



INTERIM PRESIDENT RONALD JOHNSON'S

FIRST 100 DAYS

PROGRESS MEMO

Introduction

Tennessee State University entered the fiscal year 2025 facing an acute liquidity and budgetary crisis compounded by systemic operational inefficiencies, declining enrollment, and organizational misalignment. In July 2024, the TSU Board of Trustees appointed Dr. Ronald A. Johnson as Interim President and tasked him with addressing these challenges through immediate and decisive action. While running the university's day-to-day operations for incoming and returning students, Interim President Johnson initiated a **100-Day Action Plan** strategically designed to stabilize operations, resolve critical issues, and align the university with the Board’s strategic priorities.

The plan was executed in three phases:

1. **30 Days:** Conducted a comprehensive risk assessment and initiated operational stabilization measures.
2. **60 Days:** Implemented stabilization strategies and strengthened stakeholder engagement.
3. **100 Days:** Established the foundation for the **Trajectory Change Initiative (TCI)** to drive long-term transformation.

This memo provides a detailed update on the accomplishments achieved during the **100-Day Action Plan**. It outlines the actions taken since its conclusion on **October 16, 2024**, as TSU transitions into its subsequent recovery and transformation phase under the **TCI**.

I. 100 Days Action Plan

Overview/Summary:

The 100-Day Action Plan was created to tackle the immediate challenges facing Tennessee State University, stabilize its operations, and align the institution with the strategic objectives the Board of Trustees set. The plan was implemented with intention and consisted of four key elements:

1. Due Diligence and Risk Assessment (Appendix A).
2. Commitment to transparency, accountability, and communication.
3. Stabilizing Operations.
4. Establishing a foundation for long-term transformation through the Trajectory Change Initiative (TCI)

First 30 Days: Transition, Risk Assessment, and Stabilization

Action	Focus	Description	Solution	Status
Due Diligence/Risk Assessment	Enrollment and Budget	Discovered that Fall 2024 freshman enrollment would be 50% lower than budget projections, resulting in an estimated \$30M FY 2025 deficit.	Transparency, accountability, and communications: Meetings with Board Chair Dakasha Winton, THEC Director Dr. Steven Gentile, and Commissioner of	COMPLETED AS OF 8/7/24

Action	Focus	Description	Solution	Status
			Finance and Administration and their teams to alert them and discuss options for addressing the expected budget gap. Implemented a position control policy requiring presidential approval before searching to fill open positions.	
Due Diligence/Risk Assessment	Accounts Receivables	Uncovered that TSU had not billed the Saudi Arabia Cultural Ministry (SACM) over \$11M from FY17-FY24.	Established a reporting procedure and ensured collection procedures were in place.	COMPLETED AS OF 8/7/24
Stabilizing Operations	Student Affairs, Enrollment, External Affairs, Infrastructure and Major Projects	Assembled a skilled leadership team to address operational gaps and inefficiencies.	Hired Interim VP of Student Affairs and Special Advisor to the President & External Affairs, Infrastructure, and Major Projects. Assigned enrollment management functions to Academic Affairs and Student Affairs to improve operational efficiency and effectiveness.	IN PROGRESS AS OF 8/7/24
Stabilizing Operations	Financial Aid and Bursar Review	Began addressing inefficiencies in financial aid processes and interoperability challenges.	Identified \$5.8M in student indebtedness and FAFSA-related enrollment challenges.	IN PROGRESS AS OF 8/7/24
Transparency, accountability, and communications	Stakeholder Engagement	The university has enhanced transparency by delivering public presentations, giving video addresses, sending frequent email updates,	Met with Alumni Association officers, members of the Board of Trustees, the TSU Foundation Board, the Mayor of Nashville, public	IN PROGRESS AS OF 8/7/24

Action	Focus	Description	Solution	Status
		and hosting information sessions.	officials, and key leaders across the campus	
Stabilizing Operations	Resolution of Audit Findings	The finance and compliance team addressed several outstanding audit findings.	Appendix B contains the audit findings addressed over the first 100 days.	IN PROGRESS AS OF 8/7/24
Transparency, accountability, and communications	Stakeholder Engagement	Introduced the Trajectory Change Initiative (TCI) as the organizing framework to sustain a future-ready TSU (Appendix C)	Met with Alumni Association officers, members of the Board of Trustees, the TSU Foundation Board, and key leaders across the campus, explaining the TCI	COMPLETED AS OF 8/7/24

First 60 Days: The Foundation for the Trajectory Change Initiative

Overview/Summary:

The Trajectory Change Initiative (TCI) is based on due diligence and rapid risk assessment. It was introduced as a year-long framework to address TSU’s systemic challenges and align its operations for long-term sustainability.

Challenge	Action Item	Description	Progress	Status
Stabilizing Operations	Cashflow Crisis	Discovered \$14 million in payable accounts long past due from FY 2024.	A full accounting of all accounts payables was required.	COMPLETED AS OF 9/7/24
Due Diligence/Risk Assessment	Cash Balances and Reserves	In August, I discovered that if payroll and payable accounts obligations were met, TSU’s cash position would be negative \$18.8 million.	Transparency, accountability, and communications: Meetings with Board Chair Dakasha Winton, THEC Director Dr. Steven Gentile, and Commissioner of Finance and Administration and their teams to alert them of the cash flow crisis and begin	COMPLETED AS OF 9/7/24

Challenge	Action Item	Description	Progress	Status
			working to address it with help from the Commissioner’s team, TBR, and Alvarez and Marsal.	
Stabilizing Operations	Finance and Administration, Athletics, the Band, and Advancement	Assembled a skilled leadership team to address operational gaps and inefficiencies.	Hired Senior Adviser, Interim EVP/CFO, and Special Advisor for Assessment and Planning.	COMPLETED AS OF 9/7/24
Stabilizing Operations	Cashflow Crisis	Worked closely with Commissioner Bryson’s team, TBR, Alvares and Marsal, Dr. Burnette, and Mr. Thompson to figure out how to get a cash injection to cover August payroll and manage remaining liabilities.	Those meetings brought forward the TSU LGIP payments of \$5.6M for June and May 2025 to cover payroll and push \$7M of other liabilities into September.	COMPLETED AS OF 9/7/24
Due Diligence/ Risk Assessment	Key Risk Areas Examined	Structured approach that details risk exposure and the strategies and actions necessary for the university to move from its current unstable and uncertain situation toward a thriving, impactful, and financially sustaining future—a Future-Ready TSU.	Completed the rapid risk assessment and shared it with Chair Winton and Vice Chair Traughber and, later, with the entire board in September. The findings resulted in a Next Steps report (Appendix D) and the Finance and Accounting Operations Plan (Appendix E) shared with Chair Winton and Vice Chair Traughber.	COMPLETED AS OF 9/7/24
Stabilizing Operations	Cashflow Crisis	Met with the Ad Hoc Committee of State Officials (organized by Commissioner Byson) to report on	This meeting takes place at the start of each subsequent month.	IN PROGRESS AS OF 9/7/24

Challenge	Action Item	Description	Progress	Status
		the progress and outlook of cash flow.		
Stabilizing Operations	Student Affairs, Enrollment, External Affairs, Infrastructure and Custodial Services; Financial Aid and Bursar Review; and Resolution of Audit Findings	Continue the implementation of actions taken in the first 30 days.	Identified areas of inefficiencies and functional misalignment.	IN PROGRESS AS OF 9/7/24
Stabilizing Operations	Finance and Administration	Confronted various people, processes, and technology issues	Reached out to TBR to receive senior-level support and staff training.	IN PROGRESS AS OF 9/7/24
Stabilizing Operations	Enrollment	Confronted various people, processes, and technology issues related to enrolling students for Fall 2024.	Reached out to THEC to receive senior-level support and staff training.	IN PROGRESS AS OF 9/7/24
Transparency, accountability, and communications	Empowering Student Leadership	Worked with student leadership and empowered them to produce a new communications vehicle, “Your Roar, Our Ears,” for a streamlined student-run electronic comment box.	Created a new channel for the administration to address student issues.	IN PROGRESS AS OF 9/7/24
Due Diligence/Risk Assessment	Accounts Receivables	Initiated recovery of \$11M in unpaid invoices from the Saudi Arabia Cultural Ministry (SACM).	Recovered \$3.2M to date; additional payments anticipated.	IN PROGRESS AS OF 9/7/24
Transparency, accountability, and communications	Stakeholder Engagement	Continued stakeholder engagement through info	Stakeholder confidence is strengthened through	IN PROGRESS AS OF 9/7/24

Challenge	Action Item	Description	Progress	Status
		sessions and regular updates to students, faculty, staff, key alum leaders, and strategic partners. Developed several media communications, providing updates and transparency to TSU stakeholders and the public.	consistent communication.	

Final 40 Days: Financial Action Plan under TCI

Overview/Summary:

As part of the Trajectory Change Initiative, the Financial Action Plan addressed systemic financial issues through cost-saving measures, collections, and resource optimization.

Challenge	Action Item	Description	Progress	Status
Stabilizing Operations	Cashflow Crisis	Developed Financial Action Plan (Appendix F) and implemented cash monitoring and management process to prioritize spending and created a cashflow forecast through 6/25; implemented hiring/spending freezes and workforce adjustments to reduce costs and align with TSU’s operational needs.	\$13M in annualized savings; eliminated 114 positions.	COMPLETED AS OF 10/16/24
Stabilizing Operations	Staff Realignment	Approved realignment plans for Academic Affairs and Student Affairs that incorporated the activities from the COO division (Appendix G).	Results contributed to the Financial Action Plan workforce adjustments (Appendix H).	IN PROGRESS AS OF 10/16/24
Stabilizing Operations	Fundraising	Established ‘Stand with TSU’ alumni fundraising. Cultivating High Net Worth Alumni to “Close the Gap” Scholarship Fundraising.	Raised over \$500k to cover the outstanding debt obligation of our seniors to the university	IN PROGRESS AS OF 10/16/24

<p>Stabilizing Operations</p>	<p>Cashflow Prioritization</p>	<p>Monitored and managed cash flow for FY 2025 to address liquidity concerns. MOUs were negotiated for TBR's accounting and financial support and TSAC's training and administrative support in the Financial Aid Division.</p>	<p>Cashflow forecasting was initiated; spending was aligned with operational priorities. The back-office operations were staffed with TBR and TSAC personnel to train TSU staff and execute immediate university operational needs.</p>	<p>IN PROGRESS AS OF 10/16/24</p>
<p>Stabilizing Operations</p>	<p>Enrollment</p>	<p>Launched Student Retention Strategy as a collaboration between Academic Affairs and Student Affairs (Appendix I)</p>	<p>Initiated steps to stabilize persistence for Spring 2025 and beyond and to optimize the LGI funding model.</p>	<p>IN PROGRESS AS OF 10/16/24</p>

II. 100 Days+ TCI: Next Phase

Overview/Summary:

The next phase of the **Trajectory Change Initiative (TCI)** focuses on addressing TSU’s long-term challenges and establishing a sustainable, future-ready institution. This phase builds upon the foundational work achieved during the first 100 days and incorporates ongoing efforts to optimize resources, stabilize finances, and enhance enrollment and student success.

Objectives:

1. Implementing a financial model to guide decision-making about right-sizing the university, deficit reduction, and sustainable operations.
2. Seeking approval for a restructuring plan to increase the university's mission impact, achieve financial viability, and stabilize enrollment by improving competitiveness.
3. Finalizing and launching the **Enrollment, Marketing, & Student Success Plan** to stabilize and shape the student body.
4. Evaluating opportunities to optimize the utilization of TSU’s facilities and properties and exploring avenues for generating new revenue streams.
5. Strengthening collaborations with state partners to address systemic underfunding and with peer institutions to implement best-in-class practices to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of back-office operations.

Next Phase Progress Table

Challenge	Action Item	Description	Progress	Status
Financial Modeling	Guide for Right-Sizing TSU and Estimated Time to Solvency.	Develop a financial model that aligns TSU’s personnel costs with minimum and maximum enrollment goals and LGI student/instructional staff and student non-instructional staff ratios. (Appendix J for LGI ratios)	Model to be completed by 12/9/2024.	IN PROGRESS AS OF 11/20/24
TSU Restructuring Plan	Implementation Plan for Right-Sizing TSU and Achieving Solvency.	A proposal concerning the method, scope, and timeline is being developed for board approval.	Collecting information and waiting for the results of financial modeling. The date for presentation to the board is January 2025.	IN PROGRESS AS OF 11/20/24
Enrollment Stabilization	Enrollment, Marketing, & Student Success Plan	Finalize strategies to address enrollment declines, improve retention, and enhance student outcomes.	The plan is expected by January 2025.	IN PROGRESS AS OF 11/20/24
Space Utilization Study	Sustaining a Future-Ready TSU	Dober Lidsky Mathey is preparing a space utilization study that will help develop future enrollment projections and a space utilization plan for each academic division.	Contract approved by the SBC 9/14/2024.	IN PROGRESS AS OF 11/20/24
Procedures for TSU’s Facilities and Properties Optimization	Policies, Procedures, and Protocols	Recommend that the board form an ad hoc or subcommittee for this purpose.	As soon as reasonably possible.	NOT STARTED AS OF 11/24/24
Stabilizing Operations	Improved Plant Efficiency	Implement utility cost-savings steps.	Appendix K	IN PROGRESS AS OF 11/27/24
Address Historic Underfunding	Sustaining a Future-Ready TSU	Work collaboratively with state partners to address systemic underfunding and secure equitable support.	As soon as reasonably possible.	NOT STARTED AS OF 11/24/24

Challenge	Action Item	Description	Progress	Status
Vision and Strategy Development		Defining a long-term vision for TSU as a sustainable, future-ready institution aligned with its multifaceted mission.	As soon as reasonably possible.	NOT STARTED AS OF 11/24/24



Appendix A

Due Diligence Questions and Rapid Risk Assessment

Ronald A. Johnson, PhD

Interim President

Tennessee State University

December 6, 2024

Due Diligence Questions

Transition

- What are the urgent matters for the Board and prioritization of urgent matters?
- Is there a transition communication strategy, including internal and external stakeholder messaging and timelines?
- Is a campus climate survey for students, faculty, and staff available for 2023 and 2024? What is campus morale, and are there areas for deep concern?

Audit and Budget

- Receive a copy of CLA's financial audit for 2023 and 2022?
- Do we know where we stand concerning the preparation for the 2024 Audit, and who is the Auditor and TSU's CFO?
- What is the projected budget for 2025, and what are the key assumptions?
- What has been the budget performance for 2024 vs the approved 2024 budget and the prior year?
- What outstanding items from 2024 will carry over to the 2025 fiscal year (including outstanding obligations, commitments, and payables?)
- What is the target enrollment for 2025, where are we concerning those targets, and how do scholarship and housing availability match up?
- What are the summer enrollment figures, and what are the expected financial results from summer enrollment?

Due Diligence Questions (Cont.)

Personnel

- Have the faculty and administrator contracts for 2025 been approved and distributed? Are there any outstanding issues?
- Are the organizational charts on the website up to date?
- Is there a list of expected objectives, key results, and performance evaluations for each leadership team member?
- Are there specific areas of weakness/strengths from the board's perspective?
- What steps are involved in assessing the leadership team and making necessary changes?
- What are the key outstanding personnel litigation matters, if any?

3

What does success look like over the next 12 months

- Prioritization?
- Key risk and concerns - What are the Board's concerns and risks and expected or anticipated outcomes?

Rapid Risk Assessment

- This document outlines Interim President Johnson's Rapid Risk Assessment for Tennessee State University (**TSU**), which is a complex, mission-driven, and student-centered HBCU, land grant, comprehensive regional, and R2 research institution. Understanding and managing risk is essential to **TSU's** ability to create and deliver outcomes that matter to stakeholders and to fund the costs of creating and delivering those outcomes at scale.
- In the current context, risks are the combination of the likelihood of an event and the impact of its consequences and are inherent in every activity that the university engages. Risks reflect strategic threats, operational issues, compliance with laws and community standards, and reporting obligations. They arise as much from the likelihood that an opportunity will not happen as they do from the threat or uncertainty that something bad will happen.

TSU Organization: Risk Observations

(as of 7-28, 2024)

Productivity

Practices

Programs

Place

Performance

Presence

TSU Risk Observations:

Productivity

Trending Legend		Risk Status	Risk Category
Risk Improving	↑		Liability
No Change	○		Continuous Review
Risk Worsening	↓		Continuous Monitoring
			Periodic Review
			Periodic Monitoring

Productivity is about getting things done right and on time! This requires:

- **The right people** with the skills and mindset necessary for operational effectiveness. It also calls for an environment where each person feels valued and integral to the organization, reward systems that are appropriate and effective in incentivizing people to do the right thing, and leaders who embrace core values and inspire and empower others to do likewise.
- **The right people in the right seats** align the organization's structure and make-or-buy decisions with the functioning of operations to produce and deliver outcomes that matter to stakeholders. This alignment is crucial for the organization's efficiency and success.
- Moving the **wrong people off the bus** isn't about specific people. It is about a strong sense of unity and morale, which is essential for organizational health. This is achieved by building trust, a cornerstone in creating a secure, confident, and resilient workplace.

Risks are significantly heightened when organizational alignment and human-centeredness are not routinely supported.

TSU Risk Observations: Practices

Trending Legend		Risk Status	Risk Category
Risk improving	↑	Red	Extreme
No Change	○	Orange	High
Risk Worsening	↓	Yellow	Moderate
		Green	Low

Workplace practices play a pivotal role in both reflecting and shaping an organization's culture. They are not just routines but influential factors that determine how people within an institution perceive the organization's persona or purpose.

These perceptions are also the key to how internal stakeholders embrace shared values, shape their experiences and interactions, and ultimately, affect the institution's ability to produce and deliver outcomes that matter to external and internal stakeholders.

Risks are significantly heightened when workplace practices are not aligned with the institution's purpose, goals, resources, policies, procedures, and the dynamics in the external environment.

TSU Risk Observations: Programs

Trending Legend		Risk Status	Risk Category
Risk improving	↑		Extreme
No Change	○		High
Risk Worsening	↓		Moderate
			Low

Higher education institutions are intricate ecosystems where distinct but interdependent mission-critical operations must work harmoniously. Each operation is a vital piece of the puzzle, contributing to creating, supporting, and delivering value to stakeholders.

Programs are the frontline interfaces of mission-critical operations. They must operate with a sense of urgency, efficiency, and effectiveness. Their operating models must align with the performance standards (**operational effectiveness**) required to meet stakeholders' needs and expectations. They must also provide reporting with integrity, transparency, and accountability.

Risks are significantly heightened when programs are not aligned internally or fail to respond effectively to changing environmental and market conditions.

TSU Risk Observations: Place

Place in higher education is more than the physical setting and built environment. It is about a standard of care in **placemaking**.

Placemaking can transform a campus into a vibrant community where people are eager to live, work, play, and learn. It fosters inclusivity, collaboration, and a people-centric environment.

Placemaking calls for a shared vision that mirrors an institution's purpose, values, brand, and user experience. Placemaking is a cornerstone of preserving and enhancing the institution's competitiveness and inspiring the campus to work together towards a common destiny.

Risks are significantly heightened when people are not respected as valued assets and their meaningful involvement throughout the campus community is not ensured. Also, risks are elevated when the campus is not student-ready and shared governance, transparency, and accountability are not routine.

Trending Legend		Risk Status	Risk Category
Risk Improving	↑		Liability
No Change	○		Continuous Review
Risk Worsening	↓		Continuous Monitoring
			Periodic Review
			Periodic Monitoring

TSU Risk Observations: Performance

Trending Legend		Risk Status	Risk Category
Risk improving	↑		Extreme
No Change	○		High
Risk Worsening	↓		Moderate
			Low

Reiterating the proactive role of risk in institutional **performance**, it is paramount to understand that identifying, assessing, and controlling threats to an institution's mission impact, operations, and financial performance is not just a process but a key enabler of success.

Regardless of the mission, location, scale, scope, or classification of higher education institutions, the 'fulcrum of success,' which refers to the key areas that determine an institution's overall success, is measured in terms of financial health and sustainability, student success, admissions and enrollment, and employee morale.

As a complement to traditional after-the-fact performance measurements, a risk performance approach has the potential to effectively tackle challenges that hinder or halt progress toward the four fulcrum area goals.

Risks are significantly heightened when an institution fails to identify performance 'stallers' and 'stoppers,' which can slow or derail institutional performance.

TSU Risk Observations:

Presence

Trending Legend		Risk Status	Risk Category
Risk improving	↑		Extreme
No Change	○		High
Risk Worsening	↓		Moderate
			Low

Presence is not just a factor but a defining element that empowers an institution to survive and thrive in the ever-evolving higher education landscape. It is about articulating the institution's promise, attracting students, engaging stakeholders, and securing the resources needed to succeed. Whether it is financial support, top talent, cutting-edge technology, or a state-of-the-art built environment, presence helps make an institution's aspirations a reality.

Leadership, communication, and transparency are not just tools but the pillars of an institution's market positioning, external relationship management, and advancement strategies. They are essential to deepening stakeholder commitment and understanding, ensuring institutional success.

Risks are significantly heightened when an institution neglects to promote and establish credibility as a brand, fails to fulfill its promises, or is marred by negative publicity.



APPENDIX B

Audit Findings

Ronald A. Johnson, PhD

Interim President

December 6, 2024

TSU AUDIT FINDINGS

(as of December 6, 2024)

Type	Total Findings	Corrected	Still Outstanding
FY23 Outstanding Items	7	4	3
FY24 Single Audit Outstanding Items	8	6	2
FY24 NCAA Outstanding Items	1	1	0
Single Audit 2023	6	1	5
Financial and Compliance Audit 2022	9	1	8
TSAC Audit Review 2022-2023	24	20	4
TOTAL	55	33	22



APPENDIX C

Trajectory Change Initiative (TCI)

Ronald A. Johnson, PhD

Interim President

December 6, 2024

TSU Trajectory Change Initiative (TCI)

The **TSU Trajectory Change Initiative (TCI)** is a comprehensive endeavor to tackle the university's immediate issues and set a course for sustainable growth. The initiative focuses on restoring, realigning, and reigniting the university. The plan is underpinned by a commitment to transparency, efficiency, and sustaining a Future Ready TSU.

TCI GOALS & OBJECTIVES

The TCI is structured around the following key goals:

1. **Restore** - Credibility & Stabilization: Rebuild trust and stabilize the university's financial and operational standing to ensure immediate and long-term stability.
2. **Realign** - Operations & Practices: Optimize university operations to enhance efficiency and effectiveness across all functions.
3. **Reignite** - Institutional Transformation: Drive comprehensive institutional change to foster growth, innovation, and renewed institutional purpose.



**A Conversation with Dakasha Winton, Chair
Tennessee State University Board of Trustees**

Next Steps

Ronald A. Johnson, PhD

Interim President

Tennessee State University

July 29, 2024

Step 1: Address **TSU's** People Risk

“Look, I don’t really know where we should take this bus. But I know this much: If we get the right people on the bus, the right people in the right seats, and the wrong people off the bus, then we’ll figure out how to take it someplace great.”

Jim Collins, *Good to Great*.

The Right People on the Bus...

- **TSU** is an organization where stubborn silos bog down execution, hamper innovation, and lead to poor decision-making, inevitable dysfunction, and underperformance.
- For **TSU** to be **Future Ready**, leaders at the top of the organization must move beyond being and leading teams of at best near-sighted professionals to understand and prioritize leading across the organization.
- Jeff Rosenthal and Molly Rosen (2024) address this issue in their Harvard Business Review article, *How to Lead Across a Siloed Organization*.^{*} The authors found that leaders who thrive cross functionally possess what they call, “lateral agility.” Lateral agility is the ability to move side to side quickly while maintaining their balance.
- Cross-functional leaders spend as much time leading across the organization as they do with their own teams. They effectively partner with leaders of different departments to further enterprise goals, while maintaining a focus on their own group’s objectives.

^{*} Jeff Rosenthal and Molly Rosen (2024). <https://hbr.org/2024/01/how-to-lead-across-a-siloed-organization>

High Performing Cross-Functional Leaders Are the Right People on the Bus...

High performing cross-functional leaders have the following traits*:

- **Expanded mindsets** — High-performing, cross-functional leaders think enterprise-first, consistently putting enterprise objectives above functional, team, or personal goals and believe their role is to find expertise everywhere.
- **Connective skills** — High-performing, cross-functional leaders possess a high degree of curiosity and empathy that fuel connective skills and allow these leaders to forge trusted and mutually beneficial relationships across the organization.
- **Innovative practices** — High-performing, cross-functional leaders in their day-to-day work use simple practices that go a long way in building credibility with their peers and bridges across departments.

* Jeff Rosenthal and Molly Rosen (2024). <https://hbr.org/2024/01/how-to-lead-across-a-siloed-organization>

Getting the Right People on the Bus...

Dr. Bridgette Golman, Interim Vice President for Student Affairs

Demonstrated success in working with academic affairs and devising and executing robust strategies to enhance academic excellence, optimize enrollment management, cultivate institutional growth, and boost student success.

- **Devised and executed innovative programs to enhance student success and retention and implemented strategies resulting in a 6.5% surge in Spring 2024 enrollment at St. Charles Community College.**
- **Addressed student housing issues at Kentucky State University including on campus and hotels.**
- **Addressed issues in on campus health and wellness and counseling, including Hotline.**
- **Handled COVID preparation and response.**
- **Improved Financial Aid and Scholarship Awarding process with Lean Process Mapping.**
- **Created a thorough Enrollment Management Plan as well as introduced Student Assistance Program (SAP).**
- **Restructured department to prioritize student needs, establishing internal roles for balanced workloads and efficient advising.**

Getting the Right People on the Bus...

Darryl Thompson, Interim Special Assistant to the President for External Affairs & Major Projects

Senior higher education and PK-12 administrator who has worked across functions to implement comprehensive strategies for institutional advancement, performance-based outcomes, resource acquisition and funding, and strategic partnership goals.

- **Built mutually supportive relationships with elected officials, executive branch leaders, and other institutions and was instrumental in securing a \$23 million appropriation for Kentucky State University (KSU) from the 2022 Kentucky Legislature, as well as an additional \$15 million for performance-based incentive grants for FY 2023 and FY 2024**
- **Under the leadership of Interim President Johnson at KSU worked to develop and move the current 6-year plan and campus master plan through the approval process of various Commonwealth of Kentucky governmental agencies, the Kentucky Legislative Government Contract Review Committee (GCRC), and the Council on Post Secondary Education (CPE) as required by state and local statutes and regulation.**
- **Executed new construction and deferred maintenance projects within the guidelines established by state statute and local university purchasing policies and procedures. Assisted with environmental reporting requirements and comprehensive planning and improvement efforts that included the development of preventative maintenance strategies associated with infrastructure maintenance, enhancement, and space utilization.**
- **Negotiated and managed the custodial and maintenance contract with Sodexo to address the health and safety crisis at KSU.**

Getting the Right People in the Right Seats...

- Reorganization Plan is forthcoming.

Getting the Wrong People Off the Bus

Confidential Search Conducted by TM2 Executive Search, an affiliate of the Thurgood Marshall College Fund

- COO/CFO: Replace Dr. Douglas Allen
- VP Enrollment Management & Student Success: Replace Jason Evans

Plan to Speak with Steven Gentile (THEC)

- Request Temporary Assignment of Talent from Other State Entities

Step 2. Seek a Financial Bailout

- The current estimate reflects the drop in enrollment from Fall 2023 of 7,254 FTE to Fall 2024 of 5,000 to 5,100 FTE. FY2025 Budget was built based on 7,100 FTE.
- Seek a bailout to close the budgetary gap between the current FY 2025 board approved budget and the current estimate.
- Use \$??? million of the bailout to implement across the board management improvement plan to **Sustain a Future-Ready TSU.**

Step 3. Implement Budget Control

- Position control as of July 29th. All hiring including grants must be approved by the Interim President.
- After discussion temporary position listed for reduction will take place. Approximately \$312k.
- Retirements. Approximately \$256k.
- Staffing Reductions. ???
- Contractual Commitments. Approximately \$1.6m
- Other \$1.1m

Step 4. Strengthen Communications and Marketing

The Cooper Group

The goal is to provide transparency, accountability, and credibility with a comprehensive strategy and implementation framework for day-to-day activities and initiatives and ongoing stabilization and transformation efforts. These efforts include:

- Market positioning, brand management, and marketing strategies that align with **Sustaining TSU** as a **Future-Ready** institution of impactful higher education, learning, engagement, and research.
- Strategic Communications for stakeholder engagement and relationship building
- Establishing Uni-Comm collaboration between the TSU, enrollment management, advancement, land grant, and athletics marketing and communications teams with the goal of increasing reach, impact, and cost effectiveness.

Step 5. Management Improvement Plan

- Academic program review
- Accounting, fiscal reporting systems, collections, budgets and internal controls over expenditures and financial reporting
- IT evaluation and improvement
- New Master Plan
- Review of TSU contracts, policies and procedures
- Salary study
- Student academic outcomes
- Student success and enrollment management



TSU Trajectory Change Initiative (TCI):

Finance and Accounting (F&A) Operations Plan

Ronald A. Johnson, Interim President, and Daarel E. Burnett, Senior Advisor and Interim EVP

August 23, 2024

TSU's TCI: Finance and Accounting Operations Plan

- **TSU's** F&A Operations: Basic Observations
- **TCI** F&A: Operational Effectiveness Plan
- **TCI** F&A: Transparency, Accountability, and Alignment Plan

TSU's Finance and Accounting Operations: Basic Observations

The TSU finance and accounting operations review has revealed significant issues. Our accounting and fiscal reporting systems, collections, budgets, internal expenditure controls, and financial reporting are either failing, inappropriate, or incomplete. These issues, combined with a lack of transparency, accountability, and alignment in reporting budgetary and financial information, are having adverse consequences. They are hindering TSU's ability to generate and deliver meaningful results to stakeholders and to secure the resources needed for creating and delivering those results on a large scale. It's imperative that we urgently improve our systems to address these issues.

Risk Observations Legend

Trending Legend		Risk Status	Risk Category
Risk improving	↑	Red	Extreme
No Change	○	Orange	High
Risk Worsening	↓	Yellow	Moderate
		Green	Low

TCI F&A: Operational Effectiveness Plan:

Accounting and fiscal reporting systems, collections, budget, and internal controls over expenditures and financial reporting






TSU F&A Operational Effectiveness Plan: Activities

1. Evaluate and revise internal budgetary controls and provide a quarterly budget to actual report to the Board of Trustees (BOT).
2. Improve the accounting and reporting system and internal controls over financial reporting and provide quarterly GAAP statements and other financial information to the BOT.
3. Develop appropriate treasury management policies and procedures, including cash management, operating investment management, debt management, and internal loans.
4. Consider the strategic move to outsource or co-source the internal audit function, a decision that can bring in fresh perspectives and ensure comprehensive oversight.
5. Establish a formal reserves management framework, a crucial step towards ensuring financial stability and preparedness for unforeseen circumstances.
6. Improve the collection of all accounts receivables. Implement a comprehensive Student Financial Responsibility Agreement and utilize external collection agencies.
7. Complete a comprehensive review of expenses to ensure they are charged to the correct functional area and that costs are appropriately allocated to grants and auxiliary units.
8. Complete the Banner optimization project and evaluate Oracle transition.

TSU F&A Operational Effectiveness Plan: Activities (continued)

9. Implement a long-range planning process to support strategic and capital investment decision-making.
10. Strengthen the enterprise risk management process to identify, evaluate, and mitigate critical risks facing the institution and higher education industry, including strategic operational, financial, and compliance risks.





1. Evaluate and revise internal budgetary controls and provide a quarterly budget to actual report to the Board of Trustees (BOT).

Objective	Current Risk Status	Deadline	Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Master list of budgeted positions reconciled to departmental budgets monthly 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monthly budget to actual reports for E&G, Auxiliaries, Land Grant Match, and Asset Preservation 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget projection prepared monthly for E&G, Auxiliaries, Land Grant Match, and Asset Preservation 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audit of all contracts to determine institutional need. 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Budget Variance Report and identify recurring/non-recurring/timing issues. 			



2. Improve the accounting and reporting system and internal controls over financial reporting and provide quarterly GAAP statements and other financial information to the Board

Objective	Current Risk Status	Deadline	Progress
• Match purchase orders (POs) to departmental budgets	↓		
• Clearing accounts reconciled within 15 days of end of each month	↓		
• Bank accounts reconciled within 15 days of end of each month	↓		
• Monthly closing entries posted within 7 days of end of each month	↓		
• Month closed by the 10th day of each month	↓		
• Credit card account reconciliations	↓		
• Revise and update Business Procedures Manual	↓		
• Statement of Revenues, Expenses and Changes in Net Position by 10th of each month	↓		
• Statement of Net Position by 10th of each month	↓		

3. Develop appropriate policies and procedures for of treasury management including cash management, operating investment management, debt management and internal loans.

Objective	Current Risk Status	Deadline	Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cash and Treasury management procedures manual. 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cashflow forecast monthly for the fiscal year and compare actuals to targets. 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perform monthly total available cash on hand calculations and establish minimum throughout the year of 90 days 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perform monthly total available cash on hand calculations (reduced by cash held for reserves and any accessed lines of credit) 			

4. Outsource or co-source the internal audit function.

Objective	Current Risk Status	Deadline	Progress
• Adopt audit plan for internal audit			
• Award contract for internal auditing services			



5. Implement a formal reserves and endowment management framework

Objective	Current Risk Status	Deadline	Progress
• Review reserves requirements and implement plan to track temporary use of unrestricted reserves	↓		
• Correct accounting for prior withdrawals in 2023 and 2024	↓		
• Correct accounting structure in Banner for reserve accounts	↓		
• Correct reserves reporting on FY 2023 and FY 2024 financial statements	↓		
• Review and update endowment investment policy	↓		
• Conduct a review of endowment manager performance	↓		
• Report on fundraising efficiency	↓		
• Review endowment agreements and execute new agreements where needed	↓		




6. Improve the collection of all accounts receivables. Implement a comprehensive Student Financial Responsibility Agreement and utilizing external collection agencies.

Objective	Current Risk Status	Deadline	Progress
• Monthly report of outstanding student balances	↓		
• Monthly report of collection activity	↓		
• Executed student financial responsibility agreement	↓		
• Revised collection policy	↓		




7. Complete a comprehensive review of expenses to ensure they are charged to the correct functional area and that costs are appropriately allocated to grants and auxiliary units

Objective	Current Risk Status	Deadline	Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revised chart of accounts 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summative report on account revisions 			



8. Complete Banner optimization project and evaluate Oracle transition.

Objective	Current Risk Status	Deadline	Progress
• Complete optimizations by module			
• Summative report on necessary optimizations			
• Complete Oracle transition evaluation			

9. Implement a long-range planning process to support strategic and capital investment decision-making.

Objective	Current Risk Status	Deadline	Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish goals and timelines for custodial, facilities, grounds, and motor pool management 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalize a Comprehensive Deferred Maintenance Schedule 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a Comprehensive Capital Improvement and Preservation Funding Allocation Program 			

10. Strengthen the enterprise risk management process to identify, evaluate, and mitigate key risks facing the institution and higher education industry, including strategic operational, financial, and compliance risks.

Objective	Current Risk Status	Deadline	Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create BOT committee for enterprise risk management or assign to existing committee. 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a summative enterprise risk management report. 			

TCI F&A: Transparency, Accountability, and Alignment Plan

1. Improve business procedures and practices
2. Enhance institutional reports
3. Analyze focus programs

1. Improve Business Procedures and Practices

Activity	Objective	Deadline	Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate NACUBO FARM as a guiding document for all business procedures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revised business procedures document 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine professional organizations that provide resources to assist the university with planning and evaluation of effectiveness (CUPA, NACUBO, etc.) and secure membership and arrange for training. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summative report 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage attendance at College Business Management Institute (CBMI) of the Southern Association of College and University Business Officers (SACUBO) for Finance staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report of attendance 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete software audit to identify if all purchased and licensed software is necessary and being used effectively. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summative report 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review endowment performance and develop related management metrics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summative report 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a campus master plan and a 3- and 5-year capital project plan focused on asset preservation and sustained growth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Campus Master Plan 		

2. Enhance Institutional Reports

Activity	Objective	Deadline	Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve accounts payable spend management, vendor performance and management, payment timelines and bottlenecks in TSU procedures, spending patterns for budgeting, and the ability to make timely payments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce summative reports of accounts payable KPIs, including monthly trend analysis, days payables outstanding, average time to payment, invoices processed per day per employee, cost per invoice, and spend percentage by payment method. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand and improve the process of monitoring and controlling the collection of outstanding receivables from students, grants, third-party scholarships, and others. This includes billing and invoicing, payment processing, communications with clients, internal communications and processes, and collections processes and credit policies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce summative reports of accounts receivable KPIs, including aging and monthly trend analysis, tracking average collection period, accounts receivable turnover ratio, days revenues outstanding, collection effectiveness index (CEI), and bad debt ratio as you implement changes. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze the interrelatedness of enrollment goals, student financial aid, scholarships, and institutional indebtedness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summative report 		

3. Analyze Focus Programs

Focus Programs	Objective	Deadline	Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Auxiliaries. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flow of Designated Funds Analysis, Statement of Activities, & trend 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student Fees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flow of Designated Funds Analysis, Budgetary Spending Gap, & trend 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Athletics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flow of Designated Funds Analysis, Budgetary Spending Gap Analysis including all revenue streams and expenses, & trend 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Band and Cheerleaders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flow of Designated Funds Analysis, Budgetary Spending Gap Analysis including all revenue streams and expenses, & trend 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State Allocation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flow of Designated Funds Analysis, Gap Analysis, & trend 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State Funding Model actual versus total potential allocation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summative report of the gap & trend 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land Grant Indirect Cost (IDC). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flow of Designated Funds Analysis, Statement of Activities, & trend 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research Indirect Cost (IDC). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flow of Designated Funds Analysis, Statement of Activities, & trend 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Title III. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summative report institutional impact and trend 		



FINANCIAL SITUATION FAQs

Tennessee State University Financial Situation Frequently Asked Questions

*Here, you can find answers to some frequently asked questions about Tennessee State University's financial situation. This gives you insights into what Interim President Ronald A. Johnson and his administration are doing to sustain a **"Future Ready TSU."***

Is TSU in a structural deficit?

Yes. A structural deficit is created when expenditures exceed revenues. For the past several years, the University's expenditures have exceeded revenues, and this overspending has accelerated in fiscal years 2023 and 2024. In addition to short-term strategies to improve the University's cash position, the University is working to resolve the structural budget deficit as part of the University's **Trajectory Change Initiative (TCI)**.

Is this a financial crisis?

Yes. The University did not meet the enrollment targets for the current academic year. Additionally, increasing demands for scholarships and the rising costs of education delivery and operations have intensified cash flow and budget challenges. To address this, we need to implement several cost-saving measures immediately.

What happened?

The University's financial situation resulted from not meeting the enrollment targets for the current academic year and the longer-term issue of expenditures outpacing revenues. Several factors played a role in the lower-than-planned enrollment for the current academic year, including students with large prior-year balances owed to the University, operational issues in recruitment, admissions, and financial aid. These issues are being addressed in the TCI.

In addition, a delayed start for new student orientation also contributed to the shortfall in enrollment for the current academic year. The delay was partly caused by problems with the FAFSA financial aid forms, which led to delayed student aid awards and left many students uncertain about their financial situation.

If past overspending has contributed to the current financial situation, why weren't University leaders aware of this?

The factors that have hampered the University's ability to recognize and respond to overspending are poor internal controls and weak financial policies and procedures. These issues have been documented by the Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury and the Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation in past audit findings and recommendations. Interim President Johnson is addressing these issues as part of the TCI.

[2021 Full Audit](#)

[2022 Full Audit](#)

[2023 Forensic Audit](#)

What is the impact on student scholarships and financial aid?

There is no impact on the scholarships and financial aid awarded by the University.

What is the impact on the quality of instruction and student support programs?

The current actions being taken as part of the Plan will ensure that the University can continue to offer excellent educational experiences for our students, conduct research that sparks new possibilities, and carry out outreach that impacts lives. They are an essential component of the TCI and achieving the goal of sustaining a future-ready Tennessee State University. The University is adjusting expenses to match revenues by implementing the Financial Action Plan within the TCI.

Has research funding been impacted?

Externally funded research activities are not affected.

About the Financial Action Plan

Will annual salary increases be impacted?

Yes. The University is implementing a compensation freeze to include all compensation and pay structure adjustments until further notice.

Will there be a hiring freeze?

Yes. On August 12th of this year, the university implemented a position control policy. This policy is being replaced with a hiring freeze in all units. Dr. Daarel Burnette, senior advisor, and EVP, will provide more information regarding the hiring freeze and special exceptions shortly.

Will furloughs be considered?

No.

Will there be layoffs?

There will be no university-wide, across-the-board layoffs. University senior leadership will work with division and college leaders to review budgets and develop specific strategies for each unit to right-size spending.

Will there be a freeze on travel and other spending?

Yes. More information regarding travel, discretionary, events, consulting, and service contracts spending categories and notable exceptions will be provided shortly by Dr. Daarel Burnette, Senior Advisor and EVP.



TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
3500 JOHN A. MERRITT BOULEVARD
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE 37209-1561

OFFICE OF
THE PRESIDENT

TO: TSU Campus Community

FROM: Ronald A. Johnson, Ph.D.
Interim President

REGARDING: Interim Realignment of COO Operations

DATE: August 12, 2024

As part of our ongoing efforts to enhance operational efficiency and ensure the continuity of our services, the following interim realignment of units has been established. This temporary structure is effective immediately and will remain in place during this period of transition.

Reporting to Dr. Bridgett Golman, Interim Vice President for Student Affairs:

- Enrollment Management
- Office of Admissions
- Customer Relations
- Office of Disability Services
- Office of Recruitment
- Mr. E. Jay Jones
- Enrollment Services
- Administrative/Budget Officer
- Executive Assistant
- Dr. Brent Dukhie, Interim Executive Director of Housing/Residence Life

Reporting to Dr. Robbie Melton, Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs:

- Office of Records
- Registrar
- Office of Students Success

Reporting to Dr. Curtis Johnson, Chief of Staff and Vice President for Administration:

- Campus Police

These changes are intended to streamline our operations and support the university's mission during this period of transition. We appreciate your cooperation and understanding as we work to maintain high standards of service and support for our students, faculty, and staff.

Thank you for your continued commitment to TSU.

Tennessee State University
Fiscal Year 2025 Workforce Adjustment Plan and Procedures (Including Criteria)

Introduction

Upon Dr. Ronald Johnson's arrival as the Interim President of Tennessee State University, the Tennessee State University Board of Trustees charged him with resolving prior audit findings, establishing financial stability, increasing overall morale, and developing an enrollment strategy.

In carrying out the Board's charge, President Johnson and the senior leadership team embarked on a comprehensive review of the University's divisions and departments. The review aimed to identify opportunities to implement cost-reduction measures and enhance the efficient operation of the University. It also aimed to identify barriers to achieving sustained financial stability and position the University to meet the challenges and opportunities as a 21st-century institution of higher education for this decade and beyond.

The review included examining opportunities to restructure organizational units, including realigning, merging, and eliminating positions, to ensure operational efficiencies and align personnel and administrative units within the University's current budget structure. The review also identified other cost-reduction measures, including terminating specified contracts and eliminating duplicative or inefficient services.

In addition, the leadership reviewed pertinent reports, including previous audit reports and organizational assessments currently underway and conducted by consultants in 2019, to provide additional guidance in implementing organizational measures to assist the University in its review.

To achieve financial stability and sustainability, the University reviewed and addressed its labor costs, including those in the context of current and short-term budget challenges and enrollment projections. Labor costs represent fifty-eight percent of the institution's current budget.

Based on the review, TSU will implement workforce adjustments that will impact current personnel, including eliminating and merging positions, terminating employment, and revising duties of other positions within the University.

TSU FY 2025 Workforce Adjustment Plan

TSU implemented the Fiscal Year 2025 Workforce Adjustment plan on September 18. The Plan involves restructuring organizational units, including the realignment, merging, and eliminating positions, to ensure operational efficiencies and align personnel and administrative units within the University's current budget structure.

In considering proposed workforce adjustments, the senior leadership team members were asked to consider the following criteria, with a strong emphasis on the needs and well-being of our employees:

Operational Needs:

- Analyze the current and projected workload in each department or unit
- Determine the staffing levels required to maintain essential services and operations

- Prioritize retaining employees whose roles are critical to the institution's core functions

The review also included an analysis of job function and skills (including examining the critical needs and functions of the organization), performance and productivity, overall experience, compliance with applicable employment laws, reassignment opportunities, and business continuity/disruption.

Before implementing these workforce adjustments, TSU considered other actions, including:

- a. a hiring freeze
- b. significantly reduced use of overtime and extra service pay
- c. renegotiated vendor payments
- d. reassignment of employees to other areas
- e. review of duplication of functions

The University determined that these actions were insufficient to achieve financial stability and ensure the efficient operation of the institution. Meeting these goals requires aligning resource utilization, expenses, and funding.

Under this Plan, the University will eliminate several full-time and part-time (93% +) state-funded (E&G) filled and unfilled administrative professional/ staff positions throughout the campus community and utilize those cost savings to enhance the financial stability of TSU. The University will be terminating the employment of the employees in filled positions.

Additional Workforce Adjustment Information:

The Human Resources Director was consulted to determine the support for the separated staff members. The Director of Human Resources and staff are fully committed to assisting affected employees who seek to apply for vacant positions in which they qualify. The TSU website, <https://jobs.tnstate.edu> lists the available positions for hire.

Any change in position will necessitate a new contract for the employee, and the university will try to avoid a break in service.

Notification:

The employees impacted by this workforce adjustment plan will be notified via letter and communication from their supervisors. Employees will be provided required notice before the termination of their employment. Employees will also be provided with reasonable notice if this Plan will otherwise impact their position. The President, authorized Division heads, or senior leadership team members will sign the notifications.

The notice will reference this plan, including resources available for employees separated from the University.

Employee Options:

Regular staff members who receive a notification in connection with this Plan may elect one of the following options:

- a. Accept the Workforce Adjustment status as of the effective date.
- b. Submit a notice of resignation from employment to be effective no later than the reduction date.
- c. Apply for another position for which the employee is qualified. To ensure full consideration for any

open and available position, the employee must apply as outlined in the regular hiring process.

d. Elect retirement, if eligible, to be effective no later than the reduction date.

If contacted by a prospective employer or the State Labor and Workforce Development/Employment Security Office, the University will verify that affected employees were not separated for cause. Additional information will be made available by the Human Resources Department.

Applying for Other Jobs:

Employees affected by the workforce adjustment are encouraged to regularly visit the TSU website at <https://jobs.tnstate.edu> and apply for any available positions during the next 12 months. The former employee is responsible for informing the University of their current mailing address, email, and telephone contact information. When possible, the University will notify separated employees of a vacancy within their same classification by telephone, email, or certified mail sent to the employee's last known address. The former employee shall respond in person, by electronic mail, or by certified mail no later than the fifth working day after receipt of University notification.

To ensure full consideration for any job, employees must apply through People Admin, the electronic application portal for any vacancy they are interested in. Employees who qualify and are selected for positions will be paid at the current rate budgeted for the position at that time.

Benefits Eligibility:

Annual Leave—Employees separated under this Plan will be paid for accumulated annual leave up to the maximum allowance at the time of separation. Employees will receive a check on the earliest possible payroll following separation. Separating employees should contact the payroll office for information on accumulated annual leave payments.

Sick Leave—Employees cannot be paid for unused sick leave upon employment separation. Employees who leave the university in good standing after having worked on a full-time, continuous basis for at least one (1) full year and, after that, return to state service on a full-time basis, the employee shall be credited with all sick leave to which they were entitled at the time of the previous termination, provided certification of such entitlement is received from their last employer if other than the new employer; provided further that if the employee has had interim employment with the System or any other agency of the State of Tennessee of less than one (1) year, he or she shall not be disqualified from receiving credit for sick leave to which he or she is otherwise entitled because of prior employment with the state.

Longevity Pay— Employees are eligible to receive longevity pay during the notification period and are separated from the state government. In that case, the employee will receive their longevity payment in the same payroll as the annual leave balance is paid. Time spent on layoff status will not count toward total state service, longevity, seniority, or retirement.

Unemployment, COBRA, and Employee Assistance Program Benefits—Employees enrolled in group life, accident, disability income, or other coverage and whose insurance plans are paid through payroll deduction must contact the benefits staff in Human Resources to determine whether their benefits and coverage are portable. If so, the employee must pay the total monthly premium for the coverage.

- **COBRA**—A reduction is a qualifying event under the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1974 (COBRA). Employees with group health insurance can continue group coverage for 18 months after termination. Affected employees are eligible to continue health benefits on a self-pay basis.
- **EAP**—The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a confidential counseling and referral service for all employees covered under a state-sponsored plan. Employees who accept COBRA will be

eligible for EAP for 18 months, the same amount of time they are eligible for COBRA benefits. As long as an employee is enrolled in health coverage, their eligible dependents are also eligible for services, regardless of whether they are enrolled in health coverage. All services are strictly confidential and can be accessed by calling the contracted vendor. For further information, employees should call (800) 308-4934.

Bumping Rights:

Employees shall not have "bumping rights" or any entitlement to a non-competitive appointment to another classification.

TSU FY 2025 Workforce Adjustment

TCI - Workforce Restructure Initiative *			
Divison	Base Salaries	Salaries Plus Benefits	Personnel
Academic Affairs	\$2,380,124	\$3,213,167	35
Administration	\$411,310	\$555,269	10
Athletics	\$835,294	\$1,127,646	15
Business and Fiance	\$1,946,294	\$2,627,497	21
Student Affairs	\$2,413,376	\$3,258,058	33
Grant Total	\$7,986,398	\$10,781,637	114
Prelim E&G Budget		\$185,568,900	
Percent		6%	
* As of October 30, 2024			



DRAFT

Tennessee State University

RETENTION PLAN

2024-2027

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Guiding Principles

The Tennessee State University Office of Academic Affairs (OAA) as an update to the 2022 Retention Plan that was designed by the Office of Enrollment Management has articulated the following guiding principles and commitments to retain students and preparing the for academic achievement and student success

We will:

- Provide every student with academic advising, academic coaching, mentoring, and career counseling.
- Provide every student with the information, access to resources and services, and opportunities vital to successful engagement in the TSU community.
- Provide guidance and support for students to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to achieve academic and personal success.
- Accept responsibility and accountability for consistently measuring evidence of student success.

These principles are intended to identify a broadly shared understanding by the TSU campus community – students, staff, and faculty – of its commitment to student success and to assist the Retention Task Force and the campus community in prioritizing investments in student success initiatives.

Retention Task Force Charge

Charge:

The TSU OAA Student Success Retention/Progression Team (RPT) undertakes the on-going study and data reporting of the retention, graduation, and program completion of TSU students. The RPT also engages in best practice research, continuous improvement action development, and assessment activities aimed at driving, guiding, and supporting student success.

Introduction & Background

During the Spring and Summer semesters of 2022, members of the University's leadership team identified goals and strategies for moving the University toward higher levels of student persistence and success, based in part on the existing Enrollment Management Plan and informed by the current Strategic Plan, a Pathway to Excellence (FY 2020-2025). Various retention and success initiatives that were part of the previous Enrollment Management Plan, as well as more recent efforts, were identified as "actions" by which the University could seek to reach its persistence and retention goals as stated in TSU's published Key Performance Indicators.

After careful review of trend data, best practices, and TSU resources, a new framework for the Student Success and Retention Plan, consisting of these Goals/Strategies/Actions, was developed by the Retention Task Force. A key component of the revised plan was the integration of a reporting and assessment process for the actions identified as a means to meet the University's goals.

Goal I: NACADA Academic Advising Model

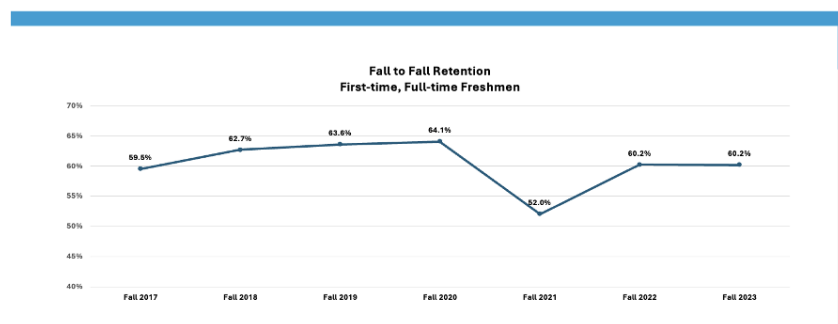
NACADA Academic 2+2 Advising Core Competencies Model OFFICE OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS STUDENT SUCCESS CENTER

NACADA Academic Advising Core Competencies Model (2017) was developed by the association's [Professional Development Committee](#). The purpose of the model is to identify the broad range of understanding, knowledge, and skills that support academic advising, to guide professional development, and to promote the contributions of advising to student development, retention, progress, and success.

- **Primary Role Advisors** for self-assessment and evaluation, and to guide learning, career development, and advancement.
- **Faculty Advisors and Advising Administrators** to clarify academic advising roles and responsibilities, and to highlight the contributions of academic advising to teaching and learning.
- **‘Student Success Specialist’: Advising Supervisors, Managers, and Mentors** to identify strengths and areas for staff development, and to guide hiring, training, and evaluation.
- **Learning Professionals, Trainers, and Researchers** to support curriculum development, establish learning priorities, and advance the scholarship in the field

NACADA serves as an advocate for effective academic advising by providing a Consulting and Speaker Service and funding for Research related to academic advising.

Overall Retention Rate 1st Freshmen (5 Years Trend)



STUDENT SUCCESS 2+2 MODEL:

Intensive Freshman Experience

- All freshmen are required to enroll in a 1-credit freshman seminar course each semester that meets weekly: UNIV 1000 (refer to updated syllabus)
- Each seminar has no more than 25 students and is led by a Student Success Specialist advisor.
- Seminar focuses on academic skills, orientation to campus resources, career exploration, and socialization.
- Advisors meet with each student individually twice per month to check-in on academic progress, challenges, and goals.
- Advisors identify students at risk of not progressing or withdrawing and provide targeted intervention programs.
- Sophomore year, students transition to faculty advisors in their intended major but Success Specialists still provide supplemental support.

Supportive Learning Cohorts

- Freshmen are placed into learning cohorts of no more than 25 students based on intended major or general interests.
- Each cohort is assigned a Student Success Specialist advisor to provide academic and career advising for two years.
- Cohort takes two general education courses together each semester for community and study support.
- Advisors implement ongoing skills workshops for topics like time management, study skills, mental health etc.
- Advisors meet with students at 30, 60 and 90 hour checkpoints to ensure on track to graduate in 4 years.
- Cohort model continues into sophomore year with same advisor providing guidance on major selection.

Retention/Progression Monitoring-Tracking:

Ongoing Degree Works, program of study (CPOS), and progression tracking to keep students on pace for graduation. Specialists review each advisee's Degree Works, CPOS and credit hours completed at the 30, 60, 90 and 120 hour checkpoints.

Any issues that could delay graduation are immediately addressed. The key aspects are small student-advisor ratios, frequent mandatory advising meetings, targeted intervention programs, learning communities, and continuity of advising support into the sophomore year. This intensive student-centered approach could help significantly increase retention and progression rates.

2+2 Advising Proposal:

1. To combine all units impacting for two years advising, academic coaching, mentoring, and career counseling together into one cohesive Student Success Center.

- 1st Year Freshmen Advising (5)
- Academic Coaching (5)
- 1st Generation Coordinators (8)
- Women Mentoring Initiative (1)
- Black Men Initiative (1)
- Adult Learners (2)
- Online Learners (1)
- Veterans (1)

Exceptional Learners (2)

2. The staff would be retitled as “**Student Success Specialists**” serving in a role for addressing general education advising, academic coaching, mentoring, and career counseling.

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Goal II – Creating a Sense of Belonging through Common Educational Experiences

In an effort to empower, support, and prepare our new first-year students for success at Tennessee State University, all new students will be afforded a Common Educational Experience that will include, but will not be limited to: CADENCE Core, First Year Seminars/Workshops, Service-Learning, Career Exploration Sessions and program-embedded experiential learning activities. TSU Core will apply to all majors in all Academic Colleges providing students an increased set of options in meeting overall Core education guidelines.

Strategy:

1. Ensure that each student is assigned to a Student Success Team responsible for guiding, supporting, and assisting students with connecting to university resources.
2. Ensure TSU: CADENCE Core is applicable and available in the beginning of each students' educational journey for all majors in all academic colleges.
3. Ensure processes and procedures for changes to students' majors do not hinder students' matriculation.
4. Establish guided pathways that demonstrate potential choices to students' majors based on college coursework already completed.

Action:

1. Each student will be assigned to a Retention Coordinator, Academic Advisor, Student Development Coach, and a Mentor who will serve as their Student Success Team during their first year.
 - a. Target: Retention Coordinators will track academic progress for each student utilizing the Early Alert system during weeks three and six of the semester. Faculty shall report any student with low academic performance on classroom assessment during these designated times.

- b. Target: Retention Coordinators will monitor class attendance weekly and contact students immediately who have missed three or more classes during the first half of the semester.
 - c. Target: Retention Coordinators will establish monthly networking events each semester within each college/major to ensure students building connections within their majors.
 - d. Target: Retention Coordinators will host monthly career exploration seminars each semester to ensure students apply educational experiences toward life and career goals.
 - e. Target: Retention Coordinators will facilitate mentoring opportunities through high achieving peer mentors, faculty, and successful recent alumni within each academic college.
 - f. Target: Retention Coordinators along with the Student Success Team will review each student record at midterm and finals to ensure students are making academic progress.
2. TSU Retention Task Force, Academic Departments, Advising – Verify all degree maps for all academic majors are updated and available for each student to best understand the path to completion of the individual major.
- a. Target: Ensure that 100% of degree programs will have an articulated guided pathway to meet program requirements by the start of each semester and is available to each student in Degreeworks.
 - b. Target: Continuously review all courses in each academic program through the assessment process (e.g., academic assessment, high attrition/high failure (HA/HF) reporting) by the start of each semester.
 - c. Target: Develop an assessment plan and handbook for the Cadence Core by the end of Fall 2022.
 - d. Target: Coordinate with Academic Affairs to provide training for all Freshman Faculty by the end of each semester.

3. TSU Retention Task Force, Academic Departments, Advising – Review all policies and procedures to ensure changes to students’ majors/minors enable student progression.
 - a. Target: Review all policies and procedures by the end of each academic year.
 - b. Target: Ensure that 100% of change requests to student’s majors/minors are completed within five business days during the academic school year.
 - c. Target: Develop advising procedures for students who change from one major discipline to another major discipline that explores the reason(s) for the major change.
4. TSU Retention Task Force, Academic Departments, Advising – Establish guided pathways for degree programs.
 - a. Target: Verify 100% accuracy of all programs in Degree Works by the end of 2024 academic year.
 - b. Target: Develop student training for Degree Works by the end of Fall 2024.

Overall Success Measures:

1. Improved time to degree (e.g., 4-year and 6-year graduation rates, THEC Funding Guidelines for Performance Funding).
2. Reduced D, F, W, and X grades in TSU Core Courses.
3. Reduced number of transfers from TSU to an external institution year over year.
4. Reduced number of students with undeclared majors who have earned more than 29 undergraduate credit hours.

Goal III – Resources for Teaching and Learning

Both faculty and students shall have sufficient academic resources to be successful in the classroom. Faculty shall have sufficient professional development opportunities, technology training, and institutional support to promote success in the classroom. Students shall have sufficient academic opportunities for success, tutoring opportunities, and other student-centered support services.

Strategy:

1. Develop and formalize a communication plan for all student-centered campus resources.
2. Increase participation in student success opportunities (e.g., Writing Center, Academic Advising, Success Coaching).
3. Provide enhanced professional development opportunities focused on curricular or pedagogical methods and best practices for faculty.
4. Provide technology training focused on innovative implementation and best practices related to educational technology applications for faculty.

Action:

1. All Co-Curricular and Support Units – All units must develop a Communication Plan
 - a. Target: Ensure that 100% of relevant units will publish communication plans by October 31, 2022.
 - b. Target: Ensure that 100% of communication plans will be assessed for website hits, myTSU application usage, emails/survey responses, etc. on an annual basis.

2. Office of Student Success, Center for Writing and Communication – Increase number of students who use Tutoring Services and Center for Writing and Communication.
 - a. Target: Increase percent of “unique” students who use services by 5% per year by the end of the 2024 academic year. (“Unique means only counted one time.)
3. Office of Student Success – Increase student participation in bridge programs.
 - a. Target: Increase student participation by 100% [of 2021 numbers] by the start of Summer 2025.
 - b. Target: Identify private, partner funding and begin application processes by Spring 2025.
4. Office of Student Success – Increase number of students who participate in TSU success coaching program.
 - a. Target: Increase student participation for students on probation by 5% for 2024 academic year.
 - b. Target: Increase student participation for students on early alert warning by 5% for 2024.
 - c. Target: Increase student participation in UNIV 1000 to 75% Fall 2024.

5. Office of Student Success – Develop Outreach Coaching Program for newly admitted First Generation and/or low-income students.
 - a. Target: Pilot Outreach Coaching Program 2024 academic year.
 - b. Target: Expand Outreach Coaching Program to all admitted First Generation and/or low-income students 2024 academic year.
6. Academic Affairs – Develop a Faculty Institute for Teaching First-Year Students that will provide faculty development opportunities that focus on curricular and pedagogical strategies for improving student success.
 - a. Target: Develop and offer faculty workshops on expanding opportunities for experiential learning while teaching first year students in all disciplines for 2024-2025 academic year.
 - b. Target: Develop and offer faculty workshops on curriculum and pedagogy for reaching at-risk populations (e.g., underserved races, underserved income levels, underserved academic status, adults 25 to 54 years of age, or as otherwise defined by ADHE Funding Guidelines) by the start of the 2024-2025 academic year.
 - c. Target: In collaboration with Office of Technology Services & Technology, provide technology training focused on innovative implementation and best practices related to educational technology applications for faculty by the start of the 2024-2025 academic year.

Overall Success Measures:

1. Improved time to degree (e.g., 4-year and 6-year graduation rates, ADHE Funding Guidelines for Time to Degree).
2. Increased student academic engagement rates.
3. Reduced number of students with undeclared majors who have earned more than 29 undergraduate credit hours.
4. Increased faculty internal professional development rates.
5. Reduced D, F, W, and X grade rates.
6. Improved progress for students participating in student success activities.

Goal IV – Integrated Academic and Career Advising

TSU shall offer high quality academic and career advising services that begin during the students' first recruitment activity and continue through their academic years and future success.

Strategy:

1. Provide goal oriented academic advising.
2. Connect students who are underperforming academically with appropriate, timely, and relevant interventions.
3. Develop intentional, ongoing, and integrated career and academic advising programming.
4. Incorporate an academic early alert system into advising and instructional practices.

Action:

1. Advising - Maintain consistent and supportive academic advising services throughout each student's relationship with TSU.
 - a. Target: Increase student satisfaction with academic advising services by 5% per year 2024 academic year.
 - b. Target: Increase student participation in pre-registration academic advising by 5% by the end of the 2024-2025 academic year.
 - c. Target: All program maps will be reviewed and updated annually by the department.

2. Advising, Information Systems & Technology – Maintain an academic early alert system and ensure campus community personnel are trained in its use.
 - a. Develop and implement intervention for students identified as at-risk by EAB and/or THEC Performance Funding Guidelines by the end of the 2024-2025 academic year.
 - b. Develop and implement training and evaluation procedures for faculty and staff use of the early alert system by the end of Fall 2024.
3. All Colleges (College Faculty Chairs/Dean), Retention Coordinators, Academic Advisors – Each college will develop intervention strategies specific to their programs.
 - a. Target: Deans, Faculty/Department Chairs, Retention Coordinators, Academic Advisors responsible for all majors will identify intervention strategies for students who are underperforming academically and/or “at risk” by leveraging existing resources by the start of the 2024-2025 academic year.
 - b. Target: Faculty advisors responsible for all majors will develop procedures to connect students to the identified existing resources by the start of the 2024-2025 academic year.
4. Alumni, Career Services, Advising – Develop ongoing programming that provides students of all levels opportunities to interact with alumni.
 - a. Target: Improve existing and develop new programming by the end of 2024-2026 academic year.
5. NACADA Advising – Develop major declaration timeline on or before the 29 credit hour milestone.
 - a. Target: Develop advising and major declaration protocol for students with undeclared majors to meet the 29 credit hour milestone by the end of the 2022-2023 academic year.
 - b. Target: (Post-Development) All students must declare a major.
6. Advising, Career Services – Develop online tools that allow students to align interests and TSU degree options with potential careers and salary information.
 - a. Target: Develop and implement online tools by end of 2024-2025 academic year.

Overall Success Measures:

1. Improved time to degree (e.g., 4-year and 6-year graduation rates, ADHE Funding Guidelines for Time to Degree).
2. Increased student pre-registration academic advising rates.
3. Increased student academic advising satisfaction rates.
4. All students with a declared major.

DRAFT

Goal V – Student Engagement and Development

TSU faculty and staff shall engage students in holistic development of and contribution to a success-oriented campus community culture.

Strategy:

1. Provide timely and sufficient student engagement and development communication.
2. Enhance participation in established programs (i.e., success services, tutoring).
3. Increase faculty and staff use of high impact practices (e.g., first year seminar, learning communities, writing-intensive courses, collaborative assignments and projects, undergraduate research, diversity/global learning, service learning, internships, and capstones).
4. Increase student engagement and participation in recognized student organizations, honors societies, interest/affinity groups, and discipline related activities across the campus community.
5. Increase faculty-mentored undergraduate research, scholarship, and creative activity opportunities.
6. Expand student involvement in global learning opportunities.
7. Increase opportunities for service learning across the curriculum.

Action:

1. All Colleges (College Faculty/Dean), Retention Coordinators, Office of Student Activities and Leadership – Each academic college will develop initiatives specific to their programs for engaging students in student organizations, research, scholarship, creative activities, special events, etc., that are included on the college annual report and shared annually with the faculty and students. Initiatives should target the general student population, majors, minors, and students in the residential and online college programs.
 - a. Target: Develop engagement plans by the start of the 2025 academic year.
 - b. Target: Increase participation rate 5% per year beginning 2025 academic year.
2. Learning Communities (Residential Life, Honors College, Commuter Student Association, Online Learning Center) – Build a sustainable and effective framework of learning community programs.
 - a. Target: Increase participation rate in Learning Communities 5% per year by the end of the 2025-2026 academic year, or until maximum capacity is met.
 - b. Target: Increase Satisfactory Academic Progress of learning community students by 3% per year by the end of the 2025-2026 academic year.
3. Office of Global Initiatives – Faculty and staff responsible for international programs will seek to raise the academic progress of international students and diverse groups among the campus community.
 - a. Target: Increase participation rate of international students in campus programming by 5% per year beginning during the 2025 academic year.
4. Men’s Centers, Women’s Center - Increase student satisfactory academic progress of participants in the Black Male Achievement Initiative and the Women’s Center programs by 3% per year beginning of the 2025.
 - a. Target: Develop and implement a Student Advisory Board by the end of the Spring 2025 semester to identify current challenges faced by student peer groups and strategies to address challenges from student perspective.

b. , etc.) by the end of the Fall 2022 semester.

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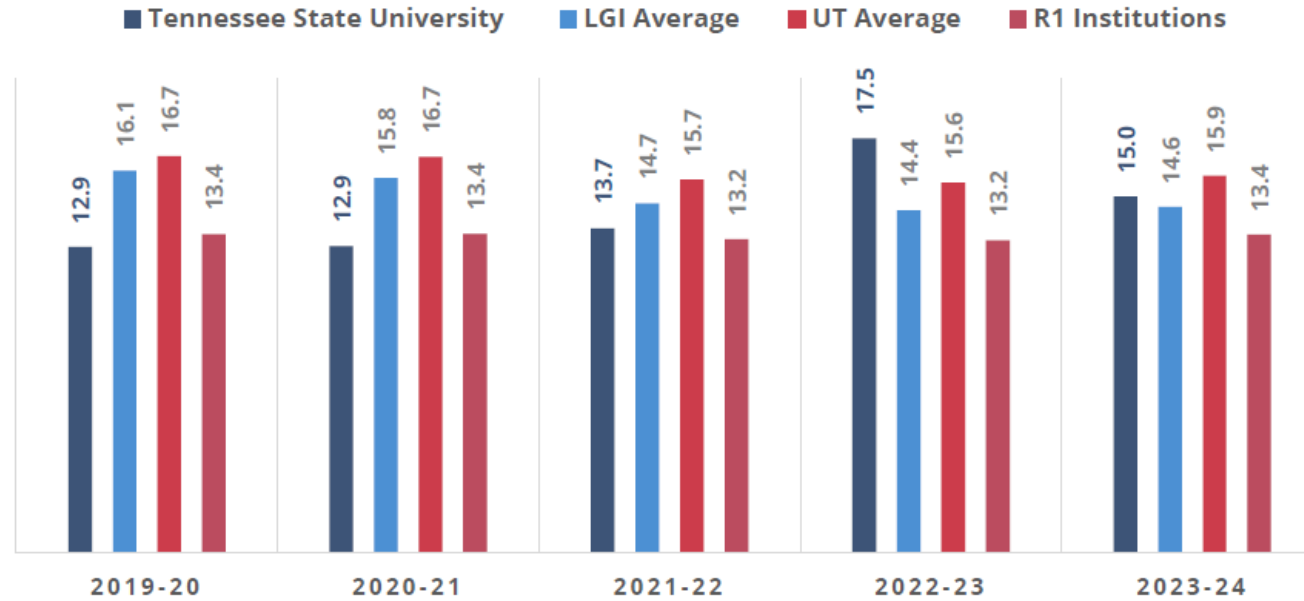
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LGI Ratios

TSU's undergraduate full-time enrollment (FTE) per instructional staff ratio has increased in the last few years, suggesting **student enrollment has grown faster than faculty hiring**.

For FY24, Tennessee State University had average faculty levels compared to university peers.

FIGURE 1: UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT FTE PER INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF



Source: 2024 Tennessee Higher Education Factbook (Student Participation) & Revised Operating Budgets (Positions).

Notes: Instructional staff includes all faculty positions, including adjunct instructors.

Locally Governed Institutions (LGI) Average: Includes all non-TSU LGIs.

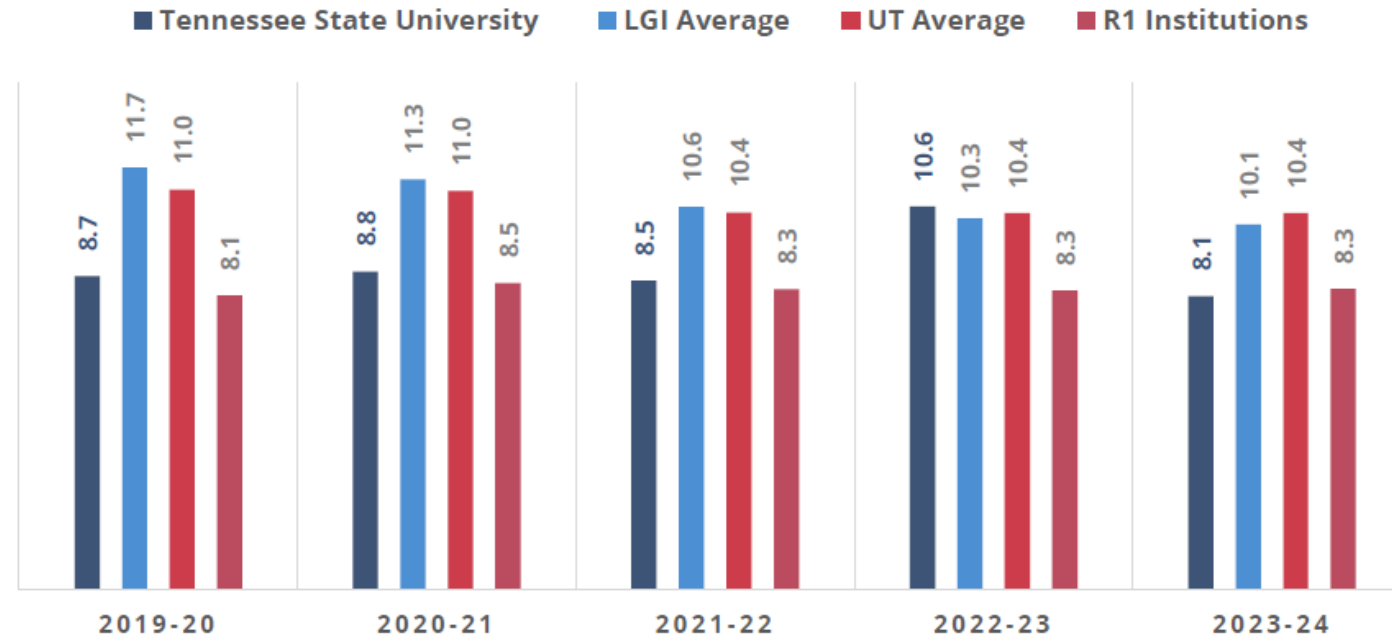
University of Tennessee System (UT) Average: UT Chattanooga, UT Knoxville, and UT Martin.

Carnegie Classification Research-One (R1) Institutions: Includes UT Knoxville and the University of Memphis.

Except for FY23, TSU's undergraduate full-time enrollment per non-instructional staff ratio has decreased over this period, suggesting **non-instructional staff hiring has grown faster than student enrollment**.

TSU generally has above average non-instructional staffing levels compared to university peers.

FIGURE 2: UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT FTE PER NON-INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF



Source: 2024 Tennessee Higher Education Factbook (Student Participation) & Revised Operating Budgets (Positions).

Notes: Non-instructional staff includes administrative support, professional, and clerical positions.

Locally Governed Institutions (LGI) Average: Includes all non-TSU LGIs.

University of Tennessee System (UT) Average: UT Chattanooga, UT Knoxville, and UT Martin.

Carnegie Classification Research-One (R1) Institutions: Includes UT Knoxville and the University of Memphis.



**IMPROVING CAMPUS EFFICIENCY:
COST SAVINGS AND SPACE
OPTIMIZATION WITH STRATEGIC
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR
SUSTAINABLE GROWTH**



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Introduction

Universities face rising utility costs, aging infrastructure, and increasing demands for sustainability, alongside inefficient space utilization, such as underused facilities and scheduling conflicts. These challenges strain budgets and hinder operational efficiency. Strategic optimization of utilities and space can deliver significant long-term benefits, including cost savings, improved facility functionality, and a reduced environmental footprint. This report outlines key challenges and solutions to help universities align resources with institutional goals.



Utility Cost Savings: The Case For Change

CURRENT ANNUAL UTILITY COST

TSU operates and maintains approximately 2.8M square foot. The current annual utility costs between FY18 and FY24 has increased by 12%. The annual utility cost in 2023-24 was \$6.5M.

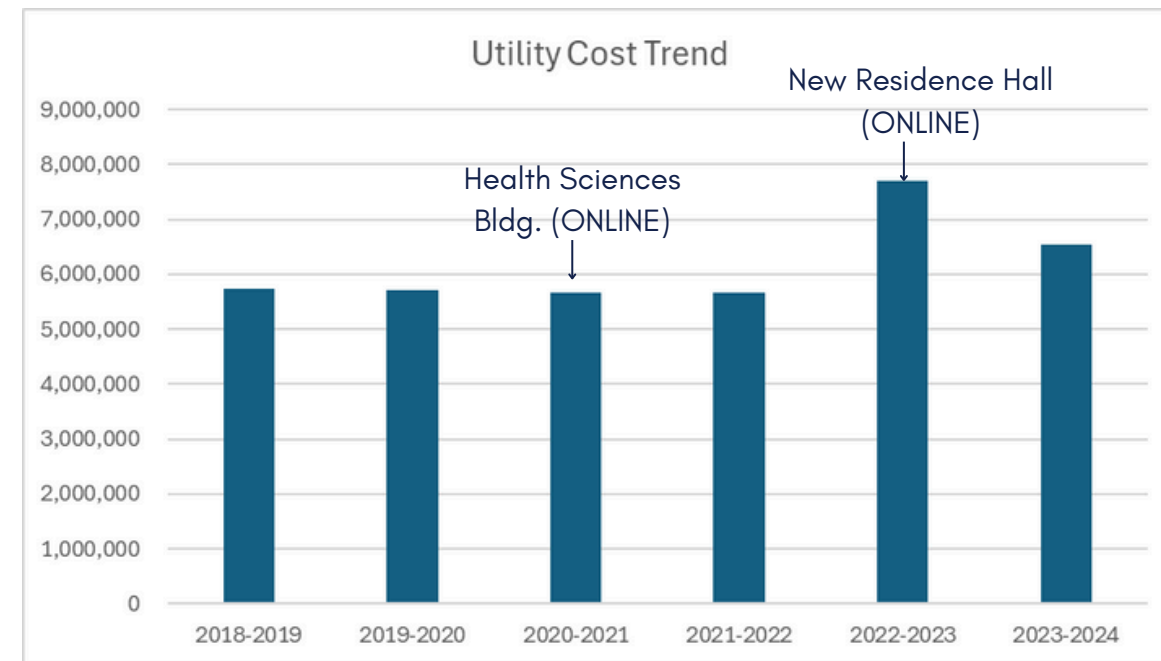


Figure 1: YOY Utility Cost Trend (\$)

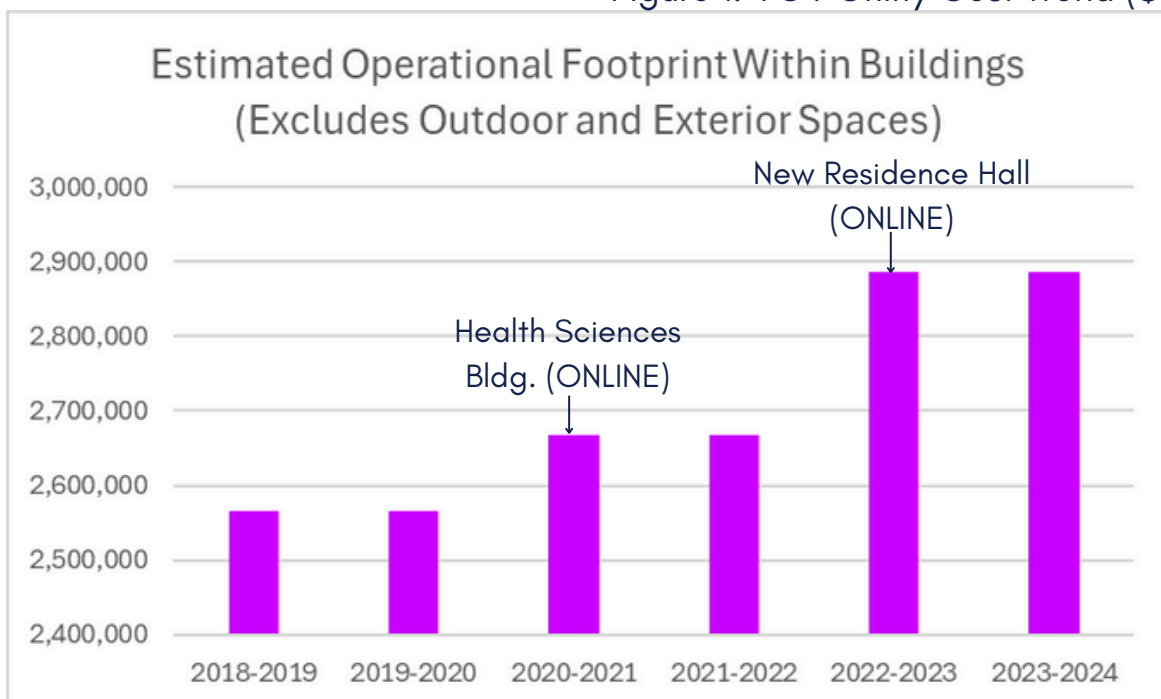
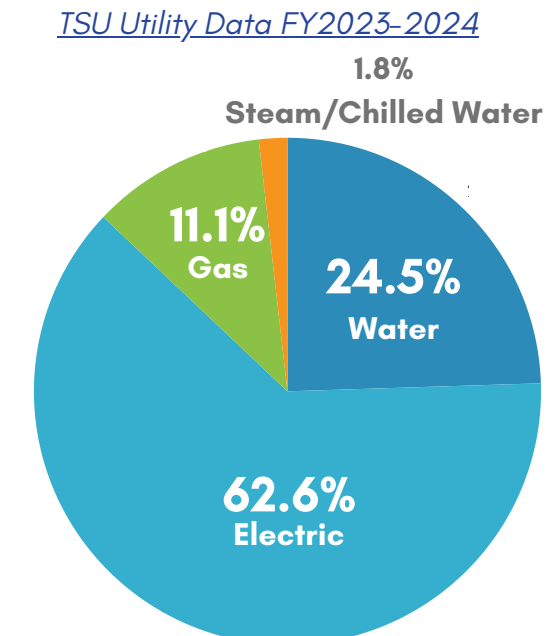
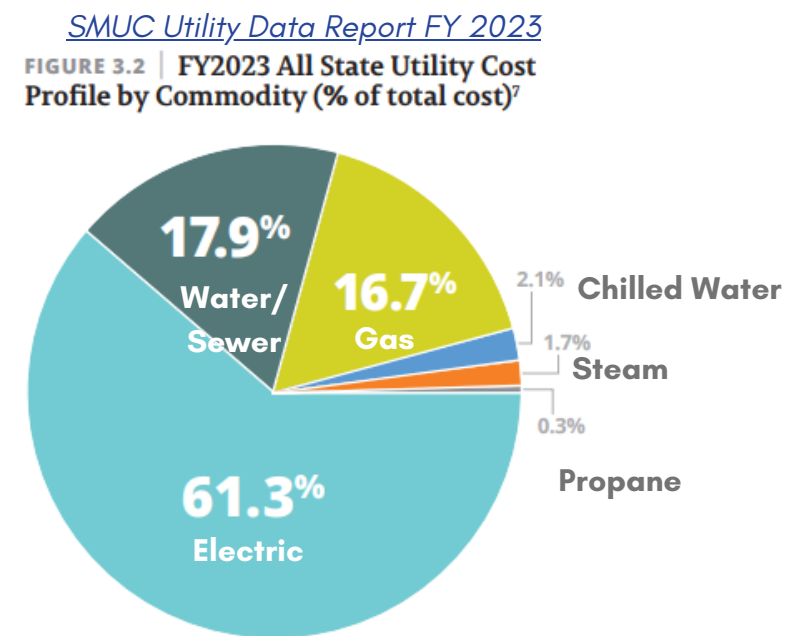


Figure 2: YOY Estimated Bldg. Operational Footprint (SF)

BENCHMARK ANALYSIS OF ANNUAL UTILITY COSTS

The State Facility Utility Management (SFUM) team, part of Tennessee's Department of Environment and Conservation, provides energy insights to government agencies and higher education institutions. Established in January 2017, SFUM aims to optimize energy use and save on utility costs for state properties by analyzing utility data and utilizing the Utility Data Management platform for monitoring expenses and promoting energy efficiency.

The below charts represents the annual utility cost in FY23 compared to TSU FY2023-2024 annual utility costs.



Findings:

TSU's utility cost is higher than the state benchmark (electric ~1.3% > benchmark, gas - ~5.6% > benchmark, water ~ 4.5% > benchmark). Although the State's benchmark of utility costs is within range of TSU's FY2023-2024, TSU will continue to pursue opportunities to realize reduced utility costs YOY.

(note for water cost comparison, TSU's utility invoices are not segregated to mirror the SMUC utility data).

Utility Cost Savings: The Case For Change

Utility costs at universities have increased for several reasons, many of which reflect broader trends in energy consumption, infrastructure, and economic pressures. Here are some key factors:

Rising Energy Costs

- Geopolitical tensions, especially the Russia-Ukraine conflict
- Rising energy demand due to electric vehicles and urban growth
- Shift to renewable energy requiring major investments and gradual coal and gas phase-out

Campus Expansion

- Campus infrastructure expansion requires more energy for new facilities
- Energy-intensive facilities like research labs and data centers consume significantly more energy than standard classrooms

Aging Infrastructure

- Older HVAC systems, lighting, and insulation may reduce energy efficiency and increase consumption
- Maintaining or replacing outdated systems can lead to higher temporary utility costs

Increased Technology Demand

- Universities depend on energy-intensive digital infrastructure, including servers, high-speed internet, and cloud computing
- Continuous 24/7 operations of many facilities raise energy demand

Environmental & Sustainability Goals

- Regulatory compliance can increase operational costs
- Investments in sustainable practices, like energy-efficient systems, require significant initial spending

Global Inflation & Supply Chain Issue

- Rising utility and maintenance costs due to inflation
- Supply chain disruptions causing delays and increased expenses

Climate Change

- More heatwaves, cold snaps, and storms increase energy needs for heating and cooling
- Protecting campuses from climate risks raises utility expenses

Student + Faculty Expectations

- Higher expectations for air quality, temperature control, and lighting can increase energy use
- Supporting technologies adds to energy consumption

To mitigate rising utility costs, many universities are adopting energy-saving measures, investing in renewable energy, and optimizing building management systems. However, these changes often take time to deliver noticeable cost reductions.

Utility Cost Savings: Key Strategies

To realize the benefit of a portfolio-wide reduction in cost requires energy and cost reducing systems, devices and equipment coupled with a change in habits, practices and behaviors by the end user and all that interact with our building and environment.

A

People + Practice RIGHT SIZE OPERATIONAL FOOTPRINT

#1 **Goal:** Operational footprint aligned with faculty and student growth strategy through FY30.

Data To Inform:

- vision and master plan for students and faculty
- target student profiles for attraction and retention
- decisions on schools to sunset or expand

#2 **Goal:** Take under utilized wings, floor and/or entire buildings off-line to allow utility usage to be scaled back.

Data To Inform:

- access control trends and foot traffic
- gaps in course schedules
- utility consumption by building, adjusting for seasonality and peak times

#3 **Goal:** Current space review to maximize space use and activation opportunities

Data to Inform:

- conduct a space audit for compliance with THEC occupancy standards
- optimize shared, flexible, and collaborative spaces
- explore programming for outdoor space utilization
- create separate faculty offices outside classroom buildings for utility adjustments

B

People + Practice EMBED COST REDUCTION PRACTICES

#1 **Goal:** Educate and motivate students and staff to support efficient practices

Data to Inform: how are students and staff interacting with the building and what opportunities are there to influence behavioral and practice change

C

Systems and Equipment MEASUREMENT AND TRACKING

#1 **Goal:** Monitor monthly consumption and costs for issue identification, analysis, and correct departmental chargeback appropriations.

Data To Inform:

- current state: square foot rate for utilities by operational footprint
- future state: submeters with monthly utility reads by building

D

Systems and Equipment COST SAVINGS, UTILITIES AND DEVICES

#1 **Goal:** Have a portfolio wide integrated platform that communicates with devices and equipment

Data To Inform:

- identify easy head-in install of devices and equipment that can be installed within 2-3 months, continue effort with fully integrated system (future state)
- prioritize installation and connectivity based on current and future state master plan

Utility Cost Savings: Case Study

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

CHALLENGES: Rising utility usage from campus growth; increase in utility expenses and environmental consequences, lack of awareness and involvement from the campus community and their role in sustainability efforts.

SOLUTIONS:

- Technological Integration:
 - Building Automation Systems (BAS): Optimizes real-time energy use in HVAC and lighting.
 - Solar Power: Installed solar panels generating over 25 MW of clean energy.
 - Energy-Efficient Equipment: Replaced old HVAC systems and traditional lighting with high-efficiency models.
 - Water Conservation Systems: Utilized low-flow fixtures and xeriscaping to reduce water usage.
- Policy and Practice Changes:
 - Energy Management Program: Mandated energy conservation practices.
 - Green Building Standards: New constructions meet LEED certification for energy efficiency.
- Student + Staff Engagement:
 - Education Campaigns: Launched "Sustainability at ASU" to raise awareness.
 - Competitions and Incentives: Energy-saving challenges for residence halls with rewards.
 - Sustainability Ambassadors: Empowered students to lead conservation efforts.

Arizona State University (ASU) adopted a thorough strategy to enhance utility consumption efficiency across its campuses. By incorporating cutting-edge systems, modern equipment, and promoting a cultural transformation among students, staff, and faculty, ASU realized substantial utility savings while progressing towards its sustainability objectives.

RESULTS

- Utility Savings:
 - 30% reduction in energy consumption over five years.
 - Water usage decreased by over 10%, saving millions of gallons.
- Financial Impact:
 - Annual utility savings of \$5 million.
 - Projected total savings of over \$100 million in 20 years.
- Cultural Shift:
 - 80% of students and staff engage in conservation.
 - Sustainability is a core aspect of ASU's identity, influencing research and partnerships.
- Recognition:
 - ASU named one of the most sustainable universities in the U.S., receiving awards for renewable energy and conservation efforts.



Utility Cost Savings: Projected Benefits

Financial Impact

- **ENERGY SAVING DEVICE INSTALLATION:** Leverage JLL to install energy saving head-in or surface mounted devices during facilities maintenance activities.
 - LED Lights: Utilizes less energy and can have a 1-3 year initial investment payback
 - Occupancy Sensors: occupancy sensors reduce energy consumption with a payback period of 1-3 years. Prioritize install in restrooms, bath/shower room, classrooms and labs,
- **UTILITY APPROPRIATIONS:** Leveraging federally approved grants and funding sources for extraordinary expenses be reappropriated to the correct funding source using a per square foot utility chargeback formula. It is anticipated that a 4-6% reduction in TSU's campus operations annual utility cost.
- **PRORATA ALIGNMENT:** Revise outdated prorata policies and rates.
- **UNUSED SPACE ADJUSTMENTS:** Mothball unused spaces and scale utilities (as applicable) to minimize campus wide utility costs.

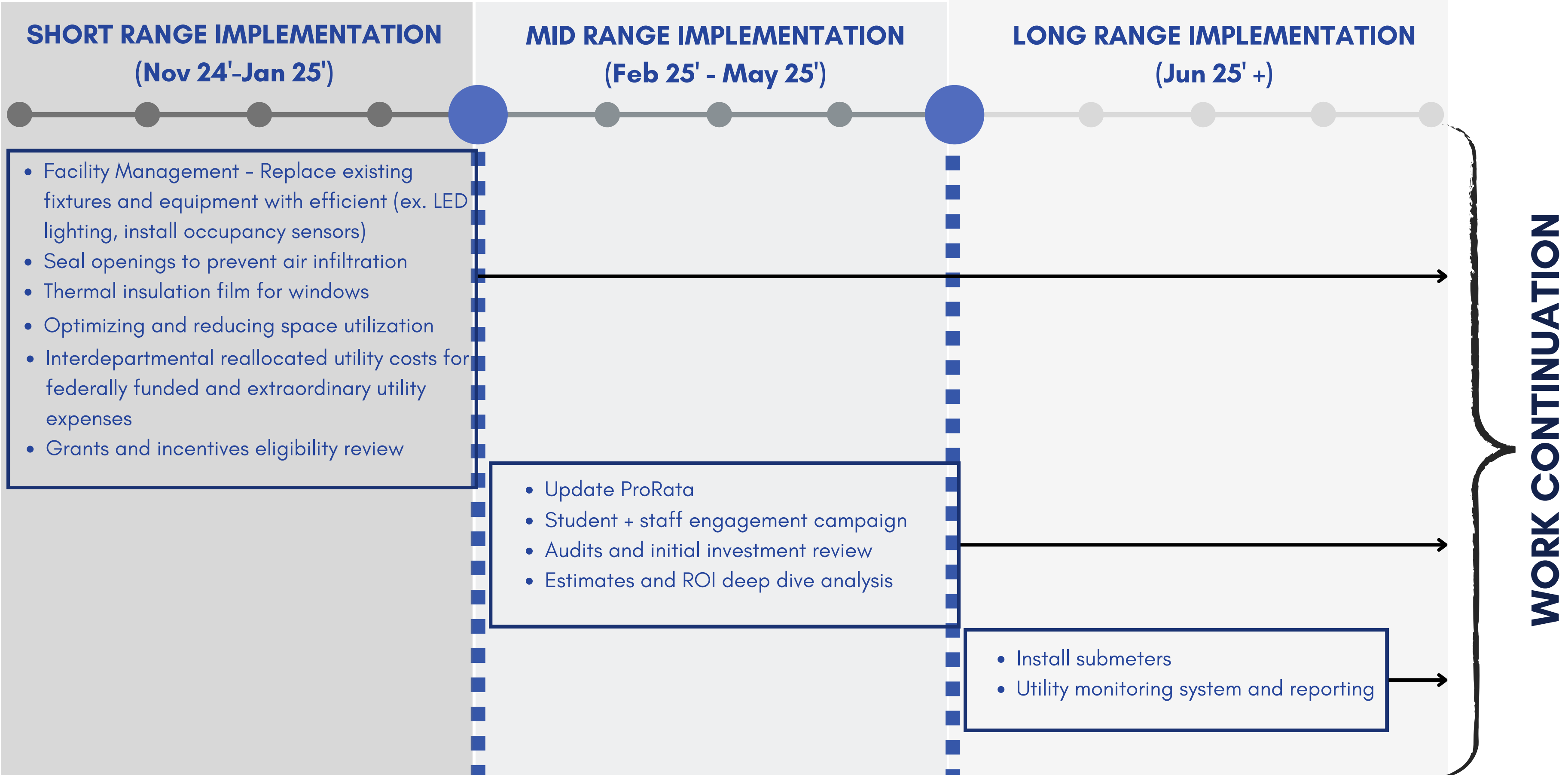
Operational Efficiency

- **SERVICE AREA OPTIMIZATION:** Adjust and scale building support and services according to the spaces that are occupied and those that are not.

Engagement + Sustainment

- **CULTURE AND COMMUNITY:** Initiating awareness and engagement campaigns that enrich the university culture will encourage both students and staff to recognize their contributions to cost reduction efforts and actively engage in sustainability practices.
- **STUDENT AND STAFF ATTRACTION AND RETENTION:** Showcasing and promoting TSU's sustainability initiatives will attract and retain environmentally minded students and staff, nurturing a sense of responsible citizenship.
- **EDUCATION:** Utilize energy conservation and space optimization as educational opportunities to enhance the university's existing curriculum.

Utility Cost Savings: Proposed Timeline



Utility Cost Savings: Next Steps

- Continue Utility Audit: Identify inefficiencies and prioritize high-impact improvements.
- Quick Wins: Implement LED retrofits, occupancy sensors, and smart thermostats.
- Funding: Secure grants, rebates, and internal investments.
- Engage Campus: Promote energy-saving behaviors with campaigns and incentives.
- Track Progress: Monitor usage, set goals, and report results.



Utility Cost Savings: Conclusion

Tennessee State University is making strides toward achieving gradual utility savings by reallocating internal funds, replacing systems, devices, and equipment with more efficient alternatives, identifying underused spaces and making adjustments, and engaging students and faculty to gain support and maintain these changes.

Through these initiatives, we are not only reducing expenses, but we are also showcasing our leadership and dedication to creating and maintaining a sustainable campus while educating our community in the process.

“Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly. I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be. This is the interrelated structure of reality.”

– Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.