

# APPENDIX A: MISSION STATEMENT

## I. Summary Mission Statement

Towson University fosters intellectual inquiry and critical thinking, preparing graduates who will serve as effective leaders for the public good. Through a foundation in the liberal arts and a commitment to academic excellence, interdisciplinary study, research and public service, Towson University prepares students for careers in high demand today and in the future. TU is recognized as a leader in community engagement, including entrepreneurial efforts that provide collaborative opportunities between the campus and the larger Maryland community. Our graduates leave with the vision, creativity and adaptability to craft solutions that enrich the culture, society, economy and environment of the state, the region and beyond.

## II. Institutional Identity

Towson University, founded in 1866 as the Maryland State Normal School, offers nationally recognized undergraduate and graduate programs in the liberal arts, sciences, arts and professional fields. Our faculty produce innovative research and educate a diverse student population from the Maryland region and beyond. As a research-oriented comprehensive university, TU provides students with extraordinary opportunities to work alongside faculty in addressing significant issues while also generating new knowledge to solve real-world, societal problems.

The university's longstanding commitment to creating a multicultural campus that embraces Maryland's emphasis on access, equity and student success is advanced by policies and practices that promote the recruitment and retention of diverse students, staff and faculty. Curricular and extracurricular programming supports the university's commitment to diversity and inclusion.

Towson University prides itself on its important role in community engagement in the metropolitan Baltimore area and in the state as a whole. As a Carnegie Community Engaged Campus and anchor institution, TU is committed to working alongside community partners to offer cultural programming, entrepreneurial outreach and civic engagement opportunities that benefit the university and the community. Through the StarUP at the Armory in downtown Towson, TU is creating new opportunities to connect campus with the greater Baltimore business community to address entrepreneurship and workforce development. The StarUP serves as TU's front door for startups, small businesses and our region's largest corporations.

### Undergraduate Education

As a large and complex learning community, the university offers rigorous academic programs with extensive learning and research opportunities. The undergraduate curriculum promotes the intellectual skills essential for:

- communicating effectively;
- gathering and evaluating information;
- thinking critically and meaningfully;
- using technology effectively;

- appreciating diversity and commonalities; and
- making informed, ethical choices.

These skills are grounded in the university's long-standing commitment to a strong liberal education core that emphasizes an understanding of how the arts and sciences gather, evaluate and apply information to reach valid conclusions. The Core Curriculum, combined with focused study in a chosen discipline and a commitment to students' co-curricular experiences and success, develops intellectual and social abilities that will guide students as contributing members of the workforce and a democratic society.

### Graduate Education

Our graduate programs provide specialized education and research opportunities designed not only to further individual students' knowledge but to create new knowledge that benefits the greater community. With a broad portfolio of master's programs and a selective group of doctoral programs, graduate studies at TU build on the strengths of the university and are in areas that are fundamental to the development and vigor of the institution and the state. Through critical research that informs business, health care, STEM and educational practices, TU's graduate students and faculty advance the knowledge base that will drive the workforce, economy and health care of the future. The goal of these programs, in addition to developing sophisticated, research-minded individuals, is to prepare ethically and globally minded individuals to lead the state and country.

### Colleges

The six colleges that define the fields of study at Towson University include:

- **The College of Business & Economics**, accredited by AACSB International (The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business) in its accounting and business administration programs, offers a one-of-a-kind Business Excellence program designed to prepare students with innovative programming and teaching to achieve academic and professional success. AACSB accreditation places the college in the top 2% of business schools worldwide. Offering undergraduate and graduate programs, the college provides a comprehensive business and entrepreneurial focused education.
- **The College of Education**, recognized as Maryland's preeminent teacher education institution as well as a national model for professional preparation, has a distinguished history of preparing classroom teachers and education specialists. The College of Education offers a comprehensive slate of high-quality, performance-based professional education programs for the initial and advanced preparation of teachers and education specialists. Most graduates from the college enter schools as teachers and specialists in Maryland.
- **The College of Fine Arts & Communication** offers students the opportunity to develop their creative and analytical abilities, tailored to their aspirations, by encouraging dialogue, inspiration, passion and beauty. These attributes are fostered through a broad liberal arts education and specialized professional training. Recognized as a thriving visual arts center for Maryland, the college contributes to the cultural and economic life of Towson and the greater Baltimore region.
- **The College of Health Professions** develops outstanding analytical thinkers and future professionals at the undergraduate and graduate

levels in a wide range of health care, human service and sport-related fields that promote and enhance health, well-being and human performance in a diverse world. Students are supported in a wide array of research and hands-on experiences that complement their academic coursework, including via the Institute of Well-Being, which provides a wide range of professional and interprofessional opportunities that develop and evaluate best practices, promote professional development, facilitate research and enhance the lives of community members through outreach programs.

- The departments and programs of the **College of Liberal Arts** explore what it means to be human, how people construct identities and institutions and how individuals and groups interact over time—in communities, cultures and in nations. The college includes those disciplines customarily identified as the humanities and those generally identified as the social sciences. With critical thinking at the center of all liberal arts, the college prepares graduates for the intellectual flexibility and civic mindedness that are in demand in a rapidly changing workforce.
- **The Jess and Mildred Fisher College of Science & Mathematics (FCSM)** offers undergraduate and graduate programs in the physical, mathematical, computational and life sciences, with an emphasis on student success through improving student retention, persistence and time-to-graduation. The college is the home of numerous STEM education and outreach programs, including Towson UTeach—TU's path to becoming a high school science or mathematics teacher. FCSM faculty are highly engaged researchers whose work is supported by numerous competitive state and federal grants. Additionally, the college promotes a wide range of opportunities for research experiences for all students.

### III. Institutional Capabilities

Towson University has achieved national prominence as a premier university by offering a wide range of excellent graduate and undergraduate degree programs with an emphasis on innovation, diversity and inclusivity, student access and success, academic rigor and research opportunities. TU has increased its regional and national reputation through its focus on student learning; innovative programs and pedagogies; faculty creativity and scholarship; applied and sponsored research; community service; and outreach to business, educational, nonprofit and health care organizations.

Our intercollegiate athletics program is an integral part of building campus community and pride. Athletics also provides leadership development and other co-curricular opportunities for student-athletes and the student body as a whole. We are especially proud of our Total Tiger program, where student-athletes give back to the community with more than 10,000 hours of community service annually.

The university capitalizes on its location by providing varied and distinctive opportunities for students, staff and faculty learning, leadership development, teaching and research. It recognizes its obligation to serve at the local, regional, state and national levels through its academic programs, research and professional services. Towson University is an integral partner to the state's community college system. The university serves a robust transfer student population, focusing on program offerings, integration and success in completing their baccalaureate degree and beyond. As part of its pursuit to meet societal needs in a comprehensive manner, Towson University will maintain

a wide range of baccalaureate programs while developing graduate education and expanding its focus on research.

As TU has grown, we strive to maintain our commitment to student-centered experiences that include frequent engagement with faculty through diverse course formats and settings. This value is reflected in the master plan that calls for substantial modification to and growth of the academic precinct over the next 10 years. The plan includes new academic and academic support spaces that emphasize the values of original research, interactive learning, informal teaching and learning, communication and individual student attention.

## IV. Institutional Objectives and Outcomes

Towson University's recent strategic plan, *Leadership for the Public Good*, outlines the university's high-level goals for the next decade.

### Towson University's Core Values

- Dedication to student intellectual and personal growth
- Commitment to creating and disseminating knowledge of the highest caliber
- Passion for continuous learning
- Devotion to civic responsibility and community service
- Commitment to diversity and inclusion
- Integrity and ethical action as leaders for the public good

Towson University has built a reputation as a leader in inclusive, accessible academic excellence where students, faculty and staff thrive. Here, rigorous and relevant academic instruction is combined with a diverse and supportive community that deepens connections and builds success.

- We challenge students to be engaged participants in an inspiring educational journey preparing them for professional success and positive impact as engaged members of their community.
- We empower faculty to make significant contributions through scholarly and creative inquiry of the highest caliber.
- We encourage and promote excellence in staff, resulting in exceptional contributions and personal growth.
- We serve communities as an anchor institution, with socially minded partnerships and entrepreneurial efforts advancing the greater Baltimore region and Maryland.

### Our Goals

- **Educate** - We will achieve national recognition for our innovative, student-centered curriculum emphasizing engaged learning, in-demand academic programs and new approaches to instruction and learning in the liberal arts, business, health professions, STEM, arts and teacher preparation.
- **Innovate** - Our faculty are leaders in scholarship and creative activities and will be fully supported in their efforts to generate new knowledge and new creative works.
- **Engage** - We will serve as community leaders and partners extending the talents of our students, faculty and staff beyond our campus boundaries to create opportunities for leadership, entrepreneurship, civic engagement and experiential learning.
- **Include** - We will build an even more inclusive, equitable and collaborative community where people from all backgrounds, identities, abilities and life experiences are welcomed, valued and supported.

- **Support** - We will recruit, retain and graduate students of the highest caliber, offer outstanding student success services and provide an engaging campus experience that reflects the educational values of Towson University and produces graduates prepared for careers or advanced education.
- **Sustain** - We will act as leaders in advancing sustainability of all resources—environmental, human and financial.

## Goal One: Educate

Education is at the center of everything we do. But it's how we educate that really matters. Towson University is committed to academic excellence, providing exceptional, student-centered educational experiences. TU's distinguished faculty mentors push the possibilities of engaged learning, create in-demand academic programs and initiate cutting-edge instruction in each of our colleges and interdisciplinary programs. Our graduates will be prepared to lead their communities with integrity, civic mindedness and creativity in service of the public good.

### Educate Actions:

- Institute and fully support a comprehensive enrollment strategy that achieves the goals of the university with regard to degree programs, diversity and fiscal outcomes.
- Recruit, retain and support outstanding faculty committed to teaching excellence.
- Provide an interdisciplinary Core Curriculum grounded in the liberal arts that reflects our educational outcomes and prepares students for the contemporary workforce and global society.
- Increase high-impact teaching and learning opportunities to ensure every TU student engages in multiple experiences during their academic career.
- Capitalize on new facilities in STEM and health professions to develop new, high-demand academic programs that support state and national workforce needs.
- Develop selective new master's and doctoral programs in accordance with regional demand and institutional mission.
- Offer an array of professional certificate programs and credentialing alternatives to position our graduates competitively in the workforce.
- Build world-class faculty development capacity and capabilities through the Faculty Academic Center of Excellence at Towson University (FACET).

## Goal Two: Innovate

As higher education leaders, the world looks to us for innovation. TU supports and promotes an active scholarly and creative activity agenda for faculty, staff and students. This includes providing appropriate resources, suitable facilities and work schedules to facilitate these critical and worthwhile efforts.

### Innovate Actions:

- Faculty will continue to serve as leaders demonstrating the highest standards of a scholar/teacher model that balances teaching, research and service.
- Utilize emerging and innovative technology to enhance teaching and learning.
- Substantially increase grant activities and scholarly output, utilizing the full spectrum of student, staff and faculty expertise.

- Build requisite facilities and resources, including those of Cook Library, to support and increase faculty scholarly and creative activity.
- Increase our commitment to undergraduate and graduate student research, including a vibrant summer research program with faculty mentors.
- Reward and recognize faculty leaders in scholarship, creative activity and teaching.

## Goal Three: Engage

Our impact goes beyond the boundaries of our campus. As a Carnegie Foundation Community Engaged University, TU students, faculty and staff serve as community leaders and partners extending their talents beyond our campus boundaries to create opportunities for leadership, entrepreneurship, civic engagement and experiential learning.

### Engage Actions:

- Build on the existing success of the BTU (Baltimore-Towson University)-Partnerships for Greater Baltimore initiative to further TU's leadership as an anchor institution for the greater Baltimore region.
- Develop and sustain a successful StarTUP business engagement center.
- Develop and sustain innovative entrepreneurship programs for internal and external parties that increase student participation from all colleges.
- Build a successful venture creation program that engages students, faculty, staff and external participants.
- Develop nationally recognized leadership programs for internal and external markets that create and reflect cutting-edge research.
- Ensure all TU students have the opportunity to participate in experiential learning during their academic careers.
- Promote civic responsibility and engagement as a learning outcome for all students.
- Fully develop a world-class Career Center supporting students and alumni.

## Goal Four: Include

TU actively works to build an inclusive, collaborative and equitable community where people from all backgrounds, identities, abilities and life experiences are welcomed, valued and supported to achieve their fullest potential. This commitment is reflected in our hiring practices, decision-making, academic and co-curricular programming, support services and resources. We will achieve the goals of the university's Diversity Strategic Plan and will be leaders in equity and inclusion.

### Include Actions:

- Provide ongoing teaching, learning, research and service opportunities to prepare students, faculty and staff to address diversity, inclusion and equity issues in disciplinary and interdisciplinary fields.
- Continue our commitment to recruiting and retaining faculty from underrepresented groups.
- Continue to build trust and confidence through strong collaborative and value-added relationships with all shared governance bodies.
- Increase diversity-rich learning experiences that raise all students' self-awareness and ethical and cultural intelligences while advancing their understanding and commitment to TU's values of inclusion, diversity and equity.

- Provide resources for faculty to learn, use and evaluate inclusive teaching and learning practices, scholarly research and creative activities.
- Build upon existing mentorship programs for undergraduate and graduate students, faculty and staff.
- Strengthen alumni engagement and giving in support of the university community and its strategic goals.

## Goal Five: Support

Student success starts with a student-centered culture. TU is committed to recruiting, retaining and graduating students of the highest caliber, offering effective support services and an engaging campus experience that reflects the values of Towson University.

### Support Actions:

- Implement a comprehensive student retention plan from prospect status through graduation and into the post-graduate years.
- Increase the four-year graduation rate through a systemic approach.
- Capitalize on the new University Union to deliver rich co-curricular programming for students.
- Establish a one-stop Academic Support Center.
- Support an exceptional athletics program that emphasizes success in the classroom, the community and athletic competition.
- Establish a world-class holistic practice of student well-being that addresses physical, mental and emotional dimensions of individuals.
- Serve as a cultural center for the TU and greater Baltimore communities, offering outstanding arts and culture programming for the region.
- Increase affordability of study abroad and other experiential learning opportunities and raise the number and diversity of student participants.
- Identify opportunities to reduce costs to students while maintaining high academic and co-curricular standards.

## Goal Six: Sustain

TU is committed to sustainable practices, responsible management and efficient use of all resources. Whether it's environmental, financial or human – we act as conscientious stewards of all resources.

### Sustain Actions:

- Promote transparent capital and operating budget processes that engage shared governance to invest financial resources to support the university's strategic goals.
- Promote and implement effective internal controls and enterprise risk management practices to provide reasonable assurance for the safeguarding of assets, the reliability of financial information and compliance with laws and regulations.
- Implement a holistic Campus Sustainability Plan inclusive of environmental, health and academic activities.
- Recruit, reward and retain outstanding faculty and staff through the implementation of a total rewards program.
- Offer engaging professional development opportunities, including mentoring and coaching programs that span career trajectories.
- Build and maintain a sustainable campus through economically viable initiatives that are environmentally and socially responsible.
- Increase philanthropic giving from all constituent groups—alumni, friends, parents, faculty, staff and students—to support ongoing and emerging needs and opportunities at TU.