

University Planning Committee Minutes  
September 20, 2024  
9:30 AM

Attended: Ron Henderson, Liz Smith, Michael Erskine, Lando Carter, Francis Koti, Tricia Farwell, Dianna Rust, Suzanne Sutherland, Joyce Heames, Mary Hoffschwelle, Ron Malone, Teena Young, Todd Wyant, Monica Smith, Michai Mosby, Rob Payne, Amy Aldridge, Brian Hinote, Pete Grandjean, Kathleen Schmand, Chris Brewer, Chandra Story, Lisa Bass, Jeri Ann Clark, Jeff Gibson, Layne Bryant

1. Provost Byrnes welcomed everyone, gave the [Committee Charge](#), and asked everyone to introduce themselves. He encouraged attendees to share information from this committee with their constituents and bring their feedback to the committee.
2. [Minutes of the Feb. 16, 2024](#) meeting were reviewed and approved.
3. **University plans and report updates** (see [MTSU University Planning and Report Timelines](#))
  - [SACSCOC Reaffirmation of Accreditation](#) - Mary Hoffschwelle, Vice Provost for Planning and Effectiveness and SACSCOC Institutional Accreditation Liaison, reported that about 50 individuals from across the University are drafting narratives and collecting evidence for MTSU's Compliance Certification Report. She described the Differentiated Review format and timeline for 2025-2026.
  - **Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) Development** [ATTACHMENT](#)- Chandra Story, QEP Director, provided an overview of the development of our next QEP to be submitted to SACSCOC in February 2026. The topics have been narrowed to four. A survey will be launched October 7, and listening sessions will be scheduled for feedback on the four topics.
  - **Institutional Effectiveness, Planning and Research (IEPR) Reporting**
    - i. [Quality Assurance Funding 2020-2025](#) - Lisa Bass, Director of Institutional Effectiveness, shared a table showing how MTSU receives additional funding through QAF activities. THEC had not released 23-24 QAF scores.
    - ii. [Strategic Plan 2015-2025](#) - Chris Brewer, Assistant Vice Provost for IEPR, and Jeri Ann Clark, Director of Institutional Research, reported that updates for Fall to Spring persistence, graduation numbers, and graduation rates have been posted in the Plan. The next round of updates relating to Fall 24 should be updated by the end of October.
  - [Academic Master Plan 2015-2025](#) - Mary Hoffschwelle reported that the Academic Master Plan is in its final year. An overview of implementation progress for 2023-24 is [here](#).

4. **2035 Strategic Plan Development** [ATTACHMENT](#) - Jeff Gibson, Strategic Plan Committee Chair, provided an overview of the strategic planning timeline, including surveys and listening sessions that occurred in AY 2023-2024, drafting of the strategy framework this past summer, and sharing the framework with the campus community this fall. He noted that approval for the plan will be sought from the Planning Committee, President McPhee, and the Board of Trustees in early 2024. He referenced the Institutional and Environmental Context document on the Strategic Plan [website](#) and noted the current survey designed to gauge satisfaction with the strategy framework (also on the website). Jeff ended by discussing that the focus of the committee's work is shifting to implementation, and he reviewed key points in the [draft Implementation Plan](#), including oversight, annual timeline, and metrics to monitor effectiveness.
5. **Mission Review** - Mary Hoffschwelle reported that a subcommittee of the Planning Committee undertook a full review of the MTSU Statement of Mission and Vision Statement in Fall 2023 and Spring 2024. The revised statements, approved by the MTSU Board of Trustees in March 2024, will guide 2035 Strategic Plan development and SACSCOC Reaffirmation reporting. Dr. Hoffschwelle proposed that the Committee not make any revisions to the Mission this year while these projects are being written in alignment with the Mission approved in 2024. Dianna Rust moved to approve no revisions to the Mission during the 24-25 academic year, and Tricia Farwell seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken, and the Committee unanimously approved no revisions to the Mission.
6. Unfinished Business
  - **Aspirational Peers** - Chris Brewer reported that last year, a subcommittee of the Planning Committee selected peer institutions for strategic planning by comparing data that closely matched MTSU's makeup and mission. There are separate peer lists for NSSE and salary studies. He asked for volunteers to form a new subcommittee to select aspirational peers with guidance from the president, provost, and 2035 Strategic Plan.
7. New Business
  - **Student Achievement Metrics** - Mary Hoffschwelle shared that SACSCOC Standard 8.1 Student Achievement requires institutions to publish goals and outcomes for student achievement using multiple measures. The first iteration of MTSU's [Strategic Plan 2015-2025](#) was developed in alignment with the Tennessee Board of Regents Strategic Plan and in tandem with the University's 2015-2025 Academic Master Plan. MTSU revisited its measures when it became a locally governed institution and in response to SACSCOC requirements in 2017-18. Mary asked for volunteers to begin reviewing the data and set new priorities.
8. Next Meeting: Friday, February 14, 2025 (with refreshments!)

# **Enhance and Energize Education for Student Success**

## **MTSU Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP)**

A Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) is a component of our university re-accreditation process intended to enhance students' learning and success. The QEP Topic Selection Committee identified four potential topics for our next QEP after in-depth consideration of student needs and opportunities. Four topics were identified in collaboration with the Strategic Planning process, as well as review of campus and national data. The four topics are: Mental Wellness, Belonging, Career Readiness, and Digital Fluency.

### **Mental Wellness**

#### **Why Mental Wellness Matters**

This topic prioritizes initiatives to enhance mental wellness of students along with faculty and staff who support them. Student success emerges when students are encouraged to support their mental health and are resilient in times of struggle. This initiative supports MTSU's mission statement: "fosters a student-centered environment conducive to lifelong learning, personal development, and success for all students."

#### **What is Mental Wellness?**

Mental wellness includes environmental mastery, self-agency, and the ability to access coping mechanisms to mitigate stress (Chaudry et al., 2024). Mental wellness, also known as psychological well-being, impacts student success (Eisenberg et al., 2009). According to MTSU student data (2023), 36% percent of students reported that stress negatively impacted their academic performance. Eighty percent of MTSU students surveyed reported moderate to high stress levels. In addition, seventy-two percent of students reported overwhelming anxiety. Faculty often witness mental distress in students as not performing well in class and absences. (Kalkbrenner et al., 2021). Furthermore, faculty mental health is key to student success (Yu & Ying, 2024).

#### **Potential Program Goals**

- Promote tools to enhance personal mental wellness
- Provide skills to encourage resiliency
- Expand mental wellness infrastructure to support student needs
- Promote mental wellness awareness

## **How can you be involved?**

### Students

- Learn how to apply coping skills for mental wellness
- Encourage peers to participate in mental wellness activities
- Encourage a wellness culture
- Cultivate peer support networks

### Faculty

- Connect students to mental wellness resources
- Incorporate coping skills and wellness discussions into curriculum
- Participate in mental health first aid training
- Learn how to apply personal coping skills and obtain support

### Staff

- Encourage students to access campus resources
- Learn to apply personal coping skills and obtain support
- Create and participate in opportunities to integrate mental wellness into university life
- Create wellness friendly spaces for reflection, relaxation, community building
- Offer support services

## **How can you be involved?**

### **Students**

- Organize/Attend peer mentorship groups
- Utilize support services to seek mentorship and guidance
- Volunteer on campus

### **Faculty**

- Encourage student engagement
- Promote campus resources
- Enhance student support and mentorship
- Encourage students to develop customized supports for belonging

### **Staff**

- Engage in student belonging initiatives
- Coordinate programs that enhance belonging
- Create welcoming spaces

## **Career Readiness**

### **Why Career Readiness Matters**

This topic prioritizes initiatives linking learning both in and outside the classroom to post-graduation success as identified by the student’s interests and values. Combining efforts across campus, this plan improves career readiness through high impact pedagogy linking classroom experiences to career applications. This plan can create more opportunities for our students before and after graduation. This initiative supports MTSU’s mission statement to “prepare students to thrive in their chosen profession.”

### **What is Career Readiness?**

Career readiness provides a foundation for demonstrating essential core competencies that equip college graduates for success in the workplace and during their academic career (National Association of Colleges and Employers – NACE). These competencies include career and self-development, communication skills, critical thinking, equity and inclusions, leadership, professionalism, teamwork, and technology. Today’s post-pandemic student wants preparation for a meaningful and fulfilling career that links their passions with their courses (EAB 2023, Anthology 2023, Best Colleges 2022). In this way, career-readiness requires skills, training, personal reflection, and curricular exploration. A student-centered approach that begins with the students' values, identifies skills (NACE), connects to curriculum, and highlights career opportunities has the potential to increase retention. The approach can also enhance a graduate’s resilience and ability to upskill quickly in the workforce.

### **Potential Program Goals**

- Bolster infrastructure and resources for student mentors, community partners, faculty, and staff to support student connections between classroom learning and career readiness
- Increase student involvement in career readiness opportunities
- Foster networking and professional relationships
- Enhance career awareness and exploration

## **How can you be involved?**

### Students-

- Engage with faculty to enhance career readiness
- Apply knowledge and skills to real life situations
- Participate in workshops and seminars
- Engage in internships
- Join career-focused organizations
- Seek mentorship and professional network building

### Faculty-

- Integrate career relevant content into coursework
- Collaborate with colleagues to provide networking opportunities
- Promote interpersonal skills, such as teamwork and communication for students
- Support student connections between classroom learning and career readiness

### Staff

- Support career counseling and advising
- Promote campus career programs
- Connect students with alumni
- Develop and maintain career resources

# Digital Fluency

## Why Digital Fluency matters?

This topic prioritizes students being able to solve problems creatively and responsibly in our dynamic society. The topic focuses on initiatives that enhance students' abilities to live meaningfully, think ethically, and inspire change within a technologically advanced world. Digital fluency equips students across our curriculum to express themselves creatively, intellectually, and appropriately in a digital environment. This initiative supports MTSU's mission statement to foster digital proficiency and adaptability.

## What is Digital Fluency?

Digital fluency is the awareness, skills, agility, and confidence to effectively use new technologies and adapt to changing digital demands. It requires problem-solving abilities, and helps individuals learn new skills, navigate digital changes, and actively participate in society and the economy (The US Digital Coalition, 2021).

Competency within digital fluency allows upward mobility for our students and is linked to student success, particularly among first generation students (Udeogalanya, 2022). In addition, existing and new jobs require the ability to use technology to work creatively, innovatively, and think critically. New high skill jobs requiring elevated digital fluency are emerging and will continue (CEW, 2024; Anand & Ackley, 2021).

## Potential Program Goals

- Provide digital technology training and resources to faculty and staff working with students
- Expand student opportunities to engage with digital technologies at MTSU
- Identify and enhance/support current curricula that includes digital fluency

## How can you be involved?

### Students

- Learn how digital fluency relates to your discipline and future career
- Utilize digital tools for class projects

### Faculty

- Amplify digital fluency concepts within your current curricula
- Encourage students to think critically about the role of digital fluency within your discipline
- Highlight digital fluency in internship opportunities
- Collaborate with colleagues to enhance digital fluency for our students

### Staff

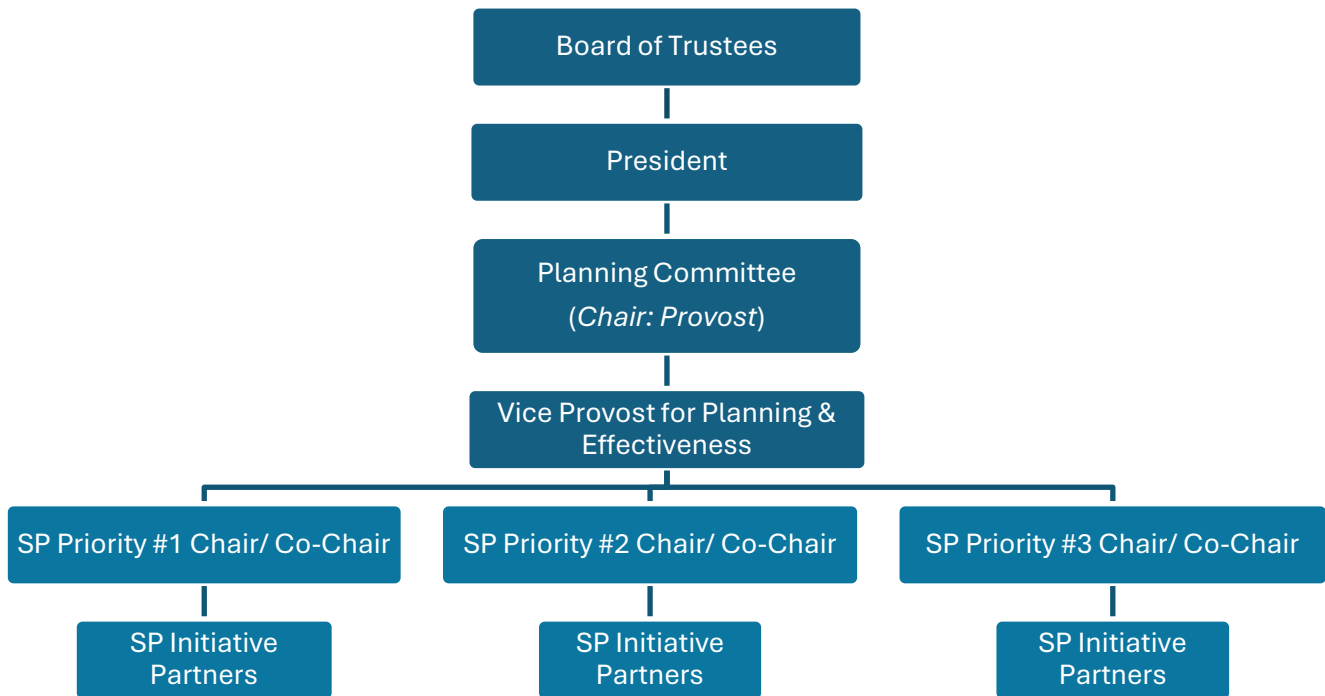
- Create and participate in opportunities to integrate digital fluency into University life



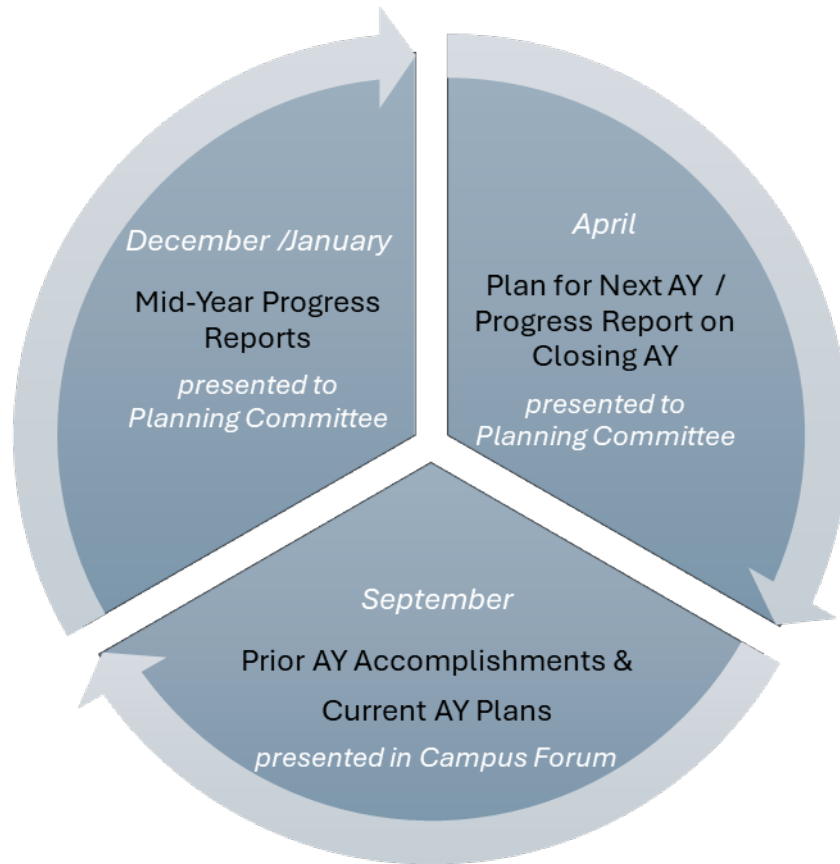
# Implementation Plan Framework (DRAFT)

rev. 8.01.2024

## Implementation Hierarchy



## Annual Implementation Timeline



Date	Milestone	Notes
April 1	Annual Activity Plans (AAP) for each Initiative established for Next AY	Reported to Priority Chairs > VPPE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AAP should include metrics/KPIs.</li> <li>Priority Chair/VP/Provost submit AAP funding requests for consideration during annual budgeting processes.</li> </ul>	
	Report on Closing AY Progress for each Initiative	Reported to Priority Chairs > VPPE
April 15	AAP for Next AY / Progress Reports presented for approval by Planning Committee	Presented by VPPE
September 10	Campus Forum: present report of Prior AY Accomplishments AND Current AY AAP	
December 15	Mid-Year Progress Reports Due	Reported to Priority Chairs > VPPE
January 30	Mid-Year Progress Reports presented to Planning Committee	Presented by VPPE

*Note: In Fall 2029, Strategic Plan leadership should conduct an in-depth process to determine if any revision to priorities, strategies, or initiatives are needed. Any changes should be approved and communicated to implementation leaders for consideration in the development of 2030 and subsequent Annual Activity Plans.*

## Metrics & Indicators of Success

Strategy	Metrics / Indicators	Responsible
<b>Deliver vibrant and impactful academic offerings and experiences</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of majors/concentrations offered</li> <li>• Undergraduate enrollment</li> <li>• Graduate enrollment</li> <li>• Annual number of on-campus instructional development programs delivered</li> <li>• Faculty participation in instructional development offerings</li> <li>• Funds spent on facility additions/improvements</li> <li>• Funds spent on instructional technology infrastructure and equipment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VPAP</li> <li>• VPEM, VPIA</li> <li>• DCGS, VPIA</li> <li>• VPFSI</li> <li>• VPFSI</li> <li>• VP B&amp;F</li> <li>• VP ITD</li> </ul>
<b>Elevate the institutional research infrastructure and reputation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of new research/scholarship programs developed</li> <li>• Research-track faculty positions (change)</li> <li>• Instructional-track faculty positions (change)</li> <li>• Research/creative activity funds allocated to faculty</li> <li>• Research and development (HERD survey) funding</li> <li>• Doctoral graduates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VPAP</li> <li>• VPR/VPARA</li> <li>• VPARA/VPFSI</li> <li>• VPR/Deans</li> <li>• VPR</li> <li>• VPR/VPAP</li> </ul>
<b>Ensure holistic academic and career supports for all students</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Persistence and Retention rates</li> <li>• Graduation rates</li> <li>• Participation in academic support services (tutoring, Scholars Academy, DAC, and other programs)</li> <li>• Number of students enrolled in academic internships</li> <li>• Career Center tracked internships/experiences</li> <li>• Student interaction with Career Development Center activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VPSS/Deans</li> <li>• VPSS/Deans</li> <li>• VPSS</li> <li>• Deans, VPSA</li> <li>• VPSA</li> <li>• VPSA, Deans</li> </ul>
<b>Support wellness, belonging and engagement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student engagement (participation) with counseling and related services</li> <li>• Student response to <a href="#">NSSE</a> “Quality of Interactions” and “Supportive Environment” indicators</li> <li>• University housing capacity (growth)</li> <li>• University housing renovation funds expended</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VPSA</li> <li>• AVP IEPR</li> <li>• VPSA</li> <li>• VPSA, VP B&amp;F</li> </ul>
<b>Enhance faculty &amp; staff support structures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retention rates for faculty and staff</li> <li>• (?) Number of preferred candidate employment recommendations accepted (create tracking?)</li> <li>• Number of faculty and staff professional development programs delivered annually.</li> <li>• Number of faculty and staff attending professional development trainings annually.</li> <li>• (?) Employee satisfaction survey results (create?)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VPARA/AVP HR</li> <li>• VPARA/AVP HR</li> <li>• AVP HR/ VPFSI</li> <li>• AVP HR/ VPFSI</li> </ul>
<b>Strengthen community and industry collaborations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create community/industry collaborative</li> <li>• Adopt CMS platform across divisions</li> <li>• Career Services industry partnerships (jobs and internship postings, Career Fair employer attendees)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UP, VPs</li> <li>• UP, VPs</li> <li>• VPSA</li> </ul>
<b>Improve institutional advocacy and communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased state funding allocations</li> <li>• Increased alumni donors and amounts</li> <li>• Increased overall donors and amounts</li> <li>• Increased admissions applications (undergraduate and graduate)</li> <li>• Increased enrollment yield of admitted students (undergraduate and graduate)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BoT/Pres/VPUA</li> <li>• VPUA, AD</li> <li>• VPUA, AD</li> <li>• VPEM, DCGS, VPIA</li> <li>• VPEM, DCGS, VPIA, Deans</li> </ul>

***Key for Responsible Positions in Metrics & Indicators***

VPAP	Vice Provost for Academic Programs
VPEM	Vice Provost Enrollment Management
VPIA	Vice Provost for International Affairs
DCGS	Dean College of Graduate Studies
VPFSI	Vice Provost Faculty & Strategic Initiatives
VP B&F	Vice President Business & Finance
VP ITD	Vice President Information Technology Division
VPAAR	Vice Provost Academic Administration & Resources
VPR	Vice Provost Research
VPSS	Vice Provost Student Success
AVP HR	Assistant Vice President Human Resources
AVP IEPR	Assistant Vice Provost Institutional Effectiveness, Planning & Research
UP	University Provost
VPSA	Vice President Student Affairs
VPUA	Vice President University Advancement
AD	Director of Athletics