Create. Empower. Innovate.

UNI's 2023-28 Strategic Plan

Vision: We serve the public good through equitable and inclusive excellence in teaching and learning, scholarship, and service.

Mission: The University of Northern Iowa creates, empowers, and innovates to enrich Iowa and beyond.

Our Values

Academic Freedom: The freedom of inquiry and expression in teaching and learning, scholarship, and service.

Access: An inclusive educational environment that is supportive, equitable, and affordable.

Integrity: A commitment to accountability, responsibility, and the highest ethical standards are integrated into all university practices.

Collaboration: A commitment to work together to achieve our shared vision, mission and goals, and to develop and improve institutional policies, programs, and processes.

Community: A caring, safe, and diverse community characterized by appreciation, respect, and a sense of belonging.

Equity: The cultivation and nurturing of a diverse, just, and inclusive community, culture, and environment.

Empowerment: Active engagement in transformative, innovative and lifelong learning in service to the public good.

Excellence: A commitment to pursuing the highest levels of achievement in teaching and learning, scholarship and service.

Sustainability: A resilient community and campus that balances innovation and stewardship, is economically sound, environmentally responsible, and socially just.

Goal 1: Create Equitable, Diverse, and Inclusive Opportunities. Create an equitable and inclusive living, learning, and working environment for all.

Strategy 1.1: Increase diversity among faculty, staff, and learners by addressing barriers that lead to disparities in access and success.

Strategy 1.2: Improve university-wide standards of practice for the UNI community to ensure a welcoming and inclusive environment.

Strategy 1.3: Nurture a sense of belonging and inclusion through a culture of care where all can achieve their educational, professional and personal life aspirations.

Goal 1 Transitional Metrics
- Increase retention rate to 85%, four-year graduation rate to 50%, six-year graduation rate to 70% by 2028
    - Increase the 4- and 6-year graduation rates for minority students to the overall student rates by 2028
- Reduce the attainment gap of traditionally marginalized students by 2028
    - Increase retention rates of minority freshmen to the overall retention rate by 2028
    - Increase the retention rates of first generation students to the overall retention rate by 2028
    - Increase the retention rates of low income (Pell eligible) students to the overall retention rate by 2028
    - Increase the retention rates of veteran students to the overall retention rate by 2028
    - Increase the retention rates of individuals with disabilities to the overall retention rate by 2028
- Increase enrollment of students of color to match or exceed the 18 - 25 year old population in Iowa (15.7% based on 2010 U.S. Census data) by 2028
    - Increase the percentage of traditionally marginalized students in the freshmen class to 15% during the next 5 years
- Increase the racial/ethnic/and gender composition of UNI faculty and staff to match or exceed the estimated availability of employees reported in UNI's annual BOR Affirmative Action Report.

Goal 2: Empower Communities to Shape Their Future. Empower and engage learners and communities to confront challenges and seize opportunities that advance the public good.

Strategy 2.1: Enhance faculty and staff engagement in the application of scholarship and service to address local, state, national, and global problems.

Strategy 2.2: Expand flexible community-based learning opportunities to enable learners to gain specialized skills and experiences and address community needs.

Strategy 2.3: Partner with communities to identify, address, and overcome societal barriers.

Strategy 2.4: Establish mutually beneficial linkages between the university and communities throughout the Cedar Valley and State of Iowa to enhance economic well-being and quality of life.

Goal 2 Transitional Metrics

- Increase Research and Sponsored Program's Capacity Grant Funding pool by 25%
- Increase the proportion of faculty teaching abroad and the proportion of faculty submitting applications and receiving Fulbright awards.
- Grow the amount of intellectual property disclosures generated by faculty, staff and students by 2028.
- Increase community and economic development client projects with businesses, organizations, and nonprofits across Iowa by 10%.
- Increase the percentage of academic departments that develop a strategic plan incorporating community engagement in their teaching, research and service each year until 80% of departments have at least one goal, strategy, or metric relative to this topic by 2028.

Goal 3: Innovate for Learner Success. Enhance access and support services for all learners through innovative and relevant academic curriculum and out-of-class experiences.

Strategy 3.1: Develop inclusive opportunities for learners to earn relevant certifications, licenses, endorsements, and degrees for success in ever-changing industries and communities.

Strategy 3.2: Develop intentional, timely, and adaptive processes that enable faculty to implement undergraduate and graduate curricular innovations that will meet learner, industry, and community needs.

Strategy 3.3: Expand programs to serve geographically place-bound learners in Iowa and beyond.

Strategy 3.4: Elevate high impact practices that focus on learner engagement, individualized education, and learner success and retention within courses and programs.

Goal 3 Transitional Metrics

- Increase enrollment in online and distance programs as guided by market research.
- Implement online degree completion programs and alternative credentialing such as certificate programs (academic positioning) in high-demand areas.
- Increase the rate of students engaged in high-impact curricular and co-curricular opportunities by 10% annually.
- Increase percent of learners/students that report at least some of their courses included a community-based service-learning project to 50% (first-year) and 80% (seniors).

Goal 4: Steward Resources Effectively. Align and effectively utilize University resources to improve equitable access, affordability, and quality.

Strategy 4.1: Enhance financial stewardship and operational effectiveness through mission-centric and strategic prioritization of resources with a focus on enrollment, physical and operational needs, and human capital.

Strategy 4.2: Reimagine space allocation and workplace practices to emphasize interdisciplinary collaborations, community partnerships, and operational effectiveness.

Strategy 4.3: Establish strategic partnerships that align with Our Values and create new revenue streams to invest in Mission-critical priorities.

Goal 4 Transitional Metrics

- Diversify funding sources by expanding external university/agency/industry partnerships and philanthropy.
- Increase investments in applied health care, analytics and Industry 4.0 technologies to emphasize interdisciplinary scholarship and new degree pathways and programs for learners.
- Enhance existing enrollment targets by refining metrics related to key enrollment subgroups (e.g. resident graduate students, non-resident professional students).