

UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY

State University of New York

The World Within Reach University at Albany Strategic Plan

October, 2010

In 2010, the University at Albany emerges from the first decade of the millennium with a strong trajectory of growth, achievement, and success. With a venerable 166-year history since its inception as a normal school, UAlbany today is a world-class public research university that brings the world within reach in its nine schools and colleges, highly ranked academic programs, award-winning faculty and staff, and outstanding undergraduate and graduate students.

Approaching the next decade, the University enters a time of incredible opportunity and challenge. It is a time of considerable change in higher education, and a time of particular challenge for public higher education in New York. In the state and in the nation, as resources are increasingly constrained, there are also ever higher expectations about the capacities and contributions of an institution of higher education. As traditional students and ways of learning continue, a more diverse students profile emerges and a more global vision of education is essential. There are new perspectives about what students need to know, and how they best learn. Sustaining growth in the development of knowledge, discovery, and creative endeavors is essential to both the culture and the economy. Innovation and partnerships for economic and workforce development are ever more critical. Keeping pace with the physical and technological infrastructure needs of a contemporary university campus is essential.

To address these opportunities and challenges, UAlbany brings many strengths: We are rich in our heritage, as well as forward-thinking in our life-enhancing research and scholarship. Our strategic location in New York's capital continues to contribute to our academic distinctiveness. We are home to a diversity of nationalities, backgrounds, and perspectives. Our nationally-ranked graduate programs are areas of significant strength. We have award-winning initiatives to support student success. We have talented and dedicated faculty and staff, and our strong partnerships across the campus, across the community, and around the globe provide rich connections that further our work.

We have new leadership—at the campus, and at the system—and a new opportunity to chart the future.

With this complex set of challenges and opportunities, President George M. Philip initiated a strategic planning process in October, 2009, to help define the University's path forward. This strategic planning process was to be informed by the Middle States review, and developed with an awareness of the then-emerging SUNY-wide strategic plan. The goal was to create a new statement of mission, a statement of strategic goals, and a 5-7 year strategic blueprint for achieving strategic objectives.

The strategic planning process began with an overview of innovations and emerging trends in higher education to help us consider how the University at Albany can best serve the needs of a local, State, regional, national and global population in the future. The Strategic Planning Committee (SPC), representative of the breadth of campus constituencies, undertook an examination of economic and environmental trends, social and political trends, trends in higher education, the interests of UAlbany stakeholders, and institutional strengths and weaknesses. Based on the analyses of the SPC, input from community forums, town halls, and individual comment, the plan presented here reflects the collective work of over 300 faculty, staff, and students, alumni, and members of the greater capital district community.

Our strategic plan begins with a new statement of our mission and values, and is framed by our strategic goals:

Our mission

**Expanding knowledge and transforming minds
to shape the future of our community and our world.**

Our values

- Excellence** • We pursue performance at its highest level, across all our endeavors
- Access** • We are committed to enabling individuals to pursue education without limitation by economic or societal factors
- Collaboration** • We cultivate an environment in which we share our respective strengths to work toward common goals
- Engagement** • We address local to global needs through engagement with diverse communities
- Respect** • We value diversity, academic freedom, and the rights and dignity of individuals
- Integrity** • We are committed to, and expect from all, honesty, transparency, and adherence to these core values

Our Strategic Goals

❖ To enhance the quality of undergraduate education at UAlbany and attract and serve a highly qualified and diverse group of students ¹

We will offer a competitive, high quality undergraduate education that is intellectually engaging and attractive to high-achieving students, and that offers specialized knowledge refined by research, practical, and creative experiences. Undergraduate education at UAlbany will equip students for informed and productive global citizenship, for fluency as writers and speakers, and for successful careers, professional life, graduate education, and life-long learning.

Objective #1: Enrich the educational experience in the major and minor

Objective #2: Enhance availability and quality of undergraduate writing instruction

Objective #3: Enhance quality, efficiency and clarity of the General Education program

Objective #4: Enhance the international components of undergraduate education 


Objective #5: Increase full-time faculty engagement with undergraduate education and provide enhanced support for undergraduate instruction

Objective #6: Improve the academic profile of incoming freshman and transfer students by working to attract more highly qualified applicants, by increasing selectivity, and by improving the yield rate of admitted top tier students

❖ To create an excellent student experience that integrates academic and co-curricular experiences, engages the surrounding community and the world, and fosters lifelong pride in the University


We will provide the breadth and quality of student experience that both informs and inspires our students. The student experience at UAlbany will provide a sense of community with distinctive traditions and cultures, strong academic and career advisement and mentoring, and support for academic and lifelong success. We will be a safe, healthy, and intellectually open community that brings the world within reach.


Objective #1: Create a strong sense of community among faculty, students, staff and alumni 

¹  represents an area of particular convergence with the SUNY strategic plan, *The Power of SUNY*


Objective #2: Prepare students for successful futures through strong academic advisement, career counseling, and inspirational mentoring

Objective #3: Instill in the University at Albany community a distinctive and enduring identity through its traditions and cultures

Objective #4: Amplify the 'World Within Reach' perspective through a dynamic, rich assemblage of experiences 

Objective #5: Foster a safe, healthy and intellectually open University environment that is conducive to success 

Objective #6: Provide excellent and effective student support services that enhance student satisfaction and contribute to academic and lifelong success


❖ To advance excellence in graduate education in support of the University's reputation, role, and stature and the preparation and competitiveness of graduates 

We will offer outstanding graduate programs, maintaining and improving those already strong and enabling others to reach their potential. Graduate education at UAlbany will attract strong students, provide the preparation and support to insure successful completion, and recognize students, graduates, and faculty for their accomplishments. We will have relevant and accurate evaluative criteria and data about our graduate programs and use them to guide investment decisions. We will have policies and practices that address current and evolving needs of graduate students broadly and non-traditional graduate students specifically.

Objective #1: To inform investment decisions, strengthen the program evaluation process by articulating appropriate criteria and collecting relevant and accurate data

Objective #2: Focus resources on graduate programs based on criteria of objective # 1, that have reached or are poised to reach national prominence, those having the strongest potential to reach national prominence, or those (including new programs) that contribute significantly to the University's mission

Objective #3: Attract and retain outstanding graduate students and support and prepare them appropriately

Objective #4: Develop policies, regulations, curricula, and incentives to meet the changing needs of non-traditional graduate students 


Objective #5: Identify faculty pedagogical needs and enhance support for these activities in graduate education

Objective #6: More effectively integrate graduate academic programs, administration, and governance to strengthen graduate education

❖ **To increase UAlbany's visibility in, and resources for, advancing and disseminating knowledge, discovery, and scholarship** 

We will be a university where world-class research, scholarship and artistic endeavors are nurtured and flourish. Research, scholarship, and artistic endeavor at UAlbany will be supported and promoted in ways that enable it to grow, to attract external funding and recognition, and to engage students at all levels.

Objective #1: Increase scholarly and creative output 

Objective #2: Increase within five years RF federal funding (including collaborative PI federal flow-through funding) by at least 50%, and the proportion of faculty who have received external funding from any source by 20% 

Objective #3: Improve administrative support for post-award services and create a culture of support for investigators

Objective #4: Improve infrastructure support for scholarly activities

Objective #5: Increase visibility and reputation of UAlbany scholarship in media, government and in the national and international scholarly community 

Objective #6: Increase postdoctoral and student engagement in scholarship and external funding

❖ **To add to, and reconfigure, our teaching, research, student life and support spaces in a manner compatible with our contemporary mission** 


We will have attractive, vibrant campuses that are inviting, accessible and navigable to students, faculty, staff and community. UAlbany campuses will include 21st century teaching, learning, living and research spaces that are sufficient to meet the needs of the university population, environmentally friendly and sustainable, and adaptable to changing needs of faculty, staff and students. Our environment will improve the quality of life of those who inhabit, work on, and visit the campuses, and provide opportunities for us to continue to grow as a community. Our campuses will be a source of pride as well as a regional engine for intellectual and economic growth.

Objective #1: Create and maintain attractive and accessible places for learning, interaction, living and recreation

Objective #2: Explore emerging technologies and invest in and keep up to date IT infrastructure to support the teaching, research, service and administrative functions

Objective #3: Seek opportunities to develop the campus to allow further support of the University mission and decompress where overcrowded


Objective #4: Address deferred maintenance in order to support the campus mission and avoid unnecessary costs


Objective #5: Invest in sustainable or green infrastructure to advance the university's sustainability agenda 


❖ To engage diverse communities in strategic partnerships to increase public, scholarly and economic benefits


We will be a leader among research universities in strategic partnerships and engagement involving faculty, students, alumni, and local to global communities for university advancement, societal and scholarly benefit, and economic development. We will be recognized for our work to create and apply new knowledge relevant to addressing the critical issues of the 21st century. We will leverage our distinctive strengths and the competitive advantage of our strategic location in New York's capital city to enhance our reputation, influence and impact.


Objective #1: Recognizing that success in cultivating the University's worldwide alumni community is essential and that engagement of the local community is at the heart of daily operations, ensure that University units reflect a customer-oriented, student-success-driven model

Objective #2: Increase strategic partnerships for social development and scholarly benefit in critical areas of policy and practice to develop human potential, advance health and welfare, and improve the quality of life from the local to global levels 

Objective #3: Grow UAlbany as a University for all ages, at the local, regional and State levels, with a special focus on building the K-16 pipeline, life-long learning and technology-facilitated learning 

Objective #4: Increase strategic public and private partnerships to advance economic development, workforce development and entrepreneurial activity 

Objective #5: Create a more integrated University-wide system for community-engaged research, teaching and service 

Objective #6: Be an active leader in community-building to improve the quality of life in the region and enrich faculty, student, and staff learning 

Details of the objectives and recommended action plans, as well as the initial implementation plan, may be found at www.albany.edu/strategicplan.

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