DECADE OF EXCELLENCE
THE VISION
DRAFT: 6/24/2020
Laying the Foundation for the Next 150 Years

Texas A&M University Mission Statement: Texas A&M University is dedicated to the discovery, development, communication, and application of knowledge in a wide range of academic and professional fields. Its mission of providing the highest quality undergraduate and graduate programs is inseparable from its mission of developing new understandings through research and creativity. It prepares students to assume roles in leadership, responsibility and service to society. Texas A&M assumes as its historic trust the maintenance of freedom of inquiry and an intellectual environment nurturing the human mind and spirit. It welcomes and seeks to serve persons of all racial, ethnic, and geographic groups as it addresses the needs of an increasingly diverse population and a global economy. In the 21st century, Texas A&M University seeks to assume a place of preeminence among public universities while respecting its history and traditions.

Our Vision

Students, faculty, and staff at Texas A&M University are united by our Core Values – respect, excellence, leadership, loyalty, integrity, selfless service - in everything we do. We are a community of problem-solvers, scholars, and creators with a mission of service, arising from our founding land-grant heritage. Our quest for excellence as a preeminent public land-, sea-, and space-grant university will be realized through our commitment to transformational education, groundbreaking research, and a university community unfettered by discipline boundaries but focused on society’s vital challenges. We will do so with integrity and respect as we prepare the next generation to lead by our example.

The foundation of the next 150 years is anchored by four strategic pillars:

THE UNIVERSITY AS COMMUNITY

Embedded within our local communities, forged by Texas, and embracing our global presence, Texas A&M University is committed to enriching the learning and working environment for all students, faculty, and staff. Diverse perspectives, talents, and identities are vital to accomplishing our mission and we are enriched by the rich global and varied tapestry that is present on our campus. As a community, we will facilitate a secure and supportive environment where we each can pursue a world class education and conduct world changing research. It is this richness of the Texas A&M community that keeps former students engaged lifelong with the university and their education.
Our Vision (continued)

TRANSFORMATIONAL EDUCATION

Providing students with the premier programs and transformative experiences inside and outside of the classroom remains our highest priority in order to prepare each individual for roles of responsibility in service to society. Melding technological advances with sound pedagogy, Texas A&M will transform the way universities interact with students yet remain committed to the principle of accessible education.

Mirroring the population of Texas, the ever-changing composition of our student body will enrich the learning environment for all. The university will excel at developing graduates with creative and innovative approaches to solving problems at every scale while preserving our core values. In order to meet real world challenges and improve the quality of lives, we will redefine the boundaries of higher education and the value of being a graduate for every level of student with continued impact throughout their lives.

DISCOVERY AND INNOVATION

Answering important questions requires thinking differently. Texas A&M’s investment in creative people and the cutting-edge tools to support their research and scholarship will continue to accelerate. The advancement of disciplinary fields yields the knowledge to tackle the most difficult interdisciplinary challenges at every scale. Encouraging a research environment based on synergies among faculty will drive a culture of discovery and innovation that moves beyond compartmentalized fields and creates a university that is an incubator of ideas and a community of scholars who benefit from and contribute to the success of each other. Working alongside our faculty and staff, A&M students will have opportunities to experience the joy of discovery and creation, while being grounded in the highest standards of ethics and professional conduct.

Our shared missions of providing a premier education while enhancing creativity and discovery brings value to the contributions of faculty, students and staff that will in turn play a critical role in attracting, developing, and retaining the next generation of talent here. Consequently, Texas A&M will continue to increase its competitive advantage by combining expertise across disciplines on research opportunities that are strategic, unique, and impactful. Texas A&M will continue to be known for solving problems.
IMPACT ON THE STATE, THE NATION, AND THE WORLD

Texas A&M champions higher education’s vital role in contributing to society in meaningful ways. Through purpose-driven research and groundbreaking discoveries, the university will demonstrate strong connections between the research conducted here and its impact on the state of Texas and communities around the globe.

Embracing our land, sea and space grant missions, we innovate solutions that serve the public good, address inequities, guarantee access to health, embrace diversity, and ensure robust and sustainable communities. Leveraging the Aggie network in conjunction with our faculty and students, we will excel at harnessing our thought leadership in developing solutions with impact throughout the public sphere. Aggies will continue to make a difference.
The Four Pillars

THE UNIVERSITY AS COMMUNITY

Within and beyond the boundaries of campus we aspire to create an environment where all are welcomed, valued, and affirmed. Texas A&M serves as a connecting point for the individual and the community, both local and global. Our students, faculty, and staff bring the world to Central Texas as we take Central Texas to the world. Indeed, it is the responsibility of Texas A&M to graduate active and engaged citizens of the world, grounded with an appreciation of the value of their contribution.

By embracing the breadth of experiences and strengths inherent among the members of our community and providing resources and support for each to be successful, Texas A&M strives to embody a compassionate community that enables individual and collaborative successes. Hosting a climate founded on the core principle of inclusion, where differences are genuinely understood and celebrated, we will provide support wherever needed to create an optimal environment for learning and working. The barriers to access and engagement for marginalized groups will be erased, regardless of whether the individuals are faculty, permanent staff, contract staff, students, or community members.

Our community meshes the physical, cultural, and the human environment, recognizing the interplay between them. The university will continue to partner with the cities of Bryan and College Station to plan for sustainable growth and livability. Enhancing the quality of life will require attention to infrastructure, green space, biking/walking trails, parks, alternative energy sources, affordable housing, accessible and sustainable transportation alongside continued support for scholarly and public advancement of the arts.

The benefits of residing near a Tier One university will be consistently felt by local residents.

Telling the stories that result from our work to the community and beyond in a way that is meaningful and accessible will invite them to participate with us. The investments in our physical infrastructure should be seen as a shared investment that also supports those living as our neighbors through local community events. Texas A&M should proudly develop the evidence that documents the institutional practices required to receive Carnegie classification in Community Engagement, ensuring bidirectional communication is strong and fluid so that we are all fully engaged in the decisions that universally impact us.
The Four Pillars (continued)

TRANSFORMATIONAL EDUCATION

Education will remain the primary mission of every university. It is the delivery of that education, the audience, and the expectations that continuously evolve. Texas A&M will be prepared to meet those changes taking place in higher education.

First, students are changing. A more diverse student body will enhance and enrich the learning environment for all students. This will include an increase in non-traditional students, such as veterans, those in mid-career, those who stopped-out, and active senior citizens. Conversely universities are likely to play a larger and more varied role in designing and perhaps delivering education to future college students. There is likely to be increasing demand for non-traditional degrees that compete with the baccalaureate, Texas A&M needs to develop alternatives that look beyond the traditional classroom to provide new opportunities for advancement through degrees, certificates, and other life-long learning programs. As we promote “life-long learning” we want to become a national leader in creating publicly accessible continuing education and develop models that provide continued value for our graduates to stay engaged with Texas A&M.

Second, technology is changing. Technological advancements will impact the way we interact with students. New forms for delivering education to 21st century students will permeate the university from technologically enhanced classrooms and include other modes of delivery, such as web-based courses. We must discover ways to employ new technologies to provide wider access to knowledge while preserving a highly personal educational experience. Texas A&M will be a university that reaches beyond its traditional boundaries to deliver on the promise of educational opportunities for all. Recognizing the persistence of technological advancements across virtually all realms of our lives, Texas A&M University will position itself to be a leader in the creation of technology to meet practical challenges and answer the needs of people. Hence, it is important that we continue to develop critical and innovative thinking in our students, while at the same time holding true to the traditions and core values that give Texas A&M University its distinctive character.

Third, the economy is changing. The cost of higher education and the demand for relevant job skills is likely to be greater for graduates in 2030 and beyond. We must find ways to enhance the value to our graduates while keeping costs within reach. Demands will continue for job-relevant education, and discussions on costs and financial burdens will continue to monopolize many discussions about college education.

Accepting our status as a premier public university, we must provide a truly globally-infused curriculum that positions our graduates to be leaders on the world stage as well as locally. Our students will have unparalleled “hands-on” research and professional training at a depth and scale rare among public institutions, applied to all our undergraduate, graduate, and professional students, developing the skills needed to find, validate, and interpret information - the new hallmark of an educated citizen.

It is this combination of world-class education, infused with an ethos of discovery and appreciation for research, yet broadly affordable and accessible in a supportive community, that will make Texas A&M a highly attractive destination among nationally recognized public universities.
DISCOVERY AND INNOVATION

The global pace of knowledge creation and dissemination is dizzying and will only accelerate. This necessitates the Texas A&M community of faculty, students, and staff working together in the shared mission of addressing societal challenges in an environment focused on creativity, discovery, and innovation. The university will incentivize and reward success, but especially collaborative success that transcends individual disciplines by shedding the constraints of organizational hierarchies. Inspired leadership will play a critical role in organizing and identifying strategic areas of excellence and recognize and reward faculty members who build successful interdisciplinary academic and industry partnerships. Moreover, students at all levels will integrate research as a key component of their educational experience to enhance career opportunities and recognize the value of these contributions to society and the economy.

Groundbreaking discoveries and innovations most frequently emerge when the expertise of multiple contributors is combined. For many research problems, a hyper-competitive funding landscape and the scale and complexity of the challenges often surpass the capacity of single investigators. Instead, a research ecosystem based on synergies between multiple and diverse faculty and students is needed to drive a culture of discovery and innovation. By moving beyond an institution focused on compartmentalized fields, Texas A&M will become an incubator of ideas and a community that benefits from the successes of each other. Consequently, we will increase our competitive advantage by combining expertise across disciplines to research opportunities that are strategic, unique, and impactful. Texas A&M will continue to be known for solving problems.

In order to lead at the highest levels, we must attract outstanding talent and provide an environment in which creativity and discovery can flourish and be translated into world-changing ideas and technologies. We must be willing to invest in people and in the tools of scholarship that both advance disciplinary fields and facilitate their collaboration and integration to tackle challenges at all scales.
IMPACT ON THE STATE, THE NATION, AND THE WORLD

Through purpose-driven research and groundbreaking discoveries, Texas A&M University will support strong connections between the work that is conducted here and the impact of that research in the state of Texas and communities across the globe. The thought leadership of our faculty and students will have impact throughout the public sphere as well.

The University’s reach is not bounded by Aggies who happen to be on the scene. When called on, Texas A&M can put an Aggie anywhere, anytime, in an internet-connected world. Aggies are the first to volunteer in times of crisis. But our greatest talent is directed at building and understanding resilience so that our collective future can be marked by developing opportunities rather than responding to dangers. The world knows us not by a uniform or a way of speaking, but by the stronger society that we will continue striving to build.

A central question that frames an audacious impact vision for any university is: What are we, as a university, good for? How do our values and commitments, in turn, align and help prioritize the defining challenges that we will address over the next 20 years? This highlights a charge for the university and its alumni to figuratively “Put a finger on the scale” to develop innovation to serve the public good. Tipping the scales can be accomplished through transformative education, research, programmatic delivery, and policy innovation, but it also demands that a university must help direct broad social discourse on public values and priorities.

Local communities, the state, and the world will see Aggie citizen leaders engaged in civil, commercial, and political life. We will see Aggies bringing their voices and talents to the betterment of community and country, whether as private citizens, elected officials, or corporate leaders. The Aggie citizen will be the first to volunteer in times of crisis. Aggie citizens will be fearless on every front.
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