
JOHN GLENN COLLEGE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Strategic Plan

2025-2028



University Overview

Ohio State Vision, Mission

The [Education for Citizenship 2035](#) strategic plan framework was introduced in late 2024 following 11 months of institutional listening sessions and strategic plan workshops. The framework’s strategic vision, themes and priorities were developed with input from students, faculty, staff, alumni and representatives from university offices, units, departments and external partners.

The plan emphasizes The Ohio State University’s renewed commitment to its land-grant mission through the guiding principle of “Education for Citizenship,” which highlights the university’s role as both an innovator in higher education and a support to local and national communities. He articulates a forward-looking vision that calls on the university community to work collectively in shaping the future while upholding the values and responsibilities rooted in the institution’s founding purpose.

“Ohio State’s motto of ‘Education for Citizenship’ speaks directly to our founding mission as a land-grant university and comes with the inherent charge to evolve and advance in ways that continue to benefit Ohioans, our nation and the world. This inspiring meaning is why our motto will be our North Star for the next 10 years as we define the future of higher education at Ohio State and serve as a model for the nation.

The Education for Citizenship 2035 strategic plan framework reflects the need to always push ourselves as Buckeyes. Working together, we will ensure our families and communities continue to thrive. That is our commitment as a land-grant university, and that is the meaning of Education for Citizenship.”

Education for Citizenship 2035 Strategic Vision and Mission

With our motto of “Education for Citizenship” as our inspiration, Ohio State will meet the challenges facing our university and higher education today. In doing so, we will define the future of higher education at Ohio State and serve as a model for the nation.

To do so, our strategic vision is to:

Educate the next generation of citizens	Build a model working and learning environment	Advance research, creativity and innovation that improve and save lives	Embrace our land-grant mission
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Everything we do must connect with our mission as a land-grant university.

We exist because of and for the people we serve.

We exist to make our state and nation better and to equip our graduates to do the same.

The Ohio State University Strategic Plan

Six themes comprise [Ohio State's Education for Citizenship 2035 strategic plan](#).

ACADEMICS

Creating a teaching-and-learning environment accessible and affordable to all that achieves both academic excellence and a strong focus on workforce development.

RESEARCH AND CREATIVE EXPRESSION

Building and expanding Ohio State's research capacity and artistic creativity to achieve new levels of state, federal and global significance in emerging and meaningful areas of discovery.

HEALTHCARE

Advancing exemplary academics, research and clinical care in Ohio and nationally at the Wexner Medical Center and health sciences colleges — in coordination with the medical center's strategic plan.

TALENT AND CULTURE

Establishing Ohio State as a destination workplace for highly qualified faculty and staff, as well as a community with the highest standards of respect for one another and diversity of thought.

OPERATIONS

Making a large, complex university more effective through excellence in resource stewardship, new revenue generation, leadership and advanced support from alumni and partners.

COLLEGIATE ATHLETICS

Elevating Ohio State as the nation's foremost leader in student-athlete development, achievement and support, while continuing to adapt to the evolving state of the intercollegiate athletics model.

These strategic themes are supported by eight university priorities.

Affordability	Student Success	Workforce Development	Outreach and Engagement
Accessibility	Performance Excellence and Resource Stewardship	Workplace of Choice	Service to the State of Ohio

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Letter from the Dean

The John Glenn College of Public Affairs is lucky to pursue its mission at The Ohio State University, one of the nation's great land grant universities driven by the motto "education for citizenship."

We work to improve public governance and policymaking by preparing professional public leaders, generating research for public impact and promoting participation in democracy.

We do this work fully aware of the nation's discontent: Confidence in public institutions is at an all-time low. Americans do not trust government or higher education to deliver value.

We believe that if we do our work at the highest level of excellence, we can deliver value to students, their families, public and nonprofit sector employers, elected officials, policymakers and citizens. This work has the power to restore trust in the government and public service.

In the spirit of Sen. John and Annie Glenn, two smalltown Americans with a deep commitment to improve their nation for their fellow citizens, we strive to model and inspire the Glenn Way: service to the common good.

The college now embarks on a strategic plan in service to this mission and in alignment with the university's priorities in excellence in academics and research.

- We will broaden degree accessibility and affordability by helping all students successfully complete their education as quickly as possible with a focus on landing a rewarding public service job or pursuing advanced study.
- We will expand our graduates' return on education through exceptional, innovative, skill-based degrees; an array of internships and professional development experiences in Ohio and Washington, D.C.; and meaningful connections to alumni, working professionals and elected officials.
- We will advance the value we deliver to the state of Ohio and the nation by producing high quality research that positively impacts the lives of citizens and through our placement of our graduates in public service positions at the local, state and federal level.

Our work draws on our academic and professional expertise in public and nonprofit management and leadership, public policy analysis and evaluation, and public budgeting and finance, as well as in areas that impact the lives of citizens — such as education, housing, public safety and national security.

How we operate matters as much as what we deliver. To serve as a workplace of choice, we will invest in our people, the faculty and staff that carry out our mission. To perform at the highest level with the lowest costs, we will improve our business practices and use artificial intelligence and other pioneering technologies in our teaching, research and operations.

Through these efforts, we will work to strengthen democracy and restore faith in public service by following the direction of John Glenn:

Don't give in to complacency and cynicism. Don't ignore what is bad, but concentrate on building what is good. Don't take America and the values reflected in our form of government for granted. And never forget that in our democracy, the government is not "them" — it is "us."

College Overview

When John Glenn concluded his political career in the late 1990s, he devoted the next chapter of his life to create a place of learning dedicated to “inspiring citizenship and developing leadership” — the foundational vision his civics teacher, Harford Steele, had inspired in him 60 years earlier. Glenn’s commitment to public service and his combination of bravery, intellect and civility inspired the creation of the John Glenn College of Public Affairs at The Ohio State University. The college vision is to serve as a model in public higher education for producing democratic citizens and public and nonprofit leaders and for creating, translating and applying research that serves the public interest across the State of Ohio and the nation.

Embracing these ideals of democratic citizenship and public leadership, the Glenn College was built as a comprehensive, interdisciplinary higher education institution with the goal of establishing strength in each of the three pillars of public affairs: public and nonprofit management and leadership; public policy analysis and evaluation; and public budgeting and finance. Today the Glenn College is home to first-class, interdisciplinary scholars who conduct rigorous and impactful research on vexing public problems related to housing; policing and criminal justice; economic and community development; education and workforce development; and the operation of public and nonprofit organizations, among others. Rankings reflect this commitment to academic and professional excellence with the college ranked in the top 20 public affairs programs by *U.S. News and World Report*.

The college offers its degree programs across two “campuses” — one in Columbus, Ohio, and the other in Washington, D.C. Its undergraduate, graduate professional and doctoral degrees, as well as its professional development programs, prepare a varied group of students and working professionals to serve the public interest through employment in local, state, national and international public, nonprofit and civic organizations, as well as elected office. College events serve as open forums for students, faculty, staff, alumni and community members to engage in civil and nonpartisan dialogue around contentious and complex issues that confront the state, the nation and the globe.

Timeline and History

The Glenn College’s roots date to the late 1960s when, in response to growing demand from national, state and local governments, the university created a graduate unit — the Division of Public Administration — devoted to preparing the next generation of public service professionals.

The division offered a Master of Public Administration, Master of Arts and doctoral degrees as well as continuing education and problem-solving teams for government agencies. Growth in graduate professional, doctoral, undergraduate and professional development offerings and faculty laid the foundation for the creation of the Glenn College in 2015.

- 1974: Following a period of rapid growth in student enrollment, faculty size and budget due to increased public sector workforce needs and research requests, the division became the School of Public Administration, a pioneer in the state of Ohio with national recognition for its first-rate faculty and innovative programs.
- 1989: Having increased in number to 12 full-time members, the faculty voted to rename the unit the School of Public Policy and Management.

- 1999: John Glenn retired from the U.S. Senate, donated his archives and memorabilia to Ohio State and founded the John Glenn Institute for Public Service and Public Policy. Faculty from the School of Public Policy and Management worked with institute programs on issues such as health and environmental science, criminal justice, and urban and regional problems.
- 2005: Combining the research, technical assistance and degree-granting authority of the School of Public Policy and Management with the John Glenn Institute's innovative public service training, outreach and research support programs, the two merged to become the John Glenn School of Public Affairs. The school's motto became "Inspiring citizenship and developing leadership."⁷
- 2015: The Ohio State University's Board of Trustees approved the creation of the John Glenn College of Public Affairs, a sweeping change that amplified the former school's mission focused on active citizenship and public leadership.

The college has grown dramatically in the past 56 years, showing excellence in public policy analysis and evaluation; public and nonprofit management, administration and leadership; and public budgeting and finance. In addition, the college has elevated areas of research distinction to build reputation and capacity for impact. It has developed new programs including workforce development certificates; online graduate degrees; Washington, D.C.-based programming; and undergraduate degrees and minors. It has also significantly increased its funded research with support from government, foundation and corporate partners.

By the Numbers

Undergraduate Programs	Degrees: 2 Minors: 10 FY25 Enrollment: 556
Graduate Programs ¹	Degrees: 3 Dual Degrees: 10 ² Minors: 3 Certificates: 5 Doctoral Program: 1 FY25 Enrollment: 257
Research Centers	Ohio Education Research Center Battelle Center for Science, Engineering and Public Policy
Core Faculty	26
Associated Faculty	44
Affiliated Faculty	19
Staff	61
Degreed Alumni	4,600

¹ Online Learning at the Glenn College: Two graduate degrees (MPA, MPAL) and five graduate certificates are offered fully online.

² Dual Degrees are offered in partnership with the colleges of Arts and Sciences; Business; Engineering; Law; Public Health; Social Work; and Food, Agriculture and Environmental Sciences.

Strategic Planning and the Office of Academic Affairs Academic Unit Review

The Glenn College is committed to continuous improvement, using strategic planning as an iterative process to identify priorities, craft strategies to meet goals, and assess and evaluate performance. For this strategic plan the college has benefitted from recently participating in an Office of Academic Affairs Academic Unit Review. The Ohio State University requires tenure-initiating colleges to undergo a formal academic unit review every 10 years. The review is an evidence-based, improvement-oriented effort to identify unit-level strengths, issues and steps to advance its strategic goals. It is a comprehensive process, closely examining all research areas; undergraduate, graduate and professional academic programs; and service, outreach and engagement efforts.

In collaboration with Ohio State's Office of Academic Affairs, the Glenn College conducted the first three phases of the academic unit review between March 2023 and June 2024. These involved a yearlong self-study (March 2023-March 2024), external review team site visit (April 2024) and submission of the unit review report for approval (June 2024).

The college relied on the comprehensive self-study and site visit team reports as foundations for the 2025-2028 college strategic plan. To provide relevant foundational context, excerpts from both reports are reprinted here.

Core Strengths

Top public affairs colleges produce doers, fixers and builders. The Glenn College similarly produces action-oriented graduates who will use their knowledge and skills to serve the common good. Over 95% of graduates from its undergraduate and graduate professional degrees are in positions related to their degree or further education within six months of graduating. The college believes in the maxim that learning is a lifelong endeavor; in addition to graduate and undergraduate degrees, it offers an array of professional development programs and certificates for public and nonprofit professionals and elected leaders at the state and local level in Ohio.

Glenn College faculty generate knowledge through research that meets rigorous academic standards and is used by public and nonprofit sector decision-makers to address pressing public challenges. Glenn College faculty have been recognized by the field's major honorific society, the National Academy of Public Administration; have risen to prominent positions within the field's professional and academic associations; and serve in major editorial positions of the field's premier journals. The faculty are highly productive scholars. Over the past three academic years, more than 80% have published at least one peer-reviewed article annually, and 45% have authored reports for nonprofit or government agencies. Sponsored research expenditures have been increasing annually since 2020, more than doubling from fiscal year 2023 to 2024. The three-year compound annual growth rate is 48% (2021-2024).

With its multidisciplinary faculty, the college has successfully established itself as highly collaborative with other colleges and academic and administrative units across Ohio State. Its undergraduate degrees integrate courses and knowledge from around campus. Around a third of Glenn College undergraduate majors are dual degree students, and half of the students who participate in the college's semester-long undergraduate Washington internship program come from other colleges. At

the graduate level, the college has 10 dual degrees with seven other colleges. Glenn College faculty also are regularly involved in team-based research projects with faculty across the university.

The commitment to collaboration and partnership pervades the college. Faculty, staff and students regularly collaborate on academic endeavors (e.g., the review and development of curriculum; research projects; engagement activities) and jointly govern many college functions. The college's team-based culture fosters trust and promotes innovation.

The external reviewers — peer deans from three aspirational schools — who participated in the academic unit review concurred with this self-assessment of the college and highlighted several strengths:

Academically Strong

The graduate, undergraduate, PhD and professional developments programs are well-managed and rigorous. There is a commitment to regular evaluation, reassessment and adjustment to these programs.

The Glenn College has successfully balanced academic rigor with maintaining relevancy to policy challenges. It has achieved the integration of practical, real-life experiences into the curriculum through faculty hires, student experiences and research while maintaining high academic and research standards. This is a difficult balance to achieve. Access to those who have worked in public, nonprofit and private sector is much appreciated and lauded by students across programs.

The students across programs consistently expressed the extraordinary advisory and support services they receive from the Glenn College. They expressed that this level of service and professional care was unique within professional schools at The Ohio State University.

Innovative and Entrepreneurial Spirit and Culture

The Glenn College has been strategic in the development and implementation of new programs and methods of teaching as well as the adoption of new processes and administrative procedures that increase efficiency and program effectiveness. Examples of the college's entrepreneurial culture are the creation of the masters' program in Washington, D.C.; the college's pioneering work to integrate online learning into its programs; and its ability to remain competitive among its peers by increasing faculty compensation during a fiscally challenging period.

In considering innovative initiatives, the Glenn College has shown that it is judicious in thinking how best to achieve change and advancement.

Interdisciplinary Savvy

The college recognizes the importance of interdisciplinary approaches to teaching and research. The college not only encourages its faculty to undertake this work but also instills the importance of interdisciplinary perspectives in its students across programs.

Financially Well-Managed/Governed

The policies, procedures and protocols used by the Glenn College have resulted from the commitment to building efficiencies, the development of robust management information systems, and the adoption of processes and protocols that are transparent, inclusive and easily accessible. The Glenn College community reported a high level of participation, and thus transparency, in these administrative underpinnings of the college.

Research Productivity

The focus and involvement of faculty in academy research is growing, and their research products are being published in major journals. The college is the home to one of the most prestigious journals in public administration.

Junior faculty appreciated the support they receive from the dean and senior faculty both in terms of their individual research endeavors and opportunities to engage with faculty across campus. Research is not limited to faculty; the graduate and undergraduate students shared meaningful experiences they were offered to engage in research projects.

The Ohio Education Research Center (OERC) and the Battelle Center for Science, Engineering and Public Policy are well-established and respected centers that continue to produce valuable research and are the source of critical data systems that serve not only the state of Ohio but researchers from other states. For example, the Battelle Center is recognized nationally for its ability to manage significant and complex research endeavors.

Students' Sentiment

Across programs, at all levels, students who enroll in the Glenn College and its programs are enthusiastic, smart and energetic. They receive sound academic grounding and appreciate the ability to engage in real-life settings where policy is formulated and played out. They have a very strong sense of community and loyalty to the college. Many students emphasized their view of the Glenn College as a hidden gem that people are attracted to once they learn about the mission, the extraordinary faculty and staff attention (including knowing student names), and the quality of academic and professional preparation.

The Land-Grant University Mission

The commitment to the university's standing as a land-grant university is strong and permeates the purpose, mission and operations of the College (e.g. student enrollment and placement; research centers; professional development programs; ties with Ohio and national legislatures). The continued commitment to the land-grant mission permeates the Glenn College's strategies that have been put in place for the upcoming years.

Tensions to Balance

The academic unit review also identified several challenges facing the Glenn College as it operates in an environment that requires the ability to adjust and adapt — often due to competing demands. The review examined how the Glenn College meets stress points to:

- Support college growth while maintaining the ability to offer a high-touch, caring, engaged community environment.
- Collaborate and comply within the university without being burdened as a small school.
- Train and graduate bold and fearless professionals who think critically and independently while overcoming the realities and consequences of societal pressures and fissures.
- Choose future strategic initiatives that use the strengths of the college while exploiting the unique socioeconomic and geopolitical position of the state of Ohio within the U.S. to develop academic and research distinction.

These strengths and challenges are the building blocks and opportunities for improvement that serve as the foundation for the college's current strategic plan.

College Strategic Initiatives and Strategic Actions

This strategic plan is the result of the multiyear process of self-assessment, external review and identification of priorities from the academic unit review, and alignment to the university's Education for Citizenship 2035 Strategic Plan and accompanying Academic Excellence plan. Through this process the college developed 12 strategic initiatives within the Academics, Research and Creative Expression, Talent, Culture, and Operations, and Land Grant Mission university themes. Goals for each of the 12 initiatives are described below. While this plan highlights specific initiatives aligning with university priorities, it should be noted that significant support will be provided by college engagement, development, marketing and communications, and administration and operations staff. Success cannot be achieved without their critical contributions.

College Strategic Framework

Ohio State Vision	Educate the next generation of citizens	Build a model working and learning environment	Advance research, creativity and innovation that improve and save lives	Embrace our land-grant mission	
Ohio State Themes	Academics		Research and Creative Expression		Talent and Culture, Operations
Ohio State Priorities	Workforce Development	Accessibility Affordability Student Success	Outreach and Engagement Service to the State of Ohio		Workplace of Choice Performance Excellence and Resource Stewardship
College Initiatives	Differentiate Existing Curricular Programs Innovate Educational Programs, Incorporate Meta-Skills	Expand Access: Recruit, Enroll, Retain Ensure Success: Return on Education	Elevate Areas of Research Distinction Scale Public Impact Research Deepen Expertise within Public Affairs Core	Expand Washington, D.C. Campus Deliver Value to State and Local Partners	Embrace AI and Technology in Teaching & Learning, Research, Operations Optimize Business Processes to Enhance Faculty and Staff Performance Model and Inspire the Glenn Way

College Strategic Initiatives

I. Academic Initiatives

This section of the strategic plan details goals to differentiate existing curricular programs, innovate, elevate meta-skills, and expand access to higher education. College efforts in this area all directly or indirectly contribute to university priority measures of impact.

Differentiate Existing Curricular Programs

Over the last several years, the Glenn College has successfully expanded its array of undergraduate and graduate curricular offerings to serve the needs of students and employers. The risk of expansion is duplication and overlap. Over the next three years, the college will differentiate its existing curricular programs to ensure that each degree delivers professional value to the target student and employer audience. It will build from ongoing cooperation between the Professional Development and curricular units to offer complementary curricular and professional development programs, some of which can be stacked into terminal degrees. The Curriculum and Student Services units will continue to work closely to further distinguish the master’s programs in terms of mission, populations served and curriculum. This will prepare these programs for future accreditation reviews. The Battelle Center will continue to partner with the college in the delivery of science and technology courses and offer co-curricular experiences that provide students with opportunities to develop marketable skills.

Table 1. Differentiate Existing Curricular Programs Goals

Goal	Indicators
Distinguish the MA and the MPA	MPA and MA distinctions approved by CAA and COPRA
Develop and support new programs (undergraduate credentials, provide additional experiential opportunities through Engage and co-curricular activities of college centers)	1) CAA approval of workforce undergraduate credentials 2) Number of new experiential opportunities created

Innovate Educational Programs, Incorporate Meta-Skills

Public and nonprofit sector professionals continue to need foundational knowledge in policy, management and budgeting and finance. With the advent of artificial intelligence and other disruptions to the workforce, they also need to learn how to rapidly acquire new skills while on the job. The college will refresh courses and develop innovative curricular programs that prepare students for the public and nonprofit workforce of today and the future. Many of these offerings will result from collaboration across teams within the college and across colleges, building on recent collaborations with Arts and Sciences, Law and Engineering.

Key to the curricular innovation is building workforce-relevant skills. The college will increase the number of students in experiential learning opportunities, building additional opportunities for hands-on learning, co-curricular activities and internship programs through expanded agency and organizational partnerships.

The Battelle Center will provide valuable professional development for students interested in science, technology and public policy through its innovative Student Communities of Practice (SCOPE). The Ohio Education Research Center (OERC) will expand experiential learning and engagement with external partners through public sector data analytics internship opportunities. Likewise, the Professional Development unit will expand the range of education and skills training needed to succeed in local government, a level of government with high demand for skilled professionals. The Washington, D.C., office plans to integrate critical meta-skills — including systems thinking, leveraging generative artificial intelligence and human-technology collaboration — into professional development workshops, speaker series and assignments that reflect real federal agency challenges.

Finally, the curriculum committees will use assessment to redesign and modernize core courses and develop new offerings relevant to today's workforce. These efforts include preparing proposals for a new general education civics class, providing an online option for the MA degree, and possible new certificates and a new undergraduate degree focused on working professionals in public safety occupations. The Curriculum unit will also continue to work with faculty to prepare them to use innovative ways to deliver their content.

Table 2. Innovate Educational Programs, Incorporate Meta-Skills Goals

Goal	Indicators
Develop an undergraduate degree in Public Safety Management & Leadership	New degree approvals secured, courses developed for offer Autumn 2026
Develop MA Cybersecurity Law and Policy track and Cybersecurity and Digital Trust Degree	New track and degree approved for offer Autumn 2026
Revise programming to integrate critical meta-skills—including systems thinking and human-technology collaboration—into professional development workshops, speaker series, and assignments that reflect real federal agency challenges	15% of co-curricular programming incorporates meta-skills
Refresh PUBAFRS 3000, 6000, 6030, 6040, 6060, DC coursework; create 6061	Refresh and development complete

Expand Access: Recruit, Enroll, Retain

Recruiting, enrolling and retaining students committed to public service and ensuring their success through degree completion will require investment in terms of funding, expansion of experiential learning opportunities and supportive advising and engagement.

Student scholarships foster greater access to our degree programs. The college will develop \$3+ million in philanthropic revenue per year through strategic engagement with donors, alumni, community partners, foundations, and public service leaders. The majority of this philanthropic

funding will directly support students. Growth in student funding will contribute to increased overall student enrollments of 5 to 7% annually.

Improved student participation in and out of the classroom will increase satisfaction and retention while helping students develop new skills valued in the workforce. Student retention and successful completion of Glenn College programs is supported by exceptional, student-centered academic advising and by deepening engagement among Glenn College community members. To encourage student engagement, the college will expand experiential learning opportunities in the classroom; offer relevant, student-focused activities, events and initiatives; and strengthen connections with alumni and community partners. Additionally, the college will work to maintain healthy enrollments in Washington-based undergraduate and graduate programs while increasing non-federal internship placements. A new initiative, Ohio State's Service to Service program, part of a national effort sponsored by The Volcker Alliance and We the Veterans, will assist the college in enrolling and retaining military, veteran and affiliated students.

Table 3. Expand Access: Recruit, Enroll, Retain Students Goals

Goal	Indicators
Maintain retention and completion rates	1) Overall retention rate at or above university levels (Aspirational = 90% or higher) 2) Overall completion rate at or above university rates (Aspirational = 90% or higher)
Implement NextGen Glenn student success program for high school students	Program implemented during AY2025-26
Increase overall student enrollments	Overall enrollment increase of 5-7% achieved
Achieve Total Unit Development Financial Revenue Goal	\$3+ million annual philanthropy funding secured
Increase student engagement in co-curricular programming	1) Launch new student event series, Glenn Engage. 2) Majority of Glenn Engage student survey respondents strongly agree/agree that programming is relevant, contributed new learning or perspectives, and added value to their education.

Ensure Success: Return on Education

The college will maintain or increase career placement rates to ensure success after graduation, with a focus on supporting accomplished new alumni in finding fulfilling roles in Ohio's public service organizations.

To this end, the Glenn College will develop increasingly accurate and timely "Return on Education" indicators, as well as seamless pipelines from recruitment through career attainment and alumni engagement. The college's Professional Development and Career Services teams will collaborate to

build and strengthen connections with local and state government employers to identify Ohio's workforce needs. As suggested in the external academic review, the college will develop methods for increased employment tracking. It will leverage these data to increase students' career readiness through expanded mentorship and internship opportunities, as well as educational programs and employer pipelines. It also will broaden external engagement and deepen connections with alumni, donors and community partners to advance student success.

Table 4. Ensure Success: Return on Education Goals

Goal	Indicators
Broaden and deepen connections with alumni, donors, and community partners through meaningful engagement that strengthens affinity, inspires support, and advances student success, community impact and celebrates public service	Growth in constituent engagement to 1,200 constituents
Increase students' career readiness	1) Determine definitions of pipelines, programs, and partnership relationships and associated baseline 2) Placement rates remain on average 95% or higher across undergraduate and masters degree programs
Partner across the college to nurture a passion for public service and connect students to jobs in local or state government	50% of graduate student class of 2025-26 (AU, SP, SU) attain positions in local or state government

II. Research and Creative Expression Initiatives

This section of the strategic plan details goals to elevate areas of research distinction, scale public impact research, and deepen expertise within the public affairs core. College efforts in this area all directly or indirectly contribute to university priority measures of impact.

Elevate Areas of Research Distinction

The breadth of the college's research activity across multiple domains of public affairs is one of its strengths. It provides an opportunity to define and elevate areas of research distinction that set the college apart from academic peers and deliver value to the community. During the 2024-25 academic year, the college's research committee defined criteria for strategic research opportunities and solicited proposals from faculty and research staff. The criteria included leveraging unique assets to further collective research reputation and impact, where unique assets are broadly defined to include people, data, relationships, college research centers, geographic-specific assets or Ohio State-specific resources.

Over the next three years, the college will work collectively to identify, support and elevate hubs of research distinction such as its two college centers, OERC and the Battelle Center. To further support

their capacity for collective impact, the centers will build new strategic connections to faculty within and outside of the college. The centers will also continue to promote their reach and reputation externally through dissemination of their work on scholarly, public and professional platforms. They will also hone their areas of expertise. OERC will continue to conduct research that builds the evidence base for effective public policy in the areas of education and workforce (e.g. RESEA, Industries of Ideas). The Battelle Center will further define and expand its capacity for research at the intersection of science, technology and public policy.

In addition to the established centers, the college will support emerging hubs of collective research distinction, including public safety, AI governance, nonprofit management and voluntary action, law and public affairs and methodological pluralism.

While making a strategic commitment to these areas of collective distinction, the college will continue to cultivate and assess other areas of collective research distinction and increase successful faculty submissions of collaborative research grants. Marketing and Communications will collaborate closely with the college research committee and college leadership to promote areas of research distinction through media relations and other marketing avenues.

Table 5. Elevate Areas of Research Distinction Goals

Goal	Indicators
Support and launch research initiatives in identified areas of strategic opportunity, including public safety, AI governance, nonprofit management and voluntary action, law and public affairs, methodological pluralism, and national security	1) Number of new research initiatives or collaboratives formed and elevated as hubs on the Glenn College research impact webpage 2) Dollar amount of external funding secured for collaborative research initiatives 3) Number of external partners (practitioners, policymakers) engaged with the college through strategic research initiatives
Elevate college centers as hubs of research distinction by expanding their reach and reputation with peer institutions and increasing connections to faculty inside and outside of the college	1) Number of academic and non-academic publications and presentations from faculty or staff associated with college research centers 2) Number of internal and external faculty and researcher affiliates for each center 3) Number of collaborative research grants involving college research centers and external faculty or research staff submitted and successful

Scale Public Impact Research

The land-grant mission is core to the strategy of the university and the college. Public impact research improves lives and serves society by not only producing scholarly impact but also by delivering value to the public through service to state and local communities.

Glenn College faculty and researchers are well-positioned for this type of research because of their knowledge of the policy process and of the operations of public, nonprofit and private institutions. Faculty and researchers’ longstanding relationships with local, state and national organizations and policymakers position the college for real world impact. The Professional Development unit also brings expertise and established relationships with state and local government that can be catalyzed to deliver value to local communities through research.

While faculty and research staff are skilled at this type of research, there is a lack of collective capacity in the college, and in the university and field more broadly, to deliver and document public impact research at scale. The college will establish shared tools for conducting local and state research and track the research reports it develops for state and local government. By increasing capacity for public impact research in a systematic and sustainable way, such as increasing local or state partnerships that include a research component, the college will accelerate its ability to deliver value to our communities while not compromising standards of scholarly excellence. It will build infrastructure for research collaborations with state and local government and community organizations by leveraging existing resources and relationships (e.g. OERC, Battelle Center, Professional Development, strategic research investments), by aligning with university initiatives in this area (e.g. OSU Extension and Outreach and Engagement), and by partnering with peer public affairs schools at R1 public institutions (e.g. through the Big10 Academic Alliance and the Association for Public & Land-Grant Universities). Through these partnerships, the college will also develop and track metrics related to faculty local, state and federal public service and the public impact of its research and will build sustainable funding models to support this work.

Table 6. Scale Public Impact Research Goal

Goal	Indicators
Build college infrastructure for research collaborations with state and local government and community organizations in partnership with college units, the university, and peer institutions in the public affairs field (e.g. Big10 Academic Alliance)	1) Number of local or state research partnerships with college faculty and research staff 2) Number of reports for state and local government by college faculty and research staff 3) Number of faculty and research staff participating in events, networks, or trainings around public impact research

Deepen Expertise Within Public Affairs Core

As a college of public affairs, it is critical that the Glenn College invests in scholarly excellence in the core areas of public and nonprofit management and leadership; public policy and policy analysis; and public finance and budgeting. This enables the college to deliver essential knowledge and skills to students, build scholarly research that transcends specialized topical areas, communicate with peer public affairs institutions using a shared language, and maintain its position as a top 20 public affairs program.

The college invests in its core through hiring, development and retention of faculty members with expertise in those areas. It also invests in the core through contributions to external public affairs associations, including continued support for faculty to serve in leadership or editorial roles for public affairs associations and journals, to lead and participate in conferences, and to publish in impactful public affairs journals.

The college currently has a strong faculty presence in public and nonprofit management and leadership, and in public policy and policy analysis. Due to faculty retirements and transitions, the college needs additional faculty with expertise in public finance and budgeting and urban policy and governance. It will conduct faculty searches to recruit and hire tenure-track faculty members in these areas over the next three years.

Table 7. Deepen Expertise Within Public Affairs Core Goals

Goal	Indicators
Attract and hire new faculty in core areas, including public budgeting and finance and urban policy and governance	Successful searches

III. Embracing our Land Grant Mission

By expanding its Washington, D.C. campus and strengthening partnerships with state and local governments, the Glenn College advances Ohio State’s land grant mission by creating pathways for shared policy engagement and enhancing public service at federal, state, and local levels.

Expand Washington, D.C., Campus

The expansion of the Glenn College’s Washington, D.C. campus represents a bold step forward in fulfilling both the college’s mission and the university’s broader strategic vision. This initiative builds upon a 25-year legacy of sending students from the Midwest to the nation’s capital to engage in public service at the global center of power. The Glenn College’s D.C. campus is not only a teaching site, but it is also a strategic platform for advancing Ohio State’s role in federal policymaking, interdisciplinary research and student preparation for careers in the federal ecosystem.

The Glenn College will expand its D.C. campus to serve as a launchpad for the next generation of policy and management professionals equipped with the skills to navigate and lead in AI-enabled federal environments, with an emphasis on developing capacity in defense, intelligence and space policy. In the coming years, it will scope the strategy for expanding the D.C. campus and develop the framework for a new Washington Center to facilitate these strategic efforts and focus on laying the operational (both physical and organizational) and academic foundation for this expanded footprint. These include piloting an executive fellow model and a “federal-to-local” event in Columbus; designing and integrating AI-focused modules and meta-skills development into D.C.-based academic programs and co-curricular experiences; and expanding faculty engagement in Washington through research collaborations and policy convenings. The development of the Washington Center will reinforce the university’s land-grant mission by creating durable pathways for shared policy engagement between state, local and federal actors.

Table 8. Expand Washington, DC Campus Goals

Goal	Indicators
Develop strategy for Washington DC campus expansion, including scoping "Executive Fellow" with an emphasis in developing capacity in national security, defense and space policy	Campus expansion strategy developed by June 2027

Deliver Value to State and Local Partners

The Glenn College seeks to strengthen the capacity of state and local governments, which have direct impacts on the lives of Ohioans. The college will position itself as a trusted resource to those seeking to enhance government capacity, performance and accountability, specifically by partnering with elected and appointed officials, agency leaders, policy analysts, program administrators and frontline public servants.

Teams across the college will collaborate to convene thought leaders, build strategic partnerships and develop engagement initiatives to better understand organizational needs at state and local levels. Through workforce development, internship programming, knowledge creation and innovation of curricular and professional development offerings, the college will prepare professionals to navigate current public management challenges.

The college will produce public impact research by leveraging its multidisciplinary faculty and dedicated research centers to offer timely insights and practical recommendations that inform decision-making and equip public servants with evidence-based tools to better serve their constituents. The college will help localities address recruitment and retention needs by offering training and certification initiatives that support career advancement. Success will be measured by increases in professional development program enrollment, custom training programming, new internship program partners and local/state government applied research opportunities.

Table 9. Deliver Value to State and Local Partners Goals

Goal	Indicators
Pilot a "federal-to-local" learning series that connects Glenn students in Columbus with DC partners	Execute one "federal-to-local" event in Columbus per year
Expand custom professional development training participation and revenue with a focus on local government	Increase custom participation 25% from 683 individuals in FY25 to 850 in FY26

IV. Talent, Culture, and Operations

This section begins by describing how the college is integrating AI and emerging technologies into teaching, research, and operations. To support a workplace of choice and optimize business processes, the college is promoting professional growth, expanding data-informed decision-making, and fostering a collaborative culture that models the life and legacy of John and Annie Glenn.

Embrace AI and Technology in Teaching and Learning, Research, Operations

A Glenn College culture of inquiry and innovation prompted early explorations of artificial intelligence in public affairs teaching and learning, research, and administration and operations. In 2023, a partnership with the Ohio State Translational Data Analytics Institute created a tenure track faculty position for a scholar with expertise in AI in public sector decision-making. In 2024, the college piloted and implemented training and AI individual user licenses, providing organizational benefits across a variety of roles and tasks for faculty and staff. Glenn College faculty and the professional development team developed and offered workforce development and continuing education programs in AI ethics and use. Undergraduate and graduate academic course offerings began including AI in learning modules and assignments.

With this strong foundation, the college is well positioned to support the university’s bold [AI Fluency initiative](#) announced in June 2025. To help ensure that every Glenn College undergraduate student will graduate being AI fluent, the college will embed AI literacy in its undergraduate curriculum as well as review and assess AI content currently included in the curriculum of all degree programs to identify opportunities for augmentation. For example, the Washington Academic Programs unit will design and launch AI-focused modules that expose students to applied uses of AI in federal operations. The college’s research centers plan to explore use of advanced analytic techniques (e.g. machine learning) and AI to conduct research. The college will support an AI community of practice to facilitate training and information exchange that promotes human-centered, efficient and effective AI use.

Table 10. Embrace AI and Technology in Teaching and Learning, Research, Operations Goals

Goal	Indicators
Promote ethical and appropriate AI use in teaching, research, and operations in alignment with university initiatives	1) College AI Community of Practice established 2) 80% of employees utilize AI to increase productivity or efficiency during FY26
Explore use of advanced analytic techniques (e.g. machine learning) and AI to conduct research, including identifying conditions and opportunities for appropriate use	1) Number of faculty and research staff who participate in the college's AI community of practice or trainings around AI and advanced analytic techniques 2) Number of shared applications and examples identified that can be used for research analysis and writing (in a shared repository)

Optimize Business Processes to Enhance Faculty and Staff Performance

The Glenn College has always been lean and nimble, remaining efficient and effective through the substantial academic and research growth experienced annually since 2020. This has been achieved by emphasizing continuous process improvement and data-informed decision-making embedded in a culture of community and care.

Being fundamental for performance and resource management, data access and use has long been a key strategic priority for the Glenn College. While many college recruitment, curriculum, professional development, and finance processes have developed sophisticated business information practices, all units will engage in exploration of new, reliable data sources to incorporate analyses into regular decision-making.

Operational excellence will be maintained through a range of goals that contribute to a healthy rating on the university Board of Trustees financial scorecard. The college’s governance documents will undergo a refresh to align with university priorities and policies. Marketing and Communications will develop a comprehensive marketing plan to support strategic initiatives. College units will focus on integrated, user-friendly systems and workflows that streamline and improve project management, financial operations and research support.

Table 11. Optimize Business Processes to Enhance Faculty and Staff Performance Goals

Goal	Indicators
Promote data access and use in college and unit strategy, decision-making, and performance assessment	Unit incorporation of at least one new, consequential data source into regular operations
Advance the college’s visibility, reputation and impact by implementing an integrated marketing and communications strategy that aligns with institutional priorities, strengthens stakeholder engagement and adapts to changing demand and growth	Achieve a 5-10% year-over-year growth in the College Marketing & Engagement Index score, showcasing lifts in awareness and affinity among priority audiences.

Model and Inspire the Glenn Way

The Glenn College culture embodies the enduring legacy of John and Annie Glenn and their deep commitment to engaged citizenship and principled public leadership. The Glenn Way honors public service as a noble calling and encourages students, staff, faculty, alumni and friends to pursue this fulfilling profession. This ethos, reflected throughout the college’s work and community, is characterized by collegial relationships, collaborative approaches to problem-solving, and shared decision-making. Through meaningful engagement and open dialogue about public issues, the Glenn Way seeks to address mistrust in public institutions, strengthen connections and inspire collective action for the common good. This guiding culture informs decisions, partnerships and daily interactions, ensuring that the college continues to reflect its public service values.

The Glenn College will model and inspire the Glenn Way by broadening and deepening connections with key stakeholders. Robust engagement with alumni, donors and community partners will seek to strengthen affinity, inspire support and drive student success and community impact. Initiatives will include donor stewardship, advancing Glenn College community and board member engagement, and enriching student experiences and belonging through co-curricular programming. Finally, by elevating stories of students and alumni success, the college will reflect public service values and help inspire the next generation of public leaders. The college will measure increased engagement across constituent audiences, philanthropic support and broader network reach within the public and nonprofit sectors.

Table 12. Model and Inspire the Glenn Way Goals

Goal	Indicators
Establish a clear, tested and widely adopted definition of The Glenn Way that resonates across audiences, establishes clear and evergreen understanding and supports the college mission	70% of key stakeholder groups demonstrate concept awareness and understanding
Advance stakeholder and college advisory board engagement	Reconfiguration of college advisory board by end of AY2025-2026

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