

The image features a green diagonal graphic in the top-left corner. The background is a photograph of a university campus with a large, modern building on the right and a sculpture in the foreground. The Chicago State University logo is positioned in the upper left.

CHICAGO
STATE
UNIVERSITY

Final Report of the
Presidential
Transition
Committee

January 14, 2019

csu.edu



To the campus community and beyond:

On July 1, 2018, I began my term at Chicago State University (CSU) as the 12th permanent University President, charged with leading an amazing institution with a rich history that stretches back to the Reconstruction Era. CSU has since evolved into an outstanding public, comprehensive, post-secondary institution that provides access to higher education for a broad range of students, particularly first-generation college students, low-income students, adult learners, and student parents. Although the institution has faced many challenges in recent years, the important educational mission of the University never waned.

Therefore, since the first day, my administration immediately began to look at ways for CSU to achieve its full potential according to my vision by renewing the focus on student success improvements, encouraging opportunities for the faculty to advance the institution's reputation for scholarship and academic research, and identifying capital improvements to make CSU a more welcoming space for community engagement. To further guide my administration on the decisions that will affect generations to come, I formed the CSU Presidential Transition Committee and tasked its members to review and make recommendations on critical University functions. I am now pleased to share with you the Final Transition Report of the Committee.

The collected ideas contained within this report reflect the hard work of the five working groups: academics; administration; enrollment; finance and budget; and governmental affairs, communications, and community engagement. The report provides thorough discussions and thoughtful recommendations on key priorities, and as I navigate the wide range of issues and opportunities facing the University, I will use the report as an important guide for strategic planning.

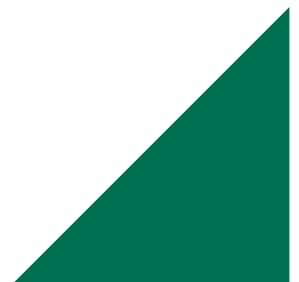
I want to thank all of the members of the CSU Presidential Transition Committee for generously lending their time and their diverse expertise to this report. I am especially grateful for the service of the Committee Chair, Hon. David H. Coar (ret.), and the Committee Co-Chair, Ms. Paula Wolff. The Chair and Co-Chair have been truly instrumental to the transition process, and I greatly appreciate their insights and support.

While the work of the CSU Presidential Transition Committee is complete, I will continue to engage each member for his or her ideas, recommendations, and critiques as my administration advances. I also want to renew an invitation for feedback to all other stakeholders, including students, faculty, staff, public officials, business representatives, and members of the community.

I am both thrilled and humbled by the optimism and restorative energy from the campus community, as it keeps me inspired toward my work to enact a student-centered vision for the University. It is a privilege to serve as the President of Chicago State University and I hope you will join me in my journey to reestablish the University as a premier academic institution and a central civic partner for the greater South Side of Chicago. Let us write the next chapter of Chicago State University's story together!

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Zaldwaynaka Scott". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "Z" and "S".

Zaldwaynaka Scott, Esq.
President



Note from the Committee

We, the Chicago State University (“CSU” or the “University”) Presidential Transition Committee (the “Committee”), are pleased to present this final report of our review of certain essential University functions to President Zaldwaynaka (“Z”) Scott, in order to facilitate her introduction to the University as its 12th permanent president.

We are grateful for the opportunity to serve this administration and all Chicago State University stakeholders, including students, faculty, staff and the surrounding community. It has been a privilege to work closely with administrators, faculty and staff who diligently responded to requests for information in addition to performing their daily job functions.



The Committee members generously gave time and effort. We offer a special thank you to the Committee Chair, Hon. David H. Coar (ret.) and Committee Co-Chair, Ms. Paula Wolff, for their leadership. We also thank the working group Chairs and Co-Chairs for their thoughtful guidance and substantive contributions during the analysis and report drafting process.

Committee Members

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The Committee's work process and structure was designed in consultation with the Civic Consulting Alliance. The Committee is composed of individuals with a broad range of professional and subject matter expertise, including high school and university administration, university faculty leadership, government and corporate leadership, media and communications, and community engagement.

The Committee's charge was to: 1) provide a sound and objective assessment of the current state of the University and its constituent units; 2) create an outline that will help the incoming president become familiar with important contacts and relationships, the college culture, and the greater community; 3) identify key challenges and opportunities for the University to achieve broad-based excellence and establish CSU as the top urban education destination; and 4) build mutual trust with internal and external communities, ensuring transparency and open communication throughout and beyond the transition process. The Committee is composed of five working groups: academics; administration; enrollment; finance and budget; and governmental affairs, communications and community engagement.

This Committee presents a broad set of observations and recommendations in this document.

Most of the report is based on the review and efforts of the five working groups as well as cross-department observations by project managers. The Committee was not charged to perform an operational audit of each administrative department and College and none is provided here.

To form their analyses, working groups, depending on the subject matter, participated in meetings with University leaders and external community stakeholders. Project managers Morae Global collaborated with the University to compile information for the working groups' review, including enrollment and course data, policies and procedures, organizational charts, job descriptions, budgets, audits, and strategic goals. Members also participated in or received the output from student, staff, and faculty focus groups. The working groups held several calls where they discussed observations and recommendations.

In an effort to understand the challenges, opportunities and concerns of the campus community and to deepen her familiarity with the University, immediately upon commencing her tenure, President Scott began a listening tour with University faculty, staff, senior administrators and students. As a result of those meetings, President Scott, among other things, made several modifications to her organization chart, formed a Supplier Diversity Task Force, and directed formation of an internal committee to draft a strategic plan for enrollment management. In addition to meetings with CSU stakeholders, President Scott has also met with government officials (federal, state and local), representatives from the Illinois Board of Higher Education, leaders from Illinois community colleges and accreditation bodies, public and charter high school administrators, not-for-profit groups focused on encouraging and supporting student access to higher education, alumni, and other community stakeholders. The Committee expects this report will serve as a helpful supplement to President Scott's direct observations and any recommendations she may have received during her listening tours.

Landscape

To assess the University's current state, it is necessary to reflect on recent history. The state of Illinois failed to pass a state budget for the fiscal year which encompassed the 2015-2016 academic year. After budget examination and prioritization, the Board of Trustees declared a state of financial exigency in February 2016 and the University laid off a substantial portion of administrators, staff and faculty. The budget impasse exacerbated previous declines in enrollment of new students, impacted the retention of existing students and threatened the closure of the University's doors. Amid pressure by the community and University supporters, the state passed partial funding to keep CSU open. The Governor signed a full state budget in June 2018.

After completing a national search, the Board of Trustees appointed a visionary new leader. In July 2018, President Scott commenced her term as the 12th permanent president of the University. Later that year the state committed to additional, crucial funding for the University, including more than \$12 million for emergency deferred maintenance and \$489,000 for Illinois student scholarships. Additionally, during the past six months the University began efforts at reestablishing its presence among the Illinois public universities with the launch of a media campaign just prior to the beginning of the fall 2018 semester.

While there is still much to accomplish, the University saw a positive term-over-term trend in student enrollment for the first time in 14 semesters. These activities, coupled with an enthusiasm on campus for new, permanent leadership, indicate that the University is on the path toward reestablishing its place in higher education.

Committee members noted the energy across campus is strong. CSU staff, faculty and students are loyal to the educational mission and history of the institution, and this enthusiasm and loyalty affords the University a significant foundation upon which to transform and rebuild. There is an exciting new story to tell about Chicago State University that champions its many strengths. Affordability, accessibility and ample green space all make the University a unique asset to its surrounding community and the broader Chicago metro area.

The efforts of this Committee are intended to sustain the University's forward momentum, and to be forward thinking in its recommendations for addressing challenges and leveraging opportunities.

A majority of the Committee's recommendations fall within four themes:

- **Coordination and Leadership**
- **Student Experience**
- **Infrastructure**
- **Communication**

Coordination and Leadership

PLANNING AND VISION

As the University continues its transformation, staff and administrators have the opportunity to amend or implement new campus and curriculum planning processes that reflect the updated, collective vision of the University. This provides leaders the opportunity to be accountable for changes in the University that align with the President's vision, and ultimately student needs. All strategic plans must flow from the vision; thus, it is imperative that as a starting point, there is clarity and alignment on the vision between the President and University leaders. The Committee understands that this report will help facilitate the updated vision and associated future planning opportunities.

ADMINISTRATIVE EFFICIENCY

Students identified student-centered administrative processes as being inefficient and redundant. Identifying areas where services overlap, such as financial aid and housing, or academic advising and career coaching, could reduce redundant interactions for the students. This may ease some customer service pain points cited by students, including long lines, incorrect and incomplete information and busy/unanswered phones. The Committee also recommends, based on student feedback, that student-facing departments be redirected toward a student customer service mentality. Staff and administrators should be adequately trained to communicate with students in a clear, timely and accurate manner.

The University should also continue to reduce its dependency on manual and paper-based processes. The Committee found that information relevant to

more than one department was kept isolated on individual spreadsheets and computer desktops. As a starting point, managers should ensure that all team members are properly trained on campus software that may eliminate the need for these manual and paper-based processes.

Feedback also indicated that students, faculty, and staff often encountered outdated, overly complex, or conflicting policies. Review of campus and personnel policies, and procedures should be undertaken. In addition, job descriptions should be reviewed for clarity and appropriate scope of responsibilities. As the University continues to develop staff and seek new talent, it is the ideal time to ensure that the job responsibilities align with University needs.



ORGANIZATIONAL DESIGN

The University's administrative organizational design requires changes to stabilize and eventually optimize operations. While we agree that leaders should have an appropriate breadth of responsibility and authority to ensure their unit's success, especially

Coordination and Leadership

during this transition period, the Committee finds that the University could improve operations by reducing the number of functions reporting through the Vice President of Finance and Administration. Also, the Committee recommends a direct reporting line from Human Resources to the Office of the President to improve alignment of certain policies, procedures, and initiatives with the department's vision and with the University's mission.



FUNDING

Like other Illinois public universities, CSU operations are supported by tuition and fees, state appropriations, grants, and charitable donations. There is an opportunity to enhance the University's financial position by strengthening the University's charitable donations and further diversifying funding sources.

A key to the University's success in receiving more gifts is developing a robust and coordinated charitable funding campaign that incentivizes and publicizes gifts of all sizes. Matching funds, awards, and grants to the University increased by almost half a million dollars in FY 2018. The University should make efforts to highlight this forward momentum. It is imperative that the University demonstrates ways the gifts directly impact the CSU's operations and mission. Attention should be drawn to the ways a prosperous CSU benefits its surrounding community. For example, with more funding the University can continue to engage local and minority business owners in its vendor selection process. Seeing other instances of gift giving, plus understanding a gift's impact, will create a compelling case for potential donors.

The University should continue to seek innovative ways to encourage charitable giving, including matching or challenge funds and named endowments. During the first few months of President Scott's tenure, CSU has reviewed and recommended improvements to the Chicago State Foundation and its governing documents and accepted proceeds made available by the state for additional scholarship funding that requires the University to match the funds.

Student Experience

ENROLLMENT

CSU is engaged in institution-wide strategic planning to improve student enrollment, retention and success. These efforts are designed to enhance recruitment, increase enrollment, and improve retention of students as well as graduation rates. We suggest that CSU leadership incorporate a cross-functional, data-driven approach in this planning, including a comprehensive and historical understanding of enrolled and prospective student profiles, to assess strengths and to identify opportunity areas. CSU should highlight its strong program offerings and success stories. For example, the physics program is a 2018 recipient of a national award for Improving Undergraduate Physics Education from the American Physical Society's Committee on Education. The University of Southern California ranked Chicago State University as tied for number two in the nation and number one in Illinois for leading public universities in educating Black undergraduates. Success stories like these could lead to stronger engagements and positive interactions with prospective students and their families.

One of Chicago State University's greatest assets is devoted faculty. Student feedback indicated a high satisfaction rate with professors, and the lower student-to-faculty ratio is a major selling point for the University. Where a faculty member is willing and able, the Office of Enrollment should strategically solicit their time to interface with potential students.

ACADEMICS AND RETENTION

Chicago State University, led by its Interim Provost, should continuously evaluate the curriculum and how instruction is delivered to remain current and to adequately prepare students for the complex, increasingly digital and automated economy. It is

important for universities to expose students to a wide variety of substantive content and experiences, while also considering the real career needs for students in today's economy.

The Committee found that the University should assess its process for academic curriculum planning. Course planning currently is a semester-by-semester exercise and therefore lacks a one- to two-year view of course offerings. This approach has been reported to present a barrier to student success because scheduling decisions impacting graduation are made with a limited base of course information.



The Committee is aware and acknowledges that CSU has tried various approaches to student support and advising in the past, and recommends that the University continue to review its approach. Recently, members of this administration met with administrators from Georgia State University to learn about its widely known accomplishments in student success and retention promoted by implementation and use of specific computer software, micro-scholarship grants, and a modified and more robust model for advising. The Committee supports this

Student Experience

endeavor and offers the following observations. Counseling should be holistic at CSU, combining the efforts of faculty, advisors and student counselors. CSU should consider whether an interdepartmental approach could provide the most value to students by offering them effective support in the areas of academics, career coaching, and emotional well-being. We learned that, at times, faculty play a large role in supporting students, including acting as crisis managers. The University and Committee are aware that there can be a stigma among certain populations and socioeconomic groups about emotional counseling, and students are often reluctant to share personal issues that may impact academic success and retention. As a result, students can be hesitant to use resources available to them in the Student Affairs department. A model that requires advisors and counselors to interface with students early and often should be considered.

To advance the University's mission, there must be suitable academic space for classrooms, laboratories and other uses vital to an academic institution. A reduction in resources during the financial exigency contributed to some spaces on campus falling into a state of disrepair. These conditions, in some campus locations, have made maintaining a hospitable and welcoming student-centered campus a challenge. Notwithstanding the ample facilities and green spaces that accommodate a growing student body, efforts to prioritize and budget for mechanical and cosmetic improvements must be a top priority. When considering facilities, the University must also consider what campus amenities are needed to attract and retain students.

For example, women account for 77 percent of students at the University, and approximately 51

percent of students have at least one child. Faculty noted that students have brought children to class to avoid missing a lecture or exam. A common suggestion from stakeholders across the entire campus is to open a childcare center. CSU is the only public university in Illinois without a campus childcare center. This would remove a barrier to success for a portion of the student body and create the opportunity to tie the center to an academic program, such as Early Childhood Education.



We note that there are many opportunities for student engagement in campus life. CSU is a member of the Western Athletic Conference with 15 competitive sports teams. Student life also includes 66 student groups clubs, honors fraternities, and affinity groups such as fraternities and sororities. In addition, the Music Department is in the process of building a marching band scheduled to start in the fall of 2019. The University should ensure students continue to have access to these special opportunities that personalize their experience and bond them to the campus community.

Student Experience

FACULTY CONSIDERATIONS

Feedback from students indicated that the University's committed, effective and engaged professors are one of its greatest assets.



Excellent teaching is at the heart of CSU's current strength and is crucial to its future development. Members of the academic working group recommend that each academic department have a statement clarifying its expectations for effective teaching accompanied by a set of well-defined practices to encourage, sustain, and assess the realization of those expectations. An engaged CSU faculty will understand that teaching does not end when the class hour is over, and many students will greatly benefit from the advice and counsel that faculty can offer.

Faculty members have tended to continue prioritizing classroom teaching and student mentorship. Every department must be adroit at recognizing and rewarding superior teaching and mentoring. The University should devote time and resources to ensuring faculty are formally recognized, supported, and rewarded for their extraordinary contributions.

The Committee found that there is limited campus-wide recognition for outstanding teaching and service efforts. The Center for Teaching and Research Excellence awards grants through an application process; however, no student or faculty-nominated award is offered. There should be efforts to prioritize developing and funding awards for faculty that derive from student data, such as end-of-semester surveys, and from a student nomination process.

In addition to reviewing teaching awards, the Committee recommends the eventual review of its faculty tenure process. An effective faculty tenure process for Chicago State University balances a commitment to research, the critical work professors perform in the classroom, and University service.

The Committee wishes to note that highlighting teaching and service efforts from professors should not serve to discourage the University's intellectual enterprise in research. The University must also support the process for securing and administering grants with appropriate resources. This includes more recognition for securing external grants through digital and social media. The financial exigency forced the University to use money set aside for internal grants to cover payroll and other operational expenses. In the past two years, the University has added money back to its grant fund, but the fund remains far below its level of three years ago. The College Deans, in close partnership with the Provost, should continue to allocate budget toward internal grants. There is also a recent state mandate that academic publications must be made open and accessible. This provides an opportunity to showcase and bolster the University's commitment to research.

Infrastructure

SAFETY

Safety and security is of paramount importance at any university, and those with campuses in urban locations often face unique challenges. Even so, CSU has the safest urban campus in America. The University recently hired a new Chief of Police with a strong law enforcement and campus security background. The University should evaluate its access controls, integrated monitoring systems, and communications technology to strengthen and enhance campus safety.

The Chicago State University Police Department (CSUPD) should continue to prioritize a strong working relationship with the Chicago Police Department. Information sharing, co-training and a coordinated approach to responding to security issues will bolster campus safety. As the University looks ahead, consideration should be given to forming a committee comprised of facilities, IT, and security leaders to engage in coordinated planning and budgeting for campus safety initiatives and to review the latest developments from other urban institutions.

MAINTENANCE AND STRUCTURAL IMPROVEMENTS

Due to the breadth of maintenance needs on campus, the University must strengthen the Facilities department leadership and resources. President Scott also identified this need, and as a result has already created a new senior-level Vice President of Administrative Services position. This position will carry the responsibilities of improving the operation of university facilities, strategically managing deferred maintenance, and managing external stakeholders involved in facilities and capital projects.

With respect to capital projects, the Committee

recommends the University engage an architectural or project management firm with subject matter expertise in university campuses to work in collaboration with Physical Facilities Planning & Management to perform an initial prioritization and work plan. In addition,



benchmarking other universities for an understanding of ways in which they are creatively transforming their spaces for students, faculty and use by the communities in which they are located can spark ideas for cost-effective updates at CSU. The University should also assess whether the current process for vetting capital projects captures the interest of all stakeholders including students and faculty.

As mentioned in the Student Experience section, improving the physical facilities would create a more welcoming experience for students, faculty, staff, and visitors. The University should prioritize budget for high-impact, low-cost improvements such as paint jobs, adequate lighting, classroom maintenance, and janitorial services. Lastly, the Facilities department should create a yearly maintenance schedule, differentiating between one-off needs and recurring actions.

Infrastructure

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

In today's world, information technology on campus plays a crucial role in the overall student experience.

As technology applies to student interaction with University administration, CSU should continue to work at improving information technology systems that streamline and centralize administrative processes for students such as course scheduling, academic advising, and tuition payment.



The Committee acknowledges efforts the University has already undertaken efforts to enhance aspects of information technology on campus, including commencing an assessment of the IT function; updating computers, projectors and podiums; securing state budget for new computers; tripling wireless technology access points in the residence hall; and, launching a new website in September. The Information Technology department

is also working with departments across campus to administer systems trainings.

Now that the University is receiving budget and equipment upgrades, the Information Technology department requires additional personnel resources. The department is lean and relies on student employees to staff the Help Desk. Stakeholder feedback indicated that the Help Desk process on campus can be slow and ineffective. Devoting time to refining and adequately staffing will increase efficiencies campus wide and positively impact the student and faculty experience.

Where possible, the Committee urges the University to engage outside resources to bridge resource gaps until additional budget is extended for the department.

With respect to how technology needs are assessed, there is an opportunity to optimize how technology is leveraged within each College. Currently, information technology is centralized at the University, precluding a process that allows the Colleges to advocate for technology needs specific to their programs. Recognizing this, President Scott plans to add technology and innovation professionals to the campus.



Communication and Community Engagement

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL AUDIENCES

As mentioned previously in this report, there is a strong and thriving culture at Chicago State University. Through focus groups and stakeholder feedback, the Committee found that the new Presidential



appointment and the emergence from financial exigency have created an optimistic atmosphere on campus about the direction of the University. The administration can build on this optimism and strengthen the University's new and transformed narrative through a demonstrated commitment to clear, open, cohesive, and frequent communication. Students, faculty and staff are primary sources of information about the University, and this administration should empower them to speak honestly, accurately, and passionately.

A commitment to communication starts with the Office of the President. To further communication and transparency, this fall the President attended the semester-opening meeting of all faculty for an introduction session and questions. She also attended all faculty meetings with each individual college. In addition, the President individually met with the Deans and Chairs of each College in a session designed to understand the opportunities and challenges of the Colleges. She has met with constituency groups such as union representatives and civil service representatives. Further, the President has attended alumni events, sporting events, visited the dormitory, toured each building and conducted a listening tour. The Committee encourages an additional student-focused townhall.

Communication and Community Engagement

TO CONTINUE TO ENHANCE COMMUNICATION ACROSS CAMPUS, THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS THE FOLLOWING:

- **Updates from the Office of the President:** The Office of the President should continue to publish frequent communication updates. These updates can be brief, and should talk about the direction of the University, including successes and strategy. Such communications could also highlight student customer service wins, offering more acknowledgement and praise to faculty and staff on a regular basis.
- **Feedback Solicitation:** The administration should also develop ways to regularly solicit feedback and communication from faculty and staff. Many faculty and staff have been with the University for a significant amount of time, in some cases far before the financial exigency. These individuals can be an invaluable source of institutional knowledge which could prove helpful when evaluating strategy, policies, procedures, and ways of working. The administration has also made several new hires who bring with them a breadth of experience, often outside of the traditional higher education space. Not only will soliciting feedback and input regularly improve operations, it will also allow people to feel more valued for their contributions and expertise.



- **Formal Internal Communication Plan:** The two recommendations above should be incorporated into a formal, internal communications plan. In developing this plan, the administration should also experiment and solicit feedback on the most effective means of communications for several different types of information.

Communication and Community Engagement

- **Focused External Communications Plan:** The University should develop a focused external communications plan. Building on the new marketing campaign's momentum, the University should continue to work internally and with external media/marketing firms to identify what content should be developed to support the University's work and operations.
- **The plan should be:** forward thinking enough to cover multiple years and should cover all University areas. The Committee stresses the importance of interdepartmental collaboration in developing this plan, as alignment on vision is crucial at this juncture. The Committee recommends that the University hold an additional focus group with internal stakeholders to determine the three to five most important messages they wish to communicate to students and to the community. Combining these messages with the branding efforts that are already publicly facing will magnify the University's commitment to its academic mission.
- **Social Media:** The University should continue to tell its story through extensive social media use. Social media use in today's world is pervasive and can be the primary source of information for certain demographics. The Committee found that social media use across campus was uneven, with some departments and Colleges posting to accounts regularly. Other accounts were dormant for months, even years. There was also uncertainty as to who managed which accounts. Recent efforts to consolidate social media accounts have been successful.
- **Impact and Brand:** Understanding the impact social media has on recruiting and information sharing is key to building on CSU's brand. The University should make a coordinated effort to increase social media use. Developing branding guidelines and a Social Media Policy will empower departments and Colleges to connect directly with students and external parties.
- **Consistent Branding:** All communications should be coordinated and reflect consistent, common branding and themes. External communications, including the website and social media, in particular, should reflect such consistency. In order to align on such messaging, it may be necessary to temporarily assign one person as an "approver" of all external communications. Moreover, many organizations implement a communications calendar so sequencing and audience identification is coordinated.



Communication and Community Engagement

COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS

Chicago State University is part of the fabric that makes up the Roseland neighborhood and Chicago's South Side. The University's strategic plan for building external relationships and community engagement should bring people to campus to further the academic mission. It should also coordinate a cross-cultural plan outlining ways give back to the underserved communities connected to the University. For example, the University's College of Health Sciences has a formal relationship with a neighborhood high school through which health and career information is shared with students.



A thriving CSU strengthens the community it serves. There are several opportunities for the University to host events and to develop initiatives that directly impact the surrounding community. Continuing to host events on campus that bring together academics, arts, culture, and politics will advance the University's mission and boost the University's visibility in the community. Successful recent events on campus include Green and White Bingo and the Gwendolyn Brooks Library Naming Ceremony. The University

can continue to foster relationships by encouraging external stakeholders to use campus facilities for meetings and events, considering a facility usage pricing for community members. Several stakeholders suggested bringing back Jazz on the Grass, or a similar event, that draws people to campus to enjoy its green space. Stakeholder feedback plus a thorough inventory of available space and resources should help form an aspirational list of campus events. The University should have a coordinated plan to devote time and resources toward securing sponsorships to close budget gaps for events.

Alumni engagement is also critical to the University's success and advancement. An active alumni network will recruit students, boost employment, encourage donations, and build relationships. Recognizing this, the administration set a goal of engaging at least 1,000 new Alumni Association members by the end of 2019. To achieve this goal, the University should hire a dedicated Alumni Affairs resource. The University should engage specific groups, like The Devine Nine, as well as alumni who work in a wide variety of industries and geographic regions.

Lastly, the Committee wishes to note the potential impact a thriving Chicago State University has on the economy and workforce of the Roseland neighborhood and on the surrounding community. It's crucial that the University engage community stakeholders at regular intervals and use a data-driven approach to understand which industries are experiencing an increasing demand for resources. Graduating students in these areas could increase the likelihood of employment right out of school. It also has the effect of diversifying workforces and improving the services local communities receive (e.g. in healthcare and in teaching).

Communication and Community Engagement

GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Chicago State University has an opportunity to increase its presence and influence in governmental affairs at the federal, state and local levels. Developing a cohesive narrative, engaging with leaders, and formulating a legislative strategy are keys to CSU's success.

The University has a unique narrative formed by its history, location, and student body. Continuing with the theme of a unified approach, the Governmental Affairs department, in collaboration with other departments and with input from students, faculty and staff, should develop a compelling story that illustrates two to three ways in which CSU is worth supporting. Fact sheets, heat maps, and other at-a-glance materials will strengthen the narrative and can make a statistical, data-driven case for why a stakeholder should invest in the University's success.

The University must continue to engage champions and identify new champions who will dedicate their support. The University should communicate its new narrative and direction with as many governmental officials as possible, particularly those whose constituencies have a direct stake in the success of the University. The University should make continued efforts to participate in road shows, receptions, and in-person meetings with officials. The University must also engage Illinois General Assembly committee members where there is evidence their decisions could impact the University or its surrounding community (e.g., healthcare).

Concurrent to telling its story and building relationships, the University should also develop a legislative strategy that allows it to be proactive in addressing potential challenges. For example, the Federal Education Department measures degree attainment in a narrow way that has the effect of discounting the efforts of transfer, part-time, and nontraditional students. These student groups make up a large portion of CSU's student body and the University should be a fierce advocate for their interests.

The University should work to understand and influence local policies, events, and developments that directly impact students, faculty, staff, and the surrounding community. Showing up is a simple, yet impactful way to illustrate that the University is embedded and invested in Chicago's South Side. The University should strive to participate in all local development meetings, including meetings concerning the 95th Corridor Development. It should also have a voice at relevant City Council and Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy meetings.



Conclusion

The idea that significant events present both threats and opportunities is well known, but no less powerful for its familiarity. The financial situation that CSU experienced, and the resulting impacts upon its facilities, students, and staff threatened the University in a most elemental way.

Yet these degradations afford genuine opportunities to reexamine what facilities are most needed and impactful; what it means to put in place sustainable supports for student engagement and success; how to create coordinated and aligned employment practices that increase the well-being and contributions of staff and faculty; and how to relate to the community that CSU calls home.

The success of all of these begin with strong leadership and a clear vision. In this report we have tried to capture some of the energy and enthusiasm that President Scott has brought to campus in her first six months. We have identified some of her early work to inform herself, create reciprocal relationships, seek funding, and find the right people to begin implementing her vision. And we have identified some of the key areas for work going forward, organized by themes of coordinated planning and leadership, student experience, infrastructure and communications. These categories structure the opportunities that we believe can have the greatest impact on achieving the University's strategic goals and ultimately fulfilling its academic mission.

The Committee appreciates the magnitude of the topics and considerations contained in this report. We recognize some can be accomplished in the shorter term, while others are aspirational. One possible strategy for organizing the recommendations is to think about changes where the University already has resources and internal authority (e.g., prioritizing existing facilities funds, reviewing existing job descriptions), changes where additional funding is required (e.g., new counseling resources, additional physical improvements), and those where a partnership with others is required (e.g., state funding, new funding opportunities).

We are confident the upcoming strategic planning process will produce a vision for the path ahead that builds upon the successes and opportunities, as well as the challenges, we have identified here as well as the many we were not able to include.

The Committee is encouraged by the pace and direction of change and predicts that a few, short years from now the University will look back and be proud of all that has been achieved. We look forward to what comes next.





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