

# Business, Finance and Administrative Services

THE ORANGE STANDARD

5  
YEAR  
STRATEGIC PLAN  
2018-2022

Syracuse University

In the pursuit  
of bold goals,  
**Syracuse**  
**University** is  
reaching for  
new heights.

Dear Colleagues,

We are in the midst of unprecedented campus-wide momentum at Syracuse University. In the pursuit of bold goals, our institution is reaching for new heights. The Academic Strategic Plan captures the lofty ambitions of the University's academic mission, while the Campus Framework establishes the benchmark for a world-class physical environment in support of the University's priorities.



With these initiatives underway, it is now time to introduce a complementary and equally ambitious plan that addresses essential administrative services. The Division of Business, Finance and Administrative Services (BFAS) is pleased to launch a five-year strategic plan to further align core campus administrative processes to the University's new vision and goals, called The Orange Standard.

In this plan, BFAS details key goals and signature strategies that will enable it to serve as a vital partner to the University's academic and research enterprise, leadership, and other units across the organization. The plan aims to respond nimbly and decisively to the changing landscape in higher education, and to position Syracuse University for ever-greater success in the 21st century.

At its core, BFAS provides enterprise leadership across a family of functions:

- Auxiliary Services
- Campus Development and Facilities Operations
- Campus Safety and Emergency Services
- Financial Planning and Resource Management
- Real Estate and Asset Management



Although these units undertake a broad array of activities, they share a common vision, mission, and set of values and can leverage synergies to perform at the highest levels. The entrepreneurial spirit and continuous improvement of BFAS and its business units are essential to the success of Syracuse University. Through The Orange Standard, BFAS will ensure that the collective efforts of the division will empower and fuel the success of the institution as a whole, creating a signature Syracuse experience that is unparalleled in practice.

We are excited about the future of our great University and are driven to serve in the relentless pursuit of excellence. Please join us on this journey.

Sincerely,

Amir Rahnamay-Azar, Ed. D.  
Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer

The Academic Strategic Plan and the Campus Framework are now joined by the 5 year Strategic Plan for BFAS called The Orange Standard.

## Vision

To define the standards by which exemplary learner-centered business and administrative services are delivered at a premier research institution.

## Mission

The Division of Business, Finance and Administrative Services powers the academic, research, and student experience at Syracuse University. We deliver best-in-class services to support all campus constituents in advancing an innovative learning environment.

## Values

### **Accountability**

Demonstrate responsible stewardship of the University's finances, infrastructure, and operations

### **Collaboration**

Foster teamwork both within the division and with campus stakeholders via partnerships, communication, and a service orientation

### **Diversity and Inclusion**

Promote an environment that supports, encourages, and empowers individuals from all backgrounds

### **Entrepreneurship**

Support innovation and responsible growth through nimble business functions and flexible infrastructure management

### **Integrity**

Act with honesty, sincerity, and adherence to ethical principles





# Strategic Goals and Signature Strategies

BFAS seeks to advance the Academic Strategic Plan, the Campus Framework, and the Invest Syracuse initiative. Key to this mission is a plan called **The Orange Standard**, containing five goals that will not only shape our division, but also create the energy and spark to address the University's mandate. The plan is intentionally nimble and flexible, designed with the recognition that as Syracuse University evolves, so too will the strategies and initiatives supporting the University's evolution and aspirations. Each goal captures several signature strategies, which are not intended to be all-encompassing, but rather representative of the types of activities that will support each goal. There will be broad, enthusiastic stakeholder engagement in the generation and execution of the initiatives defined herein and those developed going forward.

# Create an Unparalleled Syracuse University Experience

BFAS operates as a service partner to academic departments and other campus units. As such, BFAS will implement a signature service experience that places a university stakeholder at the center of its daily operations. This service culture will be reflected in every interaction between a BFAS employee and a campus customer, whether faculty, staff, student, or visitor. BFAS will measure its own success by the extent to which it enhances the University environment and by the creation of the foundation upon which the University's mission is achieved. BFAS aspires to establish a track record of best-in-class business and administrative services that lead its peers and redefine the quality of service provided to a campus community in the landscape of higher education.



# Signature Strategies

Build the infrastructure that supports great customer service

Create an environment in which BFAS employees are empowered to make our diverse customers happy and a negative experience is addressed and corrected quickly

Deepen understanding of constituent service needs and adapt processes to provide better support

Enhance service support for consumers of the highest-used business processes to promote efficiency, accuracy, and timely completion

Utilize BFAS resources to effectively support the objectives of the Academic Strategic Plan and the Campus Framework



GOAL 2

# Relentlessly Pursue Business Excellence

Ambitious institutional goals require a foundation of excellence to support their achievement. Just as the Syracuse University brand is strong globally, BFAS aspires to enhance its own brand through divisional, unit, and individual excellence.

# Signature Strategies

Actively associate excellence with recruitment and hiring practices, with a commitment to diversity and inclusion in our workforce

Advance unit-specific objectives and targets that power the strategic plan and embody the spirit of continuous improvement

Build and implement an external communication strategy that increases the awareness of divisional initiatives and encourages feedback from constituents, while ensuring that progress reports and achievements are given prominent visibility

Continue to build the data, analytics, and capabilities tools within BFAS to enhance decision-making and improve division operations both internally and externally

Develop new strategic partnerships with academic and administrative units across campus to identify opportunities for growth via expertise of BFAS employees



## GOAL 3

# Passionately Lead, Engage, and Develop Our Employees

Our employees are our greatest asset. Their talent, expertise, and technical knowledge have the potential to reach even greater heights. For the University to thrive, the stewards of its administration and operations must thrive as well. BFAS will demonstrate a renewed commitment to supporting and rewarding its people throughout the employment life cycle, from recruitment and onboarding through promotion and retirement. It will demonstrate clear career paths and reward exceptional talent to strengthen the foundation of the division.

# Signature Strategies

Craft more cross-functional training within the division to enhance employee development and establish a pool of talented employees who can fulfill targeted functions when needed

Grow an internal communication strategy that supports divisional identity, collaboration, and reporting on progress toward shared goals

Present new recruitment and retention practices to continue to attract and retain top talent at BFAS

Reward employee achievement and exceptional talent by consistently recognizing high performance across units and sharing their successes within BFAS and beyond

Target middle management for development opportunities to foster the next generation of divisional leaders and lay the framework for future success



## GOAL 4

# Empower Progress through Innovation and Entrepreneurship

True excellence is only achieved through the consistent support of creativity. Syracuse University's Academic Strategic Plan identifies innovation as one of the institution's distinguishing strengths. The University has a long record of innovation in academic activity, launching the nation's first school of fine arts and being recognized as a pioneer of student support in disability services. BFAS seeks to harness the innovative spirit emblematic of the University by demonstrating creativity and idea generation in its stewardship of the institution and its financial and administrative operations.

# Signature Strategies

Conduct an innovation-oriented internal process evaluation within all BFAS units, incentivizing employees' ideas and creative thinking

Engage with peer institution professional groups to enhance the sharing of innovations and best practices.

Introduce a program to train current and future BFAS unit leaders to encourage and support appropriate entrepreneurial risk-taking

Leverage and harness the expertise of academic units to promote innovation in business, service, financial, and operational areas of BFAS

Ripen a funding mechanism and infrastructure to serve as an idea incubator for the campus community. The incubator will create a pathway for soliciting, testing, and implementing novel ideas.



GOAL 5

# **Promote Accountability and Organizational Effectiveness**

BFAS will engage in an unceasing exercise of self-evaluation and actualization of improvement plans. The division will strategically invest in new technology to advance its own effectiveness and enhance the service experiences of campus stakeholders.



# Signature Strategies

Coin a divisional brand that signals mission, values, and vision to build institutional awareness of the family of BFAS service areas

Effectively communicate to the campus community any changes to policies, the management process, organizational structure, and personnel

Endeavor to move beyond paper-based processes and replace them with new systems that leverage technology for greater efficiency

Establish and operate training programs for new and continuing employees that educate campus constituents about business and administrative processes

Review the current state of University business processes, assess their impact on entrepreneurship within designated responsibility centers, and adjust as needed to ensure appropriate incentives for innovation and growth

## Acknowledgments

BFAS initiated its strategic planning process in September 2017, driven by a steering committee including the representatives from each functional area. Following a deliberate project-planning effort supported by Huron Consulting Group, stakeholders across campus were solicited for their input.

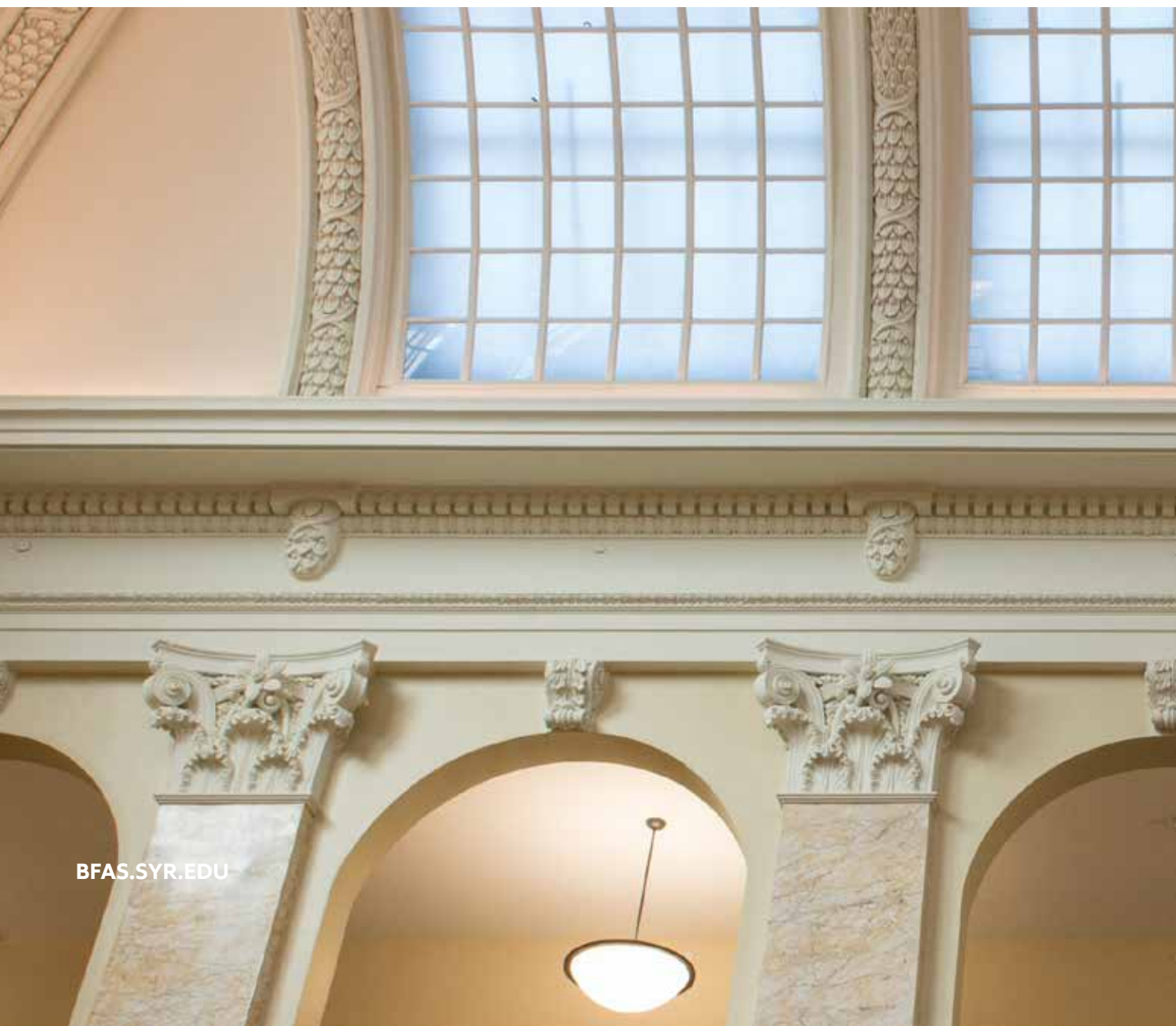
This stakeholder engagement effort began with a survey distributed to University staff, both internal and external to BFAS. The survey received approximately 600 responses, and the results provided valuable insight on strengths, challenges, and ideas for the future of BFAS and the campus stakeholders to whom it provides service.

Based on the results of this survey, key stakeholders were engaged in person. Chancellor's Council members and other leaders from across campus participated in individual interviews. Six focus groups, including over 80 participants from within and outside BFAS, provided input. The contributions received from the survey, interviews, and focus groups helped shape the agenda for two staff retreats for BFAS employees.

These retreats collectively included nearly 200 individuals and focused on brainstorming and generating ideas. Based on the information and ideas collected across these diverse engagement channels, the steering committee participated in a half-day workshop to generate goals and discuss signature strategies. The steering committee has also drafted a new mission statement for BFAS, defined collective values, and articulated a vision for the five years covered by this strategic plan.



Syracuse University



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