

MEMORANDUM

To: Dr. Robert Hampton, Provost and Executive Vice President
Tennessee State University

From: Dr. Alceste T. Pappas, President & CEO, Pappas Consulting Group Inc.

Date: February 11, 2008

cc: Dr. Stephen Portch, Vice Chair, Pappas Consulting Group Inc.
Mr. Randy Bell, Consulting Associate, Pappas Consulting Group Inc.

Subject: Academic Master Plan Report

Attached you will find a copy of our final Academic Master Plan Report, which serves to provide the Academic Master Plan Steering Committee with the framework from which to develop TSU's first-ever Academic Master Plan.

Overview of AMP Report

The report opens with an Introduction that describes our methodology and our efforts to gather the perceptions of TSU stakeholders about the current state of the University. We also describe the manner in which we worked with the AMP Steering Committee to guide them in their efforts at identifying and capturing institutional data relative to the development of an Academic Master Plan. The reports and analyses reviewed by the AMP in conjunction with us are to be found in Appendix I of the report. It is critical to underscore that the institutional database needs to be developed in a more intentional, thoughtful and consistent basis. We are hopeful that the new leadership in Institutional Research will go a long way to address the need for consistently defined data elements to enable the University to optimize its multiple planning efforts.

The second and third sections of our report provide a summary of our own SWOT analysis as well as our understanding of the mega-trends impacting higher education in the United States.

The fourth section of the report is the heart and soul of our document. In it, we articulate the ten elements of the AMP, which the Steering Committee needs to develop. These include:

- A. Academic Vision
- B. Academic Quality and Reputation
- C. Academic Program Breadth and Depth

MEMORANDUM

Page 2

- D. Enrollment Growth and Undergraduate/Graduate Mix
- E. Research
- F. Service and Engagement
- G. Academic Policies and Practices
- H. Budget Allocation and Reallocation Priorities
- I. Other Related Planning Processes
- J. Academic Support Functions

In some of the sections we are fairly prescriptive in our illustrations. We indicate what the AMP Steering Committee needs to consider in the development of that particular section of the plan. These prescriptive sections (e.g., Academic vision) are the ones that, in our view, are the most complex and challenging, particularly when taking into consideration the “first-time nature” of this work for the University and the Steering Committee. In other sections, we enumerate specific questions that need to be answered in order to guide the Steering Committee’s completion of the AMP. (e.g., Research).

We conclude that this is a critical time in the history of TSU. The motto, Carpe Diem, is most appropriate given the sense of urgency we feel on behalf of the University’s new leadership and our own understanding of the significant challenges facing TSU today. Our report is hard-hitting, direct, and candid. We feel compelled to be so as the University celebrates its extraordinary legacy and readjusts its sights on a future which is post-Geier and which throws the University into a very different and competitive higher education marketplace in Nashville, in Tennessee and beyond.

Confirmation of Deliverables

On October 16, we met with you to confirm the deliverables that were expected of the Pappas Consulting Group in support of the University’s development of an Academic Master Plan. Appendix II contains our memorandum dated October 26 that enumerates that earlier discussion.

As per that memorandum of understanding, we have:

1. Completed a SWOT analysis drawn from interviews and focus group meetings conducted with members of the University community;
2. Conducted an external scan of data and information relevant to the creation of an Academic Master Plan;
3. Supported the Academic Master Plan Steering Committee by providing a plan of work steps appropriate to creating the Academic Master Plan;

MEMORANDUM

Page 3

4. Supplied you, the President, and the Academic Master Plan Steering Committee with a report that provides
 - relevant data obtained from the environmental scan
 - a summary of the major themes emerging from the interviews and focus groups (SWOT analysis)
 - a list of the critical institutional questions that will need to be answered in order to frame the Academic Master Plan
 - a set of recommendations to be considered by the Steering Committee in their deliberations

It is now the responsibility of the Steering Committee to formulate its conclusions and write the University's formal Academic Master Plan.

We look forward to working with you, the President, and the Steering Committee in the next few weeks to review the contents of this report and to determine next steps.

**TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
ACADEMIC MASTER PLAN**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

COVER LETTER

	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. SWOT (STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND THREATS) ANALYSIS	2
III. HIGHER EDUCATION TRENDS	5
IV. ACADEMIC MASTER PLAN ELEMENTS	8
A. Academic Vision	9
B. Academic Quality and Reputation	10
C. Academic Program Breadth and Depth	11
D. Enrollment Growth and Undergraduate/Graduate Mix	12
E. Research	13
F. Service and Engagement	14
G. Academic Policies and Practices	14
H. Budget Allocation and Reallocation Priorities	15
I. Other Related Planning Processes	16
J. Academic Support Functions	16
V. CONCLUSION	17

Appendix I: Documents Produced by AMP Steering Committee (as of January 17, 2008)

Appendix II: Memorandum of Expected Deliverables

**TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
ACADEMIC MASTER PLAN**

I. INTRODUCTION

Tennessee State University (TSU) is at a critical juncture in its long and distinguished history. As an Historically Black College and University (HBCU), founded in 1912, Tennessee State University has an unusual profile since it has an urban location (two campuses in Nashville), yet it also has a land-grant mission (and a farm and a nursery). With approximately 9,000 headcount and approximately 7,500 FTE students, TSU offers 42 Bachelor's degrees, 23 Master's degrees, and 7 doctoral programs. With the settlement of the Geier case and the increased competition for students (including African American students), TSU must now more than ever define and plan its future. Relatively new leadership (both the President and Provost) at the institution recognized the realities and called for the development of a foundational Academic Master Plan (AMP). This AMP is to be a long-term one (2008-2027 and beyond) and is to delineate the University's academic, research, and service priorities. As such, the AMP will also guide all other planning processes, including strategic planning, facilities master plan, budget allocation and reallocation, human resource deployment, and fundraising.

TSU engaged the Pappas Consulting Group Inc. (Pappas Group) to assist an institutional Academic Master Plan Steering Committee in developing the framework for the AMP. In fulfillment of that Charge, the Pappas Group reviewed a variety of documents and reports to obtain an educated understanding of the underlying profile of TSU. We further assisted the Steering Committee in establishing a work plan and timetable for the data gathering/analysis phase of this planning study, and in developing a working methodology for reviewing the data received towards informing the planning decisions to be made. The Pappas Group conducted 35 individual interviews with key campus leaders, and a series of 22 focus groups with faculty, staff, students and alumni; these representative input sessions provided the Steering Committee with a broad sense of the varying perceptions of TSU held by those constituent groups. The Pappas Group also facilitated a 2-day planning retreat with the Provost's Council to discuss various key planning issues critical to determining the final Academic Master Plan in-depth. As a result of its extensive focus groups and information/data review, the Pappas Group has completed a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis and has concluded which issues we believe the AMP must address. However, it is the institution itself that must respond to those issues and must develop the details of the AMP so that there exists an institutional ownership of the results.

The Pappas Group and the Steering Committee believe that an AMP is crucial to the future of TSU. It is needed to:

- Provide the framework for decision-making, for resource allocations to, and by, Academic Affairs, and for priority setting for the entire institution.
- Ensure excellence in teaching, research, and service.
- Enable the institution to have the most effective and efficient organizational structure to support the academic mission.
- Foster both communication and collaboration among stakeholders.
- Establish goals, timetables, responsibilities, and accountability expectations.
- Empower the University to compete effectively in the higher education marketplace.
- Direct the University's targeted recruitment of both students and faculty.

Neither the Pappas Group nor the Steering Committee underestimates the enormity of the task. To be successful in the future, TSU must be transformed into a highly focused and disciplined institution that is relentless in its pursuit of quality of performance at all levels. This will require a cultural shift of seismic proportions because the institution does not have a history of making difficult choices. It has too often been too comfortable trying to be all things to all people. There will be many, both internally and externally, quite comfortable with the current culture and quite determined to defend the status quo. This would be a tragic mistake as TSU must change as never before if it wishes to be competitive in an open higher education marketplace. The Academic Master Plan is the transparent vehicle for driving those essential changes.

II. SWOT (STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND THREATS) ANALYSIS

The following analysis represents the conclusions of the Pappas Group. Interestingly our focus groups and interviews were structured around SWOT questions. The answers we received from groups and individuals were often neither consistent nor supported by data. This says to us that TSU faces a challenge to bring all its stakeholders to a common understanding of its present status even before it invites those same stakeholders to come to a shared vision for the future. As an institution that largely does not have an evidence-based culture, TSU must find ways to enable its stakeholders to have a realistic grasp of the current status, as well as shared dreams for its future. We believe the following SWOT analysis provides a starting point for those realizations:

Strengths

- Some strong programs, particularly in Business and Health Sciences.
- An enrollment sufficient to support a relatively broad array of academic programs.
- Many dedicated and talented faculty committed to teaching and learning.
- A relatively collegial and supportive faculty environment.
- General student satisfaction with their major.
- Some strong academic advisory boards.
- A vibrant community with academic program needs.
- Pockets of funded research activity.

Weaknesses

- Academic program offerings have breadth but limited depth.
- Absence of an academic program priority setting process.
- Absence of a direct link between academic program priority setting and the budget allocation/reallocation process.
- Absence of a direct link between academic program priority setting and the capital/facilities priority setting process.
- A relatively large number of schools and colleges for the size of the institution.
- An inadequate proportion of the budget allocated to instruction (46.33%) compared to Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) university average (48.25%) and a high proportion allocated to administration/institutional support (13.37%) than the TBR university average (10.17%).
- Uneven strength in the colleges, with Business and Health Sciences generally considered to be strong.
- The institution's standards for scholarship for graduate faculty (especially those teaching doctoral programs) need to be strengthened, concurrent with addressing doctoral faculty workloads, incentives, services and graduate research assistants.
- No culture of academic planning or of significant budget reallocation or of eliminating low producing programs.
- An academic program review process that is too slow and bureaucratic at both the institution and TBR levels to respond to market needs.
- An absence of a post-tenure review process.

- Faculty workloads that leave limited time for research/creative work/community engagement.
- Inadequate student scholarships and inadequate number/funding for graduate assistants.
- Low competitive research funding levels.
- Generally poor service orientation towards students.
- Poor administrative processes and responsiveness to the support needs of faculty and academic administrators
- No University governance structure in place to guide IT priorities and directions

Opportunities

- To become Nashville's public university and university of choice through the quality of its academic programs.
- To contribute to, and capitalize on, Nashville's growth and attractiveness through relevant academic programs and greater community engagement.
- To optimize both locations in Nashville as a single university and to realign program offerings at each to the benefit of students.
- To improve retention and graduation rates through changing the culture to a service orientation committed to student success.
- To diversify the resource base through increased grants/contracts, development activities, and entrepreneurial activity for the benefit of the academic program.
- To strengthen the academic program through allocating a greater proportion of the budget to instruction.
- To become more creative and flexible concerning policy interpretations.

Threats

- Uneven reputation for academic quality.
- Competition from other TBR universities and from independent colleges in Nashville and in the region.
- Too limited resources, especially as enrollment appears to have leveled off, to accomplish the Mission and Vision of the University.
- Competition for faculty, particularly in high demand fields, with relatively low salaries and relatively high workloads.

- Insufficient number of full-time faculty to accomplish the Mission and Vision of the University.
- Potential concerns about future reaccreditations considering current trends in resource allocation.
- Poor licensure pass rates in some areas.
- Inability to overcome history and historical biases.

III. HIGHER EDUCATION TRENDS

TSU cannot operate in a vacuum. Rather, TSU must astutely assess the trends in the world of higher education and conclude, for itself, what their potential impact will be on the development of the Academic Master Plan. Here is a summary of those trends that we believe are most critical to TSU, given our previous summarization of the SWOT we conducted on behalf of the University.

The demands of the world economy argue that for the United States to sustain economic growth, a more highly educated workforce is essential. A key source of the human and intellectual capital that will underpin continuing growth relates to the nation's colleges and universities. However, fewer students today are earning degrees in the STEM fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics that are not only critical to global competitiveness and economic prosperity, but which also correspond to where employment growth will be concentrated.

Even more troubling are the higher education access and achievement gaps that disproportionately impact low-income and minority students. From 1995 to 2005, due principally to declining state funding subsidies, average tuition and fees increased fifty-one percent at public four-year institutions.

Of equal concern, higher education institutions have done little to increase their effectiveness, productivity, and capacity, especially as it relates to accommodating the needs of adult students, which comprise nearly forty percent of today's postsecondary student body. Additionally, most institutions have yet to embrace new learning paradigms such as distance education, adult education and workplace programs that promote access to a broader-based student cohort and the demand for life-long learning.

In concert, public higher education institutions must not only contend with the foregoing issues, but also respond to other significant developments such as the:

- Interdependence of the world, with an increased flow of ideas, goods, capital and people, in conjunction with global linkages and partnerships that will foster educational exchanges, collective research and the management of intellectual property.

- Fundamental shift in higher education funding support from state appropriations to tuition and fee charges borne by students and their parents, and the ancillary impact of student indebtedness on career path choices.
- Rapid increase in competition from private, for-profit providers and institutions located in other countries.
- Intervention of government into university practices and programs.
- Ever-increasing diversification of students relative to age, gender, social class, ethnicity and culture.

These factors will continue to pressure higher education institutions to make significant changes over the next twenty years.

The following summary matrix highlights some of the opportunities and threats we believe are facing colleges and universities as they seek to provide a high quality learning experience for their students.

Trends Impacting Higher Education

Trend	Description
<p>Changing Demographics of College Attendance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • higher proportion of high school graduates • students lacking recommended college preparatory curricula • greater percentage of non-traditional students • more cultural diversity with higher minority diversification • greater percentage of students requiring need-based financial aid
<p>Changing Nature of the Workplace</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • emphasis on creative problem-solving, teamwork and adaptability • need for high-level intellectual skills • demand for technologically and quantitatively literate employees • interaction with more diverse people
<p>Decreased State Funding for Public Colleges and Universities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reduction in proportion of state appropriations funding cost of higher education • increasing demands on government resources for K-12 education, social services, health care, retirement benefits and infrastructure • shift to greater reliance on tuition and fees to support cost of education • greater need of private funding for professorships, scholarships and facilities

Trend	Description
Global Nature of Problems Requiring Enhanced International Cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • porosity of national boundaries • world-wide environmental impacts • multi-national corporations • post 9/11 awareness of global interdependency
Information Explosion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rapidly increasing quantity of widely available information • looser review and control of information quality • shift from remembering facts to finding and evaluating information
New Educational Sites and Formats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rapid growth in the for-profit higher education sector • rise of the corporate university • more flexible learning formats
New Enrollment Patterns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increased part-time enrollment • multiple institution attendance • online and distance courses
Renewed Emphasis on Civic Responsibility and Development of Communal Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rise in student volunteerism • cyclical student activism • increased pressure on colleges and universities to join the community in resolving local problems
Stricter Regulatory Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • greater call for accountability • more intrusive state regulation of curriculum • accreditation emphasis on effectiveness and assessment
Technological Revolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • new types of jobs for graduates • changed nature of the classroom as a result of online learning

Excerpt from “Greater Expectations: A New Vision for Learning as a Nation Goes to College”, National Panel Report – Association of American Colleges and Universities

The manner in which these trends are exploited or, when necessary, mitigated will determine which colleges and universities will be most successful over the next twenty years.

These external trends collectively illustrate that academic planning cannot be undertaken in a vacuum drawn from only an internal view of TSU. The boundaries of institutional tradition, governance, existing curriculum, and past patterns of funding allocations must be adjusted to reflect the consideration of the new realities which higher education must collectively face.

IV. ACADEMIC MASTER PLAN ELEMENTS

The AMP Steering Committee and the Pappas Group worked with the following “Planning Givens” that were confirmed by the President and the Provost. These include:

1. TSU will not receive exponential increases in state funding. Any growth in state funding will likely come from increases in enrollment and from performance-based funding.
2. TSU will not abandon its land grant mission.
3. TSU needs to grow its enrollment so as to: be able to support a quality comprehensive academic program; increase its state funding; be a recognized player in a statewide initiative to enhance educational access and outcomes for Tennessee residents.
4. TSU will maximize the opportunities provided by the downtown campus serving a growing constituency that works in the area; however, both campuses will operate within a greater one University construct.

With these as the planning assumptions, the Pappas Group recommends that the AMP have the following elements:

- A. Academic Vision
- B. Academic Quality and Reputation
- C. Academic Program Breadth and Depth
- D. Enrollment Growth and Undergraduate/Graduate Mix
- E. Research
- F. Service and Engagement
- G. Academic Policies and Practices
- H. Budget Allocation and Reallocation Priorities
- I. Other Related Planning Processes
- J. Academic Support Functions

A. Academic Vision

TSU needs a strong and relatively precise Academic Vision statement. The statement needs to answer questions about the relative importance of access, of the liberal arts, of the professional schools, of the undergraduate/graduate mix, of research, and of service/engagement. It cannot be all things to all people. It will be the first test of the willingness of the academic community to make tough choices. An example of such a statement follows. However, it is only provided as an example as it is crucial that TSU develop and own its Academic Vision.

TSU offers academic programs, including bachelors degrees, masters degrees (with special emphasis on professional masters), and doctoral degrees (with special emphasis on applied doctoral degrees). It offers these degrees primarily to students who are prepared to succeed (at least 75% of the undergraduates should require no remediation; at least 75% of graduate admits should be regular not provisional admits). Priority will be given to the development or expansion of academic programs that have a direct relationship to the career opportunities in the region and to liberal arts degrees that have demonstrated excellence and/or a demonstrated track record of preparing students for careers or graduate school. TSU will be primarily an undergraduate institution (approximately 75-80%); its graduate programs will place a priority on serving those students living/working in the region. TSU will identify no more than six "signature academic degrees" and will significantly increase funding support for those degrees. TSU will, except in exceptional circumstances, eliminate/phase out all academic programs identified by either TBR or TSU as "low producing," "non-central," or low quality.

Quality will be the hallmark of all TSU programs. Those programs with poor outcomes (for example, licensure pass rates, accreditation reviews, production and placement of graduates) will be given specific targets and timetables for improvement. Failure to meet the targets and timetables will result in probable elimination.

The highest priority will be given to the teaching and learning mission of TSU. The research enterprise will be supported and expanded in areas where there's demonstrated external support, especially for competitive funding. Wherever possible, research will be closely integrated with both the graduate and undergraduate programs. TSU will also expand its service and community engagement activities where they are central to the academic program.

TSU will allocate in excess of 50% of its budget to the academic enterprise and will reengineer all academic support enterprises (including student services and financial aid) to increase effectiveness, efficiency, and student satisfaction.

TSU's overall academic vision is to provide selected high quality academic programs that are responsive to the needs of the region.

B. Academic Quality and Reputation

The biggest danger for TSU is not that it will collapse, but that it will become irrelevant. It has sufficient size, support, and history to survive. In a post-Geier environment of increased competition, these characteristics alone, however, will not enable TSU to thrive. The two enormous barriers to a bright future are its relatively poor academic reputation and its abysmal reputation for basic services (see J). Denial of either or both of these realities will result in a status quo of stagnation.

While some of the poor academic reputation may be perceptual and may reflect various biases, there is enough data and anecdotal evidence to suggest serious issues exist. The student profile; retention rates; and graduation rates all need substantial improvement. Potential accreditation vulnerabilities (both institutional and programmatic) need to be analyzed and addressed. Faculty quality and credentials, especially at the graduate level, need to be analyzed and addressed. The institution has to become more data-informed and, where appropriate, data-driven. It has to stop making compromises driven by expediency.

This section of the Academic Master Plan must establish quality indicators; the baseline and goals over a period of years; the actions to be taken to achieve the goals; and the party responsible for successful outcomes, including:

- SAT/ACT, rank in class of incoming freshman
- GPA of transfer students
- GRE of graduate students
- Freshman to sophomore retention rates
- Four and six year graduation rates
- Pass rates on all programs with state or national licensure/tests
- Possible use of recently developed national general education tests

Again, we believe it is important that the institution establish these goals for itself. But we urge that they be specific, bold, and transparent. They must also be accompanied by detailed action plans.

We also urge that all programs with external accreditations be reviewed by external panels of academics, prior to the next accreditation, to identify and remedy any vulnerabilities. These reviews should be conducted over the next three years, starting with the programs due for accreditation review in the near future.

Finally, we believe that compromises on faculty credentials and qualifications need to be phased out as soon as is practical. This is especially true at the graduate faculty level.

Because TSU's academic reputation is not as strong as it needs to be, either internally or externally, the AMP must also identify a set of intentional activities to improve that reputation. Improving the quality without concurrently improving the reputation for quality will not serve the competitive needs of the institution.

C Academic Program Breadth and Depth

TSU faces an academic program dilemma. It already has too many academic programs for the number of students it serves and for the resources available. Both the data and the perception of most on campus suggest that the academic program is a mile wide and an inch deep, further impacting the quality issue. Yet, at the same time, TSU needs to introduce new academic programs to meet regional needs and to be competitive in the academic marketplace. Therefore, TSU must reduce the overall number of its academic programs while still adding new academic programs. Tough decisions will need to be made, such as:

1. The phasing out of all associate degree programs, working with community colleges to retain opportunities for students to transfer from the community college to complete bachelors degrees. Very few institutions today try to spread their academic mission from associate to doctoral degrees.
2. The identification of a certain number of “signature” academic programs (probably no more than six in total). These programs could be chosen, with the help of an external party, through an RFP process that has tight data and qualitative criteria. The selected programs should receive a significant reallocation (for example, an extra 25% on a per student basis than the average) of funds and should be actively marketed as signature programs.
3. The phasing out of all programs identified by the TBR as “low producing” programs, including all those identified over the last five years unless they have had significant increases in the number of graduates produced. In extraordinary circumstances, a low producing program that is deemed central to TSU’s mission could be placed on “probation” with a limited number of years to reach certain graduation levels. Failure to reach the goals would result in an automatic phasing out. Setting these performance criteria *in advance* will be key to effecting these automatic decisions.
4. The review of all programs that have licensure or test results below the TBR or state or national averages. These reviews should be conducted by external panels and should include the development of improvement plans with specific goals for licensure and test results. Failure to reach the goals would result in an automatic phasing out.
5. The selection of a small number (for example, three) of new academic programs that are consistent with the Academic Vision. Wherever possible, given the resource environment, these programs should be a “repackaging” of existing programs and faculty. A new program should be added only when 150% of the resources needed to launch and sustain the program have been generated from the elimination or reduction of existing programs. (100% would go to the new program, 50% would go to strengthening the quality of existing programs.)

Once again, TSU must make its own decisions about academic program breadth and depth. These illustrations, however, emphasize the degree of the decision that will need to be made. Mere tinkering and tweaking of the academic program or worse yet, continuing to just add programs will result in further erosion of quality.

D. Enrollment Growth and Undergraduate/Graduate Mix

TSU does not yet appear to have a robust enrollment management plan. This will be a crucial element of any AMP, since enrollment growth would enable the academic program to be strengthened. With relatively stagnant enrollment currently and increasing competition for students, TSU needs a sophisticated enrollment management plan. The plan needs to include, at a minimum, the following elements:

- Demographic data for the region, including the projected high school graduates number by year (special attention should be given to data from traditional “feeder high schools”) and the number of students in the region who are not currently enrolled in higher education but who already have some college credits. All data should be disaggregated by gender and race.
- Planned growth, both headcount and FTE, in undergraduate enrollment for each of the next 5 years and also a ten-year target. The growth targets should be disaggregated by:
 - ✓ First-time, full-time new freshman
 - ✓ Transfer students
 - ✓ Part-time students
 - ✓ Gender
 - ✓ Race

For each of these categories, action steps should be identified that will result in the targets being met.

- Planned growth, by degree program, in graduate enrollment for each of the next 5 years and also a ten-year target. Action steps should be identified in each case that will result in the targets being met.
- Five and ten year targets for the undergraduate/graduate mix
- Specific targets for improving the student profile in each year of plan, to include:
 - ✓ Target SAT/ACT range scores for first-time, full-time freshman students
 - ✓ Target average rank in class for incoming first-time, full-time students
 - ✓ Target GRE scores and undergraduate GPA for incoming graduate students (by program)
- New partnerships with schools, corporations, government entities, and non-profits to serve their employees in academic programs.
- Possible joint-degree programs, and the resultant enrollment, with sister institutions.

TSU can no longer just assume enrollment will grow. It must be highly intentional about growing the enrollment in targeted ways that will relate to, and support, the Academic Master Plan.

E. Research

TSU's current research activity is not highly integrated into the academic program. The Vice President for Research reports to the President, not to the Provost; there is a separate research building. Several Centers and Institutes have largely their own research faculty. The connection to the graduate program is limited, as are the number of supported research graduate assistants. There is discussion currently about creating research only faculty positions. The overall research funding is not particularly impressive, especially as competitive awards comprise a small percentage of the overall research expenditures. The Academic Master Plan will need to answer the following questions:

1. What should be the research mission of TSU? What areas should be targeted?
2. How can the research activity be made more integral to the academic program, both at the graduate and undergraduate level?
3. What is the optimal research organization and reporting lines, including grants and contracts administration?
4. What are realistic goals for research awards, grants, contracts, and expenditures for each of the next 10 years?
5. What proportion of research expenditures should come from competitive awards?
6. How can TSU introduce more flexibility into its faculty workload policies and practices to enable research capable teaching faculty to engage in more research? What ought to be the criteria for research time "buy outs"?
7. How can the faculty reward system be adjusted to recognize research productive faculty? What incentives can be put in place to create faculty research entrepreneurship? What is the appropriate balance between research only faculty and teaching/research faculty?
8. What criteria should govern the establishment of Institutes and Centers? What ought to be the ongoing review process? Should there be a sunset provision? What organizational/reporting arrangements ought to be in place to ensure that Institutes and Centers are integrated into the academic program?
9. What should be the target number of fully funded graduate research assistants and what is the business plan to reach those targets?
10. What infrastructure and resource needs will there be to achieve the research mission? What will be the source of those funds?

F. Service and Engagement

TSU has a land-grant mission, and it also has extensive opportunities for more engagement in Nashville and in the region. As with the research agenda, however, TSU has to answer a number of questions regarding service and engagement as part of its AMP activities, such as:

1. What will be the land-grant role of TSU going forward? What will it do in collaboration with UT? What niche might it establish exclusively for itself? How can the land-grant mission be more fully integrated into the academic program of the University? What additional interdisciplinary opportunities exist?
2. How can service learning and civic engagement become a more formal part of the academic program at TSU? Which disciplines most lend themselves to these activities? How can faculty be provided release time to be involved in formal academic engagement activities? How can the faculty reward system be adjusted to recognize formally such activities? How should service learning and civic engagement be organized and coordinated at TSU?
3. Should TSU seek the Carnegie classification as an “Engaged University” (Partnerships and Curricular) to help organize its activities and to use for marketing purposes?
4. How can TSU best assess community/regional needs and identify those areas of greatest mutual benefit?

G. Academic Policies and Practices

TSU will need to review and revise many of its academic policies and practices to support the achievement of the AMP. These include, but are not limited to:

- Faculty handbook. (not current)
- Faculty merit, promotion, and tenure policies (not reflective of new areas of emphasis).
- Faculty Workload policy. (TSU seems to interpret this TBR policy much too strictly, perhaps partially because of resource constraints. However, more flexibility and creativity in this area will be crucial to the success of the AMP and to recruiting quality teachers/scholars in the future).
- Graduate Faculty designation policy. (TSU needs to apply this policy without exceptions.)

- Research incentives policy and practices need to provide greater incentives to individual faculty, departments, and colleges through the return of a consistent and substantial proportion of overhead. (The availability may be limited currently by the funding demands of the research building.)

While these reviews and revisions will require working in a shared governance environment and spirit, it should be understood that changes must be made to enable the achievement of the AMP. Some of these revisions also will be of benefit in the SACS review. Most, if not all, should be revised during the 2008-09 academic year.

H. Budget Allocation and Reallocation Priorities

TSU's budget allocation process will need to be changed significantly to support the AMP. First, it is clear that a greater proportion of TSU's state budget will need to be allocated to the academic enterprise. By establishing a designated percentage (for example, moving from 46.33% of the state budget allocated to instruction to 51.00% over five years), TSU will discipline itself to make the reallocations that are necessary from the non-instruction areas, such as administration/institutional support, which is currently high at 13.37%.

Once the budget allocation proportion has been determined, TSU will need a transparent and somewhat inclusive budgetary process so as to be able to implement its AMP. A possible process could:

- Be led by the Provost (although Research currently does not report to the Provost).
- Include a budget committee with some representation from faculty and staff.
- Have established budget request rules for units. (For example, a prior year base budget proposal that shows: (a) how the unit would implement a 5% cut; (b) how the unit would implement a 5% reallocation within the unit; and (c) how the unit would distribute a 5% increase in base budget.)
- Have established criteria based on A-F above for budget decisions, with quality, centrality to mission, and student/regional demand being priority considerations.
- Include a "signature program" RFP element (utilizing the review process described earlier).
- Involve written budget requests by units, utilizing a standard template, followed by standardized budget request presentations by unit heads (Deans and others) to the budget committee.
- Result in recommendations to the Provost who would make final recommendations to the President.
- Notification to the academic community at large about the budget outcomes and decisions with the rationale for those decisions included.

I. Other Related Planning Processes

TSU should revisit both its strategic plan and its emerging facilities master plan once the AMP is completed. The current strategic plan fulfills the minimum requirements of the TBR and includes a number of specific goals (although no strategies or tactics for accomplishing these goals are included). However, TBR encourages institutions to supplement the required elements of the plan, and TSU should do just that once it has completed its AMP.

TSU should also revisit and update the facilities master plan it is currently developing once the AMP is completed. Priority should be given in that master plan to facility additions or renovations that would support the AMP. It will be important that the process be transparent and include both internal and external input. (The decision and the funding for the Research building was mentioned to us numerous times as a campus mystery; such surprises should be avoided in the future.)

Finally, other internal activities that have some planning component (for example, curriculum development; graduate council) should reexamine their activities in light of AMP.

J. Academic Support Services

TSU does not “work”. We heard that refrain over and over from students, staff, and faculty. We experienced it ourselves. Nothing seems simple. Want to get a cup of coffee? Want to get a parking space? Want to find an accurate mileage reimbursement rate? Want to get an appointment? We were told this reflects a bureaucratic, non-customer-focused environment, where long lines, unanswered phones, and byzantine processes are the norm. In a competitive marketplace and with increasingly demanding students, the pervasive failure of support services will drive the students with choices elsewhere. Faculty and staff likewise indicate that inefficiency and ineffectiveness are the norms, even getting your name spelled correctly “in the system” can take months and ordering simple instructional materials can be a nightmare. These challenges take away from the faculty being able to focus on their core duties.

A similar challenge comes from the lack of quality control. Submissions to the TBR, for example, routinely have to be returned for corrections or completions. The Strategic Plan submission that we reviewed, for example, has a number of typographical errors. While not impacting the substance of the submission, such errors do not reflect well on the commitment to quality. More importantly, errors and omissions slow down critical academic program approval processes at a time when TSU needs to be particularly nimble and timely in its response to regional needs.

We are concerned that unless all basic processes are reengineered and until the culture of service is firmly established, any AMP will fall short because the best students and best faculty will not be at TSU.

Therefore, we recommend that, concurrent with finalizing and implementing its AMP, TSU embark on a major process redesign and reengineering project aimed at significantly improving both effectiveness and efficiency.

V. CONCLUSION

We are impressed with TSU's willingness to take a hard look at itself and to embark on an ambitious yet disciplined Academic Master Plan. The willingness of the academic and larger community to embrace change will largely determine TSU's future. We cannot, and should not, make the decisions for TSU. We have outlined the key questions we believe TSU must answer, and we have provided specific illustrations of possible approaches to certain key elements of the plan.

With new leadership in place, a new era (post-Geier) in existence, and broad agreement that TSU must sharpen its focus and strengthen its quality, TSU is at yet another key point in its history. We are concerned that TSU may miss this opportunity either because of denial about the realities, or because of a tendency towards complacency rather than intentionality (for example, about enrollment growth), or because when it comes time to make difficult decisions too few will support bold leadership. The Academic Master Plan process is the ideal vehicle to test TSU's readiness to chart its own bright future.

**APPENDIX I:
DOCUMENTS PRODUCED BY AMP STEERING COMMITTEE**

(as of January 17, 2008)

In order to develop the Academic Master Plan, the Pappas Consulting Group worked together with the Steering Committee to produce a series of analyses and statements to serve as the framework for academic planning decisions. These included:

- Focused data reports on student demographics and admissions results
- Focused data reports on course enrollment and degree/major accomplishment
- Statement of Planning Givens as identified by the TSU Provost
- Statement on the Need for an Academic Master Plan
- Statement on TSU's Imperative for Change
- Identification of TSU's Primary Competitors
- Academic Deans Survey regarding their program profiles
- State and regional job projections from the Tennessee Department of Labor
- Discussion from planning retreat: the HBCU Tradition
- Discussion from planning retreat: TSU after the Geier Decision
- Input from University-wide SWOT analysis: students, faculty, staff, alumni
- Summary conclusions of University-wide SWOT analysis (currently in process)
- Statement on impact of Low-Producing Programs (currently in process)

In addition, we provided the AMP excerpts of the Occupational Outlook Handbook from the Bureau of Labor Statistics in order for them to understand more fully the relationships between the population, labor force, and the demand for goods and services for the period 2006-2016.

**APPENDIX II:
MEMORANDUM OF EXPECTED DELIVERABLES**

MEMORANDUM

To: Dr. Robert Hampton, Provost and Executive Vice President
Tennessee State University

From: Dr. Alceste T. Pappas, President & CEO, Pappas Consulting Group Inc.

Date: October 26, 2007

cc: Dr. Helen Barrett, Chair, AMP Steering Committee
Dr. Stephen Portch, Vice Chair, Pappas Consulting Group Inc.
Mr. Randy Bell, Consulting Associate, Pappas Consulting Group Inc.

Subject: Confirmation of Academic Master Plan Deliverables

This confirms our discussion of October 16, 2007 concerning the deliverables that are expected of the Pappas Consulting Group in support of the University's development of an Academic Master Plan:

- Complete a SWOT analysis drawn from interviews and focus group meetings conducted with members of the University community;
- Conduct an external scan of data and information relevant to the creation of an Academic Master Plan;
- Support the Academic Master Plan Steering Committee by providing a plan of work steps appropriate to creating the Academic Master Plan;
- Supply the Academic Master Plan Steering Committee with a report that will include:
 - relevant data obtained from the environmental scan
 - a summary of the major themes emerging from the interviews and focus groups (SWOT analysis)
 - a list of the critical institutional questions that will need to be answered in order to frame the Academic Master Plan
 - a set of recommendations to be considered by the Steering Committee in their deliberations

Based upon this report, the Steering Committee will then develop its conclusions and write the University's formal Academic Master Plan.

We look forward to our on-going work with the Steering Committee and providing the University with the key information needed to develop its own Academic Master Plan.