

ONE USF

/ Consolidation Update /

Dear USF faculty, staff and students,

As I have embarked upon my listening tour with the USF community, I have heard your ideas, your dreams and your aspirations. I have also heard concerns. Those conversations have been particularly useful as we work to **develop a path forward** as one consolidated university.

One of the common themes I have heard is a desire for clarity, especially regarding the expanded opportunities we anticipate and how our consolidated academic structure can facilitate those opportunities.

I wish to share with you a preliminary framework for such a structure, which encompasses all of the consultations and collaborative work that has been performed during the past year by our broadly representative USF stakeholder groups.

I continue to invite feedback as I proceed with additional listening tour visits in the coming months.

The preliminary framework was **shared with the USF Board of Trustees (BOT)** this morning as an informational item and update, with a more complete plan to be shared at our next BOT meeting in December, which will incorporate the additional feedback I expect to hear from our faculty, staff, students and other supporters.

As a reminder, our work continues to be conducted under the clear direction of the **Guiding Principles for Consolidation**, established by the **USF BOT**, to:

- Strengthen USF's stature as a Preeminent Research University with national and global prominence;
- Embrace a model of "One University Geographically Distributed" while preserving campus identity — guided by a transparent and collaborative process;
- Commit to "Students First," through expanding access and raising educational attainment while continuing USF's national best practice of student success and diversity;
- Establish a clear, simple and unified leadership structure by aligning accountability with authority and valuing shared governance through engaging students, faculty and staff on all campuses;
- Assure consistency of high impact research across the university through establishing centers and programs of academic excellence on each campus;
- Enhance regional economic development while avoiding unwarranted duplication of academic programs; and
- Maximize performance, service quality and operational efficiencies through optimizing the utilization of faculty talent and technology across the university.

Student Access and Success

Faculty Research and Creative Excellence

Community Impact

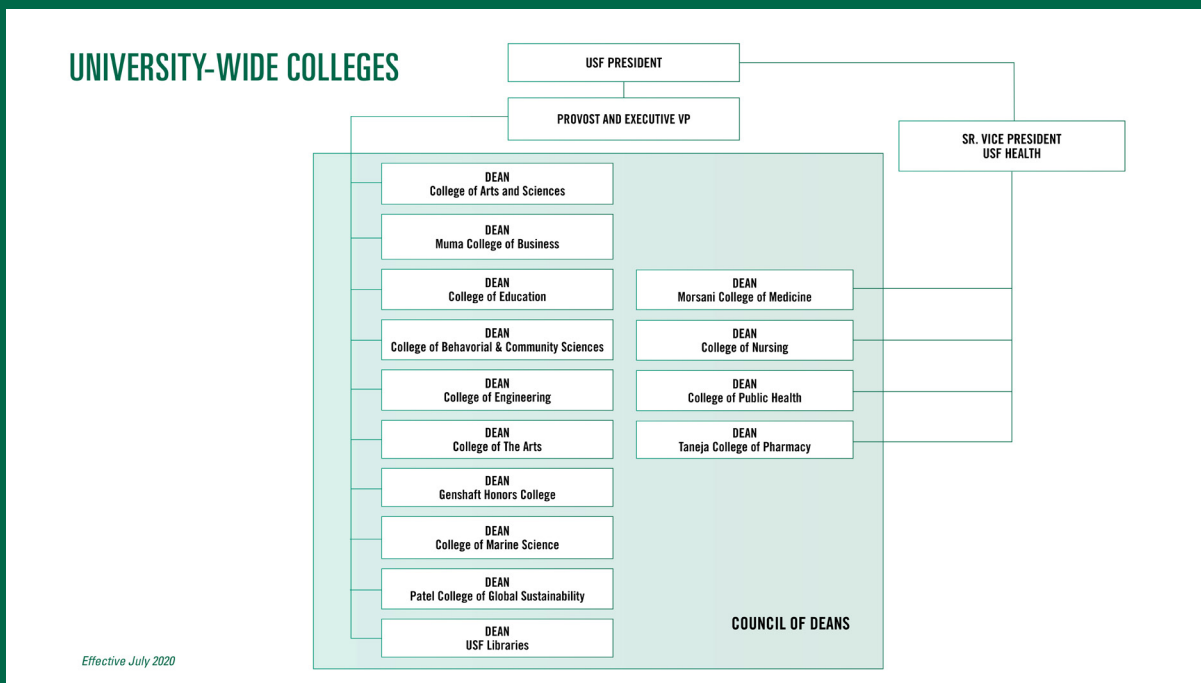
Looking ahead: A shared mission

/ Student Access and Success /

Today, USF offers 242 degree programs in multiple colleges across three campuses. However, because our campuses are currently separately accredited, students can only take advantage of those programs that happen to exist on their chosen home campus. Currently, moving into a degree program that is offered on a different campus within USF requires that the student fully transfer, as if moving to a different university.

By reunifying the campuses and combining our programs to best leverage our areas of strength and community needs, students will be able to seamlessly access a broader array of academic offerings, particularly in high-demand, high-skilled fields such as nursing and engineering. Offering such programs would have previously required the creation of entirely new colleges on our regional campuses, with the requisite additional funding to operate them.

Following consolidation, we envision all of the programs USF has to offer being made available to all of our students, enabling unprecedented student access across the Tampa Bay region. This includes access to some doctoral degree programs, which prior to consolidation were limited to the USF campus in Tampa, per SACSCOC accreditation.



[\(VIEW LARGER IMAGE HERE\)](#)

Not only will this programmatic alignment give our diverse population of students access to a broader array of degrees than ever before, alignment will also benefit from all of the student support resources that come with being part of a global research university. Importantly, every one of our students will graduate from a top-ranked Preeminent university that is poised for even greater prestige and visibility.

By unifying our three institutions, the range of student organizations, clubs and athletic opportunities will also expand. We can pool our resources to better meet students' academic, personal, professional or health and wellness needs. Scholarships, study-abroad programs, internships and other programs that were once limited to one or another campus will now be accessible to all of our deserving students.

Best practices from each of our campuses can be leveraged by all. For example, creative career preparedness practices at USF Sarasota-Manatee, personalized student experiences at USF St Petersburg, or undergraduate research opportunities at USF Tampa, and many others – will all lead to higher levels of student retention and graduation. It will also ensure that each of our campuses benefit from our national leadership in eliminating completion gaps by race/ethnicity and socioeconomic status.

Plans to invest in state-of-the-art instructional technology platforms and classrooms on all campuses will allow students greater access to world-class professors, classes and programs regardless of home campus.

And, students will earn their degree/diploma from a national, top-tier research university with the added pride and stature that will bring to them in the marketplace and/or to their application to graduate/professional (including medical, business, or law) school. This includes graduation from nationally ranked programs with specialized accreditations.

/ Faculty Research and Creative Excellence /

The faculty at USF represent some of the most innovative, accomplished, ambitious and compassionate individuals in higher education. They not only have high expectations and aspirations for themselves, they are deeply committed to the students and the communities they serve.

All of our faculty across our region deserve access to the benefits a comprehensive global research university has to offer -- with equitable assignments, opportunities, support and performance expectations. That is a desire I have heard very clearly from our faculty in St. Petersburg, Sarasota-Manatee and Tampa during my listening tour.

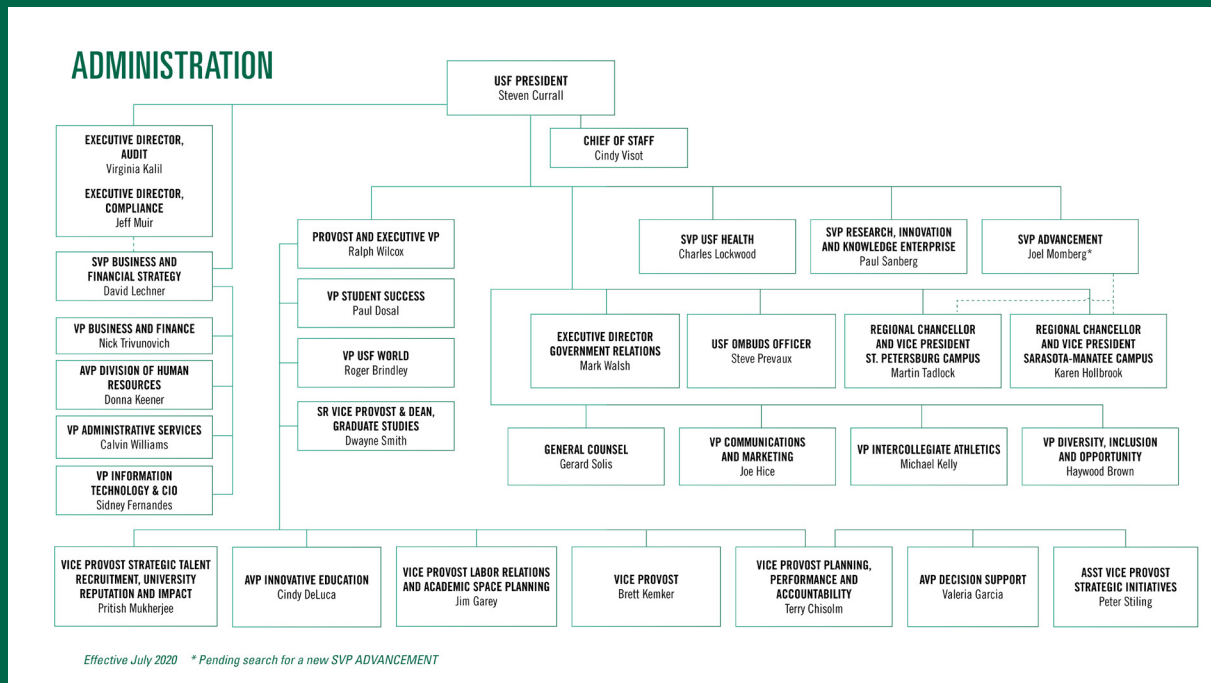
We can achieve this by uniting our colleges and empowering them through shared goals and resources. Shifting performance accountability from individual campuses to the colleges incentivizes collaboration across our communities.

To do this, we must join colleges together in one academic enterprise. In this structure, each college would be led by a dean, reporting to a chief academic officer, who reports to the president, who ultimately reports to the USF Board of Trustees.

Department chairs, school deans/directors, and college deans across USF would be responsible for supporting faculty success. They will do so by assuring equity of work assignments and access to programs intended to support scholarship, research and creative activity (including but not limited to mentoring and professional development, state-of-the-art laboratories and instrumentation, studios, technical support, graduate assistants and library resources) consistent with resources at a Preeminent Research University.

Meanwhile, our regional chancellors will play an important role in the continued advocacy for USF across our region. Since my first day as president, I have been working closely with Regional Chancellors Holbrook and Tadlock to ensure that our consolidated university will position USF's campuses in Sarasota-Manatee and St. Petersburg for continued, and enhanced, success. They have shared valuable perspectives about how each campus can contribute to USF's trajectory toward being named a Top 25 public university and eventually qualifying for AAU eligibility. The chancellors have also been very helpful in helping me understand how those campuses can leverage their regional ecosystems, local identities and areas of distinctiveness to foster continued academic excellence and regional economic development.

The chancellors’ experiences, skills and relationships will continue to be vital in our reunified structure. As such, I have asked each of our regional chancellors to take on new roles, effective 1 July, 2020, which will encompass their campus operations responsibilities, including implementing each campus’s approved budget, as well as focused goals around community outreach and development. They will also help identify distinctive needs in the local community that can be served by our educational and research efforts. They will continue to be important members of my leadership team with the new titles Regional Chancellors and Vice Presidents.



Effective July 2020 * Pending search for a new SVP ADVANCEMENT

[\(VIEW LARGER IMAGE HERE\)](#)

/ Community Impact /

What’s especially exciting about the reunification of our university is the multiplier-effect it will have on our region and our state. Here is my vision for this impact.

Following reunification, for the first time ever, no particular municipality or county in Tampa Bay will be the exclusive “home” to the region’s top public research university, nor will any one campus be the primary destination for its talent and public or corporate investment. Rather, each of Hillsborough, Manatee, Pinellas and Sarasota counties, and the greater Tampa Bay region, will be home to a campus of a top-ranked national research university with access to world-class talent, research programs and economic development initiatives available through a united USF.

Instead of three USF System institutions competing for limited state resources, philanthropic gifts, community and industry partnerships and student and faculty talent, we can now ensure that new investments or relationships will pay dividends for all three locations.

In fact, our Board of Trustees recently approved a unified “One USF” Legislative Budget Request that would provide additional state investment in all three campuses, as well as the resources necessary to develop and strengthen specialized, nationally prominent academic and research centers of excellence on the campuses.

A united USF will greatly benefit Florida, as one of its largest and fastest-growing regions is recognized internationally as a destination for exceptionally talented students and faculty -- fostering highly skilled and innovative leaders.

/ Looking ahead: A shared mission /

As we move forward together, we will be united around a common mission, one that reflects our role as a transformative force for good -- a university that is quite literally shaping the future.

At this morning’s Board of Trustees meeting, I shared a new mission and related goals that are meant to be a starting point for us as one university, geographically distributed. They were carefully designed to align and assimilate the missions and goals of each of our three campuses. We will continue to work on these in the coming months with the Board of Trustees Strategic Initiatives Committee.

/ Mission / DRAFT

The University of South Florida’s mission is to conduct innovative and translational research, scholarship and creative activity. In partnership with the communities we serve, the University delivers a world-class educational experience to talented and diverse undergraduate, graduate and professional students.

Led by outstanding faculty and professional staff, the University of South Florida fulfills its role as a public metropolitan research university, serving the people of Florida, the nation and the world by fostering intellectual inquiry and outcomes that positively shape the future, regionally, nationally and globally.

/ Goals /

DRAFT

1. Promote high-impact research and innovation to advance frontiers of knowledge, solve global problems and improve lives
2. Advance a commitment to lifelong success of well-educated, highly skilled and adaptable students who thrive in a dynamic global market
3. Serve as a major social and economic engine creating meaningful global, national and regional partnerships to build a prosperous and sustainable future for our regional communities and the State of Florida
4. Cultivate a vibrant, inclusive and safe community for learning, discovery, creative activities and transformative experiences enabled through adaptive design of physical, social and digital environments
5. Conduct continuous visionary planning and sound management throughout USF to ensure a strong and sustainable financial base, and proactively adapt to emerging opportunities in a dynamic environment

We anticipate that these goals will be effective 1 July 2020, and they will be bolstered by a more in-depth strategic plan that will come as part of our campus-wide strategic renewal process and will include broad representation from all of our constituencies next year and prior to the SACSCOC team visit in late 2020 or early 2021.

I wish to thank you for everything you do daily to make USF the nationally regarded, fast-rising university of impact that we are. It is because of you -- your enthusiasm, your passion, your bold ideas -- that makes me steadfastly confident we will continue to be stronger and more audaciously optimistic than ever.

I look forward to hearing your feedback and continuing to work together to achieve the bold vision we have for "ONE USF." Find additional information about the consolidation process, as well as some FAQs, [at our consolidation website](#).

Steven C. Currall,
President, University of South Florida