



# STATEMENT OF STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR CLEVELAND STATE UNIVERSITY

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Since assuming responsibilities on June 1, we have consulted widely within the Cleveland State University community about where we are as an institution, our collective aspirations for the years ahead, and how we might coalesce around a set of strategic priorities. A number of documents have also been reviewed that speak to our future development, especially the work of the Path to 2020 Team and the three “Priorities Committees” (student, faculty, and staff) established during the presidential transition. Drawing upon these sources and a series of formal and informal conversations with students, faculty, and staff, a draft “Statement of Strategic Priorities” was produced in early October and shared with the Board of Trustees, the Academic Steering Committee of the Faculty Senate, the President’s Cabinet, and the Provost’s Council, with a request for further thoughts and feedback.

We are pleased to report two major outcomes from this deliberative and consultative process: first, there is widespread support for the broad directions and priorities identified in our draft document; and second, there were numerous suggestions that resulted in changes and improvements to our current product.

This final version of the document is truly a collaborative work that reflects the spirit of a vibrant campus community and its commitment to our mission and vision. It is our intention to use ideas discussed below to focus our work as we begin to write the next chapter in the evolution of CSU. Thank you to all the individuals from every part of the University community who took the time to participate in this interactive process.

## II: BACKGROUND AND PLANNING CONTEXT

The Path to 2020 Program was an extended strategic planning exercise that involved many faculty and staff and included 16 projects focused on various aspects of CSU. A central 2020 Team coordinated the work. In the spring of 2017, the 2020 Team issued a Phase 1 Report containing a number of recommendations. For a variety of reasons, this report was not formally adopted, although some of its ideas have informed administrative activities in the months since its issuance. Of particular note are recommended revisions of the University’s mission and vision statements, which were formulated through an extended process that invited input from across the campus community and adjusted to reflect thoughts and guidance from the new administration:

### Recommended mission statement

*Empowering Students. Creating Knowledge. Engaging Communities. Shaping Our World.*

### Recommended vision statement

*We will be a nationally-recognized and student-focused public research institution that provides accessible, affordable, and engaged learning opportunities for all. We will be both:*



- 1) An “anchor” institution for NE Ohio, recognized for cutting-edge research, creative activity, and innovative collaborations that drive economic development and enrich the lives of our students and citizens, and;
- 2) A “beacon” institution whose vitality attracts diverse talented faculty, staff, and students from within and outside the region, thereby enhancing our distinctive and inclusive living, learning, and working environments.

As a result of the consultative process summarized in Part I above, we believe these mission and vision statements provide an appropriate general framework for the next phase of the University’s development. They emphasize our commitment to the education and success of students; they recognize our tripartite role of teaching, research and service; and they underscore our particular responsibilities as an urban university to serve as an anchor and beacon institution for our city and region. Our focus now should be on translating these fundamental commitments into a strategic framework for our next chapter, along with identifying a set of implementation priorities that will propel us “forward together.”

The remainder of this document includes the following sections:

Part III articulates a broad strategic framework that builds on and elaborates the core ideas contained in the mission and vision statements.

Part IV outlines observations of CSU’s major strengths and challenges as a background for recommending strategic directions.

Part V summarizes a number of strategic themes to frame and focus our work.

## **III: A STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK: HOW SHOULD CSU DEVELOP IN THE PERIOD AHEAD?**

The first step in setting future directions for CSU is to define a strategic framework that interprets our basic mission and vision statements in the context of our current situation and our aspirations for the period ahead. The six affirmations below, reflecting the input received from all sources, constitute the framework we will use to guide us.

1. Cleveland State seeks distinction as the premier public urban research university serving metropolitan Cleveland and Northeast Ohio.
2. We are committed to being a place of opportunity for new and returning students from all backgrounds, including graduates of the Cleveland Metropolitan School District and other school districts in Cuyahoga County, our region, and those who seek to join us from outside of Ohio because of our unique variety and quality of academic offerings.



3. By further developing our signature program of Engaged Learning, we will serve as both an anchor institution — a transformational leader in educating and developing our local talent for Cleveland’s workforce — and a beacon institution, where we draw talented students, faculty, and staff who seek to be a part of our distinctive educational experience.
4. We will support research and creativity across all disciplines we offer, and we will strengthen our capacity to provide regional leaders with ideas that foster urban revitalization, economic development, and public health.
5. We will pursue these goals in partnership with area employers, civic leaders, community-based organizations, and educators.
6. We will foster an inclusive, collegial, socially engaged academic community of students, faculty, and staff that serves as a cultural and intellectual center of gravity for metropolitan Cleveland.

## IV: WHERE ARE WE NOW? STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES

### Students

**STRENGTHS:** CSU is fulfilling its goal of enrolling and educating large numbers of students, many of them nontraditional, from modest backgrounds and urban neighborhoods who have the determination to achieve a better life for themselves and their families. The University has received recognition from the Association of Public and Land Grant Universities (APLU) and the American Association of State College and Universities (AASCU) for our work on student success, and from the Brookings Institution for our achievements with respect to the social mobility of our graduates.

**CHALLENGES:** We must think anew about how to empower the students we are committed to serving. Traditional approaches to collegiate education need to evolve if we are to gain further success with students from urban backgrounds. Despite some well-earned gains in retention and progression, our graduation rates remain below averages for our self-selected peer institutions. We must commit ourselves to providing the kind of wraparound student support services that make classroom learning possible for many students.

### Faculty

**STRENGTHS:** The CSU faculty, including a large number of active scholars with degrees from major universities, is broadly committed to the idea of CSU as an urban, first-choice, accessible university that is an anchor institution for the city and region. There is a devotion to teaching among our professoriate, and there are recognized centers of scholarly excellence. The Faculty Priorities



Committee, in its presidential transition report, expressed a strong desire to be an active partner with the administration in further developing our university within the framework of its urban mission.

**CHALLENGES:** The University administration embraces partnership with faculty and hopes to foster a spirit of shared engagement in further developing our great university. All of us are acutely aware that fiscal pressures have negatively affected our ability to adequately invest in the academic enterprise and improve the ratio of full-time/part-time faculty in several areas.

## Programs

**STRENGTHS:** We offer an impressive array of undergraduate and graduate programs, many of which are keyed to the economic character of the region while also reflecting the fundamental importance of the liberal arts and sciences, the creative arts, and critical thinking. The general education program promotes a broad understanding of basic academic disciplines while also fostering skills that are vital for successful careers, civic engagement, and fulfilling lives.

**CHALLENGES:** Fiscal pressures raise serious questions about the University's capacity to fully support its current range of programs. Some departments struggle to sustain a range of offerings sufficient to constitute a solid major. In recognition of this issue, the 2020 Team recommended a program prioritization process with the goal of identifying fields where costs could be reduced as well as those that needed additional support. Further work is needed to determine the right mix of programs and courses, as well as the most efficient methods of offering them. This effort should reflect thoughtful dialogue with faculty about poorly enrolled programs and classes as well as the need for more offerings where student interest and workforce needs dictate.

## Engaged Learning

**STRENGTHS:** Engaged Learning is a powerful idea that resonates with CSU's urban mission. It connects classroom study with real-world experience, economic opportunity, and civic participation. We have an opportunity to further differentiate our unique educational experience by expanding this concept. We have already taken a number of important steps in this direction, including offering students a wide variety of opportunities for practical experiences through internships, co-ops, and work-study placements. The general education program includes attention to six skills that are important not only for academic success but for effective participation in life beyond the academy, and a recent review has recommended adding Civic Engagement as a skill area.

**CHALLENGES:** CSU has not yet significantly invested in supporting co-op and internship programs outside the College of Engineering. The Office of Career Services, which has nominal responsibility for co-op within the central administration, is not strongly linked administratively with programs in the colleges and has limited capacity to provide leadership in this field, as its focus is on assisting students with career planning and job search. More broadly, a better defined and widely shared definition of Engaged Learning must be developed as an educational idea if we are to advance experiential learning across campus. Much more can be done to pull together the many threads of our signature approach to education into a coherent, multidimensional, and well-articulated four-year educational program that



provides our students with a distinctive learning experience. We have had some initial discussions with faculty leadership on how to best do this and look forward to further conversations.

## Community Engagement

**STRENGTHS:** The vision statement proposed by the 2020 Team embraces the idea that CSU should be an anchor institution for Cleveland. This is an aspiration the University has already done much to fulfill, through our educational work with the city’s youth, our civic engagement and public service programs, and our scholarly work that focuses on policy issues of significance to the region. We are proud to have been recognized by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching as an Engaged University, a designation that reflects broad, deep, and consistent interaction with our surrounding community.

**CHALLENGES:** It is always a challenge for an academic institution, even one committed to community engagement, to effectively address the multitude of practical issues faced by civic leaders, employers, and many citizens in an urban setting. There are urgent social needs that are beyond the capacity of an academic institution to address in operational terms, even as we offer policy advice and research that can be helpful to those with operational responsibilities. We should be mindful of our limits and remain true to our core missions of education, research, and professional public service. But within this framework, and in partnership with others, we can be an important participant in the continued redevelopment of our city.

## Facilities and Infrastructure

**STRENGTHS:** The Cleveland State campus, stretching along both sides of Cleveland’s major thoroughfare in an area showing impressive signs of revival, includes an attractive set of buildings and urban landscapes. In recent years the University has invested significantly in new and renovated facilities.

**CHALLENGES:** We need to further build out a robust, residential campus community (and define our future campus footprint) through the addition of student housing and additional investment in our physical and organizational infrastructure. This investment should focus on components that enrich the student experience outside the classroom while promoting faculty, staff and community participation in the life of the University. A highly successful and well-conceived athletics program is a critical component of the overall student experience, as are our efforts to implement a comprehensive campus growth strategy. The 2020 Team also identified a need for investment in information technology.

## Position in Cleveland and Ohio

**STRENGTHS:** CSU is the only public research university in Cleveland, and the city is making impressive progress at reinventing itself in the wake of long-standing economic challenges. The University is well-positioned to serve the city and region as the primary educator of citizens from Northeast Ohio who are likely to stay in Cleveland, and those adult and distance learners who look to further their education and advance their careers. CSU is also ideally situated to be a major scholarly resource for the region’s policy makers, civic leaders, business executives, and entrepreneurs.



**CHALLENGES:** CSU is one of four public research universities in Northeast Ohio. This reality adds to the challenge of winning public and political support as well as achieving institutional distinction.

## Finances

**STRENGTHS:** Despite daunting financial challenges arising from limited state support and lack of growth in the college-going age cohort, the University has managed its finances carefully, regularly achieving balanced budgets and maintaining a healthy balance sheet, including a significant reserve account. There has been impressive progress in philanthropic support in recent years.

**CHALLENGES:** The balanced budgets have come at a cost, especially in terms of full-time faculty and faculty support, but the financial pressures of the recent past will persist. Line-item state support will continue to be limited, growth of tuition is likely to remain restricted, and our traditional state-based/college-bound population is not expected to grow. Moreover, even with the University's history of fiscal prudence, there is a mismatch between anticipated expenses and projected revenues that jeopardizes the University's capacity to make investments essential to achieving our long-term goals. For 2020-21, we will need to cover commitments previously made to faculty and staff salary increases. The Structural Solutions Working Group has done important work in identifying steps to address this apparent structural deficit.

## Organization

**STRENGTHS:** CSU is richly endowed with talented staff who perform with dedication and effectiveness. In addition, we have created a relatively large number of academic and administrative units for an institution of our size, which has allowed for greater flexibility than is often the case in large, bureaucratic organizations.

**CHALLENGES:** Budget pressures have taken a toll on us both administratively and academically, and will continue to require us to consider organizational changes that can reduce administrative costs. At the same time, there are serious gaps in our administrative capacity in important areas that require attention, even as we seek to address our needs with respect to faculty. Administrative areas that are in particular need of attention include enrollment management, recruitment, and student success, where investments can generate resources to support other parts of the organization. In addition, there is a need for an integrated approach to the pursuit of institutional goals. This includes campus leaders and individual academic and administrative units working more collaboratively to define important outcomes from the work of those units. In addition, the actual results achieved need to be measured and reported and campus leaders need to provide individual units with the support they need to achieve the outcomes being sought. As part of heightened collaboration between campus leaders and individual units, we need to make sure there is follow-through throughout the organization on major initiatives and policies.



## Recognition

**STRENGTHS:** CSU aspires to be a “best in class” institution among public, urban, research universities. This is an admirable goal, and some of our academic units have achieved substantial national recognition, including solid positions in the *U.S. News and World Report* rankings of individual schools and programs. In addition, as noted above, our efforts have won praise from both APLU and AACSB, and from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

**CHALLENGES:** Despite the high standing of some individual units and programs, the position of the University as a whole in the *U.S. News* rankings needs improvement relative to comparable institutions in our peer group. While there are legitimate reasons to be skeptical about the substantive validity of these rankings, there can be no question about their importance in influencing the attractiveness of individual schools to both students and faculty. It will be difficult for CSU to claim recognition as “best in class” or to increase the number of well-prepared high school graduates – with choices about where to attend college – without a coordinated strategy to improve student success and program quality metrics that will positively impact rankings.

## Summary

We are a strong university with a proud history of steady progress. We have reached a moment in our institutional development where we can take a major leap forward. To fulfill our potential, we need to honestly recognize our challenges and work hard to address them in a spirit of collaboration, shared purpose, and optimism about our future. There is much to build on as CSU looks ahead with a focus on heightened achievement and recognition as a public urban research university.

# V: STRATEGIC THEMES

## Strategic Theme #1: Seek Distinction as a Leading Public Urban Research Institution

CSU should aspire to excellence and recognition in both education and scholarship linked to its character as a public urban research university. Distinction with respect to student success, Engaged Learning, workforce development, and urban research and service all support this goal. Active partnerships with other organizations and agencies in the public, nonprofit, and for-profit sectors can support and amplify our efforts.

There is a natural synergy between “doing a better job” for students and for the metropolitan region and achieving an improved position in the *U.S. News* rankings. Factors that influence these rankings, such as improving student outcomes and increasing support for educational programs, are largely compatible with achieving excellence with respect to our substantive goals. Moving up in the rankings can be a great source of energy and enthusiasm for students, faculty, and staff, as well as the donor and supporter community. Success in this regard also plays an important role in attracting more students, especially those from strong academic backgrounds. To this end, as noted above, we should develop





a set of outcome goals and metrics (displayed annually in dashboard format) linked to the *U.S. News* formula and benchmarked against leading public urban research universities.

## Strategic Theme #2: Differentiate on Student Success

CSU is committed to providing a first-rate educational experience to those students we admit and assuring that we do everything in our power to graduate them. Many have worked hard in recent years to improve student progression and retention, with notable progress. But we need to do better. There is no more important mission.

One frequently expressed concern about CSU's retention efforts is that they are program rich but accountability poor; departments and individuals can be urged by the Retention Roundtable or the College Completion Plan to take certain steps (like using the automated early warning system), but there are no consequences for failing to do so. Our goal-setting and results-monitoring program must include a student outcome component that tracks the work of individual academic and administrative units in taking defined steps to improve retention and reports the effectiveness of those efforts. Positive results must be recognized and rewarded.

An additional concern is CSU's capability to understand with much precision the key drivers of persistence and success and to strategically target interventions by grouping students by levels and types of support needed. The University purchased a software program called *Civitas Illume* to address this need, but this technology has not been as helpful as had been hoped. Still, a much more nuanced analysis of persistence patterns is needed and eminently possible. We will work collaboratively to tailor and implement a best-practice retention and progression approach that will address the specific needs of our students.

CSU's institutional scholarship policy needs more thought and attention. Financial aid is a key factor in the retention equation, and there is a belief among members of the CSU staff that our scholarship policies could be more effective in promoting persistence, in part through heightened coordination among them.

A final area of concern involves coordination of student support services. The report of the ad hoc Student Priorities Committee during the presidential transition stressed multiple problems with the organization and effectiveness of the University's support systems. These observations merit close examination.

## Strategic Theme #3: Enhance Engaged Learning

We prominently feature the phrase Engaged Learning in our promotional literature. Although this term originated as a marketing tagline, CSU has made substantial efforts to infuse it with educational substance. Experiential education is a natural element of an Engaged Learning program, and CSU offers many opportunities for co-op positions, internships, and work-study placements. We need to invest the resources in our co-op and internship programs to truly distinguish them from the programs available at many universities. Strengthening this aspect of our programming will be a priority.



Efforts that have been made to build Engaged Learning into our classroom curriculum have also been impressive. We will strongly advocate for broadening successful individual learning opportunities/co-ops/internships into University-wide pedagogical concepts. We can do much more to integrate the general education program, the civic engagement skill area, the “careers across the curriculum” initiative, the meta-majors and career pathways, our programs of experiential education, and the work of our Office of Career Services into a comprehensive undergraduate experience in which each part builds on and reinforces the other elements across a four-year developmental process.

We can also do more to highlight the power of Engaged Learning in our institutional marketing by enhancing its web presence and its prominence in our promotional materials, and by clearly defining what Engaged Learning means for our students’ educational experiences and potential achievements. As Engaged Learning evolves and is more clearly defined, it will be the basis for a significant program of institutional marketing.

## Strategic Theme #4: Strengthen Anchor Mission

### Workforce Development

Closely related to the theme of Engaged Learning is our aspiration to be the primary developer of talent for the economy of the Cleveland metropolitan region and Northeast Ohio. The goal of preparing students for the workplace appears to be widely accepted and shared by CSU faculty. A number of majors, including some in the liberal arts and sciences, have an applied emphasis, which is rare at many universities and can be a point of distinction for CSU. Workforce development should also be a central theme of graduate education and continuing professional education at CSU.

We need to identify a limited number of fields that are especially vital to the economic future of the Cleveland metropolitan area and the surrounding region, and then seek to distinguish ourselves as a premier talent generator for at least a subset of those fields — as well as a contributor to many others. Health care is frequently mentioned as a leading candidate in this regard, especially if CSU can form a highly visible partnership with the Cleveland Clinic, University Hospitals, and MetroHealth System. The attractiveness of health care is reinforced by a recent report from the Ohio Chamber of Commerce listing this field – along with “NextGen” manufacturing, smart infrastructure, and data analytics – as having great potential to drive future economic development in the state. The Chamber report also recommends that state government create (and fund) four “innovation hubs” linked to each of the fields it highlights. We should examine the potential of competing for designation as the state’s health-care hub in partnership with local health systems, should this recommendation be adopted by the state. The idea of highlighting our strength in health care is not new, and we have already taken important steps in this direction, including, of course, establishing a College of Sciences and Health Professions. But there is more we can do to emphasize our importance as a center of health-related scholarship and education.

There are other possible areas of focus in workforce development. A recent article by Charles Stack on cleveland.com identifies several high-potential fields in addition to those prioritized by the Ohio Chamber. In addition, useful work has been done in this area by faculty in our College of Urban Affairs. Careful analysis of CSU’s strengths in relation to the structure of the regional economy is needed before deciding on areas of emphasis.



Once we have identified our priorities, we need to examine our organizational structures with a view toward optimizing our impact and visibility in the selected areas. Programs focused on health care are currently located not only in the College of Sciences and Health Professions, but also in Nursing, Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, Education, Engineering, and Business. There are reasons for all these arrangements, but it would be interesting to consider whether bringing some of these programs together in a more robust health-care center of excellence would be useful in promoting interactions among these fields and in projecting CSU's role in the health-care arena. Similar questions should be asked about other organizational structures once substantive priorities have been identified.

Workforce development programs provide an important basis for partnerships with employers, and CSU should maintain a rich array of such partnerships. Every career-oriented program should have an employer advisory board, and the formation of a high-level President's Workforce Advisory Committee composed of CEOs from leading employers around the region is under consideration. This group could serve a broad consultative and public relations function for CSU, and could also spin off working committees of middle-level executives to work operationally with the University on specific projects and programs.

In addition to workforce development, we must continue to strengthen our broad community partnerships, including those with CMSD (such as Campus International School and MC2STEM High School), Tri-C, NEOMED, Parker Hannifin, the Lerner Research Institute, Playhouse Square, and major local foundations to enhance education and economic development in the region, stimulate cutting-edge research, and generate additional resources to support our mission.

### **Engaged Scholarship**

As a public urban research university, CSU should support a strong theme of scholarship and professional service linked to urban issues and useful to civic leaders and policy makers. Our recognition as an "Engaged University" by the Carnegie Foundation reflects the strength we have already achieved in this respect. Further, the new vision statement proposed by the 2020 Team commits CSU to being an anchor institution for the city and region. The Team's report lists a number of ways this role can be enhanced, and the recent follow-up report from the Engaged Anchor Study Group builds on these ideas to project an exciting future agenda of community engagement.

The College of Urban Affairs has established a particularly strong reputation for scholarly work on urban policy issues, but other units in the social sciences, physical sciences, engineering, education and business can also make significant contributions to revitalizing the city and metropolitan region. Here, as in the case of health care, there is a need to look at CSU's organization to determine the optimum structural arrangements to promote scholarly synergies around urban issues ranging from social policy to K-12 education to public and business management to technological innovation. Closer connections between the social science departments and the College of Urban Affairs should be considered in this context.



## Strategic Theme #5: Achieve Growth as a Beacon Institution

Despite recent enrollment trends and challenging demographics, CSU has opportunities to enhance productivity, success metrics, and diversity in the areas of student persistence and new student recruitment. Helpful work has been done in connection with both these issues by the Strategic Enrollment Management Task Force and the Path to 2020 Program. Work on these issues must be complemented by a greatly strengthened, modern enrollment management capability, informed by much greater utilization of data analytics to identify promising markets and by financial aid leveraging to maximize matriculation.

An integral part of our enrollment focus should be creating a CSU Student Recruitment Plan. This plan will have 4 components:

- greater matriculation “flow” from the Cleveland Metropolitan School District (including the “Say Yes” to Education program) and other school districts in Cuyahoga County;
- increasing yield from high schools in surrounding counties;
- a new initiative to recruit international students;
- and a renewed effort to enhance transfer enrollments by further developing our partnerships with community colleges consistent with the recently formed Northeast Ohio Regional Higher Education Compact.

We will also explore opportunities for new students, including working adults, in continuing education and certificate programs in technically oriented fields such as data analytics, blockchain, IT, and health care. Currently, CSU is attracting fewer enrollments and achieving less revenue from continuing education programs than most major urban universities that are ranked among the top 200 schools in the *U.S. News* rankings.

## Strategic Theme # 6: Build Financial Strength

CSU must go beyond the practice of managing budgets on a year-to-year basis. This leads to “getting by” but does not allow the kind of progress the University seeks. We need to establish a financial framework for the next several years that will balance the budget while allowing us to make investments needed for progress toward being a “best in class” public urban research university. This framework must be sufficiently detailed to allow academic leaders at the department level to plan for the future and should include both realistic revenue expectations and stretch targets from key sources, especially new student enrollments and enrolled student retention linked to aggressive efforts to improve performance in these areas.

Our financial plan should include a system of incentives and rewards, including financial rewards, for units that achieve their goals with respect to revenue enhancement or cost savings. Such a system is a critical complement to the program of goal-setting and results-monitoring that we are also proposing (see section below on Organization).



The financial plan also needs to go beyond tuition revenues. With limited state funding and a legislatively mandated cap on in-state undergraduate tuition, philanthropy and fundraising efforts will play an increasingly important role in supporting the University, particularly for student success and development of community partnerships. We must enhance our fundraising efforts, strengthen relationships with alumni and existing donors, and cultivate new donors. We will be devoting a significant amount of time to enhancing and expanding our growing list of philanthropic supporters.

We should also look closely at auxiliary services, where CSU lags behind peers in terms of coordinating strategy and maximizing opportunities for efficiencies and additional revenues.

Specific attention must be focused on addressing expected operational funding gaps in FY20/21. We will start with existing shared governance budget review structures to help address this challenge and provide further recommendations.

## Strategic Theme #7: Strengthen Campus Community

### **The Student Experience**

There is much work to be done to strengthen the student experience at CSU for both residential and commuting students. Creating living-learning communities, fostering extracurricular experiences like athletics and special interest clubs, building more residence halls, improving our infrastructure, and creating spaces for students to gather and socialize must all be a part of our planning. Enriching our overall student experience through additional *integrated* residential housing will yield dividends not only in a more engaged campus community but in retention and additional retained revenue.

### **Faculty and Staff**

CSU will achieve our ambitious goals only through the committed efforts of faculty and staff. A critical early priority is to address the relationship between the administration and the faculty with a view toward establishing a spirit of mutual respect and trust as well as commitment to a shared strategic vision along the lines proposed in this document. We intend to embrace the offer of assistance contained in the report of the Faculty Priorities Committee during the presidential transition, and, as part of this, to establish a recognition program for individuals and groups within the faculty and staff who make exceptional contributions to advancing institutional priorities.

As part of building the campus community we need to focus intensively on attracting, retaining, and developing talent in every unit of the University, both academic and administrative. This involves not only recruiting new members of our community but also recognizing and developing the potential of current employees. As we engage in this, we need to do a better job of enhancing the diversity of both our faculty and staff.

### **The Community**

The benefits of a strengthened campus community extend beyond our own students, faculty and staff to the external community. As we enrich the life of the campus, we can increasingly serve as a cultural and intellectual hub for the city and region through programs in the arts, public lectures, and civic forums



on matters of broad interest. Activities like these pay dividends in building our reputation and further enhance the student experience.

### **Organization**

We need to ensure that our investment in essential administrative support activities is both appropriate and efficiently directed. Our priorities in this respect include enrollment management (expanded recruiting, more sophisticated use of financial aid leveraging and data analytics, cradle-career student progression/continuity/career services/job placement/post-graduation connectivity); finance (strategic investing, real estate management, and development/internal “funds flow”); experiential education (co-ops, internships); business intelligence (data/analysis for decision-making, institutional research), and auxiliaries.

We need to place a special emphasis on improving customer service across all University offices that support and assist our students, faculty and staff. The need for an emphasis on customer service has been a major take-away from our “One Thing” Campaign, and we plan to follow up energetically.

### **Setting Goals and Achieving Results**

Creating a stronger system for defining institutional goals and monitoring our progress toward them is essential, not only with respect to student success programs but across all our academic and administrative activities. It is especially important that outcome metrics are benchmarked against an aspirant peer group, not just prior CSU performance. Given the goal of “best in class” status among public urban research universities, comparing ourselves with the leading institutions in this category would be appropriate. Every academic and administrative unit should have performance indicators derived from overall university goals and metrics and should be regularly evaluated based on progress toward these targets. We intend to create awards programs (including financial awards) that reflect and celebrate exceptional performance and to make it clear in every way that successful efforts will be recognized and rewarded.

## **V: PRIORITIES FOR ACTION AND INVESTMENT**

The preceding pages contain a wide-ranging set of strategic themes and programmatic ideas to propel CSU toward the position defined by the Strategic Framework proposed in Part III of this document. Some of these ideas call for new investment and/or reallocating resources. Many call for administrative actions and decisions that can be carried out with little or no new funding. An important next step, now that the overall Strategic Framework has been established, will be to identify operational priorities for both investment and action. A relevant consideration in planning next steps is the University’s upcoming reaccreditation process, which requires a new self-study by the fall of 2020. Some of the work called for in the preceding pages might well be integrated with the reaccreditation work that has recently been initiated.