The Reach to Distinction: Academic Master Plan 2015-2025

Implementation Overview for

July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2023

https://www.mtsu.edu/AMP/index.php

Strategic Direction 1

Objective: Implement aggressively the Quest for Student Success

Action Steps:

Implement and monitor implementation of Quest for Student Success 2025
- Quest 2025 strategic priority committees reported on the year's work to University community via Zoom 5/3/23*
- Quest 2025 Forum May 2023 Presentation https://mtsu.edu/quest/docs/Forum2023.pdf
- Items marked with an asterisk * below are aligned with Quest 2025

Improve infrastructure for increased employment opportunities for students
- Graduating Senior Survey updated to add First Destination questions about employment

Objective: Achieve the goals of MT Engage

Action Steps:

Develop and implement QEP
- MT Engage fully implemented as ongoing academic initiative reporting to the Vice Provost for Faculty and Strategic Initiatives.*

Expand EXL
- EXL increased across almost all categories: 15,153 students (+2,000) students enrolled in 960 course sections (+25) taught by 399 faculty (+54) with 35 new courses and 131 EXL Scholar graduates (+18).*

Develop co-curricular programs
- MT Engage Week events supported co-curricular events open to all students, such as
  - The Department of Communication Studies workshop "Difficult Conversations: Communicating Through Tough Times"
  - Family Violence Professional Panel Series featuring local professionals, with opportunities for students to learn and network with the speakers in person and on Zoom.
- MTSU Counseling Services offered both in-person and virtual mental health programming for students in Fall 2022, including Mental Health Wellness & Suicide

Prevention Fair and "Let's Talk" (in person, on-campus) and L.I.F.E. Workshop and Meditation Group (Zoom).

Create opportunities for students to participate in all public programs on campus
- Events funded by the Distinguished Lecture Fund and academic departments, center, and colleges are free to all students and many are open to the public, such as Dr. Phoebe Stubblefield's presentation on the 1921 Tulsa Massacre for the Women In Forensic Anthropology Lecture Series and "What We Know for Sure About Elevating Success," a presentation by Rita and Brit Mitchell sponsored by the College of Media and Entertainment .
- Boro International Festival October 2022, a collaboration of the Office of International Affairs and the Department of Art and Design, offered free admission and parking to attendees of this daytime event.
- True Blue TV recordings are available as livestreams and on-demand, making academic, cultural, and co-curricular programming, as well as University events, available to all students as well as to external audiences.
- Professional Counseling practicum students offered virtual psychoeducational groups "Creating and Maintaining a Self-Care Plan," "Assertive Communication," and "Coping Skills for Stressful Times."

Develop and implement programs and services, to engage off-campus and online students in learning, scholarship, and service.
- MT Serves offered an opportunity to all students to assist Second Harvest in preparing Disaster Relief Boxes to Florida after Hurricane Ian.*
- The Department of Art and Design, in collaboration with Mythos Guitar Pedals, held a second Guitar Pedal Illustration Challenge open to all students who submitted an original illustration during a 15-hour workshop held in person and virtually.

Objective: Sharpen focus on the internationalization of programs and partnerships
Action Step:
Implement IA Strategic Plan
- International scholarship awards increased from $400,000 in 2021-2022 to over $600,000 in 2022-2023, and 6 MTSU students received Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarships.
- New international MOUs included Dubai Police and American University in Cairo.
- MTSU completed ACE Internationalization Lab self-assessment and planning process, with ACE site visit planned for November 2023.
- Department of Recording Industry chair John Merchant created a degree path for Saudi Arabian media professionals that includes Pro Tools digital audio certifications.

Objective: Create more interactive learning/living spaces across campus

Action Steps:

Implement Facilities Master Plan

- School of Concrete and Construction Management Building, designed as an interactive learning laboratory, opened October 13, 2022.*
- Applied Engineering Building groundbreaking June 20, 2023. Designed for enhanced laboratory and research activity, the building will open in Summer or Fall 2025.*

Provide all faculty members with a consistent level of quality in support services, e.g., office spaces conducive to student interaction and their own work.

- Faculty offices in new buildings such as the Science Building, Academic Classroom Building, School of Concrete and Construction Management feature more natural lighting, support technology better, and have nearby seating for interaction with students.*
- Student Technology Access Fees fund multiple projects each year that support faculty instruction and research. Examples included
  - Laboratory equipment for Chemistry and Forensic Science instruction and research;
  - Discipline-specific equipment for instruction and increased safety requirements in laboratories for Nursing, Speech and Hearing, Psychology, and Athletic Training;
  - Digital Lab for Art and Design faculty and students.*

Objective: Facilitate collaborations among and between faculty, alumni, community, friends, and the business and non-profit sectors

Action Steps:

Create an MT Alumni/Community initiative for alumni/friends/community (include activities focused on university, college, and department/school levels)

- Collaborations between Alumni Relations and University faculty and staff included
  - Career Development Center's "ReCareer" webinar;
  - Admissions and One Stop sessions for Collegiate Connections;
  - Dr. Bethany Wrye (Community and Public Health) "Gathering with Gratitude;"
  - "Tourism: Unpacking Its Value" Alumni Summer College program featuring Tourism and Hospitality program faculty, MTSU alums, and Rutherford County Chamber of Commerce staff.

Create academically centered department and college initiatives/activities/events collaboratively with alumni, community, friends, and business and non-profit entities

- The Department of Accounting provided free income tax preparation for households earning less than $70,000, in collaboration with United Way of Rutherford and Cannon Counties' Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program.*

- Business leaders and scholars discussed "Learning from Diversity," a forum sponsored by MTSU's Political Economy Research Institute and Dr. Ming Wang's Cosmopolitan Initiative.*
- Exercise Science at MTSU offered an Exercise Prescription Program open to faculty, staff, students, and community members.

Establish professional development programming for professionals in the community, i.e., accountants, teachers, health care, etc.
- Tennessee STEM Education Center offered professional development for area educators at the Tennessee STEAM Festival, the Center's grant-funded Innovative Educator Workshops, and, in partnership with MTSU's Data Science Institute, the Data Science Teacher Ambassador Program
- MTSU School of Agriculture participated in a Food Systems Hybrid Field Day providing continuing education/professional development certificates.
- MTSU's Center for Health and Human Services, Center for Environmental Education, School of Agriculture, and Office of Environmental Health and Safety Services collaborated to produce a toolkit to support the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation's public education campaign on water quality.

Implement an Alumni Survey Program and establish a continuous feedback portal for alumni
- MTSU surveyed alumni in Spring 2023 to assess institutional satisfaction as part of Tennessee's Quality Assurance Funding initiative.

Strategic Direction 2: Foster Academic Community

Objective: Deepen commitment to access and diversity
Action Steps:
- University College and its Office of Student Success led faculty and staff participation in the Student Success Equity Initiative, funded by the American Association of State Colleges and University.
- The Assistant to the President for Community Engagement and Inclusion launched the Community Engagement Advisory Workgroup comprised of faculty and staff from across the University.

Objective: Develop innovative, interdisciplinary undergraduate and graduate programs
Action Steps:
Increase distinctive programs that compete nationally/internationally, e.g., Concrete Industry Management, Recording Industry, Aerospace, etc.
- College of Media and Entertainment and Information Technology Division began planning for eSports competition facilities at the Miller Education Center and eSports student computer lab in the Business and Aerospace Building.
- Bachelor of Science in Cybersecurity Management.

- Dual Master of Social Work and Master of Library Science degree program.

Objective: Promote increased and sustained research, scholarship, and creative activity
Action Steps:
Invest in increased salaries for faculty and staff
- The Board of Trustees approved President McPhee's recommendation for a 3.2 cost-of-living salary increase or $1,250, whichever was greater, for all full-time and benefitted part-time employees.

Expand undergraduate and graduate student research programs
- Dr. Murat Arik, Jennings and Rebecca Jones Chair of Excellence in Urban and Regional Planning and Director of the Business and Economic Research Center, established the Urban and Regional Planning Scholars program. This interdisciplinary research and engagement program covers urban and regional challenges, including, but not limited to, real estate, economic development, mobility, quality of life, and sustainability.

Enhance support for faculty and student research and creative activity by providing facilities, funding for travel, and time for research
- Vice Provost for Research (VPR) created a budget index to support faculty in publication and creative activity costs.
- Office of Research and Sponsored Programs added the staff positions of Internal Grant Coordinator and External Grant Coordinator.

Develop interdisciplinary initiatives that build academic community on campus and between the campus and larger communities and provide dissemination of scholarship and artistic works to on-campus and broader community constituencies
- History and Public History graduate students created and installed the exhibition "Black Stories from Murfreesboro and Rutherford County" at the Bradley Academy Museum and Cultural Center.*

Advance academic quality and innovation in academic programs through use of discipline-specific best practices by faculty and students

Objective: Recognize and celebrate achievement of excellence
Action Steps:
Revise tenure and promotion standards to recognize and reward innovation and academic quality in teaching, service, and research
- Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs began collaboration with faculty workgroup on faculty-focused policies including tenure and promotion.

Create a more effective marketing and communication plan to celebrate faculty /student/ staff accomplishments with multiple constituencies

- MTSU News and eRecord continuously publicize faculty, student, and staff accomplishments and MTSU Executive News Summary collates coverage of those accomplishments. Examples included
  - Dr. Kristi Julian (Interior Design) received the Council for Interior Design Accreditation's Keith Hooks Volunteer Excellence Award;
  - Dr. Mary Evins (History, Honors) received the Barbara Burch Award for Faculty Leadership in Civic Engagement from the American Association of State Colleges and Universities;
  - History graduate student Kayla Jenkins was named to ALL IN's Student Voting Honor Roll for her voter outreach efforts;
  - Kera Reynolds, English major with minors in psychology, social welfare, and University Honors, received the Community Service Award;
  - The Information Technology Division received Best Classroom Installation award from the Higher Education Technology Managers Alliance.

Implement a formal student recognition program with student successes/accomplishments shared with broader communities
- Division of Marketing and Communications joined the Merit student achievement platform to publicize students' achievements.

Strategic Direction 3: Innovate for Effectiveness and Efficiency

Objective: Encourage and support innovative programs and services

Action Steps:

Expand course redesign initiative to all General Education courses
- True Blue Core approved existing and new general education courses to meet new learning outcomes. Course development and approval continues for full implementation AY 24-25.

Revisit programs to assess role of required and/or elective courses
- In addition to this ongoing process, many programs have reassessed admissions criteria and removed Graduate Record Examination requirements.

Objective: Partner with business, industry, and nonprofit organizations to respond to their unique educational needs and the economic development of the region

Action Step:

Develop a focused and distinctive Partnership initiative to hallmark MTSU's distinctive strengths and in innovation and economic development within and outside the region
- Degree programs incorporate feedback from advisory boards with members drawn from business and non-profit organizations when revising curriculum. Examples featuring MTSU's distinctive strengths in relation to the innovation and economic development include

- Bachelor of Science in Concrete Management concentrations in Land Development and Residential Building;
- Bachelor Science in Aerospace, Unmanned Aircraft Systems;
- Bachelor of Science in Tourism and Hospitality Management.

Objective: Create more flexible administrative processes
Action Steps:
Review, update and/or streamline operational processes/procedures as for continuous improvement as identified in division and unit IEARs, i.e., application/registration processes with intent to increase number of touches between registration and application then application to acceptance (MyMT)

- Information Technology Division, Marketing and Communications, and Academic Affairs began work to adopt and implement Slate, a comprehensive CRM software platform for higher education.
- The MTSU Records Office was selected for the Academic Planning for Equitable Success initiative of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities.*

Objective: Enhance informational, physical, and technological infrastructure
Action Steps:

- Information Technology Division improved the wi-fi network across campus with implementation of BLUEWIFI and, in campus residences, HOUSINGBLUEWIFI.

Objective: Create a welcoming, inclusive campus that is healthy and safe for all University publics
Action Steps:

- Institutional Equity and Compliance surveyed MTSU community to identify access barriers for people with disabilities to measure success in meeting its goal of increasing accessibility and inclusivity.
- Tennessee STEM Education Center supported six MTSU students through the National Science Foundation INCLUDES Alliance: The Alliance for Students with Disabilities for Inclusion, Networking, and Transition Opportunities in STEM (TAPDINTO-STEM).
- Virtual Remote Interpreting was made available by Institutional Equity and Compliance and Information Technology Division by contract with Bridges for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.