



# TECH TOMORROW

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# STRATEGIC PLAN

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**2020**

Annual Report

# Overview

When Tennessee Tech completed its strategic plan, Tech Tomorrow, in summer 2018, it was a blueprint to provide the university with a clear strategic direction. Dean Thomas Payne and Dean Lisa Zagumny, who led the strategic planning process, put it best in calling it a “living document ... a tool to guide our actions, examine our progress, and measure our success.”

For many organizations, this would have been the stopping place, but that is not the Tech way. Four faculty members were appointed as working group chairs, one for each goal, and committees were formed to begin work on these goals (see Appendix 1). In total, more than 50 faculty and staff members are engaged with these work groups, researching and developing proposals. The Implementation Steering Committee offers feedback on proposals, strives to remove implementation roadblocks, evaluates proposals and schedules prioritization for implementation of proposals. (See Appendix 2 for a list of ISC and work group members.)

Their actions shape the priorities and actions of the university as we build the Tennessee Tech of tomorrow.

## *Year of Transition*

Prior to Fall 2019, the strategic plan implementation efforts were aided by Huron Consulting Group. The university opted to not extend this contract. On Jan. 1, 2020, the university created a new internal position to replace the services provided by the outside consultant. Dewayne Wright, formerly the university’s director of public relations, was named to this position.

In Fall 2019, the plan entered a mature phase of its implementation, with work group proposals submitted to the appropriate vice presidents on the Tech Tomorrow Implementation Steering Committee as we were primarily in an execution phase for the proposals previously vetted by the full ISC. As we approach the 2020-2021 year, the full ISC will be reconvened.

## *Project Updates*

What follows is a catalog of Tech Tomorrow initiatives. The catalog is divided by the status of the work.

- **COMPLETED:** Projects or initiatives that have been completed
- **IMPLEMENTATION:** Initiatives currently at some stage of implementation
- **PLANNING:** Proposals in execution planning stage
- **UPCOMING:** Topics currently being researched for future proposals
- **RELATED:** Initiatives impacting Tech Tomorrow goals that did not come through work groups

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# Completed

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- **Fact-finding visit to Arizona State University:** Jason Beach and Bedelia Russell, two the working group chairs, conducted a fact-finding visit to Arizona State University to learn about ASU's online course structure. While there, they met with both faculty and administrative leaders.
  - **College SWOT Analyses:** Prepared SWOT templates for each college and library for their use. Each college and library completed their SWOT, which has been used by the college deans as they work with the provost in determining future plans.
  - **Academic Programs Gap Analysis:** Tech Tomorrow Working Group completed this analysis, which was presented to the provost and the college deans. This has led to multiple brainstorming sessions involving the provost and the deans, and it has been used by some deans to lead internal discussions about academic programs in their colleges.
  - **eTranscript:** electronically submitted transcripts are sent securely and populate Banner without manual entry.
  - **Electronic course substitution form:** replacement of paper forms to ease graduation process, originating from advisor.
  - **Workforce Stats Database:** First phase (Tech student information) has been populated with university data and is now available through TechExpress. Next phase is to add data from outside of campus.
  - **Chief Diversity Officer:** Marc Burnett named CDO; at December 2019 Board of Trustees meeting, it was communicated that Burnett would stay in this role part-time after his retirement.
  - **ePortfolio:** Considered a high-impact practice, digital repositories of student work are designed to be owned and developed by student learners with guidance from faculty. This initiative is already serving the campus and can be promoted. Information at <https://www.tntech.edu/provost/ureca/eportfoliopproject.php>.
  - **Grand Challenge:** Tech publicly launched the Rural Reimagined grand challenge in spring 2019. Rural Reimagined has an existing steering committee, and is led by Michael Aikens, director of the Tennessee Tech Center for Rural Innovation. In its year of existence, more than 400 students have taken part in a RR event, more and more faculty are incorporating the challenge into their courses, and some faculty are coming to the challenge with specific ideas and projects to serve rural communities. Information at <https://www.tntech.edu/grand-challenge/>.
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# Implementation

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- **Study Abroad:** RFP being prepared to provide greater service options to faculty in arranging and facilitating study abroad opportunities. According to Tech's Office of Purchasing, the RFP should be out for response in April/May 2020, with expectation to start Fall 2020 with these new options.
- **CAFÉ:** The Center for Advancing Faculty Excellence will provide services, resources and training to help Tech's teachers improve their craft. Currently in development, with Dean Doug Bates heading up committee made up of entirely of faculty members.
- **Online Education:** Formed Online Advisory Committee, led by Mark Stephens. Creation of a new position within the provost's office (Associate Provost of Online and Faculty Development; currently finalizing position description) and increase of number of full-time instructional designers in CITL (from one to two) to help faculty members transition their courses to online.
- **University Advising Center:** Currently with implementation team. In order to provide consistency to first-year and general curriculum student advising, the university will establish a central advising center for first-year and undeclared transfer students, since these students have specific needs that differ from sophomore-to-senior students: financial aid, counseling and mental health resources, and study habits, for example. Our advising for these students needs to be focused on making choices that lead to general success in studying and decision making so they are well grounded and ready to take up the challenges of upperclassmen as they proceed in their final majors. For undecided majors, services will begin this fall, with full implantation of the center slated for fall 2021.
- **Tenure & Promotion Electronic Submission:** Using a second D2L server already in place to house electronic dossiers, the tenure and promotion process is being formed to flesh out details and logistics of implementation of electronic tenure and promotion dossiers. In addition, this server will be used for development of continuing education and professional development courses.
- **Tech Tomorrow Website update:** The strategic plan's website (<https://www.tntech.edu/strategic/>) is being revised and updated to better inform the campus community of the status of Tech Tomorrow-related projects, as well as provide for a streamlined way to provide ideas for the plan.

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# Planning

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- **DegreeWorks:** To simplify graduation process and help with curricular advising, Tech is reviewing its use of DegreeWorks to better utilize this tool.
- **Online Student Orientation:** This will be a resource repository of information and training videos for completely online students.
- **Continuing Education and Professional Development Courses:** Using a second D2L server already in place, the university will have a system in place for use in developing continuing education and professional development courses.

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# Upcoming

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- **First-Year Experience Courses:** Ed Lisic (Edith Duvier, Linda Null, Chad Rezsnyak, Lenly Weathers, Mark Stephens); held first meeting and are developing a survey to faculty members who teach FYE courses
  - **Learning Villages:** Ed Lisic
  - **Facilities Processes and Asset Management:** Ann Davis; held initial meeting with Dan Warren
  - **Humanitarian Makerspace (refocus):** Bedelia Russell; held initial meeting to discuss refocusing to remove community engagement portion as community work fits better with the grand challenge.
  - **University Fellows Program:** Bedelia Russell; program to engage more broadly the faculty community with senior administration and each senior administrator's respective leadership teams
  - **Research and scholarly activities and intellectual and creative contributions:** Jason Beach; review and refine existing practices to support research and scholarly activities and intellectual and creative contributions
  - **Departmental agreement on responsibilities:** Jason Beach; Review and refine departmental agreement on responsibilities to integrate substantive engagement activities and better reflect overall workload
  - **Tech-infused Curriculum:** Jason Beach
  - **Math and Science Teacher Education Marketing, Recruitment, and Partner Engagement (refocus):** Bedelia Russell; Work to help increase science and math teacher education graduates.
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## *Related*

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- Career Readiness Certifications (Center for Career Development)
- LinkedIn Learning (Information Technology Services)
- TechExpress (Information Technology Services)
- Handbook about new program creation (Provost)
- Various new undergraduate and graduate certificates

# Appendix 1: STRATEGIC GOALS

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## *1) Education for Life*

Tennessee Tech provides education that unleashes the potential and passion within our students and prepares them for successful careers and culturally enriched lives. TTU also provides educational opportunities, programs, credentials, and degrees to fuel the lifelong learning necessary for enduring achievement.

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## *2) Innovation in All We Do*

Tennessee Tech innovates in all we do, embracing and deploying our technological foundation in our education, research, service, and stewardship.

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## *3) Exceptional Stewardship*

Tennessee Tech is committed to optimizing resources and continuously improving effectiveness, efficiency, and return on investment for students.

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## *4) Engagement for Impact*

Tennessee Tech fosters partnerships with government, business, and non-profit organizations to advance economic and workforce development, create and disseminate knowledge, serve the public good, and generate cultural impact.

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# Appendix 2: Tech Tomorrow Team

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## *Implementation Steering Committee*

Phil Oldham, President  
Dewayne Wright, Strategic Planning Director  
Karen Lykins, Chief Communication Officer  
Lee Wray, Chief of Staff  
Lori Bruce, Provost  
Brandon Johnson, V.P. Enrollment Management and Career Placement  
Claire Stinson, V.P. Finance and Planning  
Tom Payne, Dean, College of Business  
Lisa Zagumny, Dean, College of Education  
Jeff Boles, Chairperson, Chemistry  
Christy Killman, Chairperson, Department of Exercise Science

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## *Education for Life Work Group*

Ed Lisic, Professor – Chemistry (chair)  
Tammy Boles, Assistant Professor – Environmental Studies Undergraduate  
Julie Baker, Associate Dean – College of Education  
Leveda Dexter, Assistant Athletic Director – Athletic Academic Counseling  
Judy Riggsbee, Director – Admissions  
Sally Pardue, Associate Professor – Mechanical Engineering  
Harry Ingle, Director – College of Engineering  
Leslie Crickenberger, Associate Vice President – Human Resources  
Brian Leckie, Associate Professor – Agriculture  
Phillip Baker, Community Member  
Dan Combs, Professor – Biology

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## *Innovation in All We Do Work Group*

Jason Beach, Associate Professor – Curriculum and Instruction (chair)  
Jerry Gannod, Chairperson – Computer Science  
Yvette Clark, Executive Director – ITS Administration  
Alma Hales, Assistant Professor – Economics Finance and Marketing  
Richard Pirkle, Instructor – Biology  
Stephen Canfield, Professor – Mechanical Engineering  
Dennis Fennewald, Associate Professor – Agriculture  
Allen Mullis, Executive Director – New Student & Family Programs  
Jeremy Blair, Associate Professor – Art, Craft, & Design  
Thomas Heard, Associate Director – Human Resources  
Bill Curran, Community Member

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## *Exceptional Stewardship Work Group*

Ann Davis, Associate Professor – Accounting (chair)  
Jeremy Wendt, Chairperson – Curriculum and Instruction  
Steven Frye, Director – Interdisciplinary Studies  
Kelly Chambers, Assistant Director – Advancement  
Lisa Maas, Director – ITS Enterprise Application Systems  
Sharon Holderman, Associate Professor – Library Operating  
Kerri Demeri, Director – Director of Auxiliaries  
Susan Piras, Associate Professor – Nursing Instruction  
Emily Wheeler, Associate Vice President – Business Office  
Indu Upadhyaya, Assistant Professor – Restricted Agriculture and Human Ecology  
Jeff Roberts, Chairperson - History  
Ottis Phillips, Community Member

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## *Engagement for Impact Work Group*

Bedelia Russell, Associate Professor – Nursing Instruction (chair)  
Brandon Boyd, Director – Advancement  
(Cynthia) Shelley Brown, Instructor – Sociology and Political Science  
Matt Smith, Professor – Curriculum and Instruction  
Dennis Tennant, Director – College of Interdisciplinary Studies  
Bobbie Maynard, Executive Director – Communications & Marketing  
(Jonathan) Robby Sanders, Associate Professor – Chemical Engineering  
Samantha Hutson, Lecturer – Human Ecology  
Simone McKelvey, Director – Advisement & Retention Services  
Lillian Hartgrove, Community Member  
Chester Goad, Director – Disability Services



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**Tennessee**  
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