



UNIVERSITY
AT ALBANY

State University of New York

University at Albany
Strategic Plan
2017-2020

DRAFT
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PURPOSE OF THIS PLAN

The University at Albany is at an important moment in its history. Over the past decade, our university has built considerable momentum, adopted many innovative new practices, and launched the largest academic expansion in 50 years. We have also weathered the challenges of the Great Recession and leadership transitions. UAlbany like many public research universities is operating within a challenging national context marked by growing uncertainty about the existing model of higher education; changing expectations from students, parents, alumni, policymakers and employers; profound demographic and cultural shifts; and increasing pressures on higher education from many quarters. As it has done many times in its history, the University at Albany is addressing these challenges to change with changing times. This strategic plan provides a mechanism for creating a shared way forward for the university.

This plan is offered as both a road map and a support system to guide and nurture University-wide improvements over the next three years designed to increase our capacity for scholarship, strengthen our Research I designation, ensure access to academic excellence for our students, and better align our efforts across operational units to our institutional mission. It has been crafted for and by the people of UAlbany, and it is meant to inspire and unify us so that we can team up to evolve our programs and practices, to better serve our mission, our students and each other, and to improve and grow as individual professionals and as a community of practice.

The ideas embodied in this plan emerged from dozens of conversations held among hundreds of university stakeholders over an entire academic year. It is offered in the spirit of optimistic collaboration that has long been a hallmark of the University at Albany. Not everything discussed in the planning process is included in this plan, nor should that all be. This plan's purpose is to focus effort over the next 3 years on key initiatives. There are many critical and important activities that must proceed even though they are not explicitly called out here.

MISSION & VISION

Mission: The University at Albany: Excellence in scholarship, research, creative work, and public engagement that inspires and empowers 21st century scholars and learners to transform themselves, our communities, and the world.

A public research university expresses its value through the application of discovery—be it preparing the next generation in exceptional teaching and learning experiences, or any number of avenues for public engagement, such as partnerships for economic development or solutions to complex social challenges. The University at Albany is continuing its illustrious track record of outstanding contributions to discovery and knowledge creation. From its beginnings as a normal school founded in 1844 it has developed into a public research university of the State University of New York, the largest public higher education system in America. Our faculty have always been scholars and teachers who drive the engines of excellence and opportunity for the University, New York's Capital region, and beyond. As today's stewards of this great public asset called the University at Albany, it is incumbent upon us to continue to foster academic innovation and to cultivate the University's continual evolution toward a future of excellence.

Vision: The University at Albany will define the publicly engaged research university. As a result, we will be a valued driver and partner for academic excellence, regional and global innovation, and economic opportunity.

The University's prior 2010 Strategic Plan had broad goals and notable achievements were made toward each, particularly in the teaching and learning domain of our mission. Six years later, the University's current expansion plans are unfolding in the context of financial, political, and demographic challenges. Ongoing success requires a collective focus on a set of strategies to develop our faculty and staff, to improve our academic and administrative operations, to strengthen our academic and scholarly accomplishments, and to generate a greater number of innovative program offerings, particularly at the Master's level, for students who are prepared for rigorous study and training at a dynamic public research university. Doing so will advance our crucial status as a Research I institution, burnish our institutional

reputation as one of America's great public research universities, maximize revenues to finance the mission, and increase our capacity to be a valued partner in improving the lives of people, our communities and the world.

STRATEGIC IMPERATIVES

This plan is built on a “3 by 3 by 3” framework: three big imperatives, each supported by three strategic initiatives, all dependent on the other over a three-year horizon. The first imperative is to **foster our culture of excellence** by intentionally investing in the development of faculty and staff as academic leaders and professionals. The second imperative is to **innovate our programs** and optimize our enrollments to better prepare students to meet 21st century societal challenges. To do this we must strategically shape the university's student profile, program mix, disciplinary mix and brand image. The third imperative calls us to **strengthen our research**, which broadly refers to research, scholarship, and creative activities. Strategic focus on strengthening our institutional culture for scholarly excellence and faculty achievement will advance our status as a Research I university and ensure that our students have access to academic excellence unique to a public research university.



Imperative 1: Foster Our Culture of Excellence

- 1.1 Faculty Development
- 1.2 Leadership Development
- 1.3 Service Excellence

Imperative 2: Innovate Our Programs

- 2.1 Academic Innovation
- 2.2 Strategic Enrollment Management
- 2.3 Brand and Identity

Imperative 3: Strengthen Our Research

- 3.1 Culture and Portfolio
- 3.2 Fuse Research and Learning
- 3.3 Research Infrastructure

Imperative 1: Foster a Culture of Excellence by Developing Our Faculty and Staff

Strategic Initiative 1.1 – Build and nurture faculty development programs that will better enable all faculty to more effectively foster student learning; conduct high-impact research, scholarship and creative activities; and engage collaboratively as full partners in improving the university.

Strategic Initiative 1.2 – Create and expand leadership development programs for faculty and staff to improve our capacities for leading the academic enterprise through strategic thinking, planning and management; data-driven decision making; inclusive excellence; and continuous improvement.

Strategic Initiative 1.3 – Design and implement a comprehensive set of actions to foster a culture of service excellence that will support faculty success, improve the student experience, increase employee satisfaction, foster alumni loyalty and further burnish the reputation of the University at Albany as a 21st century public research university.

Imperative 2: Innovate Programs to Meet 21st Century Societal Challenges

Strategic Initiative 2.1 – Foster an environment that promotes dynamic academic innovation across the boundaries of today's disciplines, departments and colleges. Engage the faculty in defining the mix of programs, particularly at the master's and doctoral levels, that will enable UAlbany to develop a competitive advantage, to better articulate the contemporary role of the arts and humanities, and to enhance our identity as a public research university.

Strategic Initiative 2.2 – Define the student body profile such as the ratio of graduate to undergraduate enrollment, demographics and diversity, and academic qualifications to reflect the importance of ensuring access to academic excellence, a rigorous educational experience grounded in a research-based curriculum, and student readiness and success.

Strategic Initiative 2.3 – Build a more compelling institutional brand by aligning institutional identity, external image, and identities of the units to enhance our reputation and ability to compete for the people and resources necessary to succeed as a 21st century research university.

Imperative 3: Strengthen Our Research, Scholarship, Creative Activities, and Status as a Research I University

Strategic Initiative 3.1 – Advance a culture of scholarly excellence. Develop a broader, more rigorous and competitive portfolio of research, scholarship and creative activity.

Strategic Initiative 3.2 — Infuse research into all learning environments, both formal and co-curricular, to ensure that students at every level are engaged in a rigorous course of study and academic training.

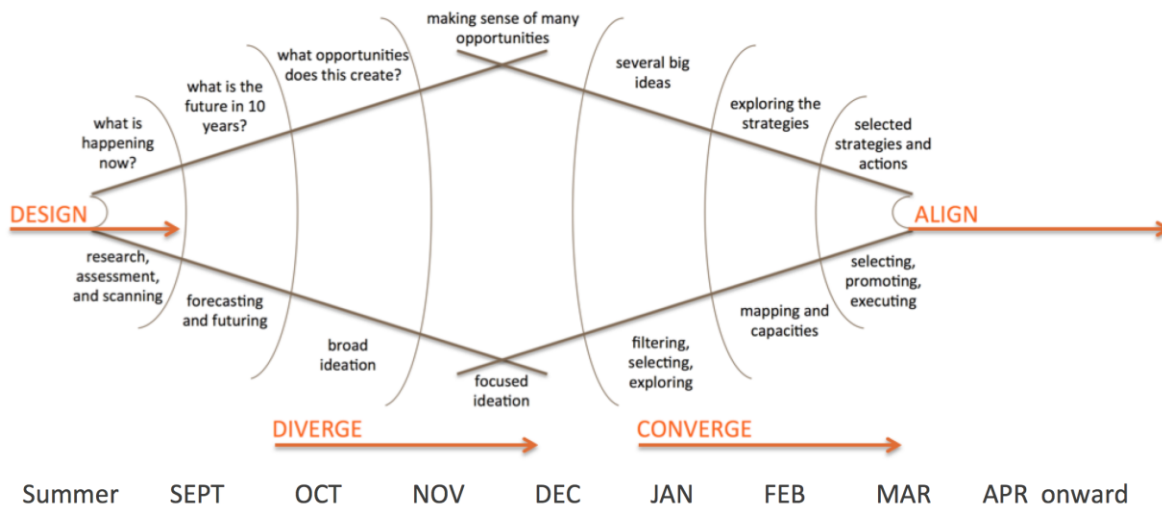
Strategic Initiative 3.3 — Optimize the research infrastructure including systems, processes, policies and incentives that better supports the faculty capacity for scholarly pursuits.

IMPLEMENTING STRATEGY

The strategic planning process, which began in mid-2016 and continued through summer of 2017, was intentionally broad and participative. Numerous events engaged hundreds of faculty and staff across all divisions and units of the university. The process employed a design thinking approach that first generated hundreds of ideas, then thoughtfully and iteratively selected down to the core imperatives and initiatives presented in this document. Full details are available on the Strategic Planning web site (<http://www.albany.edu/strategicplan/>).

5 areas of focus 18 futuring papers 476 current/future forces 300 opportunities/actions 35 big ideas 10 low-res initial expeditions 3 Imperatives, 9 Strategic Initiatives 9 High-Res Expedition Maps

design → divergent thinking → convergent planning → alignment



By focusing on the three strategic imperatives of programmatic offerings and our curriculum, becoming a stronger public research university, and building a culture of excellence through a deliberate focus on the development of our people over the next three years we seek to establish positions of strength in the core areas from which this University can pursue longer-term signature strategic goals. The imperatives in this strategic plan should be achievable within a three-year time frame by executing a number of carefully designed tactical initiatives that will strengthen the institutional foundations. We will take an expeditionary approach to strategy implementation, establishing short-term actions and goals for each Strategic Initiative, tracking progress, and adjusting course as necessary as changes occur in the environment. These efforts will position the University, under the leadership of its next permanent president, to develop and pursue new signature strategic initiatives which will further differentiate the University at Albany in the universe of R1 public research universities.