



AUBURN UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE

Strategic Plan 2021-2026



The Auburn University College of Veterinary Medicine 2021-2026 Strategic Plan

The Auburn University College of Veterinary Medicine has a long and storied history dating back to its inception in 1892 and its establishment in 1907 as the first veterinary college in the South. More than 7,000 veterinarians and over 1,000 specialists and researchers received their training, certification, and degrees from the college (including over 500 MS and nearly 200 PhD degrees).

CVM Mission: The mission of the Auburn University College of Veterinary Medicine is to prepare individuals for meaningful and impactful careers in veterinary medicine, biomedical science, and public and one health. Through comprehensive academic programs at the undergraduate, graduate, and professional levels, the college cultivates a culture of inquiry and innovation that advances clinical care, scientific discovery, and professional excellence.

A key component of this mission is the college's veterinary teaching hospital, which provides advanced veterinary services across a diverse caseload while developing clinical expertise in veterinary students and house officers.

By integrating basic, applied, and clinical sciences, the college delivers programs of instruction, research, outreach, and service that benefit the people of Alabama, the region, the nation, and the world.

CVM Vision: The college will be recognized nationally and internationally as a preeminent comprehensive college of veterinary medicine, a national resource in veterinary medical education, a preferred provider of veterinary medical care in the Southeast, and the home of a scholarly research enterprise that drives discovery and innovation. Successful pursuit of the college's mission will advance the health of animals, people, and the environment. The college will promote and advance Auburn's reputation through a culture of accountability, efficiency, innovation, and a commitment to quality in every aspect of its mission.

The 2021-2026 Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) was appointed by Dean Johnson in July 2020. Throughout the summer and fall of 2020, the SPC focus was on engagement of stakeholders and development of the college's strategic planning goals, in concordance with the 2019-2024 Auburn University Strategic Plan, including:

- 1. ELEVATED AUBURN EXPERIENCE—inspire and prepare students for success**
- 2. TRANSFORMATIVE RESEARCH—elevate research and scholarly impact**
- 3. IMPACTFUL SERVICE—expand our land-grant and service capabilities**
- 4. EXCEPTIONAL AND ENGAGED FACULTY AND STAFF – invest in our outstanding people**
- 5. STRATEGIC ENROLLMENT—enroll exceptional students with broad career interests**
- 6. OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE—support a culture of high performance**

The college's 2014-2019 strategic plan focused on student success, promoting discovery and practicing the highest standards of veterinary medicine. This new strategic plan will build upon our past successes through bold actions and measurable accomplishments. In harmony with Auburn University's strategic priorities, the six identified goals will expand the college's presence, recognition and contributions on the Auburn campus, and in the veterinary, biomedical, and agricultural communities throughout Alabama, the nation, and the world. Through dedication

and commitment, coordinated efforts will also elevate the accessibility of our programs to those who are likely to achieve the breadth of our mission.

Process: Individual Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) members, representing the breadth of the college and its constituencies, were assigned to six subcommittees reflecting the strategic planning goals listed above. Their charge was to identify and crystallize critical priorities and metrics. Subcommittee chairs were encouraged to seek additional expertise and input to facilitate subcommittee deliberations. Additional listening sessions and meetings were held as the process unfolded. In addition, a survey characterizing views about the college, its focus, and its future vision was completed by nearly 1,500 respondents from many constituencies. Survey data were then used by SPC subcommittees in establishing priorities.

Recognized Opportunities and Challenges: Subcommittee and SPC deliberations were thoughtful and raised questions regarding resources, expectations and approaches to underwriting priorities [e.g., return on investment (ROI), public-private partnership support, collaboration (rather than competition) amongst veterinary colleges, resource generation, resource accountability, and incentivization]. Regarding underwriting of thematic goals in the college, it was noted that given Auburn University's Responsibility Centered Management (RCM) model of budgeting, it would behoove the college to explore the development of an undergraduate major (or majors), aligned with the college's mission, to generate tuition dollars.

One challenge noted by the SPC in developing guidelines was the need to establish laudable and important growth metrics in targeted domains, which would require coordinated efforts from multiple units across the college. If the college is to grow strategically, additional funds would need to be generated through comprehensive college successes in research, instruction, service, and partnerships, as the days of large-scale University-funded growth are unlikely to return. Thus, targeted productivity increases, as outlined within this plan, would play an ever-expanding role in generating revenues that would in turn be used to build college capacity and expand its impact.

Responsibilities for generating resources would rely on enhanced faculty and staff productivity in research, scholarship, service, and teaching, along with administrative facilitation through strategic prioritization of resources and coordinated philanthropic development. Similarly, strategic management of enrollment in the undergraduate, professional, and graduate curricula will require added college focus on the quality of instruction and faculty support. This will be important to assure our commitment to educating and training students who will become leaders and scholars. For example, if clinical caseload and/or practice expectations are raised (potentially in light of expanding technology and resources), we must assure that the college's faculty-to-student and faculty-faculty mentorship paradigms are simultaneously strengthened.

A second challenge in development of these guidelines was identification of meaningful baseline data and metrics that would help to advance the college's mission. It was recognized that, in several areas, such baseline data will need to be collected over a sustained period before growth projections and potential opportunities could be defined. A focused effort will be needed to develop and assign responsibilities for identifying, measuring, tracking, and reporting key measures of productivity and success in attaining the goals of the plan.

As the college embarked on developing a consensus strategic plan, the vision articulated by many stakeholders through numerous listening sessions and surveys included:

- Drive national and international recognition (top 5 or top 10 in selected areas)
- Identify and expand areas of strength
- Develop leaders
- Enhance quality of life
- Invest in our promising future

Additionally, as outlined in the campus-wide strategic plan, the following themes are interwoven across all six identified goals:

- Auburn spirit
- Organizational culture
- Partnerships
- Technology
- Marketing and communications
- Accountability and measurability

The objectives that follow are considered a living document. As such:

- Key performance indicators (KPI) will be tracked and reported regularly
- Successes will be shared to strengthen the college's reputation
- Resources will be strategically invested

In July 2025, the Strategic Plan was updated to reflect changes in federal and state laws.

We thank everyone who has assisted in this process, and we look forward to achieving exciting outcomes in the coming years.

GOAL 1. Elevated Auburn Experience

The Auburn University College of Veterinary Medicine places a premium value on a meaningful experience. For students, this begins with the enrollment of students with excellent academic performance, high potential to succeed professionally, and a desire to excel professionally. For the employees (faculty and staff) that contribute to the Auburn experience, maintenance of a culture of meaningful engagement and mutual support is essential. The college strives to provide a strong educational program of training in the basic and applied sciences, including medicine, surgery, and primary care. The professional veterinary program builds key competencies and produces outstanding entry-level veterinarians. The college will provide resources to programs in veterinary and graduate education that have a positive impact on a student's educational experience on a local, national, and global scale.

Student Experience is influenced by a number of factors, including:

1. Innovative Professional Curriculum
2. Innovative Graduate Curriculum
3. Healthy Learning Environment
4. Personal Satisfaction and Wellness
5. Affordability and Value
6. Global perspective

OBJECTIVE 1.1 – DELIVER AN INNOVATIVE AND EFFECTIVE PROFESSIONAL CURRICULUM

The college will maintain an annual curriculum review model to enhance efficiency and responsiveness to changing dynamics in society. In addition to training veterinary professionals, the college will advance the concept of *One Health* by focusing on the interface between the health of animals, people, and the environment. The college will provide training in skills that facilitate collaboration between veterinarians and other public health professionals and thereby meet public needs for both human and animal healthcare. Steps will be taken to achieve the following goals:

1. Design the curriculum to build skills and competencies that prepare students for a variety of employment opportunities, including private/corporate practice, the biopharmaceutical industry, academia, and others.
2. Enhance instructional delivery through the assembly of appropriately specialized faculty.
3. Bolster existing faculty expertise in areas of urgent need through educational partnerships with outside institutions.
4. Support exceptional instruction by developing a peer teaching evaluation program to validate and improve pedagogical approaches.
5. Support and expand the system of comprehensive annual reviews by the Curriculum Committee.

6. Emphasize practical application of knowledge by introducing preclinical veterinary students (years 1-3) to patient management practices and basic clinical procedures, and supplement clinical rotations in specific areas with practice-based externships to address potential gaps as indicated by curricular review.
7. Increase curricular content related to management of finances, debt, loan repayment plans and business fundamentals; and establish a certificate in Business Management with a goal to develop a veterinary and biomedical business-focused MBA opportunity in the long-term in association with the Harbert College of Business.
8. Explore, through financial modeling and assessment of student demand, the addition of a bachelor's degree major in Public Health by capitalizing on existing and unique strengths in the college.

Key metrics

Courses led by a robust lineup of highly qualified, credentialed faculty and guest lecturers
Aim 1.1.1 – Achieve course objectives and create greater impact on students by integrating faculty and guest lecturers with applicable credentials, peer recognition, and unique experiences.

- 1. Mastery of selected clinical skills early in the curriculum**

Aim 1.1.2 – Select and build specific clinical skills during years 1-3 of the veterinary curriculum.

- 2. Assessments of externships**

Aim 1.1.3 – Annually track and monitor outcome assessments following interest-based externships to continuously improve the quality of these elective experiences.

- 3. Reduction of redundant or outdated information in the didactic veterinary curriculum**

Aim 1.1.4 – Recognizing that some redundancy is valuable, aim to identify and eliminate unplanned redundancies or outdated topics in the curriculum based on annual reviews of outcomes assessments and curricular maps.

- 4. Increase in the addition of new information in the didactic veterinary curriculum**

Aim 1.1.5 – Introduce valuable and timely course content into the curriculum.

- 5. New elective courses and rotations**

Aim 1.1.6 – Broaden the curriculum by expanding the portfolio of elective courses and rotations.

OBJECTIVE 1.2 – DELIVER AN INNOVATIVE AND EFFECTIVE GRADUATE CURRICULUM IN BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES

The college will conduct a thorough review of the Biomedical Sciences Graduate Program, including the courses offered and sequence to achieve the following goals:

1. Develop innovative strategies for attracting students and increasing enrollment
2. Ensure efficiency in admitting and onboarding students
3. Allow for formative educational experiences in a cohesive sequence.

Key metrics

Courses led by a robust lineup of highly qualified, credentialed faculty

Aim 1.2.1 – Achieve course objectives and create greater impact on students by integrating faculty with applicable credentials, peer recognition, and unique experiences.

OBJECTIVE 1.3 – FOSTER A HEALTHY LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

A healthy learning environment nurtures student wellbeing and academic achievement both in the graduate curriculum and in the veterinary curriculum. A positive environment in which a student is supported, known, valued, and productively engaged creates an optimal climate. The college will take steps to enhance the campus climate by providing training, capitalizing on existing infrastructure, dedicating facility spaces to student wellbeing, and exploring innovative technologies to achieve the following goals:

1. Optimize testing schedules for consistency and reduced impact on student participation in other courses (veterinary students).
2. Promote development of critical thinking skills (e.g., at orientation, clinicopathologic conferences, interest-based clubs; journal clubs); increase opportunities for veterinary students to perform basic and clinical research in the preclinical veterinary program (years 1-3) and clinical externships; and engage coordinators of clinical rotations on implementation of SAVMA guidelines, where possible, regarding lunch breaks, daily clinical scheduling, and time to seek personal health care and wellness.
3. Develop a voluntary teaching development program for Biomedical Sciences graduate students as part of graduate training.
4. Evaluate assistantship stipends and benefits packages for graduate students and house officers in support of an initiative to maintain equivalence with peer institutions. Create a task force to specifically address the wellbeing of house officers, in accordance with AVMA guidelines.
5. Engage international partners strategically to enrich and enhance the impact of the college's academic programs.

Key metrics

For Veterinary Students:

- 1. Absolute attrition rate for each graduating class**
Aim 1.3.1 – Maintain an absolute attrition rate below 5% in each graduating class.
- 2. Create a standardized testing window for the veterinary curriculum**
Aim 1.3.2 – Establish a consistent day and time when major exams are administered, and strategically schedule exams to minimize impact on other courses.
- 3. Quantify research productivity by professional veterinary students**
Aim 1.3.3 – Track veterinary student authorship on abstracts, oral and poster presentations, peer-reviewed publications for each academic year, and pursuit of research-related careers after graduation. Assess success of the Veterinary Summer Scholars Program (VSSP) using these metrics.
- 4. Measure the impact of early clinical training and expanded externship opportunities on student performance**
Aim 1.3.4 – Review *Outcomes of Clinical Indirect Assessments of AVMA Competencies*, and achieve ratings of “Expected”, “Next 25% of students”, or “Top 5% of students” in 98% of average indirect assessment ratings for each AVMA clinical competency.
- 5. Assess the college’s standing with respect to SAVMA clinical workload guidelines based on rotation surveys**
Aim 1.3.5 – Distribute, review, and discuss SAVMA clinical workload guidelines. Add a question to student surveys of clinical rotations that assesses workload and scheduling within the context of SAVMA guidelines.

For Graduate Students and House Officers:

- 6. Increase the number of biomedical graduate students involved in pedagogical training and practice**
Aim 1.3.6 – Increase the number of graduate students participating in pedagogical training in the Biggio Center, and incorporate them into teaching under the mentorship of a credentialed faculty member.
- 7. Assess the college’s position relative to peer institutions on graduate student and house officer stipends and benefits**
Aim 1.3.7 – Aim to raise stipends and benefits, adjusted to the cost of living in the geographic region, to above the national median.
- 8. Create a task force to address the wellbeing of house officers and address underlying concerns**
Aim 1.3.8 – Aim to determine the overall wellbeing of house officers and address areas of concern, in context of AVMA guidelines.

OBJECTIVE 1.4 – PROMOTE PERSONAL SATISFACTION AND WELLNESS

The AUCVM will seek to create an academic environment and culture that promotes social wellbeing and holistic wellness by achieving the following aims:

1. Establish and maintain a culture of mutual respect among faculty and students in the classroom and clinical settings.
 - a. Create a welcoming environment for all individuals on campus
 - b. Establish a college committee that cultivates a welcoming environment
 - c. Support student organizations that offer access to unique training opportunities
 - d. Conduct a welcoming freshman orientation to incoming veterinary students
2. Support student wellness by managing curricular workload.
 - a. Optimize instructional modalities to manage student workload to reduce stress
 - b. Increase availability of clinical psychological counselors
 - c. Provide wellness rooms on-site for students' use
 - d. Support training of veterinary psychological professionals
 - e. Provide lecture-free times (Wellness Times) in class schedules and
 - f. Create forums and/or clubs for students, staff and faculty to interact and discuss wellness issues.
3. Provide opportunities for student mentoring by faculty, alumni, and student peers in support of shared professional interests.

Key metrics

1. Overall student satisfaction

Aim 1.4.1 – Achieve positive satisfaction ratings on year-end surveys from greater than 90% of survey respondents (e.g., *I am happy with my decision to attend the AU CVM and would recommend the program to other applicants*).

2. Student mentoring

Aim 1.4.2 – Introduce and facilitate participation in a faculty-student mentoring program.

3. Appointment slots for student counseling

Aim 1.4.3 – Aim to increase the number of available counselor appointments by 50% by 2026, using 2019 as the baseline.

4. Foster student usage of onsite wellness locations, including outdoor areas, (focused on exercise, relaxation, etc.) by coordinating programs with student schedules

- a. **Aim 1.4.4** – Increase student participation in wellness activities by 10% each year.
- b. **Aim 1.4.5** – Encourage student participation in approved extracurricular student organizations.

OBJECTIVE 1.5 – IMPROVE AFFORDABILITY

As of 2020, the college had the fourth lowest resident (Alabama and Kentucky) tuition among veterinary colleges in the nation and stands at the median cost of enrollment for at-large students. Still, the cost of veterinary education and debt load for graduating veterinarians is a growing concern for all stakeholders. For some individuals, the high cost of veterinary education may limit the opportunity to become a veterinarian. The college will provide opportunities for individuals to become part of the Auburn veterinary experience by leveraging its resources to enhance recruitment and to generate scholarships based on student financial need by achieving the following goals:

1. Engage in outreach tours to junior and senior high schools in Alabama and provide financial counseling to potential students and parents related to professional veterinary education.
2. Involve parents in Summer Vet Camp programs and connect them with feeder undergraduate programs who can advise on applications, loans, scholarships and awards in support of undergraduate education and introduce them to strategies for financing a veterinary education.
3. Qualified individuals with financial need will receive support in the form of scholarships, including recruitment scholarships.
4. Use philanthropic gifts (through the CVM Office of Advancement and the Office of Academic Affairs) to assist at-large applicants with the cost of attendance.

Key metrics

1. **Track the number and type of outreach activities to K-12 schools across the state of Alabama and the Southeast**
Aim 1.5.1 – Achieve an annual increase in K-12 students engaged by 10% per year over a 5-year period.
2. **Engage the parents of prospective students**
Aim 1.5.2 – Engage the parents of Summer Vet Camp participants with information and guidance on admission into the college.

OBJECTIVE 1.6 – ENGAGE INTERNATIONALLY

The college has an established record of international engagement. We see an opportunity to prepare for growth and align closely with the Office of International Programs (OIP) and its Strategic Internationalization Plan to develop strategies in support of long-lasting institutional change. The following will be important components of the college's plan:

1. Improve the college's performance and recognition on an international scale
2. Develop a strategic engagement plan for each international partner institution with whom we maintain an active articulation agreement, focusing on:
 - a. Student instruction and cultural exchange

- b. Faculty research opportunities
 - c. International recruitment of faculty and graduate students.
- 3. Leverage the international breadth of our faculty
- 4. Serve as exceptional hosts and visitors to build scholarly productivity.

Key metrics

1. Strength of the college's portfolio of strategic and productive international engagements

- a. **Aim 1.6.1** – The International Affairs Committee will review all existing and proposed international agreements and identify those that advance the instructional, research, and service missions of the college for renewal and further development through financial support.
- b. **Aim 1.6.2** – Recruit principal contacts and facilitators on the Auburn faculty and the international institution for each international agreement.

2. International diversity of the college's faculty

Aim 1.6.3 – Recruit globally for faculty and staff positions, including short term teaching, research and clinical exchanges.

3. International visits – As hosts and as visitors, the college's faculty, staff, and students will practice scholarly engagement and the highest standards of collegiality, elevating the stature of our college as an international partner.

Aim 1.6.4 – For each international partner institution, host one visit and engage in visiting every 3 years to cultivate scholarly activity and student engagement.

GOAL 2. Transformative Research

OBJECTIVE 2.1 – ELEVATE THE COLLEGE’S RESEARCH MISSION AND COMMITMENT TO THE RESEARCH ENTERPRISE

The **Research Mission** of the college is to advance understanding and catalyze technological innovation in basic and applied sciences in order to improve the health and well-being of animals and, through them, the health, stability and economic development of mankind. This perspective was endorsed by stakeholder surveys during strategic planning.

Key metrics

Statement of Research Commitment

Aim 2.1.1 – When adopting this strategic plan, the college also adopts this statement of research commitment:

In order to realize the research mission of the Auburn University College of Veterinary Medicine and advance the research enterprise of the college, and in recognition of the fact that research is a fundamental component of the tripartite Land Grant mission embraced by Auburn University, the college commits to prioritization of resources to stabilize, advance, reward, inspire and catalyze research competitiveness, technological innovation and scholarship. To this end, the college will establish and implement transparent policies for investment of resources generated through research, or otherwise committed to the college in support of research, to priority support and incentivization of research and the research mission. The college will also establish and maintain metrics of faculty research performance as determined by faculty assignment and will commit to establishment of practices designed to protect time required to fully realize faculty research appointments.

OBJECTIVE 2.2 – ESTABLISH A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO RESEARCH GROWTH

Advancement of the research mission will require a culture of accountability and dedication from the faculty and administration. This research-promoting culture will include adoption and practice of strategic research hiring, incentivization of research productivity, infrastructure development and establishment of a visionary, research-dedicated philanthropic effort. The unique strengths of individual departments and programs within the college will be incorporated into a *Whole-of-CVM* approach, built on the strengths and competitive advantages of the college’s research. In this light, three domains of the research enterprise have been identified under Key Metrics where strategic investments, focused faculty efforts, and other supportive actions will promote research success.

Key metrics

1. Human Resources

- a. Aim 2.2.1** – Develop a research strategic hiring plan designed to catalyze research competitiveness and productivity, and that will consider opportunities presented by

institutional research priorities and programs complementary to the college's research mission. Considerations will include:

- i. Building research-competitive teams (interdisciplinary/transdisciplinary) that leverage expertise.
 - ii. Leveraging inter-departmental and inter-college/school/university hiring strategies to facilitate recruitment of strategic hires.
 - iii. Encouraging extramurally supported research-track faculty appointments and prioritize hiring of doctoral (PhD) -level, non-faculty, professional research staff (e.g., post-doctoral fellows, research fellows).
 - iv. Increasing the college's Biomedical Science (BMS) graduate student enrollment with emphasis on doctoral (PhD) trainees.
- b. Aim 2.2.2** – Develop a plan that will incentivize research productivity. Opportunities to incentivize the college's research changed drastically when the university implemented an RCM-based strategic budget model and eliminated the return of a portion of extramurally generated salary support (the former *Research Incentive Plan*). In this new landscape, we will refine and implement transparent and consistent policies for use of available extramurally generated resources. Considerations will include:
- i. Encourage and recognize advancement of Intellectual Property (IP), acquisition of patents and licensing of technologies generated from the college's research.
 - ii. Support faculty and student travel associated with dissemination of research findings at professional meetings through a policy that applies to all departments.
 - iii. Support costs associated with publications.
 - iv. Support and encourage professional improvement/sabbatical leave opportunities for research-active faculty.

2. Infrastructure

Aim 2.2.3 – Prioritize investment of college resources to support research infrastructure, including facilities and shared/core equipment. This will include the college's research infrastructure (e.g., facilities, analytical cores) in consideration of and in coordination with institutional efforts to develop major core research resources.

3. Research-focused fundraising (development)

Aim 2.2.4 – Define a research-focused development plan with strategic priorities and goals that, when realized, will enable (through endowments and gifts) advancement of strategically defined areas, including:

- a. Human resource development, such as
 - i. Support for professorships (all levels)
 - ii. Support for non-faculty, doctoral (PhD) – level professional staff
 - iii. Support for graduate stipends and tuition
 - iv. Support for travel (graduate trainees/faculty)
 - v. Support for professional improvement/sabbatical leave.
- b. Infrastructure development – Support for modern research space/facilities (e.g., research building, laboratories, animal facilities).

OBJECTIVE 2.3 – GROW THE RESEARCH ENTERPRISE THROUGH GREATER PRODUCTIVITY

Progress in research and related scholarship will be monitored by tracking metrics generally recognized to reflect research-related performance (e.g., published peer-reviewed manuscripts, extramural funding, invited presentations at scientific conferences, etc.). Progress will be evaluated annually. Key research performance indicators (KPI) to be monitored and related targeted goals are identified below. Strategically, positive year-over-year performance trajectories are desired. Annual research performance assessments will involve internal benchmarking (e.g., comparing metrics for academic units within the college) and external benchmarking (e.g., comparing our college's metrics with peer and aspirational programs nationally).

Key metrics

Aim 2.3.1 – Research productivity, measured by the criteria below, will increase year-over-year

- a. Proposals submitted (number)
- b. Faculty with grants and/or contracts
- c. Grants/contract per faculty
- d. Percent faculty with grants/contracts
- e. Total grants/contracts
- f. Total dollars requested
- g. Expenditures and associated indirect cost (IDC) recovery by agency or sponsor

Aim 2.3.2 – Peer-reviewed works will increase year-over-year

- a. Refereed journal articles
 - i. Articles/author
 - ii. Faculty publishing (with) articles
 - iii. Articles/faculty
 - iv. % Faculty with articles
 - v. Total articles
- b. Book chapters
 - i. Faculty with chapters
 - ii. Chapters/faculty
 - iii. % Faculty with chapters
 - iv. Total chapters
- c. Books
 - i. Faculty with books
 - ii. Books per faculty
 - iii. % Faculty with books
 - iv. Total books
- d. Citations
 - i. % Authors with cites
 - ii. Faculty with cites
 - iii. Cites/publication
 - iv. Cites/faculty
 - v. % Faculty with cites

- vi. Total cites

Aim 2.3.3 – Intellectual property metrics, as specified below, will increase year-over-year

- a. Disclosures submitted
- b. Patents awarded
- c. Licensing events

Aim 2.3.4 – Graduate student numbers¹ will increase year-over-year

- a. Total
- b. PhD
- c. MS
- d. PhD/MS ratio

Aim 2.3.5 – Faculty and professional research staff² will grow year-over-year

- a. Tenure track (Research FTE)
- b. Research Professor series
 - i. Number/rank
- c. Non-faculty PhD staff (number)
 - i. Post-doctoral Fellows
 - ii. Research Fellows
 - iii. Other

Aim 2.3.6 – Research Infrastructure. Infrastructure spending will increase year-over-year

- a. Investments in infrastructure (e.g., space)
- b. Investments in stabilizing/advancing shared research technologies (e.g., instrumentation, service contracts)

Aim 2.3.7 – Development. Research-directed dollars raised through philanthropy will increase year-over-year

- a. Strategic selection of priorities
- b. Gifts/endowments acquired

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¹Changes in graduate student numbers are projected to reflect changes in extramural support.

²Changes in number of faculty and professional staff are projected to reflect college/university budget priorities (tenure track appointments) and extramural support (soft money positions).

GOAL 3. Impactful Service

Dissemination of the college's expertise for public benefit is central to the mission of the college. Our impactful service to students, alumni, faculty and staff and the community at large is measured not only in dollars, but also by the impact on the lives and livelihoods of those we serve. The college's service function is accomplished by the education and development of outstanding veterinarians, the treatment and care of animals through the teaching hospital, the practical application of research, and outreach to the veterinary and animal-owning community.

OBJECTIVE 3.1 – ELEVATE THE COLLEGE'S SERVICE

Three overarching areas have been identified where the college's service impact should be strategically advanced:

1. Excellence in Veterinary Continuing Education

We will continue to be recognized as a national leader in the education, training and development of practicing veterinarians. We will also develop and implement new and unique ways to educate and train current veterinarians with industry-leading continuing education.

Educational Excellence will be documented in the following ways:

1. Number and location of events
2. Number and geographic distribution of attendees
3. Participant surveys
4. Types of educational modalities and innovation of delivery (e.g., wet labs, online tutorials, active learning, and combinations of these)
5. Website traffic of information pages
6. Social media post tracking

2. Serving as a First Resource

We will be recognized in the State and Nation as a first resource in providing cutting edge compassionate general and expert-level specialized veterinary medical care, diagnostic services, research support, medical knowledge, and product development. When someone thinks, "I have a problem" we want them to think, "Auburn's College of Veterinary Medicine can help me solve it."

First Resource will be documented in the following ways:

1. Stakeholder surveys (from any person or entity being served, not only pet owners)
2. Referring veterinarian surveys
3. Number and geographic footprint of referrals/diagnostic samples/products
4. Geographic footprint (*hot map*) of primary cases, including ambulatory
5. Website traffic
6. Social media post tracking
7. Impact on the community (referring veterinarians, students, researchers)
8. Impressions and reach in media and news
9. Donations

3. Exceptional Community Outreach and Public Education

We will strengthen, develop and implement community outreach activities that directly impact Alabamians and others in our region. We will expand the outreach of veterinary medicine to educate on how it impacts people through programs, partnerships and technologies. Community Outreach will be documented in a number of ways, including:

1. Scott Ritchey Research Center impact on the community (treating rare diseases, media outreach, public relations, student research participation)
2. Auburn University Raptor Center
 - a. Educational sessions will be assessed for impact (number of participants, number of events, geographic distribution of events)
 - b. Rehabilitation of raptors and other contributions to a sustainable environment
3. Gene Machine (geographic location of trips, number of people engaged, efficacy of learning at educational sessions)
4. Open House (Number of attendees and area of residence; numbers of schools represented; extent of media outreach)
5. Vet Camp attendance: Through the Office of Academic Affairs and AU Office of Outreach, measure the number and career interests of attendees and maximize their level of engagement with the veterinary student body
6. Attendance at annual events sponsored by the college: Boshell Diabetes and Metabolic Diseases Conference, CVM Annual Conference, Phi Zeta Day, ALVMA meetings, etc.
7. Impressions and reach in media and news
8. Website traffic
9. Social media post tracking
10. Individual stories on people influenced by the college

Key metrics

1. Create and distribute surveys for all outreach activities to establish baseline metrics.

Aim 3.1.1 – In year 1, establish baseline data and develop performance metrics to be implemented and tracked annually.

2. Promote and quantify the real-world application and impact of the college's research.

Aim 3.1.2 – Identify individuals who have benefited from the college's research and promote their stories through a variety of outlets and platforms.

3. Continuously develop new and improved ways to serve our stakeholders through increased efficiency, new technologies and better communications.

Aim 3.1.3 – Introduce new strategies and conduct satisfaction surveys of stakeholders after engagement (i.e., continuous improvement through assessments and innovative improvements).

4. Create an outstanding public-oriented website to showcase the college's accomplishments.

Aim 3.1.4 – Hire a webmaster, integrate them into the breadth of college activities, and promote interesting and valuable content by sharing at least one new story on the website and social media outlets per week.

5. Communicate and market the value of the college's outreach and service programs.

Aim 3.1.5 – Develop a standard cycle of communications on outreach and service programs that includes: promotion (pre-event), progress (in-event), and impact (post-event).

GOAL 4. Exceptional and Engaged Faculty and Staff

OBJECTIVE 4.1 – FACILITATE FACULTY AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT, RECOGNITION, AND RETENTION

The heart of our college is our people—team members, comprised of faculty and staff, with a shared vision and common values, fully committed to our mission, and desiring to assure its success. Holding true to its mission, the college will cultivate an environment that fosters careers of success among the faculty and staff. The college recognizes and embraces the importance of an environment that engenders a sense of community. We will engage both locally and globally. A culture of productive engagement between and among faculty and staff is critical for the success of the college and will elevate the college to new heights of performance, value, and recognition.

We will focus on six goals:

- 1. Facilitate and reward exceptional performance** – Prioritize research by offering incentives for exceptional performance; prioritize institutional investments in research infrastructure.
- 2. Expand mentorship and personal/professional development** – Create an environment conducive to retention, through the following actions:
 - a. Strengthen the college's faculty mentorship program
 - b. Develop a robust staff mentorship program
 - c. Explore flexible work hours and schedules
 - d. Provide competitive compensation, benefits, and mechanisms to address salary compression
 - e. Vigorously protect FTE assignments for faculty
 - f. Incentivize exceptional performance in after-hours and weekend responsibilities
 - g. Support continuing education and sabbatical periods
 - h. Implement exit interviews for faculty and staff electing to depart the college
- 3. Provide clear pathways for professional advancement** – For each employee, the supervisor will assess, discuss, and facilitate professional growth that aligns with the college's mission.
- 4. Offer leadership training for individuals with supervisory responsibility** – This includes proper training of staff supervisors.
- 5. Recognize exceptional performance in all aspects of the faculty assignment** – Highlight awards and achievements of the college's faculty and staff.
- 6. Invest in employee relations** – Offer professional counseling resources and training in areas such as effective communications and conflict resolution to ensure good emotional, physical, and psychological health of faculty and staff.

Key metrics

- 1. Retention rate**

- a. **Aim 4.1.1** – Establish baseline faculty retention rate and improve by at least 1 faculty FTE annually. Implement faculty exit interviews.
 - b. **Aim 4.1.2** – Report the number of tenure track and non-tenure track faculty who are successful in the promotion process, and where the CVM exceeds a success rate in excess of 90% of packets presented to the university's Promotion & Tenure Committee.
- 2. **Survey results from the Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education (COACHE)**
Aim 4.1.3 – Review most recent COACHE results for the CVM and develop plans for improvement.
- 3. **Staff job engagement survey results**
Aim 4.1.4 – Establish an engagement survey for staff and achieve >75% positive responses.
- 4. **Internal promotion rate for staff**
Aim 4.1.5 – Track staff promotions; identify and support opportunities for advancement.
- 5. **Onboarding**
Aim 4.1.6 – Create an efficient and valuable onboarding experience for all new faculty and staff. Ensure effective training is provided to new staff upon hire with clear expectations and opportunities to prepare them to be successful in their position.
- 6. **College ranking in AAVMC salary comparisons**
Aim 4.1.7 – Using AAVMC Comparative Data, determine the college's national rank in faculty salaries in each title. Aim to achieve the upper half of national rankings in each rank.
- 7. **Create a streamlined portal for sharing of new information on awards and achievements throughout the college.**
Aim 4.1.8 – Develop an efficient system for reporting awards, accomplishments, and achievements and promote them broadly through robust communications.

OBJECTIVE 4.2 – INCREASE THE RECRUITMENT, RETENTION, REWARD AND ADVANCEMENT OF OUR EMPLOYEES

- 1. **Actively recruit applicants for open positions.** The dean will charge each search committee to actively build the applicant pool through engagement of professional networks and personal contacts. The chair of the search committee will provide a summary of those efforts to the dean and discuss opportunities before a hiring recommendation is made.
- 2. **Promote research opportunities and support projects that enhance the quality of life.** An important element of our mission with respect to advancing *One Health* is to conduct research, instruction, and outreach that directly benefit our region's people. The college will support, promote, and showcase examples of the college's holistic commitment to *One Health*.

3. **Support exceptional faculty and staff with nominations for awards, recognition of achievements, and appointments to the college's key committees.** Our college will improve through the insight and unique perspectives of our personnel by incorporating them into the decision-making framework of the college. Their successes will be promoted widely through nominations and promotional communications, bringing recognition to them and to the college.
4. **Enhance mentorship of faculty, staff, and students to include a supportive network for navigating unique challenges.** The college will be vigilant in identifying and eliminating impediments to full engagement of all faculty, staff, and students by building a culture where individuals are welcomed, valued, respected, and engaged.

Key metrics

1. **College participation in early education recruitment programs**
 - a. **Aim 4.2.1** – Offer scholarships for participants in the Veterinary Intensive Program and summer Vet Camp.
 - b. **Aim 4.2.2**– Invite and facilitate visits to Open House from regional elementary, middle, and high school students.
2. **Acceptance rates for top candidates**

Aim 4.2.7 – Departments, the college and the Office of the Provost will collaborate to successfully recruit the most competitive faculty when recommended by a search committee.

OBJECTIVE 4.3 – FOSTER A CULTURE OF WELLNESS AND WORK-LIFE BALANCE

All people in the veterinary profession seek to excel and advance professionally. The professional development of the college's faculty and staff contributes directly to the advancement of the college. It is vitally important that the success of faculty and staff is recognized and rewarded to ensure engagement and a sense of satisfaction and wellness. These qualities create a bridge between professional wellness and holistic wellbeing. The college will commit to providing pathways for professional development through efficient and valuable onboarding programs, full-career mentoring, clearly specified pathways for advancement, coordinated use of annual leave, innovative work policies, and constructive and timely performance evaluation. The following steps will be taken in support of wellness and work-life balance:

1. **Identify and promote wellness-related Human Resource (HR) programs and training sessions.** These will focus on psychological health, stress management, financial management, self-improvement, and using existing employee benefits.
2. **Create and promote campus infrastructure and programs to support work-life balance.** Provide opportunities to participate in on-campus fitness activities. These activities could include professionally coordinated exercise programs, established walking paths, allocated time and transportation to the AU Recreation and Wellness Center, social events (tailgates, ice cream breaks, etc.) and others.

3. **Explore options for flexibility in positions within the college.** Investigate inventive ways to support faculty and staff with alternative professional goals or other work-life balance needs to allow flexibility in positions such as job sharing.

Key metrics

1. **Vacation days earned versus vacation days used**
 - a. **Aim 4.3.1** – Alert employees to check personal leave balances and encourage planning for the use of allocated vacation days.
 - b. **Aim 4.3.2** – Achieve >50% usage of personal leave days per year.
2. **Functional and inviting lactation rooms**
 - a. **Aim 4.3.3** – Create a task force to review university-policy, legal requirements, and best practices for lactation rooms.
 - b. **Aim 4.3.4** – The task force will advise the administration on the identification of appropriate spaces for, and the creation of, contemporary mother's rooms on campus.
3. **Innovative work policies**
 - a. **Aim 4.3.5** – Engage AU Human Resources in support of the proposed sick leave bank.
 - b. **Aim 4.3.6** – Explore options for job flexibility within the college with AU Human Resources and other stakeholders.
4. **Promotion of workshops and professional development opportunities**

Aim 4.3.7 – Distribute and post a monthly resource guide for professional and personal development.
5. **Survey existing resources, future needs, and funding strategies for further infrastructure**

Aim 4.3.8 – Create a task force for employee wellness to assess existing resources, identify best practices for awareness, and report to the dean.

OBJECTIVE 4.4 – ENHANCE SUPPORT FOR FACULTY AND STAFF IN DUTIES RELATED TO ADMINISTRATION, RESEARCH AND SERVICE

The college's faculty and staff should be supported in their assigned activities to achieve the highest productivity and engagement. The college will identify and provide the resources and support necessary to ensure the success of faculty and staff carrying out their responsibilities in instruction, research, and service through the following steps:

1. **Streamline processes and procedures to facilitate productivity.** Many service activities being conducted by faculty members could be assumed or facilitated by administrative staff. We will identify these activities and develop a support structure to assist the faculty. Examples include assisting search committee chairs with scheduling and logistics of searches, and assisting course coordinators with communications, room scheduling, and Canvas usage.
2. **Maintain a college calendar and post related announcements on an accessible place on the college's website.**

3. **Create a quarterly college-wide seminar series as the basis for cross-college social and professional engagement.** This series would be designed to complement departmental research seminars and would serve as a forum for the exchange of scholarly activity and college-wide perspectives.

Key metric

1. **Identify needs and resources**

Aim 4.4.1 – Survey the faculty and staff to identify critical needs for administrative support and uniform distribution across the college and identify resources to address them.

GOAL 5. Strategic Enrollment

OBJECTIVE 5.1 – ENROLLMENT AND RETENTION

The college will seek to recruit and retain a robust, talented, and representative student population that embraces the variety of career opportunities in veterinary medicine and biomedical science. This includes all students— veterinary students, graduate students, and house officers— and will consist of the following activities:

1. **Designate a faculty team** to increase outreach activities for K-12 students in rural communities and in cities; establish a regional mentoring network of individuals to engage in outreach activities to educational institutions in the short term.
2. **Ensure an objective admissions process** by training interview teams to implement best practices for admissions.
3. **Increase the academic strength and career interests of the applicant pool** by engaging pre-veterinary students and establishing a clear understanding of expectations for academic performance, discussing varied career options, and maintaining contact throughout the undergraduate experience (to include potential new undergraduate programs in the college).

Key metrics

1. **Establish benchmarks for student recruitment.**

Aim 5.1.1 – Ensure that recruited students have interests and experiences that match the breadth of the profession.

2. **Facilitate innovative activities in student recruitment.**

Aim 5.1.2 – A recruitment officer will engage undergraduate students and facilitate recruitment visits to the college's campus.

3. **Number and impact of activities by the Veterinary Advisory Council.**

Aim 5.1.3 – The Veterinary Advisory Council will meet with the dean each semester to discuss an agenda that recognizes the college's successes and promotes further strategies for recruitment of students that meet the needs of the profession.

4. Number of incoming students (veterinary, graduate, and house officers) with diverse career interests as a proportion of total student population.

Aim 5.1.5 – Increase the number of incoming students with interests in rural practice.

5. Track key data for the admitted class and disaggregate the data based on career interest, particularly with regard to rural and large animal practice.

a. **Aim 5.1.6** – Analyze components of the admissions rubric for potential detrimental impact on recruitment and admission of applicants with varied career interests.

b. **Aim 5.1.7** – Determine graduation rates and median time-to-degree for individuals from groups with an interest in rural practice when compared with the overall class.

c. **Aim 5.1.8** – Determine the attrition rates (relative and absolute) for groups with interests in rural practice when compared with the overall class.

d. **Aim 5.1.9** – Determine the employment and retention rates for graduates with interests in rural practice compared to the majority population and from the overall class.

GOAL 6. Operational Excellence

Implement operational efficiency and effectiveness measures that continuously support a culture of high performance at all levels of the college. Operational excellence is foundational to the success of all elements of the Strategic Plan. The college will be an example of best practices in resource stewardship, operational effectiveness, efficiency, and innovation. Through responsible stewardship of resources, the college will maintain flexibility to assess and redirect investment to activities and initiatives that will help us to achieve our bold aspirations and ambitious vision. In an environment of collegiality and transparency, financial sustainability for the college will be created by focusing on creative solutions to funding challenges without compromising the successful pursuit of our mission. The college recognizes the strong financial support provided by Auburn University, the state of Alabama and our generous donors for our world-class facilities and programs. Operational excellence will leverage this support and allow the college to do more and to excel.

The college has the opportunity to operate more efficiently while also operating more effectively. Our overarching goal would be to operate with intelligence that is grounded by data to deliver optimal mission activities at lower cost. To achieve these goals, the college will provide support and training for faculty, staff, and students on our responsibility to be fiscally accountable in all aspects of our mission. College units will find new ways to collaborate as they achieve operational excellence. Engaged and collaborative employees will be rewarded for efforts to implement operational efficiencies in their organizational units and the college. Implementing technologies in cost-justified ways will be explored as a means to reduce overhead and personnel costs. Well-informed decisions will be made by ensuring transparency of financial information. In return, units will enhance their productivity. By strategically managing college resources, investments can be made in top priorities, while judicious divestment can be made in areas of lower priority. The Strategic Plan will be the roadmap for these strategic decisions.

Achieving financial sustainability for the college will be accomplished by focusing on creative solutions to funding challenges while enhancing faculty, staff and student outcomes. Operational efficiencies will be examined in five key areas:

1. **Emphasize public engagement and philanthropy to enhance financial sustainability**
2. **Develop public-private partnerships to support and enhance college activities**
3. **Implement efficiencies in the administration of the college's operations**
4. **Practice responsible resource stewardship**
5. **Enhance the college's safety and security**

OBJECTIVE 6.1 – EMPHASIZE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND PHILANTHROPY TO ENHANCE FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

The college's development team has advanced the college's mission in multiple ways and creates a high return on investment. The college will leverage those successes into operational efficiencies and mission-critical priorities through a strategic fundraising campaign.

Staffing expertise on the college's development team will be expanded and optimized to broaden the type of donors we engage, to include corporations, foundations, and other non-traditional development targets. Such support will create new opportunities for growth. Tangible benefits will include endowed professorships and chairs, which enable the college to be more competitive in recruiting, retaining, and rewarding exceptional faculty.

Key metrics

1. **New corporate, government, foundation, and individual partners for achieving the college's mission.** Develop contacts, cultivate relationships, and develop proposals to align the college's goals with their needs.
 - a. **Aim 6.1.1** – Review the development portfolio within the context of the Strategic Plan goals to establish foundational data for current support and other areas of opportunity.
 - b. **Aim 6.1.2** – Identify and engage 10 new potential development targets, with a focus on corporations and foundations, in year 1.
2. **Promote the college's mission to government officials (local, state and federal), corporations, and foundations.** Work with policymakers through appropriate university channels to ensure appropriate funding for the college; explore new opportunities for local, state and federal support outside of traditional revenue streams. Capture support for capital projects through these new channels. Advocate for college inclusion in AU government priorities.
 - a. **Aim 6.1.3** – Engage AU federal liaison and AU state liaison to identify opportunities for advancement of the mission. Strive to be included annually in the AU federal and state agenda.
 - b. **Aim 6.1.4** – Identify corporate, foundation, and donor relationships created by the faculty to be cultivated with the college's assistance as program-building opportunities.

OBJECTIVE 6.2 – DEVELOP PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS TO SUPPORT AND ENHANCE COLLEGE OPERATIONS

The college has developed strong relationships with the private business, corporate, and government sectors in developing research, markets, and clinical services, and these relationships can be leveraged to enhance the college's strengths.

Key metrics:

1. Document trends in economic development and commercialization pursued by the college.

Aim 6.2.1 – Track and promote commercialization of the college's intellectual property through the AU Office of Innovation, Advancement, and Commercialization.

2. Quantify investment by external entities/partners in college operations.

Aim 6.2.2 – Track and promote the college's projects and programs supported by private investments on an annual basis. Identify and develop new revenue streams based on industry partnerships. These could focus on training programs, research projects, and public engagement.

3. Leverage central campus resources and the Auburn Research and Technology Foundation (ARTF) to enhance commercialization efforts and investments in college operations.

Aim 6.2.3 – Engage the ARTF and the Auburn Research Park to pursue business opportunities emanating from and enhancing access to the college's intellectual property and services.

OBJECTIVE 6.3 – IMPLEMENT EFFICIENCIES IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE COLLEGE'S OPERATIONS

Define faculty assignments to focus on the academic mission. Reduce and streamline administrative responsibilities placed on faculty.

Key metrics

1. Administrative costs as a percent of the overall college budget, defined by operational unit.

Aim 6.3.1 – Calculate administrative costs for each of the college's administrative units and express as a total of the unit's budget.

2. Collect all regular processes conducted by the college's administrative units. Conduct an internal audit and assessment to streamline

- a. **Aim 6.3.2** – Identify, define, and document the essential processes conducted in each unit of the college.
- b. **Aim 6.3.3** – Apply the above methodologies to each process to improve efficiency and eliminate redundancy.

3. Centralize certain administrative activities to eliminate redundancy at unit-levels and to apply consistency of policies and practices.

Aim 6.3.4 – Identify processes in the academic units that could be moved centrally (i.e., to the college level) to increase efficiency.

4. Identify and eliminate costly, redundant, or unnecessary policies, practices and procedures that obstruct productivity.

Aim 6.3.5 – Identify administrative obstacles to faculty productivity that could be assigned to professional staff. Examples include faculty recruitment activities (itineraries,

accommodations, and routine communications with candidates) and course management (Canvas entries).

OBJECTIVE 6.4 – PROMOTE RESPONSIBLE RESOURCE STEWARDSHIP IN ALL ASPECTS OF THE COLLEGE’S MISSION

Optimize the veterinary curriculum through curriculum mapping to reduce educational overlaps. Explore, encourage and facilitate teaching practices that reduce the cost of veterinary education, including the development of course and clinical rotation budgets to promote fiscal stewardship. Maintaining the broad-based education of Auburn students is essential to the college’s mission.

Resource stewardship metrics will be developed in all key aspects of the college’s mission, including veterinary education, graduate student education, research infrastructure, and hospital operations. The college recognizes that some educational activities are more expensive than others and some educational activities are more amenable to operational efficiencies than others.

Key metrics

1. The costs and revenues associated with educating a veterinary student

Aim 6.4.1 – Determine the approximate cost of educating a veterinary student and be accountable for the spending of tuition and fees generated by these activities and the college resources allocated to support their activities.

2. The costs and revenues associated with educating a BMS graduate student, both house-officer graduate students (clinical residents) and research-intensive graduate students

Aim 6.4.2 – Determine the approximate cost of educating a graduate student in each classification and be accountable for revenue generated by these students and the college resources allocated to support their activities.

3. The costs and revenues associated with offering courses and clinical rotations.

Aim 6.4.3 – Develop budgets for each course and clinical rotation.

4. Develop partnerships with other colleges of veterinary medicine to identify opportunities for sharing resources through educational partnerships.

Aim 6.4.4 – Engage actively in initiatives of the AAVMC and Southeastern Veterinary Education Consortium to find strategic opportunities for sharing resources for veterinary and graduate education.

OBJECTIVE 6.5 – ENHANCE SAFETY AND SECURITY

Maintenance of animal resources in support of education and research requires constant security vigilance, and conscientious actions by all parties. The college will use central campus resources for implementation and rapid messaging of safety and security issues on our campus.

Key metrics

1. An effective central campus security response network.

Aim 6.5.1 – Develop an adaptable security communications network.

2. An integrated and hierarchal communications system to supplement AU Alert.

Aim 6.5.2 – Assess ways to supplement the AU Alert system for the benefit of the college.

3. Investments in infrastructure and security in support of the college’s Division of Laboratory Animal Health and other university-level animal activities of importance to the college.

Aim 6.5.3 – Track and report annual investments in animal-use infrastructure and security in the college.