

Strategic Planning Committee Minutes

November 17, 2021

The Strategic Planning Committee met on Wednesday, November 17th at 11:00 a.m. in the Athens State Ballroom. Present were Ms. Toni Carter; Ms. Pam Clark, Recorder; Dr. Mike Essary; Ms. Barbara Ferguson; Dr. Keith Ferguson; Ms. Jackie Gooch; Mr. Jeff Guenther; Ms. Beth Jenkins; Ms. Belinda Krigel; Dr. Kim LaFevor; Mr. Mike McCoy; Mr. Benjamin Shepard; Dr. Jackie Smith; Dr. Stephen Spencer; Dr. Timothy Thornton; Dr. Lee Vartanian; Dr. Philip Way; Dr. Catherine Wehlburg; Ms. Gabrielle Whitney; Ms. Jennifer Wolfe; and Dr. Lionel Wright. Mr. Jamie Adams, Dr. Rick Barth, Mr. Ronnie Chronister, Dr. Joe Delap, Ms. Laura Beth Horn, Ms. Sarah McAbee, Mr. Jeff Powers, Mr. Derrek Smith, Mr. Gary Valcana, and Ms. Debra Vaughn were absent. Special guest via Zoom was Ms. Maria Carrillo.

Dr. Way called the meeting to order at 11:02 a.m. and welcomed everyone. There were no corrections to the September minutes and they were unanimously approved on a voice vote.

The focus of the meeting was to discuss the results from the economic impact study, a measurement used in goal 5 of Horizon 2030, and determine how to go forward using the data. Dr. Way turned the meeting over to Mr. Guenther. Mr. Guenther welcomed everyone and explained that Athens State partnered with EMSI Burning Glass to produce an economic impact study. He introduced Ms. Maria Carrillo from EMSI Burning Glass, who gave an overview of the company, the economic value of Athens State University, and an investment analysis (Handout 1). At the conclusion of Ms. Carrillo's presentation, Mr. Guenther thanked her for joining the meeting and presenting. The members were divided into five groups for discussions (Handout 2).

Alumni Group – LaFevor, Latham, and Way

1. What economic impact study data are you most likely to share with the stakeholders that your breakout group is representing today?
 - Overall economic impact
 - Earnings (lifetime and by degree type)
 - Return on investment
2. How would you formulate the narrative?
 - Based on impact
 - Based on return
 - Based on opportunity to discuss further learning opportunities (e.g., master's degrees for individuals who have already completed a bachelor's degree)
3. What channels would you use to share this information?
 - The Column
 - e-Newsletter
 - Alumni Chapter
 - Professional organizations
 - Website

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4. What additional data could strengthen our anchor institution narrative?
 - Qualitative – cultural enrichment and overall quality of life
5. What additional quantitative or qualitative data are captured in your department or division that align with Horizon 2030 goals 5, 5.1, and 5.2?
 - Data from campus events etc. (Bicentennial events)

Community Partners Group (Employers, Chambers, NGOs) – Dollar, McCoy, Shepard, Thornton, and Vartanian

1. What economic impact study data are you most likely to share with the stakeholders that your breakout group is representing today?
 - Taxpayer impact - \$2 return for every \$1 invested
 - Social impact – \$6.10 for every \$1.00
 - Operations impact
 - Overall total impact – 3,141 jobs
 - Graduates
2. How would you formulate the narrative?
 - Add components of this to our brochure that we share with businesses, the legislature and local constituencies
 - Alabama dollars stay in Alabama
 - Small yet impactful
 - Programs and initiatives at Athens State
3. What channels would you use to share this information?
 - Dedicated webpage
 - Chamber of Commerce meetings
 - Rotary
 - Targeted presentations to businesses, city and county groups
 - Digital media ads
 - Postcards
 - Stump speeches?
4. What additional data could strengthen our anchor institution narrative?
 - Where faculty and staff live and how they are embedded in the community
 - Articulate how much the community relies on Athens State
 - Comparative data
 - Tuition rate
 - Job placement

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5. What additional quantitative or qualitative data are captured in your department or division that align with Horizon 2030 goals 5, 5.1, and 5.2?
 - New programs and certificates
 - Expand our discussions, visibility, and presence to Morgan and Madison counties
 - Incorporate Bicentennial into celebrations and data

Faculty and Staff Group – Carter, Essary, Krigel, Spencer, and Wright

1. What economic impact study data are you most likely to share with the stakeholders that your breakout group is representing today?
 - Employment and earning impact on students – faculty may use the data to recruit students and help them see the value of various degrees
 - The return on wages for Athens State students
 - Students and maybe alumni
 - Increase in graduate earnings per year
 - Return on investment
 - Operations spending impact analysis
 - Student spending impact analysis
2. How would you formulate the narrative?
 - Highlight information in an executive summary
 - Students recover \$4.80 for every dollar invested in their education at Athens State
 - Potential careers and opportunities for graduates
 - To help students understand return on investment of higher education
 - How Athens State University's reputation and dedication to student success contributes to the economy - could help with morale of faculty and staff
 - In a formal report with executive summary
3. What channels would you use to share this information?
 - Include in recruiting information
 - Internet
 - Fact Book
 - Individuals who ask about Athens State
 - Programs would be able to appreciate the return on investment
 - Program web pages
 - Recruiting materials
 - Email
 - Small group discussions (with food)
 - Some sort of yearly report
 - Economic impact report
 - Internal/External communications

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4. What additional data could strengthen our anchor institution narrative?
 - Impact on the quality of life in the Athens State community
 - Economic value contributed to non-profits by University community outreach and public service activities
 - Explain the community impact for our students – their education will serve and enhance their communities
 - Compare to other institutions in the area
 - Cost point
 - Student return on investment
 - Job outlook

5. What additional quantitative or qualitative data are captured in your department or division that align with Horizon 2030 goals 5, 5.1, and 5.2?
 - Faculty achievements
 - Community service initiatives
 - Student achievements
 - Academic – industry partnerships

Government Relations Group – K. Ferguson, Gooch, Wehlburg, and Whitney

1. What economic impact study data are you most likely to share with the stakeholders that your breakout group is representing today?
 - The entire sheet is useful at the local and state level, especially given that the vast majority of students are in-state
 - Alumni impact
 - Operations spending impact
 - Investment analysis

2. How would you formulate the narrative?
 - The data speaks for itself, but given the context of our student constituency (in-state) and particularly high returns on investment

3. What channels would you use to share this information?
 - Lobbyist presence in local or regional government entities
 - Presence in ACHE or other educational bodies
 - Expand, influence to our other counties of impact – increase our presence because we impact their constituents

4. What additional data could strengthen our anchor institution narrative?
 - Qualitative data (e.g. stories)

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- Information on our partnerships, grants and data on impact there
5. What additional quantitative or qualitative data are captured in your department or division that align with Horizon 2030 goals 5, 5.1, and 5.2?
- Completer impact data
 - Qualitative narratives for graduates
 - Stakeholder feedback on impact
 - Number one type of partnerships with communities

Students Group – B. Ferguson, Jenkins, Smith, and Wolfe

1. What economic impact study data are you most likely to share with the stakeholders that your breakout group is representing today?
- Lifelong earnings and jobs supported
 - Salary data
 - Alumni – jobs supported
 - Amount of money being made and jobs supported
 - Students and employers
 - Dollar amount of earnings
2. How would you formulate the narrative?
- Quality of life – students with some college or AA employers
 - Students with some college credit and employers
 - Underemployed students with some college who want more money
 - Employers who need employees to take classes
 - Earnings benefit
3. What channels would you use to share this information?
- Radio
 - Student Success Center
 - Community colleges
 - Student success coaches and recruiters
 - Social media
 - Recruiting
 - Advertising
4. What additional data could strengthen our anchor institution narrative?
- List of employers that employ our graduates
 - Where our students and graduates work – how much they are a part of the community

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- Sharing this data with Economic Development Agency and Chamber of Commerce
 - Chamber of Commerce having information to share with potential companies so they will move to the area
5. What additional quantitative or qualitative data are captured in your department or division that align with Horizon 2030 goals 5, 5.1, and 5.2?
- Repackage Student Achievement Report and student outcomes
 - Resume building
 - Collaboratory data for students
 - Comprehensive data logged in Collaboratory
 - We employ student workers (resume building)
 - Collaboratory is used to engage students with community activities
 - Student learning outcomes that show what students are learning
 - Work study jobs

Mr. Guenther turned the meeting over to Dr. Way. He thanked everyone for their time and wished everyone a good holiday season. The meeting adjourned at 12:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted: Pamela D. Clark

Handout 1: The Economic Value of Athens State University by EMSI Burning Glass

Handout 2: Horizon 2030 and the Economic Impact Study

The Economic Value of Athens State University



About ATSU

3,882
Students

362
Employees

The ATSU Service Region
Alabama

ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS



Alumni impact

Impact of the increased earnings of ATSU alumni and the businesses they work for

An economic boost similar to hosting the World Series
28x

\$165.6 million
Added income

2,668 Jobs supported



Operations spending impact

Impact of annual payroll and other spending

Enough to buy **984** new cars

OR **425** Jobs supported

\$33 million
Added income



Student spending impact

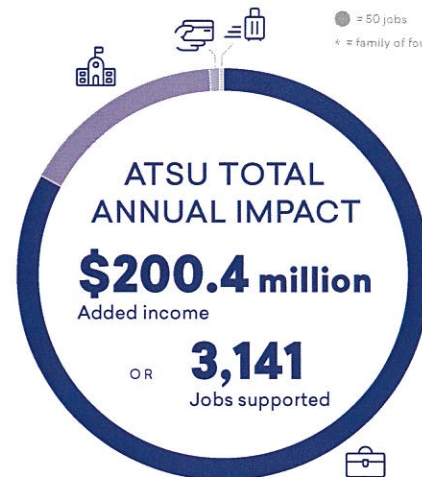
Impact of the daily spending of ATSU students attracted to or retained in the region

Enough to buy **103** families* a year's worth of groceries

OR **34** Jobs supported

\$1.3 million
Added income

= 50 jobs
 = family of four



Visitor spending impact

Impact of visitors attracted to the ATSU Service Region for events hosted by ATSU

\$506.9 thousand
Added income

OR **14** Jobs supported

INVESTMENT ANALYSIS

For every \$1...



Students gain **\$4.80** in lifetime earnings



Taxpayers gain **\$2.00** in added tax revenue and public sector savings



Society gains **\$6.10** in added state revenue and social savings

The average bachelor's degree graduate from ATSU will see an increase in earnings of **\$16,000** each year compared to someone with an associate degree working in Alabama.



Economic impact study takeaways

“Good to know” isn’t good enough

If you’ve spent money obtaining the best data available about your university’s economic value, you need that information to serve a purpose. What stories can you tell? How do you tell those stories?

My university generates more tax dollars than it takes.

When your university’s taxpayer benefit/cost ratio is greater than one, it creates more tax revenue than it takes. For every dollar that state taxpayers give to ATSU, the university returns \$2.00 to government coffers. This \$2.00 represents a larger future tax base from students’ higher income and workforce productivity, which has been discounted back to the present. After all, \$1 today is worth more than \$1 tomorrow.

This message is especially potent when compared to other uses of government funds. Public parks, for example, require funds to maintain but they don’t generate more tax revenue. Your university is unique: It’s a moneymaker that generates more than it takes.

Who Cares: Legislators, Board of Directors, Homeowners, Taxpayers

My university retains and creates wealth.

Income, or value added, is just another way of talking about the extra money generated in the region even after subtracting costs of production and leakages (most money spent on computers in Alabama, for example, leaves Alabama for Seattle to pay Microsoft). The remaining funds for the region are wages, profits, and other forms of income: money that otherwise wouldn’t exist in the region if your university didn’t exist. The university also creates wealth by educating students who add to their businesses’ output. This alumni impact would never have come to exist if the university hadn’t existed.

Who Cares: County Commissioners, Rotary/Kiwanis Clubs, Mayors, City Council, Local Businesses

My university performs better than the stock market.

The S&P 500 has delivered an average return of 9.9% over the last 30 years. If your university has higher rates of return to its stakeholders (students and taxpayers), then it’s a safer and stronger alternative to the stock market.

Who Cares: Prospective Students, Local Media, Trustees, Average Citizens

Horizon 2030 and the Economic Impact Study

Please circle the stakeholder breakout group to which you are contributing:

Alumni	Community partners (employers, chambers, NGOs)
Faculty and staff	Government relations
Students	

Goal 5: Athens State University will engage with its outside communities as an “anchor institution” resulting in reciprocal benefits.

Sub-goal 5.1: Economic development will occur through university-sponsored education and participation in community efforts such as to establish an incubator and to attract additional businesses.

Sub-goal 5.2: The quality of life, including arts and culture, health, and the environment will be enhanced through increased programming, especially at the ACA and outreach by internal stakeholders.

Considering the Horizon 2030 goal and sub-goals listed above, and the economic impact study data that have been shared with you today, please answer the following questions:

1. What economic impact study data are you most likely to share with the stakeholders that your breakout group is representing today?
2. How would you formulate the narrative?
3. What channels would you use to share this information?
4. What additional data could strengthen our *anchor institution* narrative?
5. What additional quantitative or qualitative data are captured in your department or division that align with Horizon 2030 goals 5, 5.1, and 5.2?