What is Possible
Jacksonville University 2025 – 2030 Strategic Plan

Dear Campus Community,

We are excited to share the details of our 2025–2030 strategic plan. It reflects a bold vision for the future of our University, bringing an entrepreneurial approach to innovate our academic programs, deepening our partnerships, and creating a student experience that truly responds to the needs of today and tomorrow.

The landscape of higher education is shifting under our feet. We know that our future depends on our collective willingness to be nimble and flexible to adapt to the world around us. We are grateful for the hundreds of one-on-one meetings, group discussions, surveys, and email feedback. Throughout all this, we clearly heard that change, discipline, and focus are essential to our future success. And we need to stop limiting ourselves by asking, "What can we do?" and start asking, "*What is possible?*"

The conversations and assessment completed defined five overarching themes that comprise the plan's strategic pillars:

- Provide **Extraordinary Academics**
- Enhance **Student Experience and Success**
- Build and Foster Strong **Communities and Partnerships**
- Transform our **Financial** Processes and Models
- Create a culture of **Operational** Excellence

The pillars are interconnected, and to be successful, we must work on them together. These will be our key focus areas over the next five years and will serve as the underpinning for our prioritization of funding, staffing, programs, and initiatives. They serve as the cornerstones for all decision-making and will cascade into the strategic plans of our colleges and every campus department that supports our faculty, staff, and students.

This plan exists because of the vision, energy, and commitment of our extraordinary faculty, students, staff, alumni, and friends of the University. You not only helped shape the priorities but are also dedicated to building a stronger future for our University. We believe that together, we can be a national leader at the nexus of practical knowledge, applied learning, and new technologies that transform lives and will create a better society for generations to come. At this pivotal moment in higher education and our world, we can follow or lead—through this plan, we are choosing to lead.

Thank you for your engagement and commitment. We look forward to working with each of you to bring the 2025–2030 Strategic Plan to life.

With gratitude,
The 2025 – 2030 Strategic Coordinating Committee

2025 – 2030 Strategic Planning Coordinating Committee

Co-Chairs
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Rob Berwick, AVP Office of the Registrar

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Kaylee Bloom, Director, Office of Career Design and Exploration
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Courtney Taybron, Senior Associate Athletic Director, Athletics Department
Dr. Dee Thornton, Director, Academic Technology & Faculty
Dana Tupa, Associate Dean & Faculty, Stein College of Arts & Sciences
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APPROACH

A structured and intentional six-month approach to the strategic planning process was implemented, divided into three phases: Assessment, Visioning, and Implementation. This approach is well-documented and has been widely employed in higher education.

ASSESSMENT

Data collection > Draft prioritized SWOT > Campus Alignment

The priorities of what would be addressed, and as importantly, what would not be addressed, during the planning process were clearly defined at the outset.

In-Scope	Out of Scope
• Review of the 2020-2025 Strategic Plan • High-level benchmarking • Documenting what the strategy won't include and why • Meet with internal and external campus stakeholders • Facilitate strategic planning process and campus-wide feedback • Create a strategic framework • Develop an implementation plan	• Detailed financial projections • Specific marketing campaign • Meeting with every campus unit • Interviews with deans related to program portfolio changes

Data Collection

Multiple data sources were compiled, reviewed, and analyzed during the planning process.

- Overview of reports, articles, and white papers to create a "state-of-the-state" lens for higher education
- Benchmarking against 13 colleges and universities.
    - Peer institutions: Stetson, Rollins, Eckerd, University of Tampa, High Point (NC), Lynchburg (VA)
    - Aspirational institutions: Elon *NC), Davidson (NC), Wake Forest (NC), Carleton College (MN),
    - Others: Simmons University (MA), Colby-Sawyer (NH), Otterbein (OH)

Constructs reviewed included undergraduate and graduate enrollments, academic offerings, tuition, financial aid, institutional aid, housing, and board costs, athletics division and offerings, endowment, and annual giving (when available). Information was compiled from publicly available sources, including the institution's website, strategic plans, news clippings, IRS 990s, and the National Center for Education Statistics Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS).

- Sought and received input from 500+ campus stakeholders via,
    - 1:1, small groups, departments

- An anonymous survey tool and email
- Campus-wide survey
- South and received input from external stakeholders, including members of the Board of Trustees, alumni, and community partners.
- Reviewed the strategic plans, available accreditation reports, and other provided documents for each of the Jacksonville University colleges.

Prioritized SWOT

The SPCC identified the University's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The compiled items were debated and discussed, then categorized into themes and prioritized in the draft SWOT. We recognize that the SWOT is not all-encompassing. It was not meant to be. The goal was to identify the items most pressing to the University, ensuring they are addressed in the strategic plan.

The SWOT was presented to university faculty, staff, and students in two university Updates sessions on March 25 and 26. It was also presented to multiple student groups, the Employee Advisory Committee, and other individuals and stakeholder groups as requested. Feedback was collected via an anonymous Qualtrics survey.

The SWOT received strong support from the survey respondents, with agreement ranging from 78% to 98% for the priority SWOT items. We received several comments encouraging us to add "government uncertainty" to the list of threats. Commenters also noted that college devaluation and financial pressure could be combined. This feedback is incorporated into the final SWOT.

Final Prioritized SWOT

The final SWOT analysis was used in conjunction with the assessment information compiled to inform and provide direction for the strategic framework and key priorities.

	Strengths	Weaknesses
Internal	• **Location: Located in** the 4th fastest growing city in the US, with NE FL growing at twice the rate of the rest of FL. The region is experiencing rapid economic and population growth, supported by a strong job market and affordable cost of living. • **Student-centric culture:** A campus environment defined by personalized support, engagement opportunities, experiential learning, and a strong culture of caring and connection that prioritizes the student experience. • **Academic excellence and balance:** Faculty expertise and recognized strengths in programs such as aviation, nursing, and marine science, integrated with liberal arts to produce well-rounded, career-ready graduates.	• **Unclear brand identity and differentiation**: Ambiguity around the University's brand and value proposition limits the ability to communicate unique strengths, weakening competitiveness in attracting students, faculty, and partners. [Can't be everything to everyone] • **Unsustainable fiscal practices**: Financial management challenges, including limited cost control, inconsistent budgeting discipline, and dependence on vulnerable revenue streams, create strain on the University's long-term fiscal health. • **Inefficient organizational processes and culture**: Fragmented communication, departmental silos, lack of transparency, limited accountability for performance, and outdated systems and infrastructure contribute to low morale and reduced organizational trust.
	Opportunities	**Threats**
External	• **Academic innovation**: Expanding expectations for universities to offer forward-looking academic programs, integration of emerging technologies such as AI, and workforce-ready skills pathways that attract high-performing students, lifelong learners, and talented faculty in a rapidly evolving job market. • **Workforce alignment**: Growing demand for clear and consistent connections between higher education and regional, national, and global workforce needs, with industries seeking graduates who are prepared for future career pathways. • **Stakeholder engagement**: Rising emphasis among alumni, employers, and community partners on supporting institutions through engagement, philanthropy, experiential opportunities, and career networks that strengthen student outcomes and university outcomes.	• **Changing student and learning demographics**: A projected national decline in high school graduates by 2030, combined with a growing proportion of students who are first-generation, students of color, and diverse learners, reshaping the composition and expectations of the future student body. • **Increasing scrutiny of the value and cost of a degree**: Rising skepticism about the return on investment (ROI) of a traditional 4-year degree, fueled by economic pressures, shifting employer expectations, and the growth of alternative credentialing pathways, leading to heightened demands for transparency and proof of career outcomes. • **Unpredictable government influence**: Volatile federal and state policy environments marked by fluctuating regulations, uncertain funding streams, and shifting political agendas impacting accreditation, curriculum, and student financial aid.

VISIONING

The University's vision and mission statements, as well as core values, were revisited as part of the planning process. Throughout the assessment phase, feedback was received from all stakeholder groups. We incorporated feedback and leaned into the vision of our colleges and institutes to create a bold, clear, and concise renewed university vision statement that is aspirational and a mission statement that cuts to the heart of why Jacksonville University exists.

RENEWED STATEMENTS

Vision: Jacksonville University aspires to be a national leader at the intersection of practical knowledge, applied learning, and new technologies—reimagining education for the future.

Mission/Purpose: We exist to educate students and empower life-long learners with vision, skills, and adaptability to make a positive impact in an ever-evolving world.

Core Values

Student-Focused: We believe that students are at the heart of everything we do. We challenge ourselves to listen to understand, act with empathy, and create transformative experiences that empower every student to thrive — in the classroom, on campus, and in life.

Entrepreneurial spirit: We believe in sparking curiosity, unleashing creativity, empowering innovation, and creating opportunities that transform ideas into action, encouraging bold thinkers who are unafraid to become doers.

Community: We believe in building a strong community that cares for one another and fosters meaningful connections that create a sense of belonging for all.

STRATEGIC PILLARS and KEY PRIORITIES

The following five strategic pillars, along with their associated key priorities, comprise the University's framework for the 2025-2030 strategic plan.

Strategic Pillar 1: Provide an Extraordinary Academic Experience.
Provide an extraordinary academic experience that is forward-thinking, embraces emerging technologies, and prepares learners with practical knowledge and ever-ready skills.

Priority 1: Develop modernized and integrated academic offerings that align with our strengths, future trends, and foster cross-disciplinary learning to build ever-ready skills and practical knowledge for all students through relevant, adaptable programs.

Priority 2: Adopt emerging technologies that innovate and extend teaching, learning, and skills to provide our students with a distinctive educational experience, thereby giving them a competitive advantage.

Priority 3: Advance flexible, student-centered academic pathways through diverse, adaptive instructional models that reflect varied student goals and learning styles.

Priority 4: Support faculty innovation and academic excellence through professional development, interdisciplinary collaboration, clear standards, and continuous improvement.

Strategic Pillar 2: Enhance Student Experience and Success.
Deliver a best-in-class, holistic student experience with intentionality that prepares every student for short- and long-term success.

Priority 1: Create a sense of belonging for all students through a strong campus where interactions are personal and caring, engagement is meaningful at every level, and experiences are recognized and celebrated.

Priority 2: Provide opportunities for holistic growth & personal development through proactive, flexible support systems, awareness of available resources, and the fostering of self-awareness and emotional intelligence to help all students thrive.

Priority 3: Enhance academic advising by establishing a strong foundation early in the student journey, ensuring resource continuity, and implementing proactive, personalized planning to support student success throughout their academic career.

Priority 4: Prepare students for career readiness and lifelong professional success through co-curricular engagement, hands-on learning, and career pathways that build essential professional skills, foster leadership, and communication to be successful in an ever-evolving global society.

Strategic Pillar 3: Build and Foster Strong Partnerships & Communities
Develop partnerships and engage stakeholders to enhance student opportunities, support academic programs, and cultivate a strong sense of our place in the community.

Priority 1: Strengthen and activate our alumni network to foster meaningful engagement that supports student development, enhances university connections, and advances institutional goals.

Priority 2: Strategically expand corporate and non-profit partnerships that connect to and strengthen our academic programs, enrich student and faculty engagement, and elevate the University's reputation nationally.

Priority 3: Facilitate internal and external collaboration to amplify thought leadership locally, regionally, and nationally, to address social, political, and economic issues. Be a convener.

Strategic Pillar 4: Transform Financial Processes and Models
Transform our financial policies and models to ensure the long-term achievement of our educational mission and strategic priorities.

Priority 1: Align all decision-making across the University with long-term institutional and financial goals.
Priority 2: Implement financial best practices and standard operating policies to promote consistency and discipline across all university entities.

Priority 3: Align the comprehensive revenue strategy, including the tuition revenue model, endowment strategy, and auxiliary services, with our expenses and infrastructure targets to drive long-term financial health and growth.

Strategic Pillar 5: Create a Culture of Operational Excellence
Optimize our operations to foster a culture of accountability and excellence by streamlining processes, promoting clear communication, and ensuring transparency, thereby enhancing the experiences and satisfaction of faculty, staff, and students.

Priority 1: Advance our analytics and reporting systems by leveraging generative AI and emerging technologies to enhance data-driven planning, monitoring, tracking, and continuous improvement across all university functions.

Priority 2: Enhance administrative transparency and accountability to support institutional effectiveness and foster greater trust through clear two-way internal communication practices.

Priority 3: Establish sustainable capital budget planning models for infrastructure, technology, and campus improvements.

Priority 4: Prioritize facilities and IT enhancements to improve the quality of residential living experience, promote student and workplace collaboration, enable modernized academic technology platforms, and continually improve data governance and cybersecurity.

IMPLEMENTATION

Overarching Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

The net promoter KPIs will be implemented at the University, college, and department levels.

- Student satisfaction (net promoter)
- Faculty satisfaction (net promoter)
- Staff satisfaction (net promoter)
- Persistence rate: Total, TU, Grad
- 4-Year graduation rate
- 6-Year graduation rate

Strategic Pillar KPIs

Strategic Pillar	KPIs
Academic	• % of syllabi that include objectives tied to career-readiness/professional development • % courses that incorporate artificial intelligence to address skill building, knowledge generation, ethical reasoning, creative thinking, and critical exploration • # interdisciplinary/integrated courses [across colleges/dept/schools] • % of students in interdisciplinary/integrated courses • % students with minors outside of major area of study • Meets or exceeds national mean scores on Ruffalo Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (Instructional Effectiveness) • Expand opportunities for non-traditional learner populations • % faculty completing development training annually • % faculty completing development training focused on emerging technology/AI
Student Experience & Success	• % of students who report a sense of belonging as measured by a validated national assessment tool • % of student advising, instructional, residential life complaints • % student satisfaction with academic advising using a validated national tool • % of UG students graduating with a minimum of three high-impact practices (HIPs) • % students with internship/ever-ready work experience • Graduation rates – 4-years/6-years • First time in college (FTIC) graduation rate – 4-years/6-years • % Bachelor graduates securing full time jobs/graduate school within 6 months post-graduation • % Graduate students securing full time employment and making 50K+
Community & Partners	• Increase the number of alumni participating on campus and in alumni-sponsored events, nationally.

	• Increase the number of alumni giving by 100% by 2030. • # of regional and national industry/sector partnerships • # of academic programs with industry/sector partners for faculty and student development • % Bachelor graduates securing full time jobs/graduate school within 6 months post-graduation • % Graduate students securing full time employment and making 50K+ • Achieve Carnegie Community Engagement classification by 2029 (next app 2027) • Increase industry sponsorships/naming/giving by 200% • Establish an Interdisciplinary Center of Excellence
Financial	• Implement transformed budgeting process, with clearly communicated policies and timelines by end of FY2026 • Implement AI and new technology that advances and automates reporting • Include budget management goals in 100% of performance reviews for employees who manage university funds by 2027 • Implement a new revenue model by the end of FY26 • Increase operating margin by 10% by 2030 • Increase the NTR by 15% for undergraduate and 10% for graduate students • Increase the % endowment by 20% by 2030 • Increase endowment $ per student by 20% by 2030
Operations	• Develop clearly communicated RACI models for OpX projects • Create standard operating policies and procedures for all high-utilization services across campus, include OTC rate and effectiveness (right the first time) goals • Implement stage-gate model for all university-wide projects • 95% of courses 95% fill rate • % on-time completion rate for key services: course scheduling, academic advising, enrollment verifications, student account/bills, student health/counseling services, security and IT requests • Scores for end user (customer) satisfaction for student accounts, financial aid, security, IT, and academic advising services • Scores on the "Great Colleges to Work for" Survey in the areas of "Mission and Pride," "Confidence in Senior Leadership," "Job Satisfaction & Support," "Professional Development," "Shared Governance," and "Faculty and Staff Well-being": "Very Good to Excellent" Ranking • Establish a real-time campus-wide scorecard with leading and lagging indicators by the end of FY26