OAKWOOD UNIVERSITY

STRATEGIC PLAN

2017-2022

AIM

GOD FIRST!

VISION

Oakwood University graduates are leaders in service to God and humanity.

Motto
Enter to Learn;
Depart to Serve

MISSION

The mission of Oakwood University, a historically black, Seventh-day Adventist institution, is to transform students through biblically based education for service to God and humanity.

Oakwood University commits to the following values . . .

God First: Oakwood seeks to advance the kingdom of God by transforming lives. The value of putting God first expresses the primary reason for Oakwood University's existence.

Respect: Oakwood esteems others as worthy of human dignity, deference, and service.

Compassion: Oakwood manifests sympathy, empathy, care, and concern in our dealings with others.

Integrity: Oakwood demonstrates honesty, uprightness, moral virtue, and ethical rectitude in every relationship.

Excellence: Oakwood communicates the personal decision to perform at our highest capacity and to continually improve in work and service.

Service: Oakwood chooses to provide assistance, aid, help, caring, outreach, and ministry in response to human need.

Innovation: Oakwood is willing to break with precedent in the advancement of institutional mission by introducing new methods and major changes.

Remarks from the President of Oakwood University

Since its founding on November 16, 1896, by the Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Oakwood University has prepared students for service to local, national, and international communities. Standing as one of the historical landmarks in the city of Huntsville, Alabama. Oakwood University enjoys a beautiful natural setting on 1,185 acres of choice real estate. Approximately 105 acres comprise the campus, with another 500 acres under cultivation. Oakwood University is committed to the spiritual nurture and character development of each student with the goal of developing servant leaders. Beginning with only 16 students, Oakwood originally existed to provide, on the basis of Seventh-day Adventist beliefs and worldview, a wholistic Christian education for who were then called "colored students." Today, Oakwood reflects a diverse geographical, cultural, educational, and socioeconomic environment. And yet, the original purpose continues-Oakwood University specializes in the delivery of biblically based transformational Christian education. Today, approximately, 1636 students form more than 23 countries attend Oakwood. They can select from 51 undergraduate degree programs, as well as a Master of Arts in Pastoral Studies. The liberal arts curriculum is taught in a Christ-centered learning environment that is designed to prepare students to serve God and humanity in a variety of positions and careers.

The Oakwood University Strategic Plan for 2017-2022 reflects our vision of transformational education. The plan includes the input of a wide variety of participants, beginning with the historic Strategic Actioning Session (SAS) of September 19-21, 2012. This planning session brought together a cross-section of Board members, administrators, alumni, faculty, staff, students, and community leaders tasked with the mission of recreating Oakwood for the 21st century. The implementation of recommendations from that historic session formed the basis from which we continue to envision Oakwood's future. This resulting document includes many of the "game changing" initiatives which will strengthen and expand the mission of the institution. The goal of this plan is to maximize and deepen the famous "Oakwood experience" by making improvements at the University which will enhance, not simply the four years of a student's Oakwood educational journey, by the 40-plus years of their service life.

Since its founding in 1896, Oakwood University has been blessed with a number of historic strengths that have provided the foundation upon which its mission is built. The University constituency of alumni, churches, conferences, and supporters stand as advocates for and benefactors of Oakwood. Focused on the mission of our institution, these loyal supporters contribute both faith and finances. Oakwood's unique brand of spirituality, with its passion and substance, reflects another strength of the institution. This spirituality is reflected in the spiritual strength of the institution. This spirituality is reflected in the spiritual strength of our faculty, staff, and students. The internationally acclaimed music of Oakwood reflects the "Oakwood experience" which continues to provide a lifelong blessing to our graduates. A diverse student body, a lifelong "family" ambiance, a dedicated alumni, a highly accomplished faculty, a caring and dedicated staff and a committed Board of Trustees combine to make Oakwood a compelling and attractive place to study. Fiscal stability as well as a growing base of philanthropy provide strengths upon which Oakwood's "God First" commitment guides the institution.

~Leslie N. Pollard, PhD., D.Min., M.B.A.

Background

Oakwood University was founded in 1896 as Oakwood Industrial School, with the purpose of providing Christian education for blacks. From the sixteen students that comprised the original student body on opening day, Oakwood has grown so that today it embraces a diverse student body of more than 1900 students from more than 40 states and 20 countries. The original purpose continues, but it has expanded to include all others who want a quality Christian education also.

History of Oakwood University

1896 — Oakwood Industrial School

Oakwood University, in Huntsville, Ala., was founded by the Seventh-day Adventist Church (SDA) in 1896 to educate the recently-freed African-Americans of the South. Drawing upon its Christian faith and the emancipation of slaves by President Abraham Lincoln in 1863, it believed that "all people are created equal" and deserved the opportunity to learn a trade

1904 — Oakwood Manual Training School

In the early days, Oakwood Industrial School offered a faith-based industrial training atmosphere for individuals who wanted more than a public education. In 1904, it was expanded to include a broader curriculum.

1917 — Oakwood Junior College

In 1917, it became known as "Oakwood Junior College," offering a two-year college program with emphasis on subjects paralleling most junior colleges. Several of the principals of the church served the school until it achieved this status and elected its first president, James I. Beardsley, later that year.

1943 — Oakwood College

The school received its first accreditation as a junior college in 1943, and continued moving toward senior college status, which it achieved 15 years later.

2008 — Oakwood University

The 315 members of the 2008 graduating class were the first to receive degrees under the "Oakwood University" designation.

Oakwood University's Strategic Plan

PRIORITY	GOALS
Priority 1: The Division of Mission, Enrollment Services, and Retention	
The Division of Mission, Enrollment Services, and Retention will increase student enrollment and engage internal and external stakeholders through exceptional, innovative, and collaborative services to enhance spiritual development and drive student success.	1. Develop an individualized plan with students that focuses on their spiritual development. 2. Develop community service, service learning, and mission opportunities which includes a signature services project. 3. Improve the culture of the campus experience. 4. Develop plans to grow student enrollment 5. Improve retention from 5% 6. Increase graduation rate by 5%
Priority 2: Educational Excellence	

Oakwood University's Division of Academic Administration will ensure academic excellence in teaching and learning informed by a Biblical worldview.	1. Expand the delivery of undergraduate and certificate programs.
	2. Develop an academic master plan, while considering the following changes in higher education and the professional climate such as work force development:
	   - Diversity: Advocate for a respectful setting in which cultural competencies are cultivated to enable successful navigation of today's multicultural society
	   - Technology: Collaborate with the office of Information Technology to integrate technology into learning modalities across the university
	   - Collaboration & Partnerships: Expand Partnerships for effective collaboration between the university and its constituency.
	3. Design an Honors Program to attract academically-gifted scholars.
	4. Diversify graduate degree program offerings.
	5. Increase traditional and online degree and certificate program enrollment
	6. Employ qualified faculty who model and support the mission of Seventh-day Adventist education.
	7. Create a culture of Academic Technology usage.
	8. Improve key performance indicators (KPIs) relative to the mission of the institution including Career Pathways Initiative:
	   - Enrollment Rate
	   - Persistence Rate
	   - Retention Rate
	   - Graduation Rate
	   - Completion Rate
	   - Employment Rate
	   - Graduate School Placement Rate
	9. Monitor continuous compliance to regional and denominational accreditation standards
	10. Facilitate the University's Planning and Assessment Process

Priority 3: Learning-Supportive Environments

Oakwood University's Division of Student Services will facilitate a safe and nurturing environment that is sensitive to the needs of students and supportive of the academic mission of the institution.	1. Strengthen a collaborative and supportive relationship between Academic Administration and Student Services through the curriculum and co-curriculum experience. 2. Implement a Student Leadership Academy certificate program to support student career placement goals. 3. Oakwood University Dining services will offer healthy dietary options consistent with "Stand Out" principles. 4. Student Services will provide support to online students. 5. Promote healthy lifestyle: physically, mentally, socially, and spiritually in support of Healthy Campus 20/20. 6. Develop a First- and Second-Year Experience co-curricular program as a part of residential life, in collaboration with the Center for Student Success/academic schools.

Priority 4: Research and Faculty Development

Oakwood University's Research and Faculty Development Division (RFD) will facilitate the expansion of our grants and research infrastructure and will assure exceptional performance of faculty and staff through the utilization of best-in-class professional development in support of the strategic mission of the University.	1. Develop research and scholarship infrastructure to support faculty and student productivity and to provide assurance of compliance with University policies and state and federal guidelines. 2. Increase research and scholarly activity across the schools and within academic departments 3. Increase grant funding for externally sponsored activities, expanding the capacity of the Office of Grants 4. Disseminate the scholarly activity of faculty through digital and print media. 5. Monitor the career pathway system for the 21st century student 6. Understand the spiritual life of collegiate men and women, the relationship to learning, and disseminate findings. 7. Develop the Anna Knight Center for Women's Leadership research. 8. Expand Healthy Campus 2020 to include establishment of a Community Health Action Center and Clinic (CHAC) to augment the service-learning and community engagement programs. 9. Develop a Faculty Exchange Program between the Consortium of Adventist African Universities and Partners (CAAUP) and Oakwood University. 10. Monitor learning to generate a SACSCOC approved Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) to ensure continuous improvement and sustainability of student learning. 11. Ensure an ongoing evidence-based faculty and staff development program that supports the mission of the University and meets the standards of the SACSCOC. 12. Maintain a qualified faculty, including qualified to teach online, to teach critical thinking, to deliver instruction from a Biblical foundation, and orient faculty to their role as teachers, scholars/researchers, and servant leaders.

Priority 5: Advancement of the University

Oakwood University's Division of Advancement will cultivate internal and external partnerships, to strategically sustain, advance and promote the mission of our founders through philanthropy, fund development and integrated communication and marketing.	1. Cultivate local, national and global. mutually beneficial and sustainable partnerships to grow affinity and increase institutional capacity for the long-term success of the University. 2. Coordinate organized stewardship and donor recognition activities for a more donor-centered environment. 3. Complete a $32 million-dollar comprehensive University Capital Campaign including unrestricted and restricted gifts to support the priorities of the University. 4. Strengthen the infrastructure of the Division of Advancement to increase donor confidence, communication and philanthropy.

	5. Develop the Alumni Relations program model that enhances the direct relationship between the University and its alumni and increases Alumni engagement in volunteerism, student and faculty recruitment, mentoring and career development, research, and philanthropy. 6. Increase the listenership, exposure and revenue of WJOU. 7. Publicize the success of Oakwood graduates for more marketing. 8. Implement marketing standards designed to enhance the institutional brand. 9. To continuously improve professional skills and equipment to share the OU experience with potential students, parents, alumni and other stakeholders through additional hiring/enhancement of IMPR office.
Priority 6: Fiscal Growth, Responsible Management, and Revenue Diversification	
Oakwood University's Division of Financial Administration will secure the fiscal health of Oakwood University in harmony with the strategic mission of the institution.	1. Increase non-tuition revenue through the creation and/or procurement of mission and values-compatible businesses. 2. Increase student employment opportunities to better prepare students for gainful employment 3. Grow Institutional Endowment to ensure long institutional viability 4. Plan for the development of new facilities to support missional operations 5. Develop an Energy Management Plan to reduce inflation adjusted energy cost. 6. Manage Default Prevention Program to ensure the University's default rate stays at least 2% below the national average. 7. Establish a campus life safety and security system including campus surveillance to prevent and detect life-safety anomalies
Priority 7: Operational and Technological Leadership	
Oakwood University's Division of Information Technology will facilitate the use of technology to improve operational efficiency and to communicate the Oakwood mission globally.	1. Deliver Technology Services to support the Educational Mission of the Institution. 2. Establish a culture of Automation Adoption throughout the University 3. Expand Campus Broadcast Infrastructure. 4. Expand Virtualization Systems Environment. 5. Develop IT Business Continuity to ensure the functions of the University. 6. Establish a Campus-wide Life Safety and Security System. 7. Technological Literacy for Career Preparation