

## **Texas A&M University: An Ideal 21<sup>st</sup> Century University**

Texas A&M University will attain the ambitious ideals of *Vision 2020* by its commitment to the founding principles of the Morrill Act of 1862, also known as the Land-Grant College Act:

- to provide students across the population access to higher education,
- to generate meaningful research and scholarship, and
- to transfer discoveries to the people of the State and beyond; and

by its commitment to the modern purposes of AAU research universities:

- to serve society through basic and applied research,
- to lead in graduate education, and
- to be an engine of social transformation and economic growth.

This balanced commitment to founding principles and expectations is the mandate from students, faculty, legislators, and the public for excellent universities of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **To achieve our vision, Texas A&M University will:**

#### **GOAL 1: Provide an outstanding educational experience for all students as evidenced by:**

- Enhanced learning outcomes
- Strong appreciation for the value of the educational experience
- High completion rates
- Timely graduation norms
- High placements upon graduation

Texas A&M University's mission requires that we provide an exceptional education to undergraduate and graduate students that reflects the changing social and cultural demographics of Texas and the Nation. We must ensure that our graduates are highly sought after, and are prepared to lead, learn, and serve for a lifetime. We must do this while serving the State and Nation in the effective utilization of resources, by striving for high completion rates, in a timely manner, which will lead to lower student debt accumulation. We must accomplish this educational aspect of our mission by enhancing innovative approaches and strong standards in our curricula.

In the 2013-14 academic year in the State of Texas, Texas A&M University had the lowest average time to degree for full-time undergraduates (4.1 years), the highest percentage of 4-year graduating full-time students (53.6%), the highest 5-year and 6-year graduation rates (77% and 80.4%), and the highest 4-year graduation rate for community college transfer students (85%). Large percentages of our graduate students complete their degrees, 73.1% of master's students in two years and 72.4% of doctoral students, in 6 years. The average time for students to receive a master's degree was 2.1 years, and for the doctorate it was 5.9 years. Over 78% of our students had job or graduate school placement within 3 months of graduation. All programs are achieving appropriate learning outcomes near or above national norms. In a survey of our graduating students, we found that 79% were sure the cost of attendance was well worth the benefits received, and 20% indicated it was probably worth it. Greater than 75% of the graduating students believed that their experience at Texas A&M enhanced their communication skills, reasoning skills, social and global awareness, team participation and leadership skills, and respect for other cultures. Twenty-two percent of our former students contributed funds to the University in 2014.

## WE CAN DO EVEN BETTER.

Among our *Vision 2020* peers, we are 15<sup>th</sup> in 4-year undergraduate completion rates and 13<sup>th</sup> in 6-year completion rates; our graduate student completion rate appears to be in line with our *Vision 2020* peers, and our student satisfaction at the time of graduation and beyond seems to compare well among these peers. (Alumni donations to Texas A&M are second only to Georgia Tech among these peers.) Among our graduating students, only 69% believe we have helped them to effectively integrate knowledge from other fields into their efforts in their own field, only 40% believe we have helped them appreciate history, art and literature and their effect on society.

To improve, we will:

- STRATEGY 1:** Commit to a University culture that values timely completion of degrees at all levels.
- STRATEGY 2:** Commit to a University culture that ensures all students engage in high-impact learning experiences in their curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular experiences.
- STRATEGY 3:** Review and enhance all academic units' curricular, pedagogical, and career preparation activities, especially the development of our instructors, to optimize value to our students.
- STRATEGY 4:** Strengthen multidisciplinary programs and initiatives, and reinforce their alignment with and recognition by existing disciplinary structures.
- STRATEGY 5:** Enhance our ability to ensure that all faculty, staff, and students, regardless of their identity, are recognized and valued for their contributions at Texas A&M University.

### **GOAL 2: Produce impactful new knowledge, innovations, and creative works as evidenced by:**

- High citation, utilization, and display of scholarly outputs
- High levels of support for our scholars
- Recognition of our scholars
- Contributions to solving society's grand challenges

Our research, scholarly, and creative activities must redefine fields of study, steer future pursuits, and improve the quality of life in Texas and the world. We will use the full resources of Texas A&M University to address society's grand challenges – tough problems that can only be solved through large-scale collaboration involving experts representing the full spectrum of knowledge and competencies at our University.

In the 2013-14 academic year, we had the highest total research expenditures in the State of Texas (over \$850 million), the second highest number of citations, and 628 faculty members who received prestigious awards.

### Texas A&M University's *Vision 2020* Peers

Texas A&M University  
Georgia Tech  
Indiana Univ  
Michigan State  
Ohio State Univ  
Penn State Univ  
Purdue Univ  
Univ of Calif - Berkeley  
Univ of Calif - Davis  
Univ of Calif- LA  
Univ of Calif - San Diego  
Univ of Florida  
Univ of Illinois  
Univ of Maryland  
Univ of Michigan  
Univ of Minnesota  
Univ of North Carolina  
Univ of Texas  
Univ of Washington

## **WE CAN DO EVEN BETTER.**

Among our *Vision 2020* peers, we are 13<sup>th</sup> in total research expenditures, 18<sup>th</sup> in federal research expenditures, 15<sup>th</sup> in faculty with prestigious awards, 18<sup>th</sup> in number of National Academy members, and 18<sup>th</sup> in citations for our scholars' work.

To improve, we will:

- STRATEGY 4:** **(same as above)** Strengthen multidisciplinary programs and initiatives, and reinforce their alignment with and recognition by existing disciplinary structures, especially in University focused areas of grand challenges.
- STRATEGY 6:** Review and refine faculty and staff annual performance and promotion evaluation processes and merit-based incentives to reinforce expectations and reward impact and productivity.
- STRATEGY 7:** Facilitate and support our faculty to publish and exhibit in top-tier venues, to succeed in garnering external funding for their work, and be successfully nominated for significant awards and recognitions.
- STRATEGY 8:** Refine and implement unit budgeting processes to ensure investments are made in facilities, equipment, and personnel that reinforce University expectations.

### **GOAL 3: Place the needs of the public good at the forefront of our mission as evidenced by:**

- Graduating a large number of students who share the University's commitment to serve the public good
- Increasing the number of graduating students who identify as African-American or Hispanic
- Graduating more than 25% of our students who are first generation college attenders or whose family income is below the State poverty level
- Graduating students with a low student debt burden
- Translating rapidly our scholarly and creative works to serve and improve society's natural environment, economic environment, and human condition
- Exercising responsible stewardship of the State's resources

To realize our *Vision 2020* aspirations, we commit to even greater effectiveness, efficiency, and excellence. Excellence demands that we establish and be accountable to University-wide and unit-based metrics that measure progress toward meeting our mission as a first class land-grant public research university. Our faculty, students, and staff must influence communities and serve the public good. We will provide students from Texas and around the globe with hope and direction for a brighter and stronger future by helping families understand, value, and plan for their childrens' educational aspirations; and by working with practitioners to incorporate new ideas and knowledge into daily practices. In the 2013-14 academic year, we interacted with numerous pre-college students and assisted hundreds of school teachers and administrators through development and research. We awarded 13,913 degrees. Of the degrees awarded, 48.8% were to women and 17.1% were to graduating students who identified as African Americans, Native Americans, or Hispanics. Our students' debt was below the national average. We submitted 18 invention disclosures and had 5 patents issued. Our administrative costs were the lowest in the State at 3.6%.

**WE CAN DO EVEN BETTER.**

Although we have an increasingly diverse University community (students, faculty, and staff) compared to some of our peers, considering the changing demographics of the State of Texas, we can do even better. We strive to be an even more diverse and inclusive institution of higher education. Our faculty continue to encounter cumbersome procedures for bringing their ideas to the public, so administrative hurdles must be minimized to increase the amount of time dedicated to achieving our goals.

To improve, we will:

- STRATEGY 5:** **(same as above, but ensure University wide)** Enhance our ability to ensure that all faculty, staff, and students, regardless of their identity, can thrive at Texas A&M University.
- STRATEGY 8:** **(same as above but ensure University wide)** Refine and implement *University wide* budgeting processes to reinforce University expectations.
- STRATEGY 9:** Align partnerships with other Agencies and our administrative procedures and operations to optimize our teaching, research, and service mission.
- STRATEGY 10:** Reinforce and support procedures and initiatives to improve the recruitment and retention of faculty, staff, and students at all levels and from all backgrounds.