The history of Langston University provides the context for understanding the university’s mission and goals for the future.

Founded through the Morrill Act of 1890 as a land grant college, Langston University (LU) was initially established as the Colored Agricultural and Normal University on March 12, 1897, by the Oklahoma Legislature. LU opened its doors in September 1898 with an enrollment of 41 students who were served by four faculty members. In 1941 as the purpose of the university continued to expand, the name was officially changed to Langston University. As the only Historically Black College/University (HBCU) in the state of Oklahoma, the University has a rich history of growth and development that emphasizes the perseverance and dedication of its administration, faculty, and students.

Building on its history as an HBCU, LU continues to educate African-Americans while extending its purpose and mission to include a more diverse student body. Today the university offers 38 degree programs that are housed in six schools and serve over 2500 students annually. The University operates under the guidance of the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical Colleges Board of Regents. Urban campuses in Tulsa and Oklahoma City also are directed by a Board of Trustees.

Since 1948, the University has been accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. Individual programs are accredited by the: Oklahoma Board of Nursing, National League for Nursing, Oklahoma Office of Educational Quality and Accountability, National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education, Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs, Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education, American Physical Therapy Association, and the Council on Rehabilitation Education.

Although LU is classified as a teaching institution with a limited research function, the university has successfully secured external funding for its research in agriculture, particularly emphasizing goat research and research on caged fish and small farm projects. In 2015 research dollars totaled over $9,000,000, the third largest dollar amount at all Oklahoma institutions. The E. (Kika) de la Garza Institute for Goat Research was founded in 1984 and attracts scientists and agricultural specialists from around the world. The institute’s research emphasizes meat, dairy, and fiber-producing goats. LU has established partnerships with countries such as Ethiopia, Zambia, and China related to its goat research. Additionally, LU operates a cooperative extension grant that serves the communities of Oklahoma.

Grants in biology and chemistry, as well as a NASA Space Grant and a large grant in rehabilitation counseling all are ongoing projects of the university. In partnership with the Johnson Space Center, the Department of Biology is investigating the dysregulation of the immune system in reduced gravity. The Chemistry Department is working to prepare high school teachers in the STEM areas. Rehabilitation Counseling is examining strategies for working with minorities in a variety of rehabilitation related areas. In 2016, the University expanded its research capacity by dedicating a facility on campus exclusively for research projects in the physical sciences.
In keeping with the traditions and missions of an HBCU, Langston University offers a variety of social and cultural opportunities for its students. Greek life is present on campus and students frequently participate in social and athletic events. Student organizations engage in community projects. Supplemental academic support is available to students through writing and mathematics labs and in course offerings that underscore the needs of underserved student groups.

Additionally, the university offers exposure to cultural events and experiences. LU houses the Melvin B. Tolson Black Heritage Center with over 7,000 volumes of books, newspapers, and periodicals, as well as a variety of African artifacts. It also is the repository for the National Association for the Study and Performance of African American Music. The Ira B. Hall Lecture Series provides students with the opportunity to meet and hear successful Black professionals; research day is facilitated for undergraduates through the School of Arts and Sciences; and, International Day is held on campus to increase cultural awareness among students. These types of activities are aimed at providing a well-rounded college experience for Langston students.

In 2012, Dr. Kent Smith, Jr. became the 16th president of Langston University. President Smith provided his plan for the university through a visual representation that includes a foundation of academic excellence and six pillars for university growth. The goals of the strategic plan are embedded in President Smith’s vision of academic excellence. The Plan uses the six pillars of the President’s vision as resources to achieve the goals of the plan, thereby connecting the mission of Langston University with the daily tasks that will lead to the accomplishment of its strategic goals.
While the university offers diverse academic programs and co-curricular events, the administration recognizes that there are many opportunities for growth at Langston University. The strategic plan is a roadmap for the future that emphasizes the following:

- Expanded opportunities to provide support for underserved students to better fulfill the university’s mission;
- Opportunities for faculty growth that strengthen the academic base of LU;
- Improved communication as a tool for the growth of the university;
- The development of new programs based on student and marketplace needs; and,
- Opportunities to strengthen the university’s financial position to enhance the university’s role as a competitive institution of higher education.

Strategic Plan 2017-2022/27 is guided by the current mission and vision of Langston University. New mission and vision statements were created as a prelude to the new strategic plan. The mission and vision emphasize a student-centered view of the higher education experience while keeping with the traditions of Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

The strategic plan was created through the input of faculty, staff, students, alumni, and patrons (see Appendix A). The plan reflects five goals with supporting initiatives that promote the existing strengths of the university while simultaneously offering opportunities for growth and expansion. The five goals emerged from brainstorming sessions across campus and were vetted through SWOT analysis (see Appendix B & C).
Langston University has a solid history of providing access and opportunity. Building on that legacy, our goal is to recruit, retain, and graduate a larger, more diverse student body. We are committed to promoting excellence by fostering academic support and practical instruction.

**Initiative 1: Expand student enrollment to 2500 students on the Langston campus and 600 students on each of the urban campuses, Oklahoma City and Tulsa.**

Student enrollment promotes program quality as a critical mass of students supports a thriving academic environment. To achieve the goal of increased enrollment, focused recruitment and retention efforts will be implemented. The targeted recruitment of first-time freshmen from Oklahoma and neighboring states will continue. Strengthened partnerships with PK-12 schools and community colleges will build a stronger local student base. Additionally, an international student recruitment plan will be developed.

The University will continuously review the viability of program offerings at the urban campuses and explore opportunities to modify graduate programs to better meet the needs of the Oklahoma City and Tulsa communities. Online and hybrid course and program offerings will expand for both undergraduate and graduate students.

A culture that supports the notion that recruitment and retention are everyone’s business will be established by revealing the benefits of student persistence and the repercussions of low retention. An investment in faculty and staff will be made to increase persistence. The number of general education faculty will increase, quality training for online instruction will be provided, and knowledge of best practices related to recruitment and retention will continue to be emphasized.
Initiative 2: Implement a communication plan for freshman that provides them with assistance through the initial phases of the college experience.

Clear and efficient communication is necessary for academic success. This type of communication applies in particular when communicating with entering students, many of whom are the first in their families to attend college. Creating and utilizing a system of regular communication with students before the beginning of and throughout their matriculation at Langston University will set the stage for open communication throughout a student’s time at the university. To identify the type of communication needed, student focus groups will be held at the end of the freshman and sophomore years. The groups will gauge what students wish they had known as they began their college experience. Informational material (both printed and electronic) will be created that focuses on the day in the life of a student; materials will help students understand academic expectations and co-curricular opportunities for the Langston University students. Formal freshman class meetings, organized Living Learning Community meetings, as well as Personal and Social Development, the required course for all first-year students, also will be outlets for disseminating information.

Initiative 3: Implement the University Persistence and Completion Plan.

The existing persistence and retention plan will serve as the base for continued retention efforts. The plan will be executed, monitored, and assessed annually to operate as a directional tool for persistence and program completion efforts. Faculty and staff will continue to receive professional development focused on using data for continuous improvement.

Initiative 4: Expand the academic culture on campus to emphasize academic excellence for all students.

The Langston University administration is committed to creating an academic culture by acknowledging success and applauding excellence. At Langston University, a significant milestone for students is the completion of the first 45-60 hours of coursework. At this point, most students have completed the general education requirements and others have met the requirements for the associate degree. Students, then, declare their majors and move from University College to their respective departments. To recognize these achievements, a celebration will be held which acknowledges this first rite of passage. Other celebrations that recognize student progress toward the baccalaureate degree will occur within in the various departments and schools.

Another culture building strategy is to increase student involvement in scholarly activities, both inside and outside the classroom. Students will be exposed to research opportunities and encouraged to participate in undergraduate research experiences and summer internship programs that emphasize academics. The creation of a stronger academic culture also will be advanced through the expansion of honor organizations and societies. Individual departments will be encouraged to build membership in learned societies and academic clubs.
Initiative 5: Create and implement a second-year experience that increases student retention.

Building on the foundation of our freshman-focused programs, “touch points” will be identified for connecting with students throughout the second year of their matriculation. This process includes enhancing communication with second-semester first-year students and sophomores. Student focus groups will be held at the end of sophomore year to gauge the student perspective on what they wish would have known during their second year. Student focus groups also will offer student input to general education faculty which pinpoints student perceptions of academic support and need. Based on the focus groups, additional activities will be planned for second-year students to serve as touch points throughout the year. Current programming and events such as the academic majors fair will be considered as targeted activities for these students.

Initiative 6: Increase graduation rates through expanded academic support, advising, internships, and community engagement.

Remaining focused on initiatives designed to increase retention, persistence, and graduation rates, Langston University will enhance academic support services, particularly for underprepared students. These efforts will include advisor training for faculty and staff as well as the expansion of departmental tutoring. It also is planned to expand internship opportunities by leveraging the various professional networks of faculty, staff, alumni, and patrons. Further, the responsibility of marketing our students will move beyond the Office of Career Services to include academic departments. Departments will be involved in creating partnerships with businesses and agencies to expand internship and placement opportunities.
Initiative 7: Integrate academic and co-curricular experiences.

Langston University faculty, staff, and administrators are committed to offering an integrated curriculum and co-curriculum to develop the academic, social, and leadership abilities of Langston University students. Expanded service learning provides opportunities for more meaningful learning while connecting with others in the campus community and beyond. Faculty and staff will collaborate with students and various stakeholders to identify unique and diverse experiences beyond the campus and encourage student participation in such activities and excursions. The university will invest in dynamic, relevant speakers for student forums and encourage students to remain aware of and involved in issues going on in the community, across the nation, and throughout the world.

Initiative 8: Revise a student wellness protocol.

Langston University supports holistic student wellness efforts. We recognize the connections between a healthy body and mind and academic success. A timeline will be developed that provides a long-range plan for expanding the wellness protocol in order to benefit all Langston University students.

Intimately tied to Goal One are the Learning Outcomes of the University. The outcomes reflect the expectations of faculty and staff for the students of LU.

Graduates of Langston University will be able to demonstrate:

- Critical thinking skills through academic problem-solving
- Effective communication skills
- Knowledge of challenges faced by rural and urban communities, both global and domestic
- Knowledge of current technology
- Positive leadership skills
- Use of quality methods for conducting research or inquiry
- Respect for diversity in its many forms
- Commitment to responsible citizenship
- Competence in their chosen field of study
GOAL TWO: Provide support to faculty members that allows for professional growth and development in the areas of teaching, research, service, and community engagement.

Much like the engine in a vehicle, the faculty members provide the force needed to drive a university forward. Quality teaching, research, service, and community engagement can only be achieved through a better prepared, engaged, and motivated faculty. Langston University cultivates critical thinking skills in its students and produces graduates who are competent in their chosen field of study. The members of the faculty must be allowed and encouraged to stretch, grow, and develop in the areas of pedagogy, scientific inquiry, service, and community engagement to continue to generate successful graduates.

Initiative 1: Offer faculty and staff development opportunities focused on instructional strategies and methods for working with diverse students.

Action steps to achieve this initiative include offering faculty development sessions during Faculty Institutes at the beginning of each semester, as well as providing online faculty development opportunities throughout each academic year. Free or inexpensive webinars, seminars, workshops, conferences and speakers that focus on effective instructional strategies and methods for working with diverse student populations (high-risk students) will be included in the faculty development plan of the University. Assessment of faculty engagement in faculty and staff development opportunities will be conducted annually, and modifications to professional development opportunities will be made based on faculty feedback.

Initiative 2: Provide financial support for research projects and presentations at national events.

Three specific actions will be used to achieve this initiative. First, grant proposal writers will include travel expenses to grant-related events in their proposed budgets. Second, each fiscal year, funds will be allocated to the University for faculty to participate in national events. A minimum of 33% of faculty in each department will be eligible to participate on an annual basis. Finally, a dedicated portion of the funds raised at the President’s Annual Scholarship Gala’s will be set aside to support scholarly student participation in academic, research, community engagement, extension, and co-curricular events.

Initiative 3: Revise the training program for grant proposal writing.

Faculty experts in grant writing will be asked to voluntarily mentor a small group of faculty through a grant proposal writing process. New faculty (and other faculty as needed) will be introduced to instructions and presentations on grant proposal writing. Staff development on grant writing will be offered as part of ongoing staff development. University protocols will be modified to ensure a shorter turnaround time for the proposal routing process.

Initiative 4: Expand support for sabbaticals and/or release time for research.

Langston University currently has a policy on leave and faculty release time. The procedures will be reviewed to determine current viability. Additionally, when updated procedures are in place for sabbaticals and release time, funding sources will be sought to move the sabbatical process forward. A University committee will draft a policy statement in support of sabbaticals and, or, release time for research.
Initiative 5: Offer training to faculty on the building of community relationships and service learning opportunities.

Action steps to achieve this initiative will include providing operational definitions for the terms community relationships and service learning opportunities so their meanings will be consistent across all three Langston University campuses. There will be an assessment of current policies, procedures, and practices associated with community relationships and service learning. Face-to-face training in these areas will be provided during annual fall, and spring Faculty Institutes and recorded faculty training sessions will be archived in the course management system and accessed by faculty. There will be identification and promotion of free or inexpensive webinars, seminars, workshops, conferences and individual speakers who focus on building community relationships and service learning. Assessment of faculty engagement in community relationships and service learning opportunities will be done annually via the approved faculty evaluation instruments.

Initiative 6: Create a faculty mentoring program for new faculty members, including adjuncts.

This initiative includes assigning each new faculty member (adjuncts as appropriate) a mentor within their School on the first day of employment. There will be a review and update of the current Faculty Handbook and a copy provided to each new faculty on the first day of work. Timelines, expectations, and goals will be created to help ensure that faculty mentoring practices are consistent across all three Langston University Campuses. Each instructor’s service will be identified and documented as service to the department/school on the appropriate evaluation instrument.

Initiative 7: Provide regular training for research protocols.

Existing research protocols in all research areas (e.g., general, human subjects, animal health, exemptions, etc.) will be clearly outlined. Training will be provided during faculty meetings at the department and, or school levels to ensure that protocols unique to individual disciplines are followed. Assessment of faculty engagement in proper research protocol will occur annually.
Systematized and efficient communication is essential for upholding Langston University’s mission. This goal aims to support the mission and elevate the University’s public image by enhancing internal and external communications. An extensive plan to update existing communication channels and create new modes for disseminating information will be established. Langston University will work to increase exposure of its achievements and convey to the public that Langston University is a capable, reputable institution.

**Initiative 1: Create necessary communication protocols across the university.**

In recognition of the critical role communication plays in daily operations, Langston University will establish standard communication protocols for conducting university business. The protocols will heighten the sense of community among students and employees; a modern digital style approach for campus communication will be used for communication purposes. A communication Council comprised of faculty, staff, and students from the main and urban campuses will be assembled and have the responsibility of creating a communication plan that ensures internal constituents will be aware of university policies, procedures, events, and announcements. Also, policies and procedures for using institutional emails and updating directories will be created.

**Initiative 2: Institute a program for ongoing updates to the university website.**

Electronic communication is a primary form of communication in today’s society. Potential students often form their perceptions of a university based on their impression of its website. Langston University will develop an ample and more user-friendly website that is routinely updated for the purpose of improving communication with internal and external groups. The University will present content on the site in ways that are inviting to visitors. The University believes the quality of information published on the institutional website reflects upon all members of Langston University and plays an essential role in the University maintaining a positive image.

**Initiative 3: Implement a monthly online newsletter.**

A monthly online newsletter will be created as an avenue to communicate stories about the university, administrators, faculty, staff, students, and alumni to both internal and external audiences. This digital publication will highlight university activity within the community, employee and student awards and recognitions, and outstanding employee and student profiles. Procedures and deadlines for submitting information for publication will be created. The newsletter will be published on Langston University’s website and written by a team of students, faculty, and staff.

**Initiative 4: Establish a campaign to enhance the University’s public image.**

Langston University is distinguished from other institutions of higher education through its rich history, the success of its graduates, the scholarly expertise of its faculty, and the distinction of its academic programs.
The University’s accomplishments and contributions are often untold and unnoticed. Langston University has a vast responsibility to share information, including its achievements and contributions, with the communities that influence its image and reputation. Every member of Langston University can affect the University’s reputation and share responsibility for enhancing the public image. Langston University will highlight employee and student involvement in academic activities, athletic events, and university celebrations as a means to accentuate school spirit and pride. Faculty and students will be encouraged to embrace the concept of Education for Service and contribute to enriching the university’s reputation through excellent community service and involvement.

The communication tools of social media can be of great assistance in augmenting the university’s reputation and public image. Social media will be utilized to foster greater public recognition and communicate Langston University’s position as a historically black college and university (HBCU) that offers quality education to diverse populations. A variety of mediums will be used to accentuate the scholarly activities and academic work of faculty, staff, and students. Capitalizing on strengths and sharing success stories is an important way to demonstrate the active work of the University. Stories that are not told represent a missed opportunity to highlight the University and its contributions to teaching, research, and service. Relevant university stories can be articulated through current emerging social platforms to heighten interest and expand our presence nationally and internationally.

Initiative 5: Implement a technology plan that addresses the needs of the University.

Langston University must provide adequate technologies and infrastructure to meet the demands of modern education. Technologies and infrastructure that contribute to the advancement of the university are a high priority. A robust infrastructure is critical in advancing communication; improving access to various learning experiences; and, promoting innovation in research and teaching inside and outside the classroom. During a time of steady reduction in state revenues, informational technologies and infrastructure must be assessed and updated in a fiscally responsible manner. Langston University will implement a rigorous assessment of its digital infrastructure with the intent of determining where to invest to meet the present and future needs of the university. After an analysis of the evaluation results, the University will construct and implement a tactically focused plan for upgrading of the technologies, support systems, and infrastructure.

Initiative 6: Develop and implement a plan for effective customer service.

Langston University has an abiding commitment to provide students with quality academic experiences. The University will execute a comprehensive plan that will provide customer service training to faculty and staff in a variety of venues. Explicit methods for collecting data regarding the impact and quality of customer service will be utilized. The purpose of the customer service training is to strengthen the University’s culture in a way that promotes excellent student service and satisfaction.
GOAL FOUR: Develop and expand academic programs to strengthen the university’s offerings for students that will enhance their marketability and career readiness.

The Global, social, cultural, and economic progress occurring in the world today dictates the need for a well-educated citizenry in every area of society. Langston University is involved in cutting edge research and produces talented and motivated individuals with the knowledge and skills necessary to pursue and fulfill crucial professional and service oriented roles throughout the world. This goal can be accomplished when the University provides high-quality undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs that meet the requirements of the current and future workforce.

Initiative 1 – Expand online course offerings and programs.

The growth of online programs will involve a systematic process for evaluating what courses/programs should be offered and how programs will be implemented. Beginning with a review of general education courses an evaluation will be conducted to determine which courses best fit the requirements for an online format. Curriculum review will occur to ensure that online and face-to-face courses are equivalent. Training for every instructor and professor who teaches online courses will be conducted, and syllabi will be modified to meet Quality Management criteria for offering a class in an online format.

Initiative 2 – Review and update the policies for course offerings, instructor training, and course components (i.e., Quality Matters).

Protocols for online courses will be reviewed and revised as necessary to facilitate a more extensive online program. Procedures will include faculty teaching requirements and processes for evaluating the effectiveness of online courses.

Initiative 3 – Refine the review process to assess the quality of instruction and course materials to ensure consistency across all delivery methods (i.e., face-to-face, hybrid, and online courses).

At the departmental level, programs that are offered in multiple formats will be evaluated to ensure that course content is consistent regardless of delivery mode. On an annual basis, a course comparison will be conducted, and modifications to instruction and content will be made based on evaluation results.

Initiative 4 – Add new course offerings to produce competitive graduates.

Langston University’s faculty and administrators will seek opportunities to ensure that the university is cognizant of cutting edge programs offered at comparable universities and HBCUs throughout the country. Other institutions that offer high-quality programs will be used as benchmarks for state-of-the-art programs that will be created at Langston University. Additionally, national trends related to professional marketability and economic growth trends will be utilized as a measure when considering new course offerings. The research outcomes of professional associations also will serve as a guide for determining programs needed to produce competent graduates to meet current and future workforce needs.
Initiative 5 – Complete an annual needs assessment of knowledge and skills required in today’s workplace.

Deans of each school will implement and execute an annual program and curriculum evaluation system to ensure the on-going quality and viability of program offerings. Utilizing surveys or feedback questionnaires, corporate and business partners, and community stakeholders will be queried annually to assess student performance in internships. The collected feedback will determine changes and enhancements needed for current programs and will be used to recommend new programs required to meet workforce changes.

Initiative 6 – Globalize course offerings.

Following a comprehensive needs assessment, the University will obtain authorization from the Higher Learning Commission, the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, and the A & M Board of Regents to offer additional online undergraduate and graduate degrees. This initiative will be the initial step for creating an online college.

Initiative 7 – Strengthen programs to assist with graduate school readiness.

Langston University will ensure that freshman and sophomore students receive excellent opportunities for success in their general education course requirements to lay the foundation needed for future academic pursuits. Specifically, highly-skilled instructors and professors will teach 1000 and 2000 level courses in science, math, English, and history; written and oral communication requirements will be expanded throughout the current curriculum to develop stronger communication skills among the students.

Initiative 8 - Projects established for upperclassmen will prepare them for graduate level course work.

Arrange for professional education consulting firms to conduct GRE, LSAT, MCAT, etc., and preparatory workshops for juniors and seniors, committed to attending graduate school.
In a day and age where higher education is highly competitive and is always vying for limited resources, it is imperative that university revenue is managed wisely and in such a way that leverages resources for maximum benefit. It is equally important to seek outside support to provide valuable resources to the University community. This goal emphasizes the need to enhance both external and internal resources to the University’s advantage.

**Initiative One: Manage and increase internal resources to maximize growth and sustainability.**

The internal resources of Langston University include state appropriations and funding, as well as student-generated revenue. Efforts to continually lobby for the needs of the institution with the state legislature and ongoing efforts to increase the student-generated revenue stream are essential for growth and sustainability. Additionally, responsible fiscal management and budgeting based on needs assessment and the University’s growth will occur through the implementation of budgeting processes implemented by the Budget Planning Council.

**Initiative Two: Manage and increase external resources to maximize growth and sustainability.**

Efforts to expand alumni financial support of the university is an essential part of this initiative. Additionally, the strengthening of existing corporate and foundation partnerships and the building of new ones is vital to the growth of external resources. Opportunities for new grant opportunities must be pursued with increased grant writing support provided to the faculty.

Avenues for external student scholarships will continue to provide students with a greater base for seeking financial assistance. As scholarship opportunities are identified, a database will be created that provides students with easy access to scholarship information and applications.

**Initiative Three: Fortify student investment in their university community.**

Students will be provided with learning experiences that enhance financial literacy and increase their awareness of student fiscal responsibility. As part of their education, students will be taught the value of philanthropy and giving back to the university.
The goals and initiatives of the Strategic Plan will be used as a foundation for action. Each initiative will be broken down into measurable objectives with timelines for completion, the identification of responsible parties/departments, the cost of implementation, and deadlines for completion (see Appendix C). On an annual basis, the strategic planning committee will review progress toward the completion of the measurable objectives. Because the plan is designed to be a living document, modifications to the original plan may occur at the time of the review.

As part of the annual review, a report on the plan will be provided to the President and Vice Presidents by the Office of Institutional Research and Planning. Recommendations concerning modifications of the plan will be submitted as part of the annual report on the plan. The report will be due to the President April 1st of each year.

Appendices
A: Developing the Strategic Plan
B. SWOT Analysis
C. Action Plan
D. OKC Strategic Plan
E. Tulsa Strategic Plan
COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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Dr. Carol Cawyer, Director of Institutional Research and Planning

Ad hoc Members
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Ms. Theresa Graves, Chief of Staff

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Dr. Charles Spurlock, School of Arts and Sciences
Ms. Karlese Williams, Office of Financial Aid

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