



# ASCENSION TO EXCELLENCE

Florida Memorial  
University

Strategic Plan | October 2020



# ABOUT THE PLAN:

This Ascension Plan establishes and reinforces the future focused vision, mission, and aspiration of Florida Memorial University through aligned and achievable strategies and activities and thoughtfully, considers and addresses the challenges and opportunities facing Florida Memorial University and higher education generally.

Through this Ascension Plan, Florida Memorial University will strengthen its service to the its students, providing a high-touch and supportive environment that propels them to excel academically, socially, physically, and spiritually, faculty, staff, alumni, and partners.

Furthermore, our strategic plan shall aid with integrating FMU into the greater community and elevating the University's prominence on a global level. Goals outlined herein are designed to help build a sound and sustainable future for our beloved FMU.



# CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE



Since the fervent prayer offered by the Missionaries in 1879 that birthed Florida Memorial University, we have been developing students to their fullest potential through robust initiatives designed to create opportunities for student's academic, professional, and personal growth.

Despite the many challenges in higher education, today Florida Memorial University is poised to continue on its rich history and remarkable past as we prepare to chart a new path to an even more bold and powerful future. This Strategic Plan will provide guidance over the next few years that will ensure a comprehensive experience for our students, the elevation of our brand to a flagship university, a campus-wide commitment to excellence, growth, and sustained enrollment.

Each member of the Florida Memorial University Board of Trustees is keenly aware that we are embarking on an exciting and ambitious strategy. Since that that fervent prayer we have learned that we are strongest and most effective when working together on a common mission, vision, and focus. We are tremendously grateful to President Hardrick and all the members of the Strategic Plan Committee for their hard work and diligence in performing this task, and to the many members of the university community who participated in what was truly a collaborative endeavor.

This is an ideal time to be a Florida Memorial University Lion.

*William C. McCormick, MBA*

Chairman



# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Our culture of inclusive strategic planning has led to decades of success. A profound transformation is disruptively sweeping the higher education landscape. Every component of higher education has changed (What is delivered? How it is delivered? To whom it is delivered? And, at what cost?) and will continue to evolve and dominate global conversations. These realities have caused a revolution throughout universities across the globe. The international marketplace requires well-trained talent that can compete in a globalized economy, exude cultural competency, and demonstrate an ability to adapt to rapidly evolving technology and trends. This is certainly the case for institutions here in South Florida, and the world over. Universities that rise to this challenge will actualize unprecedented opportunities to develop a new generation of leaders, innovators, and talent for the global marketplace. These new leaders must be globally minded, socially conscious, and innovatively talented to help solve and prevent many issues that confront our world. Florida Memorial University always rises to the challenge .

For over 140 years, Florida Memorial University has assessed its environment and made adaptations to strengthen its foundation and uphold its mission and commitment to its students, faculty, staff, and community. This obligation is based on the belief that Florida Memorial University provides hope and opportunity to thousands of hard-working students and their families who depend on the university to help families increase the quality of their lives.

Florida Memorial University offers students an intense, rigorous learning experience in a supportive academic community, celebrating the intellectual energy that flows from its diverse student population. As part of their university experience, students gain the problem solving, critical-thinking, and leadership skills necessary to meet the challenges of the 21st century. They learn from outstanding faculty (roughly 80-percent of faculty members hold terminal degrees) who are scholars in their fields, utilize the latest evidence-based teaching practices, publish research in academic publications, and present scholarship at industry conferences. Students work shoulder-to-shoulder with faculty on meaningful research inside and outside the classroom and engage in service learning that impacts our community and our nation.

Florida Memorial's Ascension Plan is our roadmap to turn ideas into action and achieve transformational impact. We must draw our strength from each other and give our students and community our absolute best. This plan shall guide us in honoring the past while ascending to a brighter future that will leave a legacy originally intended by our founders.

*Dr. Jaffus Hardrick*

President



# STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS



## WHAT IS THE STRATEGIC PLAN?

It is a living document providing guidance over the next few years on how to strengthen our service to our students and in-turn, chart a course to a more sustainable future

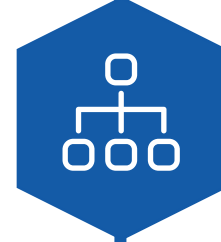


## WHO AUTHORED IT?

The Strategic Planning Committee, inclusive of a highly engaged cross-section of the entire Florida Memorial University community, came together in this collaborative effort to articulate a forward-thinking plan representative of all institutional constituents



# STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS



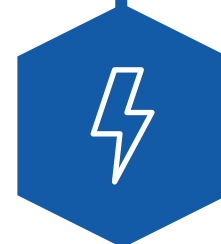
## HOW IS IT ORGANIZED?

A series of strategies, objectives, and metrics across five (5) key strategic pillars have been identified to turn our ideas into action in a way that leads to transformative impact



## HOW WILL IT BE IMPLEMENTED?

Cross-functional teams responsible for strategy tracking and goal attainment will be established, ensuring each department is engaged and creating department-level strategic plans that contribute to the broader Ascension Plan's objectives



## WHY NOW?

A profound transformation is disruptively sweeping the higher education landscape with every component (*what is delivered? how it is delivered? to whom it is delivered? and, at what cost?*) dominating global conversation and concern. FMU must strengthen its foundation and adapt to new demands to meet the needs of those we serve. We again, must **rise** to the challenge.




# Vision

As South Florida's HBCU (Historical Black College and University), Florida Memorial University will be a premiere urban-serving liberal arts educational institution preparing the next generation of global leaders.

# Mission

The mission of Florida Memorial University is to instill in students the importance of becoming global citizens through life-long learning, leadership, character, and service, which will enhance their lives and the lives of others.





# THE ASCENSION PLAN

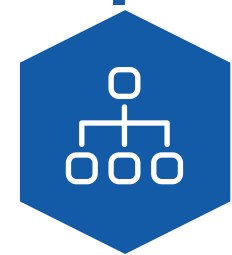
## Aspirational Goal

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**F**lorida Memorial University, a Historically Black University (HBCU), will be the premiere urban-serving educational institution, focused on social mobility, preparing students to be the next generation of global leaders.

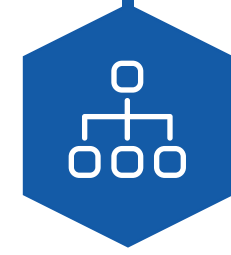


# STRATEGIC PLAN PILLARS



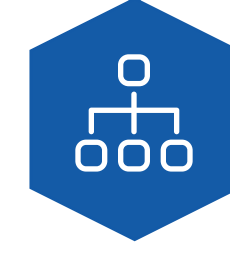
## STUDENT SUCCESS

Foster a student-centric environment where everyone is responsible for student success & rich, transformative experiences are at the center of learning



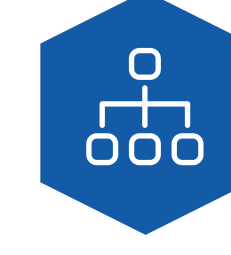
## ACADEMIC QUALITY

Establish an environment where academic excellence is the standard & faculty provide exceptional learning opportunities, to produce outstanding scholarship



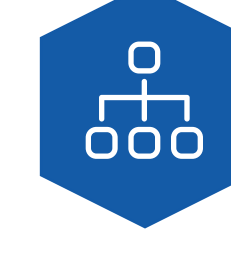
## FINANCIAL SOLVENCY

Create & expand a sustainable financial base to fund future growth of the university



## OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Strengthen operations to ensure that students, internal & external constituents consistently receive exceptional service



## RELATIONSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Improve current relationships & develop new partnerships



# STUDENT SUCCESS

## STRATEGIES

01

**ESTABLISH** an exceptional student-centric environment that promotes academic success throughout the university and offers a quality student experience that develops the whole student

02

**STRENGTHEN** academic support programs that improve retention and foster timely graduation

03

**IMPLEMENT** pre-collegiate and summer programs to strengthen college readiness and success among elementary, middle, and high school students

04

**PROMOTE & SUSTAIN** a safe campus environment that supports diversity, a high quality of life and learning that positively impacts retention through graduation

05

**STRENGTHEN** admissions process to increase and diversify enrollment (GPA, location, first-generation etc.)





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## IMPLEMENTATION

- 1.1. Provide iROAR guest speakers focused on assisting students with job placement
- 1.2. Create a culture of campus pride through events, learning activities, athletics, and traditions
- 1.3. Provide improved Florida Memorial University orientation
- 1.4. Create a nurturing/supportive environment
- 1.5. Create a curated chapel experience that embraces the diversity of religions and faith practices





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## IMPLEMENTATION

- 2.1. Develop career preparation courses, labs, tutoring and workshops
- 2.2. Establish paid internships and secure rewarding careers for graduates
- 2.3. Create fully immersed career experiences
- 2.4. Develop more opportunities for professional certification programs
- 2.5. Develop programs for careers in demand by job market
- 2.6. Offer preparatory workshops and programs for students looking to attend graduate/professional schools
- 2.7. Provide students with technology
- 2.8. Recruit and retain staff committed to student success





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## IMPLEMENTATION

- 3.1.** Provide training and resources to local high school counselors in underserved communities in the targeted areas
- 3.2.** Prepare underserved populations through summer bridge programs and various academic enrichment initiatives, especially in the STEM disciplines.
- 3.3.** Partner with schools in the tri-county area to create a robust pre-collegiate experience and strengthen dual enrollment programs





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## IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1. Create a safe space for LGBTQ+ individuals, women, international students, nontraditional and transfer students, veterans, active duty military, and religions to ensure that everyone feels appreciated
- 4.2. Diversify student and faculty population
- 4.3. Provide diversity and inclusion training
- 4.4. Provide a well-trained campus security staff that recognizes the dignity of each student and their duty to protect and serve
- 4.5. Invest in upgrades of campus infrastructure
- 4.6. Develop and implement an aggressive deferred maintenance plan
- 4.7. Build new state-of-the-art apartment-style residence halls and a student center





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## IMPLEMENTATION

- 5.1.** Develop partnerships with secondary schools in the target markets
- 5.2.** Establish pre-collegiate summer magnet programs that provide a positive experience for students from a variety of backgrounds
- 5.3.** Develop a variety of pathways to admission based on academic preparedness to ensure that students are on-boarded with the right support





# ACADEMIC QUALITY

## STRATEGIES

01

**OPTIMIZE** Academic Programs that are responsive to Florida Memorial University's mission and are systematically reviewed for sustained quality, relevance, and excellence to meet the challenges of a highly competitive and global workforce,

02

**STRENGTHEN** iROAR program to ensure students graduate ready for the global marketplace through the building of power skills, meaningful internships, and experiential learning

03

**DEVELOP & IMPLEMENT** innovative teaching models that embrace technology and engage students for improved student learning

04

**PROVIDE** students with opportunities for credentialing in critical skill areas through certifications and badges

05

**ENHANCE** Honors Program to provide a robust, concierge experience from admissions to graduation

06

**INSTITUTE/INCREASE** continuing, non-credit education opportunities to engage the life-long learner and provide skill development programs for working professionals, and non-traditional students, life-long learners





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## IMPLEMENTATION

- 1.1. Strengthen Florida Memorial University's Aviation, Business, Education, and STEM Programs
- 1.2. Develop programs in health care, including a Physician Assistant program
- 1.3. Use a data-driven process to identify programs to meet critical global workforce needs and assess the viability of existing and new programs (including online programs)
- 1.4. Establish a robust program evaluation process that includes the assessment of resources and program quality
- 1.5. Ensure discipline specific accreditation where available, and regular external program review in the absence of the accreditation
- 1.6. Engage students in rewarding undergraduate research and learning experiences
- 1.7. Experiential learning center where students will be exposed to scenario-based learning
- 1.8. Create a robust grant development office to increase research and apply for relevant funding opportunities
- 1.9. Prioritize funding for faculty presentations at international conferences and major national conferences





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## IMPLEMENTATION

- 2.1.** Provide iROAR guest speakers focused on assisting students with job placement
- 2.2.** Expose students to higher paying career opportunities
- 2.3.** Provide curated student internships experiences that are designed to lead to permanent employment in the field
- 2.4.** Establish corporate, government, and community partnerships to create opportunities for experiential learning
- 2.5.** Develop a robust student internship program in every major that includes a strong preparation process
- 2.6.** Establish on-campus internships and service-learning opportunities in particular to address the needs of international students





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## IMPLEMENTATION

- 3.1. Examine opportunities for problem-centered learning across disciplines
- 3.2. Explore innovative learning models that reconsider the traditional classroom and course model and focus on more student-centered learning





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## IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1. Evaluate options for students to obtain stackable certificates and credentials that would make them more employable
- 4.2. Establish credentials and badges available to every program





# ACADEMIC QUALITY



## STRATEGIES

05

**ENHANCE** Honors Program to provide a robust, concierge experience from admissions to graduation

06

**INSTITUTE/INCREASE** continuing, non-credit education opportunities to engage the life-long learner and provide skill development programs for working professionals, and non-traditional students, life-long learners

## IMPLEMENTATION

- 5.1.** Develop and implement a summer honors pre-college program to recruit honors student and provides an opportunity to earn college credit in high school
- 5.2.** Create a process to groom honors students for external graduate fellowships from the start of the first year
- 5.3.** Establish partnerships for external funding of Honors programs for scholarships and programming, including study abroad
- 5.4.** Establish an honors mentorship program with high achieving alumni and other partners
- 5.5.** Develop a robust service learning component for the honors programs study abroad



# ACADEMIC QUALITY

## STRATEGIES

**05** **ENHANCE** Honors Program to provide a robust, concierge experience from admissions to graduation

**06** **INSTITUTE/INCREASE** continuing, non-credit education opportunities to engage the life-long learner and provide skill development programs for working professionals, and non-traditional students, life-long learners

## IMPLEMENTATION

- 6.1.** Remove barriers to recognition and accreditation of prior learning and qualifications
- 6.2.** Consider programs and offerings that improve knowledge, skills, and competencies for personal, civic, social, and employment that support Florida Memorial University's competitive advantage
- 6.3.** Evaluate evening and weekend classes and/or online programs for adult learners





# FINANCIAL SOLVENCY

## STRATEGIES

**01 EXECUTE** a comprehensive enrollment and retention plan that stabilizes enrollment

**02 DEVELOP** a data-driven business model that ensures Florida Memorial University can rise to the top of its chosen market through affordability, robust recruitment, and relevant academic programming

**03 BRAND & MARKET** Florida Memorial University for greater local, national, visibility by telling the Florida Memorial University story

**04 DEVELOP & IMPLEMENT** a comprehensive marketing plan that will brand Florida Memorial University as an institution known for its academic and operational excellence

**05 DEVELOP** a comprehensive fundraising strategy that includes a capital campaign

**06 DIVERSIFY** revenue streams





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## IMPLEMENTATION

- 2.1.** Create and execute a comprehensive enrollment and retention plan that stabilizes enrollment
- 2.2.** Establish enterprise resource management process that provide data assessment, reporting, and tracking mediated by software and technology
- 2.3.** Develop working groups formed on key initiatives of the Ascension Plan
- 2.4.** Develop Department and program-level plans linked to Ascension Plan
- 2.5.** Establish systems of accountability focused on fiscal management to drive cost containment and affordability
- 2.6.** Provide events in communities of prospective student populations
- 2.7.** Engage current students as ambassadors and mentors to local high school students
- 2.8.** Increase student body to 3,000
- 2.9.** Redesign core organization to improve capacities in teaching research (research, programming, and diverse student populations)
- 2.10.** Divest from programs that do not differentiate Florida Memorial University from the competition
- 2.11.** Invest in programs that drive competitive advantage





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## IMPLEMENTATION

- 3.1. Tailor marketing message, complete with reasons as why to choose Florida Memorial University
- 3.2. Promote diversity, values, and offerings
- 3.3. Establish a marketing and public relations staff office
- 3.4. Highlight faculty and students on the website
- 3.5. Invest in campus beautification and facilities improvements





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## IMPLEMENTATION

4.1. Establish goals, and identify strategies and activities that target the Florida Memorial University demographic





# FINANCIAL SOLVENCY

## STRATEGIES

**05** **DEVELOP** a comprehensive fundraising strategy that includes a capital campaign

**06** **DIVERSIFY** revenue streams

## IMPLEMENTATION

**5.1.** Launch Florida Memorial University \$25M in Five Fundraising Campaign





# FINANCIAL SOLVENCY

## STRATEGIES

**05** **DEVELOP** a comprehensive fundraising strategy that includes a capital campaign

**06** **DIVERSIFY** revenue streams

## IMPLEMENTATION

- 6.1.** Develop private/public partnerships with corporations, businesses, and foundations to create institutional support for funding, scholarships, jobs internships, and grants
- 6.2.** Compete for grants through private sector as well as state and federal agencies
- 6.3.** Engage alumni, faculty, staff, students, and trustees to create philanthropic opportunities for the university
- 6.4.** Provide fee-based programs to reduce reliance on tuition
- 6.5.** Explore produce farm on underutilized land
- 6.6.** Provide need-based federal, state, and institutional financial support to increase access and degree attainment for low-income students and students of color





# OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

## STRATEGIES

- 01** **CREATE** an environment where faculty and staff are inspired, supported, motivated, and fully engaged
- 02** **LEVERAGE** technology to enhance operational excellence and compliance
- 03** **IMPROVE** efficiencies, service excellence, accountability, compliance, and shared services
- 04** **OPERATE** with the highest level of integrity and transparency
- 05** **IMPLEMENT** effective best practice standards that enhance transparency, accountability, department efficiency and university-wide culture of total customer service





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## IMPLEMENTATION

- 1.1.** Implement initiatives to increase morale, appreciation, collaboration, and shared governance
- 1.2.** Develop award system for faculty and staff excellence in core areas
- 1.3.** Re-establish promotion and tenure for faculty
- 1.4.** Re-establish retirement fund matching
- 1.5.** Provide robust professional development for faculty and staff
- 1.6.** Implement a leadership training program for staff and faculty who wish to advance to administration





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## IMPLEMENTATION

- 2.1. Develop a robust IT Infrastructure
- 2.2. Identify and implement best practices in technology
- 2.3. Develop and implement a schedule for technology upgrades
- 2.4. Put technology in the hands of the user





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## IMPLEMENTATION

**3.1.** Make necessary upgrades throughout the campus

**3.2.** Establish digital workflows and approvals processes for routine operations

**3.3.** Implement a strong performance management system that is not predicated on a once per year evaluation





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## IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1. Establish strong policies and procedures
- 4.2. Implement a clear code of ethics and a robust code of conduct
- 4.3. Allow alumni to feel like their voices are being heard and they are important to the future of the school





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## IMPLEMENTATION

- 5.1.** Create a customer service training program University -wide
- 5.2.** Place customer evaluations at the point of service and implement a continuous improvement process based on the evaluations
- 5.3.** Ensure safe environment for students, faculty, staff, and university assets





# RELATIONSHIP DEVELOPMENT

## STRATEGIES

01

**IMPROVE** community and donor relations – Be fully engaged in the South Florida communities by building networks and promoting Florida Memorial University’s agenda

02

**DEVELOP** public/private partnerships with corporations, community organizations and small businesses to support academic growth

03

**ESTABLISH** Florida Memorial University as an integral part of the community and a source for solutions to critical challenges





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## IMPLEMENTATION

- 1.1. Increase Florida Memorial University’s presence and reputation locally, state-wide, and nationally
- 1.2. Develop a program to excite, energize, and catalyze alumni to support for University initiatives, recruitment, and resource raising.



# RELATIONSHIP DEVELOPMENT



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**IMPROVE** community and donor relations – Be fully engaged in the South Florida communities by building networks and promoting Florida Memorial University’s agenda

02

**DEVELOP** public/private partnerships with corporations, community organizations and small businesses to support academic growth

03

**ESTABLISH** Florida Memorial University as an integral part of the community and a source for solutions to critical challenges

## IMPLEMENTATION

**2.1.** Create expansive and reciprocal network between students and organizations

**2.2.** Develop Florida Memorial University into a pipeline for corporations/ organizations



# RELATIONSHIP DEVELOPMENT



## STRATEGIES

01

**IMPROVE** community and donor relations – Be fully engaged in the South Florida communities by building networks and promoting Florida Memorial University’s agenda

02

**DEVELOP** public/private partnerships with corporations, community organizations and small businesses to support academic growth

03

**ESTABLISH** Florida Memorial University as an integral part of the community and a source for solutions to critical challenges

## IMPLEMENTATION

- 3.1.** Establish a Center for Social Justice
- 3.2.** Develop relationships within the African Diaspora to increase engagement and training, sponsor revenue generating programs and increase student enrollment from across the Diaspora
- 3.3.** Institutionalize rewards (e.g. merit increase, promotion, release time) for faculty research and faculty and staff service in support of the community as appropriate





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