

A close-up, high-contrast photograph of an owl's face. The owl's feathers are dark and textured, with a prominent, large orange eye with a black pupil. The background is black, making the owl's features stand out.

KENNESAW STATE
UNIVERSITY

TAKING FLIGHT

STRATEGIC PLAN



A LETTER FROM PRESIDENT KATHY S. SCHWAIG

Dear Owl Nation:

This is an exciting moment in Kennesaw State University’s history, and we are proud to launch our new strategic plan. We will chart a course with a newly articulated mission, vision statement, and values — all strongly rooted in our history, and boldly reimagined for the new heights we will achieve together.

There is no better time than now. Kennesaw State is serving more students than ever before, and as a proud R2 institution, we are emerging as a top public research institution in the nation. We are leaving an undeniable and lasting mark on the communities and state we so proudly serve.

Now, we set our sights even higher, committed as ever to academic excellence, innovative research, strong community partnerships, economic opportunity, and operational effectiveness, all proud hallmarks of Kennesaw State. Students remain at the heart of our academic mission, and we fully embrace the opportunity and responsibility to grow our reach locally, regionally, and nationally, and doing so the Kennesaw State way, with curiosity, intention, and authenticity.

Under the direction of our Strategic Plan Steering Committee, this plan was meticulously crafted through a yearlong process that integrated the perspectives of internal and external stakeholders. Their voices represented every corner of the KSU community, and I thank all who contributed ideas to set our direction for the next several years.

As we implement the plan across KSU, I hope each member of this community will see themselves in our new strategy. We all have a part to play to amplify the plan through our own work and to be a part of realizing the exciting opportunities ahead for Kennesaw State.

It is a new day, and I eagerly look forward to working together.

Kathy S. Schwaig

Kathy S. Schwaig
President
Kennesaw State University



TAKING FLIGHT

The Kennesaw State University story is one of academic excellence, scientific discovery, community enrichment, and global impact. Now, we are boldly embarking on our next chapter. As an emerging top public research university, KSU is breaking new ground and will further define success as a prominent leader in higher education proudly serving Georgia, the Southeast, and the nation.

From Convocation to Commencement, KSU fosters an environment that not only challenges students with a rigorous academic experience but also allows them to thrive through first-class resources and engaging, high-impact activities. An emphasis on learning outcomes, retention, and progression ensures that our students enter the workforce as coveted innovators prepared to make a difference.

Galvanized by the unwavering support of industry partners and research spearheaded by brilliant minds across our two campuses, KSU will be at the forefront of scientific discoveries that influence society. This community is filled with curious, voracious dreamers who see the possibilities of a better world. As our research capabilities grow, so do our opportunities to bring groundbreaking technologies to the marketplace and dreams into reality.

Strong operations and a vibrant culture are critically important to our continued success. Kennesaw State's strategic plan establishes goals to strengthen our infrastructure, maximize efficiency, and elevate our sustainability efforts.

Moreover, the plan instills a sense of pride across Owl Nation, touching the hearts of our students, alumni, employees, and community. The value of a Kennesaw State education will only continue to grow as our name becomes synonymous with excellence in the classroom and research, in industry, in the community, and on the field of play.

This plan was built for KSU by KSU, and we are ready to take flight together.



OUR MISSION

Kennesaw State University transforms lives through academic excellence, innovative research, strong community partnerships, and economic opportunity. We empower our students to become thought leaders, lifelong learners, and informed global citizens by cultivating an inclusive environment that encourages free expression and civil discourse.

OUR VISION

Kennesaw State will achieve national prominence as a public university known for education, research, and community programs that foster inquiry and advance society.



OUR VALUES

KSU's strategic plan provides an opportunity to connect the university's newly articulated mission with a future-oriented vision communicating the values:

- **Respect**
- **Integrity**
- **Collaboration**
- **Inclusivity**
- **Accountability**

These values guide our strategic decision making at the highest levels of the university, and they are also central in the day-to-day operations of KSU; they provide a common language and purpose and unite us in our aspirations for how we learn and work together as a KSU community.

OUR GOALS

Kennesaw State's goals align with the University System of Georgia's strategic priorities that focus on increasing student success, responsible stewardship of resources, economic competitiveness, and community impact. In the coming years, we will focus on the following five goals.



GOAL 01

CREATE A LEARNING ENVIRONMENT WHERE STUDENTS THRIVE

Kennesaw State will take a comprehensive approach to providing our students with an exemplary educational environment, enriching their lives through initiatives that foster growth in the mind, body, and spirit from the time they step on campus to the moment they cross the Commencement stage.

Strengthen our Undergraduate Student Success Ecosystem

- Enhance undergraduate first-year retention and success.
- Improve success in critical courses with high enrollment and low pass rates.
- Build systems and structures to advance our Honors program.
- Implement scheduling systems to facilitate academic progression.

Expand Graduate Program Support and Development

- Expand research-intensive graduate programs and enrollment.
- Cultivate career-oriented partnerships to serve graduate students.
- Develop a student success infrastructure for graduate students.
- Expand Double Owl programs.

Improve Curriculum and Learning Outcomes

- Reduce curricular inefficiencies to foster academic progression.
- Increase opportunities and support for students to engage in high impact practices.
- Develop an online student success infrastructure.

Foster Pedagogical Innovation and Inquiry

- Expand faculty programming to cultivate innovative and effective pedagogical practices.
- Become a leader in the scholarship of teaching and learning.
- Foster intellectual inquiry through hosting events and conferences.

Prepare Students for an Evolving Workforce

- Expand undergraduate internship opportunities and participation.
- Review and revise undergraduate degree programs to ensure career preparedness.
- Expand lifelong learning pathways.



GOAL 02

Drawing inspiration from brilliant minds across the institution, Kennesaw State will establish itself as a national leader in research by fostering an environment in which researchers are encouraged to think critically and boldly about real-world challenges.

CONDUCT INNOVATIVE RESEARCH THAT ADVANCES SOCIETY

Increase Research Productivity and Impact

- Increase extramural research funding.
- Recruit and retain faculty to increase research capacity.
- Develop Interdisciplinary Research Centers.

Accelerate Research Innovation and Impact

- Grow research commercialization, entrepreneurial initiatives, and ventures.
- Cultivate external research alliances that enhance collaboration and innovation.

Invest in Student Research Support

- Expand graduate and undergraduate research experiences and participation.
- Elevate the quality of research mentorship for graduate and undergraduate students.
- Increase sponsored graduate research assistant opportunities and support.



GOAL 03

Bolstered by meaningful engagement and a community-focused culture, Kennesaw State will support and grow campus programs and services, traditions, and outreach to ensure that each member can thrive, forging a proud and lasting connection to KSU among students, faculty, staff, and alumni.

ENHANCE AND INSPIRE OUR COMMUNITY

Strengthen Student Experience and Engagement

- Innovate and strengthen student programs and activities to encourage meaningful campus engagement.
- Establish and grow campus traditions and events that foster school spirit and build community.
- Raise awareness and capacity for student support services, including mental health and well-being.

Cultivate Campus Culture and Build Community

- Cultivate civil discourse and professional engagement across campus.
- Increase employee participation in programs that foster a sense of community.
- Enhance leadership development programs for faculty and staff.

Engage Alumni

- Coordinate and streamline the alumni communications plan.
- Increase alumni participation and engagement in campus community and events.



GOAL 04

EXPAND INSTITUTIONAL INFLUENCE AND PROMINENCE

Kennesaw State will grow existing partnerships and forge new opportunities for support, elevating the Kennesaw State brand and building an enduring reputation for excellence in how we teach and conduct research, partner with industry, support our community and state, and compete on the field of play.

Strengthen Partnerships with External Constituents

- Develop government relations programs that build support for the university.
- Increase engagement of external stakeholders at university events, meetings, and initiatives.
- Advance the systems and structures needed to achieve comprehensive campaign goals.

Amplify our Institutional Brand

- Develop, launch and operationalize a new brand campaign.
- Develop effective communication systems and protocols.
- Identify and elevate areas of institutional excellence.

Enhance the Impact of Athletics

- Improve holistic student athlete support services.
- Increase attendance at athletic events.
- Develop partnerships to build sustainable championship programs.



GOAL 05

ADVANCE A SUSTAINABLE, ADAPTABLE, AND OPERATIONALLY EFFICIENT INSTITUTION

Kennesaw State will provide a high-quality education, supported by effective, efficient, and agile operations. All aspects of the educational and research missions throughout the university will be strengthened through optimized operational, physical, and fiscal infrastructure.

Increase Operational Effectiveness and Sustainable Practices

- Conduct an operational review of key processes to advance institutional efficiencies.
- Develop scalability plans in strategic areas to support institutional growth.
- Enhance support infrastructure for research activity.
- Create and implement a Sustainability Master Plan.

Optimize Information Systems and Strategy

- Establish formal governance protocols for the efficient use of information technology resources.
- Develop reporting solutions that support effective operational practices.
- Enable cross-functional digital transformation and optimization efforts.

Strengthen Impact and Stewardship of Fiscal Resources

- Increase funding and impact of student scholarships and grants.
- Conduct regular reviews to improve cost optimization and streamline expenditures.
- Enhance the annual budgeting process to increase alignment with strategic priorities.

Enhance the Physical Environment

- Optimize and enhance instructional space.
- Develop facilities to support research priorities.
- Increase on-campus student housing.
- Create and align spaces to support community and scholarly events.



IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

Many voices, insights, and aspirations helped craft Kennesaw State’s path forward, and now, this plan belongs to each member of Owl Nation. Our plan cannot sit on a shelf, nor is it the sole responsibility of a few administrators. While campus champions will help steer our path, the entire Kennesaw State community will be a part of bringing the plan into reality through our work.

Supported by the expertise of cabinet-led divisions, the initiatives will germinate in every academic, operational, and administrative department across KSU. Each unit will develop tactical and measurable objectives that advance each goal, and identify the processes, practices, and technologies that best enable activation and implementation of the plan.

Successful implementation must include regular tracking and assessment measures to keep KSU accountable to our bold goals and initiatives. Each semester, departments and units will be asked to report achievements that map to each goal. The plan is designed as a living document, so as implementation continues over time, campus champions and others can identify areas of opportunity to bolster our efforts, and adjust initiatives, as needed.

Implementation must also include opportunities to amplify our work on campus and with our external constituents. We want to hear from every corner of Owl Nation as the plan comes to life. Sharing stories from the classroom, lab, office, field, and beyond will energize our efforts in real, tangible ways and we want to celebrate the work of this entire community.

As we continue to tell the Kennesaw State story internally and externally, it is incumbent upon all of Owl Nation to enable the journey that will take KSU to the next level as a competitive and nationally prominent university. We invite all KSU community members to actively engage in implementing our strategic plan. Our collective work is lifting this institution to greater heights, and we look forward to what’s possible for KSU in our journey together.

Kennesaw State is taking flight!





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