

# **Fisk University**



## **Strategic Plan: Sesquicentennial 2014 – 2017**

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## Executive Summary

The Fisk University Strategic Plan: Sesquicentennial (2014-2017) represents a rolling plan of action for achieving important University goals over the next few years.

Since September of 2013, the University has been developing a strategic plan to guide its performance and productivity over the next ten years, via a rolling three-year plan. During the 2013 October Board meeting, the Board of Trustees provided direction, guidance, and parameters within which the University should work to develop the plan. In addition, the University created a Strategy Committee to provide ongoing guidance and oversight for the University's strategic management efforts.

Prior to the October Board meeting, the University conducted S.W.O.T. analyses with all internal stakeholders (faculty, staff, and students). During the months since the October meeting, the University has conducted additional S.W.O.T. analyses with other groups of stakeholders, including alumni (both in Nashville and across the Country) and Friends of Fisk ((both in Nashville and across the Country). It has also convened a University-wide Strategic Planning Committee, with the Provost serving as Chairperson and the President serving as "consultant" and "facilitator."

During a planning retreat, on November 17, 2013, the Strategic Planning Committee created a list of five Strategic Goals, based on its existing Mission, vision, and values, as well as a proposed Vision statement, to serve as the draft goals for presentation to the Strategy Committee and, ultimately, to the Board of Trustees. In addition, the Committee has developed a series of objectives, strategies, and action items to accomplish the goals.

The Board agreed that the University should develop the Strategic Plan ("Plan") as a three-year, rolling plan that will be monitored, updated, and rolled-forward on an annual basis. The next few pages represent the evolved, draft Strategic Plan, for the Board's consideration, input, and approval.

The Strategic Planning Committee considered and developed the draft plan in the context of the University's current Mission, Vision, and Values (see below). It also considered the major concerns, imperatives, and proposed vision for Fisk, as well as a "Pillars for Vision Success" (see below).

## **Mission**

Fisk University produces graduates from diverse backgrounds, with the integrity and intellect required for substantive contributions to society. Our curriculum is grounded in the liberal arts. Our faculty and administrators emphasize the discovery and advancement of knowledge through research in the natural and social sciences, business, and the humanities. We are committed to the success of scholars and leaders with a global perspective.

## **Vision**

Fisk University will rank among the best global liberal arts institutions of higher education in the country.

## **Values**

At Fisk, our success is in the D.E.T.A.I.L.S.: Diversity; Excellence; Teamwork; Accountability; Integrity; Leadership; and Service.

## **Challenges Confronting Higher Education (and Fisk University)**

(1) Decreasing pool of traditional-aged high school graduates; (2) challenging economic times for families; (3) rising costs of higher education; (4) importance of “minding the gap” between the cost of higher education and what families can afford; (5) the value proposition of higher education being questioned; (6) threatened increased government intervention (“College Rating System”); and (7) the value and continued relevance of HBCUs questioned.

## **Fisk University Imperatives**

(1) Develop excellence in “client service”; (2) increase student enrollments; (3) develop broader, firmer financial base; (4) enhance/expand academic programs; (5) enhance public image; (6) enhance physical infrastructure

## **Pillars of Vision Success**

(1) Students; (2) Faculty and Staff; (3) Academic Programs; (4) Infrastructure and Environment (physical and virtual); and (5) financial stability

# **Goal #1: Clarify, sustain, and enhance the Fisk Brand of academic excellence, leadership, and civic engagement**

## ***Introduction***

To achieve the “Fisk Renaissance,” the University must create clear, distinct brand messages that speak proudly and profoundly about the academic excellence, leadership, and civic engagement for which Fisk continues to be known. The objectives identified below are designed to achieve this overarching goal, which is so very critical to the University’s long-term effectiveness and sustainability.

## ***Objectives, Strategies, and Action Items***

**Objective 1:** Develop clear, consistent messages related to the Fisk Brand

**Rationale:** Fisk has an outstanding brand of “academic excellence,” on which the University should capitalize. The University must present a clear and consistent set of messages to the marketplace. This effort should result in enhanced recruitment of students, faculty, and staff – as well as have a positive impact on those third-party rankings that include peer assessments and reputation.

**Strategy:** **Marketing to highlight and promote Fisk’s academic excellence**

### Action Items

- a. Revise the overall University marketing plan to highlight and promote the Fisk Brand of “Academic Excellence,” across the target markets
- b. Include student and parent testimonials on website
- c. Include faculty and staff testimonials on website
- d. Create a University-level marketing committee

**Objective 2:** Increase demand for Fisk University among faculty, staff, and students

**Rationale:** The very existence of the University depends upon the recruiting, attracting, and retention of quality students, faculty, and staff. These groups of “constituents” are the most important in terms of promoting the Fisk brand.

**Strategy:** **Attract/recruit students, faculty, and staff of excellence**

### Action Items

- a. Establish appropriate relationships with high school counselors and community colleges in target markets
- b. Encourage faculty and staff to participate in seminars and conferences across the State and Country
- c. Increase merit-based scholarships
- d. “Rebate” 2012-2013 furloughs and pay cuts
- e. “Rebate” 2013-2014 furloughs
- f. Improve faculty/staff compensation packages, including benefits

**Objective 3:** Improve quality of Academic Programs

**Rationale:** The University has created and maintained a sterling reputation for academic excellence, which, first and foremost, presupposes a cadre of quality programs. The University must assure mechanisms are in place to protect the quality of its academic programs.

**Strategy:** *Academic Affairs Division and Institutional Effectiveness and Accreditations AVP to develop and implement controls and monitor quality of programs*

Action Items

- a. Provost to lead faculty through review and revisions of academic rules and regulations, as required, based upon “best practices”
- b. Employee Engagement Committee to work with faculty to promote faculty and staff engagement in assuring academic excellence across the University (including considering academic and service “Excellence Awards”)
- c. Maintain SACSCOC, Music, and Chemistry accreditations
- d. Secure other appropriate accreditations, including Business Programs accreditation

**Objective 4:** Re-establish Fisk as “Champion” of social justice

**Rationale:** Much of Fisk University’s reputation and tradition of excellence derives from its history of, and significance in, championing the civil rights movement here in Nashville and across the south. As a component of the strategic planning process, the University’s constituents, including its students, expressed the need for Fisk to become more actively involved in a number of social-justice issues. Fisk can, once again, enhance its overall

reputation by recapturing some of its rightful place in the discussions of social-justice issues.

**Strategy:** Empower/support Sustainability Committee to re-establish Fisk as leader in social justice

Action Items

- a. SLT to consider establishing a faculty-led :”Center for Sustainability,” with a tripartite focus of economic, environmental, and social-equity sustainability, including reincarnating a contemporary version of the “Race Relations Institute”
- b. SLT to consider creating a “Fisk Polling Institute,” designed to secure, research, and publish polling information related to issues pertinent to the Nashville, Tennessee, National, and African American communities

**Objective 5: Set key academic areas of focus, including new, cutting-edge programs**

**Rationale:** In these tough economic times, Fisk University must carefully determine and protect its key academic programs, while identifying other areas of programmatic potential. Indeed, while the University has established areas of academic excellence, especially the areas of math, science, technologies, and the visual and performing arts; increasingly, business has gained in popularity over the recent past. Of course, the University must find ways to sustain and grow its currently quality, productive programs, while creating new programs best suited to preparing students for current and future professional opportunities.

**Strategy:** Academic Affairs Division to establish key continuing and new academic areas of focus

Action Items

- a. Provost to lead faculty through “brainstorming” of new academic programs, based on documented evidence of future job and graduate-training trends and “best practices”
- b. Provost to lead faculty through review, revisions, upgrades, and extensions, as required or desirable, of existing premiere programs
- c. Provost to lead faculty in considering the enhancement and extension of the University’s Business programs
- d. Provost to lead faculty in considering adding nursing and other healthcare programs, as well as other top-ten programs “of the future”

**Objective 6:** Enhance students' professionalism skills and knowledge

**Rationale:** During these times of extreme competition among students for valuable internship- and permanent-job placements, students must not only possess the knowledge bases and intellectual skills for success, they must also possess the professionalism skills necessary to navigate the current and future job markets (and graduate programs).

**Strategy:** Career Services Department to implement necessary programs and changes

Action Items

- a. Provost and Enrollment Management VP to work together with faculty, staff, and other appropriate constituents to ascertain critical skills and competencies students need for maximum proficiency and productivity in the work place and in graduate programs
- b. Provost and Enrollment Management VP to work together to consider creating a series of required professional development opportunities for all students (e.g., Toastmasters, dining etiquette, and EXCEL certification)
- c. Provost and Enrollment Management VP to renew and enhance the University's tradition of required "Convocations" for all students

## **Goal #2: Recruit, retain, graduate, and place (in employment and graduate schools) traditional and non-traditional students prepared to lead in a globalized society**

### ***Introduction***

The higher education industry is experiencing its most difficult time in its long history. Critics contend that Institutions of higher education are too expensive, too ineffective, limiting “true access” to underserved populations, and not being held sufficiently accountable by the Federal Government. In this climate of skepticism over even the value of a college education and increased competition among colleges and universities, Fisk must clearly distinguish itself as leading institution of higher education by recruiting, retaining, educating, graduating, and placing traditional and non-traditional students.

### ***Objectives, Strategies, and Action Items***

**Objective 1:** Increase numbers off freshmen and “transfer” students enrolling at the University

**Rationale:** The University must grow its student enrollments to achieve the critical mass of students necessary to sustain its academic, research, and community service programs. An impressive cadre of freshmen and transfer students is the life-blood of a university.

**Strategy:** Enrollment Management Division to develop and implement a plan to increase the size of the incoming classes of students over the next five years

#### Action Items

- a. Enrollment Management Division to develop a five-year plan for student enrollments, including “on the ground” and online students – focusing on incoming students (freshmen and transfer students)
- b. University to articulate overall marketing plan with the Enrollment Management Plan and to integrate marketing emphases on the Fisk brand of academic, scholarship, and leadership excellence
- c. Admissions Office to assure recruiting efforts dovetail with Enrollment Management Plan requirements for incoming students
- d. Admissions Office to review, revise, and create recruiting initiatives to assure continuing flow of new students sufficient to meet the Enrollment Plan goals

- e. SLT to orchestrate construction of new Living-Learning Center for students, to be completed by the 2016 Spring Semester
- f. SLT to orchestrate construction of new Student Center by 2016 Fall Semester
- g. SLT to create website Mobile App

**Objective 2:** Increase student retention (and rates)

**Rationale:** While recruiting and attracting new and transfer students is important to the University's sustainability and long-term success, retaining students through to graduation is critical: (1) society needs to have students proceed efficiently and effectively through the higher education process to, ultimately, make significant contributions to the World's communities; and (2) retaining students through to graduation is much more cost-effective for the University and, ultimately, for society.

**Strategy:** Enrollment Management Division to implement ideas and activities to increase student enrollments over the next five years

Action Items

- a. Enrollment Management Division to develop a five-year plan for student enrollments, including "on the ground" and online students – focusing on retaining and returning students
- b. Faculty and staff to complete "Client Service" training and refresher courses (goals and measures included in Performance Review Process)
- c. Faculty and staff to assure effective student support services (goals and measures included in Performance Review Process), including digital resources to facilitate teaching, learning, and living
- d. Facilities Management and custodial staffs to assure University's facilities represent the University well and provide a comfortable and aesthetically pleasing environment for teaching, learning, and living
- e. Academic Affairs and Enrollment Management Divisions to review, revise, and implement retention initiatives to assure continuing flow of returning students sufficient to meet Enrollment Plan goals
- f. University to raise six-year graduation rate to 65% by 2017-2018

**Objective 3:** Enhance/increase athletics and related programs

**Rationale:** Student activities are critical indispensable to creating a hospitable, productive living and learning environment. Moreover, athletics programs build important professional competencies and skills onto the intellectual and academic skill sets developed by students. A vibrant athletics program can add immeasurably to the University's living, teaching, and learning environment.

**Strategy:** Athletics Department to enhance/expand athletics and related programs and opportunities, within carefully articulate and monitored financial parameters

#### Action Items

- a. University Budget Committee to revise budget to reflect increased focus on athletics programs (within limits established by President), including moving "Athletics Scholarships" and "Recruitment Travel" amounts from the Enrollment Management Division to the Athletics Department
- b. University to hire full-time head coaches for the major sports, including requiring the Athletics Director and Assistant to the Athletics Director to coach a team
- c. University to add Soccer and Men's and Women's Golf Programs by the 2014 Fall Semester
- d. University to develop long-range plans to re-establish football as a major Fisk sport
- e. Athletics Department to work with Enrollment Management Division to ascertain level of student interest in Club-level baseball
- f. Athletics Department to work with Facilities Management Department Admissions Office to assure recruiting efforts dovetail with Enrollment Management Plan requirements for incoming students

**Objective 4:** Develop culture of "Client Service"

**Rationale:** Today's college students demand more and better "client service" than ever. Moreover, as colleges and universities across the Country raise their levels of attentiveness to students, Fisk University has to remain competitive. Moreover, "client service" is directly correlated with increased persistence and graduation rates. Finally, of course, everyone deserves to be treated with respect, dignity, and caring at all times.

**Strategy:** Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to develop and implement plan to establish and sustain culture of "excellence in service"

### Action Items

- a. SLT to implement “Client Service” training initiative prior to the 2015 Fall Semester
- b. The University’s Performance Review Process will be modified to include goals and metrics for client service development efforts and accomplishments
- c. The Human Resources Department will team with University’s Employee Engagement Committee will work to provide faculty and staff input to support and refine these “client services” efforts

**Objective 5:** Enhance students’ professionalism skills and knowledge

**Rationale:** Today’s employers and graduate schools demand that students graduating from undergraduate institutions join them with a good understanding of professionalism and the sets of peripheral skills necessary to navigate the professional world. Assisting students in developing professionalism skills and knowledge should significantly impact internship-, job-, and graduate-school-placements.

**Strategy:** Career Services Department to implement ideas and activities to enhance students’ professional- and business-protocol skills and knowledge

### Action Items

- a. Academic Affairs and Enrollment Management Divisions to work together with faculty, staff, and other appropriate constituents to ascertain critical skills and competencies students need for maximum proficiency and productivity in the work place and graduate programs
- b. Academic Affairs and Enrollment Management Divisions to work together to create series of required professional development opportunities for all students
- c. Academic Affairs and Enrollment Management Divisions to work together to renew and enhance the University’s tradition of required “Convocations” for all students
- d. Career Services Department to develop processes, practices, and programs to support and enhance skills developed via the professional development courses, convocations, and other curricular and co-curricular activities
- e. Career Services to facilitate students’ access to internship and “permanent” positions in the workforce
- f. Career Services to enhance its mechanisms for tracking and reporting student placements in the workforce

- g. Academic Affairs and Enrollment Management Divisions to consider establishing a “Graduate Schools Placement” function (as a component of Career Services), to facilitate students’ moving on to the best graduate programs
- h. The “Graduate Programs Placement” function (as component of Career Services) will establish and maintain processes to track and report student placements in graduate programs

## **Goal #3: Recruit, develop, and retain a diverse group of faculty and staff members, who serve well the students, the University, and the community-at-large**

### ***Introduction***

Fisk University's primary mission is to facilitate the education of students as they strive to achieve their dreams and to become viable, contributing scholars and leaders in a globalized society. The University also strives to conduct research that builds upon and expands knowledge that, ultimately, improves society, as well as to provide critical community service. It cannot achieve any of its mission-objectives without qualified faculty and staff, who are indispensable to an effective living and learning environment. Consequently, the University must recruit, develop, and retain a diverse group of faculty and staff members, who are equipped to serve well the students, the University, and the community-at-large.

### ***Objectives, Strategies, and Action Items***

**Objective 1:** Establish a culture of faculty/staff focus

**Rationale:** All successful organizations must focus on persons, products, and processes, with the most important being persons. At Fisk University, "persons" includes students, first, and, then, faculty and staff. If faculty and staff enjoy their work and are fully engaged they are much more likely to provide high quality "client service" to the students. Moreover, they are much more likely to develop and maintain a sense of loyalty to the University.

**Strategy:** Establish policies, practices, committees, and events that promote and support opportunities for faculty and staff engagement, work-life balance, and general employee welfare

#### Action Items

- a. Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to establish Employee Engagement Committee, comprised of persons from across the University's divisions
- b. Institutional Effectiveness Department to facilitate University's participation in Chronicle of Higher Education's "Great Colleges to Work For" program
- c. Engagement Committee to benchmark and report standards of work-life-balance excellence in colleges and universities
- d. Employee Engagement Committee to implement annual engagement survey

- e. SLT to establish policies, practices, and events to recognize and reward employee productivity, service, commitment, and loyalty
- f. University to establish “Employee Perks and Discounts Program” that includes discounts for goods, services, and recreation
- g. University to establish ways to recognize excellence in teaching, research, service, and other job performance in open and public ways

**Objective 2:** Operate with proper faculty-student and faculty-staff ratios

**Rationale:** To achieve maximum effectiveness, the University must match properly the numbers of faculty and staff with the numbers of students. Too few faculty or staff can damage “client service,” to the detriment of the University’s achieving its mission of teaching, research, and service. On the other hand, excess capacity of faculty or staff leads to financial inefficiencies, which can threaten the University’s long-term sustainability.

**Strategy:** Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to benchmark, develop and effect appropriate faculty-student and faculty-staff ratios

Action Items

- a. SLT to work with Institutional Effectiveness Department, Academic Affairs Division, and the Finance & Administration Division to benchmark, establish, and maintain appropriate faculty-student ratios
- b. SLT to work with Institutional Effectiveness Department, Academic Affairs Division, and Finance & Administration Division to benchmark, establish, and maintain appropriate staff-student ratios

**Objective 3:** Create appropriate and effective faculty and staff training and development programs

**Rationale:** Faculty and staff can only achieve their maximum potentials if they are engaged in ongoing continuous improvement activities, including training and development programs. These programs and overall attention to models of continuous improvement can keep faculty and staff on the cutting-edge of effective and efficient academic and administrative pedagogies and protocols.

**Strategy:** Human Resources (HR) Department to work with Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to develop and implement appropriate and effective faculty and staff training and development programs

### Action Items

- a. HR Department to review and refine recruiting approaches and activities, so as to identify the best “fits” for Fisk University
- b. HR Department to work with the Academic Affairs Division to benchmark effective development/training programs to support faculty and staff development and continuous improvement (including programs specifically designed for supervisors)
- c. SLT to adapt existing Performance Review Process to emphasize development and continuous improvement across all faculty and staff categories
- d. SLT to promote and facilitate faculty and staff community outreach and engagement

**Objective 4:** Achieve and sustain equitable compensation packages for faculty and staff

**Rationale:** To recruit, attract, and retain talented faculty and staff, the University must provide and sustain equitable compensation packages for faculty and staff, especially as it seeks to expand and improve its academic and student programs and services.

**Strategy:** Human Resources (HR) Department to work with Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to develop and implement appropriate faculty and staff compensation packages

### Action Items

- a. SLT to eliminate furloughs, beginning with 2014-2015 Academic Year
- b. SLT to establish timeline for “rebating” furloughs and pay cuts implemented during 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 Academic Years
- c. SLT to establish timeline for establishing more equitable compensation packages for faculty and staff and that are more representative of Fisk University’s re-emerging standard of excellence
- d. SLT to develop and implement monitoring process, to assure year-to-year focus on maintaining equitable faculty and staff salaries, by discipline, rank, and years of service
- e. SLT to develop and implement a process for assuring that salaries of “new hires” support the overall compensation system (avoiding “compression” of existing faculty and staff salaries)
- f. SLT to develop and implement a Performance Review Process that, ultimately, includes a merit pay system that includes a minimum “cost-of-living” component

- g. SLT to develop a grant-ward incentive program, to encourage individuals and departments to secure outside grants
- h. SLT to create Benefits Committee to advise and support SLT decision making
- i. SLT to create Retirement Plan Advisory Committee

## **Goal #4: Improve and maintain University infrastructure necessary to promote and support academic, leadership, and civic-engagement excellence**

### ***Introduction***

Fisk University is committed to providing quality academic, leadership, and civic-engagement educational opportunities for all its existing and future constituents and target-markets of students. Accordingly, the University must improve and maintain both its physical and virtual teaching and learning infrastructure.

### ***Objectives, Strategies, and Action Items***

**Objective 1:** Perform needed maintenance, renovations, and refurbishments work

**Rationale:** The University is proud of its historic infrastructure and the Nation's acknowledgement of its importance over the decades of its existence. However, aging infrastructure requires significant maintenance efforts, including occasional renovations and refurbishments. To remain competitive in recruiting and retaining the best faculty, staff, and students, the University must perform the needed maintenance, renovations, and refurbishments.

**Strategy:** Facilities & Grounds (F&G) Department to work with Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to develop and implement plan to maintain, refurbish, and renovate existing facilities, appropriately

#### Action Items

- a. F&G to work with Institutional Effectiveness Department to Conduct surveys of faculty, staff, students, alumni, and community constituents to assess current facilities and future needs
- b. SLT to hire facilities planning consultant to plan deferred maintenance, renovations, refurbishments, and new infrastructure construction
- c. SLT to work with F&G Department and other Finance & Administration (F&A) Division personnel to determine appropriate solutions for University maintenance of buildings and grounds
- d. F&G Department to update "Deferred Maintenance" assessment, for SLT prioritization
- e. SLT to work with F&A Division to identify financing to support refurbishment, renovation, and preservation of the University's existing facilities

- f. SLT to apply for Federal Government's HBCU Financing Program funds to support infrastructure maintenance and development

**Objective 2:** Construct new living-learning center for student housing

**Rationale:** To remain competitive in recruiting and retaining the best and brightest students, the University must attend to the needs of existing and future students. Research suggests that living accommodations are upper most in the minds of students when they choose a college or university.

**Strategy:** Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to develop workable plans to design, finance, and construct living-learning center by the 2016 Spring Semester

Action Items

- a. SLT to work with outside consultants and experts to determine "best practices" for constructing new living learning center to house students
- b. SLT to consider contracting with Construction Manager ("Owner's Representative"), to provide focused expertise in overseeing project for University
- c. SLT to work with Construction Manager to employ architect to support design work and the development of drawings to promote the project, from a fundraising perspective
- d. SLT to work with Construction Manager to employ contractor to construct the living-learning center

**Objective 3:** Construct new Student Center, to house dining facilities and other spaces for student co-curricular and extra-curricular activities

**Rationale:** Again, to remain competitive in recruiting and retaining the best and brightest students, the University must attend to the needs of existing and future students. Research suggests that living accommodations are upper most in the minds of students when they choose a college or university.

**Strategy:** Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to develop workable plan to design, finance, and construct new student center, to house dining facilities and other spaces for student co-curricular and extra-curricular activities

Action Items

- a. SLT to work with outside consultants and experts to determine “best practices” for constructing new student center
- b. SLT to consider contracting with Construction Manager (“Owner’s Representative”), to provide focused expertise in overseeing project for University
- c. SLT to work with Construction Manager to employ architect to support design work and the development of drawings to promote the project, from a fundraising perspective
- d. SLT to work with Construction Manager to employ contractor to construct the student center

**Objective 4:** Enhance and improve physical and virtual infrastructure to support academic excellence

**Rationale:** To remain competitive in providing cutting-edge education the University must continue to improve the physical and virtual infrastructure necessary to support academic excellence. This entails enhancing and maintaining effective teaching, learning and administrative infrastructure, as well as living-environment infrastructures that support faculty, staff, and student learning outside the classrooms and business offices.

**Strategies:** (1) *Academic Affairs (AA) Division to work with Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to benchmark, identify, and create plans to purchase/develop appropriate physical and virtual infrastructure to support academic excellence and (2) Enrollment Management (EM) Division to work with SLT to benchmark, identify, and create plans to purchase, develop and/or upgrade infrastructure to enhance student life on campus*

Action Items

- a. SLT to work with AA and EM Divisions to benchmark and ascertain “best practices” in academic and student-life infrastructure
- b. SLT to prioritize infrastructure needs over the short-term and long-term
- c. SLT to develop timeline for implementing infrastructure improvements, consistent with budget priorities and constraints
- d. SLT to assure that University maximizes the benefits of its existing academic infrastructure (e.g., Blackboard and other software packages)
- e. SLT to assure that budget is prioritized so as to assure student comfort and accommodation, with respect to necessary infrastructure purchases and improvements

**Objective 5:** Allow and facilitate long-term growth and expansion of the Campus by securing an expansion of the Fisk Master Plan Overlay

**Rationale:** Fisk University has been a mainstay in this community for more than 100 years, providing hope and a standard of excellence for the residents. As the neighborhood changes and evolves, Fisk must position itself to remain a force in this immediate community. Consequently, it must secure an expansion of its Master Plan Overlay, which will allow it to expand as opportunities present themselves.

**Strategy:** Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to work with City and North Nashville Community to secure Master Plan Overlay expansion

Action Item

SLT to work with Councilwoman Gilmore, other City officials, and the North Nashville community to secure an expansion of the Fisk University Master Plan Overlay

**Goal #5: Develop a solid, innovative, and sustainable financial base for the University**

***Introduction***

Throughout its history, Fisk University has overcome tremendous financial challenges – without sacrificing its brand of academic excellence. Unfortunately, given the particularly tough economic times and competitive environments that promise to challenge institutions of higher education into the foreseeable future, the University must establish a firm, sustainable financial base upon which to build its next 150 years.

***Objectives, Strategies, and Action Items***

**Objective 1:** Grow student enrollments to at least 1,500 by 2017-2018

**Rationale:** While the University continues to strive to identify, develop, and nurture other avenues of generating resources, its fundamental revenue sources continue to revolve around student enrollments. The University simply must grow and sustain its student enrollments to solidify its financial sustainability.

**Strategy:** Enrollment Management (EM) Division to work with Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to develop and implement strategies and tactics to grow student enrollments to at least 1,500 by 2017-2018

Action Items

- a. EM Division to develop a five-year plan for students enrollments, including “on the ground” and online students – focusing on incoming students (freshmen and transfer students)
- b. University to articulate overall marketing plan with the Enrollment Management Plan and to integrate marketing emphases on the Fisk brand of academic, scholarship, and leadership excellence
- c. Admissions Office to assure recruiting efforts dovetail with Enrollment Management Plan requirements for incoming students
- d. Admissions Office to review, revise, and create recruiting initiatives to assure continuing flow of new students sufficient to meet the Enrollment Plan goals
- e. SLT to orchestrate construction of new Living-Learning Center for students, to be completed by the 2016 Spring Semester
- f. SLT to orchestrate construction of new Student Center by 2016 Fall Semester
- g. EM Division to develop a five-year plan for students enrollments, including “on the ground” and online students – focusing on retaining and returning students
- h. Faculty and staff to complete “Client Service” training and refresher courses (goals and measure included in Performance Review Process)
- i. Faculty and staff to assure effective student support services (goals and measures included in Performance Review Process), including digital resources to facilitate teaching, learning, and living
- j. Maintenance and Custodial staffs to assure University’s facilities represent the University well and provide a comfortable and aesthetically pleasing environment for teaching, learning, and living
- k. Admissions Office to review, revise, and initiate recruiting strategies and tactics to assure continuing flow of new students sufficient to meet Enrollment Plan goals

**Objective 2:** Grow “other” revenue sources to 15% of total revenues by 2018

**Rationale:** While continuing to grow and sustain enrollments, as its fundamental sources of revenues, to sustain its growth and development, the University must also continue to seek “other” sources of revenues (beyond traditional fundraising).

**Strategy:** Finance & Administration (F&A) Division to work with Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to grow percentage of “other” sources of revenues to 15% of total revenues

Action Items

- a. F&A Division to work with the Board of Trustees Investment Committee to assure maximum returns on invested capital, both endowed and other investments of cash and cash equivalents
- b. F&A Division to work with SLT to develop ideas to convert existing resources and activities to generate additional revenues
- c. F&A Division and SLT to work with online partners to maximize potential revenues
- d. SLT to explore possibility of developing Employee/Community Childcare Center (to support employees, community, and students studying in University’s reinvigorated and expanded Teacher Education Program)
- e. SLT to consider creating “Center for Entrepreneurial Ventures,” to encourage and support faculty, staff, and students who want to pursue mutually beneficial entrepreneurial ventures

**Objective 3:** Increase total endowments to \$50 million within three years

**Rationale:** An important element of a successful institution of higher education is its endowment. Earnings from endowments can expand the University’s ability to handle operational shortfalls, in the short- term, and – more important – can provide additional scholarship dollars to support the recruitment and retention of students.

Ultimately, the University must increase its endowments to beyond \$100 million; this objective represents the initial phase of the process to achieve that level.

**Strategy:** Development (DV) Division to work with Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to develop and implement strategies and tactics to grow total endowments to \$50 million by 2018

Action Items

- a. SLT to work with DV Division and Board of Trustees to complete silent phase “Comprehensive Campaign” by July 1, 2016
- b. DV Division to develop and implement plan to encourage Fisk Alumni to give every year (rather than only during Reunion years)
- c. DV Division to implement segment of plan to target “Friends of Fisk” in Nashville

- d. DV Division to create opportunities for businesses and foundations in “target markets” across the Country to fund scholarships for local students attending Fisk
- e. DV Division to implement plan to target Fisk alums and “Friends of Fisk” to include Fisk University in their estate plans
- f. SLT and DV Division to consider continued membership in UNCF
- g. DV Division to develop a plan to target “select” foundations, organizations, businesses, and individuals for major gifts

# Measures of Success (Metrics)

## Introduction

This section provides a general approach to assessing progress in achieving the goals outlined in this Strategic Plan. It also provides some important assumptions and a listing of core metrics to gauge success.

### General Approach

These metrics have the following general, and very important qualities: (1) they are organized around the goals and their related objectives; (2) they are both qualitative and quantitative in nature; (3) they are focused primarily at the University level (although, where appropriate, unit level metrics might be appropriate); (4) they are as flexible and adaptable as possible; (5) they are often overlapping and/or reinforcing; and (6) as much as possible, they rely on existing sources of data.

### Basic Assumptions

The core listing of metrics are based on the following key assumptions: (1) metrics, appropriately used, can promote progress and continuous improvement by holding individuals, units, and/or the University accountable; (2) unfortunately, metrics can have unintended negative consequences if the focus is solely on moving the numbers, as opposed to focusing on the larger purpose of the metric; (3) no single metrics is perfect; (4) in most instances, the metrics are most meaningful when considered in combination with other metrics; (5) each of the metrics or indicators should be viewed in an overall qualitative context and judgment about its meaning; and (6) metrics should be developed and refined using input from persons most closely associated with the underlying areas being assessed.

### Core Metrics

In accordance with Basic Assumption #6, above, this set of core metrics represents a tentative listing that should be confirmed and refined as necessary. Still, they represent a starting point for assessing progress toward achieving the goals (as reflected in their related objectives). Moreover, they represent broad categories of measures that might be identified or effected through any number of methods (e.g., surveys, observations, testing, and etc.).

**Goal #1: Clarify, sustain, and enhance the Fisk Brand of academic excellence, leadership, and civic engagement**

- a. Clear, consistent marketing messages
- b. Quality faculty, staff, and students
- c. Effective Academic Programs
- d. Fisk faculty, staff, and students engaged in social-justice issues
- e. Key academic niches identified and promoted
- f. Student internship- and permanent-job-placements
- g. Fisk's third-party rankings

**Goal #2: Recruit, retain, graduate, and place (in employment and graduate schools) traditional and non-traditional students prepared to lead in a globalized society**

- a. Student enrollments
- b. Mix of students on Campus and online
- c. Increased student persistence/retention
- d. Increased graduation rates
- e. Increased student placements (internships, permanent jobs, and graduate schools)
- f. Student satisfaction
- g. Number of Athletics and related programs
- h. Quality of Athletics Programs
- i. Numbers and mix of students engaged in athletics and related programs and activities

**Goal #3: Recruit, develop, and retain a diverse group of faculty and staff members, who serve well the students, the University, and the community-at-large**

- a. Diversity of faculty and staff
- b. Fully "engaged" faculty and staff
- c. Satisfied faculty and staff
- d. Satisfied students and community constituents
- e. Well-trained and developed faculty and staff
- f. Equitable faculty and staff compensation packages
- g. Effectiveness of recruiting efforts

**Goal #4: Improve and maintain University infrastructure necessary to promote and support academic, leadership, and civic-engagement excellence**

- a. Satisfaction of users of physical facilities (faculty, staff, students, community)
- b. Renovated and improved physical structures
- c. New, state-of-the-art Living-Learning Center
- d. New, state-of-the-art Student Center
- e. Effective academic technologies and support
- f. Effective operations technologies
- g. Comprehensiveness of infrastructure
- h. Satisfaction of users of infrastructure (faculty, staff, students, community)

**Goal #5: Develop a solid, innovative, and sustainable financial base for the University**

- a. Sustainability of financial base
- b. Financial scorecard/dashboard
- c. Increased student enrollments (on campus and online)
- d. Increased percentage of "Other Revenues"
- e. Diversity of revenue sources
- f. Consistency of unrestricted gifts
- g. Creation and sufficiency of "Emergency Fund"