

Transition Forward

STRATEGIC PLAN

DISCOVER WHAT'S NEXT.

Friends and colleagues,



WELCOME to the inaugural strategic plan for Georgia Regents University, *Transition Forward*.

While I could define strategy, tactics, and other elements of the plan, perhaps including a Sun Tzu quote on the topic, I prefer to focus on what this plan really represents.

Inside these pages is a vision of our future and a glimpse of what we will become. In this plan, we have aligned ourselves with the three strategic imperatives of the University System of Georgia:

- Academic excellence and degree completion.
- Economic development and world class research.
- Accountability, efficiency, and innovation.

As a result our strategic plan is not only the strategy and tactics, but the heart, the morals, and ideals that form the foundation of our university.

The strategies reflect our values—what we are and what we aspire to be. These values illustrate a university seeking to continue the strong traditions of its parent institutions, and the faith that it will become something even more amazing.

This is the guidebook to lead us to that point.

In the end, this is something more than the typical strategic plan—a trip down a well-trodden path leading to a familiar destination. This is a genesis. This is the first step on a new path. This plan sets up the guidelines for that path.

While we may not know exactly where we will end up, we do know the direction we want to take and who we want to be when we get there.

This document is not meant to be a permanent, set-in-stone list of commandments, but a living document that will be revised and changed as we grow and meet our early goals. As with any young organization, we hope to grow quickly and meet and exceed our initial goals, and reach beyond that to become one of the great institutions not only in the Southeast, but in the world.

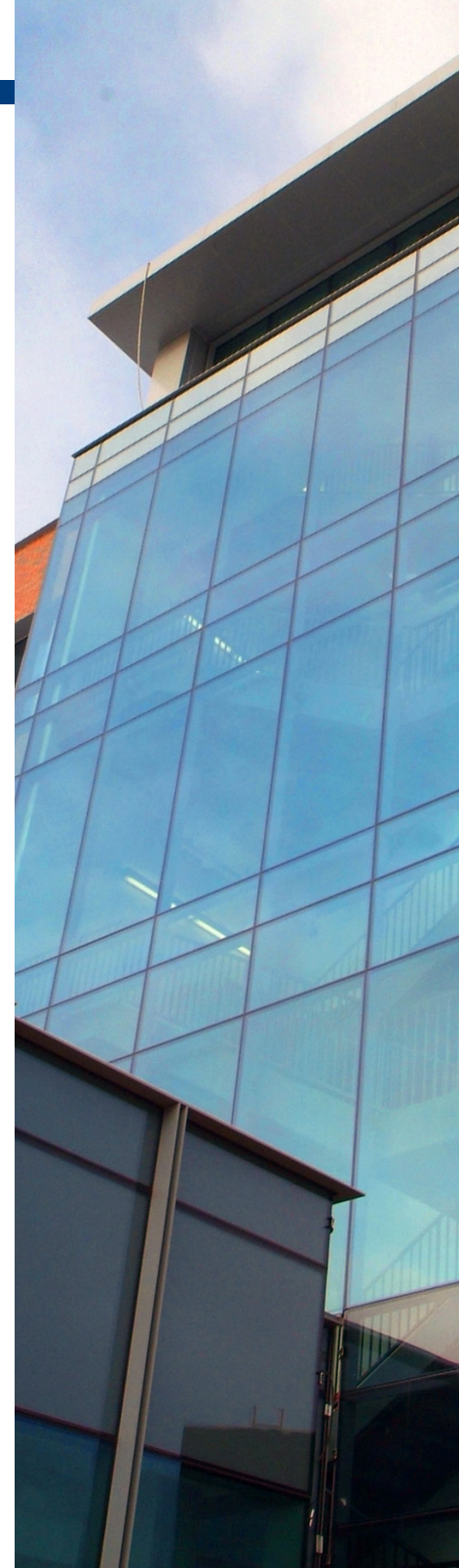
I would like to thank the group that worked to develop this plan, the Strategic Planning Team. They worked long and hard and developed a cohesive and bold vision for a new university—no easy feat.

I hope you are as excited about the plan, and the future that it lays out, as I am. This guide articulates grand expectations—expectations I have faith we can not only meet, but surpass.

Thank you for taking the time to review the plan.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ricardo Azziz', written in a cursive style.

RICARDO AZZIZ, M.D., M.P.H., M.B.A.
President, Georgia Regents University;
CEO, Georgia Regents Health System



Introduction from the Strategic Planning Work Team

THE PROCESS of the consolidation of Augusta State University (ASU) and Georgia Health Sciences University (GHSU) has created the opportunity for what we strongly believe can be the next great American university, Georgia Regents University (GRU). This Strategic Plan is our map outlining the initial steps of this journey, and these first steps are critical. We know that the transition from “good” to “great” will not happen overnight and that, although we now have one name and one leadership, the act of consolidation has only just begun. To this end, we must position ourselves competitively in order to meet the challenges of today and realize our vision for becoming a great comprehensive research institution tomorrow.

For clarity’s sake we note that we use the term “research” to mean that research and discovery are part of the mission of the university; although it does not

mean that every faculty member will be expected to be a researcher. In turn, the term “comprehensive” is used aspirationally. While GRU certainly encompasses a broad range of disciplines, we do recognize that it will take us a number of years to achieve true comprehensive results.

As you read through this plan it is important that each of us, as individuals, see ourselves within the Strategic Plan; in turn, each unit—department, center, office, college, etc.—should also see its own path somewhere in the plan. For the plan articulates the direction that the entire enterprise should be taking and that all of us should embrace. While we may not all agree on every single point presented, as with any collective process, the plan represents our best attempts at creating consensus on the institution’s strategic direction and priorities.

The strategic plan begins with the mission and values of the institution, which infuse the vision statement of what GRU will become in the future—for both the short and the long term. Subsequently, the plan outlines six Strategic Priorities, for the university and health system,



which prioritize the use of resources and effort. These Strategic Priorities are the roads we should travel on, or the directions we should take, as seen from 30,000 feet—those big, visionary, and sometimes-obvious concepts of what we should be.

Under each Strategic Priority are a series of Organizational Goals. These are the more specific outcomes we, as a collective enterprise, intend to achieve under each Priority. Each Organizational Goal is described in a brief paragraph. And we decided that rather than including specific tactics or objectives, we would leave these up to each individual unit to formulate and craft. Instead, we include a statement of how these goals might be implemented. In fact, the descriptive paragraphs outlining each Organizational Goal are not intended to provide tactical prescriptions, but rather to give units across the enterprise ideas or suggestions as to how we might accomplish each goal. Notably, the ideas in these statements are not intended to be all-inclusive, and each unit should feel free to come up with innovative ways to meet the intent of the Organizational Goals most pertinent to their unit.

As we travel into the future, building a new comprehensive public research university, the fourth such institution in the state and the only public institution with an integrated academic health center in Georgia, we need to take this Strategic Plan with us as a guide.

Finally, the plan is designed to take the enterprise—the whole of the university, its aligned health system, and our branch campuses across Georgia and around the world—down the road toward success—but for no more than the first five years of GRU's existence. As for all transformational initiatives, flexibility will be important, with the plan requiring periodic assessment, and reorientation if needed. The Strategic Plan should not be a document pulled out and dusted off once a year, but a plan that we absorb and breathe. It should be a guide that shapes our hard work and budgeting plans as we move forward—together. And we recognize that in short course a new plan may need to be crafted to meet the changing conditions and the expected growth of the university and health system. That will only happen with each of our focused and dedicated efforts.

With appreciation,



Joseph Thornton (Co-Chair)

Vice President of Ambulatory Care



Ray Whiting (Co-Chair)

Associate Vice President of Institutional Effectiveness



Robert Bledsoe

Associate Professor of German



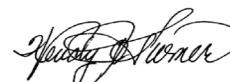
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STRATEGIC PRIORITY

1

BE A NATIONAL MODEL

for the successful consolidation of two higher-education institutions into one fully integrated and aligned research university

ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS

SP1. Organizational Goal 1



Manage the transition from two distinct educational institutions to one student-centered research university.

GRU must become aligned as one entity, one university, to succeed as an integrated research university. To this end, we shall recognize and manage the psychosocial dynamics of our institutional evolution. We shall foster opportunities that facilitate collaboration and integration. Among other things, the GRU community will establish a communication model that cultivates an understanding of the scope and complexity of our enterprise and effectively promotes GRU. Initiatives will be developed in open, iterative processes with multiple opportunities for appropriate stakeholder input during the processes.

SP1. Organizational Goal 2



Cultivate a collaborative, enriching work environment that generates open, honest, and constructive communication.

The best work—whether teaching, scholarship, research, clinical care, health care, or support for these endeavors—is accomplished in a friendly and socially healthy environment. GRU is committed to facilitating efficient and effective communication, shared governance, and effective messaging for the right venue at the right time. Furthermore, we will develop appropriate methodologies that embrace open, honest, and constructive communication at all organizational levels and establish an enterprise that is sensitive to diversity and inclusion.

SP1. Organizational Goal 3



Ensure that facilities and infrastructure fulfill the needs of our academic, athletic, clinical, military outreach and research programs.

As we consolidate and grow into a great university, we must effectively and efficiently steward the resources entrusted to us. We will optimize the use of current facilities, use technology wisely, and ensure that new facilities are built to model the stewardship of financial and natural resources.

SP1. Organizational Goal 4



Promote access to higher education, in the context of a research university, and respond to the needs of our communities.

As we evolve from two distinctly different institutions, we will work from both ends of the spectrum of student applicants. We will offer programs that attract highly qualified individuals and, at the same time, foster programs that ready under-prepared individuals for education in a rigorous yet nurturing environment. We shall also strive to expand the number of qualified local applicants, especially traditionally under-represented groups.

SP1. Organizational Goal 5



Attain national and international recognition as an integrated and innovative university and academic health system.

We will create a culture of integration and innovative problem solving that empowers employees to identify and remove the physical, administrative, and accounting obstacles that hinder the efficiency of the enterprise. We will also reward innovative advances in all aspects of the enterprise.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY

2

BE A COMPREHENSIVE RESEARCH UNIVERSITY

that leverages its history of excellence in health science and medical education with a strong foundation in liberal arts education and professional degrees

ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS

SP2. Organizational Goal 1



Deliver excellent education and training throughout our expanding footprint.

Education is the backbone of the university. It drives our mission and vision, underpinning all else at GRU. We shall improve the quality of education and training—with high-quality educators, innovative assessment models, efficient use of technology, and new programs and courses, among other initiatives. We need to creatively leverage our resources to build new academic programs of study of superior quality and high demand, and to optimize effectiveness in online, local, and international education sites. We will strengthen student transfer and education options, and expand the quantity and quality of student enrollment. Furthermore, GRU will reinforce and enhance student pipeline programs and recruitment initiatives.

SP2. Organizational Goal 2



Create, enhance, and sustain programs that prepare graduates for success in a rapidly changing global workplace and society.

Our graduates need to be equipped to work and live in an ever-changing global environment. We shall design and sustain programs that prepare informed and engaged students for success. We shall develop and implement geographically dispersed education and enrichment programs, including nontraditional, military, rural, and international educational experiences. We will provide our educational experiences in the context of cultural awareness and diversity, created by university-wide activities and initiatives, increasing collaboration and partnerships with international and minority-serving educational institutions.

SP2. Organizational Goal 3



Provide an environment that promotes innovative education.

GRU's faculty and administration value, recognize, and reward effective teaching and learning. At all levels we will create development and leadership models that foster innovative teaching and learning. We will promote productive partnerships with other institutions, organizations, and industries to support effective learning communities. We shall create interprofessional programs and courses, emphasizing critical thinking and creative problem solving, and dual-degree and certificate programs.

SP2. Organizational Goal 4



Increase student retention, progression, and graduation.

Recruiting excellent students and providing an outstanding and innovative education is not enough; GRU must strive to ensure students complete their course of study in a timely and cost-efficient manner. We will manage and grow student enrollment, sustaining support and guidance throughout each student's career at GRU.

SP2. Organizational Goal 5



Develop an undergraduate curriculum with a distinctive profile that embraces the principles of liberal arts education as fundamental to all disciplines and that recognizes the value of a culture of intellectual inquiry, creativity, and undergraduate research.

As GRU transitions into a more comprehensive research university, it must foster a common vision for a distinctive undergraduate curriculum founded on a high level of intellectual engagement cultivated through cooperative learning among faculty and students. Through open and iterative processes, the university community will conceive of the undergraduate curriculum as a four-year formative process to enhance the experience, foster student success, and increase retention and timely graduation. All alumni will leave with a strong foundation of shared knowledge, advocating for the university's distinctive identity as they contribute to a well-educated community.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY

3

BE A NATIONALLY & INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED LEADER

in research, discovery, and scholarship

ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS

SP3. Organizational Goal 1



Support a culture of collaboration and interdisciplinary research, discovery, and scholarship.

Research, scholarship, and education reflect the heart and soul of the academy. GRU shall adopt best practices that identify, nurture, disseminate, and reward research, scholarship, and creative work across the enterprise. We will broadly communicate research, scholastic, discovery, and scholastic efforts on campus both internally and externally. This is of such importance to our new identity that GRU will incentivize interdisciplinary partnerships and establish university-wide research networks in strategic areas of research growth.

SP3. Organizational Goal 2



Foster novel research and creative activities that lead to discoveries with significant academic, therapeutic and economic impact.

New ideas and the creative spirit are essential for discovery. GRU will promote opportunities for faculty innovation, entrepreneurship, and commercialization. We will also stimulate high-risk, innovative projects using internal mechanisms.

SP3. Organizational Goal 3



Lead in training, attracting, and retaining highly qualified researchers and scholars from diverse backgrounds.

As a new research university, GRU will sponsor sabbaticals to encourage creativity and develop an infrastructure to support research education. We must evaluate faculty recruitment and retention efforts to develop the best practices befitting a research institution. GRU will foster a nurturing and respectful environment for individual development and will recruit, mentor, and retain a diverse group of scholars and researchers at all levels of the enterprise. Strategic emphasis will also be placed on developing the research capabilities of current faculty who historically have been engaged in a teaching mission.

SP3. Organizational Goal 4



Promote a culture of undergraduate and graduate student research.

GRU embraces a culture of student research, supporting efforts to grow undergraduate research. We are devoted to encouraging collaborative research between faculty and students throughout the enterprise. We encourage original research and creative activity by students in all areas and disciplines of the university.

SP3. Organizational Goal 5



Practice distinction in biomedical research and health science education.

Building on our existing strength in health sciences, GRU will identify and cultivate relationships with the University System of Georgia and institutional partners that enhance strategic areas of research growth in biomedicine and the health sciences. We encourage and will facilitate joint ventures to increase investigative capacity and access to increased basic science funding.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY

4

PROVIDE SERVICE

to the local, state, national, and global communities

ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS

SP4. Organizational Goal 1



Partner with our constituent communities and regional health care assets to leverage coordinated interprofessional care and empirically-based expertise.

GRU will provide expert and collaborative consultation and service to our constituencies. We will expand public and preventive health and health policy programs and develop an infrastructure to support innovative patient-oriented care and research. We will advance the Institute of Public and Preventive Health to support clinical, translational health, public health, and prevention research. We will support and facilitate inter-professional, team-based, patient- and family-centered education, care, and research. GRU will also identify under-served disease populations, and link clinical service lines with existing areas of research to address local and regional health disparities.

SP4. Organizational Goal 2



Provide scholarly service and leadership in local, state, national, and international venues.

An enterprise-wide culture of service—from all facets of the enterprise—consists of giving back to our communities be they local, state, national, or global. GRU encourages the exchange of ideas and research with local and global communities, as well as the further development of educational and research venues and avenues. We will expand community programming and outreach in our service area. GRU will exemplify cooperative efforts in all areas of service. We will regularly reinforce, recognize, and reward the service improvements of individuals and teams.

SP4. Organizational Goal 3



Engage in service that demonstrates a sustained commitment to diversity and inclusion.

GRU is committed to service that demonstrates respect and sensitivity in education, health care, and all aspects of our work environment. We will encourage and empower individuals who are engaged in service to remove cultural barriers and use innovative approaches and discoveries to serve communities of need locally, nationally, and internationally. We will develop state-of-the-art practices and policies that promote inclusivity and ensure they are implemented and embraced across the enterprise.

SP4. Organizational Goal 4



Demonstrate excellence in patient care by developing high-quality, culturally appropriate, cost-effective patient- and family-centered health care.

To ensure excellence in patient care, we must utilize interprofessional teamwork to implement best practices throughout the health system and eliminate unnecessary variation in care of diverse populations. We will create and sustain a culture of patient- and family-centered care throughout the enterprise, while offering quality, cost-effective services and clinical training.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY

5

OPTIMIZE OUR POTENTIAL

as a whole through greater efficiency, effectiveness and productivity supporting strategic growth and development

ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS

SP5. Organizational Goal 1



Optimize leadership, faculty, and staff recruitment, retention, productivity, and engagement.

GRU will recruit the best educators, researchers, scholars, administrators, and health care professionals. We must promote and support a robust mentoring and retention program along with professional development as a university priority. We shall encourage engagement with campus life, while promoting a healthy balance between professional work, enterprise activities, and personal life.

SP5. Organizational Goal 2



Develop innovative employee-sensitive policies, practices, and programs that establish GRU as an employer of choice.

The university will foster faculty and staff members' educational, clinical, research, creative, leadership, scholarly, and support capabilities by investing in professional and community leadership development programs. Our sense of community, our support for great research and creative engagement, and our hands-on approach to education will make us a place employees want to work.

SP5. Organizational Goal 3



Enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the enterprise’s administrative, academic, student services, and clinical infrastructure, systems, and processes to maximize the stewardship of all resources.

We shall use uniform processes, benchmarking standards, analytical tools, and consistent reporting to evaluate effectiveness, manage initiatives, and improve operations. We will streamline the organizational structure and continue the integration of administrative, academic, and clinical functions. We will evaluate and optimize management of our human, financial, and physical resources.

SP5. Organizational Goal 4



Efficiently use existing resources and identify new resources to meet our current and future needs.

GRU will develop a plan with expected outcomes for enterprise integration that is articulated clearly and shared consistently with all stakeholders. GRU will evaluate senior leadership, faculty, and staff based on alignment with strategic priorities and the use of measurable goals and objectives. We will reward innovative advances in all aspects of the enterprise.

SP5. Organizational Goal 5



Advance a coordinated philanthropic strategy to increase and enhance fundraising activities supporting all aspects of the enterprise.

We will optimize funding opportunities and expand partnerships with international, national, regional, and local communities and industry. We shall increase the engagement of our alumni and cultivate major gifts and philanthropy that support faculty, staff, and student incentives, scholarships, stipends, and special programs and initiatives.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY

6

Provide sustained commitment to
DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION
across all missions

ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS

SP6. Organizational Goal 1



Develop practices and policies of inclusivity that are implemented and embraced across the enterprise.

GRU shall become a culturally, ethnically, racially, sexually, and religiously inclusive community. In order to deliver the highest quality education, services, and care, we must leverage our distinct talents and experiences. These unique experiences are inextricably linked to our diverse cultures, ethnicities, educational backgrounds, gender, sexual orientation and identity, intellectual perspectives, gender identities, socioeconomic status, disability status, race, national origins, religions, and more. To establish this culture, GRU will create policies and practices that enhance inclusiveness and civility, promote community and international cultural activities, and improve efforts to reduce population-based disparities.

SP6. Organizational Goal 2



Facilitate ongoing cultural competency development.

In order to meet the needs of a rapidly diversifying and globalizing community, all employees will participate in ongoing cultural competency development. GRU will develop programs to enhance cultural awareness and skills that emphasize effective leadership and accountability. A high-performing, culturally competent workforce is required to build respectful relationships with our stakeholders who represent the broadest segment of society.

SP6. Organizational Goal 3



Enhance efforts to reduce population disparities.

GRU will recruit and retain exemplary students, educators, researchers, and staff from diverse backgrounds to effectively respond to the education and health needs of our local community. Cross-mission efforts will be designed to solve disparities, using interprofessional teams that engage in a holistic, person-centered approach. Civility and empowerment will be core values that guide the process of creating solutions to disparities.



We embrace a three-tiered planning architecture and taxonomy to promote top-down and bottom-up approaches to achieving its mission, vision, and values.

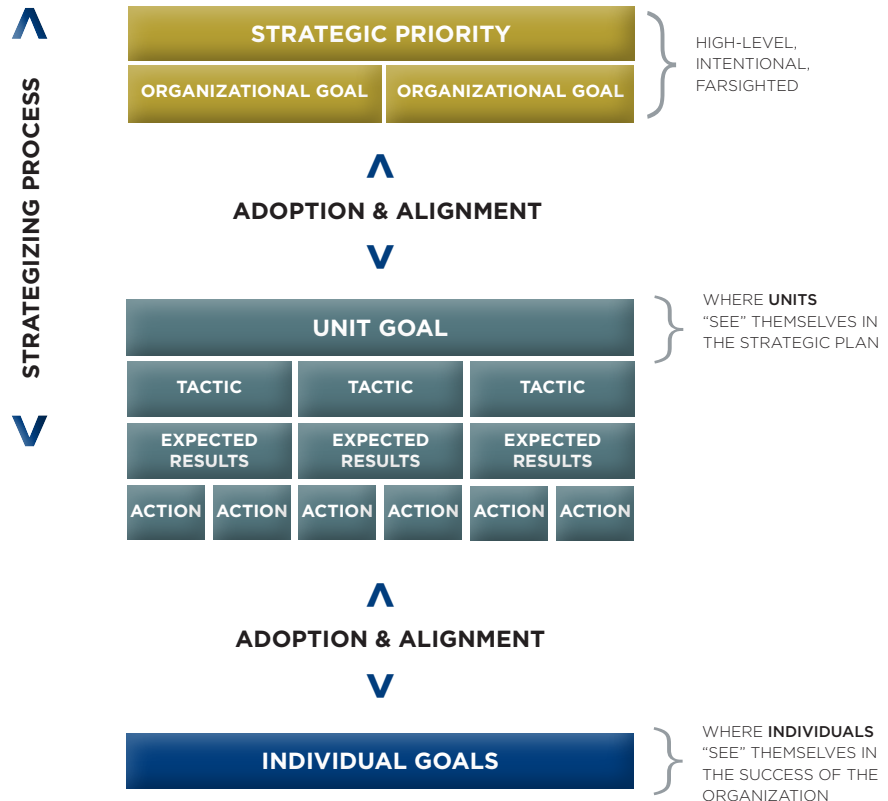
Strategy vs. Tactic

The term “strategy” is often used to denote the entirety of a strategic plan, i.e. the strategic goals and the resulting tactics to accomplish it. At GRU we prefer to use the term “strategy” to denote only the strategic goals, priorities or direction from which a variety of tactics will emanate (or for which a variety of tactics will be needed).

While a strategy and a tactic are both action-oriented statements, strategies are directional and intentional (the ‘where are we going’), while tactics are operational and responsive (the ‘how we will get there’).

We should recognize that one person’s strategy can be another’s tactic, depending on where they are in the strategic or organizational hierarchy.

Linking Strategic Planning to Unit Planning



Tier One:

DEFINE THE PLAN

Strategic Priorities reflect our mission, vision, and values and are farsighted or visionary statements, representing our high-level directions. We created our strategic priorities by asking, “What will we be and where are we going?” and used environmental scanning processes to determine our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in response.

Organizational Goals describe our common expectations as an enterprise. They often require a consistent and collective focus across multiple organizational units. We set our organizational goals by asking, “How will we accomplish our strategic priorities?” These Organizational Goals include ideas and information collected through an iterative process at all levels. The comments collected at each step and from every part of the enterprise ensured the widest possible input.

Both strategic priorities and organizational goals should be reviewed at least biennially and monitored by the enterprise.

Tier Three:

INDIVIDUAL PERFORMANCE PLANNING

The third tier of strategic planning, known as Individual Performance Goals, links the Strategic Plan, unit goals, tactics, and actions to the goals of individuals throughout the enterprise. Individual Performance Goals are included in the Performance Planning and Appraisal process where performance expectations of an individual member of the workforce are established. Individual performance goals are defined by the supervisor in conjunction with the employee. Individual performance goals also have expected outcomes, similar to those in annual unit planning. Each expected outcome is weighted, where all expected outcomes equal 100 percent. These are monitored annually at the assessment unit level, with results of individual performance submitted to Human Resources.

The planning architecture allows all assessment units and individuals in the organization to adopt and align their actions with the strategic priorities and organizational goals of the enterprise. Thus, working together, we can accomplish the mission, vision, and values of the institution.

Tier Two:

UNIT PLANNING

The second tier of strategic planning, Annual Unit Planning, is the point at which each defined assessment unit aligns and adopts the strategic priorities and organizational goals established by the enterprise. Annual unit planning consists of Unit Goals, Tactics, Measures, and Expected Outcomes. We set our unit goals by asking, “What will we do to help achieve organizational goals?” Most unit goals are developed ‘bottom up’ in that they are defined and refined through a research-based review of assessment results and new information from environmental scanning. Some unit goals can also be established ‘top down’ in that some organizational goals are set at higher administrative levels and are expected to be fulfilled in each assessment unit across the enterprise.

In either approach, assessment units will establish specific tactics by asking “How will we accomplish our goals?” Tactics are defined by the unit leader in conjunction with those responsible for accomplishing the tactic. Each tactic has an associated measure, or measures, used to evaluate quality, responsiveness, and efficiency. Measures may be qualitative or quantitative and are based on normal management processes that are already established or that the unit commits to establishing. To measure the degree of performance across each tactic, expected outcomes are set at threshold (minimum standard of performance expected), target (preferred level of performance), and high performance (exceptional achievement of results). Expected outcomes are aspirational, yet realistic and are expected to be set on nationally normed data or benchmarks, when appropriate.

Where possible, Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) will be established from authoritative sources to help units monitor their progress. To achieve certain tactics, Actions are established to help indicate the day-to-day operations of a unit as defined through standard operating procedures or indicate new activities that require a need to establish and then operationalize, as managed through projects. The enterprise annually reviews and monitors unit goals, tactics, measures, and expected outcomes established through annual planning.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ACTIONS: In this context, actions are activities to support or achieve tactics in an effort to meet the expected outcomes of a goal.

COMPREHENSIVE RESEARCH UNIVERSITY: Comprehensive can indicate both coverage of a broad variety of disciplines and/or that a variety of degrees are available in those disciplines. No university is completely comprehensive, as new degrees and interdisciplinary degrees are developed every day. GRU is more comprehensive than either of its founding universities as a liberal arts and a health sciences institution, but we have much to accomplish before we realize the breadth and depth we aspire to when we use the term ‘comprehensive.’

ENTERPRISE: A generic term to conceptualize the whole of the university, including the health system and all branch campuses and clinics statewide and beyond. The enterprise can be considered to include the Georgia Regents University (GRU), Georgia Regents Health System (GRHS), Georgia Regents Medical Center (GRMC), the Children’s Hospital of Georgia (CHOG), Georgia Regents Medical Associates (GRMA), the Georgia Regents Research Institute, and our related clinics and campuses.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES: In both unit planning and individual performance planning, goals and tactics should be measurable with threshold, target, and high performance levels, the expected outcomes, set as tactics are established.

GOALS:

ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS:
The means by which Strategic Priorities are met.

UNIT GOALS: The aspirations of individual units within the enterprise as they see themselves in the context of the Strategic Plan.

INDIVIDUAL PERFORMANCE GOALS: The means by which individuals support the goals and priorities of their units, and through which expectations and merit are established for each individual in our workforce.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs): It is one thing to have measureable tactics within a given unit, and it is another to make the tactic work. An individual or team responsible for actualizing a tactic will set markers and completion dates for actions. This provides benchmarks, or KPIs, as to whether a tactic is viable, if it is on time, and if it needs to be altered along the way.

MEASURES: The qualitative or quantitative means by which actions (tactics) toward improvement can be gauged.

OBJECTIVES (see: Tactics)

PLANNING:

UNIT PLANNING: The priorities, goals, tactics, and actions by which each individual unit will meet its portion of the Strategic Priorities of the enterprise as well as its own accreditation requirements and each disciplines’ expectations.

STRATEGIC PLANNING:
Planning at a high level—meaning enterprise, university, hospital, college, etc.— to allocate human and monetary resources and effort within the whole.

TACTICS: Objectives and actions to accomplish a goal.

TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH:
Midpoint research that applies basic science results from the laboratory to developmental experiments in hopes of results that might eventually be useful in clinical and practical applications. Sometimes referred to as “bench to bedside.”

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES: Aspirational and visionary statements that encapsulate what we want to become in the near and distant future.

gru.edu

DISCOVER WHAT’S NEXT.