STRATEGIC VISION

THE UNIVERSITY OF
TENNESSEE
KNOXVILLE

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION,
HEALTH & HUMAN SCIENCES

2021

MARCH

THE UNIVERSITY OF
TENNESSEE
KNOXVILLE

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION,
HEALTH & HUMAN SCIENCES

Strategic Vision of the College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences

2021-2025

This strategic vision will be implemented alongside the CEHHS Diversity Action Plan and under the umbrella of the university's strategic vision and the college's vision statement.

VISION OF THE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, HEALTH, AND HUMAN SCIENCES

*Enhancing Research, Outreach, and Practice
through a Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion*

GOAL 1:

Develop world-class programs designed for the needs of today and the future and develop outstanding teaching of faculty for these programs, for the purposes of increasing student enrollment and greater student success.

This goal focuses on what universities were originally built to do: prepare professionals and citizens for the future. This goal will invite all members of CEHHS to think about what our current and *future* students need programmatically and instructionally.

Create a futurist task force to conduct research on programs needed in the future.

- Work with consultants and outside stakeholders (e.g., business and industry) to assess future programming needs.
- Conduct focus groups of students, alumni, and other stakeholders to assess current programs for how well they currently prepare professionals for students' chosen careers.
- Share report widely with departments for the purposes of developing new programs (majors, minors, certificates, micro-credentials) or revising and renaming old ones.

Institute new ideas for program development, improvement, and increased enrollment.

- Based on the report of the futurist task force, develop new programs that will draw students and prepare them for the future work force.
- Develop an infrastructure (including timetable of regularity) for faculty to examine student data (e.g., course products, retention rates, surveys on programs) and make subsequent improvements.
- Develop dual-credit opportunities with high school students for all relevant programs.
- Develop online programs (majors, minors, certificates) for all appropriate face-to-face programs. Use winter term, weekend, dual/expedited undergraduate-graduate programs, and short-term sessions to attract students.
- Develop more experiential learning/service-learning courses in all relevant programs.
- Create a student/alumni network in each department to connect students to internships and post-college opportunities.

Develop outstanding teaching.

- Implement a systematic program of professional development to improve teaching and learning across the college. Identify "exemplar" faculty in the college (i.e., Board of Advisor's award winners, Chancellor's Honors for Teaching recipients, or department head recommendations based on peer teaching observations and TN Voice data) to (1) host a webinar or panel session for dialogue regarding what is working and what may need attention, (2) allow others to shadow/observe, and/or (3) consult interdepartmentally regarding teaching.
- Ensure all faculty and leaders have been trained on how bias emerges in student evaluations and feedback regarding faculty members of color, and provide strategies for mitigating bias in evaluative process.

Resources to support this work:

- Invest in faculty and staff time (e.g., summer stipends) to launch programs and projects to meet the above goals.
- Hire a college recruiter, who is also focused on student success (e.g., time-to-degree, completion rates), focusing on graduate students.
- Hire a data analyst to support faculty to assess program outcomes for regular program improvement.

Relationship to University of Tennessee Strategic Vision:

GOAL 1: Provide high-quality educational opportunities that meet the needs of people, whenever and wherever they seek to learn.

GOAL 3: Develop and sustain a nurturing university culture where diversity and community are enduring sources of strength.

GOAL 4: Empower and sustain a culture of collaboration, agility, and innovation throughout the university.

Metrics for measuring accomplishments of these goals:

● College and departmental bylaws outline success in teaching and program development.
● Annual reviews of faculty for efforts to develop or improve programs, support students, and increase enrollments.
● Nationally recognized programs in all programs: majors, minors, certificate and micro-credentialing programs.
● Increased enrollments in all relevant programs (including minors, certificate programs).

GOAL 2:

Engage in and produce high-impact research and scholarship.

As a Carnegie University of High-Level Research Activity (R1), faculty are expected to engage in research and scholarship that makes a difference and is recognized nationally. To support their research, faculty are expected to procure external funds to support their work, if appropriate and available in their field. Our goal is to increase the amount and *quality* of research, supported by an increase in funding.

Build the infrastructure to support the highest quality research and scholarship.

• Develop a multi-tiered research mentoring plan for all new faculty aligned with their skills and needs. Provide optional training and mentoring (including from external mentors, funding agency program officers), for *all* faculty on specific research skills, methodologies, and grant writing.
• Consider differentiating workload policies in each department that allows for tenured/tenure track faculty to continue to conduct research but choose to take on

more or less teaching or engagement/service loads that are aligned with each individual's strengths. Evaluate faculty on their redesigned load, rewrite bylaws according to differentiated loads.

- Rethink how graduate assistantships are supported and how they might better contribute to the quality and quantity of our research.
- Plan regular events for faculty collaboration across the college and university (e.g., brown-bag seminars, community-based research "salons") for understanding others' work, new methodologies, and grant-writing possibilities.
- Develop a community board to advise on mutually beneficial partnerships for research.
- Establish norms for regular communication about our research (e.g., *Accolades*, The Conversation, research briefs, current database/repository of external funding efforts).

Resources to support this work:

- Hire a senior faculty member with exemplary quantitative research skills to mentor faculty on research design, data analysis, and grant writing.
- Invest in more graduate students, preferably at higher (more competitive) salaries.
- Invest in faculty time (e.g., release from teaching to write grants).

Relationship to University of Tennessee Strategic Vision:

GOAL 2: Create a more just, prosperous, and sustainable future through world-class research, scholarship, and creative work.

GOAL 3: Develop and sustain a nurturing university culture where diversity and community are enduring sources of strength.

Metrics for measuring accomplishments of these goals:

- College and departmental bylaws describe clear criteria for quality research productivity
- Increased research quality and impact
- Increased productivity of programs as defined by college and departmental bylaws
- Increased college, department and programs rankings
- Increased opportunities for research collaborations, especially funded research

GOAL 3:

Make a direct and visible impact on our local and global community.

As a land grant university, our mission is to empower learners of all ages and backgrounds to achieve their dreams through accessible and affordable education. Our work should advance the prosperity, well-being, and vitality of communities across Tennessee and around the world. To do this, we must commit to excellence, equity, and inclusion in all of our work, including our outward-facing engagement.

- Assess the needs of the community. Conduct a state-wide assessment of needs/gaps related to the work of our college to identify partners and opportunities for engagement. Develop a regular and formal mechanism for continuing to update community needs. Share reporting internally and externally annually.
- Develop a website or database for documenting the engagement work the college is doing, with the goal to recognize current work, communicate with partners, and invite additional collaboration.
- Assess the needs of the campus community (e.g., food, fees, books, housing) and address those needs.
- Develop a micro-credentials series of brief courses (health, education, entrepreneurship, leadership) that meet the needs of stakeholders at any stage of life and provide income to departments.
- Based on needs assessed above, develop a college-wide focused project on improving social and economic mobility in one part of our local community: an initiative focused on education, health, and workforce development, so all have the opportunity to participate. Seek public and private funds to support the initiative. Identify existing initiatives to which several CEHHS units/departments can contribute (e.g., Camp Koinonia, Center for Sport, Peace, and Society) and make collaboration opportunities transparent.
- Establish procedures for sustaining engagement work: promote engaged scholarship through the Office of Communications, develop an internal newsletter, establish support groups, and rewritten workload to acknowledge engagement work.
- Create a training/mentoring plan for faculty on engaged scholarship.

Resources to support this work:

- Hire an Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Engagement.
- Invest in faculty and staff time (e.g., stipends) to launch initiatives or rethink work load.

Relationship to University of Tennessee Strategic Vision:

GOAL 1: Provide high-quality educational opportunities that meet the needs of people, whenever and wherever they seek to learn.

GOAL 3: Develop and sustain a nurturing university culture where diversity and community are enduring sources of strength.

GOAL 5: Connect with every Tennessean and with communities around the world, inspiring future Volunteers to join our diverse community.

Metrics for measuring accomplishments of these goals:

- College and departmental bylaws describe clear criteria for quality engaged scholarship.
- Increased opportunities for research collaborations with community partners.
- Increased respect from community stakeholders.

GOAL 4:

Enhance the working environment for staff and faculty in the college for the purposes of achieving Goals 1-3.

In order to achieve the above goals, we must have a healthy, engaged working environment, and it takes intentional effort to create and maintain such a culture. Moreover, we learned a great deal during 2020, when nearly all our work had to be done remotely. Hence, we will use what we've learned, and include new ideas, for creating and maintaining a work environment that supports staff and faculty to do their best work.

Go virtual when it's right.

- Examine all paper processes and in-person traditions and assess if electronic or virtual may be preferable and more effective.
- Permanently offer virtual advising as an option.
- Hold most didactic meetings virtually.

Rethink how we work.

- Develop a plan to make the workplace a more joyful environment for staff and faculty (e.g. wellness programs, niche-group conversations, dedicated space for specific groups, electronic bulletin board for communication).
- Work with Human Resources to examine work policies, flexible hours, and flexible locations; develop new policies for options where appropriate.
- Develop plans for professional development for staff.

Resources to support this work:

- Funds for events.
- Fund professional development.

Relationship to University of Tennessee Strategic Vision:

GOAL 3: Develop and sustain a nurturing university culture where diversity and community are enduring sources of strength.

GOAL 4: Empower and sustain a culture of collaboration, agility, and innovation throughout the university

Metrics for measuring accomplishments of these goals:

- Inclusion in bylaws how service (especially heavy lifts such as assessment and curricular work) and culture-building work contributes to annual reviews
- Increased productivity in all areas of work
- Increased wellness of faculty and staff

The Development of the 2021-2025 CEHHS Strategic Vision

This strategic vision was developed by faculty and staff of the College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences during the fall of 2020 and refined after dialogue sessions and a prioritization survey in January 2021. During the fall, the work was divided into ten topic areas to enhance within the college: student success, federal research grants, external funds from other sources, quality research and scholarship, community engagement, work efficiencies, designing and improving programs, improving teaching, enhancing the work environment, and providing educational opportunities for all people at every stage of life. The dean asked two leaders to facilitate each group, and faculty and staff participated in one of the ten groups.

The groups met for four sessions. Each meeting had a specific focus, and each subsequent meeting built on the previous meeting. The questions posed for each meeting included the following prompts related to the one narrow topic of each group:

Session 1: What are we currently doing well (regarding topic X)? What have we done well in the past?

Session 2: How can we increase or expand what we have done or are doing well? What else can we do? What do other successful institutions do? What innovations might we try?

Session 3: Given the ideas generated in the past two sessions, how can we adapt the work to ensure a focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion?

Session 4: Given the ideas generated, what would be the top three long-term priorities we should focus on? What are 3-5 initiatives we can do now?

After each session, facilitators uploaded notes from the meeting on to Google Drive and all members of the college community were invited, with multiple reminders, to read those notes and offer input for group members to consider during the next meeting. The dean's advisory board members also weighed in on the notes. The working groups took all comments into account. From the reports of the working groups, the dean drafted an initial vision with strategies and tactics. She collapsed the work of the ten groups into our college's three focus areas: 1) teaching and program development, 2) research and scholarship, and 3) community engagement. The fourth goal was developed from the working groups focused on workplace culture and environment. The plan was shared initially with the dean's leadership team, the dean's advisory board, and the facilitators of the working groups. Revisions were made after feedback from those groups. It was then shared with the entire faculty in a dialogue session for the purposes of prioritizing the work and resources. Then, using the notes from the meetings, the dean developed a survey for all staff and faculty to weigh in on, to communicate their priorities. From these data, the dean reorganized the vision strategy and tactics to reflect the priorities of the group, taking into consideration the many comments made in the survey. The priorities in the survey that received modest promotion were left out of this version; indeed, nearly half of the proposed tactics are no longer in this plan. Importantly, though, all original strategies and tactics have been saved for future implementation planning.

This plan, alongside the CEHHS Diversity Action Plan, will focus our work through 2025.