Vision 2020 Mid-Term Review

Creating a Culture of Excellence–Serving the Public Good

Executive Summary

In the fall of 2010, President Bowen Loftin initiated a Mid-Term Review of the University's progress toward accomplishing Vision 2020. The purpose of the Vision 2020 Mid-Term Review was:

> **To assess Texas A&M University's progress in *Creating a Culture of Excellence* during the first 12 years of Vision 2020 and to identify the state, national and global opportunities that will enable our university to be recognized**
>
> **(1) As one of the ten best public universities in the nation by 2020, and**
> (2) **As an invaluable resource to the state, nation and the world.**

This assessment was to update and refresh Vision 2020 to serve as an overarching guiding document for the University as it continues to *Create a Culture of Excellence* and not as a strategic plan. To that end, a Vision 2020 Mid-Term Review Task Force composed of an Executive Committee, Steering Committee and 12 Imperative Study Teams (more than 200 faculty, staff, students and external constituents) conducted the Review from December 2010 - July 2011. An underlying intent was to build upon the *Culture of Excellence* developed during the first 12 years of Vision 2020, which to a large degree had an internal focus, and to shift the future emphasis primarily to an external focus.

The Philosophical Framework

As an overarching framework for conducting the Vision 2020 Mid-Term Review and fulfilling the Task Force charge, the Vision 2020 Mid-Term Review Executive Committee, Steering Committee and Imperative Study Teams recommitted the fundamental tenets of Vision 2020 as outlined below:

> *It is our position that Texas A&M University strongly reaffirm its ultimate aspiration of being recognized as one of the ten best public universities in the nation by 2020. While maintaining and enhancing our historical distinctiveness of developing leaders of character who embody our core values, Texas A&M will leverage its extraordinary role as a land, sea and space grant institution to continue to build a Culture of Excellence focused on meeting the evolving educational and societal needs of the state, nation and world.*

In fulfilling the aspirations of Texas A&M, the Vision 2020 Mid-Term Review Executive Committee views the changing environment as an opportunity to prioritize and focus strategic initiatives and strategic partnerships that leverage our strengths to address state, national and world needs.

Our traditional Core Values of Excellence, Integrity, Leadership, Loyalty, Respect and Selfless Service will continue to guide our decisions, programs and student development emphases. We will continue being effective and efficient stewards of resources and the public trust. We will develop further the university's human resources to create a learning, research and service environment of the first order.

The Mid-Term Review Process

The Task Force conducted an extensive review of institutions that are generally accepted as the best public universities in the nation, using the membership list of the American Association of Universities as a starting point. This was followed by the Task Force identifying and evaluating those metrics used by AAU and other appropriate measures that are typically used as indicators of the best public universities. From this analysis, nineteen comparable peer institutions and a set of metrics were selected to establish the criteria and benchmarks against which Texas A&M can assess its progress and improve ongoing efforts to achieve this aspirational vision.

The Vision 2020 Mid-Term Review Task Force conducted in-depth assessments of the accomplishments related to the original Vision 2020 Imperatives, Precepts and Goals and further evaluated those in light of current and anticipated contexts. Comprehensive synthesis of recent institutional planning efforts was also conducted to inform updating and alignment of the Mid-Term Review. This comprehensive assessment resulted in the identification of three **"Marks of Excellence"** and a number of *illustrative and definitive actions* that (1) leverage institutional strengths and opportunity gaps, (2) draw upon multiple Vision 2020 Imperatives and Precepts informed by recent institutional planning, (3) are externally focused and (4) provide collective evidence that Texas A&M is **Creating a Culture of Excellence - Serving the Public Good.** They are as follows:

(1) *Lead in Scholarly Impact:* Our scholars' work (faculty and students) will have more impact in the classroom, the laboratories, the disciplines and in the lives of people around the world. We will leverage our scholarly strengths to:

- *Foster multidisciplinary and multi-modal research*
- *Inform public policy*
- *Fuel economic development and the entrepreneurial spirit*
- *Build energy capacity*
- *Enlarge the food supply*
- *Enhance national security*

- *Strengthen the letters and the arts*
- *Advance the professions*
- *Innovate in technology*
- *Generate advancements in health and the life sciences*
- *Build on the extension model to expand scholarly engagement*

(2) ***Lead in Educating the Next Generation*:** We will graduate highly recruited leaders who are critical thinkers, effective communicators, and lifelong learners with diverse and global perspectives. We will build on our historical emphasis on student leadership development to:

- *Accelerate our strengthening graduate programs*
- *Graduate students who are highly valued in their professions*
- *Increase the number of graduates and reduce time to degree*
- *Ensure that students have high-impact educational experiences including international experiences*
- *Enrich the quality of life for a diverse and global campus environment*
- *Develop responsible servant leaders with a commitment to public service*
- *Value the residential experience*
- *Enhance the integration of curricular and co-curricular experiences*
- *Maintain accessibility*

(3) ***Lead in Stewardship and Partner Engagement:*** We will be the exemplar of responsible stewardship of resources, driven by transparent, effective planning and decision making. We will develop mutually beneficial partnerships and strategic alliances with external constituents that involve the creation, dissemination and translation of academic knowledge. We will:

- *Be accountable for those resources entrusted to us*
- *Improve the return on funds invested by the state and benefactors*
- *Maintain the public trust*
- *Sustain and enhance the environment*
- *Foster continuous improvement*
- *Increase strategic alliances with K-12, community colleges, non-profit and for-profit partners, especially in urban areas*
- *Expand distance and continuing education*
- *Expand scholarly engagement with urban and emerging population centers*

Central to our capacity to advance effectively these opportunities is ensuring our *"Foundations of Excellence,"* including the

(1) Development and diversification of financial resources,
(2) Maintenance and enhancement of the institutional infrastructure,
(3) Support and development of staff and
(4) Amplification of faculty excellence.

The refreshed Vision 2020 Mid-Term Review Imperatives, Precepts and Pathways to the Precepts to address these opportunities and further leverage the work and commitment of faculty, staff, students and former students over the past decade to ensure the accomplishment of Vision 2020. Figure 1 portrays how building on and further enhancing our *"Foundations of Excellence"* through executing our *"Illustrative Actions"* and supported by our recent rich institutional planning, Texas A&M can be known for its *"Marks of Excellence"* and *achieve its aspirational vision of being recognized as one of the ten best public universities in the nation by 2020.*

Figure 1: Strategies of Excellence

Vision 2020
Creating a Culture of Excellence – Serving the Public Good
Being recognized as one of the ten best public universities in the nation by 2020

Marks of Excellence

Lead in Educating the Next Generation of Leadership	*Lead in Scholarly Impact*	*Lead in Stewardship and Partner Engagement*

Refreshed Vision 2020 Imperatives Precepts and Pathways to the Precepts

Illustrative Actions
- Accelerate our strengthening of graduate programs
- Graduate students that are highly valued
- Increase the number of graduates and decrease time to degree
- Ensure students have high impact educational experiences including international experiences
- Enrich the quality of life for a diverse campus environment
- Value the residential experience
- Develop responsible servant leaders with s commitment to public service
- Enhance the integration of curricular and co-curricular experiences
- Maintain accessibility

Illustrative Actions
- Foster multidisciplinary and research
- Inform public policy
- Fuel economic development and the entrepreneurial spirit
- Build energy capacity
- Enlarge the food supply
- Enhance national security
- Strengthen the letters and the arts
- Advance the professions
- Innovate technology
- Generate advancements in health and the life sciences
- Build on the extension model to expand scholarly engagement

Illustrative Actions
- Be accountable for those resources entrusted to us
- Improve return on funds invested by the state, donors and partners
- Earn the public trust
- Sustain and enhance the environment
- Foster continuous improvement
- Increase strategic alliances with K-12, community colleges, non-profit and for profit partners
- Expand distance and continuing education
- Enlarge the engagement with urban and emerging population centers

Foundations of Excellence
Amplify *FACULTY EXCELLENCE*
Support and Develop *STAFF*
Maintain and Enhance INSTITUTIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE
Develop and Diversify FINANCIAL RESOURCES