

University of Nebraska at Kearney (UNK)

Strategic Plan 2016

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.

Vision

UNK 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 an increasingly diverse, interconnected, interdependent, and technological society.

Values

- Learning Matters: UNK is an academic community that pledges to protect and foster a climate of rigorous intellectual inquiry, unfettered exchange of ideas, and mutual respect—inside and outside the classroom—that is grounded in the principles of academic freedom and academic responsibility. The academic community designs and continuously reviews programs to ensure that students develop broad intellectual capabilities and an awareness of diverse cultures and civilizations in addition to specific academic and career-related knowledge and skills.
- Learning Environment Matters: UNK is committed to a student-centered learning environment that:
 - is inclusive and explicitly values diversity of individuals, cultures, thought, and expression.
 - centers on student success through personalized teaching and mentoring relationships.
 - extends broad access to a quality education to all qualified students in the region, especially Nebraska, emphasizing diversity and quality.
 - prepares students for lifelong learning with the ability to think critically, exposure to global perspectives, and competence with technology.
 - embraces modern technology to enhance pedagogy and access to traditional and online programs.
 - integrates experiential learning.
 - fosters ethical behavior and decision-making and responsibility.
 - promotes emotional, social, and physical wellness in addition to intellectual development.
 - serves, engages, and enriches the Kearney community, area, and region.
 - provides a regional focal point for intellectual, artistic, cultural, and recreational activity and competitive NCAA Division II intercollegiate sports.
- People Matter: UNK promotes an inclusive environment that affords equitable access and opportunity to every individual.
- Responsible Stewardship Matters: UNK is committed to efficient and effective administration of resources—human, financial, and physical/infrastructure—to ensure long-term institutional fiscal stability and environmental sustainability.

Mission Imperatives

UNK is an exemplary public university that serves Nebraska by:

- meeting citizens' educational needs.
- adhering to policies of accrediting and governing agencies.
- being accountable to stakeholders for the quality of its work and for good stewardship of its resources.
- engaging in research, service, and outreach activities that apply university expertise to public needs.
- renewing curriculum, pedagogy, and activities with advice from internal and external constituencies.
- recruiting, challenging, nurturing, and retaining a diverse student body.
- recruiting and mentoring qualified diverse faculty and staff.
- building bridges to the community and state through athletic, cultural, and educational events.

UNK is an exemplary residential university that provides:

- a holistic approach to student development manifested in a progressive academic curriculum and a wide array of personal growth opportunities outside the classroom.
- residence halls and academic buildings that are well suited to student success and achievement.
- modern, well maintained and secure living and dining accommodations, sports and recreational facilities, and campus grounds.
- programs and services designed to involve those who live on or off campus in campus life.
- deliberate interaction with the surrounding community, capitalizing on location advantages to enhance learning opportunities for students.

UNK provides quality undergraduate education by means of:

- a curriculum that provides solid grounding for students in the liberal arts and sciences while also enabling them to specialize and prepare for careers.
- high quality academic programs that attract top students and draw faculty from centers of scholarship nationwide and worldwide.
- a well-qualified faculty/staff/student community whose diversity is itself an educational resource.
- student services that foster academic success, involvement in campus life, and progress toward graduation.
- a culture that supports opportunities for international experiences and studies.
- a commitment to learning with plentiful opportunities for students to engage in research with professors.
- a modern instructional and information technology infrastructure.
- expanding affordable access through quality online courses and degree programs.
- processes to assess student learning and to adjust programs in light of that appraisal.

UNK provides quality graduate programs that:

- build on areas of undergraduate strength.
- respond to public need and demand and serve the people of Nebraska and beyond.
- familiarize students with trends and developments in their disciplines.
- mentor students to contribute to their disciplines and apply knowledge to issues in society.
- help students develop research skills.

UNK values and supports faculty research and creative activity that:

- advances academic disciplines and addresses public needs.
- enhances teaching and professional development.
- involves mentoring and collaboration with students.

Envisioned Outcomes

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

Strategic Goals, Strategies and Implementation Priorities

Four strategic goals were derived directly from each of UNK's four core institutional values. Strategies and implementation priorities provide the means for achieving/evaluating progress toward the four strategic goals.

UNK Value—Learning Matters. UNK is an academic community that pledges to protect and foster a climate of rigorous intellectual inquiry, unfettered exchange of ideas, and mutual respect—inside and outside the classroom—that is grounded in the principles of academic freedom and academic responsibility. The academic community designs and continuously reviews programs to ensure that students develop broad intellectual capabilities and an awareness of diverse cultures and civilizations in addition to specific academic and career-related knowledge and skills.

Goal 1: Academic Quality. Faculty and staff will ensure ongoing review and continuous improvement of the curriculum across all academic programs on campus.

Strategies and Implementation Priorities:

- 1A. All academic programs and units on campus will undergo continuous review characterized by systematic planning, collection and analysis of data, and evaluation.
 - Form Academic Program Review Assessment Committee to review/evaluate/identify common processes and metrics, quantitative and qualitative, to ensure meaningful ongoing review of quality and efficacy of all academic (both instructional and non-instructional) programs.
 - Review and, as appropriate, restructure the academic alignments within academic affairs, colleges, and departments—may include consolidation or separation of academic units and/or reapportionment of resources.
 - Engage academic units to identify themes that might connect curriculum across campus (STEM/STEAM, Great Works, e.g.).
 - Evaluate pursuing formal accreditation for quality academic programs that are not currently accredited.
- 1B. Require completion of an extended/substantive and independent, yet faculty guided, Experiential Learning (EL) activity, within the major field of study, for graduation in all academic programs/degrees.
 - Form a campus-wide EL Committee to develop a common University-wide EL framework and require completion of an approved EL activity for all graduates.
- 1C. Embrace NU-system priority of collaboration and enhance/increase collaborative opportunities with other campuses, government agencies, and the private sector.
 - Survey all existing collaborations across campus and identify/prioritize future opportunities that benefit students and regional/state/beyond needs, building upon existing/emerging system-wide collaborative models (e.g., Food for Health, Health Sciences, Engineering).
 - Expand innovative curricular initiatives (e.g., stackable credentials, certificate programs, 2 + 2 articulation agreements, and internships) in collaboration with other NU campuses, public or state universities, community colleges, and the corporate sector.
 - Capitalize on unprecedented/expanded scope of academic opportunities while developing University Village, e.g., public/private academic and workforce-related ventures, maker spaces, incubator initiatives, collaborations with government, city, civic agencies.
- 1D. Evaluate existing on-site and on-line graduate programs, investigate new degree/credential options in areas of strength and demand—notably those that form stronger partnerships with other NU campuses.
- 1E. Expand undergraduate and graduate online offerings in areas of strength and demand to provide greater access to quality UNK programs and market/recruit aggressively.

UNK Value—UNK is committed to a student-centered learning environment: that is inclusive and explicitly values diversity, extends broad access, promotes emotional, social, and physical wellness, embraces technology, centers on personalized teaching and mentoring relationships, enriches the Kearney community, provides a regional focal point for intellectual, artistic, cultural, recreational, and competitive NCAA Division II intercollegiate sports.

Goal 2: Access and Success. Increase recruitment and enhance support for student success.

Strategies and Implementation Priorities:

- 2A. Increase recruitment of a quality, diverse student body through holistic enrollment management.
- Elevate expectations for every unit/member of the campus community to embrace the critical role each plays in recruiting/retaining students—emphasizing engagement, positive interactions, and mutual respect.
 - Evaluate and enhance all aspects of recruitment (e.g., Admissions & Financial Aid strategies, campus tours and academic department visits, marketing/messaging, transfer processes).
 - Deploy targeted initiatives to increase enrollments of transfer, minority, and international students and increase presence in specific Nebraska schools with strong academic programs and high number of quality graduates.
- 2B. Increase retention of a quality, diverse student body through holistic enrollment management.
- Emphasize professional engagement with students and improved responsiveness and customer service in all offices and functions.
 - Enhance the quality of advising (faculty and staff) through improved formal training, by developing common measures of student satisfaction with advising, and explore recognition of advising performance as a component of evaluation.
 - Enhance Military and Veteran services and support.
 - Implement best practices and policies to promote student success and timely degree completion.
 - Improve readiness of first-term freshmen “Admitted by Review” by creating/offering a series of 1-hour Learning Skills courses that are specific to areas of concern.
 - Improve Freshman to Sophomore retention rate by deploying intensive early/often advising interventions.
 - Ensure academic programs are well-articulated and courses are offered/scheduled to meet demands.
 - Develop a career education module for students that is accessible through MyBlue.
- 2C. Enhance support and marketing for signature programs/initiatives with campus-wide reach that positively impact student recruitment, retention, success and academic quality including the Honors Program, Undergraduate Research, Thompson Scholars Learning Community, and Kearney Bound Scholars, e.g.
- 2D. Enhance support for diverse University activities and events that enrich the community and cultural life of the Kearney area, state, region, and beyond.
- Increasingly integrate themes of global engagement and cultural competency in academic programs and across campus and promote cross-cultural interaction between students from different backgrounds.
 - Enhance students’ global engagement by increasing Study Abroad Programs (long and short term programs) and continue to promote Service Learning and Community Outreach opportunities.
 - Develop and support a comprehensive vision for UNK as a cultural hub for, for example, the fine and performing arts, museums, festivals, symposia/conferences, civic engagement, and public discourse.
 - Develop strategic plan for intercollegiate athletics, to provide sustainable framework for student-athletes’ competitive and academic success, and enhance relationships/affinity with students, employees, alumni, and community.

UNK Value—People Matter. UNK respects diversity—of individuals, cultures, thought, and expression—and supports an inclusive environment that affords equitable access and opportunity to every individual.

Goal 3: Quality Faculty and Staff. Recruit, support, develop, and retain a high quality and diverse faculty and staff.

Strategies and Implementation Priorities:

- 3A. Evaluate processes of recruiting, retention, compensation, and explore alternate compensation approaches.
- Develop effective job postings that accurately reflect position responsibilities and workload expectations.
 - Supervisors will encourage and evaluate, as appropriate within university guidelines, employee professionalism in their interactions with students, colleagues, and constituents.
 - Solicit campus input to professional development for faculty and staff.
 - Survey employees to determine meaningful recognitions of contributions, performance, and accomplishments.
- 3B. Explore and implement ways to enhance diversity of faculty and staff.
- Utilize the Equity, Access and Diversity Advisory (EAD) to assist the Chancellor in further nurturing an atmosphere of inclusion for faculty, staff, students, and visitors to campus.
 - Evaluate current recruiting processes and procedures to attract larger and more diverse candidate pools.
- 3C. **Specific for Faculty:** Explore and implement approaches to managing workload/expectations and teaching, scholarship, and service to enhance the workplace and productivity.
- Utilize Digital Measures as the official electronic repository for faculty activity (teaching, scholarship, service, and administrative responsibilities) and annual productivity goals.
 - Examine faculty workload policy, clarify performance/evaluation expectations, and seek parity across units.
 - Inaugurate, and clarify performance/evaluation expectations for, appointments of designated faculty as Professor of Research (greater degree of focus on scholarly activity) and Professor of Practice (greater degree of focus on teaching/advising/service).
 - Provide appropriate and reasonable support for faculty to pursue a meaningful agenda of scholarly activity; one of professional satisfaction and distinct benefit to students and society.
 - Develop campus-wide program in grantsmanship to increase grant resources, and in seeking parity across units, work toward recognizing grantwriting as an option for faculty scholarly productivity in evaluations.
- 3C. **Specific for Staff:** Explore and implement approaches to managing workload/expectations to enhance the workplace and productivity.
- Benchmark staff compensation through established NU system pay bands.
 - Clarify staff workload expectations within job descriptions/bands and seek parity across units.

UNK Value—Responsible Stewardship. UNK is committed to efficient and effective administration of resources—human, financial, and physical/infrastructure—to ensure long-term institutional fiscal stability and environmental sustainability.

Goal 4: Stewardship of Resources. Secure, generate, and responsibly steward the resources necessary to carry out the mission of the campus and ensure long-term institutional fiscal stability and environmental sustainability.

Strategies:

- 4A. Annually generate revenue necessary to offer competitive compensation, maintain and replace facilities, and invest in technology and infrastructure, student services, and general institutional needs.
- Enhance recruitment and retention of students to increase credit-hour production/tuition net revenue.
 - Optimize course offerings/scheduling/enrollments to increase credit hour production/tuition net revenue.
 - Enhance current/Develop new on-campus and online programs in areas of strength/demand and market and recruit aggressively.
 - Increase internal support for, and success in, acquiring external grant/indirect funding.
 - Build on increasingly successful Foundation efforts to increase private giving.
 - Create stronger 2+2 agreements with state institutions of higher education and collaborate with high schools on dual enrollment and other mutually beneficial opportunities.
- 4B. Administer resources in alignment with campus, unit, and operations priorities.
- Critically analyze, using appropriate metrics, the effectiveness, efficiency, and fiscal and environmental sustainability of every unit/aspect of UNK’s operations.
 - Align resource allocations with priorities in all units/aspects of UNK’s operations.
 - Continue to invest prudently in technology and environmentally-friendly infrastructure to support campus priorities while seeking efficiencies in purchasing and within current staffing/time.
 - Increasingly execute environmental sustainability strategies identified in UNK’s sustainability master plan.
 - Form a Budget Advisory, with representation across campus units, to provide input relative to resource allocation and administration.
- 4C. Enhance UNK’s brand and reputational identity across the state, region, and nation.
- Operationalize plans for integrated marketing/branding/communications, unique to UNK while complimentary to the NU “One University Four Campuses” theme, to tell our University’s story and aggressively promote the strategic priorities outlined in this document.
 - Identify and pursue mutually beneficial collaborations with the City of Kearney and Buffalo County, regional businesses and stakeholders, and other specific area communities (such as Lexington and Grand Island) to work together to solve community academic and business challenges.
 - Capitalize on unprecedented opportunities provided by the development of University Village to pursue new ventures and partnerships—public/private, academic/community, retail, office, residential, and recreational.
 - Build on increasingly successful alumni engagement initiatives and tracking of graduates to deepen alumni affinity and engagement with campus to enhance recruiting, fundraising, and experiential learning and internship opportunities.

Strategic Planning Committee

*began service in 2015 **began service in 2016

Douglas Kristensen, Chancellor – Chair
Peggy Abels, Director of Health Sciences
Kelly Bartling, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Communications and Community Relations
Charles Bicak, Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs
Matt Bice, Exercise Science (COE)*
Kim Carlson, Department of Biology (NSS)/Faculty Senate Rep
Stacy Darveau, Administrative Associate (CBT)
Mark Ellis, Department of History (NSS)
Brenda Eschenbrenner, Department of Accounting and Finance (CBT)/Faculty Senate Rep
Rachel Flaugh, Student Regent**
Gilbert Hinga, Interim Dean for Division of Student Affairs
Bill Jurma, Dean, College of Fine and Performing Arts
Dusty Newton, Director of Admissions/Staff Senate Rep
Jane Petersen, ITS Director Academic Services
Paul Plinske, Director of Intercollegiate Athletics
Neal Schnoor, Senior Advisor to the Chancellor for Executive Affairs
Jon Watts, Vice Chancellor for Business and Finance**

Members serving on SPC 2014-16: Chris Jochum, Department of Modern Languages (FAH), John La Duke, Dean, CNSS, Mariah Hergott, Graduate Student/Counseling and School Psychology, Jon Ritterbush, E-Resources and Serials Librarian

Members serving on SPC 2015-16: Evan Calhoun, Student Regent and Jane Sheldon, Interim VCBF

Members serving on SPC in 2014-15:

Erin Bush, Communication Disorders (COE), Barbara Johnson, VCBF, Connor Schulte, Student Regent

Phase II Implementation Planning Groups 2015-16

*denotes chair/co-chair

Group 1: Charlie Bicak*, John La Duke, Greg Broekemier, Grace Mims, Sam Umland, Janet Steele, Rod Flanigan, Scott Unruh, Sharon Campbell, Satoshi Machida, Deb Schroeder, Martonia Gaskill, Holly Peterson, Evan Calhoun, and Brittney King.

Group 2: Ed Scantling* and Gilbert Hinga*, Sheryl Feinstein, Toni Hill, Carrie Kracl, Martha Kruse, Suzanne Maughan, George Holman, Dusty Newton, Kyle Means, Michael Stopford, Tami Moore, Aaron Estes, Bree Dority, Gloria Vavricka, and Dallas Doering.

Group 3: Kathy Zuckweiler* and Jane Sheldon*, Tim Burkink, Kyle Luthans, Jan Moore, Daren Snider, Paul Twigg, Mary Chinnock Petroski, Dustin Favinger, Laura Hyatt, Rochelle Kruger, Steve McGahan, David Palmer, and Chris Wilson.

Group 4: Kenya Taylor* and Jean Mattson*, Janet Wilke, Laurie Swinney, Sherry Crow, Tim Farrell, Scott Darveau, Lee McQueen, Rich Brodersen, Pete Kotsiopulos, Brian Cox, Chelsea Swarm, Richard Mocariski, Susan Mueller, and Megan Fryda.

Group 5: Kelly Bartling*, Bill Jurma, Paul Plinske, Alan Wedige, Lucas Dart, Shawn Kaskie, Marsha Yeagley, Dick Meyer, Rick Schuessler, Katherine Kime, Audrey Kauders, Will Stoutamire, Noah Rogoff, and Todd Gottula.