Better Together: 2030

Better Together: 2030 focuses on the things that matter most for Columbus State University's future. This plan will propel us forward through hard work and intentional service to our students, to each other and to the community we serve.

Our five-year strategic plan centers around four major areas: student success, responsible stewardship, community impact and economic competitiveness. By achieving positive and measurable outcomes in these areas, we will realize our mission and bring our vision to life.

Download Better Together: 2030

We value people. We dream big. We believe that we can accomplish anything we set our minds to. We work hard. We speak truthfully. We act with compassion. We text-lg with a servant's heart.

President RayfieldColumbus State University President

Student Success

To prepare students as they advance toward graduation, careers and meaningful lives, we will:

- Intentionally engage in initiatives that focus on the growth and academic success of students.
- Prioritize student well-being, belongingness and safety.
- Ensure student career-readiness and employability.
- Create meaningful opportunities for students to be engaged on campus.

Goals include:

1. Increase student retention rates to 85% from fall to fall.
2. Increase undergraduate graduation rates to 60% by 2030.

Activities that support this priority
- Implement first-year, sophomore-year, junior-year and senior-year experiences.
- Redesign the academic advising standard of care for students.
- Design and implement a comprehensive career development center.
- Redesign the General Education/Core Curriculum.
- Track graduate employment and graduate school admission outcomes.
- Implement a campus traditions initiative.
- Develop an alumni mentoring and networking program to support student and career success.
- Invest in faculty and staff training based on the National Institute for Student Success results and the General Education/Core Curriculum redesign.
- Develop and deploy stackable credentials in appropriate degree programs.

Responsible Stewardship

To promote the ethical and transparent management of resources for the individual student and for the university, we will:

- Manage resources responsibly and control costs whenever possible.
- Invest in people, programs and initiatives that support the strategic plan and text-lg to institutional sustainability.
- Prioritize and promote philanthropy and community giving.
- Engage and advise students in financial wellness activities.

Goals include:

1. Increase the amount of scholarship dollars donated and the number of scholarships awarded annually by 10%.
2. Decrease students' time-to-completion rates to below the 2024 state universities' average of 5.1 years.

Activities that support this priority
- Align institutional budget and priorities.
- Conduct an environmental and sustainability audit.
- Implement Target X/TouchNet financial wellness modeling.
- Focus on donor retention and annual giving campaigns.
- Engage new donors.
- Maximize the use of existing technologies and implement innovative technologies as appropriate to improve outcomes and efficiencies.
- Pursue grant funding in support of environmental best practices for college campuses.

Community Impact

To drive innovation and create opportunities for continued economic development and improved quality of life in our region, we will:

- Align degree programs to workforce needs in our region and the state of Georgia.
- Drive economic advancement for all in our community.
- Prioritize partnerships in the community—with an emphasis on the Chattahoochee Valley and U.S. Army Fort Benning and The Maneuver Center of Excellence.
- Deliver opportunities for the community to engage in and benefit from activities hosted and/or sponsored by the university.

Goals include:

1. Increase the number of students who participate in experiential learning opportunities with industry partners to 100% by 2030.
2. Implement a strategic enrollment management plan that leads to increased traditional and non- traditional new student enrollment annually.

Activities that support this priority
- Redesign the General Education/Core Curriculum.
- Develop and implement a comprehensive strategic enrollment management plan.
- Support the community-university Better Together partnership initiative.
- Conduct a campus culture analysis to improve employee retention, well-being and morale.
- Partner with regional school districts to enhance innovations in teaching and learning for P-12.
- Expand the number of student courses with an experiential learning component and track students' participation.
- Deploy a robust professional education model tied to specific workforce needs in the Chattahoochee Valley.

Economic Competitiveness

To elevate the university to be a destination for higher education and to contribute to the vitality of the Chattahoochee Valley, we will:

- Fuel innovation through advances in research, technology, creative endeavors and problem-solving.
- Develop and maintain unique community and industry partnerships.
- Align degree programs to workforce needs in the Chattahoochee Valley and throughout Georgia.
- Advance Columbus State's visibility and brand awareness throughout the state.

Goals include:

1. Increase the number of degree and certificate awards in high-demand knowledge, skills and abilities.

2. Increase the number of corporate sponsorships and academic partnerships.

Activities that support this priority
- Develop and implement a comprehensive strategic enrollment management plan.
- Invest in research, scholarship and creative endeavors that advance the university's and region's economic impact.
- Expand professional education offerings driven by industry needs.
- Engage in an institutional image and perception study.
- Implement degree programs that align with emerging markets, technologies, modality demands and areas of study.
- Increase partnerships with peer University System of Georgia institutions to offer innovative career-focused programs in high-demand areas.
- Expand collaborative programs and courses such as eMajor, the Georgia Fintech Academy, and the Georgia Film Academy.
- Align and implement unique online programs in response to industry needs and strategic enrollment goals.

Support Better Together: 2030

Established in conjunction with President Rayfield's October 2023 investiture, the President's Innovation Fund equips Columbus State University leaders to implement these strategic priorities.

Give to the President's Innovation Fund

"Now more than ever, students and their future employers require universities like ours to be on the leading edge of knowledge and experience —no matter the discipline. To me, that means being nimble, and by supporting this President's Innovation Fund, our alumni, friends and partners can invest in making Columbus State more responsive and adaptive to the needs of our students, faculty, staff and community."

-President Rayfield