The history of Georgia State University is one of transformation — from its founding in 1913 as an evening school of commerce, to its emergence as an independent college in the 1960s, to its designation in 1995 as one of four research institutions in the state university system. GSU is now the second-largest university in the University System of Georgia, with more than 30,000 students, over 1,000 faculty members and over 250 degree programs in 62 fields of study that generate cutting-edge research and educate one of the most diverse student populations in the nation. Our students, faculty, staff, graduates and programs are integral to the city of Atlanta, Georgia’s capital and largest city, marking an important distinction for us among universities in Georgia. Our boundaries and influence are growing as our campus extends throughout the greater metropolitan area, with an economic impact on the metro area of more than $1 billion annually. This strategic plan builds upon Georgia State’s trajectory of growth in quality, size and impact, anticipating increased prominence as we approach our second century and vie for a place among the leading public research universities in the United States.

The Georgia State community is characterized and strengthened by its diversity, which is among our greatest sources of pride. Our student body reflects the makeup of our state and anticipates the increasing diversity of our nation as a whole, as acknowledged in the University’s Diversity Strategic Plan, an executive summary of which is appended to this document. We take as a matter of course that all of our students, who come from every county in Georgia, every state in the nation and more than 150 countries, deserve a first-rate education. And while we have continued to provide access to nontraditional students, over the past decade GSU also has attracted many of the state’s most talented undergraduates. We are confident that thus far we have been successful in educating our multifaceted student body and are proud of our alumni, who have excelled and led in all areas of endeavor at local, state, national and international levels. In 2009 Georgia State was named one of the Top 100 Public Universities in the U.S. by Forbes magazine, based on student satisfaction, affordability and success in job placement of its graduates. We have made continued improvement in teaching a priority in this Strategic Plan.

GSU, once known as a commuter school, now offers a rich and vibrant student experience through a remarkable array of academic, social and cultural opportunities including community-building programs in athletics, student life and recreation, Freshmen Learning Communities, and peer tutoring. Over the past 15 years we also have added extensive undergraduate housing. And over the past decade we have built exciting, competitive NCAA athletic programs, including the GSU Panthers football team, which established a winning record in its first season of play in the Georgia Dome.

GSU faculty research, as measured by external funding, publications, rankings and prestigious awards, has shown sustained and impressive growth. The creativity and productivity of individual faculty members have enhanced Georgia State’s status nationally and among the four research institutions in the University System of Georgia. They have also given rise to a number of nationally ranked graduate programs, including GSU’s program in health law, which is ranked among the top five in the nation according to U.S. News & World Report. GSU’s part-time MBA is ranked among the best in the nation by BusinessWeek and U.S. News & World Report and its Executive MBA is on the Financial Times list of the world’s best EMBA programs.

GSU research and service projects have garnered national attention, financial support and recognition for their innovation and contributions to the broader community. In 2005 the White House selected Computer Assisted Debate as a signature program for Helping America’s Youth. Since 1999 GSU’s Bio-Bus has introduced more than 100,000 students in over 150 schools to cell biology, the basics of DNA and other life science concepts. In 2010, faculty members from the Robinson College of Business and the Andrew Young School of Policy Studies developed the first comprehensive nationwide calculator for small businesses to determine eligibility for tax credits under federal health care reform. Since 2005, Georgia State’s Partnership for Urban Health Research has facilitated interdisciplinary research on health disparities in urban communities and
brought in over $12 million in external awards. GSU scientists, working in state-of-the-art facilities such as the Center for High Angular Resolution Astronomy (CHARA) and the new Parker H. Petit Science Center, have garnered major support from the National Science Foundation and the National Institutes of Health. As an example, the Center for Behavioral Neurosciences, an NSF science and technology center, has been awarded over $40 million since 1999. Recently, GSU’s College of Education received a Teacher Quality Partnership Grant to support its innovative teacher preparation programs in collaboration with school system partners. And GSU’s Center for Collaborative and International Arts brings music, film, visual and literary arts from around the world to campus, often in collaboration with GSU’s distinguished Rialto Center for the Arts.

This preamble provides a context for the Strategic Plan that follows. Over the past few decades GSU has grown and advanced at a dramatic rate due to the creative efforts of individual faculty across disciplines as well as collaborative undertakings in our emergent areas of focus. The University is committed to supporting and rewarding ongoing faculty achievement, as all faculty accomplishments contribute to the excellence and reputation of the institution. Based on our campus dialogue, the Strategic Plan identifies five major goals and outlines a series of supporting initiatives that will promote innovation, accelerate research and build on our existing strengths. With broad agreement from President Mark P. Becker and Provost Risa Palm, and from faculty, students and staff, we have resolved (1) to become a national model for undergraduate education by demonstrating that students from all backgrounds can achieve academic and career success at high rates; (2) to significantly strengthen and grow the base of distinctive graduate programs that assure development of the next generation of researchers and societal leaders; (3) to become a leading public research university addressing the most challenging issues of the 21st century; (4) to be a leader in understanding and addressing the complex challenges of cities and developing effective solutions; and (5) to achieve distinction in globalizing the University.

We believe that these goals and the specific initiatives that support them are worthy, and we are committed to their success. Over nine decades GSU has shown significant growth. Yet we believe we have the potential to achieve more during our second century than could have been imagined in our first. We invite you to join us in realizing these goals.

The overarching goal of Georgia State University as it enters its second century is to be recognized as a dynamic academic community where teaching and research combine to produce leaders and create solutions to conquer the challenges of the 21st century.
As Georgia State has grown, our student body has retained the characteristics that make the University one of the most distinctive public research institutions in the nation while becoming a destination of choice for high-ability students. The opportunity to teach and learn in such a rich environment is one of the University's greatest strengths. Our goal is to continue to position the University as a model of academic success for diverse populations and to lead among research institutions in producing engaged citizens of the 21st century.

INITIATIVE 1: Increase the level of scholarship support for undergraduate students. The ability to recruit highly qualified students as well as the academic performance of enrolled students are both greatly influenced by the level of a student's financial need. Although the academic ability of our students has been steadily increasing, their socio-economic profile is unique for a research university in that nearly 90 percent of students qualify for financial aid. To enhance Georgia State's ability to attract the best students and to address the detrimental effects of financial need on student recruitment, retention and graduation, the University proposes doubling the level of institutional support for merit- and need-based scholarship funding. This support also will assist in expanding our unique retention programs such as Keep HOPE Alive, which gives students an opportunity to participate in academic and financial aid counseling and intensive academic skills development. Central to increasing the effectiveness of our scholarship offerings is the development of an Office of Fellowships and Scholarships that connects students with a range of internal and external scholarships.

INITIATIVE 2: Establish a Student Success Center. To ensure the success of our students, Georgia State will establish a Student Success Center identified as the campus location for a complete range of student academic support programs. As part of its commitment to student success, the University will commit to lowering the student/advisor ratio to the national standard of 300 to 1 and will establish a new advisement program that will track each student's academic progress and create mandatory points of advisement and interventions at key academic junctures. The Student Success Center also will house Georgia State's Center for Teaching and Learning, where faculty can explore innovative classroom pedagogies and technologies. Housed within the Center, a Teaching Academy will promote the scholarship of teaching and learning and serve as an entity to seek external funds to enhance learning and instruction. Faculty who become Teaching Academy Fellows will conduct research on improving student learning in their courses with a goal of publishing this work in peer-reviewed journals. The Student Success Center will serve as evidence of the University's commitment to student success by providing resources to both students and faculty to improve the process of teaching and learning at Georgia State.

INITIATIVE 3: Implement an Undergraduate Signature Experience. The University will establish signature experiences for undergraduates. Undergraduates will complete at least one signature experience before graduation. These programs represent a commitment to applied learning as an integral part of our educational mission. Initially the four signature experiences will
be structured as follows: (1) The Research Fellows program will allow undergraduates to join a research team or work with individual research faculty. (2) The City Fellows program will involve participation in the Council for the Progress of Cities or the President’s Leadership Academy. The Academy will hone students’ practical and applied real-world skills through coursework, civic engagement and internships and will culminate in an international trip hosted by the University president. (3) The Professional Fellows program will provide a way for students to partner with those already working within their chosen profession. Both the City Fellow and Professional Fellow programs will draw on our extensive alumni base for mentors, internship directors and civic contacts. (4) The International Fellows Program for Studying Abroad will offer students an opportunity to learn and engage as world citizens. Academic units are encouraged to organize additional Signature Experiences.

INITIATIVE 4: Establish an Honors College. Georgia State University will establish an Honors College and thereby join other universities nationally in giving its Honors efforts stature and visibility on campus. The Honors College will advocate for the educational experiences and resources needed by our high-ability students. The College will gain resources for instructional support to allow faculty from across the University to offer individual Honors courses or be appointed as Honors Faculty Fellows. The Honors College will be a place where faculty can work with our most talented students to advance undergraduate scholarship, enhance research, foster service, and compete for prestigious awards and fellowships.
Social, cultural and economic progress depends in part on the work and dedication of well-educated scholars, scientists and societal leaders. As a public research university, one of Georgia State’s primary functions is to provide talented and motivated individuals with the knowledge and skills necessary to take on important roles. This is best done through high-quality graduate and professional programs that are well supported and that target the areas of greatest projected need.

**INITIATIVE 1: Expand support for doctoral programs.** A cornerstone to the growth and quality of a research university is the interdependence between the conduct of research and the opportunities for quality graduate study. It is with this appreciation that the University will create a plan for increasing investment in graduate programs, with a goal of maintaining approximately 30 percent of the student body enrolled in graduate programs, with a particular emphasis on increasing the number of Ph.D. and professional doctoral students. Of particular note, while our doctoral programs provide scholars and researchers for research universities, based on the diversity of the students who attend Georgia State, we are particularly well positioned to increase the trend of GSU providing the academy and public and private enterprises with minority students holding graduate degrees. To increase the research profile of the University and graduate an increased number of doctoral students in programs of excellence throughout the University, at least two strategies will be considered. First, the size of the faculty and the number of Ph.D. assistantships in selected programs that contribute to this goal should be increased. Second, the level of scholarship and assistantship funds awarded to students should be increased to nationally competitive rates to ensure that Georgia State is able to compete for the best students from across the nation and around the world.

**INITIATIVE 2: Leverage our national reputation in professional degree programs for the development of societal leaders.** Georgia State has achieved national prominence of its professional programs and will leverage their strengths in ways that support their current trajectory toward becoming elite programs for professional education and dissemination of scholarship that respond to the 21st century need for leaders with cross-professional competencies. Increasingly, societal leaders play multiple roles in complex organizations with responsibilities across sectors. To accomplish this cross-professional competency, interdisciplinary graduate degree programs will be increased, both by leveraging existing successful programs and by creating new programs that address unmet and evolving needs. The University also will create a consortium of courses designed to provide leadership and professional skills drawn from a broad array of disciplines to supplement profession-specific curricula. Further, the University will develop noncredit executive education programs for those who face increasingly complex issues in their operating environments and/or are considering transition to other organizational contexts (e.g., business to nonprofit). In addition, the University will consider the creation of a university-level facility that will serve as a central location for executive education and allow the University to accommodate individuals from outside the Atlanta metropolitan area.
As an academic community we honor the achievements of disciplinary and interdisciplinary research conducted at Georgia State University. These efforts contribute to the development of knowledge and are represented across the University. We will accelerate these efforts through strategies and investments that will position Georgia State among the leading public research universities. Essential components of this goal are to increase the University’s competitiveness in the award of federal research funds and prestigious awards and fellowships, and to provide new structures, adjust existing ones, and encourage additional resources that will promote and increase interdisciplinary collaboration.

**INITIATIVE 1: Enhance a research culture.** The vitality of a University’s research and scholarship is dependent on the leadership of the faculty and the quality of graduate programs. Georgia State’s Second Century Initiative is a commitment to this relationship. With this initiative as a basis we will increase the number of endowed professorships, Regents’ Professorships, and Eminent Scholars as well as create research-designated professorships. Additionally, we are committed to further developing a culture that recognizes the importance and impact of funded research and its dissemination and rewards individuals whose efforts further the strategic goals of the University. It is important therefore that we recognize the importance of developing and supporting productive scholars across all ranks and disciplines, pre- and post-tenure. Also, Georgia State’s commitment to increasing and focusing our research and scholarship will be made tangible by increased resources for selected existing and potential areas of strength. We will identify and focus on such areas of research and commit to transformative investments. This commitment is exemplified by recent awards in the areas of diagnostics, which include immunity and inflammation and drug design; evidence-based economics and public policy; health law and policy development; bioinformatics; urban health issues; challenges to acquisition of language and literacy; neuroscience; new media and communication; and risk management.

**INITIATIVE 2: Establish University-Level Research Centers.** At public and private agencies the growth in potential funding increasingly is focused on interdisciplinary research that addresses societal problems. To assure Georgia State’s competitiveness the University requires a more robust and strategic means for developing research programs. Toward this end, we will establish a two-tier system of University-level research centers that will facilitate the conduct and administration of research.

**University-Level Research Centers (ULRCs).** ULRCs will give priority to problem-focused projects that demonstrate successful interdisciplinary collaboration and address challenges facing our rapidly changing society. ULRCs will provide value-added administrative support systems and the operational efficiencies necessary to facilitate the translation of scholarship into grant applications, economic development activities, products and services. These centers will facilitate recruitment of accomplished research faculty, scientists, graduate students and post-doctoral fellows. Their primary responsibility will be to house center- or program-level funded projects of approximately $1–3 million per year. **University Research Center Incubators (RCIs)** will support emerging research programs that have the potential to mature into a ULRC. RCIs will

GOAL 3

Become a leading public research university addressing the most challenging issues of the 21st century.
be provided up to three years of support and then will be reviewed for designation as a ULRC. For such designation an RCI will have received an average of $1 million in annual external federal support. [For extended discussion see Appendix C.]

**INITIATIVE 3: Create a Georgia State Faculty Fellowship Program.** Prestigious, peer-reviewed, international, national and disciplinary fellowships and awards are a metric for scholarly excellence. Many such awards require extensive applications and completion of specific scholarly activities. To be competitive for these awards faculty require time to develop proposals or complete the activity for which they received the award or fellowship. The University will create a Georgia State Faculty Fellowship Program that provides one-semester teaching and service release to facilitate completion of applications for a designated list of pre-eminent international and national fellowships or awards. Recognized fellowships and awards will be externally defined. For the arts and humanities, social sciences, physical sciences, and life sciences the relevant awards will be those on the National Academy’s list or those identified by the Center for Measuring University Performance. Similar externally judged award listings for the professional disciplines will be identified.

**INITIATIVE 4: Enhance supporting infrastructure for the conduct of research.**

(a) **Research administration support services.** Reforms of internal research administrative support will include an integrated central and distributed research administration. This will include expanded Central Research Administration management staff to ensure central services are functioning at expected levels, while also providing supervision and training of the new distributed full-time certified research administrative staff in the Colleges/Departments. [Expanded discussion appears in Appendix D.]

(b) **Research information resources.** The Georgia State University Library will provide new and emerging technologies that support research. This includes technologies to provide anytime/anywhere access to Georgia State’s and the world’s scholarly information and improved discovery tools to ensure access to purchased, licensed and electronic content. As economic pressures shift distribution away from traditional delivery models, the library will provide a just-in-time method for acquiring materials instead of the existing just-in-case model. The Digital Archive @ GSU will be used to collect, disseminate and preserve Georgia State’s scholarly output. In response to government mandates, the library will collaborate with others to create a plan for long-term management of research data. [Expanded discussion appears in Appendix E.] Additionally, the University will enhance its digital infrastructure to deliver IT-enabled services in support of research. These services will enable faculty and students to capture, organize, analyze and share structured and unstructured data and collaborate seamlessly across projects. Given the rapid pace of innovation in information technology, the University will continually scan for new capabilities and offer the best of these to its constituents, with both on-premise and outsourced services.
INITIATIVE 5: Enhance Georgia State’s contributions to the sciences, and health and medical research and education

(a) Expanding the scale of scientific research. Georgia State is committed to increasing the scale of its contributions in the natural, computational, behavioral and social sciences because the sciences are crucial to Georgia State’s identity as a leading research university and its goal of significantly increasing external funding. Expanding research capacity in the sciences will require additional resources and mechanisms to foster the success of faculty, staff and students in key areas, strengthen interdisciplinary collaborations, forge connections with University-Level Research Centers, and sustain our nationally competitive core facilities. Toward this end we will expand our partnerships and pursue large-scale program projects and center grants with the Georgia Research Alliance, other research universities, industry and government. We will increase the development of intellectual property, property technology transfer and biotech licensing and build on our successes in securing external funding for research in science and math education.

(b) Contributions to health and medical education. The 21st century is already seeing significant growth and concern in the areas of the health and medical requirements of our citizens. Atlanta is home to numerous global health organizations that provide a significant variety of research, funding and employment opportunities. As a leading public research university in Atlanta, Georgia State will expand its contributions to research and education in these areas by establishing a School of Public Health. This new school will be eligible for a stream of federal funding dedicated to accredited schools of public health and expand current degree offerings to include undergraduate and doctoral degrees. Further, given the prospects for growth and society’s projected needs, Georgia State representatives will initiate discussions with the Board of Regents and major stakeholders concerning a new avenue of contribution by which Georgia State would add a new school or college in the field of medical/health research and education.
In appreciation of the relationship between Georgia State and Atlanta we will be a leading university engaged in the study of, and the development and implementation of, solutions to complex challenges faced by cities and their regions today and as they transition to the megacities of the future. To accomplish this we will connect the talent and resources of the University with individuals and resources in public and private agencies, governments, and local community organizations. Additionally, as part of the University’s engagement with Atlanta, we will expand our contributions to the economic and cultural development of the city and of Georgia.

**INITIATIVE 1:** Form the Georgia State University Council for the Progress of Cities (CPC). The CPC will be a confederation of researchers and campus entities to support collaboration with academic, governmental, corporate, nonprofit, community organization, and foundation partners. The purpose of the CPC will be to provide evidence-based solutions that demonstrate the potential to become nationally recognized “best practices” for selected challenges based on the current strengths of the University and identified needs of urban areas such as Atlanta. The CPC will support three categories of Center Fellows: (1) Research Scholar-in-Residence from noted national and international academic institutions, (2) Professional-in-Residence from among governmental and private foundations, NGOs, and corporate partners, and (3) Student Research Fellows who will participate in research teams and/or engage in city-focused internships. As the CPC develops, it will work in conjunction with the International Consortium of City-based Universities (noted in Goal No. 5) to engage in joint research with international partners focused on current shared city-based problems and in comparative research projects such as the growing phenomenon of cities transitioning into megacities. The CPC will also provide an interdisciplinary structure for the historical, anthropological and archaeological study of our home city of Atlanta. A focus of study would be Atlanta’s unique standing as the historical anchor of the Civil Rights movement and as the international capital of the South.

**INITIATIVE 2:** Highlight the arts and media. The arts and media are vital to the quality of all major cities. Georgia State houses Atlanta’s largest and most influential schools of music and art and design, as well as thriving programs in film and creative writing. The Center for Collaborative and International Arts cultivates unique programming, and the Rialto Center for the Arts is highly regarded for the quality of its diverse series. Our Laboratory for Digital Arts and Entertainment has incubated global businesses while collaborating with industry partners to stimulate growth in media production. Our initiative in emerging media promises to shape media studies that cross boundaries in the arts and media. To elevate our leadership in the creative arts to a new level of viability so that we become known nationally for our distinctiveness and excellence, Georgia State will form a College of Fine Arts that will highlight the Ernest G. Welch School of Art & Design, the School of Music and the Center for Collaborative and International Arts. As we build this school we will increase the competitiveness of our recruitment, enhance student interaction with renowned artists and expand our community partnerships. We will seek performance, exhibition and screening venues and promote our programs to increase our reach and our audience.
Georgia State University will continue to engage in efforts to internationalize its academic activities and establish sustained international relationships that further the education, research and scholarship of its students and faculty. This will require creating an institution that is able to attract talented scholars whose contributions are recognized worldwide in leading academic and policy forums. It also will require creating educational experiences and programs for students that prepare them to be successful in an increasingly interconnected and globally oriented world.

**INITIATIVE 1: Create an International Consortium of Universities for Critical Issues Challenging Cities.** Georgia State University will lead in the formation of a global consortium of premier universities dedicated to addressing the issues of an increasingly urban world. This network will serve as the mechanism through which we will exchange students, scholars, knowledge and best practices. The consortium will be a collaborative of select, premier city-based universities in major metropolitan areas around the world to focus on common issues currently facing these cities and those that arise as they transition to megacities. The major activity of the Consortium will be to initiate long-term partnerships among members in order to engage students, faculty and staff in addressing issues of common importance. The Consortium will seek to engage Atlanta’s international community organizations (consulates, bi-national chambers of commerce, etc.) as partners and sponsors for Consortium activities.

**INITIATIVE 2: Promote externally funded research on the challenges facing emerging nations.** Global social and economic stability is dependent, in part, on the continued development of emerging nations. Georgia State will leverage and expand the expertise of its faculty to build interdisciplinary teams that focus on externally funded research addressing the complex cultural, economic, legal, educational, medical and social issues facing emerging nations. As we move to increase funding for these initiatives a plan will be developed that proposes resources and strategies to be implemented and evaluated, as well as a structure to coordinate and increase visibility of our projects.

**INITIATIVE 3: Establish a Georgia State University International Center.** Georgia State will further internationalize the campus environment through a facility that brings visibility and coordination to international programs, activities and services. Such a physical facility will create opportunities for maximizing interaction of the campus community with international students and scholars, bring greater coordination among university international offices and programs, and provide meeting rooms for cultural events and workspace to accommodate international visitors, dignitaries and scholars, including representatives from the international consortium.

**INITIATIVE 4: Enhance the global competency of students, faculty and staff.** Georgia State can become the institution of choice for students from across the world by leveraging current strengths in international studies and by putting new programs in place to enhance the global competency of students, faculty and staff. Georgia State will establish educational objectives and provide resources necessary to help students develop the cultural competencies necessary to
interact effectively with people, ideas and activities from other cultures. Examples of these objectives include (a) doubling the number of students who enroll in study abroad opportunities and expanding the study abroad program to include more semester-long opportunities, (b) introducing a Global Leadership Certificate program for undergraduates featuring interdisciplinary programs that combine comparative and international courses with professional experiences as well as on- and off-campus extracurricular activities, and (c) commissioning a task force to assess requirements for and identify efficient and contemporary ways of assisting students to gain multi-language and cultural proficiency.

**IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN**

The outcomes of the Strategic Plan will be used as input for the various academic operating plans throughout the University. Overall responsibility for implementation of the Strategic Plan rests with the president and the provost. Specific implementation strategies will be developed in consultation with the Senate Executive Committee, the deans of the various schools and colleges, and other University officers as appropriate. As needed, specific items requiring further discussion or elaboration will be referred to appropriate senate committees. The provost will be responsible for the development of annual operating plans and annual progress reports. A set of metrics [see Appendix G] will be used to measure progress toward meeting strategic goals.

Appendices (located online at www.gsu.edu/strategicplan)
A. The process of developing the Strategic Plan
B. SWOT analysis
C. Discussion paper prepared on research centers
D. The Huron Report on administrative support for the conduct of research
E. Discussion paper prepared on the University Library
F. Executive Summary of the University Diversity Strategic Plan
G. Metrics for measuring progress toward meeting strategic goals

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

**Paul Alberto**  
Regents’ Professor of Special Education and Chair of the Senate Executive Committee

**Pamela Barr**  
Professor of Managerial Sciences

**Michelle Brattain**  
Associate Professor and Associate Chair of History

**Allison Calhoun-Brown**  
Associate Professor of Political Science and Director of Student Retention

**Tamer Cavusgil**  
Callaway Professor and Director of the Center for International Business Education and Research

**James Dutton**  
President, Student Government Association

**Michael Eriksen**  
Professor and Director of the Institute of Public Health

**Sandra Garber**  
College Financial Officer, CHHS

**Ralph Gilbert**  
Professor and Associate Dean of Fine Arts, Director of CENCIA

**Steve Kaminshine**  
Professor and Dean of the College of Law

**Edgar Torbert**  
Assistant to the Provost and Ex Officio member

**Jorge Martinez**  
Regents’ Professor of Economics and Director of the International Studies Program

**P.C. Tai**  
Regents’ Professor and Chair of the Department of Biology and Chair of the Senate Committee on Planning and Development