

This Plan is under a mid-point  
review and will be updated  
through the Strategic Plan  
Refresh Process in  
mid/late 2024.

UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

# LEAD ON, UNIVERSITY

STRATEGIC PLAN

**NORMAN CAMPUS**



*The* UNIVERSITY of OKLAHOMA



## Why a Strategic Plan and Why Now

---

American higher education faces an uncertain and highly competitive future. Fundamental disruption has occurred and will certainly continue. The COVID-19 pandemic has intensified the pressures that higher education faces. Now is not the time to lurch from year to year without an insightful and bold plan for the University's second century. In at least the last 25 years, the University never issued a clear strategy for its future. We simply cannot succeed in the next 10 years without one.

Therefore, the Board of Regents and President Harroz initiated a comprehensive and inclusive process to create a new Strategic Plan for the University. This task is extraordinarily complex: The Plan must unite a University of three campuses, dozens of colleges, hundreds of undergraduate and graduate degrees, and tens of thousands of students, faculty, and staff. And we have undertaken this task at a time when the very foundation of higher education is being challenged on multiple fronts. The task of creating a Strategic Plan is more vital than ever, and the stakes could not be greater for the University and the entire state of Oklahoma.

Under Review



## Premise

---

Universities are a cornerstone of our economic and social prosperity and the key to realizing the American dream. A college degree is worth about \$1.5 million more earned over a lifetime.

The period from 1945-1980 was a Golden Age of higher education, defined by rapidly growing enrollments and increased investment from states and the federal government (e.g., GI Bill). From 1980-2008 was a period of relentless public disinvestment and steadily increasing tuition. We are now in a new period that continues these trends and is further defined by worldwide competitive forces and consolidation due to demographic, fiscal, and technological factors.

Systemic concerns have developed over that same time period. These can be generally divided into fiscal concerns, changing demands for services, and a reliance on stopgap measures to confront a changing marketplace:

- Tuition and fees at U.S. public institutions increased 310% from 1987 to 2019. These increases far outpaced inflation and cannot continue at the same rate.
- State funding of public institutions retrenched and shows no signs of rebounding. Constant dollar public appropriations per student is 8% lower than in 1992, and 20% lower than 2001. State appropriations fund ~10% of the Norman Campus operating budget today, in contrast to 1982 when they accounted for 42%.
- Personal debt that individuals have taken on to afford higher education. Two-thirds of students borrow today versus less than half in 1990, and the average constant dollar debt among borrowers has doubled to over \$25,000.
- Student loans are the second-largest segment of consumer debt, accounting for \$1.5 trillion (~11% of consumer debt). Student debt increased 250% since 2007.
- Universities have built and expanded programs and services without corresponding cuts or incremental revenue gains. Institutions have more liabilities, higher debt service, and increased expenses without the revenue or the cash reserves to support them.
- Compliance burden and student services have grown drastically. Controlling for inflation, system-wide costs of student services have increased 19% from 2008-2020.



Premise (cont.)

---

- As demographics change, college enrollments are predicted to decline by 15% between 2025 and 2029. The states of Texas and Oklahoma are somewhat buffered, with projections of growth until 2026 before modest decline. Oklahoma projects 45,400 graduates in 2025, decreasing to 43,000 by 2029. Regional and national competition in our core markets will continue to intensify (e.g., North Texas).
- Intensifying competition for students will limit OU's pricing power.
- Social and economic forces will increase demand for advanced degrees and credentials.
- The market for higher education is segmenting. Closures and consolidations will increase nationally. Public consolidations and closures focus on smaller schools, often in low-growth areas. Value and premium brands may continue to thrive.
- Mounting challenges in the Oklahoma system of higher education have been staved off by stopgap measures (such as concurrent enrollment and Section 13 offset programs that subsidize otherwise financially at-risk institutions). Ultimately, the current system is unsustainable. Change is inevitable.

OU's strategy must choose among market segments. We must develop a brand premised around it. Impactful research is integral to brand value and will be core to OU's future.

It is essential that we focus on the most distinctive characteristics of the OU experience, both locally and nationally.





Differentiated and financially sustainable public institutions do the following:

- Focus strongly on providing the highest quality education at the lowest possible cost, and on improving student outcomes and reducing student debt at graduation;
- Leverage athletics and medical campuses to generate income and brand awareness;
- Grow revenue through philanthropy, corporate partnerships, economic development, and other non-traditional approaches;
- Align strategically with the state to leverage investments;
- Streamline overhead and reduce administrative costs;
- Free up capital in non-core assets;
- Receive differential, strategic investment from the state; and
- Strategically invest in innovative and disruptive models.

Brand strength and economies of scale must be realized at the enterprise level (i.e., across all OU campuses), and there must be trust and alignment between roles and accountability. We must balance shared governance practices with a level of agility to react to opportunities and challenges.

Our Strategic Plan must garner understanding and buy-in from relevant constituencies. In academic institutions, success requires a culture of excellence measured by agreed-upon institutional standards calibrated to achievable, aspirational targets. We must avoid false economies which cost us value in the long run.

A bold, honest and clear-eyed strategy must be adopted that allows the institution to flourish.



## The Process

---

### Executive Team

1. A core team of five executive leaders committed twice-weekly meetings to the strategic planning process. Each meeting averaged 3.5 hours. Beyond those sessions, each member committed time to developing ideas and identifying issues that would have to be addressed. It's estimated this group collectively spent 2,500-3,000 hours on the project over the last year.
  2. The group also shared ideas and concepts with the University's 18-person executive leadership team and held feedback and strategy sessions with that group during weekly meetings.
- 

### Norman Campus

1. The President's Academic Planning and Budget Advisory Committee's 11-member group, co-chaired by Provost Harper and School of Music faculty member Dr. Sarah Ellis, was asked to begin exploring the establishment of our Plan. The Advisory Committee represents faculty of varying ranks and multiple disciplines. Between September and December 2019, The Advisory Committee collectively spent more than 900 hours working on the Plan and interacting with campus stakeholders, including the representative leadership of faculty, students, and staff.
2. The Norman Deans' Council began providing input on the development of the plan in August 2019 at its annual Deans' Retreat. Updates on the plan's process were provided at regular council meetings. The group provided critical feedback throughout the entire process.
3. In October 2019, executive leadership and the Advisory Committee invited OU community members from all constituencies to participate in a survey to help inform the campus conversation around OU's Strategic Plan. The survey yielded more than 5,000 responses.
4. Executive leadership and Provost Harper conducted 6 town hall meetings across all three campuses throughout December 2019 and January 2020, soliciting feedback for the Strategic Plan.
5. Final input was sought on a draft of the plan from the executive leadership team, the Norman Deans' Council, student leadership, and Faculty and Staff Senate executive committees.



## How it Works

---

Our Strategic Plan consists of five elements:

- The University's **Purpose**;
- The **Pillars** that define what kind of university we want to be;
- The **Strategies** that carry out the Pillars;
- The **Tactics** required to fulfill the Strategies; and
- **Regular Assessment** and **Performance Review** based on the Strategic Plan.

The **Purpose** is concrete, immovable, and enduring. It is the essence of what we do.

The **Pillars** establish the initial pathway for fulfilling our Purpose. They reach to the core of what is most important for the University. Like the Purpose, Pillars do not change except under truly exceptional circumstances.

**Strategies** separate Pillars into manageable parts so that underlying tactics can be identified, assessed, planned, and executed with clarity and efficiency. Simply stated, Strategies are intermediate goals.

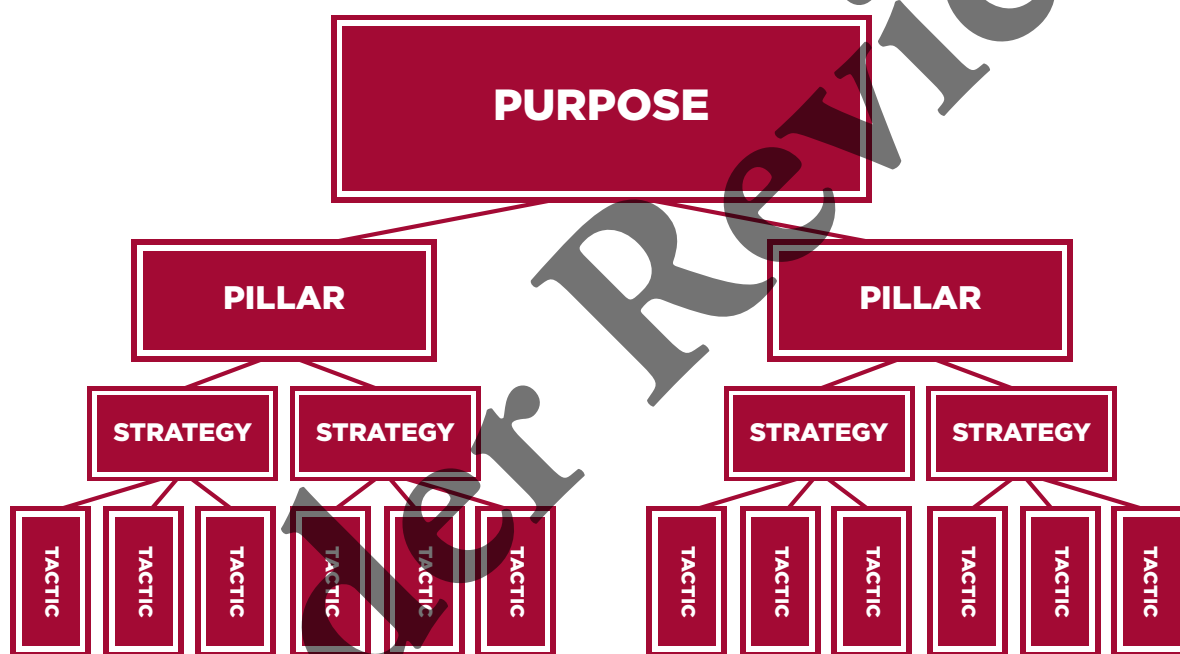
**Tactics** are where the rubber meets the road. They are fluid and correspond to then-current needs, while always remaining consistent with the corresponding Strategy.

**Regular Assessment** and **Performance Review** will be essential to successful implementation of the Plan.

Our Strategic Plan is not static. It is a dynamic, living, and breathing roadmap to our future. All future decisions will be made through this prism.



Our Strategic Plan operates **top-to-bottom** and **bottom-to-top**. Everything is connected and coordinated. This affords real-time assessment of how our University is functioning.







## Defining a Purpose

---

The world is changing rapidly. This dynamic will continue and increase in speed; what once was likely will never be again. Higher education will not be exempted from this and is already squarely in the crosshairs of disruptors who would enjoy nothing more than to take down the historic models that have served us well for more than 100 years. The question facing us, then, is whether we are going to stand by and watch that happen or are we going to define who we are, where we are going, and then go about the business of achieving those goals with the same unrelenting determination as those who would bring our traditions to an end?

Longstanding ways of operating and educating students face an uncertain future while promising new alternatives await. For OU to remain relevant and prosper in this disruptive era, it needs a fundamental understanding of who it is and why it exists.

For a strategic plan to have real value and not just be placed on the shelf as yet another exercise, why the organization exists must be distilled to its very core. While this may sound fairly simple, it is anything but. Many strategic plans fail because this crucial first step is underappreciated, lacks any real sense of self-awareness, and is mistakenly taken for granted as understood by everyone.

Determining the essence of why an organization exists takes the thought of many, requires real debate and disagreement, results in high levels of constructive frustration, demands the willingness to be open-minded and begin anew, and calls for raw determination and perseverance. All of this is expended in exchange for the promise of a deep understanding of what it is that an organization actually does. To be clear, defining an organization's true Purpose is far more than casting yet another ubiquitous and hollow "mission and vision" statement.

It is much more important because, from it, all thoughts, practices and decisions flow. It is in the pursuit of this purpose that all core strategies and tactics are designed and relied upon to successfully take the organization into the future.

At the University of Oklahoma, our Purpose is elegant in its simplicity and profound in its depth:

**WE CHANGE LIVES.**



## Pillars

---

Our Strategic Plan is made up of five pillars that define how the University will fulfill its Purpose. The process of identifying the pillars took great time and consideration and required reaching to the core of what is most important for the University of Oklahoma. The pillars are manageable, and they create clear focus in fulfilling our Strategic Plan. They are equal in importance.

- 1 Become a Top-Tier Public Research University
- 2 Prepare Students for a Life of Success, Meaning, Service, and Positive Impact
- 3 Make OU's Excellence Affordable and Attainable
- 4 Become a Place of Belonging and Emotional Growth for All Students, Faculty, Staff, and Alumni
- 5 Enrich and Positively Impact Oklahoma, the Nation, and the World through Research and Creative Activity



## Pillar 1:

### Become a Top-Tier Public Research University

---

Strategy 1	Meet Association of American Universities-quality benchmarks to position OU among the top public universities in the U.S. The Association of American Universities represents the top 65 public and private universities in the U.S. and Canada.
Tactic 1	Hire 150 net new faculty in areas consistent with our Strategic Plan through a new annual investment of \$35 million recurring, phased in over seven years. Invest an additional \$10-15 million per year, over seven years, in start-up packages providing industry-standard funding for necessary research tools for faculty success.
Tactic 2	Expand Ph.D. programs to the level of aspirational peer institutions by investing an additional \$6 million recurring, phased in over seven years, and create incentives for research faculty to secure additional external funding.
Tactic 3	Ensuring staffing levels are appropriately proportioned to the increase in the faculty and student needs.
Tactic 4	On a quarterly basis track progress toward becoming a top public university using Association of American Universities-quality benchmarks. Additional details provided below in Pillar 5.
Strategy 2	Hire leading faculty who will help take OU's reputation to the next level.
Tactic 1	Establish a best-in-class recruiting program, including concierge-like services and a spousal/partner accommodation program.
Tactic 2	Streamline and accelerate hiring practices for new faculty and staff to be competitive with the market.
Tactic 3	Hire top-tier talent in strategic areas by channeling new investments through an internally competitive process.
Tactic 4	Develop measures to ensure outstanding faculty hires, using a faculty committee to provide feedback toward standards of excellence.



---

Pillar 1: Become a Top-Tier Public Research University (cont.)

---

Strategy 2 (cont.)

Tactic 5 Honor the value of tenure while increasing flexibility to hire teaching-intensive faculty as we grow research and expand professional and online programs.

Strategy 3	Develop and retain an outstanding and diverse faculty and staff.
------------	--

Tactic 1 Provide best-in-class professional development for our faculty through OU's Center for Faculty Excellence.

Tactic 2 Establish an Associate Provost for Inclusive Faculty Excellence position with responsibility related to faculty development, teaching and learning, curriculum development and review, and new faculty orientation.

Tactic 3 Establish college-specific teaching plans, benchmarked to research and teaching goals, tailored to the performance and capabilities of each faculty member.

Tactic 4 Forge new standards of performance evaluation for faculty and staff to ensure consistency and rigor, in alignment with the Strategic Plan.

Tactic 5 Implement compensation plans that meaningfully reward excellence and provide salary increases for performing faculty and staff.

Tactic 6 Enhance professional development and career opportunities for staff.

Tactic 7 Reduce the administrative burden and increase the effectiveness and efficiency of post-tenure review to ensure a high level of productivity for all tenured faculty members.

Tactic 8 Provide robust professional development and training of supervisors and administrators and conduct yearly evaluations of administrators and administrative offices.

Tactic 9 Identify, understand, and address retention issues.



---

Pillar 1: Become a Top-Tier Public Research University (cont.)

---

Strategy 3 (cont.)

Tactic 10      Ensure that there are mechanisms to address faculty and staff who are not meeting expectations consistent with the Strategic Plan.

Strategy 4

Enhance the OU brand through new investment in marketing and communications to improve recruitment, alumni engagement, and institutional reputation across the state, region, and country.

Tactic 1      Develop a targeted university-wide marketing plan and brand identity that reflects OU's distinct value. Eliminate inconsistent, confusing, and poorly constructed branding within the University.

Tactic 2      Recognize the value of the OU Athletics brand for the entire institution and purposefully capitalize on the enthusiasm and affinity for OU Athletics to benefit the broader institution.

Tactic 3      Achieve and continually track earned media and other relevant key performance indicators benchmarked against public Association of American Universities standards.

Tactic 4      Develop a best-in-class social media presence and institutional identity benchmarked against public Association of American Universities standards.



## Pillar 2:

Prepare Students for a Life of Success, Meaning, Service,  
and Positive Impact

---

Strategy 1	Foster a student-centered culture across the institution.
Tactic 1	Incentivize and reward outstanding teaching and mentorship of students.
Tactic 2	Ensure that OU's top researchers are engaged in the classroom and that all OU students are connected to faculty who are on the forefront of discovery and creativity.
Strategy 2	Improve undergraduate and graduate degree completion.
Tactic 1	Enhance and prioritize fundraising for need-based aid to increase retention and raise the six-year graduation rate from 67% to 75%.
Tactic 2	Reduce required degree hours and increase flexibility for students who change majors.
Tactic 3	Expand mental health resources and services to meet demonstrated increases in student clinical needs and improve awareness of mental health issues and resources for faculty and staff.
Strategy 3	Support and reward excellence in teaching within the classroom.
Tactic 1	Work with the Center for Faculty Excellence and the Graduate School to create an infrastructure of faculty, graduate student, and staff interaction and support for professional development, innovation, and teaching excellence at all levels.
Tactic 2	Develop fair and rigorous metrics for evaluating teaching effectiveness, and reward and promote outstanding performance.





Pillar 2: Prepare Students for a Life of Success, Meaning, Service, and Positive Impact  
(cont.)

Strategy 4	Ensure learning experiences outside the classroom, such as faculty mentored research, service learning, and leadership opportunities for every OU student, undergraduate and graduate.
Tactic 1	Design undergraduate research opportunities for every academic major, ensuring experiential learning within every major.
Tactic 2	Purposefully cultivate global perspectives.
Tactic 3	Set clear service learning, volunteerism, and leadership expectations in the student experience for everyone.
Strategy 5	Embrace global engagement as an integral part of the OU experience.
Tactic 1	Build on OU's legacy of excellence, brand strength, and international assets to promote study abroad experiences as widely as possible for a major public institution.
Tactic 2	Ensure that every major includes educational experience that situate disciplinary knowledge in a global perspective.
Tactic 3	Commit to cultural programs and extracurricular experiences that dramatically enhance the global awareness of all students, faculty, and staff.
Strategy 6	Ensure that every academic program has a curriculum combining liberal arts, innovation, and engagement, while providing all students with essential skills to succeed.
Tactic 1	Develop college-level curricula review committees to assess the state of the curriculum and institute revisions that ensure an OU education produces broad, versatile, creative, and civic-minded leaders.
Tactic 2	Establish student advisory council to the Provost's Office to provide insights and advice to the Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost regarding academic administration and curriculum.





Pillar 2: Prepare Students for a Life of Success, Meaning, Service, and Positive Impact  
(cont.)

---

Strategy 6 (cont.)

- Tactic 3 Expand the impact of the Honors College with innovative programs that cut across disciplines, aiming to provide interdisciplinary solutions to real-world problems.
- Tactic 4 Purposefully cultivate communication, teamwork, leadership, listening and fundamental business skills.
- Tactic 5 Track and expand external (industry, federal, other universities) internships, fellowships, and mentorships.
- Tactic 6 Evaluate structure and performance of university-level Career Services relative to peers to ensure best-in-class and expand external engagement role to ensure OU is meeting workforce needs of the state.
- Tactic 7 Ensure that every College has a highly effective Board of Visitors whose charge includes making certain that OU's curricula are engaged with industry and societal needs.

Strategy 7 Enhance extracurricular activities to extend learning experiences beyond the classroom.

- Tactic 1 Design and implement a best-in-class suite of extracurricular and co-curricular opportunities that provide intellectual, social, and emotional growth.
- Tactic 2 Provide individual and collective awards and recognition for extra- and co-curricular engagement that benefit others.
- Tactic 3 Make student organizational involvement a desired transformative experience in the lives of all students.
- Tactic 4 Utilize the first-year housing experience to enrich the social, intellectual, and emotional growth of students, including promoting cross-cultural engagement and understanding.



Pillar 2: Prepare Students for a Life of Success, Meaning, Service, and Positive Impact  
(cont.)

---

Strategy 7 (cont.)

- Tactic 5      Actively support financially constrained students to enable participation in extracurricular activities.
- Tactic 6      Leverage strength of OU Athletics to enhance the experience of students on campus and overall institutional affinity.
- Tactic 7      Expand awareness of and engagement with the visual and performing arts on campus.
- Tactic 8      Establish stable funding for prominent, student-led cultural programs.
- Tactic 9      Ensure safety and accessibility on campus for all students, faculty, and staff.

Strategy 8      Increase doctoral degree completion from 62% to 70%.

- Tactic 1      Develop a culture of graduation, including reducing required doctoral degree hours to 60.
- Tactic 2      Make need-based aid for graduate programs a fundraising priority.
- Tactic 3      Bring Ph.D. funding to competitive levels with benchmark institutions.
- Tactic 4      Provide comprehensive graduate faculty mentorship training through the Center for Faculty Excellence and conduct graduate program climate surveys to identify target areas for improvement.



## Pillar 3:

### Make OU's Excellence Affordable and Attainable

---

Strategy 1	Grow revenue to improve affordability and accessibility.
Tactic 1	Honor our fundamental commitment to serve Oklahoma by being a place of opportunity for students from all backgrounds across the state.
Tactic 2	Grow annual enrollments for our in-person freshman class by 2% per year for the next seven years.
Tactic 3	Expand OU's transfer student population by formalizing relationships with other in-state institutions in selected programs and ensure that all students with the potential and motivation to earn an OU degree have a pathway to success.
Tactic 4	Ensure non-academic areas – such as housing and athletics – serve the University's Purpose, operate efficiently, and generate resources for academics.
Tactic 5	Capture the online education regional market in professional graduate programs by growing tuition and fee revenues (net of waivers) to \$100M over 7 years.
Tactic 6	Seek state support at levels in line with comparably populated states' support of public Association of American Universities institutions.
Tactic 7	Increase the number of international undergraduate and graduate students attending OU by 50% over the next 7 years.
Strategy 2	Implement operational efficiencies across the institution to provide the highest quality education at the lowest possible price for students.
Tactic 1	Create a culture that understands and is supportive of the Strategic Plan and is committed to its fulfillment. All support functions should operate at optimum efficiency to support the University's Purpose.
Tactic 2	Using peer-benchmarked data, centralize personnel and operations.



---

Pillar 3: Make OU's Excellence Affordable and Attainable (cont.)

---

Strategy 2 (cont.)

- Tactic 3 Streamline policies and procedures, and reduce service obligations, such as committee work, to unlock faculty and staff productivity.
- Tactic 4 To complement Academic Program Review and State Regents Productivity Reports, conduct annual college-level performance and productivity reviews, evaluating student success, research impact relative to institutional peers, and program/degree efficiency, with annual reports shared with Board of Regents.
- Tactic 5 Hire and develop outstanding staff who are leaders, helping OU pursue excellence and efficiency through a purpose-driven culture.

Strategy 3 Create a fundraising operation that underwrites the University's Strategic Plan.

- Tactic 1 Redesign the fundraising operation in line with best practices at high-performing institutions.
- Tactic 2 Invest resources necessary to achieve scale in fundraising.
- Tactic 3 Direct fundraising to institutional priorities as articulated in the Strategic Plan and operate in a coordinated manner across the institution.
- Tactic 4 Make need-based aid the University's No. 1 fundraising priority.
- Tactic 5 Grow fundraising resources to top-tier public university levels.
- Tactic 6 Launch a comprehensive fundraising campaign by 2022.
- Tactic 7 Pair fundraising targets with research, creative activity, and entrepreneurship growth goals.



---

Pillar 3: Make OU's Excellence Affordable and Attainable (cont.)

---

Strategy 4	Transparently focus resources on the Strategic Plan.
Tactic 1	Simplify tuition and fee structure, creating clarity for students and their families.
Tactic 2	Develop and abide by a seven-year financial pro forma that aligns with the Strategic Plan and is updated annually.
Tactic 3	Transition toward responsibility-based budget models for colleges that increase autonomy while creating incentives for revenue generation and research impact.
Strategy 5	Explore bold ideas that rethink the role of OU within the state to pursue our Purpose more effectively.
Tactic 1	Provide alternatives to the current system of higher education in Oklahoma that would better serve the state through greater efficiencies and better outcomes for students.
Tactic 2	Analyze strategies to increase on-campus living to produce better student outcomes.
Tactic 3	Analyze outsourcing to achieve lower operating costs.
Tactic 4	Seek innovative funding support from local communities to lower the costs for students (e.g., on the model of Tulsa Community College and Oklahoma Career Tech).





---

Pillar 3: Make OU's Excellence Affordable and Attainable (cont.)

---

Strategy 6	Increase accessibility to students who cannot be on campus by expanding our portfolio of online programs and certificates.
Tactic 1	Achieve a 95% job placement rate within six months of graduation.
Tactic 2	Develop 50 online programs by 2025.
Tactic 3	Achieve an 85% retention rate and a 75% graduate rate in online programs by 2025.
Tactic 4	Enhance the diversity of student body through OU Online.

Under Review



**Changes to this section are imminent in compliance with Executive Order 2023-31.**

## Pillar 4:

Become a Place of Belonging and Emotional Growth for All Students, Faculty, Staff, and Alumni

---

Strategy 1	Make diversity, equity, and inclusion a cultural strength of OU with the goal of ensuring that everyone in the OU community is valued and understood, is dignified and respectful toward others, and feels connected.
Tactic 1	Embrace diversity in ideas, experiences, and identity in the recruitment of students, faculty, and staff.
Tactic 2	Promote a culture of civil discourse, on campus and in our online educational spaces, by fostering a respectful exchange of different viewpoints, perspectives, and life experiences.
Tactic 3	Fully implement the University's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion strategic plan to reinforce shared values and mutual respect towards all.
Tactic 4	Pursue OU's status as a <i>public</i> institution by placing greater focus on recruiting, supporting, and retaining first-generation students and students from historically underrepresented communities.
Tactic 5	Create a new student orientation program which includes access for all incoming students in a common experience that welcomes them to campus and introduces them to the University and its cultural expectations.
Tactic 6	Design focused student programming that fosters individual and shared lifechanging experiences that promote intellectual, social, and emotional growth.
Tactic 7	Explore the development of an equity and inclusion course as part of the general education curriculum to promote respect for all students, in conjunction with the University's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion strategic plan and subject to shared governance approval processes.





Pillar 4: Become a Place of Belonging and Emotional Growth  
for All Students, Faculty, Staff, and Alumni (cont.)

---

Strategy 1 (cont.)

- |           |   |
|-----------|---|
| Tactic 8  | Identify space in support of multicultural programs and services.   |
| Tactic 9  | Ensure that transfer and non-traditional students have a sense of belonging to OU.  |
| Tactic 10 | Promote multicultural in-person experiences that bring students of different backgrounds together to learn from one another.                |
| Tactic 11 | Activate a programmatic effort to ensure OU alumni and supporters enjoy a lifelong connection to OU and remain engaged with the University. |

Strategy 2

Improve systems to support and assess evidence-based diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives for faculty and staff.

- |          |   |
|----------|---|
| Tactic 1 | Improve recruitment, hiring, and retention processes and adopt practices that promote the recruitment and hiring of historically underrepresented groups.   |
| Tactic 2 | Expand networking and mentorship among faculty, staff, administration, and alumni to enhance the sense of belonging to the OU community.  |
| Tactic 3 | Develop customized, high-quality training that is mandatory for all faculty, staff, and administrators on issues regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion in higher education.  |
| Tactic 4 | Value and reward work that strengthens campus diversity, equity, and inclusion when assessing faculty, staff, and administrative offices for annual evaluations, promotion criteria, internal grants, and compensation. |



## Pillar 5:

### Enrich and Positively Impact Oklahoma, the Nation, and the World through Research and Creative Activity

---

Strategy 1	Achieve research and creative activity outcomes at public Association of American Universities-quality benchmarks.
Tactic 1	Grow annual extramural research revenue from the federal government, the private sector and philanthropies, and the state of Oklahoma by 4 % to 7% per year for seven years, relative to FY19.
Tactic 2	Commit OU-Norman to a growth plan that leads to 7% to 10% annual growth in research expenditures over seven years, relative to FY19.
Tactic 3	Establish a clear and effective federal lobbying strategy for research.
Tactic 4	Create and staff an internal proposal development team at the Center for Faculty Excellence dedicated to assist faculty in pursuing large, national scale research centers and initiatives from the federal government and philanthropies.
Tactic 5	Work with the Center for Faculty excellence to create a program to drive faculty nominations for major awards based on research and creative activity, and grow the number of national academies members, Guggenheim fellows, MacArthur award winners, and others to Association of American Universities levels.
Tactic 6	Create a new Office of Corporate Partnerships to lead the effort to grow strategic research partnerships with the private sector and philanthropies.
Tactic 7	Transform the Norman Research Campus into a Discovery and Innovation District that ties together OU research and corporate partnerships in a thriving entrepreneurial ecosystem.



Pillar 5: Enrich and Positively Impact Oklahoma, the Nation, and the World  
through Research and Creative Activity (cont.)

Strategy 1 (cont.)

- Tactic 8 Create economic development in the Norman and Oklahoma City communities by growing the number of OU technology-based start-up companies. Attract angel investors and venture capital to the region to incubate and accelerate these start-ups in the Discovery and Innovation District.
- Tactic 9 Create the position of Associate Dean for Research and/or Creative Expression at every college and align college efforts with the institutional research strategy.

Strategy 2

Create multidisciplinary Research Centers of Excellence focused on significant and real-world challenges that provide opportunities for different areas of expertise across all three campuses.

- Tactic 1 Work with faculty to define a research and creative activity strategic plan, emphasizing key areas of focus, for example:
- aerospace and defense;
  - energy and environmental sustainability;
  - life sciences and the future of healthcare; and
  - flourishing societies.
- Tactic 2 Align internal investment with research strategic plan and launch up to five new multi-college, multi-campus Research Centers of Excellence.
- Tactic 3 Align Centers of Excellence with federal, state, tribal, and private sector opportunities for growth in research scale, scope, and impact.
- Tactic 4 Create a fundraising strategy to endow the Centers of Excellence with significant resources.
- Tactic 5 Create a program of seed funding support for high-risk, high-payoff ideas from multidisciplinary teams of faculty and staff aimed at growing extramural research funding in new areas.



Pillar 5: Enrich and Positively Impact Oklahoma, the Nation, and the World  
through Research and Creative Activity (cont.)

Strategy 2 (cont.)

Tactic 6      Seek and leverage synergies between the Norman, HSC, and Tulsa campuses in strategic areas.

Strategy 3      Cultivate community-engaged research collaborations to solve critical challenges facing the state of Oklahoma, tribal nations, the United States, and the world.

Tactic 1      Strengthen collaborations with external partners.

Tactic 2      Provide faculty and staff development to increase capacity for designing community engagement throughout Oklahoma and broader impact plans.

Tactic 3      Develop policies, awards, and recognitions for impactful community-engaged scholarship.

Strategy 4      Develop a transparent culture of performance and accountability in all areas of research administration.

Tactic 1      Establish open, transparent, and peer-reviewed decision-making processes for the vast majority of funding and faculty and staff support decisions made in the Office of the Vice President for Research and Partnerships.

Tactic 2      Establish academic impact metrics—and, as appropriate, milestones and return on investment targets—for all internally supported research efforts. Evaluate all internally funded faculty, staff, and student research support programs annually.

Tactic 3      Establish an Office of Research Ethics and Integrity that will help and train faculty, staff, and administrators in issues and liabilities related to the responsible conduct of research and disclosure and reporting requirements.





Pillar 5: Enrich and Positively Impact Oklahoma, the Nation, and the World  
through Research and Creative Activity (cont.)

Strategy 5	Foster an environment for achieving articulated goals.
Tactic 1	Align our strategies for supporting research and creative activity with our diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts to ensure that all faculty, staff, and students have opportunities to engage in high-quality research and creative excellence.
Tactic 2	Instill a culture of service in all research support functions at the University and measure faculty and staff sentiment on a regular basis.
Tactic 3	Grow the Office of Research Services and other support functions commensurate with growth in sponsored research.
Tactic 4	Working with the Center for Faculty Excellence and leading consultants, create a series of workshops aimed at developing the skills necessary to succeed in obtaining federal and other research funding, and to enhance success in publishing books and academic manuscripts in leading journals.
Tactic 5	Ensure that OU has flexible and efficient intellectual property policies and processes that make the faculty and staff competitive when seeking the support of the private sector, or when seeking to patent and license inventions.
Tactic 6	Ensure that OU has flexible and simplified export control and security policies that enable faculty, staff, and students to successfully carry out sensitive research.
Tactic 7	Develop a variety of ways to celebrate research success, including news highlights, social media campaigns, recognition programs for particular research achievements, etc.
Tactic 8	Incentivize collaboration, teamwork and mutual support to enhance faculty, student and research success.



Pillar 5: Enrich and Positively Impact Oklahoma, the Nation, and the World  
through Research and Creative Activity (cont.)

---

Strategy 6	Build, enhance, and support campus infrastructures necessary to compete at the level of top public universities.
Tactic 1	Fund and establish state-of-the-art research facilities in critical areas where OU is lacking.
Tactic 2	Ensure funding to maintain sufficient levels of both support staff and shared research facilities, and update equipment as needed.
Tactic 3	Fund and establish expanded research facilities in areas of OU strength where growth depends on new infrastructure, such as atmospheric sciences, weather, and radar.
Tactic 4	Value and support creative activity and infrastructure for the arts and humanities.
Tactic 5	Create a program of support for faculty capital equipment needs to be able to remain competitive in rapidly advancing fields.
Tactic 6	Increase the performance of OU's research computing capabilities. Explore cloud-based services for data science and other computing needs.
Tactic 7	Ensure IT systems and policies support Strategic Plan objectives and remain current.
Tactic 8	Establish laboratory incubator space to accelerate startup creation in strategic areas.





## Norman Conclusion

---

Disciplined execution of our Strategic Plan will result in: providing affordable academic excellence for our students; promoting students' intellectual, social, and emotional growth; and preparing students for a life of meaning and impact.

We will also: educate students committed to the pursuit of academic excellence regardless of background; serve and improve society through discovery, creativity, and innovation; and work in partnership with the public and private sectors to advance prosperity and well-being.

We Change Lives!

Under Review