2023-2028 Strategic Plan

Purpose

The University of Wisconsin System will deliver transformative educational outcomes and research that expands the boundaries of knowledge. We will work to extend the value of our universities beyond the boundaries of the campuses, seeking to enhance the quality of life for all in Wisconsin and beyond, in fulfillment of the Wisconsin Idea.

Core Values

Purpose-driven: Our purpose drives all that we do.

- Student-centered: A primary reason for our existence is to serve our students. We do so by fostering excellence in teaching and learning, research, scholarship, creative activity, and community service, and by supporting our students to reach their full potential.
- Pursuit of truth: We support the pursuit of truth that drives the core research mission and serves as a foundation for teaching and learning.
- Advancement of knowledge: The dissemination of knowledge, discovery of new truths and areas of inquiry, and the search for a deeper understanding of our world and our place in it are central to our work.
- Service: An essential aspect of the System and the universities that comprise it is to serve the State of Wisconsin and the public good.

People-focused: We value and promote all who work, live, and learn in the System, as well as those in communities we serve across the state.

- Collaboration and teamwork: We appreciate and understand that our best work is done working together in teams in a collaborative and supportive environment.
- Diversity: We are committed to diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging. These principles are key to our long-term success.
- Mutual respect and trust: We support an environment of civility, trust, collegiality, open and honest communication, and mutual respect by building a sense of community and caring among faculty, staff, students, and community partners.

Commitment to Stewardship: We are accountable to each other, to the System, and to the Wisconsin Idea. The decisions we make are focused on the best interests of those who work and learn at the universities in the System and the State of Wisconsin.

- Accountability: We are committed to live our core values and deliver excellence every day. As a premier public university system, we are committed to providing an excellent educational experience for our students while ensuring accessibility, affordability, and cost-effectiveness.
- Integrity: We adhere to high standards of ethics and professionalism and safeguard the reputation of our universities and the System.
- Innovation: We understand the importance of adapting to changing conditions in the world by being open to new ideas and continuously seeking solutions to challenges.
- Sustainability: We take the long-term view to ensure we are structured and supported to serve the people of Wisconsin for generations to come. We will leave the System better than we found it.

Strategic Objectives

- Enhance the student experience and social mobility.
- Foster civic engagement and serve the public good.
- Create and disseminate knowledge that contributes to innovation and a better understanding of the human condition.
- Advance economic prosperity.

ENHANCE THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE AND SOCIAL MOBILITY

STRATEGIES	UW SYSTEM ADMINISTRATION ROLE	SUCCESS MEASURES
S1. We will increase access to higher education and improve rates of success for historically underserved students.	1.1 Relentlessly pursue student aid resources as a means of removing financial barriers 1.2 Coordinate with the universities to identify and support best practices in collaboration with K-12 schools, technical colleges, and other educational partners to promote transition into, and success at, our universities 1.3 Conduct regular affordability reviews to ensure our universities remain a top value in higher education compared to their peers	Increase access and improve rates of success of historically underserved populations, including low-income, first generation, and underrepresented racial/ethnic minorities. • Close gap in participation of underrepresented students after high school by 50%, increasing participation rates by 7 percentage points for Hispanics, 11 percentage points for Native Americans, and 12 percentage points for African-Americans • Increase Pell-eligible in-state students to 35,000 from 26,000 • Increase enrollment of first-generation new freshmen to 10,000 from 8,400 • Significantly reduce the retention and graduation rate gaps for underserved students, improving System-wide graduation rates for that cohort by 12 percentage points
S2. We will champion student success across the higher education life cycle.	2.1 Support the universities in the provision of robust academic advising, career advising, and mental health support to students 2.2 Assist the universities in expanding high-impact practices to students across the curriculum 2.3 Enhance our focus on achieving a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment for our students 2.4 Work in collaboration with the universities to develop greater online capacity to support hybrid learning for in-residence students 2.5 Assist the universities in enhancing online educational opportunities for adult learners 2.6 Coordinate with the universities to provide state-of-the-art facilities and digital platforms for student learning and academic excellence	Ensure excellence in teaching and learning through evidence-based practices and be national leaders in educating and developing lifelong learners and engaged citizens. • Ensure that all students participate in at least two high impact practices while undergraduate students, primarily focused on educational advancement or enhancing job opportunities • Increase participation of undergraduate students in research activity to at least 25% at each institution • Double the number of proactive engagements with students through (to the extent applicable) the Navigate Student Success platform • Implement and promote use of System-provided virtual well-being services programs on all campuses

	2.7 Review and modify or eliminate any System policies that have a negative impact on the ability of the universities to meet the academic and career advising and student mental health needs	• Increase the number of adult learners enrolled through exclusively online programs across all universities from 5,700 to 10,000
S3. We will promote excellence in teaching and prioritize the recruitment, development, and retention of high-quality, diverse faculty and staff.	3.1 Advance an inclusive and engaging workplace 3.2 Secure the resources to provide competitive compensation packages 3.3 Coordinate with universities to enhance professional development that fosters career progression 3.4 Assist the universities in recruiting, developing, and retaining a high-quality, diverse, and innovative faculty and staff	• Periodically measure employee engagement levels and take appropriate actions to enhance engagement • Increase overall compensation delivered by System institutions to be competitive with peers, through enhancing benefit offerings and salary increases • Distribute $300,000 in competitive grants annually to the universities to enhance faculty and instructional staff professional development • Identify areas of priority staffing needs across the System and develop and implement plans to address those needs • Improve retention, progress to tenure and time- at-institution of individuals from under- represented groups

FOSTER CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND SERVE THE PUBLIC GOOD

STRATEGIES	UW SYSTEM ADMINISTRATION ROLE	SUCCESS MEASURES
S4. We will champion the democratic principles of free expression, academic freedom, and civil discourse.	4.1 Amplify the efforts of the universities to be public advocates and a resource for K-12 schools around free expression, academic freedom, and civil discourse 4.2 Measure student understanding of the First Amendment and principles of civil discourse 4.3 Develop resources for our universities to utilize to preserve and promote these values 4.4 Work with the universities to identify priority areas for strengthening or clarifying policies on cultivating critical thinking, civil discourse, freedom of expression, and academic freedom on all campuses and for all communities	Demonstrate success through survey results reflecting: • Heightened awareness of critical thinking, civil discourse, freedom of expression, and academic freedom • Robust instructional climate of open inquiry and critical thinking
S5. We will ensure our universities are financially and environmentally sustainable so that they are positioned to fulfill their strategic missions.	5.1 Build strong relationships with key stakeholders, including the legislature and business community 5.2 Implement shared services in a cost-effective manner that preserves benefits for our universities 5.3 Assess a campus-flexible approach for periodic tuition adjustments and expanding differential tuition opportunities to fund higher-cost programs 5.4 Provide support to the universities to grow philanthropic giving, including leveraging national foundation requests and System specific grants to support System-wide initiatives 5.5 Champion the effort to allow universities to retain the full benefit of the Wisconsin/Minnesota reciprocity arrangement	Seek to position university budgets to support the objectives of the strategic plan • Increase actions focused on driving cost efficiencies, including increasing the level of shared services offered to the universities, with the goal of achieving cost savings of 10% to 15% • Secure PR bonding authority • Ensure that all capital projects incorporate sustainability and resiliency measures • Increase returns on current resources through prudent management and commonly accepted investment practices Maintain a CFI of 1.1 or greater at all universities, as a general marker of financial health Eliminate structural financial deficits at all universities Improve cybersecurity across the System to protect sensitive and confidential information

	5.6 Advocate for resources for the university, helping stakeholders understand the significant positive economic impact of our institutions and positive consequences for the state of a strong system of higher education 5.7 Identify sound financial vehicles and revenue-securing opportunities for the universities 5.8 Employ zero-based budgeting principles at the UW System Administration level 5.9 Work with applicable universities to develop action/sustainability plans for the two-year campuses to ensure that they are financially viable 5.10 Apply principles of environmental sustainability with respect to the built environment	

CREATE AND DISSEMINATE KNOWLEDGE THAT CONTRIBUTES TO INNOVATION AND A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE HUMAN CONDITION

STRATEGIES	UW SYSTEM ADMINISTRATION ROLE	SUCCESS MEASURES
S6. We will focus on being a global leader in research, scholarship, and creative activity, as well as knowledge dissemination that benefits society.	6.1 Champion the production of knowledge and world-class research within the System, with particular emphasis on support and enhanced funding for the two R1 universities 6.2 Assist our comprehensive universities in identifying and securing enhanced funding for research and creative activities, which are important across all of our campuses 6.3 Work with the universities to expand the focus on environmental sustainability across both the curriculum and the research enterprise 6.4 Coordinate with the universities to respond to state and local challenges with research and policy support 6.5 Assist the universities in increasing research collaborations with industry partners	Ensure a strong research infrastructure • Increase research expenditures throughout the System, including by 15% at UW-Milwaukee and by 10% at comprehensive institutions • Increase the national HERD ranking of UW-Madison to no. 6 • Strengthen UW-Madison's status as a top 10 public university and UW-Milwaukee's R1 status
S7. We will foster a culture of innovation in support of advancing human knowledge and economic prosperity.	7.1 Establish and convene, periodically, a System-wide "think tank" to identify and evaluate innovative concepts 7.2 Create an innovation fund to support new, pilot initiatives at the universities 7.3 Modify Regent and System policies, and advocate for changes in state and federal regulations and statutes, that unnecessarily impede innovation 7.4 Encourage a culture that recognizes that failure is a necessary by-product of an innovative process	Award $1 million annually to support new university-driven initiatives

ADVANCE ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

STRATEGIES	UW SYSTEM ADMINISTRATION ROLE	SUCCESS MEASURES
S8. We will provide support for the universities to drive enrollment to meet the needs of the state and the knowledge economy.	8.1 Coordinate with the universities to support pilot innovative enrollment and transfer initiatives, and create policy flexibility to facilitate innovation 8.2 Leverage the UW brand through an umbrella marketing campaign to drive enrollment 8.3 Work with the universities to develop and evaluate, as appropriate, distance learning resources to complement the needs of adult learners 8.4 Assist the universities in differentiating themselves in the marketplace and establishing centers of excellence	Grow the talent pipeline by graduating 41,000 students annually across the universities. • Increase participation rates of high school graduates from 27% to 34% • Increase the number of transfer students from outside the System from 7,000 to 10,000 per year • Improve overall graduation rates by five percentage points from 70% to 75% • Recruit back and graduate 1,000 former students per year who opted out prior to degree completion
S9. We will engage thoughtfully with the employer community to identify and address employer talent, support, and research needs.	9.1 Encourage and celebrate efforts to provide an exceptional, effective, high-quality education to students that leaves graduates able to succeed professionally and personally 9.2 Work (in consultation with state government agencies) to understand present and future workforce needs for Wisconsin and how our universities can provide a strong talent pipeline 9.3 Seek input from Wisconsin employers regarding curriculum development and program array approvals in light of existing and anticipated talent needs 9.4 Expand access for entrepreneurs and businesses to System consulting resources, networks, and educational resources 9.5 Collaborate with the technical colleges and other institutions of higher education in Wisconsin to address educational opportunities and program array 9.6 Develop, as appropriate, micro-credentials and certificates and professional development activities	Engage 500,000 state residents per year in Workforce/ Career Education/Professional Development, Community Engagement, and other high-demand programs. • Ensure professional development activities remain 75% of total of all activity • Increase non-credit students served by each institution by a specific percentage per year • Develop and document a broad-based array of micro-credential programs to support specific workforce demand areas Increase the percentage of new System graduates who remain in Wisconsin three years after graduation from 72% to 80% Periodically survey Wisconsin employers and provide resulting data to the universities to inform their academic planning and career advising