



*Create. Empower. Innovate.*

## **UNI's 2023-28 Strategic Plan**

Approved February 2025

**Vision:** We serve the public good through 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:** A welcoming, supportive and affordable educational environment for all.

**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 and safe community characterized by appreciation, respect, and a sense of belonging for all.

**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, and environmentally responsible.

**Goal 1: Innovate for Learner Success.** Enhance access and support services for all learners through an innovative and relevant academic curriculum and out-of-class experiences.

Strategy 1.1: Develop comprehensive opportunities for learners to earn relevant certifications, licenses, endorsements, and degrees for success in ever-changing industries and communities.

Strategy 1.2: 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 1.3: Expand programs to serve geographically place-bound learners in Iowa and beyond.

Strategy 1.4: Elevate high impact practices that focus on learner engagement, individualized education, and learner success and retention within courses and programs.

**Goal 1 Metrics:**

- Increase enrollment in online and distance programs by 5% annually over five years
- Create at least two new, fully online undergraduate degree completion programs in high-demand areas, guided by market research, by 2028
- Create at least two new, fully online graduate programs in high-demand areas, guided by market research, by 2028.
- Increase innovation related to programs/courses of new or existing courses/programs over five years (e.g. new 4+1, new Master's MAIS, Purple Pathway)
  - Review and simplify UNI's curriculum approval process
  - Grow program offerings and student enrollments in health related fields, data analytics, and engineering and technology to emphasize interdisciplinary scholarship and new degree pathways and programs for learners
  - Increase the number of targeted credentials and courses in high demand areas by 10% by 2028
- Create curricular designations for courses that have engaged learning or high impact practices within the system to encourage enrollment growth in those courses

**Goal 2: Access for All.** Create a living, learning, and working environment with access for all.

Strategy 2.1: Improve university-wide standards of practice for the UNI community to ensure a welcoming environment.

Strategy 2.2: Nurture a sense of community through a culture of care where all can achieve their educational, professional and personal life aspirations.

**Goal 2 Metrics:**

- Eliminate the *institutional gaps* in student success rates of all students by 2028

- Increase the overall retention rate to 85%, four-year graduation rate to 50%, and six-year graduation rate to 70%.
- Achieve an average of 75% faculty/staff reporting that perceived university procedures, interactions and outcomes are fair in nature during each institutional climate survey cycle.
- Achieve an average of 75% of students reporting that they feel a sense of belonging at the institution annually.

**Goal 3: Empower Communities to Shape Their Future.** Empower and engage learners and communities to confront challenges and seize opportunities that advance the public good.

Strategy 3.1: Enhance faculty and staff engagement in the application of scholarship and service to address local, state, national, and global problems.

Strategy 3.2: Expand flexible community-based learning opportunities to enable learners to gain specialized skills and experiences and address community needs.

Strategy 3.3: Partner with communities to identify, address, and overcome barriers to economic success and vitality.

Strategy 3.4: 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 3 Metrics:**

- Increase the number of external funding proposals 7.5% annually over five years
- Increase community and economic development client projects with businesses, organizations, and nonprofits across Iowa by 10% by 2028
- Launch and develop a plan to institutionalize a collective, campus-wide community engagement project by 2028.
- Increase the number of service-learning designated courses approved by 100% (50 courses approved by 2028) assuring at least five courses in each college
- Retain the Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement Status (application submitted by 2026)

**Goal 4: Steward Resources Effectively.** Align and effectively utilize University resources to improve 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 Metrics:**

- Recognizing that enrollment growth is essential to effective resource stewardship, enhance existing enrollment targets by refining metrics related to key enrollment subgroups (e.g. undergraduate students, graduate students, new freshmen, new transfer students) as outlined in the 2023-28 strategic enrollment management plan for sustainable and predictable enrollment growth with targets in the fall of 2028 of 11,116.
- Increase external funding amounts by 10% from a range of sources such as agencies, federal funding, industry partnerships, foundations and philanthropy by 2028
- Attain a 70% target utilization, based on 45 hours per week, and 70% seat fill for 110 classrooms and a 45% utilization, based on 45 hours per week, with 80% seat fill for 210 classrooms annually.
- Increase the percentage of community partners sharing spaces and programming on the UNI campus by 20% by 2028.