MIDDLE TENNESSEE

STATE UNIVERSITY.

Quest for Student Success
2013–2016

A comprehensive, strategic initiative designed to improve retention and completion rates

I AM *true* **BLUE**

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Quest for Student Success
2013–2016

Student success is the core and fiber of Middle Tennessee State University—central to its mission and defining the strength of its integrity as an institution of higher education. The University is committed "to preparing students to thrive in their chosen professions and a changing global society" and articulates that commitment as a central goal in its Academic Master Plan, *Building on the Blueprint for Excellence, 2007–2017*, which says, "Promote individual success and responsibility for accomplishments through fostering a student-centered learning culture." MTSU delivers on this commitment by providing students a high-quality academic experience marked by continuous improvement in the educational environment and changing external economic realities.

MTSU has been centered on student success for over 100 years, and in its second century, it is imperative to build on this strong foundation. Consequently, MTSU made a strategic decision three years ago to address a challenging economic environment, dwindling annual budgets, and the Complete College Tennessee Act of 2010, which is focused on educational outcomes. The decision was to recommit to its core value: student success. Since then, the University has engaged in an intentional and deliberate exploration of student success strategies through its University Leadership Council; strategic enrollment planning process; and academic department, college, and division-based planning. The council and other collaborative stakeholders throughout the University, guided by fact-finding and best practices shown to have a powerful impact on student success, have identified educational improvements to be made and support gaps to be addressed. The culmination of this work is a plan focused on implementing best practices to significantly improve the educational experiences and success rates of MTSU students over the next three years.

MTSU's Quest for Student Success keeps the University focused on its primary purpose—educating students. It weaves student success and academic enhancement into the institutional core and emphasizes how best the University can engage and support students as they progress, achieve, and graduate.

Goal I

Middle Tennessee State University will recruit students who value student success and have the potential to achieve in a student-centered culture.

Goal II

Middle Tennessee State University will enhance the academic experience of students to better ensure their success.

Goal III

Middle Tennessee State University will facilitate student success through innovation and the use of data-informed best practices.

Goal I

Middle Tennessee State University will recruit students who value student success and have the potential to achieve in a student-centered culture.

Success begins with the first interactions the student has with the University. From that initial encounter forward, the University must deliver to all students a clear and consistent message: **Success is a partnership between the student and the University. This partnership requires the student's commitment to academic and personal achievement and MTSU's commitment to provide support and an outstanding academic experience**.

This mutual commitment will ensure the highest probability of success for each student recruited and enrolled. Quality programs coupled with a thriving and supportive intellectual community attract success-oriented students and provide a clear path for academic achievement.

MTSU will:

- monitor and, as appropriate, **adjust undergraduate admissions standards and the composition of incoming classes** to align the student profile with the success expectations of both students and the University;

- expand **dual-enrollment** programs with middle Tennessee high schools;

- expand transfer student recruitment and **streamline the transfer process**; and

- redesign the **MTSU Web presence and MTSU apps** to highlight outstanding academic programs and other distinctions of the MTSU experience.

The University is also committed to refining its student profile to better align its institutional resources to meet the educational needs of the students it recruits and the new realities of an increasingly global economy.

MTSU will:

- **increase international student enrollment** to approximately 3 percent of total enrollment; and

- plan for a long-term **cap for on-ground campus enrollment** not to exceed 30,000, unless additional infrastructure is added to support a larger student population, while **exploring alternative methods of effective course delivery** such as blended and online courses, courses taught at off-campus sites, and other new teaching and learning modalities.

Goal II

Middle Tennessee State University will enhance the academic experience of students to better ensure their success.

Once a student enrolls at MTSU, nothing is more central than the academic experience. With the classroom "at the center of a student's educational life and, in turn, at the center of institutional action for student success" (Tinto 2012), it is most important that students have a strong classroom experience, continuing academic and professional relationships with faculty, and effective academic supports for learning. Thus, the cornerstones of an enhanced academic experience for MTSU students will lie in curricular innovation and reform, quality academic advising, and a significantly improved academic support system.

MTSU will initiate curricular innovation and reform across all disciplines focused on student success.

MTSU will:

- examine courses across the curriculum for the inclusion of **pedagogies that will enhance learning**, i.e., "hands-on" learning and mentored undergraduate research, and make pedagogical improvements earlier in the academic major;

- support the **appropriate use of technology** in creating more effective learning experiences for students, including new learning configurations and course redesigns such as the use of flipped classrooms to leverage technologies and methodologies so that teachers can spend more class time interacting with students;

- identify courses across the curriculum that have higher-than-average failure rates and make **improvements in these courses** through course redesign, supplemental instruction, alternative teaching methods, and additional skills practice/support for students;

- enhance **cocurricular programming** to further complement and support academic programs and to provide students with expanded learning opportunities;

- develop **alternative degree pathways for every major** for students who do not meet candidacy requirements, including a new Bachelor of University Studies degree;

- develop **exploratory degree concentrations** in science, arts and humanities, and professional studies for students who have yet to declare a major;

- create a **consolidated, centralized, and highly accessible tutoring center** to provide students with learning support across disciplines;

- improve **communication with students regarding their academic standing** by reestablishing the practice of posting midterm grades, enhancing the student alert system, and implementing a follow-up system with students who appear to be in danger of failing; and

- expand MTSU's **Raider Learning Communities** to provide instructional and peer-mentoring support to more incoming students.

MTSU will use best practices in advising and underscore the role of **quality advising** in the successful academic experience of students.

The University will:

- create an **advising map for every student** from recruitment through graduation, reconciled with the student's academic map to simplify and articulate the advising process and requirements, allowing students to more easily remain on track and quickly seek advising assistance;

- create an **institutional advising map** that includes all advising entities by function from recruitment through graduation, reconciled with student academic mapping to ensure that **systemic advising points** and paths are identified, gaps in points and paths are identified, and processes and/or services are developed to address advising gaps;

- implement a student **academic tracking notification system** that informs students, advisors, and administrators when a student is "on" and "off " the academic map, and designate clear responsibility as to who will follow-up when the student is identified;

- establish an effective **accountability system** for advising, including the assignment and evaluation of faculty advisors and professional advisors;

- create an **alumni map for every student** from recruitment to alumni status affirming that **MTSU students are expected to graduate**, assume alumni status, and prepare to succeed professionally as MTSU alumni; and

- increase the **faculty/staff-to-student ratio** to enhance learning opportunities and improve academic and student support services—critical components to student success.

Goal III

Middle Tennessee State University will facilitate student success through innovation and the use of data-informed best practices.

MTSU's commitment to student success is resolute. The University will, therefore, engage in a concerted examination of its processes and practices to ensure that they are truly student-centered and that they do not create barriers to student success. The University will more clearly define what the learning needs of students are and collaboratively address those needs. Every member of the University community will be oriented toward and engaged in practices that encourage and support student success. Every institutional unit—i.e., division, college, department, school, and office—will make significant, measurable commitments to improving policies and practices to better support student enrollment, progression, retention, and graduation.

MTSU will:

- leverage **institutional effectiveness processes** to ensure targeted and measurable continuous improvement across the University in student learning and program outcomes and operating processes and practices as they relate to student success;

- make **organizational changes** to ensure focused, sustained, and coordinated achievement of student success goals across the University;

- facilitate **access to course offerings** by eliminating course bottlenecks that prevent students from staying on target with their academic maps, i.e., by offering more sections of high-demand courses or offering these courses at times that allow greater access for students;

- collect, analyze, and distribute **data analyses** to all student success stakeholders **for use in making decisions** in processes and practices related to student success;

- create **data tools**, i.e., data dashboards and data cubes, to allow easy access to reporting by all members of the faculty and administration;

- establish an **MT One Stop** using a business model that ensures that students will be able to complete enrollment, registration, financial aid, and payment processes in a timely manner and that will significantly improve operating procedures related to these processes;

- establish a **Freshman Involvement Initiative** that intentionally sets expectations and connects MTSU's most at-risk students—freshmen—to campus involvement activities;

- establish a **Sophomore Student Success Initiative** to deepen student commitment to achieving academic, career, and lifelong learning goals;

- champion innovations to assist in **reducing administrative barriers** to ongoing student enrollment, to **leverage technical advances** to address improvements in basic business policies and practices, and to further **enhance the campus environment** to support student success;

- expand **financial support for students** to mitigate the financial issues associated with their matriculation by increasing the University's resources designated for need-based and merit scholarships and short-term aid for MTSU's neediest students;

- conduct **campus-wide training and professional development** for all employees in best practices in supporting and delivering effective student-centered services; and

- create an effective **institutional accountability system** that articulates measurable goals, timelines, and designation of responsibility for improving student success.

Conclusion

MTSU has grown immensely in size and distinction over the past century and has emerged as a major American university, totally committed to academic quality and the academic success of its students. The Quest for Student Success is a working set of goals and strategies intended to result in increased progression, accomplishment, and graduation of MTSU students—the achievement markers of student success. This working document also affirms the University's continuous quest for an enhanced academic experience leading to the success of each student it serves.

References

Tinto, Vincent. *Completing College: Rethinking Institutional Action*, University of Chicago Press, 2012.

Office of the University Provost Retention Plans: Colleges, Academic Departments and Schools: http://www.mtsu.edu/provost/retentionplans.php

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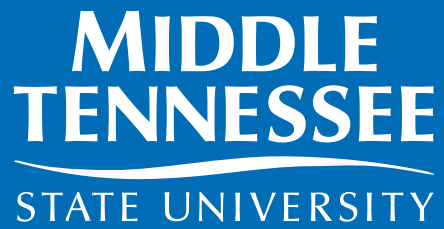
Implementation Plan

Quest for Student Success
2013–2016

Quest for Student Success 2013–2016
Implementation Chart

GOAL 1: Recruit students who value student success.

Strategy 1: Monitor, and as appropriate, adjust undergraduate admissions standards and the composition of incoming classes to align the student profile with the success expectations of both students and the University.

Objective	Action	Responsible Office	Completion Date
Annually increase the number of freshman applications submitted, with a goal of reaching 11,000 freshman applications by fall 2016.	Implement a comprehensive suite of communication pieces to appeal to potential students. Develop recruitment pieces designed for students at each age range, grades 8–12. Enhance campus tour program. Enhance the complete program of on- and off-campus recruitment activities.	AVP Admissions and Enrollment	Underway, with most items to be completed by fall 2014. Monitoring and adjustments to be ongoing. Meet goal of 11,000 freshman apps by fall 2016.
As total numbers of applications received increase, adjust undergraduate admissions standards to reflect a student profile most prepared to meet success expectations.	Annually review funnel and retention data. Annually analyze projected retention increases based on various changes in freshman admission standards.	AVP Admissions and Enrollment	Initial analysis complete. Will be completed each year, ongoing.
Maintain new freshman enrollment at approximately 12–14% of total enrollment.		AVP Admissions and Enrollment	Monitoring and adjustments to be ongoing.

Strategy 2: Expand dual-enrollment programs with middle Tennessee high schools.

Objective	Action	Responsible Office	Completion Date
Develop partnership opportunities with Central Magnet School.	Initial meetings with principal and guidance counselors were held in spring 2012. Dual-enrollment courses offered at the school beginning fall 2012. Ongoing courses to be offered each academic year on the campus.	AVP Admissions and Enrollment	First year of program is complete. Plans for fall 2013 are underway.
Develop partnership opportunities with Stewarts Creek High School.	Initial meetings between leadership team and Dr. McPhee, provost, and deans. Dual-enrollment courses offered at the school beginning AY 2013–14. Ongoing courses to be offered each academic year on the campus.	AVP Admissions and Enrollment	Initial meetings were completed May 2013.

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Implementation Chart

Pursue opportunities for additional dual enrollment partnerships.	AVP of Admissions and Enrollment will seek additional partnership opportunities.	AVP Admissions and Enrollment	Ongoing.

Strategy 3: Expand transfer student recruitment and streamline the transfer process.

Objective	Action	Responsible Office	Completion Date
Annually increase number of transfer applications submitted, with a goal of reaching 4,750 transfer applications by fall 2016.	Add position of assistant director for transfer recruitment and reorganize transfer admissions unit. Develop additional marketing materials and campus events. Establish consistent presence of MTSU recruitment staff in the five major feeder community colleges.	AVP Admissions and Enrollment	Reorganization complete summer 2013. Meet goal of 4750 transfer applications by fall 2016.
Annually increase number of transfer students enrolled, with a goal of transfer students comprising 10 percent of total enrollment.	See above.	AVP Admissions and Enrollment	Fall 2016.

Strategy 4: Redesign the MTSU Web presence and MTSU apps to highlight outstanding academic programs and other distinctions of the MTSU experience.

Objective	Action	Responsible Office	Completion Date
Development of new Web presence for the University.	Develop new concept; completely rewrite and edit existing pages; develop media to be embedded in pages.	ITD and Marketing/ Communications	Phase one rolled out by fall 2014. Additional phases ongoing.

Strategy 5: Increase international student enrollment to approximately 3 percent of total enrollment.

Objective	Action	Responsible Office	Completion Date
Increase international student enrollment to 3percent of total enrollment by fall 2016.	Implement International Affairs Strategic Plan.	VPIA	Fall 2016.

Strategy 6: Plan for a long-term cap for on-ground campus enrollment not to exceed 30,000, unless additional infrastructure is added to support a larger student population, while exploring alternative methods of effective course delivery such as blended and online courses, courses taught at off-campus sites, and other new teaching and learning modalities.

Objective	Action	Responsible Office	Completion Date
Monitor long-term strategic enrollment plans.		President, VPs	Annual.

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Implementation Chart

GOAL 2: Enhance the academic experience.			

Strategy 1: Examine courses across the curriculum for the inclusion of pedagogies that will enhance learning, i.e., "hands-on" learning and mentored undergraduate research, and make pedagogical improvements earlier in the academic major.

Objective	Action	Responsible Office	Completion Date
Examine general education courses for the inclusion of pedagogies that will enhance learning.	General Education Faculty Work Group begins process of aligning general education courses with common core standards.	VPSS/Director, General Education/Gen. Ed. Committee	5/1/2014.
Examine courses in the academic majors for the inclusion of pedagogies that will enhance learning.	Examine courses and make recommendations related to the inclusion of pedagogies to enhance learning; implement recommendations.	VPSS/Chairs, Academic Depts/ Directors, Schools	Course examinations completed by 5/1/2014; recommended changes implemented fall 2014.

Strategy 2: Support the appropriate use of technology in creating more effective learning experiences for students, including new learning configurations, pedagogies, and course redesigns such as the use of flipped classrooms to leverage technologies and methodologies so that teachers can spend more class time interacting with students.

Objective	Action	Responsible Office	Completion Date
Establish a Faculty Learning Community in each of the colleges (8) to focus on new learning configurations and course redesigns.	Begin two college FLCs in fall 2013, and two in spring 2014. Begin two college FLCs in fall 2014, and two in spring 2015.	Deans, LT&ITC	Implement revisions for fall 2013 FLCs in Fall, 2014 and spring 2014 FLCs in spring 2015; Repeat cycle for four other colleges during AY 2014–2015.
Conduct instructional development workshops on incorporating new learning configurations into course redesigns .	Schedule a workshop series organized toward course redesign in fall 2013 and spring 2014.	LT&ITC	Present a course redesign workshop series annually.

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Implementation Chart

Strategy 3: Identify courses across the curriculum that have higher-than-average failure rates and make improvements in these courses through course redesign, supplemental instruction, alternative teaching methods, and additional skills practice/support for students.

Objective	Action	Responsible Office	Completion Date
Examine courses identified in the CBAS with high failure rates and redesign to incorporate more effective learning experiences.	CBAS Faculty Work Group begins summer 2013.	Dean, CBAS LT&ITC	Complete curricular redesign 5/1/2014; implement revision and monitor SLOs fall 2014.
Examine courses identified in the CLA with high failure rates and redesign to incorporate more effective learning experiences.	CLA Faculty Work Group begins summer 2013.	Dean, CLA LT&ITC	Complete curricular redesign 5/1/2014; implement revision and monitor SLOs fall 2014.
Examine courses identified in the CBHS with high failure rates and redesign to incorporate more effective learning experiences.	CBHS Faculty Work Group begins fall 2014.	Dean, CBHS LT&ITC	Complete curricular redesign 8/1/2015; implement revision and monitor SLOs fall 2015.
Examine courses identified in the JAJCB with high failure rates and redesign to incorporate more effective learning experiences.	JAJCB Faculty Work Group begins fall 2014	Dean, JAJCB LT&ITC	Complete curricular redesign 8/1/2015; implement revision and monitor SLOs fall 2015.

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Implementation Chart

Strategy 4: Enhance cocurricular programming to further complement and support academic programs and to provide students expanded learning opportunities.

Objective	Action	Responsible Office	Completion Date
Enhance programming/activities in discipline-specific student organizations/associations; require student participation.	Per academic department retention plans.	Chairs, Academic Depts./Directors, Schools	Begin fall 2013; ongoing.
Enhance professional development by encouraging students to participate in professional associations (student-status; leverage professional networking opportunities for students).	Per academic department retention plans.	Chairs, Academic Depts./ Directors, Schools	Begin fall 2013; ongoing.
Increase study-abroad programming for students	Per academic department retention plans and Office of International Affairs strategic plan.	Chairs, Academic Depts./Directors, Schools/VPIA	Begin fall 2013; ongoing.
Increase support for students to present scholarly/creative activity to professional audiences across the state and nationally and internationally.	Per academic department retention plans and Undergraduate Research Center objectives.	Deans, Dept. Chairs, School Directors/ VP Advancement/ Undergraduate Research Center	Begin fall 2013; ongoing.
Expand EXL Scholars Program to include more discipline-specific EXL courses and student learning experiences.	Per academic department retention plans.	Chairs, Academic Depts./ Directors, Schools	Begin fall 2013; ongoing.

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Implementation Chart

Strategy 5: Develop alternative degree pathways for every major for students who do not meet candidacy requirements, including a new Bachelor of University Studies degree.

Objective	Action	Responsible Office	Completion Date
Create alternative degree pathways for every academic major.		Deans/Academic Departments/ Schools	12/15/2013.
Create a new Bachelor of University Studies degree.		Dean, UC	8/1/2013.

Strategy 6: Develop exploratory degree concentrations in science, arts and humanities, and professional studies for students who have yet to declare a major.

Objective	Action	Responsible Office	Completion Date
Develop career cluster packages for science, arts and humanities, and professional studies for use in advising undeclared students.		Dean, UC; Director, Career Development Center	12/15/2013.
Implement block scheduling in science, arts and humanities, and professional studies for undeclared students.		Dean, UC	Implement fall 2013 to be repeated in subsequent fall semesters.

Strategy 7: Create a consolidated, centralized, and highly accessible tutoring center to provide students learning support across disciplines.

Objective	Action	Responsible Office	Completion Date
Create a centralized tutoring center accessible to all students in James E. Walker Library.		VPSS/Dean, Library	Spring 2013.
Expand tutoring center services to include tutoring in additional general education/major areas based on student need.		VPSS/Deans	Fall 2013; ongoing.

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Implementation Chart

Strategy 8: Improve communication with students regarding their academic standing by reestablishing the practice of posting midterm grades, enhancing the student alert system and implementing a system for following up with those students who appear to be in danger of failing.

Objective	Action	Responsible Office	Completion Date
Reestablish posting of midterm grades.		Provost/VPSA Advisors	Fall 2013.
Enhance the student alert system to include midterm posting.		Provost/VPSA Advisors	Fall 2013.
Implement a follow-up advising system for students identified via the student alert system.		Provost/VPSA Advisors	12/15/2013.

Strategy 9: Expand the MTSU's Raider Learning Communities to provide instructional and peer-mentoring support to more incoming students.

Objective	Action	Responsible Office	Completion Date
Increase the number of students participating in Raider Learning Communities from 735 in Fall 2013 to 1,505 in fall 2016, a 48.8 percent increase.	Annual targets for increased numbers of students in Paired Courses (PCs), Block RLCs (BRLCs), Scholars Academy (SA) and Block Totals respectively: PCs BRLC SA Block Total F 2013 220 480 35 735 F 2014 220 750 35 1005 F 2015 220 1000 35 1255 F 2016 220 1250 35 1505	VPSS/ Dean, UC / Asst. Dean	Annual.

Strategy 10: Create an advising map for every student from recruitment through graduation, reconciled with the student's academic map to simplify and articulate the advising process and requirements, allowing students to more easily remain on track and quickly seek advising assistance.

Objective	Action	Responsible Office	Completion Date
Create an advising map for every undergraduate major.		Deans/Academic Departments/ Schools	1/1/2014.
Create an advising map for each entering freshman/transfer student with an undeclared major.		University College	8/1/2013.

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Strategy 11: Create an institutional advising map that includes all advising entities by function from recruitment through graduation reconciled with student academic mapping to ensure that systemic advising points and paths are identified, gaps in points and paths are identified, and processes and/or services are developed to address advising gaps.

Objective	Action	Responsible Office	Completion Date
Create institutional advising map including all advising entities by function.		Provost/Dean, UC	12/15/2013.

Strategy 12: Implement a student academic tracking notification system that informs students, advisors, and administrators when a student is "on" or "off" the academic map, and designate clear responsibility as to who will follow-up when the student is identified.

Objective	Action	Responsible Office	Completion Date
Develop and implement student academic tracking notification system.		Provost/Dean, UC	

Strategy 13: Establish an effective accountability system for advising, including the assignment and evaluation of faculty advisors and professional advisors.

Objective	Action	Responsible Office	Completion Date
Establish an advising accountability system by function based on the institutional advising map.		Provost/Dean, UC	5/15/2014.
Revise promotion and tenure policies, placing additional emphasis on the value and importance of advising, teaching, service, and, ultimately, student learning and success.		Provost/Faculty Senate	12/1/2013.

Strategy 14: Create an alumni map for every student from recruitment through graduation to alumni status affirming that MTSU students are expected to graduate, assume alumni status, and prepare to succeed professionally as MTSU alumni.

Objective	Action	Responsible Office	Completion Date
Develop MTSU National Alumni Association program(s) to support student success, i.e., "adopt a student program."		VP Advancement/ Office of Alumni Relations	5/15/2014; ongoing.

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Implementation Chart

Objective	Action	Responsible Office	Completion Date
Develop Presidential Commendations to be given during True Blue Tour throughout Tennessee to recognize individual successes of students who hail from the tour stop locations.		VP Advancement/ Marketing and Communications	Fall 2013; annual.
Implement "Devoted to Student Success" tagline throughout president's communications to underscore the University's expectations for student success.		VP Advancement/ Marketing and Communications	Ongoing.
Develop advertisements and implement an advertising strategy for MTSU's experiential learning programs targeting potential and enrolled MTSU students.		VP Advancement/ Marketing and Communications/ Deans/Dept Chairs/School Directors	5/1/2014.
Develop nationally recognized "I am True Blue" campaign to spotlight the quality and successes of MTSU and its programs, students, and faculty.		VP Advancement/ Marketing and Communications	In progress and renewable.
Strategy 15: Increase the faculty/staff-to-student ratio to enhance learning opportunities and academic and student support services—critical components to student success.			
Objective	**Action**	**Responsible Office**	**Completion Date**
Determine faculty/staff capacity/needs related to enhancing academic quality and infrastructure to support student success and allocate resources accordingly.		VPs	Fall 2013; annual.

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Implementation Chart

GOAL 3: Facilitate student success through innovation.

Strategy 1: Leverage institutional effectiveness processes to ensure targeted and measurable continuous improvement across the University in student learning and program outcomes and operating processes and practices as they relate to student success.

Objective	Action	Responsible Office	Completion Date
Incorporate student success goals into annual IEPR reporting for all academic departments and units. Monitor reporting to ensure continuous improvement.		Provost/Divisional and College Assessment Coordinators	Fall 2013; annual.

Strategy 2: Make organizational changes to ensure focused, sustained, and coordinated achievement of student success goals across the University.

Objective	Action	Responsible Office	Completion Date
Redefine Special Committee on Advising as Standing Committee on Advising.		President	9/1/2013.
Establish a standing committee on Recruitment and Retention.		President	9/1/2013.
Appoint a vice provost for student success.		Provost	12/15/2013.

Strategy 3: Facilitate access to course offerings by eliminating course bottlenecks that prevent students from staying on target with their academic maps, i.e., by offering more sections of high-demand courses or offering these courses at times that allow greater access for students.

Objective	Action	Responsible Office	Completion Date
Examine course scheduling to determine where bottlenecks occur; implement changes to eliminate bottlenecks.		Deans, Department Chairs, School Directors/ITD	Fall 2013.

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Implementation Chart

Strategy 4: Collect, analyze, and distribute data analyses to all student success stakeholders for use in making decisions in processes and practices related to student success.			
Objective	**Action**	**Responsible Office**	**Completion Date**
Collect, analyze, distribute, and monitor key data related to recruitment and retention to all stakeholders.		IEPR	Ongoing.

Strategy 5: Create data tools, i.e., data dashboards and data cubes, to allow easy access to reporting by all members of the faculty and administration.			
Objective	**Action**	**Responsible Office**	**Completion Date**
Develop student success data dashboards for use by all relevant institutional constituencies.		ITD	Fall 2013; ongoing.
Develop student success data/information cubes for use by all relevant institutional constituencies.		ITD	Fall 2013; ongoing.
Create a tool to build a graphical representation of multiple potential class schedules for an upcoming term so that students can choose preferences (such as days of week and times of day) to find the schedule that best fits their needs.		ITD/Dept. of Computer Science	Fall 2013; ongoing.

Strategy 6: Establish an MT One Stop using a business model that ensures that students will be able to complete enrollment, registration, financial aid, and payment processes in a timely manner and that will significantly improve operating procedures related to these processes.			
Objective	**Action**	**Responsible Office**	**Completion Date**
Establish a consolidated service center for enrollment services including financial aid, scheduling, the registrar's office, bursar, and general academic advising.	MT One-Stop will open by fall 2014	VPSA	Fall 2014, with ongoing assessment and adjustment.

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Implementation Chart

Strategy 7: Establish a Freshman Involvement Initiative that intentionally sets expectations and connects MTSU's most at-risk students—freshmen—to campus involvement activities.

Objective	Action	Responsible Office	Completion Date
Establish a Freshman Involvement Initiative	Plan is under development, and the first year pilot will be implemented fall 2013.	VPSA, Dean of Students;	Fall 2013.

Strategy 8: Establish a Sophomore Student Success Initiative to deepen student commitment to achieving academic, career, and life-long learning goals.

Objective	Action	Responsible Office	Completion Date
Continuously assess data related to freshman progression and experience to inform academic and social support needs for sophomores.		Provost/Deans, Dept. Chairs, School Directors/VPSA, Dean of Students	Begin summer 2013; ongoing.
Develop and implement a pilot Sophomore Student Success Initiative based on assessment of feedback data related to freshman academic progress and experience.	Implement pilot Sophomore Student Success Initiative.	Provost/Deans, Dept. Chairs, School Directors	Fall 2016.

Strategy 9: Champion innovations to assist in reducing administrative barriers to ongoing student enrollment, to leverage technical advances to address improvements in basic business policies and practices, and to further enhance the campus environment to support student success.

| Objective	Action	Responsible Office	Completion Date
Leverage media and media tools, including social media, to better communicate with students about advising, cocurricular learning opportunities, and registration, i.e., MTSU Mobile Apps, Text Alert system, "It's Time" marketing campaign.		VP Advancement/ Marketing and Communications/ VPITD/Deans/ Department Chairs/School Directors	Fall 2013; ongoing.
Develop and implement "It's Time" campaign to remind students about the need and importance of early advising.		VP Advancement/ Marketing and Communications	12/15/2013.

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Review parking and transportation procedures for continuous improvement in efficiencies and effectiveness, i.e., shuttle route time efficiencies, street improvement, the MTBustracking app., parking garages.		Asst. VP Administration	Fall 2013; ongoing.
Expand access to advising, i.e., via additional hours (nights and weekends) and additional modes of communication (online, apps, and Web conferencing).		Deans	12/1/2013.
Conduct an advising survey and implement changes based on analysis of findings.		IEPR	Survey Completed 5/15/2013; implement changes 7/1/2013.
Survey nonreturning students and use findings to inform changes in services and processes.		IEPR	Conduct survey; implement changes based on survey findings.
Work with TBR to revise board policy to allow students who have a small debt ($100 or less) to see their grades and enroll for the next semester (Allows for continuous enrollment only; all fees and the debt must be paid by the next fee payment due date.)		SVPBF	12/15/2013.
Revise book-charging purchasing guidelines to allow qualified financial aid students to charge book purchases before funds are disbursed to the students' accounts.		Assoc VP B & F	Fall 2013.
Establish a "Workplace Watch" program to proactively engage the campus community in mitigating criminal activity, reducing criminal opportunities, and identifying criminal activities and persons.		Chief of Police	5/15/2014.

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Implementation Chart

Expand the Student Patrol program to include activities with residence hall students to facilitate information gathering/sharing, to promote crime prevention information, to elicit feedback from residents, and to assist with resident problems or concerns.		Chief of Police	5/15/2014.

Strategy 10: Expand financial support for students to mitigate the financial issues associated with their matriculation by increasing the University's resources designated for need-based and merit scholarships and short-term aid for MTSU's neediest students.

Objective	Action	Responsible Office	Completion Date
Increase donor support for need-based and merit scholarships.	Achieve $20 million increase in endowed scholarships and graduate awards via the Capital Campaign.	VP Advancement	12/31/2015.
Increase donor support for short-term aid for immediate student enrollment needs.		VP Advancement	12/31/2015.

Strategy 11: Conduct campus-wide training and professional development for all employees in best practices in supporting and delivering effective student-centered services.

Objective	Action	Responsible Office	Completion Date
Train employees to use best practices in the delivery of services to students.		VPs	5/30/2014.

Strategy 12: Create an effective institutional accountability system that articulates measurable goals, timelines, and designation of responsibility for improving student success.

Objective	Action	Responsible Office	Completion Date
Implement and monitor the Quest for Student Success initiative.		President/VPs	August 1, 2013; annual.

MIDDLE TENNESSEE
STATE UNIVERSITY
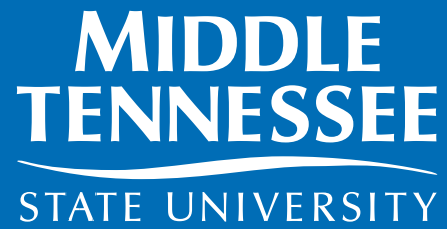
Technology Plan

Quest for Student Success
2013–2016

Quest for Student Success 2013–2016
Technology Plan

Since the inception of the new Student Services building, Middle Tennessee State University has been working to streamline and better integrate recruiting, enrollment, advising, retention, and graduation support–related functions. The focal point of all of these services is a one stop shop called MT One Stop. The planning for this initiative has been led by Deb Sells and Bruce Petryshak and has involved all related service areas. Five primary support systems have been identified to facilitate the services to be delivered through MT One Stop.

Constituent Relationship Management (CRM)

This system will allow University personnel to serve students through fixed and mobile devices to deliver the following services.

Effectively Communicate with Individual Students

Ability to report and record all interactions between a student and any MTSU employee (advisors, counselors, faculty, and administrators) providing student support services regardless of the type of interaction (face-to-face, email, chat/IM, etc.). This includes tracking student responses to emails, chats, etc.

Effectively Communicate with Groups of Students

Using the most current data available, University personnel will be able to proactively contact groups of students about their academic progress through all means possible (voice, email, letter, chat/IM, etc.) and track those interactions for follow-up and reporting.

Essential Student Information Readily Available

Consolidate and display through a limited number of screens all pertinent information related to the student's career to an MT One Stop counselor, advisor, faculty member, or administrator. This includes biodemographic information, academic profile data, pertinent financial aid data, registration-related data, pertinent admissions data, and payment status data.

Track and Report Communication Effectiveness

All interactions recorded in the CRM system will be categorized, evaluated and assessed to ensure that our students are not "falling through the cracks." The system provides robust reporting and aggregation tools to allow for tracking the effectiveness of the University's efforts to reach students through all communication methods.

Appointment and Queue Management

Integral with the University's student success initiatives is the ability to coordinate services to students through effective appointment scheduling and queue management.

Appointment Scheduling from Anywhere

Students will be able to check availability and schedule appointments with any University service provider (departments, advisors, faculty, counselors, and administrators) through the Web, kiosks, and mobile devices.

Proactive Appointment Reminder and Preparation Services

The system will be configured to provide students with timely appointment reminders through the communication channels of their choosing. It will also allow the University to provide custom preparation instructions and other information to students before appointments to help provide the best service possible.

Track and Report Appointment Effectiveness

The system will allow managers to monitor and adjust resource availability to meet the demands of students. It also provides student satisfaction and appointment assessment reporting.

Complete Call Center Services

Integrated with the MT One Stop operation and University voice/email systems, the MT One Stop call center will be able to handle both inbound and outbound calling with on-demand queue management. Managers will also be able to assess call center and operator performance to make sure the University allocates sufficient resources to effectively serve our students.

Recruiting and Prospect Services

Integrated with the University's Banner Information system, Ellucian's Recruiter system will offer prospective students a simple Web-based interface to get information and schedule participation in recruiting-related events. It provides University recruiting personnel with valuable information about prospective students, their interests, and their participation in recruiting processes.

Streamlined Inquiry and Application Management Services

Recruiter provides inquiry forms, campus visit scheduling, event registration, and application functions. Based on the same platform as the CRM system, Recruiter is integrated with the University's communication systems (email, text, voice, etc.). It natively includes the ability to import assessment data (ACT, College Board, etc.), performs address validation, and automatically performs duplicate record tracking. The system allows pertinent information to move within the Banner environment with individuals as they transition from being prospective students to enrolled students.

Coordinated Recruiting Event Management

Recruiter allows the University to manage all aspects of a recruiting event, from budgeting to scheduling to participant satisfaction surveys. It provides simple online event registration services.

Recruiting Effectiveness Tracking and Reporting

Recruiter allows recruiting managers to efficiently track response rates and plan recruiting events. Recruiter will allow nontechnical MTSU personnel to build and customize dashboards to help manage all communication and contacts our recruiters have with prospective students.

Degree Evaluation and Academic Progress Services

Under the leadership of Dr. McPhee, the University identified the need for significant improvement in the degree evaluation and academic progress tracking systems.

Real-time Academic Progress Tracking

Provide students with both graphical and tabular information displays showing their progress toward program completion and what remains to be completed. All information is directly displayed from Banner and includes in-progress, completed, and transfer course data. This data is also available to advisors, enabling them to assist students through their academic careers.

### What-if Analysis of Proposed Major/Minor Changes

Allows students to experiment with the impact that a change in major or minor may have on their academic careers. Using the same graphical and tabular information displays provided for their current program of study, the system clearly shows requirements they have met toward the proposed major/minor and what remains to be completed.

Academic Progress Automation Workflows

Allows students to digitally complete and submit declarations of and changes to majors and minors, upper-division forms, program applications, and other forms required as they complete their selected programs of study. Once completed, these applications are automatically processed by the system through required workflow approval processes.

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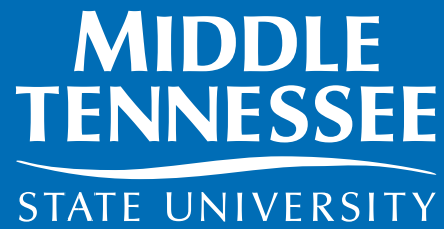
Media Coverage
of Plan Introduction

Quest for Student Success
2013–2016

THE TENNESSEAN

October 2, 2013

MTSU unveils reforms geared to improve student success

Course redesign, other reforms to help bolster retention and graduation

From MTSU

MTSU unveiled Wednesday a sweeping set of reforms that its president and provost say will target processes and practices that create barriers to student success.

The plan, advanced by Provost Brad Bartel and endorsed by President Sidney A. McPhee, calls for the university to identify and rework general core courses with high academic failure rates. It outlines plans to revamp academic advising and develop customized graduation maps for each student.

In a letter to the campus community, McPhee summarized the plan as helping to focus university efforts on just one question: "How can we help more students learn more?"

The plan is designed "to make sure that every student who comes to MTSU with the drive to achieve will be met with the best instruction from excellent professors who care for their success," McPhee said in a release.

"We will create a culture of high expectations coupled with personal attention when students struggle inside or outside of the classroom," he said.

The university also named two administrators to interim roles to oversee the reforms. University College Dean Mike Boyle also will serve as interim vice provost for student success. And Vincent Windrow, director of intercultural and diversity affairs, will be interim assistant vice provost for student success.

Boyle and Windrow will work with the president and provost to evaluate every division, office, department, school and college for measurable support for retention and graduation efforts.

And MTSU will create a consolidated tutoring center to provide learning support to students in all majors; re-establish the practice of posting mid-term grades and tweak its academic-alert system, so it will trigger intervention if a student appears to be in danger of failing.

McPhee underscored the need for bold steps to transform higher education, citing Gov. Bill Haslam's goal for 55 percent of Tennesseans to earn a degree or certificate.

"We must be consistent in the quality of services and support we deliver to students in all of our colleges and departments," the president said in the release. "We must measure our results and hold each other accountable."

Bartel said many of these initiatives came from the deans of the university's eight academic colleges, who analyzed practices and made recommendations for changes.

"When we enroll a student, we are making a commitment: If they put forth reasonable effort in our courses, we in turn must give them the instruction and support they need to achieve success," the provost said.

McPhee said the plan is based on the results of six months of consultation and review, including a series of student-success hearings involving every academic dean and division vice president. It calls for the university to:

• Implement innovation and reform in curriculum across all disciplines.

• Underscore the role of quality advising in student success.

• Champion other innovations to further support student success.

• Examine processes and practices to eliminate barriers to student success.

The university has begun to identify general education courses with higher-than-average failure rates, he said. A task force of faculty and administrators are developing new approaches in those courses through curriculum redesign, supplemental instruction and alternative teaching methods.

McPhee also said the university will augment its student recruitment efforts with a new emphasis on transfer, international, high-ability and graduate enrollment.

And Bartel said the university will explore alternative methods of effective course delivery such as blended and online courses, courses taught at off-campus sites and other new teaching and learning modalities.

Quest for Student Success plan

Implement innovation and reform in curriculum across all disciplines:

• Use new technology to create more effective learning experiences for students, such as new learning configurations and course redesigns like "flipped classrooms," which may allow teachers to spend more class time interacting with students.

• Look for opportunities to develop new teaching methods that will enhance learning, such as "hands-on" learning and mentored undergraduate research.

• Develop alternative degree pathways for every major for students who do not meet candidacy requirements, including use of the new bachelor's of university studies degree.

• Develop exploratory degree concentrations in science, arts and humanities, and professional studies for students who have yet to declare a major.

• Create a consolidated, centralized and highly accessible tutoring center to provide students learning support across disciplines.

• Improve communication with students regarding their academic standing in their courses by re-establishing the practice of posting mid-term grades, enhancing the student-alert system and implementing a follow-up system with those students who appear to be in danger of failing.

• Expand MTSU's Raider Learning Communities initiative to provide instructional and peer-mentoring support to additional numbers of incoming students.

• Enhance co-curricular programming to further complement and support academic programs and provide students expanded learning opportunities.

Underscore the role of quality advising in student success:

• Create an advising map for every MTSU student from recruitment through graduation reconciled with the student's academic map to simplify and articulate the advising process and requirements, allowing students to more easily remain on track and quickly seek advising assistance.

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• Establish an MT One Stop, using a model that ensures students can complete enrollment, registration, financial aid and payment processes in a timely manner at one location.

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— Make organizational changes to insure focused, sustained and coordinated achievement of student success goals across the university.

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• Collect, analyze and distribute data analyses to all stakeholders for use in making decisions

• Create data tools, such as data dashboards and data cubes, to allow easy access to reporting by all members of the faculty and administration.

• Conduct campus-wide training and professional development for all employees in best practices in supporting and delivering effective student-centered services.

jacksonsun.com
First in News.

October 23, 2013

MTSU: Focused on increasing grad rate

By Tajuana Cheshier
tcheshier@jacksonsun.com

Middle Tennessee State University President Sidney McPhee and members of his staff are traveling the state to bring awareness about the school's new strategic plan which focuses on increasing the graduation rate and redesigning course instruction.

"We're being self-critical about how we can do a better job," said McPhee, who spent some time talking with The Jackson Sun's editorial board on Tuesday afternoon. "What we're doing is not about grade inflation or lowering our standards."

MTSU's five-point strategic plan will address concerns about the rate that students receive a D, F, incomplete or withdraw from a course by providing stronger academic advising, making essential campus offices located in one central location, recruiting students using social media and redesigning several academic courses including - English, geology, history, communication, biology, chemistry and math.

The planning and drafting process of the plan took more than a year, McPhee said.

Several professors have signed on to participate in a pilot of the redesigned courses.

McPhee said a study will be conducted to determine the success of students in the redesigned courses versus the traditional courses.

Ensuring students' success, McPhee said, is essential in the college's goal to increase its graduation rate.

In 2011-12, MTSU's graduation rate was 51.6 percent based on a six-year cohort of students.

MTSU's outreach extends to West Tennessee with 628 alumni in Jackson and 1,355 in Jackson and surrounding counties. There are 8,213 first generation students and 877 students from the Jackson area.

McPhee said more than 70 percent of the school's population are first-generation college students, which means their parents did not attend or complete a post-secondary institution.

"The state has ambitious goals," McPhee said of Gov. Bill Haslam's Drive to 55, which seeks to push more adults to earn an associate's degree or higher. "In order to improve the graduation rate, we must do some things differently and think outside of the box. It's going to be challenging."

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MTSU unveils reforms geared to improve student success

Published: October 2, 2013
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MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

MTSU unveiled today (Wednesday) a sweeping set of reforms that its president and provost say will target processes and practices that create barriers to student success. The plan, advanced by Provost Brad Bartel and endorsed by President Sidney McPhee, calls for the university to identify and rework general core courses with high academic failure rates. It outlines plans to revamp academic advising and develop customized graduation maps for each student. McPhee says the plan is designed to make sure that every student who comes to MTSU with the drive to achieve will be met with the best instruction from excellent professors who care for their success. The university also named two administrators to interim roles to oversee the reforms. University College Dean Mike Boyle will also serve as interim vice provost for student success. And Vincent Windrow, director of intercultural and diversity affairs, will be interim assistant vice provost for student success. More information at WGNSRadio.com, keyword MTSU Reforms.

**MORE:**

Boyle and Windrow will work with the president and provost to evaluate every division, office, department, school and college for measurable support for retention and graduation efforts.

And MTSU will create a consolidated tutoring center to provide learning support to students in all majors; reestablish the practice of posting mid-term grades; and tweak its academic alert system so it will trigger intervention if a student appears to be in danger of failing.

McPhee underscored the need for bold steps to transform higher education, citing Gov. Bill Haslam's goal for 55 percent of Tennesseans to earn a degree or certificate.

"We must be consistent in the quality of services and support we deliver to students in all of our colleges and departments," the president said. "We must measure our results and hold each other accountable."

Bartel said many of these initiatives came from the deans of the university's eight academic colleges, who analyzed practices and made recommendations for changes.

"When we enroll a student, we are making a commitment: If they put forth reasonable effort in our courses, we in turn must give them the instruction and support they need to achieve success," the provost said.

McPhee said the plan is based on the results of six months of consultation and review, including a series of student success hearings involving every academic dean and division vice president. It calls for the university to:

- Implement innovation and reform in curriculum across all disciplines;
- Underscore the role of quality advising in student success;
- Champion other innovations to further support student success;
- And examine processes and practices to eliminate barriers to student success.

The university has begun to identify general education courses with higher-than-average failure rates, he said. A task force of faculty and administrators are developing new approaches in those courses through curriculum redesign, supplemental instruction and alternative teaching methods.

McPhee also said the university will augment its student recruitment efforts with a new emphasis on transfer, international, high-ability and graduate enrollment.

And, Bartel said, the university will explore alternative methods of effective course delivery such as blended and online courses, courses taught at off-campus sites, and other new teaching and learning modalities.

Specific elements of the "Quest for Student Success" plan include:

Implement innovation and reform in curriculum across all disciplines:

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55°
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Pressure: 1022mb
Mostly Cloudy   Winds: NW 10mph
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Tags: MTSU, MTSU Reforms, Murfreesboro news, student success, WGNS

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MTSU takes action to help students pass basic-level classes

Bill Taylor's Bushido
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Posted: Oct 04, 2013 9:02 PM CDT
Updated: Oct 18, 2013 9:02 PM CDT
Reported by Larry Flowers - email

MURFREESBORO, TN (WSMV) - A surprising number of students that are failing basic-level courses at Middle Tennessee State University and similar colleges nationwide, which begs the question of how prepared the students are coming out of high school.

MTSU President Dr. Sidney McPhee is so concerned about students getting grades of Ds and Fs, along with Ws for a withdrawal, or is for an incomplete, in those basic education courses, that he took action.

He implemented what is called the Quest for Student Success and is calling on his faculty to help make sure each student is successful.

"This is not about us compromising our academic standards. This is not about giving away grades. Students must meet the standards. What we're saying is we expect them to do their part, and rather than blaming everybody else," McPhee said.

But it starts before students ever step foot on campus. At Oakland High School, administrators start working with students early on to ensure their success in college.

"It ensures every child that walks through our doors are going to have the opportunity to be successful," said Oakland Principal Bill Spurlock.

MTSU senior Jordan Rose said she's trying professors will embrace this new way of teaching.

"I have a class of 300, and all she does is lecture on a PowerPoint, and everyone around me is just talking. No one is paying attention. All you do in classes is just listen," Rose said.

McPhee said he presented a copy of his Quest for Student Success to the Tennessee Board of Regents and they then decided to share it with all the other schools in the TBR system to use as a guideline of coming up with their own plans to ensure students are not failing basic-level courses.

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• Collect, analyze and distribute data analyses to all stakeholders for use in making decisions

• Create data tools, such as data dashboards and data cubes, to allow easy access to reporting by all members of the faculty and administration.

• Conduct campus-wide training and professional development for all employees in best practices in supporting and delivering effective student-centered services.

I am

TRUE BLUE.

as a member of this diverse community,

I am a **VALUABLE CONTRIBUTOR** to its

& PROGRESS SUCCESS | I AM **ENGAGED** IN THE **LIFE**

of this **community**

I am a **RECIPIENT &** a **GIVER**

I AM A *listener* **& a** *speaker*

I am **HONEST** *in word and deed*

I AM COMMITTED TO REASON,

NOT VIOLENCE

I am a learner **NOW & FOREVER**

TRUE BLUE.

I am a **BLUE RAIDER.**

MIDDLE TENNESSEE
STATE UNIVERSITY.