Aiken
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

Educate.
Innovate.
Inspire.

USCA'S STRATEGIC PLAN 2030

MESSAGE FROM THE CHANCELLOR

As we embark on an exciting journey to shape the future of our institution, our commitment to excellence in education and dedication to student success remains at the heart of USC Aiken's mission.

That commitment is evidenced in our Strategic Plan – Educate. Innovate. Inspire. – which provides a blueprint that will guide us in achieving our enrollment and institutional goals over the next five years. This plan reflects our commitment to fostering a vibrant and diverse academic community and ensuring the exceptional education we offer remains accessible and relevant to all who seek it.

In the following pages, you will find a comprehensive roadmap that outlines our vision for enrollment growth, student success, and the enhancement of our educational offerings and facilities. This plan is a testament to our dedication to providing an enriching educational experience, one that empowers our students to excel academically, become leaders in their fields, and make a positive impact on the world.

Our Strategic Plan is a collective effort, reflecting the insights, expertise, and aspirations of our entire USC Aiken community—faculty, staff, students, alumni, and partners. It embodies our commitment to continuous improvement, innovation, and adaptability in the face of challenges and opportunities.

As we embark on this journey, I want to express my gratitude to every one of you for your unwavering support and dedication to our university. Together, we will shape a brighter future for USC Aiken, one that ensures our institution continues to thrive and remains a beacon of excellence in higher education.

Thank you for your commitment to USC Aiken, and I look forward to the incredible achievements that lie ahead as we implement our plan to Educate. Innovate. Inspire.

Sincerely,

Chancellor Daniel Heimmermann, PhD
University of South Carolina Aiken

Executive Summary

The University of South Carolina Aiken engaged its stakeholders over the past 15 months in the development of an updated mission, an ambitious vision, and a set of strategic priorities and goals that will guide the institution toward that vision through 2030.

MISSION

The University of South Carolina Aiken is a regional public comprehensive university that cultivates a diverse population of engaged citizens who provide lifelong contributions in their careers and communities. Our dedicated faculty, staff, and industry partners guide undergraduate and graduate students through a transformative educational journey that uses engaged, accessible teaching and learning practices to blend the liberal arts, sciences, and professional disciplines with research and experiential opportunities that are aligned with economic and societal needs. We are a center for innovation that serves the region through entrepreneurial partnerships, public service, community leadership, relevant research, educational outreach, the visual and performing arts, and intercollegiate athletics.

VISION

To create a campus community that values each individual, acts as a vibrant hub of activity in our region, partners with government and industry to address societal and economic issues, and transforms undergraduate and graduate students into engaged global citizens.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

1. **Deliver a Flexible and Relevant Curriculum**
2. **Address the Pressing Needs of the Region**
3. **Reimagine the Composition of the Student Body**
4. **Enhance the Campus Experience**
5. **Bolster a Sustainable Foundation**

Strategic Planning Process

USC Aiken kicked off the 2030 strategic planning process in August of 2022 to ensure a roadmap for the future would be in place prior to the conclusion of the 2018-2023 plan. Central to the new strategic plan are a refreshed mission and inspirational vision to ground the work of the institution as it looks ahead to the next five years.

USC AIKEN LEADERSHIP & STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

The strategic planning process was driven by Aiken leadership and the Strategic Planning Committee, which was formed to guide, execute, and deliver on the five-phase process.

The leadership team provided project guidance and input; access to data and resources; and feedback for final decision making.

- **Daniel Heimmermann**, *Chancellor*
- **Mary Driscoll**, *Vice Chancellor of University Advancement and External Relations*
- **Christen Engel**, *Vice Chancellor for Marketing and Communications/Chief of Staff*
- **Ernest Pringle**, *Vice Chancellor of Information Technology*
- **Cam Reagin**, *Vice Chancellor of Administration and Finance/CFO*
- **Dan Robb**, *Associate Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Management*
- **Ahmed Samaha**, *Vice Chancellor for Student Engagement and Belonging*
- **Daren Timmons**, *Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs*
- **Todd Wilkinson**, *Director of Athletics*

Invited to serve by the Chancellor, the Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) actively engaged stakeholders throughout the strategic planning process and provided perspectives representative of their constituency in the development of the mission, vision, and plan.

- **Liz Dille**, *Director of International Programs*
- **Beth Georgian**, *Department Chair, History, Political Sciences and Philosophy*
- **Andrew Gregory**, *SGA President*
- **Carla Hayes**, *Director of Human Resources*
- **Jamel Hodges**, *Director of Institutional Culture and Belonging*
- **Thayer McGahee**, *Dean, School of Nursing*
- **Jason Munsell**, *Department Chair, Communication and Emerging Media*
- **Robert Murphy**, *Director, Veteran and Military Student Success and the Center for Student Achievement*
- **Ravi Narayanaswamy**, *Professor, School of Business*
- **Ellis Reeves**, *Director of Online Learning and Support, Chair of Staff Assembly*
- **Alex Roach**, *Associate Professor, Chair of Faculty Assembly*
- **Gerard Rowe**, *Professor and Chair, Department of Chemistry and Physics*
- **Nicole Spensley**, *Director of Institutional Effectiveness, Research & Compliance*

Early in the process, six primary stakeholder groups were identified as having insights valuable to understanding USC Aiken's strengths, challenges, and opportunities for the future.

1. Students
2. Faculty
3. Staff, Internal Partners
4. Alumni & Donors
5. Community Partners
6. Influencers

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

In multiple phases of the strategic planning process, a wide range of internal and external stakeholders were provided opportunities to engage. In-person activities and events included:

- focus groups
- interviews
- unit/department meetings
- town halls
- visioning sessions
- lunch and learns

Online surveys were also broadly administered to ensure a robust range of insights and perspectives were gathered as well as to collect feedback on the draft mission, vision, and strategic priorities.

The methodology guiding the strategic planning process was comprised of five phases of work performed sequentially so that information gathered in one phase would inform the subsequent phase.

PROJECT PLAN AND ORGANIZATION
August-September 2022

Define a clear plan, timeline, resources, and outreach needed to deliver successful project.

STRATEGY ASSESSMENT
September 2022-January 2023

Utilize primary and secondary data to assess current strengths and capabilities in the context of market trends and the competitive landscape.

FACILITATED VISIONING
January-February 2023

Refine ideas for future strategic alternatives, opportunities, and constraints, with particular attention on three strategic areas.

DEFINE STRATEGIC DIRECTION
February-March 2023

Finalize institutional mission and vision and define strategic priorities and top level goals.
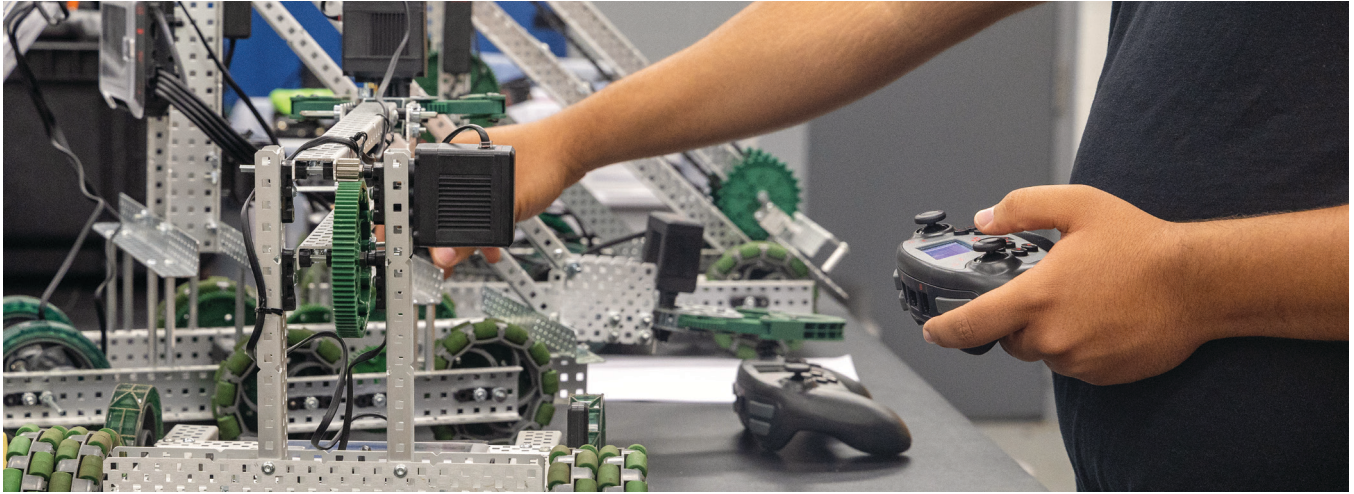
COMMUNICATE AND ACTIVATE
March-October 2023

Share the mission, vision, and priorities with stakeholders, and engage units/departments in the development an action plan to deliver on the strategy.

Landscape Assessment

LOCAL, STATE, AND NATIONAL CONTEXT

The undergraduate programs in South Carolina face a challenging landscape, but there are still market opportunities available for USC Aiken to help offset the shrinking population of traditional students. Firstly, our proximity to both traditional and non-traditional learners opens the door to cater to a wider range of students. Dual enrollment could serve as a feeder program, while the growth of graduate and post-baccalaureate certificates signal a notable opportunity in graduate education. The rebound in international interest as well as USC Aiken's proximity to military and veteran prospective students provides an advantage in recruitment. Additionally, changes to federal financial aid programs create new possibilities to serve low-income students.

JOB MARKET NEEDS

The job market demands graduates with credentials and specific skill sets, highlighting the need for relevant education and training, specifically in the areas of health care, finance and banking, education, and data analytics. Graduate curricular opportunities align with USC Aiken faculty areas of interest, and several academic fields are already popular in the region at the bachelor's level. Ultimately, growth in certificates and master's degrees will appeal to both recent graduates and working professionals looking to continue their education.

COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

Competitive research shows that many institutions tout similar strengths to those of Aiken, such as small class sizes, leadership and applied learning experiences, and military community. USC Aiken's competitive advantage will come not from what we do, but from how we deliver a transformational educational experience. Therefore, USC Aiken must define, and execute on, the how. We will focus on the following areas to establish a unique and compelling brand identify for USC Aiken:

- Curriculum and pedagogy
- Career outcomes
- Affordability
- Leadership
- Student life

STRENGTHS

Student-centered experience

Teaching focus

Affordability / Value

Accessibility of applied learning experiences

Quality of faculty

Collegiality / Sense of community

Military Connections

Campus size

Savannah River Site and DOE

WEAKNESSES

Lack of differentiated brand identity

Under resourced faculty and staff

On-campus student experience

Student, staff, and faculty retention

Aging facilities

Marketing / Website

Internal communications

Clunky technology / Data management

OPPORTUNITIES

Value proposition at the intersection of tech schools and R1s

More flexible and targeted GenEd curriculum

Build breadth and depth in applied learning experiences

Tap into regional alumni for hiring, mentoring, annual gifts

Dual enrollment, direct enrollment, military feeders

Align incoming classes with adjusted curriculum / staffing

County / City partnerships

THREATS

Importance of student life and career outcomes vs. current state

Legislative climate for higher education / liberal arts

Quiet quitting; faculty and staff morale

Knowledge and efficiency gaps with turnover

USC System constraints on hiring, budget, technology

Perceived lack of leadership transparency

FUTURE SUCCESS

In looking ahead to the next five years, USC Aiken's future success depends on the following:

- Defining a differentiated brand identity
- Revamping General Education requirements and updating the curriculum and pedagogy in kind
- Aligning the undergraduate target population, curriculum, and resources
- Delivering on expectations and investments in cybersecurity
- Facilitating access and increasing heterogeneous prospective student population
- Improving the campus experience for internal and external stakeholders
- Expanding applied learning and career management resources
- Growing post-baccalaureate certificate & master's degree offerings and enrollment

CAPABILITIES NEEDED

To deliver on the strategic plan certain capabilities will be required:

- Subject matter expertise in areas including, but not limited to, marketing and communications; cyber and engineering; integration of career readiness and applied learning experiences into the curriculum; annual campaigns
- Stronger partnerships with external stakeholders such as local government and industry partners and employers
- Mechanisms to develop and recognize faculty and staff, as well as transparent and improved internal communications
- Enhanced internal assessment activities such as program assessments; workplace and climate surveys; and compensation and workload reviews
- Financial resources in the form of increased donor and alumni giving; optimizing tuition revenue across undergraduate and graduate programs; and external funding through partnerships and major gifts

Strategic Priority 1
Deliver a Flexible and Relevant Curriculum

GOAL 1.1: Ensure / clarify relevance and post-graduation career preparation for all undergraduate and graduate programs of study

Early access to faculty-mentored research, leadership roles, internships, study abroad, and the like has been a hallmark of the USC Aiken experience. Going forward, every USC Aiken student will graduate with at least one experiential learning element that supports their post-graduation goals. A central resource will be created to grow the pool of experiential learning opportunities and to provide information, access, and support to students as they pursue them.

ACTION 1.1.1: Publicize and market post-graduation successes of alumni in all programs of study

The university will achieve this goal by publishing six alumni stories from each school / college annually through 2029.

ACTION 1.1.2: Establish internship and co-op opportunities for students of all majors

The university will achieve this goal by incorporating co-ops and internships into every USCA major by 2029.

GOAL 1.2: Expand and support experiential learning opportunities for students in all programs of study

Students and families care deeply about outcomes – graduate school admissions and career placement, in particular. Our mission is to cultivate engaged citizens who provide lifelong contributions in their careers and communities. We are aligned with students and families in our collective interest in student success post-graduation, and bolstering the services for students related to graduate school and career preparation is one part of it. Another is the capture of data related to outcomes, as they provide both a benchmark for constant improvement and a signal of our success in this area.

ACTION 1.2.1: Improve tracking of post-graduation activities

The university will achieve this goal by measuring and reporting the number of students who progress to graduate school or are employed within 12 months of graduation.

GOAL 1.3: Bolster support for student post-graduation career and education preparation / success and alumni track

Critical to the expansion and incorporation of experiential learning opportunities in each major is the establishment of the appropriate tracking mechanisms to ensure alignment and achievement of this goal.

ACTION 1.3.1: Enhance relationships with existing internship and co-op partners and recruit new ones

We will achieve this goal by growing the number of partners providing co-op and internship opportunities by 6% from 2024-2029.

ACTION 1.3.2: Appoint a part-time coordinator for graduate studies to, among other duties, centralize and publicize support for prospective and current graduate students and programs

We will ensure a dedicated coordinator of graduate studies is aiding us in booting the number of students interested in graduate studies, particularly those programs available at USC Aiken, by boosting graduate enrollment by 17% over the next five years.

ACTION 1.3.3: Survey alumni annually to assess how and why they want to be engaged and provide opportunities for participation and promotion

To meet our goal, we will distribute an annual alumni survey in which we intend to receive a minimum of a 30% response rate. Alumni feedback will be crucial in making improvements and enhancements to increase alumni affinity.

GOAL 1.4: Continue to refine GenEd learning objectives

Our distinctive blend of the liberal arts, sciences, and professional education with applied experiences is what prepares our students for success. Our GenEd curriculum will prepare our students for both the hard and soft skills needed in their careers and communities. It will be flexible to allow for exploration and changes in majors, including providing multiple pathways for those pursuing our most competitive courses of study. It will also be welcoming to transfer and non-traditional students by valuing prior experience.

ACTION 1.4.1: Refine school- and college-specific learning objectives associated with new GenEd curriculum

To achieve our goal, we will improve our six-year graduation rate from 42% to 45% by 2029.

GOAL 1.5: Develop best-in-class academic program review process and template to ensure program relevancy, vitality, and support

"Relevance" is a moving target, and as such, we will maintain strong program and course review processes as well as support mechanisms for sharing and implementing best practices in education technology and delivery. We will review our new program development process for potential refinements to ensure timely launch of programs with market demand, faculty expertise, and institutional resources.

ACTION 1.5.1: Create a standard timeline and academic program review template to include financial performance, market demand, and enrollment trends

We will meet this goal by having 100% of programs reviewed under the new process and template by 2029.

Strategic Priority 2
Address the Pressing Needs of the Region

GOAL 2.1: Develop undergraduate and graduate programs that are aligned with the employment and applied research needs of the region

We have identified a number of areas where market demand for talent aligns with existing faculty strengths and hiring needs in our region, specifically in the areas of health care, finance and banking, education, and data analytics. Opportunity is concentrated in postbaccalaureate certificate and master's degree offerings. We will further investigate these opportunities and develop a new program strategy and rollout plan for undergraduate and graduate education at USC Aiken.

ACTION 2.1.1: Add new graduate programs that meet regional needs

We will achieve this goal by growing graduate enrollment by 17% over the next five years by adding new graduate programs and certificate offerings.

ACTION 2.1.2: Add new undergraduate programs that meet regional needs

We will achieve this goal by growing undergraduate enrollment (headcount) by 7% over the next five years to pre-pandemic levels.

GOAL 2.2: Nurture existing partnerships

USC Aiken has established strong relationships with the Department of Energy, Department of Defense, and Savannah River Site. These partnerships have been cornerstones of our most recent strategic plans and will continue to drive our impact in the region. Our efforts over the next five years will focus on the memorandums of understanding (MOUs) and other working documents needed for the Advanced Manufacturing Collaborative (AMC) and the National Guard Cyber Center.

ACTION 2.2.1: Establish and / or enhance community-based advisory boards that meet regularly to inform opportunities for meaningful community partnerships

We will achieve this goal by establishing new 10 Memorandum of Understandings annually over the next five years with DOE, DOD, SRNS, and SRNL partners in the areas of applied research, cybersecurity, computer science, engineering, and advanced manufacturing.

ACTION 2.2.2: Establish a webpage and social media presence that serves to convene and communicate with current university partners

We will achieve this goal establishing a central resource to communicate and convene industry partners, thereby facilitating the establishment of 10 new MOUs annually for applied research, cybersecurity, computer science, engineering, and advanced manufacturing.

ACTION 2.2.3: Provide in-person engagement opportunities with current partners

As aforementioned, we will measure performance against this goal by securing a minimum of 10 new Memorandum of Understandings annually over the next five years with industry partners in applied research, cybersecurity, computer science, engineering, and advanced manufacturing.

GOAL 2.3: Expand partnerships to represent the major industry sectors in the region

Our existing partnerships are deep, mutually beneficial relationships that enhance our research, enable us to provide students with experiential learning opportunities, ensure that our course content is relevant, improve our campus experience, and bolster our fundraising efforts. As we grow our graduate offerings and increase our experiential learning and potential graduate school and career paths, partnerships with a broader range of industry sectors such as education, healthcare, and STEM will be key to our success.

ACTION 2.3.1: Forge new partnerships to represent major industry sectors in the region

We will achieve this goal by recruiting 25 new partners who will sponsor student internship and co-op opportunities related to the Department of Energy and South Carolina National Guard facilities that will be hosted on USC Aiken's campus.

GOAL 2.4: Establish an innovation hub for applied research in areas that drive regional, social, and economic needs

USC Aiken strives to be a catalyst for positive change, fueling economic and social progress throughout the region. Through close collaboration with local government and industry partners, we will identify the specific areas of research that are most relevant to the development of the region and will target fundraising and allocate resources to build research capacity and expertise in those areas. We will disseminate the findings gained from the applied research endeavors to ensure the knowledge reaches and benefits the broader community.

ACTION 2.4.1: Establish areas or centers of applied research in high-demand areas to promote collaboration, expertise, and funding acquisition

We will achieve this goal by increasing research fundraising from private gifts to $500,000 annually over the next five years.

ACTION 2.4.2: Launch and promote a Regional Security Operations Center

Having launched the Regional Security Operations Center in 2023, we will promote its offerings to local school districts and municipalities to establish five external clients over the next five years.

Strategic Priority 3
Reimagine the Composition of the Student Body

GOAL 3.1: Adapt to changes in the undergraduate student market

The traditional undergraduate student population is shrinking, while non-traditional students and transfer student populations are growing. Our recruiting, intake, and support services will adapt to better identify, attract, and retain these students. This will allow our undergraduate student mix to better reflect where the market lies – with slightly less traditional students and more non-traditional and transfer students.

ACTION 3.1.1: Enhance existing transfer pathways from other colleges and universities and develop new ones

We will evaluate progress toward this goal by increasing the number of certificates and micro credentials awarded annually to 75 and increasing our transfer enrollment by 18% over the next five years.

GOAL 3.2: Expand and enhance support for graduate student population

Growth in the education market is concentrated in graduate education – in particular, post-baccalaureate certificates and master's degrees. Students and employers are seeking additional knowledge and experience to either jump-start or move ahead in their careers. We will focus on both expanding our existing graduate programs where there is market opportunity, as well as leveraging new graduate programs to notably increase the portion of our student body that is comprised of graduate students.

ACTION 3.2.1: Create graduate strategic enrollment management plan, to include a graduate student retention and success plan

We will achieve this goal by increasing our graduate enrollment by 17% over the next five years.

GOAL 3.3: Emphasize student success and retention

Student success is key to fulfilling our mission and vision. Our multi-faceted approach will focus on preparedness, transition, curriculum, and active support. Our admissions team will establish a target student profile that aligns with market realities and ensures students are academically prepared. Orientation will be retooled to ease the transition to college, particularly for students who have had alternative social and academic experiences through COVID. The revamp of the GenEd curriculum will better support student exploration, academic planning, and learning outcomes, and will align with the new mix of incoming students. Faculty and staff will be trained and provided with resources in order to offer ongoing support and guidance to students throughout their USCA experience, driven by proactive engagement of at-risk students and the removal of administrative barriers to timely graduation.

ACTION 3.3.1: Leverage a Center for Engaged Teaching and Learning to encourage and support the development and adoption of high-impact practices

We will achieve this goal by ensuring the participation of at least 230 faculty members in CETL workshops annually.

ACTION 3.3.2: Leverage a Center for Engaged Teaching and Learning to encourage and support the development of diversified effective pedological methods and high-impact practices to engage students and promote learning in all formats of delivery across all disciplines and degree levels

We will achieve this goal by credentialing a minimum of 50% of our faculty through CETL programs over the next five years.

ACTION 3.3.3: Leverage a Pacer Academic Resource Center that will include a holistic enhanced student services access desk

We will achieve this goal by having a minimum of 90% of faculty proactively engage with students through the Navigate Student Success Portal for advisement, early warning, referrals, and reporting. We will also engage with students through the Navigate Student App by having a minimum of 90% of the undergraduate students download and use the app.

ACTION 3.3.4: Leverage a Faculty Advising and Mentoring Program that will support faculty with supplemental training in advising/mentoring best practices

We will achieve this goal by increasing the percentage of faculty who feel prepared to advise students (question 7b on NSSE survey) to 75%.

ACTION 3.3.5: Leverage a coherent first-year experience program to enhance the freshman experience and retention

We will achieve this goal by improving first-time freshman retention to 70%.

Strategic Priority 4
Enhance the Campus Experience

GOAL 4.1: Build a vibrant campus community based on respect

A vibrant campus is a hub of activity for all of its stakeholders – faculty, staff, students, alumni, industry partners, and the community – to come together, learn from each other, and flourish. We will consider adjustments to the housing exemption so that more students are required to live on campus, thus generating more activity and engagement. Through the curriculum, on-campus events, and improved facilities and dining services, we will bring our stakeholders together. As a regional institution whose campus community members hail from across the U.S. and around the world, we will cultivate a sense of belonging and inclusion through personal connections with each other and the University.

ACTION 4.1.1: Drive the successful completion of the DOE's Advanced Manufacturing Collaborative and the South Carolina National Guard's Cyber Innovation and Readiness Centers

To achieve this goal, the university will have completed 100% of campus enhancements needed to support the new facilities within the next five years.

GOAL 4.2: Improve facilities and services

We will target our facilities investments toward upgrading on-campus housing, improving technology infrastructure and data management, and providing a wider range and more flexibility in dining options and meal plans. These elements are key parts of the student experience, and enhanced dining options and hours will also draw other institutional stakeholders to campus. We see great opportunities to partner with city, county, and local businesses as well as donors to help us to improve campus living and dining.

ACTION 4.2.1: Expand dining and self-service and/or dining-to-go options convenient and available to campus constituents

To achieve this goal, the university intends to establish at least one new dining location/option within the next five years.

GOAL 4.3: Facilitate student, faculty, and staff development and wellbeing through a culture of continuous assessment and improvement

Each member of our community will be stronger personally, and will make the community stronger, when they feel valued and respected. We will invest in the development of each community member through career and personal development programs. We will establish mechanisms to assess our campus climate and support of our stakeholders, and to address opportunities for improvement.

ACTION 4.3.1: Develop and distribute a Campus Climate Wellbeing Survey to gauge employee satisfaction

To achieve this goal, we will strive for a 75% employee response rate to a survey administered annually. Results will be reviewed and corrective actions implemented where possible.

ACTION 4.3.2: Develop and implement a non-credit based Higher Education Leadership Certificate Program for employees with various tracks to choose from, including administrative, middle management, and upper management

To achieve this goal, we will have a minimum of 10 employees participate in the program annually.

Strategic Priority 5
Bolster a Sustainable Foundation

GOAL 5.1: Define and communicate USC Aiken brand identity

We have identified clear areas for differentiation in the market, and we will complete this work by developing proof points that define and support how we deliver on those differentiators. This will be implemented as the backbone for updated marketing materials, the website, and communications.

ACTION 5.1.1: Develop and execute new brand and identity system

Through the achievement of this goal, we will improve brand awareness by at least 5% over the next five years, particularly in markets outside of Aiken and Edgefield counties.

GOAL 5.2: Overhaul website

Our website is the primary way that we engage with prospective students, families, alumni, donors, partners, and the rest of our stakeholders. This is the medium for how we share our story and build our community, and it will be updated and enhanced to better support our activities.

ACTION 5.2.1: Migrate website to Terminal 4 and implement new user policies

Through the launch of a new website with best-in-class design and navigation, we will improve our unique visitor count to 10,000 per month over the next five years.

GOAL 5.3: Improve internal communication and transparency

Internal communication is key to ensuring that all stakeholders are engaged, knowledgeable, and aligned with institutional priorities and goals. Transparency and timely communication also contribute to a sense of well-being and connection to the institution. We will review current internal communication platforms, processes, and frequency, and set a plan for action to provide effective and timely communications to our stakeholders.

ACTION 5.3.1: Improve performance of weekly newsletter

By frequently communicating and encouraging a single source of information for our campus community, we will improve the open rate of our internal newsletter to 30% over the next five years.

ACTION 5.3.2: Survey campus to identify areas for improvement in communication

To ensure our efforts are improving communication and transparency, we will distribute a survey once annually to assess preferences for receiving information and overall satisfaction.

ACTION 5.3.3: Develop and launch intranet

As aforementioned, we will survey campus constituents once annually over the next five years to assess their satisfaction with the university intranet and what areas may need improvement as we work to segment information by audience.

GOAL 5.4: Identify and address drivers of faculty and staff attrition

Our staff and faculty are our most valuable assets, and they are critical to our ability to deliver on our strategic plan. We will identify the drivers of faculty and staff attrition and will create and implement a plan to improve retention.

ACTION 5.4.1: Survey campus about job satisfaction

To ensure we're providing a rewarding and engaging environment for our faculty and staff, we will distribute a survey once annually over the next five years to assess the percentage of employees who feel satisfied and implement corrective actions when possible.

GOAL 5.5: Advance fundraising efforts

Funding is always a major factor in what can be accomplished in a strategic plan, and how quickly. Building revenue sources beyond tuition revenue is critical to both the execution of this plan, and the ongoing sustainability of the institution. We will target specific additional revenue streams, including alumni giving, corporate giving, state and local government funding, summer programs and conferences, and athletics.

ACTION 5.5.1: Provide new giving levels and naming opportunities for donors

This action will aid us in raising $150,000 in segmented solicitations annually over the next five years.

ACTION 5.5.2: Provide opportunities for young alumni (1-5 years post graduation) to give back

Through new giving opportunities for young alumni, we will increase young alumni giving by 3% annually over the next five years.

ACTION 5.5.3: Create a donor survey to provide donors and non-donors an opportunity to comment on giving

The aim of the survey will be to achieve a minimum of a 12% response rate annually to help determine giving priorities, engagement opportunities, and donor preferences.

ACTION 5.5.4: Expand on major gift strategies

Through efforts to improve the solicitation of major gifts, we will increase the number of gifts over $20,000 by five each year over the next five years.

ACTION 5.5.5: Provide moves management cultivation / solicitation efforts with the chancellor, deans, and university leaders

By extending our network of fundraisers and enhancing our personalized giving strategies, we will increase stewardship, solicitation, and cultivation visits to 100 annually over the next five years.

ACTION 5.5.6: Assess and implement appropriate external review recommendations

Through improvements identified through a third-party and executed internally, we will improve our annual giving total to $2.5 Million annually.

GOAL 5.6: Establish a clear budgeting process across all units

Allocation of funds in alignment with the strategic plan's priorities and goals are key to its success. All units contribute to achieving the plan, and will be involved in budget planning and stewardship. We will define and roll out a clear process for budget requests, review guidelines, and allocation, including timelines and communication.

ACTION 5.6.1: Define budget process including how we handle new requests

This action will aid us in improving financial stewardship, resource allocation, and efficiencies through a standardized budgeting process and request for resources.

Conclusion

USC Aiken members are working annually with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Research, & Compliance to facilitate transparency and progress monitoring for the institution's achievement of these strategic priorities. Annual progress updates will be made available on the website, in leadership communications, and other methods where appropriate.