

# Graduate America

“America cannot lead in the 21<sup>st</sup> century unless we have the best educated, most competitive workforce in the world”

-President Barack Obama on Higher Education

April 24, 2009





## Purpose of American Higher Education

To sustain and advance a democratic society for the public good. Higher education is not an island but a wellspring for the betterment of the *nation* and the *world*.

# Increase Opportunity

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The United States must provide the opportunity for more of our people to attend and complete college and university undergraduate and graduate programs of study, as well as advanced training.



## Opportunity: Planning and Preparation

Close the opportunity gap by increasing access to college and workforce training beyond high school, especially for low-income and underrepresented minorities.



## Opportunity: Affordability

Ensure that young people and adults, regardless of socioeconomic status, are able to enroll in and focus on their postsecondary studies without excessive long-term financial strain.



## Opportunity: Informed Choice

Help prospective students identify programs and providers that will most effectively prepare them to be productive participants in society.

# Increase Achievement

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Toward that end, we must not only increase the number of students earning “postsecondary credentials” such as college and university degrees and certificates but also expect that every American will complete at least one-year of education and/or workforce training beyond high school.



## Achievement: Completion

Increase degree and certificate rates of college-going students with special attention to populations that are disadvantaged due to income, ethnicity, gender, disability, or other factors which keep them from obtaining a higher education.



## Achievement: Quality

Increase quality in student achievement, research and civic participation to advance America's innovation, excellence, and global competitiveness.



## Achievement: Lifelong Learning

Open access to high quality learning opportunities to every American throughout his or her life.



## Achievement: Civic Engagement

Build strategic partnerships with America's colleges and universities to increase social and economic development of the nation's cities and rural regions.

# Advance Research, Development and Innovation

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The economic, environmental, and social crises of the contemporary period require an expanded role for our colleges and universities, from the revival of American cities to the global transition away from fossil fuels.



## Research, Development and Innovation: World Class Standards

Undertake and stimulate world-class research and innovation to increase America's leadership, prosperity and competitiveness in our global society.

# Increase Accountability and Transparency

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We must balance two different methodologies: sponsoring the widest creativity in new initiatives and reinforcing the most proven approaches to our problems. To enable both approaches, America will need a greater sophistication in our data, its uses, its interconnectivity, and its communication to institutions, states, the federal government and the public.



## Accountability and Transparency: Quality and Usability of Data Systems

Improve the quality of data used to make decisions about student and institutional performance to better understand and increase student learning and achievement from early learning through adulthood.



## Accountability and Transparency: Monitor and Widely Communicate Progress

Closely monitor and communicate America's progress towards achieving President Obama's goals for higher education.

# We Can Achieve: Graduate America

A vibrant and prosperous America depends on its educational system. Higher education, workforce training, career advancement and civic participation are the social and economic engines for communities and states to thrive, reduce poverty and build capacity for the future.

