University of Nebraska at Kearney
Phase I Strategic Plan:
Mission, Vision, and Planning Guidance

January 2007

UNK Mission

The University of Nebraska at Kearney is a public, residential university committed to be one of the nation’s premier undergraduate institutions with excellent graduate education, scholarship, and public service.

UNK Vision

The University of Nebraska at Kearney will achieve national distinction for a high quality, multidimensional learning environment, engagement with community and public interests, and preparation of students to lead responsible and productive lives in a democratic, multicultural society.

Key to such improvement will be: clear focus on mission imperatives, fidelity to historic core values, and continuous and rigorous self-appraisal or assessment of outcomes.

Mission Imperatives

We understand the following commitments to be central to the mission of an exemplary institution of our kind.

A public university must serve its state in at least the following ways.

- It must meet citizens’ educational needs.
- It must contribute to broad developmental objectives of the state.
- It must be accountable to citizens and other stakeholders for the quality of its work and for good stewardship of its resources.
- It must deploy research, service, and outreach activities that apply university expertise to public needs not only within but also, where appropriate, outside of the state.
- Its curriculum, pedagogy, and activities must be informed by the larger community of which the state and nation are a part. Its intellectual and programmatic horizons encompass regional, national and world environments, incorporate the values and objectives of academic disciplines, and prepare students for life in global society.
A residential university provides:

- An inclusive, integrated academic living/learning community in which varied modes of association outside of class support academic achievement and help to foster in each individual the attitudes and skills essential to responsible life in society.
- A variety of opportunities to develop and to learn through leadership and service.
- Modern, well-maintained, and secure living and dining accommodations, sports and recreational facilities, and campus grounds.
- Programs and services designed to involve those who may live off-campus in community life.
- Deliberate interconnections with the surrounding community, and incorporation of location advantages into instructional and developmental strategies for students.

An undergraduate institution must have the following attributes:

- A holistic concept of student development manifested in a comprehensive academic curriculum and a wide array of personal growth opportunities outside the classroom and both on- and off-campus.
- A commitment to student learning, evidenced by an emphasis on exemplary teaching by fully-credentialed and active scholars and plentiful opportunities for students to engage in research with their professors.
- A curriculum that provides solid grounding for all students in the liberal arts and sciences while also enabling them to specialize and to prepare for careers.
- High quality academic programs that attract top students and draw faculty from centers of scholarship nationwide and worldwide.
- A faculty/student/staff community whose diversity -- ethnic, experiential, geographic, intellectual, etc. -- is itself an educational resource.
- A lively and intentional “informal curriculum” featuring activities and organizations designed to enable students to pursue special interests, to develop a sense of responsibility to lead and to serve, and to acquire skills enhancing interpersonal effectiveness.
- Student services that foster academic success, satisfaction with and involvement in campus life, individual wellness and development of the whole person, and progress toward graduation.
- A modern instructional and information technology infrastructure that makes academic offerings and services available to both on-campus and off-campus learners.
- Processes to assess student learning and to adjust plans, programs, and budgets in light of that appraisal.

In this context, graduate programs:

- grow from areas of undergraduate strength and are therefore qualitatively select;
- respond to public need/demand;
- are complementary to and synergistic with the undergraduate curriculum, and are subject to similar assessment imperatives, and
• are essential to the identity and mission of the institution.

Finally, in a university that values scholarship:
• Faculty are actively engaged in research and creative activity of professional quality that advances academic disciplines and addresses public needs.
• Scholarly activities are understood to be intrinsic ingredients of good teaching, as they enrich the curriculum, provide individualized intellectual growth opportunities for faculty and students, prepare students for advanced and continuing study, involve them in experiential learning opportunities, exemplify the commitment to lifelong learning, and engage faculty in work that advances individual disciplines and community/societal interests.
• While individual research interests and activity at UNK may range widely, the institution places particular value on scholarship that involves students, enhances instruction, aids faculty professional development, and contributes to community welfare.

Values

Historically at UNK, the animating principles and ideals of institutional development have placed commitments to learning and to people above all others.

Learning Matters
Democratic society needs an educated citizenry of lifelong learners who are aware, collectively, of the accomplishments of diverse civilizations and cultures, the historical context of current affairs, and the ways in which our society seeks to discern and serve a common, unifying public interest. Individual citizens, if they are to lead satisfying and productive lives in society, need to develop not only career skills but also such personal and intellectual qualities as integrity, respect for others, initiative, diligence, and capacities for clear thinking, writing, and speaking. It is the university’s role to meet these needs, both within and outside of classrooms and laboratories.

UNK’s learning environment is student-centered and reaches both on- and off-campus to build an active community of scholars. It:
• protects and fosters a climate of rigorous intellectual inquiry, unfettered exchange of ideas, and mutual respect that is grounded in principles of academic freedom and academic responsibility;
• centers on personalized, individualized teaching-learning relationships between faculty and students, with facilities, faculty capabilities and workloads, class sizes, and out-of-class activities that support and encourage those interactions;
• recognizes the important role of experience in the learning process and in pedagogy;
• is designed to foster students’ success in their academic programs and achievement of their academic goals;
• is structured to provide personal growth opportunities in student life, activities and government;
• values civility, celebrates learning and accomplishment, and offers full opportunity for every individual to realize his or her potential.

People Matter
At UNK, faculty – who are the heart of the university – have always been devoted to serving students and others in the larger community who can benefit from their scholarship and creative expertise and activity. Administrators and staff have always been devoted to serving faculty and students and to meeting the public’s educational needs. Students, who are the focus of our educational enterprise, have always prized the opportunity to live and learn together in this unique academic community. UNK has no institutional life apart from these networks of interaction and mutual support. The people who generate these dynamics are UNK’s greatest strength – indeed they are UNK.

For these reasons, as we plan for the future:
• It matters – and will always matter – whether students are satisfied and succeed at UNK.
• It matters – and will always matter – whether faculty members have the wherewithal to teach well, to produce scholarship, and to apply their expertise to advance campus, community, and societal interests.
• It matters – and will always matter – whether administrators and staff have the wherewithal to lead and support a broad student-centered partnership in learning and personal development.
• It matters – and will always matter – whether our community and state are better off because of the work of the people at UNK.

Envisioned Outcomes
We will graduate persons who know the accomplishments of civilizations, who value disciplined thought, and who are prepared for productive careers, further education, and responsible citizenship.

We will advance state and community interests by applying university educational programs and other expertise to meet public needs.

We will be known nationally as among the best universities of our kind.

Accordingly, UNK strategy, plans, decisions, operational and academic assessment processes, and resource allocations should seek to produce the following results.
• A higher proportion of academic programs which are demonstrably first-rate among comparable institutions.
• A curriculum that serves UNK’s educational purposes through general studies and diverse specialization opportunities, and that is continuously adapted to accommodate promising new pedagogies, the capabilities of information technology, distance learning techniques, and experiential learning that integrates theory with practice and engages UNK students and scholars with the community, state, and world.
• A larger body of research, scholarship, and creative activity that is influential in academic disciplines and in our community, state, nation, and world.
• A record of service to the public by the faculty that is noteworthy and responsive to the needs of the citizens of Nebraska.
• A student body, staff, and faculty whose composition reflects, at least, the multicultural composition of the state at large and includes broad representation from around the nation and world.
• Continuous renewal of the academic, residential, and recreational/campus life infrastructure and of co-curricular programs that enhance student development and wellness.
• More extensive financial support from external sources.
• More numerous and broader operating partnerships of mutual benefit and support with off-campus communities both inside and outside of Nebraska.
• Student enrollment that remains at least at current numerical levels, with improved qualitative indicators.
• Student retention, graduation, and advanced study placement rates comparable to those achieved by exemplary similar institutions.
• A public and professional perception of UNK that centers on excellence.

**Strategic Goals and Objectives**

In light of the mission, vision, values, and hoped-for outcomes outlined above, and also in light of UNK’s present and foreseeable circumstances, we have established five campus-wide goals, each of which states a central institutional purpose. For each goal, we have also developed a set of objectives and major program directions that identify essential ingredients of success and opportunities to improve. The result is a comprehensive blueprint to guide, organize, and focus future planning at all levels, both within divisions and units and in campus-wide settings.

I. **Learning Goal**: to enlarge students’ understanding of the world, to improve their ability to think critically, and to prepare them for advanced study and productive careers, by engaging with each as an individual learner in a climate of high expectations.

**Objective 1**: Recruit and retain a diverse faculty of scholars who teach well.
- Provide faculty compensation at competitive levels.
- Foster excellence in teaching through mentoring programs and by emphasis in policies governing workload, promotion, and tenure.
- Reward teaching excellence demonstrated by high levels of learning, innovative pedagogy, and graduates’ success in further schooling and careers.
- Endeavor to exceed peer institution averages in the proportion of faculty who are women and people of color, especially by enhancing recruitment outreach and identifying prospects at early stages of their academic preparation.
• Maintain the historical premium on small class sizes, teaching delivered by 
full-time faculty with terminal degrees, and close faculty and staff attention to 
helping students to succeed academically.
• Expand visiting faculty programs especially to attract international, minority, 
and female scholars.

Objective 2: Improve all academic programs, including general education, 
systematically and demonstrably by assessment of learning outcomes.
• Continuously improve methods in each program to assess learning over the span 
of a student’s course of study.
• Use assessment results to adjust all undergraduate and graduate academic 
programs and position them to achieve the best possible learning outcomes.
• Identify opportunities for, and allocate resources to, initiatives designed to 
improve learning outcomes and to reward improved performance.

Objective 3: Achieve national distinction in programs having special strength, 
comparative advantage, or demonstrable potential.
• Recognize and reward programs that attract external notice of excellence 
including national accreditation.
• Help programs obtain external support designed to enhance quality and achieve 
distinction.
• Where programs achieve external notice of excellence, allocate resources to help 
them attain even higher levels of recognition.

Objective 4: Maintain an undergraduate curriculum that engages students 
broadly with the liberal arts and sciences and features a comprehensive array of majors 
and experiential learning opportunities.
• Develop students’ ability and confidence to think critically and to express 
thoughts well orally and in writing.
• Inculcate skills and attitudes needed for lifelong learning.
• Integrate general education goals across disciplines and within major courses of 
study, clarifying the relevance of general studies to academic specialties and 
career aspirations.
• Expand opportunities for global learning and awareness of various cultural 
perspectives. Develop an ethnic studies program that draws from multiple 
disciplines, concentrates pertinent faculty expertise, and enlarges curricular 
opportunities for UNK students to pursue academic interests in diverse cultures.
• Strengthen experiential learning opportunities including internships, practica, 
research, service learning, and international exchange or Study Abroad programs. 
Encourage students to incorporate them into their courses of study, and develop 
assessment methods to ensure that they impact student learning positively.
• Encourage faculty to incorporate experiential learning into curricula and 
pedagogy, and recognize and reward those who achieve distinction in that regard.
• Strengthen curricular emphasis on technical and information literacy.
• Assess citizens’ educational needs and adjust program offerings and methods of 
instructional delivery (including e-learning) to address them.
Facilitate graduation within 4 years, for students seeking that result, by reorganizing courses, curricula, and majors as needed, and by ensuring that students have adequate access to required courses.

**Objective 5:** Offer graduate programs that are grounded in academic strength and that meet changing needs.
- Systematically assess citizens’ educational and career development needs.
- Ensure that established programs have sufficient support to sustain academic quality and relevance to the needs of the state.
- Encourage development of new programs which, within available resources, will deliver high quality instruction responding to demonstrated need.

**Objective 6:** Promote student academic achievement through support services outside the classroom.
- Provide academic advising, tutoring, and individualized skill-development assistance enabling students to address particular learning challenges and succeed in their courses of study.
- Continuously evaluate and improve facilities, organization, and levels of support for all aspects of student advising, program and career planning, and academic support services.
- Enhance training for and reward excellence in academic advising and individualized student mentoring.
- Use assessment outcomes to adjust academic services and to achieve the best possible learning results for each student.
- Promote greater student understanding of the nature and rationales for each aspect of the educational experience, and help them to develop comprehensive plans for their programs of study.

**Objective 7:** Continue the renewal of UNK’s academic infrastructure including buildings, classrooms/laboratories, library resources, and instructional technology.
- Complete plans and seek funding for the second phases of the Bruner Hall and Otto Olsen renovation projects.
- Systematically review the infrastructure needs of faculty, students, and staff, and develop plans and funding arrangements to address those needs in timely fashion.
- Expand external funding for UNK’s academic infrastructure renewal strategy.
- Incorporate information and communications technology in all plans, including video-conferencing and wireless capabilities where appropriate.

**II. Scholarship Goal:** To advance academic disciplines, curriculum and pedagogy, and Nebraska/community interests through excellent scholarship.

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1 The concept of scholarship used in this plan is the concept endorsed by the University of Nebraska’s Board of Regents in RP 2.1.6. This concept recognizes that university scholarship serves four equally important functions: to advance, integrate, apply, and represent knowledge. UNK has incorporated that
**Objective 1**: Strengthen the role of scholarship within UNK’s academic culture.
- Nurture the research capability of tenure-track faculty through workload adjustments, mentoring arrangements, and resource allocations that do not adversely affect the quality of departmental instruction.
- Ensure that departmental, college, and UNK policies, plans, and practices encourage and enable all forms of scholarly activity that are appropriate within particular disciplines.
- Recognize and reward excellent scholarship of all kinds.

**Objective 2**: Increase the amount and variety of high quality scholarship projects undertaken by UNK faculty.
- Promote greater research and funding collaboration, consultation, and synergism across disciplines and in the intercampus and inter-institutional environment.
- Encourage faculty to pursue their scholarship within a global framework.
- Increase resources supporting scholarship, especially through (1) external funding from government agencies, international organizations, industries, and foundations; (2) workload policies that enable all faculty to pursue scholarly interests, (3) providing superior research facilities, technology, and equipment tailored to faculty and student needs; (4) developing new sources of funding for academic equipment, including equipment requiring large investments, (5) enlarging research assistant support and opportunities, and (6) enhancing library resources including access to electronic databases.

**Objective 3**: Provide enhanced proposal preparation, grant processing, and grant management support to faculty from all disciplines and professions.
- Create a seamless process to help faculty prepare and execute project proposals from initial concept through grant administration.
- Provide appropriate matching and in-kind support for grant applications.

**Objective 4**: Promote and encourage undergraduate and graduate student research and creative activity across all disciplines.
- In academic policies/practices, curricula, and course syllabi, encourage students throughout their programs of study to become involved in research and creative activity with faculty and in independent projects.
- Increase financial support for student research, including funds to purchase supplies and to travel for conference presentations.
- Recognize and reward excellence in student research accomplishment.
- Recognize and reward faculty members who consistently guide excellent student research and creative activity projects.
III. **Student Development Goal**: To graduate individuals who are prepared for the responsibilities and opportunities of leadership, citizenship, and careers in a pluralistic, democratic, multicultural, and entrepreneurial society.

**Objective 1**: Develop a comprehensive strategy that will guide planning and activity outside the formal academic curriculum to enhance each student’s cognitive and moral development, interpersonal skills, and prospects for satisfaction and success at UNK and in life after graduation.

- Articulate a framework of principles and common objectives, and establish collaborative mechanisms, enabling units to cooperate across organizational boundaries to enhance student retention, graduation, and career placement results.
- Bridge Academic and Student Life programming to integrate living and learning experiences for students, to enrich the residential campus environment, and to promote engagement in civic and community service projects.
- Consistent with University academic standards and goals, attain first-year retention and six-year graduation rates that exceed peer institution averages.

**Objective 2**: Enhance UNK’s physical infrastructure supporting residential life, recreational/wellness activities, and student support programs.

- Through new construction and renovation of existing residence halls, provide a balanced array of modern on-campus living choices for students ranging from traditional shared and single rooms, to semi-suites and suites, to apartment-style accommodations.
- Maintain excellent Student Union and other student service facilities.
- Ensure that residence halls and student service facilities are equipped with appropriate levels of information technology networking capability.
- Expand and enhance parking capacity on campus and/or on property nearby.
- Enhance recreational and other facilities serving the health, physical fitness, and general wellness needs of students and staff.
- Provide intercollegiate athletics facilities that meet appropriate competitive standards and serve general student and community needs.
- Enhance campus landscaping, including green and open spaces, and systematically include landscape impacts and outcomes in planning all facilities improvement projects.

**Objective 3**: Provide an array of programs designed to enhance personal development, associational, and learning experiences in student government, co-curricular activities, residential/Greek and community life, and community or societal service.

- Maintain standards of student conduct and enforcement systems that recognize student responsibility for choices and actions, that promote personal growth, and that enhance community welfare.
• Encourage involvement in student, Greek, and residence hall governance and facilitate student participation in appropriate campus decision-making and advisory processes.
• Encourage formation of student interest and activity groups, including service organizations and activities, and recognize and reward staff and faculty who advise them.
• Maintain a large and active intramural sports and recreation program.
• Maintain a NCAA Division II intercollegiate athletics program that represents our campus, community and state well and that places first priority on student academic achievement, personal development, and preparation for life after college.
• Establish community and other links that will widen opportunity for students to engage in voluntary community service or civic activity, and enhance levels of campus support for those programs.
• Expand programming designed to educate the UNK community about diverse cultures and multicultural issues on campus and in society.

Objective 4: Provide comprehensive support services and programs, outside of formal learning venues, that help students adjust to and engage with university opportunities and resources, that enable them to manage or resolve personal problems, and that promote general health, wellness, and ability to achieve their goals.

• Expand programs that acquaint new students and their families with university expectations, resources, and opportunities.
• Expand support for programs that promote social/civic awareness, UNK community esprit, and student interaction with peers, faculty, and staff.
• Monitor the progress of students drawn from underrepresented or disadvantaged populations and address their special support needs.
• Enhance involvement of parents, families, regional community members in campus life.
• Provide appropriate levels of professional training for staff and technology applications that will improve student services.
• Strengthen programs that prepare students to lead healthy lives.
• Continuously evaluate campus safety and security measures, including building/room access controls, lighting, emergency communications, and pedestrian and vehicular traffic patterns and management.
• Establish and organize a full array of services to help students decide upon and begin productive careers, including programs conducted or sponsored by career advising staff; academic departments; student clubs; professional, fraternal, and academic societies; and the business community.

Objective 5: Enroll a larger, more diverse, and well-prepared student body.

• Continue to improve the quality and appeal of UNK academic offerings, residential infrastructure, support services, and climate for all students.
• Continue to improve UNK marketing, especially to promote UNK strengths and increase visibility in areas where populations are growing.
• In cooperation with the University of Nebraska Foundation and other entities, expand resources for merit scholarships and financial need awards.
• Hold discretionary student charges at levels that are consistent with university access aims, and evaluate pricing steps that may improve UNK’s recruitment position.
• Offer educational programs that align with the career and personal development needs of both traditional and nontraditional students, and widen access to instruction through distance education and e-learning delivery methods.
• Improve outreach to prospective undergraduate students: (1) recruit all eligible Nebraska residents in person and by systematic communications, but improve coverage and results from eastern Nebraska especially, (2) enhance such efforts in contiguous states where high school cohorts are growing; (3) devote special attention to expanding enrollment of students of color and economically disadvantaged students; (5) consolidate and expand recent advances in transfer enrollments; (4) enhance capabilities and activities to attract international students; and (6) seek to attract greater numbers of students ranked in the top 25% of their high school classes.
• For prospective graduate students: expand the number of programs offered consistent with university and statewide policy; assist graduate departments in marketing and recruiting activity; and continue to improve graduate assistant stipends and other financial assistance.
• Overall, increase headcount enrollment and student credit hour totals by 1.5% annually.

IV. Outreach and Engagement Goal: To help people, businesses, communities, and the state achieve their educational and developmental aims.

Objective 1: Collaborate with public and private sector partners to create and mobilize coordinated programs that spur business development and economic opportunity and enhance citizens’ and communities’ health and quality of life.
• Develop new and/or expand existing partnerships with citizens, communities, and public and private sector entities that clarify shared goals, identify opportunities to cooperate, and produce new capability to advance common interests.
• Develop economic and business development partnerships that increase opportunity to apply UNK research and instructional capability in diverse fields and industries.
• Establish advisory mechanisms enabling communities, businesses, organizations, and citizens to inform campus leaders of their education and training needs related to business, economic, and general regional development.
• Customize training and education programs for new and existing businesses.
• Encourage collaboration among campuses, colleges, departments, disciplines, faculty, and students that produces new forms of external engagement, supports educational partnerships, and increases involvement of faculty, staff, and students in outreach activities including applied research.
• Recognize and reward exemplary service in these partnerships and collaborative programs.
**Objective 2:** Develop academic programs that respond to workforce educational needs, employment opportunities for graduates, and rural community development needs.

- Assess employment opportunity trends and workforce educational needs and develop appropriate course and degree offerings.
- Review academic structure, policy, planning, and operations to identify opportunities to enhance academic outreach and service.
- Expand entrepreneurship education, training, and outreach.
- Expand experiential learning opportunities with business, education, government, military, and nonprofit organizations.

**Objective 3:** Provide an array of professional development and lifelong learning opportunities for individuals, via for-credit and non-credit instructional programs both on-campus and off-campus.

- Assess educational needs of local, regional, and statewide constituencies and increase continuing education offerings, including e-learning and distance education programs, to address them.
- Revitalize academic offerings and other initiatives that facilitate public use of the campus year-round.

**Objective 4:** Provide a regional focal point for intellectual, artistic, cultural, and recreational/athletic activity.

- Continue to improve campus venues for special events/performances, recreation and athletics activities, and conferences/meetings.
- Enhance support for and visibility of campus events showcasing faculty, student, and visiting performer talent.
- Capitalize on the Museum of Nebraska Art and the Frank House as venues for special events and programs.
- Facilitate appropriate public use of recreational, athletics, fine arts and group meeting facilities.
- Develop campus perimeter and buffer property to enhance access to key facilities, to improve green space, aesthetics, and pedestrian and vehicular movement, and to strengthen the residential character of our surroundings.

**Objective 5:** Emphasize direct service programs to enhance the economic conditions, prospects, and quality of life of communities in the region.

- Work with disadvantaged and underrepresented populations to familiarize them with the university and with resources widening access to higher education.
- Evaluate ways to broaden the impact of academic or service centers offering health/wellness, business development, and other problem solving expertise to rural communities.
- Expand experiential learning activity that applies UNK expertise to the development challenges of communities, businesses, and public service interests.
- Build stronger alliances with regional and statewide civic, business, educational, and ethnic organizations to promote citizens’ understanding of and respect for all cultures.
Objective 6: Build close relationships with key University stakeholders and constituencies to improve communication about and understanding of UNK.

- Enhance mutually beneficial relationships with alumni by strengthening organization efforts and by diversifying communication links, using electronic technology where feasible.
- Develop greater awareness, on- and off-campus, concerning areas in which private benefactors and friends of the university can help improve program quality and campus life.
- Enhance and integrate marketing to support undergraduate and graduate student recruitment as well as continuing and distance education enrollments.
- Strengthen UNK’s reputation for educational excellence through improved relationships and communications with citizens, legislators and other state and federal government officials, and the higher education community.
- Partner with the University of Nebraska Central Administration and others to enhance public appreciation for the role of the University in advancing Nebraskans’ qualify of life and prospects for the future.

V. Organizational Development Goal: To build a strong, effective institution by empowering staff, organizations, and the campus as a community to attain strategic goals.

Objective 1: Employ continuous strategic planning to enhance institutional cohesion, sense of direction, and developmental momentum.

- Maintain a Strategic Planning Committee (SPC), staffed with rotating campus-wide representative membership, to review the progress of major plans and activities advancing UNK strategic goals and objectives.
- With the advice of the SPC, periodically evaluate UNK’s strategic plan and circumstances to identify needed changes in goals, objectives, or priorities.
- Invest resources systematically to serve strategic goals and objectives.

Objective 2: Develop organizational structures, policies, procedures, and resource allocation practices that enable UNK to function efficiently and effectively.

- Review administrative structure, policies, and procedures to ensure they serve strategic goals and objectives.
- Employ best practices, including technology applications, to improve operational efficiency and effectiveness and to support planning, assessment, and accountability.
- Allocate the largest feasible proportion of resources to instruction, research, and services directly related to students.

Objective 3: Broaden UNK’s financial resource base.

- Clarify campus, college, and other major unit external fundraising priorities and enhance collaboration with the UNK Alumni Office and the University of Nebraska Foundation to increase support for UNK needs.
• Work with the University of Nebraska’s Central Administration to improve citizens’, legislators’, and other federal and state officials’ understanding of and support for the University’s financial needs and budget priorities.
• Identify and maximize new revenue sources, including summer programs, educational outreach, non-credit offerings, differential tuition charges for high-cost programs, and increased public use of campus facilities.
• Increase total sponsored awards for instruction, research, and public service from all federal agencies.
• Improve campus-based budget flexibility to respond to emerging opportunities and challenges while maintaining stable and predictable unit budgets.

**Objective 4:** Provide a satisfying professional environment for UNK faculty and staff.
• Assess the UNK employment climate through systematic surveys, other feedback mechanisms, and review of grievance/complaint patterns.
• Improve compensation, training, and mentoring programs.
• Develop effective leaders and supervisors through appropriate management, team-building, and professional development training.
• Address workplace needs including facilities, office space, and associated infrastructure, information technology, and equipment.
• Encourage and reward institutional service and operational innovation.
• Foster a culture of excellence by rewarding exemplary work and achievement.
• Provide sustained support for well-workplace programs.

**Objective 5:** Maintain effective internal communications and shared governance.
• Take full advantage of systematic advisory mechanisms to ensure that decisions are informed by pertinent faculty, staff, and student perspectives.
• Ensure that employees have the information they need to do their jobs well and that supervisors encourage employee input about operational improvements and other workplace concerns.
• At campus-wide and unit levels, inform employees regularly about major organizational goals, objectives, initiatives, and events.

**Objective 6:** Promote a safe, welcoming, healthy, and supportive work climate characterized by mutual respect and trust.
• Foster a better understanding and appreciation of all cultures through education, professional development, programming for students and staff, and student support programs.
• Diversify the work force at all levels, especially those directly serving or interacting with students and families.
• Promote awareness of and vigorously enforce policies on nondiscrimination and sexual harassment as well as other conduct standards that require members of the UNK community to treat every individual with respect.
Looking Ahead

The strategic principles, goals and objectives we have developed are not, of course, self-executing. It is not enough to announce them; we must make them consequential by using the envisioned ends to shape decisions about ways and means. The real test of any strategy lies in completing that link *via* follow-on planning. We are committed to employing an integrated planning process of that kind as we go forward, a process that links ends, ways, and means and produces strategic coherence in our operations and budgets. We anticipate that our strategic “plan” in that sense will be composed of the guidance stated in this document and the family of implementing plans we prepare to carry it out.

Additionally, a strategic plan is not -- and cannot be regarded as -- a fixed or immutable declaration. It is a “living” document in the sense that the very first steps it generates will begin to change the situation for which it was created and to bring us closer to the envisioned goals. Therefore, we are committed to review our strategy on a continuing basis and to adjust it as may be needed to align with changing realities, including the progress we make toward realizing our vision.