

University of Nebraska at Kearney (UNK)

Mission, Vision, and Strategic Planning Guidance

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

- **People Matter:** UNK has no institutional life apart from the networks of interaction and support between faculty, staff, students, and community. The University respects diversity—of individuals, cultures, thought, and expression—and supports an inclusive environment that affords equitable access and opportunity to every individual.
- **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:** UNK is committed to a student-centered learning environment that:
 - is inclusive and explicitly values diversity of individuals, cultures, thought, and expression.
 - extends broad access to a quality four-year 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 technological competence.
 - integrates experiential learning.
 - fosters ethical behavior and decision-making and responsibility.
 - promotes emotional, social, and physical wellness in addition to intellectual development.
 - embraces modern technology to enhance pedagogy and access.
 - centers on student success through personalized teaching and mentoring relationships.
 - 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.
- **Responsible Stewardship:** UNK is committed to efficient and effective administration of resources (human, financial, and physical/infrastructure) to ensure long-term institutional stability and 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 that promotes online instruction as a complement to on-site teaching.
- 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.
- familiarize students with trends and developments in their disciplines.
- respond to public need and demand.
- 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

- 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.

Strategic Goals and Strategies

In light of UNK's mission, vision, values, imperatives, and envisioned outcomes, and present and foreseeable circumstances, five campus-wide goals have been established. Strategies for each goal provide campus units with coherent priorities to guide implementation planning.

Goal 1: Academic Quality

Faculty and staff will ensure ongoing review and continuous improvement of the curriculum and scholarship across all academic programs on campus.

Strategies:

- 1A. All academic programs and units on campus will undergo continuous review characterized by systematic planning, collection and analysis of data, and evaluation.
- 1B. Create a formal framework that validates an extended independent, yet faculty guided, experiential learning activity—a central theme of the set of student competencies upon graduation from UNK.
- 1C. Seek collaborative opportunities as appropriate with other campuses, government agencies, and the private sector and expand online education to enhance student opportunities.
- 1D. 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.

Goal 2: Access and Success

Recruit and enhance support for student success.

Strategies:

- 2A. Enhance recruitment and retention of a quality, diverse student body through holistic enrollment management.
- 2B. Implement best practices and policies to promote student success and timely degree completion.
- 2C. Implement effective comprehensive academic and career advising, utilizing mentors where possible.
- 2D. Enhance global engagement and student engagement with fellow students and community.

Goal 3: Quality Faculty and Staff

Recruit, support, develop, and retain a high quality and diverse faculty and staff.

Strategies:

- 3A. Evaluate processes of recruiting and retention, compensation, and explore alternate compensation approaches.
- 3B. Identify and provide professional development that is responsive to faculty and staff needs.
- 3C. Explore and implement approaches to managing workload/expectations and teaching, scholarship, and service to enhance the workplace and productivity.
- 3D. Explore and implement ways to enhance diversity of faculty and staff.

Goal 4: Stewardship of Resources

Secure, generate, and responsibly steward the resources necessary to carry out the mission of the campus.

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.
- 4B. Administer resources in alignment with campus, unit, and operations priorities.
- 4C. Pursue alternative resources, models, and approaches to enhance revenue.
- 4D. Enhance collaboration and support to increase grant and endowment resources.

Goal 5: Outreach and Engagement

Enhance service, engagement, and enrichment of the campus, Kearney area community, Nebraska, and beyond.

Strategies:

- 5A. Identify and expand on opportunities between colleges and departments, individual faculty and staff, and public and private community collaborations in business, services, research, and events that advance the University's mission of teaching, scholarship, and service.
- 5B. Enhance support for diverse University activities and events that enrich the community and cultural life of the Kearney area.
- 5C. Support and promote intercollegiate athletics to create opportunities for student-athletes to build on their athletic accomplishments and compete at the highest level possible while building valuable stakeholder pride and University spirit through competitive sport and achievement.

Implementation Plan Guidance

This strategic guidance document is a “living” document, which may be influenced by factors ranging from progress made toward goals, to potential shifts in system priorities, to any number of changing realities. However, it establishes coherent campus priorities to guide the development of implementation plans by campus units. The work of the Strategic Planning Committee will now shift to reviewing units' implementation plans, monitoring implementation, and assessing and evaluating progress toward goals.