

# Transformative Excellence





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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The 2023-2028 Strategic Plan: Destination 2028 was approved by the Board of Trustees of Clark Atlanta University (CAU) on Friday, October 13, 2023. Destination 2028 is the University's blueprint for directing the course of the future to preserve the sustainability and long-term health of the institution. Over the next five years there will be a transformational shift that is aimed at achieving positive breakthrough results by altering both the organizational culture and mindset.

CAU's mission is and always has been to transform student lives by preparing them for the challenges of our time. Destination 2028 serves as a proactive Plan designed to fortify our students and institution, equipping them to tackle unforeseen challenges on the horizon. The demonstrated impact of the new Plan will be evident by actualizing its vision and goals by working through four (4) strategic pillars:

- Student Transformation
- Academic Transformation
- Institutional Transformation
- Financial Transformation

***CAU 2023-2028 Strategic Plan Approved by the Board of Trustees, October 13, 2023***





## HISTORY AND HERITAGE

Leveraging its distinctive and historic legacies of W.E.B. DuBois and Bishop Davis W. Clark, Clark Atlanta University (CAU) provides an exceptional educational experience at the undergraduate, graduate, and professional levels. A combined 300 Year legacy of Excellence, Innovation and Engagement, Clark Atlanta University has been a cradle of educational opportunity and a driver of learning.

Clark Atlanta University is the result of the consolidation of two historically significant institutions: Clark College, and Atlanta University. Clark College was founded in 1869 by the Freedmen's Aid Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, which later would become the United Methodist Church and the nation's first private liberal arts institution to award baccalaureate degrees to African Americans. Atlanta University was founded in 1865 and was the nation's first graduate-level institution for African Americans. In 1957, the controlling boards of six institutions (Atlanta University, Clark College, Morehouse College, Morris Brown College, Spelman College and Gammon Theological Seminary) ratified new articles of affiliation to create the Atlanta University Center (AUC), the most prevalent consortium of African American private institutions of higher education in the United States. Connected by a common heritage, a shared set of commitments focused on providing quality education to African Americans, the historic consolidation brought together Clark College and Atlanta University to create "***One Exceptional University***" in 1988.

## MISSION

Building on its social justice history and heritage, through innovative teaching, research, scholarship, and service, Clark Atlanta University (CAU), a historically Black university transforms student lives and equips them for leadership in the global society.

***Approved by the Board of Trustees, October 13, 2023***

## VISION

Clark Atlanta University will have a cultural and transformative impact on future generations through thought-provoking research, innovative academic programs, and services and support.

***Approved by the Board of Trustees, October 13, 2023***



## CORE VALUES

Our core values guide the University community and are foundational in achieving its strategic vision.



- **P e o p l e** – Create a culture of community and belonging that demonstrates/reflects a positive campus environment for all.
- **R e s p e c t** – Honor the dignity and worth of all individuals as we foster a culture of service.
- **I n n o v a t i o n** – Ignite new possibilities in research and advance knowledge that serves humanity.
- **D i v e r s i t y** – Embrace and celebrate the diverse experiences of our students, faculty, and staff as we work to build a supportive and inclusive campus community.
- **E x c e l l e n c e** – Commit to high-quality standards and quest for truth, in all we do.

*Approved by the Board of Trustees, October 13, 2023*



## COMPARATIVE AND ASPIRATIONAL PEER INSTITUTIONS

Clark Atlanta University uses strategic benchmarking practices for identifying key metrics and industry-leading indicators by identifying comparative and aspirational peer groups. Strategic benchmarking is a process where organizations compare their performance metrics and processes with those of other organizations, especially those considered as industry leaders or best-in-class. This helps in identifying areas for improvement, setting performance standards, and gaining a comparative advantage. Engaging in strategic benchmarking involves the following steps:

**Identification of Key Metrics:** Determine the key performance indicators (KPIs) and metrics that are crucial for assessing the university's performance. These metrics could include student enrollment, graduation rates, research funding, faculty-to-student ratio, and other factors.

- **Selection of Peer Groups:** Identify peer institutions that are considered benchmarks or aspirational peers. These could be universities with similar missions, student demographics, or those recognized for excellence in specific areas.
- **Data Collection and Analysis:** Gather data on the identified metrics from both Clark Atlanta University and its peer institutions. Analyze the data to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in comparison to the peer group.
- **Setting Targets and Goals:** Use benchmarking insights to set realistic and ambitious targets for improvement. Establish goals that align with or exceed the performance of peer institutions.
- **Implementation of Best Practices:** Adopt best practices identified through benchmarking. This may involve making changes to policies, procedures, or adopting innovative strategies that have proven successful in peer institutions.

### Comparative Peers

1. [Clarkson University, Potsdam, NY](#)
2. [The University of Tulsa, Tulsa, OK](#)
3. [Hampton University, Hampton, VA](#)

### Aspirational Peers

1. [Howard University, Washington, DC](#)
2. [Lehigh University, Bethlehem, PA](#)
3. [North Carolina A & T University, Greensboro, NC](#)

**2023-2028 Variables:**

1. Carnegie Classification 2021: Basic (beginning 2021-22)
2. 2020 Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, Enrollment Profile
3. Fall 2021 Full-Time Retention Rate
4. August 31, 2022, Graduation Rate
5. 2021-22 Number of students receiving a DOC, MAS, and BACH Degree (Completions)
6. FY 2021 Expenses, Salaries, and wages by function and total expenses by natural classification (Research – Total Amount)
7. Institution Control – Private, Not-for-Profit

**Sources:**

- IPEDS DATA Feedback Report (2022 and 2021)
- US News and World Report - Best HBCU
- Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education



## STRATEGIC PILLAR 1: Student Transformation

The student transformation at Clark Atlanta University is anchored in the institution's unique history and heritage. The CAU Student experience encompasses all aspects of a student's life both within and outside of the classroom. In a supportive and nurturing learning environment, students actively pursue academic achievement that incorporates knowledge, innovation, research entrepreneurship, social justice, artistic expression, cultural awareness, and professional development.

### GOALS

1. Attract and recruit talented students who will become future leaders committed to service and community.
2. Strengthen graduate student enrollment and funding to promote sustainable growth by discipline.
3. Foster student engagement through quality programming and personalized supports that nurture their holistic development, sense of well-being, and success both in, and outside of the classroom.

Objectives	Key Strategies	Resource Allocation	Key Performance Indicators
Objective 1.1: Provide programs and services to achieve sustainable undergraduate and graduate enrollment growth to attract and recruit talented students from across the nation and the world.	Develop and execute a comprehensive recruitment plan that will drive sustainable enrollment growth in key markets.	Internal Reallocation	Total Enrollment 5,000 by 2028 80% Undergraduate 20% Graduate
Objective 1.2: Expand resources and funding to attract a diverse range of talented graduate students.	Identify institutional funding sources and policies to support research and scholarly activities, by expanding graduate assistantships and research opportunities.	New Funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• # of new institutional funding sources*</li> <li>• # of graduate assistantships</li> <li>• % growth in graduate student enrollment</li> <li>• Increase in average entering GPA of Graduate Students</li> </ul>
Objective 1.3: Increase student satisfaction and engagement with institutional support services, and the educational experience.	Nurture the development of the whole person through student engagement in university programs, support resources, and career services, with a focus on positive personal transformation.	New Funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and disseminate student Satisfaction Surveys annually</li> <li>• Achieve annual improvement on our Student Satisfaction Surveys (NSSE and EBI)</li> </ul>





## STRATEGIC PILLAR 2: Academic Transformation

Academic transformation at Clark Atlanta University will be centered on the development and support of our faculty, the intellectual growth of our students, and our ongoing commitment to innovation, transformative research, the arts, and scholarship.

The University will embrace the opportunities of the future through a commitment to developing and supporting high-quality academic programs that will enhance our reputation and support an ongoing culture of academic excellence.

### GOALS

1. Promote the success of our faculty by creating an environment of excellence that supports and strengthens the University's academic enterprise.
2. Strategically invest in our current and future faculty in order to attract and retain world-class faculty committed to teaching and research excellence.
3. Provide students with access to the high-impact practices that shape a transformational undergraduate education.
4. Amplify Clark Atlanta University's academic reputation and distinction through focused and dynamic academic planning.
5. Leverage technology and online learning to create relevant and dynamic educational experiences which result in future ready credentials and increased revenue for the University.

Objectives	Key Strategies	Resource Allocation	Key Performance Indicators
<b>Objective 2.1:</b> Create an infrastructure and programming that supports faculty as they pursue excellence in their teaching, research, creativity, and service.	Strengthen policies and practices to support the recruitment and retention of talented faculty at all ranks.	New Funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of a 'Faculty Excellence' Plan</li> <li>• Establish support initiatives for each stage of the faculty career life-cycle</li> </ul>
<b>Objective 2.2:</b> Design and execute an academic strategic plan, driven by qualitative and quantitative data, that will inform decisions to support, expand, or create new academic and credential programs.	<p>Develop a framework for identifying distinctive, high-demand, and innovative academic programs.</p> <p>Develop an online education strategy that leverages our current resources and supports academic program growth.</p>	New Funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• # of new high-demand programs</li> <li>• # of programs of distinction</li> <li>• # of new online degree programs</li> <li>• 15 to 1 Student to Faculty Ratio by 2028</li> </ul>
<b>Objective 2.3:</b> Create a Student Success infrastructure focused on supporting the academic success of our undergraduate and graduate students.	Build a modern Student Success Center informed by a comprehensive student success plan that leverages best practices and current research to improve the overall academic performance of our students.	New Funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete Construction of the Student Success Center</li> <li>• 1<sup>st</sup> Year Retention Rates</li> <li>• 6-Year Graduation Rates</li> <li>• Time to Degree Completion (Graduate)</li> </ul>



### STRATEGIC PILLAR 3: Institutional Transformation

Institutional transformation and effectiveness at Clark Atlanta University refers to the capacity to achieve strategic goals and objectives in a way that is efficient, effective, and accountable. It involves evaluating the institution's performance and making data-informed decisions to improve and strengthen the University's long-term health and sustainability.

#### GOALS

1. Strengthen the University's culture of accountability and assessment through an on-going, comprehensive, and systematic review process of institutional goals and outcomes.
2. Align the IT governance process with the University's shared governance structure to improve policy, planning efficiency, and cost effectiveness.
3. Align annual planning, budgeting, and employee performance reviews with strategic goals and priorities in academic and non-academic units.
4. Cultivate a culture of customer care where all connections are nurtured, issues are resolved with empathy and fidelity, and provide top-notch experiences and support.

Objectives	Key Strategies	Resource Allocation	Key Performance Indicators
Objective 3.1: Increase the institutional visibility of the University's Six-Step Assessment process to promote a climate of assessment and continuous improvement for enhancing academic program quality and administrative support services.	Adopt and deploy a systemic performance improvement system across all administrative and academic units.	New Funds	By 2028, the University will have a fully integrated IE framework in place that aligns with its six-step assessment and improvement process that measures the overall impact and effectiveness on our students and institution
Objective 3.2: Enhance governance of the University's ERP system (Banner).	Maximize the University's Executive Governance Council to amplify the utilization of the University's Enterprise Resource Planning system (Banner) to its fullest extent possible to uphold the set policies and procedures.	New Funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• # of banner (ERP) policies developed</li><li>• # of Banner professional development opportunities</li><li>• # of trained professionals who utilize Banner</li></ul>
Objective 3.3: Strengthening the effectiveness of the University's talent management involves fostering individual and organizational accountability, facilitated through continuous supervisor/manager assessment and performance feedback.	Enhance the existing systematic process for conducting annual performance evaluations to support the University achieving desired outcomes.	Internal Reallocation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• By 2024, Individual performance plans will be developed by each business unit</li><li>• By 2028, the University will have fully integrated and improved performance evaluation process</li></ul>
Objective 3.4: Foster an institutional climate for effective customer support services in the areas of service excellence, teamwork, and student experience.	Perform an operational assessment to identify a baseline of the institution's current customer support services.	Internal Reallocation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• # of customer support services baseline will be established</li><li>• # of customer support services will be assessed for effectiveness (annually)</li></ul>



## STRATEGIC PILLAR 4: Financial Transformation

Clark Atlanta University's financial transformation expands on the opportunity for the campus community to participate in the diversification of revenue via the generation and stewardship of charitable investment, sponsored research, and auxiliary services.

### GOALS

1. Diversify and generate revenue needed to sustain the growth and enhancements of our comprehensive university.
2. Creation and implementation of a blueprint for the efficient and effective coordination, dissemination, measurement, and reporting of the University's local, national, and global mission, vision, and success.
3. Create a brand for the University that highlights its alumni and friends, as well as its culture, engagement, connectivity, and promise.

Objectives	Key Strategies	Resource Allocation	Key Performance Indicators
Objective 4.1: Prioritize funding options like the Campaign for Clark Atlanta University to address the University's needs for increasing and improving student access and success, faculty and academic rigor, campus infrastructure, and areas of CAU excellence.	Clearly define and execute the development of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the University's annual, major, and planned giving efforts.	New Funds	By 2024, the University will have fully integrated Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) that promotes fundraising activities by BOT, Administration, Faculty, Staff, Students, Alumni, and other stakeholders. (Data will be disaggregated by funder type)
Objective 4.2: Support efforts to increase sponsored research, related activities, and auxiliary services.	<p>Increase the engagement of faculty, administrators, students, and staff who participate in research/scholarship, proposal submission, and externally funded activities. <b>*Cross-referenced Objective</b></p> <p>Increase the revenue generated through marketing, promotions, special events, utilizing university spaces, promotional vending, and product licensing.</p>	Internal reallocation	# of faculty, administrator, students, and staff that participates in research/scholarship, proposal submission, and externally funded activities. (Data will be disaggregated by type of researcher)
Objective 4.3: Promote responsible stewardship at the University by fostering sustainable resource management.	Optimize resource allocation, identifying new revenue streams through partnerships, grants, and innovative programs, and ensuring transparency in financial decision-making to maintain the institution's financial health and affordability for student.	New Funds	Percentage Increase in Non-Tuition Revenue Sources.
Objective 4.4: Physically improve the condition and upkeep of facilities and grounds so that they can be used to enhance auxiliary revenues.	Identify improvements needed for the University's facilities to maximize potential external revenues.	New Funds	# of campus improvements total amount (\$) generated from external revenue stream (reported annually)
Objective 4.5: Partner with well-established real estate developers to commercially develop the vast amounts of properties owned by the University.	Finalize and implement the master development and financial plans for the strategic real estate projects.	New Funds	# of commercially developed properties

**NOTE:**

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