presence of the Graduate School.</li> </ul>

# Goals - Looking Back

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Build a stronger, more collaborative relationship with Global Carolina to monitor and build international partnerships.</li><li>• Implement Shorelight Live program to provide synchronous online delivery broadcast from campus studio built by Shorelight.</li><li>• Improve student retention and progress toward on-time graduation.</li><li>• Expand high impact experiential learning within and beyond classrooms.</li></ul>
<b>Resources Needed</b>	
<b>Goal Notes</b>	



# Goals - Looking Back

## Goal 4 - Assembling and Supporting a World Class Faculty

<b>Goal Statement</b>	Recruit and retain a world class faculty through the strategic allocation of resources; fair and transparent policies and procedures for the appointment, evaluation, and progression of faculty; opportunities for professional development and career enhancement.
<b>Linkage to University Goal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attract, inspire, challenge and enable our students to become innovative thinkers and transformative leaders.</li> <li>• Assemble and cultivate a world-class faculty and staff.</li> <li>• Cultivate a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive campus culture where every individual, regardless of background, has the full opportunity to flourish and thrive.</li> </ul>
<b>Alignment with Mission, Vision, and Values</b>	This is in direct alignment with the mission and vision.
<b>Status</b>	Progressing as expected (multi-year goal)
<b>Action Plan</b>	
<b>Achievements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The office assisted in hiring 1 tenured, 37 tenure-track and 7 non-tenure-track hires (November 1, 2018 – October 31, 2019); processed 106 USC-Columbia and 4 Palmetto College T&amp;P files, in addition to T&amp;P grievances; and non-tenure-track promotion files; hires with tenure, clinical and professor of practice faculty members, and endowed chair appointments, reviews and re-appointments.</li> <li>• Coordinate faculty reappointments.</li> <li>• Supported faculty committees exploring policies and procedures for non-tenure-track faculty.</li> <li>• Hired and retained highly productive and diverse faculty scholars and educators. Supported academic units implementing strategic faculty hiring plans.</li> <li>• Incented and rewarded high-quality teaching through an increased number of teaching grants.</li> <li>• Facilitated early implementation of Excellence Initiative projects.</li> </ul>
<b>Resources Utilized</b>	
<b>Goal Continuation</b>	
<b>Goal Upcoming Plans</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue and expand career enhancement programs for mid-career faculty</li> <li>• Develop action plans for increasing faculty diversity and retention, with an initial focus on STEM disciplines (IChange network).</li> <li>• Analyze and report COACHE faculty satisfaction responses and develop action plans in response.</li> </ul>
<b>Resources Needed</b>	
<b>Goal Notes</b>	

# Goals - Looking Back

## Goal 5 - Spurring Innovation, Creative Expression and Community Engagement

<b>Goal Statement</b>	Promote and encourage innovation and creativity in the classroom, in academic enrichment activities; through all forms of research and scholarship; and in engagement in our local, state, national, and international communities.
<b>Linkage to University Goal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultivate a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive campus culture where every individual, regardless of background, has the full opportunity to flourish and thrive.</li> <li>• Harness the power, attributes and institutional diversity of an integrated and interoperative university system that enhances access, success and affordability for every eligible SC student.</li> <li>• Spur innovation and economic development through impactful community partnerships.</li> <li>• Build teams that win with excellence and character.</li> </ul>
<b>Alignment with Mission, Vision, and Values</b>	This is in direct alignment of the mission and vision.
<b>Status</b>	Progressing as expected (multi-year goal)
<b>Action Plan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify resources to continue provost's internal grants program.</li> <li>• Measure the facilitation of community partnerships across campus by developing community engagement opportunities for post graduate job placement.</li> </ul>
<b>Achievements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• USCreativity included the Gamecock Design Challenge and Creativibe as highlights of the year. The bus is in the process of being re-furbished with donor funds.</li> <li>• CTE offered USCreativity Innovation grants to facilitate incorporating the creative arts into courses and curricula and to facilitate design challenges in pedagogy (8 awards totaling \$20,000) over the course of 2018-19.</li> <li>• Trained faculty to implement virtual reality technology in the classroom and implemented EdTech Showcase in March 2019 (over 200 attendees).</li> <li>• Awarded 26 new internal grants to faculty and six SEC faculty travel grants across USC Columbia.</li> </ul>
<b>Resources Utilized</b>	
<b>Goal Continuation</b>	
<b>Goal Upcoming Plans</b>	
<b>Resources Needed</b>	
<b>Goal Notes</b>	

# Goals - Real Time

Goals for the current Academic Year.

## **Goal 1 - Attract, inspire, challenge, and enable our students to become innovative thinkers and transformative leaders.**

<b>Goal Statement</b>	Support the educational mission of the University through innovative and creative development and delivery of curricula; facilitate faculty in developing their skills in pedagogy; facilitate advising of all students across the university; expand academic enrichment, and promote access to student services.
<b>Linkage to University Goal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attract, inspire, challenge and enable our students to become innovative thinkers and transformative leaders.</li> <li>• Assemble and cultivate a world-class faculty and staff.</li> <li>• Create new pathways to research excellence to become AAU eligible.</li> <li>• Cultivate a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive campus culture where every individual, regardless of background, has the full opportunity to flourish and thrive.</li> <li>• Harness the power, attributes and institutional diversity of an integrated and interoperative university system that enhances access, success and affordability for every eligible SC student.</li> </ul>
<b>Alignment with Mission, Vision, and Values</b>	This is in direct alignment with the mission and vision
<b>Status</b>	Progressing as expected (multi-year goal)
<b>Action Plan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand undergraduate programs delivered online.</li> <li>• Develop new undergraduate and graduate programs that are responsive to student demand and to the needs of the state in collaboration with the faculty.</li> <li>• Ensure the support of faculty in developing their skill in pedagogy.</li> <li>• Promote initiatives that facilitate timely graduation for our students.</li> <li>• Develop professional development programs for graduate students.</li> <li>• Develop My UofSC Experience to engage undergraduate students and to allow them to synergize the classroom and outside classroom experiences to maximize learning.</li> <li>• With the advising experience as the best predictor of undergraduate satisfaction, continue to promote excellent advising across the university.</li> <li>• Develop academic collaborations with international universities and national universities.</li> <li>• Continue to support our transfer students and develop articulated transfer pathways.</li> </ul>

# Goals - Real Time

<p><b>Achievements</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Under the direction of the University Advising Center, professional advisors with training in all advising technologies advised remotely all incoming freshmen. Remote advising was extremely successful and will likely continue post-pandemic.</li> <li>• The University Advising Center re-advised many students in order to get them the Fall 2020 schedule that they preferred and as they made decisions about S/S+/U for their Spring 2020 courses.</li> <li>• We expanded the Winter Term to 14 fully on-line courses in Jan 2019 and it was subscribed fully. Winter Term expanded in Jan 2020.</li> <li>• Continued Palmetto Pathways in 2020-21 and that program in combination with Gamecock Gateway program and various transfer articulation agreements has enhanced the education of our transfer students.</li> <li>• Center for Teaching Excellence, On Your Time, and Office of Distributed Learning partnered to create the Keep Teaching Website to provide faculty with the resources to pivot in Spring 2020 and also to continue teaching in the online space. The Center for Teaching Excellence ramped up its workshops and individual consultations for faculty in March 2020 and supported over 2000 unique faculty and continues to support innovative teaching.</li> <li>• The Quality Enhancement Plan on Experience by Design has been established and the 100-page document is close to completion (due Jan 1). Plans for implementation and gathering of assessment data have been developed.</li> <li>• Continued enhancement of professional development and scholarly initiatives for graduate students, building collaborations with many entities across campus, and utilizing online resources.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Resources Utilized</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Center for Teaching Excellence hired two additional instructional designers on a temporary basis. These individuals were hired full time over the summer and half time for Fall 2020.</li> <li>• Advisors within the University Advising Center and Colleges worked overtime.</li> <li>• Many faculty developed new courses over the Summer when they were not being paid.</li> <li>• Stipend for Associate Director of Center for Integrative and Experiential Learning to write Quality Enhancement Plan, stipend for external review of the written document, editing, and visual arts support.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Goal Continuation</b></p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p><b>Goal Upcoming Plans</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measure the enrollment growth of a highly competitive and diverse student population</li> <li>• Continue direct recruitment and support of academic unit initiatives to expand strategically graduate enrollment and doctoral degrees conferred.</li> <li>• Provide academic enrichment activities to improve the</li> </ul>

# Goals - Real Time

	<p>educational experience for all graduate students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate for increased funding for stipends, tuition abatement, and health insurance for improved quality of life for graduate students.</li> <li>• Explore how training and resources for 3MT and similar programs can be used to enhance the presence of the Graduate School.</li> <li>• Build a stronger, more collaborative relationship with Global Carolina to monitor and to build international partnerships. Implement Shorelight Live program to provide synchronous online delivery broadcast from campus studio built by Shorelight.</li> <li>• Improve student retention and progress toward on-time graduation.</li> <li>• Expand high impact experiential learning within and beyond classrooms.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Resources Needed</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased funding for graduate student stipends to enhance recruitment and graduate student quality.</li> <li>• Recurring budget for the Quality Enhancement Plan to be managed by the Center for Integrative and Experiential Learning</li> <li>• Assessment software for OIRAA and Quality Enhancement Plan needed.</li> <li>• Support for more advisors particularly in areas with extremely high advisor to student ratios (Criminal Justice, Darla Moore School of Business, Biology, Psychology).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Goal Notes</b></p>	

# Goals - Real Time

## Goal 2 - Assemble and cultivate a world-class faculty and staff.

<b>Goal Statement</b>	Recruit and retain a world class faculty through strategic allocation of resources; fair and transparent policies and procedures for the appointment, evaluation, and progression of faculty; opportunities for professional development and career enhancement.
<b>Linkage to University Goal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attract, inspire, challenge and enable our students to become innovative thinkers and transformative leaders.</li> <li>• Assemble and cultivate a world-class faculty and staff.</li> <li>• Create new pathways to research excellence to become AAU eligible.</li> <li>• Cultivate a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive campus culture where every individual, regardless of background, has the full opportunity to flourish and thrive.</li> <li>• Harness the power, attributes and institutional diversity of an integrated and interoperative university system that enhances access, success and affordability for every eligible SC student.</li> </ul>
<b>Alignment with Mission, Vision, and Values</b>	This is in direct alignment with the mission and vision.
<b>Status</b>	Progressing as expected (multi-year goal)
<b>Action Plan</b>	
<b>Achievements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The office assisted in processing 132 tenure and promotion files (77 promotions and 55 tenure decisions).</li> <li>• The Office of the Provost assisted with 60 tenure track positions; and 66 non-tenure-track positions during the period of August 16, 2019-August 15, 2020.</li> <li>• Implemented changes in the Faculty Manual and Academic Affairs policies to reflect recommendations for professional track faculty (previously referred to as non-tenure track faculty).</li> <li>• Hired and retained highly productive and diverse faculty scholars and educators. Supported academic units implementing strategic faculty hiring plans.</li> <li>• Incented and rewarded high-quality teaching through an increased number of teaching grants. Provided 6 SEC travel awards.</li> <li>• Facilitated early implementation of Excellence Initiative projects.</li> </ul>
<b>Resources Utilized</b>	
<b>Goal Continuation</b>	
<b>Goal Upcoming Plans</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue and expand career enhancement programs for mid-career faculty.</li> <li>• Develop action plans for increasing faculty diversity and retention, with initial focus on STEM disciplines (IChange network).</li> <li>• Analyze and report for COACHE faculty satisfaction responses and develop action plans in response.</li> </ul>

# Goals - Real Time

<b>Resources Needed</b>	
<b>Goal Notes</b>	

# Goals - Real Time

## Goal 3 - Creates new pathways to research excellence in order to become Association of American Universities (AAU) eligible.

<b>Goal Statement</b>	<p>In order to accomplish this goal, the focus must be on supporting faculty and their graduate students to be awarded competitively funded federal research grants, attaining membership in the national academies, faculty awards, fellowships, and memberships, and publishing papers that achieve high citations. Secondary goals will focus on USDA, state, and industrial funding, doctoral education, postdoctoral appointees, and undergraduate education.</p>
<b>Linkage to University Goal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attract, inspire, challenge and enable our students to become innovative thinkers and transformative leaders.</li> <li>• Assemble and cultivate a world-class faculty and staff.</li> <li>• Create new pathways to research excellence to become AAU eligible.</li> <li>• Cultivate a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive campus culture where every individual, regardless of background, has the full opportunity to flourish and thrive.</li> <li>• Harness the power, attributes and institutional diversity of an integrated and interoperative university system that enhances access, success and affordability for every eligible SC student.</li> <li>• Spur innovation and economic development through impactful community partnerships.</li> </ul>
<b>Alignment with Mission, Vision, and Values</b>	<p>This is in direct alignment of the mission and vision.</p>
<b>Status</b>	<p>Progressing as expected (multi-year goal)</p>
<b>Action Plan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate interdisciplinary research across Colleges that would position them to receive grants from federal agencies.</li> <li>• Ensure that research laboratory space supports state-of-the-art research and ongoing and potential federally-funded research.</li> <li>• Increase graduate student stipends so that the best potential graduate student chooses to attend UofSC and support the research mission.</li> <li>• Strategically promote faculty so that they are nominated for and awarded memberships in the academies, faculty awards, etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Achievements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appointed Interim Vice Provost of Interdisciplinary Studies in Fall 2020 charged with actively promoting interdisciplinary research</li> <li>• Provost convened Research Lab Committee charged with developing guidelines for awarding and removing laboratory space to individual Principal Investigators across colleges.</li> </ul>
<b>Resources Utilized</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Salary supplement for Interim Vice Provost of Interdisciplinary Studies.</li> <li>• Collaboration with facilities to determine laboratory space utilization.</li> </ul>



# Goals - Real Time

<b>Goal Continuation</b>	
<b>Goal Upcoming Plans</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• OIRAA: continue to develop data systems to provide more efficient access to data analytics and data visualization tools.</li></ul>
<b>Resources Needed</b>	
<b>Goal Notes</b>	

# Goals - Real Time

**Goal 4 - Cultivate a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive campus culture where every individual, regardless of background, has the full opportunity to flourish and to thrive.**

<b>Goal Statement</b>	Create and sustain an inclusive learning, living, and working environment where all members of the university community feel welcomed, valued and supported.
<b>Linkage to University Goal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attract, inspire, challenge and enable our students to become innovative thinkers and transformative leaders.</li> <li>• Assemble and cultivate a world-class faculty and staff.</li> <li>• Create new pathways to research excellence to become AAU eligible.</li> <li>• Cultivate a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive campus culture where every individual, regardless of background, has the full opportunity to flourish and thrive.</li> <li>• Spur innovation and economic development through impactful community partnerships.</li> <li>• Provide a sustainable campus infrastructure that supports academic excellence and preeminent student life.</li> <li>• Build teams that win with excellence and character.</li> </ul>
<b>Alignment with Mission, Vision, and Values</b>	This is in direct alignment of the mission and vision.
<b>Status</b>	Progressing as expected (multi-year goal)
<b>Action Plan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage Deans and Faculty to participate in undergraduate recruitment, particularly in high schools where there is more diversity.</li> <li>• The Quality Enhancement Plan will focus on undergraduate students from diverse backgrounds with the goal of facilitating a sense of belonging and satisfaction with the undergraduate experience, which ultimately impacts quantitative metrics of undergraduate retention and graduation rates.</li> <li>• Increase graduate student stipends and other forms of financial support that will enhance our ability to recruit the best graduate students; specific funds will be earmarked for the recruitment of students from diverse backgrounds.</li> <li>• Enhance professional development to ensure graduate students' success.</li> <li>• The Center for Teaching Excellence will continue to offer its certificate in Teaching towards Inclusive Excellence to promote inclusive and equitable classroom environments.</li> <li>• Focus faculty recruitment and retention efforts on enhancing diversity through participation in the iChange Network and other means.</li> </ul>
<b>Achievements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand Living/Learning Communities. Dirk Brown led a pilot living-</li> </ul>

# Goals - Real Time

	<p>learning community on entrepreneurship and innovation in Fall 2019 and Fall 2020. For both years, over 300 students applied for 50 slots. In this coming year, we must decide if the pilot project will be made permanent.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued to build on the 2018 pilot on First Year Interest Groups. We expanded the initiative to ten groups of 19 students placed in linked course work in Fall 2020. Over 35% of the participants are First Generation students.</li> <li>Continued participation in the American Talent Initiative that targets support for students from low-income families.</li> <li>Completed transfer boot camp pilot program for students in two colleges Summer 2020. 100% retention rate of participants in the 2019 transfer boot camp. Plan to expand to three colleges in summer 2021.</li> <li>Inaugural member of APLU's Institutional Change Network to improved STEM faculty diversity and retention.</li> </ul>
<b>Resources Utilized</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supplement for the Faculty Principal of the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Community and student fees from Housing to facilitate programming.</li> <li>Funds from On Your Time to support transfer bootcamp activities.</li> <li>Funds to support the First Year Interest Groups for mentors were no longer available so there was no faculty mentoring piece for this initiative.</li> </ul>
<b>Goal Continuation</b>	Ongoing goal
<b>Goal Upcoming Plans</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to enhance the Grace Jordan McFadden Professors Program and other initiatives to foster the success of URM graduate students, in collaboration with CAD0.</li> <li>Develop an action plan to improve diversity and retention of URG faculty (IChange Network).</li> </ul>
<b>Resources Needed</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funds for graduate stipends</li> </ul>
<b>Goal Notes</b>	

# Goals - Real Time

## Goal 5 - Spur innovation and economic development through impactful community partnerships.

<b>Goal Statement</b>	Promote and encourage innovation and creativity in the classroom: in academic enrichment activities; through all forms of research and scholarship; and in engagement in our local, state, national, and international communities.
<b>Linkage to University Goal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attract, inspire, challenge and enable our students to become innovative thinkers and transformative leaders.</li> <li>• Assemble and cultivate a world-class faculty and staff.</li> <li>• Create new pathways to research excellence to become AAU eligible.</li> <li>• Cultivate a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive campus culture where every individual, regardless of background, has the full opportunity to flourish and thrive.</li> <li>• Harness the power, attributes and institutional diversity of an integrated and interoperative university system that enhances access, success and affordability for every eligible SC student.</li> </ul>
<b>Alignment with Mission, Vision, and Values</b>	This is in direct alignment of the mission and vision.
<b>Status</b>	Progressing as expected (multi-year goal)
<b>Action Plan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify resources to continue Provost’s internal grants program.</li> <li>• Measure the facilitation of community partnerships across campus by developing community engagement opportunities for post-graduate job placement.</li> </ul>
<b>Achievements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• USCreativity included the Gamecock Design Challenge and Creativibe as highlights of the year. The bus is in the process of being re-furnished with donor funds.</li> <li>• CTE offered USCreativity Innovation grants to facilitate incorporating the creative arts into courses and curricula and to facilitate design challenges in pedagogy (8 awards totaling \$20,000) over the course of 2018-19.</li> <li>• Trained faculty to implement virtual reality technology in the classroom and implemented EdTech Showcase in March 2019 (over 200 attendees).</li> <li>• Awarded 26 new internal grants to faculty and six SEC faculty travel grants across USC Columbia.</li> </ul>
<b>Resources Utilized</b>	
<b>Goal Continuation</b>	
<b>Goal Upcoming Plans</b>	
<b>Resources Needed</b>	

# Goals - Real Time

Goal Notes	
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# Goals - Real Time

## Goal 6 - Strengthening and Supporting Interdisciplinary Research Activities

<b>Goal Statement</b>	Work across colleges and departments to create new interdisciplinary research initiatives, support existing ones, and create an atmosphere of interdisciplinary excellence to tackle cross-cutting challenges.
<b>Linkage to University Goal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assemble and cultivate a world-class faculty and staff.</li> <li>• Create new pathways to research excellence to become AAU eligible.</li> <li>• Spur innovation and economic development through impactful community partnerships.</li> </ul>
<b>Alignment with Mission, Vision, and Values</b>	This goal aligns squarely with the institution's mission, vision, and values.
<b>Status</b>	Newly Established Goal
<b>Action Plan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create interdisciplinary working groups and consortia on both broad and narrow issues of importance to the local, regional, and global communities.</li> <li>• Support interdisciplinary efforts through visionary leadership and guidance. Identify and develop resources to provide material support to interdisciplinary efforts.</li> </ul>
<b>Achievements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Created new interdisciplinary research programs (minimum one new program this year).</li> <li>• Launched and sustained conversations across colleges on new research initiatives (minimum four sustained conversations).</li> <li>• Enhanced existing interdisciplinary efforts (minimum two existing efforts receive guidance from the Office of the Provost).</li> </ul>
<b>Resources Utilized</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time and effort of Vice Provost for Interdisciplinary Studies.</li> <li>• Material support as available to provide concrete support in the furtherance of grants and other funding streams to support interdisciplinary research.</li> </ul>
<b>Goal Continuation</b>	
<b>Goal Upcoming Plans</b>	
<b>Resources Needed</b>	Additional funding to further support bringing in interdisciplinary grants and funds that would have value-multiplying consequences.
<b>Goal Notes</b>	

# Goals - Real Time

## Goal 7 - Provide sustainable campus infrastructure - physical, virtual, fundraising, and administrative - that supports academic excellence and preeminent student life.

<b>Goal Statement</b>	In order to achieve academic and research excellence, it is essential that our infrastructure in the classroom and in the laboratory be excellent. In addition, the technology in the classroom and the infrastructure for research must be first class.
<b>Linkage to University Goal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attract, inspire, challenge and enable our students to become innovative thinkers and transformative leaders.</li> <li>• Assemble and cultivate a world-class faculty and staff.</li> <li>• Create new pathways to research excellence to become AAU eligible.</li> <li>• Cultivate a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive campus culture where every individual, regardless of background, has the full opportunity to flourish and thrive.</li> <li>• Provide a sustainable campus infrastructure that supports academic excellence and preeminent student life.</li> </ul>
<b>Alignment with Mission, Vision, and Values</b>	Goal is perfectly aligned with Mission, Vision, and Values.
<b>Status</b>	Progressing as expected (multi-year goal)
<b>Action Plan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Require that the Deans be more active in development.</li> <li>• Shorelight will implement UofSC Live classroom to enable international and other students to participate in real-time classes virtually. This is primarily meant for graduate education.</li> <li>• The Provost convened the Research Lab Committee to examine research lab utilization to optimize its use for research productivity and to recommend strategic lab renovations.</li> <li>• Provide a student computer and hotspot loan program to ensure that students from all backgrounds can participate in remote learning. Done in collaboration with the DoIT and Thomas Cooper Library.</li> </ul>
<b>Achievements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Upfitted over 480 classrooms with technology in the Summer 2020. Continue to upfit classrooms with higher quality immovable technology.</li> <li>• Provided over 100 computer loans and almost 50 hotspot loans. Hotspot loans have been particularly important for students in quarantine, in spaces without good wifi (e.g., National Advocacy Center); and computer loans have helped students with broken computers and those who have financial need.</li> <li>• The Shorelight UofSC Live classroom will be functional in January 2021.</li> <li>• The Provost's Research lab Committee will complete its guidelines for the awarding and the removal of laboratory space by the end of Fall 2020.</li> </ul>
<b>Resources Utilized</b>	Some of these resources will be covered by CARES Act.

# Goals - Real Time

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Travel and support for Deans' fundraising activities</li><li>• Funding for classroom upfitting.</li><li>• Funding for 400 computers and 100 hotspots and 50 webcams for loans.</li></ul>
<b>Goal Continuation</b>	Ongoing
<b>Goal Upcoming Plans</b>	Ongoing
<b>Resources Needed</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Funds for renovating research lab space will be essential</li><li>• Funds for renovating and upgrading our classrooms spaces, some of which are in disrepair</li></ul>
<b>Goal Notes</b>	



# Goals - Looking Ahead

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Goals for the next Academic Year.

## Goal 1 -

<b>Goal Statement</b>	Our Looking Ahead goals are outlined under our initiatives.
<b>Linkage to University Goal</b>	
<b>Alignment with Mission, Vision, and Values</b>	
<b>Status</b>	Progressing as expected (multi-year goal)
<b>Action Plan</b>	
<b>Achievements</b>	
<b>Resources Utilized</b>	
<b>Goal Continuation</b>	
<b>Goal Upcoming Plans</b>	
<b>Resources Needed</b>	
<b>Goal Notes</b>	

# Programs or Initiatives

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## Effective Programs or Initiatives

*List your most effective programs/initiatives toward fulfillment of mission.*

UofSC in partnership with the Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education (COACHE), a research initiative based at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, is engaging in a first-of-its-kind national study of faculty departures and retentions.

UofSC is part of the American Talent Initiative, a consortium of universities with high graduation rates committed to enrolling over 50,000 more low-income students by 2025.

UofSC became one of the inaugural members of iChange Network in 2018 whose goal is to increase the diversity in STEM Faculty. This is ongoing.

## Program Launches

*List any programs/initiatives that were newly launched during the Academic Year or any programs/initiatives you would like to launch in the coming year(s). Describe the program/initiatives, provide financial requirements (including additional staff), and academic year in which you would launch. What key performance indicators are you utilizing to track the success of this program?*

UofSC developed the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) required for SACSCOC reaffirmation through a process that included consultation with faculty, staff, and students. The QEP will be called Experience by Design and will leverage all of our previous work on Graduation with Leadership Distinction and My UofSC Experience to engage all students in all that UofSC has to offer. The purpose of Experience by Design is to improve retention and graduation rates and improve the quality of the academic experience.

UofSC modified its undergraduate requirements for all students that enter UofSC in the Fall 2021; they must take a 3-credit course that covers the founding documents.

UofSC established two initiatives last year that have been well received— Entrepreneurship and Innovation Living Learning Community and the First-Year Interest Groups (FIGS). These initiatives continue this year in expanded forms.

UofSC launched a new focus on interdisciplinary research and studies by creating a new Vice Provost position focused explicitly on these issues. This office is coordinating the development of two future centers: Excellence in Policing and Migration Studies.

### New Programs Approved by the Board

1. MSN, Master's Entry Practice Nursing (June 2019 BOT)
2. Master of Law in Health Systems Lay (June 2019 BOT)
3. Graduate Certificate in Health Care Compliance (June 2019 BOT)
4. Certificate in Artificial Intelligence (April 2020 BOT)
5. M.S., Business Analytics (June 2020 BOT)
6. Certificate in Environmental Nanoscience (June 2020 BOT)

# Programs or Initiatives

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## Program Terminations

*List any programs that were newly terminated or discontinued during the Academic Year. Provide justification as to why the program was discontinued.*

Terminated Programs Approved by the Board

1. M.S., Information Security (December 2019 BOT)
2. M.S., Software Engineering (December 2019 BOT)
3. MCD, Communication Disorders (December 2019 BOT)

The three additional program termination proposals in APPS at the time of writing the blueprint that have since been approved by the Board are listed below. Depending on the timeframe you are using for your report and if you want to report only those with Board approval, you may want to include them or you may want to adjust the number of program terminations to 3. We included them in the blueprint because they were in the curricular approval process.

1. IMA, Art Education (October 2020 BOT)
2. Certificate in Public Health (October 2020 BOT)
3. MPH, General Public Health (October 2020 BOT)

## Program Rankings

*List any nationally ranked or external recognition during the Academic Year. For each, provide the formal name of the program followed by the name of the organization that issued the ranking, the date of notification, effective date range, and any other relevant information.*

US News & World Report 2020

- Online graduate nursing program is No. 1 in the nation among public universities and No. 2 overall
- College of Education's online program is ranked No. 23 overall and No. 22 in public universities
- UofSC's international business program offered by the Darla Moore School of Business retained its No. 1 ranking for the 22nd straight year.
- Ranked in the top tier as Best Learning Communities, Best College for Veterans, and Best Value.

The South Carolina Honors College has continued to be in the top tier of public Honors Colleges

The doctoral program in Exercise Science was ranked number 1 for the second five-year term in a row by the National Academy for Kinesiology.

# Initiatives and Fees

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## Initiatives

*Describe any new initiatives your unit will need for the coming year.*

- In an effort to increase our world-renowned faculty, which allows us to become AAU eligible, the Office of the Provost must have a five-year faculty recruitment plan that includes \$8M recurring funds and \$20M one-time funds. This would provide competitive salaries for senior and junior faculty across multiple disciplines as well as cluster hiring in two specific areas. The one-time funds would be for startup funding for their research.
  - Faculty Hiring-Health. Cluster hiring in the area of health would include many departments, schools, and colleges across campus including but not limited to Sociology, Statistics, Anthropology, Philosophy, Information Science, Journalism, and Mass Communication as well as traditional areas where health is a central focus of the unit.
  - Faculty Hiring-Democratizing Knowledge Online. This would be a competitive process where academic units compete for faculty hire to encourage the development of online programs across the campus. The aim is to hire outstanding faculty with expertise in online development and program leadership.
- Laboratory Upgrades. The University of South Carolina has an aging research infrastructure and by AAU standards is limited in volume. These limitations represent a barrier to expanding our research productivity and standing as measured by phase I factors associated with AAU membership. The Office of the Provost seeks \$15M in one-time funds to upfit the lab space to accommodate the mission of this institution.
- Transformative Doctoral Student Matching Fund. To achieve AAU status, the university requires transformative doctoral students. The current stipend rates vary widely across campus. Many schools and colleges pay doctoral students a stipend at or barely above minimum wage. Thus, academic units have no real opportunity to compete for the best and brightest students in South Carolina or beyond. The inability to compete places a limitation on research productivity. To address this problem, the funds will be used as a 60-40 match with participating departments to attain a baseline stipend of 15K and to decrease the PhD production. This may seem counter to Phase 2 indicators of the AAU metrics for entry in terms of growing PhD numbers in the aggregate. In fact, we will continue to push for growth in STEM fields. Currently, these areas offer packages consistent with the baseline stipend. By attracting stronger PhD students more broadly, we position them and the university for external recognitions and support (e.g., National Science Foundation Graduate Fellowship Awards). We seek \$5.2M in recurring allocation to change the nature and quality of doctoral education at the University of South Carolina.
- Graduate student health insurance subsidy. The inadequate level of financial support for many of our graduate students is recognized by current faculty and students and reflected in challenges to recruit the best graduate students for our academic programs and in the University's reputation. All graduate students are required to have health insurance, with the option to purchase student health insurance if health insurance is not available through other means. Graduate students hired as graduate assistants are special employees of the university and therefore expect at least partial support of the cost of health insurance. Currently, UofSC provides \$1000 per year as a subsidy, just under 50% of the total cost. In contrast, Clemson University pays almost 80% of the student health insurance premium for graduate assistants. We are requesting funding to increase the subsidy to \$1500 per student per year.
- Establish Department of Biomedical Engineering (BME). Currently, the university has a BME program, where faculty from other areas (mechanical and chemical engineering) teach the

# Initiatives and Fees

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courses. Biomedical engineering is foundational to the research infrastructure of an AAU university with a medical school. Over 90% of the 63 AAU institutions have medical schools. Of these institutions, only 2 do not have a BME department. A BME department is not sufficient for reaching AAU status, however, it is necessary; and the 21st-century medical school requires a thriving academic department in this area as a partner. Hires would be strategically selected to interface with the Arnold School of Public Health, College of Nursing, Cardiovascular Translational Research Center, Artificial Intelligence Institute, Research Center for Transforming Health, and the COEE Biofabrication Center. The proposed department would house the SmartState Chair in Tissue Engineering. This position has remained vacant given the challenge to find an elite researcher without a BME department. We request \$3.9M one-time and \$750K recurring. This is a joint venture between the College of Engineering and Computing and the School of Medicine.

- The Office of the Provost is exploring the adoption of a Faculty Activity Reporting (FAR) system to facilitate the production and maintenance of CVs, annual review documents, and tenure and promotion files. Competitive systems include programmed input of some external data (e.g., publications, federal grants) and internal data (e.g, teaching load), a system for annual review/T&P committees, and the ability to produce standard and customized reports (e.g., certain program and institutional accreditation reports). A FAR system eliminates redundancy in preparing CVs, annual reviews, and tenure/promotion files since multiple documents can be prepared from the repository of system data. Standard templates generate these documents that can be tailored to the needs of specific units within the university. In addition, aggregate reports of faculty productivity that currently require substantial manual effort will be available and workflows for evaluation of annual review documents and tenure and promotion files can be built within the system, replacing variable systems across academic units and multiple technologies currently in use. Many individual faculty and administrators who have experienced effective systems at other universities have requested the implementation of a centrally supported FAR system. The Office of the Provost convened a workgroup in September 2018 to develop UofSC requirements for a FAR system in preparation for developing an RFP and held demonstrations from several potential vendors. Over half of the other SEC institutions currently use one of the major FAR vendors seen as potential respondents to an RFP.
- A Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) is required as part of SACSCOC accreditation and is evaluated every 10 years as part of UofSC's reaffirmation process (next scheduled for 2021). Our 2021 QEP focuses on high-quality Engagements and Reflection for all students with particular emphasis on student populations such as low income, transfer, and underrepresented minority students who do not graduate at the same rates and do not participate in the many opportunities offered by UofSC at the same rates as the general student population. Engaging in the opportunities at a university particularly when paired with reflection has been shown to increase retention and graduation rates of students. The new QEP aligns well with the new university strategic plan established in 2020 (UofSC Strategic Plan) as several indicators specific to the QEP are shared under Strategic Priorities 1 (focused on student experience), 4 (focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion), and 6 (focused on impactful community partnerships). The next QEP will propel UofSC forward in fulfilling identified institutional goals, meeting established SACSCOC criteria, and generating hallmark opportunities unique to a UofSC student experience and degree. The 2021 UofSC's QEP proposal outlines the expectations for a five-year recurring budget. To date, a one-time QEP funding allocation has been provided at a total of \$300,000. This allocation will fulfill Year 1 needs. Additional funding is requested for recurring QEP needs through year 5 (through AY2025-2026). The budget highlights opportunities to provide students with need-

# Initiatives and Fees

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based support to complete Engagements (e.g., passport fees, reliable transportation), methods to support the development of high-quality Engagements by faculty and staff across the five participating campuses, and staffing and technology needs to support QEP facilitation. We require \$300,000 recurring in the budget to meet the needs of this QEP.

- Five (5) Additional Undergraduate Academic Advisors. Currently, the University Advising Center (UAC) hires and trains Undergraduate Academic Advisors (UAA) at the university level and advises approximately 9,000 first-year students, 55% of new transfers, and 20% of continuing students at the University of South Carolina (UofSC). This is roughly 33.5% of the total undergraduate student population. Students not assigned to UAAs are often assigned to faculty advisors or professional staff whose primary role is not academic advising (such as student services coordinators or administrative assistants). Over the last five years, students, colleges, and advisors have deemed the UAC's First-Year Advising (now titled UAC Undergraduate Academic Advising) model highly successful. As a result, all colleges (i.e. DMSB, Public Health, CAS, Nursing, Social Work, Music, Education, CEC, HRSM, Pharmacy) and many individual Academic Departments (SVAD, Political Science, Biology, Psychology, Sociology) have requested the University to expand the professional UAC model. This expanded advising model ensures students receive a consistent, high-quality advising experience rather than a disjointed or segmented handoff after their first year at UofSC. The UAC requests funding for five (5) additional FTE Undergraduate Academic Advisors in order to accommodate college requests for expansion. The baseline salary of UAAs is \$37,913. Including fringe, hiring five additional UAAs would cost the university approximately \$265,000 annually to support an additional 1,500 students. Given that UAAs carry an advising caseload of approximately 300 students each, this equates to a \$176.67 investment per student served annually.
- Academic Advisor/Outreach & Intervention Coordinator for Special Student Populations (Veterans, First-Generation students, Transfers, and other students with graduation gaps) requires \$62,900. The COVID-19 pandemic and campus risk mitigation efforts made visible the engagement of the academic advisors to support academically at-risk students, specifically those not attending or engaging with their courses. At the request of faculty, in spring 2020 the UAC began the Absent or Disengaged Student Referral Initiative. This was a highly successful endeavor. In Fall 2020, this initiative is highlighted as part of President Caslen's Campus Risk Mitigation Plan. By establishing an Academic Intervention Specialist in the University Advising Center, there would be a dedicated staff member responsible for facilitating communication between faculty/teaching assistants and students' assigned academic advisors. This integrated network of care delivers on the promises made to students and their families in the admissions and orientation processes. Additionally, this advising professional would be responsible for researching national best practices in supporting targeted subpopulations of students (military students, transfer students, first-generation students, and African American males) through specialized academic advising and strategic interventions. This position will generate best practice advisor workflows for academic intervention based on knowledge of UofSC processes and systems and utilize predictive analytics to identify data-informed impediments to student persistence.
- University Continuous Compliance. In September 2020, the University submitted its 10-year reaffirmation plan. The extensive amount of work that went into ensuring that each standard was properly documented must not be lost until the next reaffirmation plan is submitted. Rather, leadership supports a "continuous compliance" model that ensures all related compliance and institutional effectiveness-related activities are in place to meet current and future reporting requirements and to ensure, as noted below, that continuous improvement, student learning, and student success remain at the core of our mission and

# Initiatives and Fees

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strategic thinking. Effective institutions demonstrate a commitment to principles of continuous improvement, based on a systematic and documented process of assessing institutional performance with respect to mission in all aspects of the institution. An institutional planning and effectiveness process involves all programs, services, and constituencies; is linked to the decision-making process at all levels; and provides a sound basis for budgetary decisions and resource allocations. (The Principles of Accreditation, SACSCOC, Standard 7: Institutional Planning and Effectiveness). The Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) is an integral component of the reaffirmation of the accreditation process and is derived from an institution's ongoing comprehensive planning and evaluation processes. It reflects and affirms a commitment to enhance overall institutional quality and effectiveness by focusing on an issue the institution considers important to improving student learning outcomes and/or student success. (Standard 7.2). Student learning and student success are at the core of the mission of all institutions of higher learning. Effective institutions focus on the design and improvement of educational experiences to enhance student learning and support student learning outcomes for its education program. (The Principles of Accreditation, SACSCOC, Standard 8: Student Achievement).

## Fees

*List any new or changed fees that your unit has implemented or had to take on in the last academic year.*



# Community Engagement

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## Community Perceptions

*Describe how your unit assesses community perceptions of your engagement, and how the unit assesses the impact of community engagement on students, faculty, community and the institution. Provide specific findings.*

Town Halls - we collaborated with the President and other university leadership in town hall meetings specifically designed for faculty, staff, parents, and students. The Provost, Vice Provosts as well as several faculty and staff presented information to the constituents related to the pandemic and the institution's response. In addition, the Provost's office held a town hall for the faculty regarding the IT infrastructure and how to use the AV equipment in the classrooms.

The 2020 Brown Lecture—"The Segregation Pandemic: Brown as Treatment or Placebo?"—was given by William F. Tate IV, provost and executive vice president of academic affairs at the University of South Carolina, and a leading expert on the intersections between education, society, and public health. A moderated discussion and audience Q&A followed Dr. Tate's 30-minute lecture. The lecture was given virtually on October 22, 2020.

Coordination of Public Health and College of Pharmacy for the COVID testing across the state of South Carolina. The University of South Carolina will expand rapid saliva-based COVID-19 testing to other colleges and universities across the state thanks to a \$16.7 million investment from the state of South Carolina. UofSC is one of the first universities in the nation to develop a saliva-based COVID-19 testing program for students, faculty, and staff. With the grant, more schools across the state will be able to offer the test this spring. The UofSC College of Pharmacy, which developed the highly accurate test, offers testing five days a week on a walk-up basis and results are delivered within 24 hours.



# Collaborations

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## Internal Collaborations

*List your Unit's most significant internal collaborations and multidisciplinary efforts that are internal to the University. Details should be omitted; list by name only.*

The Office of the Provost collaborates with all Colleges to continuously improve academic outcomes of graduate and undergraduate students and to increase scholarly and research activity by faculty. This year we hired an interim vice provost for Interdisciplinary Studies. His charge is to foster scholarly collaborations across academic units that lead to grant proposals, new courses, certificates and programs. The university's new Strategic Plan rightly places interdisciplinary activities at the heart of UofSC's Path to Excellence.

## External Collaborations

*List your Unit's most significant external collaborations and multidisciplinary efforts that are external to the University. Details should be omitted; list by name only.*

UofSC is an active member of the American Talent Initiative (ATI) which brings top colleges and universities together with the philanthropy and research communities to expand access and opportunity for talented low- and moderate-income students. By 2025, ATI aims to attract, enroll, and graduate an additional 50,000 lower-income students at the 319 colleges and universities that consistently graduate at least 70 percent of their students in six years. ATI members are a subset of these 319 and include a mix of public and private colleges and universities from all over the country.

UofSC is a member of the inaugural cohort of the NSF-funded APLU Aspire Alliance's Institutional Change Network to promote recruitment and retention of diverse faculty in the STEM fields. Member institutions have completed self-assessments of policies and procedures related to recruitment and interview processes and to the retention and general faculty satisfaction in the context of analysis of demographics of faculty candidates, hires, and promotions, and departures.

# Campus Climate and Inclusion

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## **Campus Climate and Inclusion**

*Activities the unit conducted that were designed to improve Campus, Climate, and Inclusion.* Led by the Future Planning Group - 3 on academics and research, surveys of all students (undergraduate, graduate and professional) and of all faculty who are teaching are being conducted right now. The results of these surveys will be used to guide changes in Spring 2021 in our academics and research.

# Concluding Remarks

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## Weaknesses and Plans for Improvement

*What is your unit struggling with? What plans do you have to overcome the weakness that you have faced in the next academic year.*

## Key Issues

*Identify key issues or potential challenges your unit will encounter this coming year and the steps you plan on initiating.*

The Office of the Provost oversees the academic and research missions of the UofSC Columbia and works collaboratively across the University to accomplish that mission. It is important that the units that implement the mission, particularly the Colleges, have adequate budgets. It is also important that the Office of the Provost have a budget to implement innovative university-wide programs and key mission-critical activities.

## Quantitative Outcomes

*Explain any surprises regarding data provided in the quantitative outcomes modules throughout this report.*

The Blueprints of the individual units that report to the Office of the Provost outline quantitative outcomes more fully.

Graduation rates have been steadily climbing with a 10% increase in 10 years and this improvement is seen across all groups of students including under-represented minorities and students from low-income students.

African American women comprise the group of undergraduate students with the highest graduation rate.

## Cool Stuff

*Describe innovations, happy accidents, good news, etc. that occurred within your unit not noted elsewhere in your reporting.*

UofSC Columbia has more nationally ranked graduate programs than all of the other SC universities combined.

UofSC Columbia has the most highly enrolled completely online degree programs than any other university or college in the UofSC system.

The Office of the Provost provides leadership for UofSC's participation in three national initiatives to improve diversity in the academy and student outcomes across the nation demonstrating the deep commitment of UofSC to students and diversity.