



HT



FROM FIRST TO FOREMOST

HUSTON-TILLOTSON
UNIVERSITY
STRATEGIC PLAN 2024-2034



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



In the ever-changing realm of higher education where knowledge reigns supreme and innovation is cultivated, I am proud to remark about the venerable institution known as Huston-Tillotson University. This bastion of learning has stood tall for 150 years, with its roots entwined in the rich tapestry of academic excellence.

In 2022, I was honored to be selected as the seventh President and CEO of the only historically Black institution of higher education in Central Texas. During my first year, I was asked more times than I can count to share my vision for HT. And today, I am pleased to share that vision, which I shaped with intentionality and garnered with a collaborative spirit. I present to you, “From First to Foremost,” a strategic plan that stands as a beacon of hope and a roadmap to the future for Huston-Tillotson University.

Much more than just words on paper, this plan represents a sacred pact — a covenant forged by the collective voices of the university’s diverse community and stakeholders. From the wise elders of the East Side and our alumni to the bright-eyed students, from the tireless faculty to the visionary trustees, all have joined hands in shaping the destiny of this esteemed institution.

This is truly OUR PLAN – yours and mine.

But what exactly does this grand plan entail? Well, dear reader, prepare to be energized! For at its heart lies a commitment to transformation – a bold vision where every corner of the university is in harmony towards a common goal. No stone is left unturned, as the new HT Austin pledges to nurture an environment where academic prowess meets real-world impact, where students’ dreams take flight and soar beyond the confines of the classroom.

And how, you might wonder, will this magnificent journey unfold? How will we elevate ourselves from being known proudly as the first institution of higher learning in the city of Austin to the foremost institution for innovation? The answer: Through thoughtful strategies that will require your help and your infectious generosity. From the development of effective marketing and recruitment strategies to the enhancement of educational innovation, we are actively positioning ourselves for long-term success. And the adventure of going from first to foremost does not stop there. HT also vows to be a stalwart ally in the community, a beacon of inspiration for budding entrepreneurs and innovators, a welcoming haven for lifelong learners, while simultaneously building up our infrastructure to serve as the living room for learning and innovation in downtown Austin.

Thus, as you embark on this epic odyssey with us, remember this: “From First to Foremost” is not merely a plan—it is our destiny writ large. With every step we take, every lesson we learn, and every dream we chase, we will shape our future; and in so doing, improve our economy in the state of Texas and beyond. Won’t you please join us? Together we shall chart a course that will lead Huston-Tillotson University from its humble beginnings to the very forefront of greatness.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Melva K. Wallace". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Melva K. Wallace, Ph.D.
President and CEO

INSTITUTIONAL PROFILE

Huston-Tillotson University, located in the heart of East Austin on a 23-acre, tree-lined campus, has the proud distinction of being Austin's first institution of higher education. On February 28, 2005, Huston-Tillotson College became Huston-Tillotson University and started another chapter in its continuing legacy. With an enrollment of approximately 1,000 students, mostly of whom are African-American, HT is home to students from various racial ethnic and religious backgrounds, thereby fostering a diverse and inclusive campus community.

Since 1875, the sons and daughters of HT have made a dramatic difference in the quality of life for the communities and individuals they touch. Huston-Tillotson is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to offer associate, bachelor's, and master's degrees. As such, more than 2,000 of the University's graduates currently live and work in the Austin metropolitan area, thereby contributing to the greater Austin community, the economic growth and development of Central Texas, and the global society.

Huston-Tillotson's academic programs are facilitated by qualified faculty members, many of whom are leaders in their academic disciplines. To date, the University maintains its reputation as a teaching university with a stellar faculty and a place where students can achieve their goals. Within the ranks of the forty faculty, nearly 80% of the full-time members have a terminal degree in their teaching fields. Among the faculty are authors and other recognized scholars from prestigious programs such as the Fulbright Scholarship Program, Henry C. McBay Research Fellows Program, Piper Professors, and Sam Taylor Fellowship Programs. Faculty spend their summers completing research in their field, studying at the New York Faculty Institute, attending the UNCF/Mellon Faculty Seminar, engaging in international travel, and other initiatives that further define their specialized areas.

Furthermore, the University is deeply committed to cultivating leaders and providing activities that enhance learning inside and outside the classroom. The University embraces diversity. We consistently welcome students and faculty of diverse backgrounds, interests, and talents. As we continually lay a foundation to grow and retain our students, we are increasing our ability to serve them with Centers of Excellence, enhanced learning and study spaces, and innovative peer-based learning services. Further, while we will provide curriculums that reflect academic programs in high-demand fields, we will continue to promote spirituality, critical thinking, science, technology, innovation, and entrepreneurship as our foundational values.

Notwithstanding, HBCUs are facing some compelling and challenging questions in a post-COVID pandemic era. Now more than ever, institutions of higher learning have had to rethink their business models and conduct strategic planning, particularly in an indefinite and increasingly competitive educational marketplace. The pandemic tested the adaptability and agility of colleges and universities, forcing them to effectively pivot and quickly adopt new methods of educational service delivery that are safe, effective, and cost-efficient. In addition, shifting demographic trends and economic considerations fuel a preference for asynchronous learning and a heightened demand for more flexible and affordable online educational options.

In a broader perspective, racial and social injustices, health disparities, and economic inequalities are bringing into sharper focus the roles progressive colleges and universities might play in formulating and implementing innovative solutions to these problems. The escalating scale and complexity of these problems will require thoughtful collaboration with other responsive organizations and industries. In this context, HT must reexamine its strategic direction and forge new strategic partnerships predicated on its aspirations and fulfilling its distinctive mission.

Therein, HT must continue to plan, prepare, train, equip, and organize for the future; design and offer a model for sustainable tuition and fees; increase financial stability through alternative funding revenue streams; substantially increase endowments with more aggressive fundraising among philanthropists and other individual donors (including alumni and alumnae) and foundations; implement alternative and effective teaching models, create high demand market-driven curriculums; recruit more competitive students and embrace innovations. Therefore, the University is poised to present a strategic plan that will guide this institution's decision-making over the next decade. We are confident that attention to the noted challenges on our campus will result in a reimagining of our future and serve to replenish us in doing what we do best, namely, to serve students.



HUSTON-TILLOTSON HISTORY

Tillotson College dates to 1875 when the Congregationalists (now known as the United Church of Christ) worked with the “freedmen,” the descendants of slavery, to establish a secondary school. The secondary school eventually became Tillotson College and Normal Institute. Over three years, the Institute changed to Andrews Normal School, a junior college, a women’s college, and a senior college. The roots of Samuel Huston College date to 1876 when the Reverend George Warren Richardson, a Methodist minister from Minnesota, leased St. Paul Methodist Episcopal Church in Dallas, Texas, as the site for a school for the colored youth of Dallas. A fire destroyed St. Paul, and the school was relocated to a temporary site and then to the Colored Methodists Church of America. Eventually, the Methodist West Texas Conference agreed to relocate the school to Austin, Texas, and Wesley Chapel Methodist Episcopal Church, now known as Wesley United Methodist Church. Huston-Tillotson College, chartered in 1952 by the State of Texas, represents the merger of Tillotson College and Samuel Huston College. Following the merger, Huston-Tillotson College became the sole provider of higher education for African Americans in Central Texas until the landmark case of *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), which launched the period of desegregation. Huston-Tillotson College officially changed its name to Huston-Tillotson University, effective February 28, 2005.



STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS AT HUSTON-TILLOTSON

With the endorsement, enthusiastic support, and collaborative input of the Huston-Tillotson Board of Trustees, President Melva K. Wallace brought forth this robust strategic planning process by engaging the campus community and the University's various constituency groups in developing a ten-year strategic plan to launch on the eve of the university's historic sesquicentennial year of 2025. As you will read, this plan outlines bold and aggressive goals to be achieved by 2035.

This plan, which outlines bold and aggressive goals to be achieved by 2035, highlights the University strengths, while underscoring the importance of engaging with external organizations and agencies that share mutual goals. It surveyed the higher education landscape to determine current and foreseeable demographics, workforce trends, and critical needs throughout the Greater Austin metropolitan area, the nation, and the global community.

From the outset, this 10-year roadmap involved a decidedly transparent and engaging process. Accordingly, President Wallace introduced this planning initiative to the University community in January 2023 and, by March 2023, appointed a Strategic Planning Steering Committee. The committee comprises faculty, students, staff, administrators, deans, and representatives from the local community.

The immediate charge of the Steering Committee was to reexamine the University's vision, mission, and core values to ensure their alignment with the future aspirations and mandates of the institution. The Committee developed and executed a structured and systematic planning process. Project tasks, milestones, and deliverables were identified and approved. The scope of work is to conduct internal environmental scans to determine the current state of the University and collect and interpret data/surveys from various internal and external constituents about the current and foreseeable direction of the campus. The committee further conducted focus groups and town hall meetings with internal and external constituents, including members of the Board of Trustees.

After naming Dr. Beverly Downing as committee chair, President Wallace solicited the support of a national consultant organization that provided demographic information, student outcome data, and sufficient quantitative benchmarks to permit the measurement of the committee's proposed goals and objectives. Subcommittees and task team assignments drove the committee's work.

Subcommittees integrated strategies and scrutinized their results. Their respective efforts included identifying preliminary goals and implementing strategies, developing metrics, and monitoring procedures, drafting the report, and incorporating feedback.



STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND THREATS (SWOT ANALYSIS)

Of a preliminary nature, the Steering Committee took stock of a number of notable institutional strengths that point to opportunities for sustainable growth. These strengths provide competitive advantages that can and should be effectively leveraged over the next ten years.

STRENGTHS

1. Strong reputation as a producer of high performing students who are critical thinkers.
2. Growing diverse student body and a welcoming inclusive environment.
3. Geographic location (Urban-Vibrant Austin, TX metropolitan region, East Austin).
4. Small private Liberal Arts institution.
5. Faith-based affiliation with The United Methodist Church and the United Church of Christ.
6. Diverse, dedicated, and expert faculty, administrators, and staff.
7. Healthy shared governance process, constituent engagement, and broad-based support.
8. Comprehensive and individualized support structure that transforms students of every background to excel and overcome difficult socio-economic barriers.
9. Emphasis on student life and engagement fostering leadership potential.
10. Large and growing international-student population.
11. Strong, visionary executive leadership and management team.
12. A continuous focus on improving student success including retention and graduation.
13. Research capabilities and business/industry relationships.
14. Great financial value for the quality of education received.
15. Competitive.
16. Spirit of collaboration.

WEAKNESS

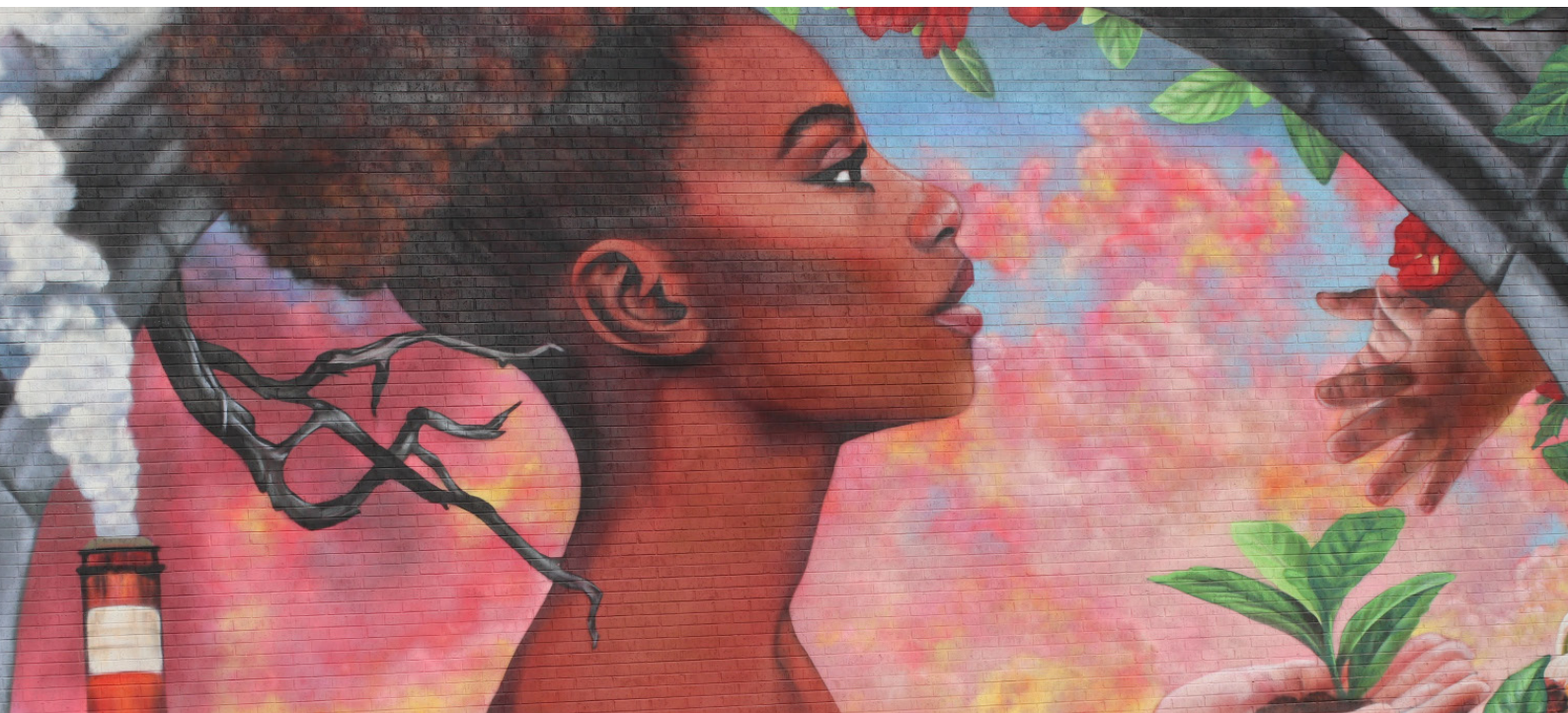
1. Aged campus infrastructure and buildings.
2. Limitations and competitiveness for unrestricted dollars.
3. Limited campus space for growth.
4. Technology
5. Capacity to retain talent in the Austin, TX market.
6. HT's total first-time student application pool has fluctuated greatly since 2018 resulting in unstable enrollment projections.
7. Ninety-two percent of HT students depend on financial aid signaling a need for increased institutional support.
8. Some curricular offerings and majors are suffering from persistent low enrollment, possibly due to low demand from students (and potentially the workforce).
9. Facilities asset value per student is not compatible with peer institutions.

THREATS

1. Free Tuition provided by Community Colleges.
2. Enrollment cliff.
3. New FAFSA Process.
4. Cost of Living increases.
5. Increase of bachelor's degree offerings by Community Colleges.
6. Economic Impact on Donor Giving.
7. Housing Cost in Austin, TX
8. Impact of AI on Academic Integrity

OPPORTUNITIES AND ASPIRATIONS

1. Build state of the art residential facilities to meet capacity demand.
2. Develop land assets as align with university Master Plan.
3. Launch a Capital campaign.
4. Increase brand visibility.
5. Promote and expand intercollegiate athletic programs.
6. Promote and expand intramurals and club sports.
7. Enhance the educational experience of students thereby preparing them to be responsible global citizens.
8. Expand and increase access to education and modes of delivery (robust online presence, California campus, accelerated programs).
9. Expand and improve institution advancement processes with a view to cultivate major gifts and investments.
10. Expand undergraduate and advanced degree-level programs and certifications.
11. Accelerate alumni giving and involvement.
12. Attract and retain additional quality faculty and staff.
13. Increase interdisciplinary projects through strategic collaborations and accelerate corporate sponsorships.
14. Improve infrastructure and optimize key business processes and supporting technologies.
15. Strengthen the relationship with local and global communities and foster greater economic, civic, and cultural development in the region through applied research and advocacy to help mitigate and help solve critical urban issues.
16. Expand programs to revitalize local neighborhoods and make a lasting impact on the quality of life of its residents.



UNIVERSITY VISION, MISSION STATEMENT & CORE VALUES

VISION STATEMENT

Huston-Tillotson University commits to cultivating the forerunners of innovation. We aspire to prepare graduates who are pioneers, socially engaged leaders and thinkers, demonstrated through academic excellence and service.

MISSION STATEMENT

Huston-Tillotson University is a faith-based historically black college and university (HBCU) nestled in the vibrant heart of downtown Austin, Texas. The institution provides a robust liberal arts and STEM education through market-driven certifications, associate, baccalaureate, master's degrees, and centers of excellence. HT remains committed to its legacy of educating a mosaic community of learners while cultivating innovative leaders who are dedicated to academic excellence and service.

CORE VALUES

Huston-Tillotson University is committed to the values of *Brightness, Bravery, Benevolence, Competence, Collaboration, and Spiritual Grounding*. These values represent the tenets that guide our actions, enable us to sustain our historical mission, and realize our strategic plan.

1. **Brightness:** Pursuing excellence and innovation in all endeavors.
2. **Bravery:** Courageously confronting challenges and embracing change.
3. **Benevolence:** Demonstrating kindness, empathy, and compassion towards others.
4. **Competence:** Striving for proficiency and effectiveness in all areas of operation.
5. **Collaboration:** Is our superpower. Fostering teamwork, creativity, cooperation and partnership.
6. **Spiritual Grounding:** Nurturing a sense of purpose, building faith, and a connection to higher principles.



SUMMARY OF HUSTON-TILLOTSON STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND BENCHMARKS

Huston-Tillotson's vision is to become a preeminent institution that embodies innovation, service, and academic excellence as it prepares high-performing graduates who are renowned as socially engaged leaders and thinkers. Therein, this plan, From First to Foremost, sets forth the next step in our journey to build upon the University's distinctive identity by focusing on five strategic priorities:

1) Enrollment & Student Success, 2) Expand Educational Programs, 3) Innovation, Community, and Entrepreneurship, 4) Improve Campus Life and Infrastructural Development, and 5) Support Transformative University Advancement Enterprises. Each strategic priority identifies ambitious goals to guide the University and its constituents in operationalizing the strategic plan.

Furthermore, through the achievement of these strategies, HT seeks to enhance the quality of the student educational experience, foster faculty excellence, invest in the community, and position HT to contribute to the workforce demands of the City of Austin, the state of Texas, and the global marketplace.

Key Performance Indicators and Strategic Priorities are as follows:

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS		
2024	METRICS	2034
1,025	Fall Enrollment Headcount	1,700
60%	Fall to Fall Retention Rate	70%
30%	Six-Year Graduation Rate	50%
1,924 (FTE)	Institutional Funds for Need-Based & Merit Support	3,848 (FTE)
22	Total Number of Undergraduate Programs	32
7	Number of STEM Programs	10
2	Number of Graduate Programs	4
3	Number of Certificate Programs	10
15	Number of Faculty & Staff Engaged in Sponsored Research	22
200	Number of Students Placed in Internships or Formally Engaged with Community Organizations	850
8.74%	Annual Alumni Giving Rate	25%
\$382,100	Annual Corporate Giving	\$3.0 M
\$2.3 M	Annual Individual Giving/Major Gifts	\$4.3 M
\$13.7 M	Endowment Fund	\$30.0 M

Specifically, the complete listing of priorities include:

- 1) Enrollment and Student Success
- 2) Expand Educational Programs
- 3) Innovation, Community, and Entrepreneurship
- 4) Improve Campus Life and Infrastructural Development
- 5) Support Transformative University Advancement Enterprises

HT STRATEGIC PRIORITY #1: ENROLLMENT AND STUDENT SUCCESS

- Increase enrollment annually over the next 10 years (3% for 2 years (1087); 5% for 5 years (1388), 7% for 3 years (1700).
- Increase Fall-to-Fall First Time student retention rate to 70%.
- Reach 50% or higher six-year graduation rate by 2034.

HT STRATEGIC PRIORITY #2: EXPAND EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

- Develop new undergraduate and graduate programs in alignment with market driven workforce demands in the Austin metropolitan area and region.
 - Complete market research on high demand programs/regional demands by 2025
 - Develop new certificate programs and non-credit offering aligned with workforce demands.
 - Develop new executive and graduate degree programs accessible in-person, online and hybrid.
 - Develop/Redesign fast-track accelerated undergraduate degree programs that enable students to graduate in less than four years.
- Number of faculty and staff activity engaged in sponsored research.
 - Increase number of new, junior, and emerging researchers with externally funded projects by 50% through 2034.
- Number and/or total grants funded will increase by 20% through 2034.
- Strengthen the religious studies program.

HT STRATEGIC PRIORITY #3: INNOVATION, COMMUNITY, AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

- Expand the relationship with our founding religious partners, The United Methodist Church and the United Church of Christ.
- Increase our faith-based partnerships.
- Expand the capacity and infrastructure of the Center for Academic Innovation & Transformation through a transformational investment.
- By 2026 establish a platform and resources to support students' attainment of licenses, inventions, and/or startups.
- No less than 850 students will be placed in internships or formally engaged with community organizations.
- Conduct community needs assessment beginning in 2025 and thereafter every two years to define programming and the effectiveness of collaborative initiatives.
- Develop a Philanthropy Center to educate the socially conscious student, volunteer, and practitioners in the field of Philanthropy.

HT STRATEGIC PRIORITY #4: IMPROVE CAMPUS LIFE AND INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT

- Complete HVAC installation of Mary E. Branch Gymnasium by 2025.
- Renovate and expand the religious life building.
- Break ground Phase 1 of new Student Housing by 2027.
- Complete planning and construction of new academic center by 2030.
- Complete Phase 2 of new Student Housing by 2032.
- Annually achieve a score of 80% or higher in APPA Standards Compliance.
- Annually achieve a customer satisfaction score of 80% or higher as assessed from internal and external constituents.
- Maintain an industry-standard, service-based IT environment that facilitates teaching, learning, and research through 2034.
- Hire, cultivate, train, exceptional professional talent.

HT STRATEGIC PRIORITY #5: SUPPORT TRANSFORMATIVE UNIVERSITY ADVANCEMENT ENTERPRISE

- Implement Capital Campaign.
- Increase alumni and corporate donor participation annually.
- Increase alumni recruitment and participation.

- Secure and invest incrementally endowed funding year-over-year to increase the endowment value by \$30.0 million dollars through 2034.
- By 2034, HT will establish a minimum of eight (8) endowed professorships to recruit, attract and retain leading faculty in the country.
- HT will establish a federal identification classification and achieve federal contractor status by 2026.

HUSTON-TILLOTSON STRATEGIC PRIORITIES, BENCHMARKS AND GOALS 2024-2034

HT STRATEGIC PRIORITY #1: ENROLLMENT AND STUDENT SUCCESS

- Increase enrollment annually over the next 10 years (3% for 2 years (1087); 5% for 5 years (1388), 7% for 3 years (1700).
- Maintain 70% or higher first-to-second year retention rate.
- Reach 50% or higher six-year graduation rate by 2034.
- Increase by 100% institutional funds allocated to support need-based and merit grants/scholarships.

GOAL #1.1 Increase the enrollment of domestic and international students while providing access to quality academic offerings and student success preparation to undergraduate, graduate, and adult learners.

- 1.1 Develop and implement comprehensive Enrollment Management Plans that include the following components:
 - A detailed Recruitment and Retention Plan
 - A detailed Financial Aid Plan
 - A detailed Marketing and Communication Plan
 - A detailed Student Engagement/Campus Life Plan
 - A detailed Academic Advisement and Mentorship Plan
- 1.2 Expand the recruitment of traditional students first-time full-time students (18 - 24 years).
- 1.3 Expand the recruitment of non-traditional students – adult learners (25 years and above).
- 1.4 Expand the recruitment of transfer students by developing articulation agreements with community colleges.
- 1.5 Increase the re-admission of students who have completed courses but exited prior to completion (earning a credential or degree).
- 1.6 Increase the recruitment of first-generation students.
- 1.7 Increase the recruitment of international students.
- 1.8 Increase the recruitment of graduate students.
- 1.9 Increase the recruitment of homeschool students.
- 1.10 Increase the dual enrollment program.

GOAL #1.2: Expand and enhance strategic recruitment initiatives to improve the academic profile of incoming cohorts.

- 1.2.1 Expand on-campus student housing options by adding new modern residential facilities.
- 1.2.2 Promote online/distance education as a viable option to deliver graduate and undergraduate education to increase enrollment.
- 1.2.3 Expand Memorandum of Understanding with institutions within the Austin Community College District to increase enrollment.
- 1.2.4 Initiate the establishment of Memorandum of Understanding with California colleges and universities to gain access to thousands of students.
- 1.2.5 Strengthen recruitment networks (i.e., alumni associations, organizations, premier schools, business & industry, etc.).
- 1.2.6 Expand recruiting resources, events, training for recruitment staff, and include student, faculty, alumni and staff ambassadors. Create recruiting materials that appeal to diverse student groups/types.
- 1.2.7 Create recruitment pipelines via pre-college programs with premier/college prep high schools (i.e., collaborate with schools/ colleges).

GOAL# 1.3: Elevate student success outcomes (retention, graduation rates, pass rates, etc.) to the high excellence range among peers and aspirational peers.

- 1.3.1 Increase competitiveness for high-performing students.
 - 1.3.1.1 Develop and implement a plan to increase need- and merit-based funding through private funding to increase access and ensure HT remains affordable to all students.
 - 1.3.1.2 Develop and enhance feeder opportunities with high schools and colleges across the country.
 - 1.3.1.3 Engage high-profile faculty and alumni to assist with the recruitment process.
 - 1.3.1.4 Showcase compelling student stories (i.e., securing high profile internships, undergraduate research, campus involvement, on multiple communication channels).
 - 1.3.1.5 Enhance school/college ambassadors' responsibilities to assist with recruitment and communication activities to potential scholarly students.
 - 1.3.1.6 Increase student diversity by aligning recruitment plans to reflect state, national and global demographics to increase enrollment.
 - 1.3.1.7 Align scholarship practices with peer and peer institutions.
- 1.3.2 Increase the allocation of financial support to address unmet need.
 - 1.3.2.1 Prioritize scholarship/funding support for students (i.e., recruitment of FTF, transfer and offering both merit and needs-based).
 - 1.3.2.2 Establish a sophomore and junior scholarship for students who performed exceptionally and did not qualify for any prestigious scholarships as incoming students.
 - 1.3.2.3 Perform analysis to determine the best allocation of institutional funds for both need and merit based scenarios.

HT STRATEGIC PRIORITY#2: EXPAND EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

- Develop new undergraduate and graduate programs in alignment with market driven work-force demands in the Austin metropolitan area and region.
 - o Complete market research on high demand programs/regional demands by 2025
 - o Develop new certificate programs and non-credit offering aligned with workforce demands.
 - o Develop new accelerated executive and graduate degree programs accessible in-person, online and hybrid.
 - o Develop/Redesign fast-track accelerated undergraduate degree programs that enable students to graduate in less than four years.
- Number of faculty and staff activity engaged in sponsored projects.
 - o Increase number of new and junior, faculty and staff with externally funded projects by 50% through 2034.
- Number and/or total grants funded will increase by 20% through 2034.

GOAL# 2.1: Reimagine and align academic offerings to address current and emerging workforce demands and increase degree production in programs of strategic emphasis.

- 2.1.1 Explore the need for new undergraduate and graduate programs in accordance with state, regional, and national market demands.
 - 2.1.1.1 Leverage program prioritization study to identify gaps/areas where new programs are needed.
 - 2.1.1.2 Strengthen strategic relationships and partnerships with business and industry.
 - 2.1.1.3 Expand high-wage, high-demand undergraduate /graduate academic programs to increase enrollment.
 - 2.1.1.4 Develop new accelerated executive and graduate degree programs accessible in-person, online and hybrid.
 - 2.1.1.5 Develop/Redesign fast-track accelerated undergraduate degree programs that enable students to graduate in less than four years.
 - 2.1.1.6 Prioritize areas that have potential for funding (i.e., track record of proven success).
- 2.1.2 Align career readiness competencies within academic programs to prepare graduates for a successful transition to the workplace and post-graduate life.
 - 2.1.2.1 Integrate academic certification credentials around career pathway.
- 2.1.3 Continuously evaluate, optimize, and enhance academic quality and reputation.
 - 2.1.3.1 Create an evaluation tool/template to audit existing and needed academic programs and related work-force demand trends.
 - 2.1.3.2 Prioritize strengthening of existing programs and development of needed in-person and online academic programs.
 - 2.1.3.3 Strengthen well performing academic programs with resources that build on their success.
 - 2.1.3.4 Periodically survey the campus to ensure our culture is “best practices.”
 - 2.1.3.5 Enhance support for departments that provide services supporting first-generation and underrepresented students.



GOAL# 2.2: Regularly review academic program curricula to identify and eliminate barriers to timely degree completion.

2.2.1 Assess, enhance, and expand academic programs and offerings.

- 2.2.1.1** Create template and evaluation tool/report process to facilitate academic program reviews.
- 2.2.1.2** Continue semi-annual assessment of academic and non-academic programs.
- 2.2.1.3** Use enrollment data to project and prioritize offering of courses to prevent delays in progression (i.e., sufficient offering of courses in sequence).

GOAL# 2.3: Nurture the professional development of faculty and staff across the career span and across disciplines to create a culture of sustainable excellence and investment in research.

2.3.1 Strengthen faculty and staff development programs.

- 2.3.1.1** Increase full-time faculty engagement.
- 2.3.1.2** Evaluate incentives for faculty and staff development.
- 2.3.1.3** Identify avenues for faculty and staff development particularly relative to enhancing research proficiency.
- 2.3.1.4** Develop an annual professional development learning plan for faculty, staff and administrators.
- 2.3.1.5** Develop and promote opportunities for education abroad.

2.3.2 Enhance the development of pedagogy that improves the teaching and learning of undergraduate research.

- 2.3.2.1** Assess the market to identify training content for pedagogical best practices.

2.3.3 Establish a structure that fosters sustained faculty and staff excellence and promotes research.

- 2.3.3.1** Develop approaches to incentivize faculty and staff excellence at all stages of career journey (i.e., rewards, staff/support, compensation, conferences, leadership development opportunities, succession plan, cultural environment).
- 2.3.3.2** Implement a sustained system of support for faculty research, scholarship, professional development, and active engagement in professional organizations.

2.3.4. Build capacity and infrastructure to attract, retain and incentivize world class faculty and staff

- 2.3.4.1** Identify competitive solutions (i.e., start-up packages) to attract and hire new faculty and staff.
- 2.3.4.2** Develop a compensation approach to incentivize faculty research activities.
- 2.3.4.3** Provide additional resources for work environment/space, equipment, resources for faculty and staff.
- 2.3.4.4** Establish pre-award teams within each unit to support principal investigators.

HT STRATEGIC PRIORITY#3: INNOVATION, COMMUNITY, AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

- Expand the capacity and infrastructure of the Center for Academic Innovation & Transformation through a transformational investment.
- By 2026 establish a platform and resources to support students' attainment of licenses, inventions, and/or startups.
- No less than 850 students will be placed in internships or formally engaged with community organizations.
- Conduct community needs assessment beginning in 2025 and thereafter every two years to define programming and the effectiveness of collaborative initiatives.
- Develop a Philanthropy Center to educate the socially conscious student, volunteer, and practitioners in the field of Philanthropy.
- Partner with external organizations that help community focused, Black-led organizations scale in order to uplift the community.

GOAL# 3.1: Create a community of learners, innovators and entrepreneurs whose interest is to advance innovative pathways for the global community.

- 3.1.1 Development of Capacity and Infrastructure to support innovation and entrepreneurship.
- 3.1.1.1 Expand the capacity and infrastructure of the Center for Academic Innovation & Transformation providing for future inventors and entrepreneurs the tools to fulfill their respective aspirations.
- 3.1.1.2 Seek partnerships that provide HT students with the expertise, mentoring support, and necessary relationships critical in becoming effective entrepreneurs.
- 3.1.1.3 Establish internships designed to assist students in acclimating themselves in environments that foster creative, innovative, start-up ventures.
- 3.1.1.4 Secure grants/resources to support innovative start-up ventures for undergraduate and graduate students.
- 3.1.1.5 Secure authorization to engage in federal contracting.

GOAL# 3.2: Serve as an institutional anchor for the City of Austin and beyond in addressing challenges facing the city, to include educational and health inequities, community and neighborhood development, societal injustices, and poverty.

- 3.2.1. Advance HT's Community Engagement Agenda
- 3.2.1.1 Develop a comprehensive community needs assessment that will be shared broadly across all academic units, leading to their input and active participation.
- 3.2.1.2 Establish within the Center for Academic Innovation & Transformation a role/position who will serve not only as a conduit for the internal university community, but among other things will be responsible for spurring community engagement and whatever collaboration is needed with community residents to develop effective interventions and solutions to complex problems within minority communities.
- 3.2.1.3 Expand internships for undergraduate and graduate students placed in agencies and organizations.
- 3.2.1.4 Broaden the University's public and community engagement infrastructure through the facilitation of interdisciplinary applied research.
- 3.2.1.5 Expand the University's menu of virtual programs/workshops that support students and community constituents as aligned with their respective interests.

HT STRATEGIC PRIORITY#4: IMPROVE CAMPUS LIFE AND INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT

- Develop a Campus Masterplan
- Complete HVAC installation of Mary E. Branch Gymnasium by 2025
- Break ground no later than Phase 1 of new Student Housing by 2027
- Complete planning and construction of new academic center by 2030
- Complete Phase 2 of new Student Housing by 2032
- Annually achieve a score of 80% or higher in APPA Standards Compliance
- Annually achieve a customer satisfaction score of 80% or higher as assessed from internal and external constituents.
- Maintain an industry-standard, service-based IT environment that facilitates teaching, learning, and research through 2034.
- To hire, cultivate, and train, exceptional professional talent.

GOAL# 4.1: Strengthen capacity that would enable HT to secure capital resources that address the strategic priorities of the university.

4.1.1 Update University's Master Plan

4.1.2 Provide first-class facilities and services.

- Installation of HVAC in Mary E Branch Gymnasium by 2025
- Phase I of New student housing complex by 2030
- Planning and construction of new academic center by 2030
- Improve campus facilities: Installation of new elevator in men's residence hall.

4.1.2.1 Stay abreast of the best cutting-edge advances in facilities and services.

4.1.2.2 Identify funding sources for upgrading facilities and services.

4.1.3 Acquire state-of-the art technological infrastructure.

4.1.3.1 Identify funding sources to continuously upgrade and refresh technology on a rolling three-year basis.

GOAL# 4.2: Promote a culture of quality customer service and a commitment to the University's mission and core values at all levels of the University.

4.2.1 Provide quality customer service to internal and external University partners.

4.2.1.1 Provide customer service excellence training for all departments.

4.2.1.2 Solicit customer service feedback for quality enhancements.

HT STRATEGIC PRIORITY#5: SUPPORT TRANSFORMATIVE UNIVERSITY ADVANCEMENT ENTERPRISE

- Increase alumni and corporate donor participation annually.
- Secure and invest endowed funding year-over-year to increase the endowment value.
- HT will establish a minimum of eight (8) endowed professorships to recruit, attract and retain leading faculty.
- HT will establish a federal identification classification and achieve federal contractor status by 2026.

GOAL# 5.1: Support and sustain a robust university advancement enterprise that consistently generates transformative alumni, friend, and corporate giving.

5.1.1. Design and implement plans to assist in growing the University's revenue through increased support from alumni, corporations, foundations, grants, and contracts to assist in accomplishing its strategic goals and operational requirements.

5.1.1.1 The HT community will work in collaboration with Institutional Advancement to assist in advancing, planning, and marketing Huston-Tillotson's planned giving opportunities along with new initiatives and programs.

5.1.1.2 Increase alumni participation and giving rates annually by 40%.

5.1.2 Enhance the University Advancement infrastructure:

5.1.2.1 Strategically leverage the deans' and non-academic units' relationships with corporate partners and alumni to increase giving.

5.1.2.2 Enhance collaborative efforts with the Office of Marketing, Strategy, Impact, and Innovation to elevate the branding and communication of HT's value proposition.

Goal #5.1 Achieve Competitive Long-Term Investment Performance for the University Endowment

- 5.3.1** Through prudent and professional active management, the University Endowment should achieve competitive long-term investment returns consistent with a globally diversified portfolio comprised of both public and private market investments.
- 5.3.2** From December 27, 2018 through March 31, 2024 the average annual return for the University Endowment Fund was 8.5% net of all management, administrative, and custodial fees and expenses.
- 5.3.3** Based upon forecasts for various asset class returns over the next 10 years, it is reasonable to expect that a diversified investment portfolio comprised of 60% growth assets (represented by the MSCI All Country World Index return of 8.0%) and 40% income assets (represented by the Bloomberg Aggregate Bond Index return of 5.0%) could produce an average annual return of 6.8% over the next 10 years.

FROM FIRST TO FOREMOST

THE JOURNEY AHEAD

In summary, we thank all who participated in and contributed to formulating this strategic plan. The plan constitutes a blend of vital inputs from various individual shareholders and constituent groups who have generously given their time and expertise to produce this blueprint for the strategic advancement of Huston-Tillotson University.

The execution of this plan will require our best energy and an unwavering determination to fully express our longstanding reputation of advancing academic excellence. Yet, as a practical matter, the fulfillment of this plan is mainly resource contingent. That said, we must embrace a well-coordinated and shared approach to institutional advancement to significantly expand our human and monetary resource base and reinforce our financial solvency in the years ahead. A favorable climate for accomplishing this plan is improving our private sector fundraising efforts and securing additional research and training grants that meet pressing human development and workforce needs. Ideally, this will entail the acquisition of more impactful and transformational gifts that enhance our capacities and meaningfully convey the unique dividends we bring to the broader corporate and philanthropic community.

Through this multidimensional plan, we affirm a culture of continuous improvement and accountability even more. In that vein, we are proud to present to you “From First to Foremost”, the 2024-2034 Strategic Plan of Huston-Tillotson University.



STRATEGIC PLANNING STEERING COMMITTEE

The Steering Committee was comprised of faculty, students, staff, administrators, deans and representatives from the local community. The immediate charge of the Steering Committee was to reexamine the University's vision, mission and core values to ensure their alignment with the future aspirations and mandates of the institution. Hence, the committee developed and executed a structured and methodical planning process. Project tasks, milestones and deliverables were identified and approved. This entailed conducting internal environmental scans to determine the current state of the University and collecting and interpreting data/surveys from various internal and external constituents with regard to the current and foreseeable direction of the campus.

STEERING COMMITTEE CHAIR(S)

Dr. Melva K. Wallace
Dr. Beverly Downing

President and CEO
Associate Provost & Interim Director, Office of Institutional Planning, Research and Assessment (Chair)

ADMINISTRATIVE CABINET STEERING COMMITTEE

Dr. Archibald W. Vanderpuye
Ms. Dawn Cassanova
Dr. Kenneth R. Crawford
Dr. Shaquille K. Dillon
Ms. Linda Y. Jackson
Dr. Jennifer Miles
Ms. Quinika Qualls
Mr. Jorge Sousa
Dr. Jonas O. Vanderbilt

Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs
Associate Vice President for Finance
Executive Associate to the President and CEO
Vice President for Marketing, Strategy, Impact, & Innovation
Vice President for Institutional Advancement
Special Assistant to the President for Corporate Relations
Director of Human Resources
Vice President for Enrollment Management
Vice President for Student Affairs

STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Ahmad Kamalvand	CAS-Math
Asia Haney	Marketing, Strategy, Impact, and Innovation
Angel Traylor	Student
Amanda Masino	CAS-Science
Bridgett Weatherly	Financial Aid
Ckyara Anthony	Student
Channing Hicks	OIPRA
Cynthia Charles	Library Services
Canary Gallion	OSP-Title III
Carlos Cervantes	CAS-Kinesiology
Chase Almendarez	Athletics-Baseball
Courtney Robinson	Student Affairs
Dawn Cassanova	Finance
Douglas Schroder	CAE-Math
Ebony Kilgore	Marketing, Strategy, Impact, and Innovation
Farzana Hussain	CAS-Math
Gerald Poe	Facilities
Hector McFarland	SBT
Jason Carter	SBT
Jeremy George	CAS-Music
Jennifer Miles	CAIT
John T. Shead	Student
Maurice Osborne	Enrollment Management-Records and Registration
Odel Williams	Finance
Paul Anaejionu	CAS-Political Science
Shawanda Stewart	CAS-English
Stephnay Coleman	Counseling Center
Sarah Santillanes	CAS-Education
Tommy Mouton	CAS-English
William Oliver	CAS-Music





FROM FIRST TO FOREMOST

HUSTON-TILLOTSON
UNIVERSITY
STRATEGIC PLAN 2024-2034