

Breaking Through: 2017-2022

A Strategic Plan for the University of Wyoming

Preamble

At the “gateway” to the University of Wyoming, a woman rider breaking through a sandstone wall welcomes all to campus. “Breakin’ Through” captures the spirit of Wyoming and its university: Our students break through to the future for the Cowboy State *and* the Equality State.

Wyoming’s dual identity has shaped this university from its origins through to the present day. John Hoyt, as territorial governor and UW’s first president, was determined that Wyoming’s lack of statehood would not stand in the way of its citizens’ access to higher education. If the Morrill Act excluded territories from the land-grant mission, he decided, that was no reason to wait to build Wyoming’s university. Indeed, the law would have to change. So, he “broke through”—twice. He worked with western governors to get the Morrill Act changed, eventually allowing UW to become a land-grant university. And, in 1887, three years before Wyoming became a state, this university opened its doors to 42 students and five faculty members. On this first day, the university became the flagship for Wyoming’s future. It welcomed women and men alike. Then in 1890, when Wyoming gained statehood, the state’s first legislators went further. Recognizing the rich humanity that made up their new state, they declared that UW should stand “equally open to students of both sexes, irrespective of race or color.” Wyoming’s university ushered in the “Equality State.”

Here, on the high plains of a windswept territory, John Hoyt built the foundations for a world-class university. His UW was the flagship for a state, meeting the wide land-grant mission “to promote the liberal and practical education of the industrial classes in the several pursuits and professions of life.” Its trademark became innovation and ingenuity in pursuit of educational access, excellence and relevance. For Hoyt, this heritage mandated that UW provide its students with a complete education, one that balanced Agriculture and Engineering with Arts and Humanities. With that aim, he provided a rich curriculum, teaching classes from History to Engineering, while his wife, Elizabeth, took on Psychology and Logic. Hoyt set the pattern for generations of Wyoming faculty, who “break through” to bring their students tomorrow’s opportunities today.

Hoyt’s refusal to accept barriers for Wyoming, its citizens and the education that the state’s university would offer to all of its students set the tone for UW’s future. To this flagship and land-grant university, student opportunity is everything. Indeed, the University of Wyoming is poised to break through once again.

Vision

As the Equality State’s university, we strive to break through barriers and explore new frontiers of teaching and learning. Through the unfettered pursuit of knowledge, we aim to apply innovation, intelligence and tenacity to meet the economic, social and environmental challenges of today, and to create a sustainable, diverse and equitable world without borders for tomorrow.

Mission

We honor our heritage as the state's flagship and land-grant university by providing accessible and affordable higher education of the highest quality; rigorous scholarship; the communication and application of knowledge; economic and community development; and responsible stewardship of our cultural, historical and natural resources.

In the exercise of our primary mission to promote learning, we seek to provide academic and co-curricular opportunities that will:

- Graduate students who have experienced the frontiers of scholarship and creative activity and who are prepared for the complexities of an interdependent world;
- Cultivate a community of learning energized by collaborative work among students, faculty, staff and external partners.
- Nurture an environment that values and manifests diversity, internationalization, free expression, academic freedom, personal integrity and mutual respect; and
- Promote opportunities for personal health and growth, physical health, athletic competition and leadership development for all members of the university community.

As Wyoming's only public university, we are committed to scholarship, outreach and service that extend our human talent and technological capacity to serve the people in our communities, our state, the nation and the world.

Values

Our values represent beliefs and principles that drive the culture and priorities of the entire university community and provide the crucial framework within which decisions are made. Regardless of role, student, faculty, staff, trustee, alumni and other stakeholders alike recognize the importance of embedding these values in their day-to-day activities to assure that the institution and its graduates succeed and are exemplars of the best of Wyoming and the world.

Exploration and Discovery

Free, open and unfettered exploration and discovery supported by rigorous peer review and the communication and application of that scholarship, constitute the core principles and practices of this university.

Innovation and Application

Creative thinking leads to new knowledge, inspires student achievement and brings practical innovation to our communities.

Disciplinarity and Interdisciplinarity

Knowledge advances through intense and focused study and also in the intersection of ideas and disciplines. UW cultivates the energy of individual and collaborative advances.

Integrity and Responsibility

Outstanding teaching, learning and scholarship rely on the principles of integrity, responsibility and trust throughout our community.

Diversity and Internationalization

A diverse and international community that includes and respects different ethnicities, genders, sexualities, abilities, cultures and worldviews multiplies our capacity to explore, innovate and educate.

Engagement and Communication

Engagement with local, state, tribal, national and global constituencies inspires our daily work. We are committed to active outreach and clear communication with our extensive communities.

Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Driving Excellence

Join together as an intellectual community already renowned for its regional, national and global relevance and impact by fostering and rewarding excellence in teaching, scholarship, innovation and creative endeavor.

Promote and strengthen the university as a scholarly and creative enterprise

- Build national reputation and stature through strategic initiatives
- Elevate expectations for research and creative activities
- Expand capacity of the Office of Research and Economic Development
- Invest in computational and library resources and fund seed grants

Foster entrepreneurship and collaboration in research and teaching that bridge disciplines and engage public concerns

- Fully recognize the role of interdisciplinarity and integration in teaching, research, service and outreach in performance evaluations and tenure and promotion decisions
- Promote academic programs that address workforce needs of the state and region

Enhance local and global relevance, engagement and impact by recruiting a regional, national, international and diverse community of students and faculty

- Establish an Office of Global Engagement to expand recruitment of international students and broaden the exposure of faculty and students to international events and cultures
- Increase faculty and student participation in programs abroad
- Grow interactions with historically black, Hispanic-serving and tribal colleges, as well as international institutions of higher learning

Achieve consistently excellent teaching and mentoring that give students the knowledge, ability, determination and innovation to meet tomorrow's challenges with sustainable solutions

- Develop a professional advising program for students that includes services centralized in colleges

- Incentivize revision and development of courses and curricula that includes technology-enhanced learning, online delivery and high-impact teaching practices
- Embrace informed and innovative approaches to assessment and improvement of student learning

Goal 2: Inspiring Students

Inspire students to pursue a productive, engaged and fulfilling life and prepare them to succeed in a sustainable global economy.

Welcome, support and graduate students of differing backgrounds, abilities and needs and from different cultures, communities and nations

- Implement a student-centric enrollment management strategy to grow enrollment and enhance recruitment and retention of students
- Enhance our relationship with Wyoming and regional high schools through visits and pre-college summer and academic opportunities on campus
- Establish dual-enrollment, program articulation and other transfer processes with the state's community colleges
- Improve retention, 4-year and 6-year graduation rates for undergraduates and graduation rates for graduate and professional students
- Build new living and learning communities to enhance retention
- Augment student support services to ensure that students thrive emotionally and physically
- Grow the number of students at a distance enrolled in hybrid and fully online degree programs
- Offer programming on diversity and inclusion through the office of the chief diversity officer

Engage and graduate well-rounded and creative thinkers, capable of meeting unpredictable and complex challenges

- Provide high-impact learning experiences in research, creative activities, internationalization, internships, entrepreneurship, leadership and community service
- Incentivize greater faculty and staff involvement in student life
- Institute an experiential transcript
- Expand career placement services

Build pathways to academic, cultural, professional and entrepreneurial opportunity and leadership at undergraduate and graduate levels

- Establish an Honors College
- Establish an office to support graduate education
- Establish a center for entrepreneurship and infuse innovation throughout the curriculum
- Establish a center for integrated STEM education to support the engineering, science and trustees' education initiatives
- Expand and grow quality of undergraduate and graduate scholarly experiences

Goal 3: Impacting Communities

Improve and enhance the health and well-being of our communities and environments through outreach programs and in collaboration with our constituents and partners.

Facilitate collaboration between the university and its constituents to address complex economic, environmental and social challenges through research, education, entrepreneurship, economic diversification and growth

- Establish an Office of Engagement and Outreach
- Support economic development in Wyoming through ENDOW and other opportunities
- Enhance extension programming

Build a statewide community of learners by collaborating with schools, community colleges and tribal nations to connect students and citizens

- Bring outreach educational and cultural opportunities to the state
- Expand partnerships with the Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho tribes

Engage strong and celebratory alumni who connect UW to regional, national and international communities, welcome graduates into a lifetime association with the university, and boost all our endeavors through a culture of giving

- Engage in a variety of strategies to establish contact with a greater number of alumni
- Engage alumni in student recruitment and mentoring
- Develop and promote competitive athletic teams that conjure enthusiasm and pride for UW

Goal 4: A High-Performing University

Assure the long-term strength and stability of the university by preserving, caring for and developing human, intellectual, financial, structural and marketing resources.

Build human capital

- Enhance workplace conditions to recruit, retain and reward all UW employees and encourage innovation and commitment
- Implement career ladders for staff
- Provide and incentivize participation in professional development that enhances technical skills of employees
- Develop mentoring and leadership programs for faculty and staff
- Increase the number of endowed faculty positions, including new types such as distinguished professorships, or state engagement professorships
- Hire strategically to ensure robust disciplinary and interdisciplinary scholarship and to support academic and co-curricular opportunities that meet the needs of 21st century students

Strengthen marketing effectiveness

- Effectively communicate UW's opportunities to prospective students, regional partners and national and global markets
- Institute a centralized plan that tells our story and positions UW for recognition in all of these contexts
- Develop a comprehensive branding, public relations and marketing campaign

Enhance financial resources

- Stabilize, diversify and enhance revenue streams
- Launch a substantial and strategic capital campaign
- Develop a coordinated plan for managing intellectual property, entrepreneurship and technology development and transfer
- Drive operating efficiencies to save costs while maintaining services

- Analyze tuition and fee structure

Enhance institutional operations and planning

- Build a more highly functioning university by embracing transparency at all levels of administration and operations as well as by streamlining, updating and consistently implementing governing regulations and policies
- Create and implement university-wide plans such as a campus master plan, housing plan, capital and fiscal plans
- Create and implement metric-based strategic plans for all university units
- Honor UW’s commitment to the environment by instituting sustainability initiatives in daily operations, renovations and new construction

Measuring Success

Goal 1: Driving Excellence

Join together as an intellectual community already renowned for its regional, national and global relevance and impact by fostering and rewarding excellence in teaching, scholarship, innovation and creative endeavor.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	BASELINE	2022 TARGET
Changes in external recognition of scholarly work	Invest in a database	1 decile improvement from baseline indicators
External research funding: awards and expenditures	\$95.33 M external awards/\$106 M in expenditures for 2016	\$115 M External funding
Income-bearing IP licenses	2 to 3 per year	5 or more per year
Degree programs created, substantially modified, or eliminated	192 degree and certificate programs	8 new academic programs; 4 modified or eliminated
Number of international students (undergraduate and graduate)	791	1,050
Number of students and faculty participants in study abroad	425: 395 students, 30 faculty	650 students and faculty

Goal 2: Inspiring Students

Inspire students to pursue a productive, engaged and fulfilling life and prepare them to succeed in a sustainable global economy.

Overall enrollment (enrollment growth projected for both in-state and out-of-state students)	12,366	13,500
Enrollment of transfer students	967	1,200
Enrollment of underrepresented students	13%	17%

Retention rate for FTFT (First-time, full-time, baccalaureate degree-seeking)	76%	80%
Construction of new residence halls	Create a 10-year plan for student housing	10-year plan in implementation; 2-3 new residence halls in construction or completed
Student participation in support services	16%	25%
4- and 6-year graduate rates for undergraduates	25.8%/54.4%	33%/60%
Percentage of students completing an experiential transcript	Institute co-curricular transcript	25% of seniors have co-curricular transcript
Placement one year following graduation	TBD from new database	85% in jobs or advanced degree programs
Percent of graduates with credential from Honors College	4%	8%

Goal 3: Impacting Communities

Improve and enhance the health and well-being of our communities and environments through outreach programs and in collaboration with our constituents and partners.

Carnegie community engagement classification	Not designated	Qualified to submit for 2024 deadline
Attendance at intercollegiate athletics events	275,372	310,000

Goal 4: A High-Performing University

Assure the long-term strength and stability of the University by preserving, caring for and developing human, intellectual, financial, structural and marketing resources.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	BASELINE	2022 TARGET
Campus climate and environment	Fall 2018 campus climate survey	TBD from survey data
Employee job satisfaction	Participate in Chronicle of Higher Education "Great Colleges" job satisfaction survey	Improvement from 2017 baseline
Number of endowed faculty positions	36	60
Total annual university revenue	\$505.6 M	\$555 M
Growth of university endowment	\$450 M	\$650 M
Deployment and full utilization of Enterprise Management Systems	Underway	Completion
Implementation of an incentive-based, decentralized budgeting	Beginning	Completion

system		
Review and update of all university regulations and policies	Underway	Completion
Campus Sustainability Ranking (STARS)	Not designated	Bronze

The Process

The University of Wyoming Board of Trustees in July 2017 adopted “Breaking Through 2017-2022: A Strategic Plan for the University of Wyoming” following an extensive planning process that began in September 2016.

Leadership Council: The process began with a kickoff event at the Marian H. Rochelle Gateway Center, where members of the Strategic Planning Leadership Council were announced. The council was appointed by President Laurie Nichols, following consultation with campus constituency groups, to provide overarching leadership for development of an integrated, comprehensive strategic plan to guide the university for the next five years. The president solicited nominations and received 175 nominations of 117 individuals (some people were nominated multiple times). A website, www.uwyo.edu/president/strategic-plans, was established to inform the campus community and the public throughout the strategic planning process.

Campus Listening Sessions: The leadership council, headed by Provost Kate Miller, directed a series of campuswide dialogue and listening sessions on 12 different topics in November, December and January. The sessions were led by leaders selected by the council from among UW’s faculty and staff. Input was recorded and reported to the leadership council.

Unit Meetings: Separately, Provost Miller and members of the leadership council met with individual colleges, departments and units to discuss priorities and strategies to help shape the future.

Statewide Listening Sessions: A series of statewide listening sessions also was conducted by President Nichols in Jackson, Cody, Torrington, Rock Springs, Riverton, Casper, Cheyenne, Laramie, Gillette and Sheridan in November and December. The sessions were attended by hundreds of people, and their input was recorded and reported to the leadership council.

First Draft and Town-Hall Meetings: The leadership council began crafting the strategic plan in February and released a first draft in March, inviting the public to comment on it. The council also conducted four town-hall meetings in April, three in Laramie and one in Casper streamed live on the web, to present the draft and receive input. The draft also was presented to the Board of Trustees for its input.

Constituent Groups' Input: Other constituent groups – including the UW Foundation board, the UW Alumni Association board, the UW Faculty Senate and the UW Staff Senate – received drafts of the plan, with invitations to provide input.

Revisions and Completion: Based upon all input received, the leadership council and UW's administration produced multiple revisions of the strategic plan document before presenting it to the Board of Trustees before the July 18-21 meeting in Rock Springs, where it was approved unanimously.

Acknowledgements

The 2016 – 2017 strategic planning process for the University of Wyoming was led by a Leadership Council composed of the following individuals:

Kate Miller, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs (Chair)
Klint Alexander, Dean, College of Law
Susan Aronstein, Interim Director, Honors Program
Michael Barker, Professor, Department of Civil and Architectural Engineering
Diane Boyle, Professor, School of Nursing
April Brimmer Kunz, Member, UW Foundation Board, Cheyenne
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Keener Fry, Executive Director, UW Alumni Association
Bill Gern, Vice President for Research and Economic Development
Bill Mai, Vice President for Administration

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Athletics: Alyson Hagy, Faculty Athletic Representative, and Joi Thomas, Athletics

University Structures & Organization: Jacquelyn Bridgeman, College of Law, and John Mittelstaedt, College of Business

Extended Education/Lifelong Learning: Meg VanBaalen Wood, Ellbogen Center for Teaching and Learning, and Karen Bartsch Estes, College of Arts and Sciences

Undergraduate Recruiting & Enrollment: Chip Kobulnicky, College of Arts and Sciences, and Mary Aguayo, Office of Student Affairs

Diversity/Inclusion/Internationalization: CeCe Aragon, College of Arts and Sciences, and Dave Messenger, College of Arts and Sciences

Academic Programs, Curriculum, Academic Quality: Ricki Klages, College of Arts and Sciences, and Derek Smith, College of Health Sciences

Information Technology: Jen Chavez, Information Technology, and Dimitri Mavriplis, College of Engineering and Applied Science

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Research, Scholarship and Graduate Education: Bryan Shader, Office of Research, and Suzie Young, College of Education

Engagement, Outreach, Economic Development and Vibrant Communities: Jeff Clune, College of Engineering and Applied Science, and Mark Northam, School of Energy Resources

Resource Realignment, Revenue and Budgeting Modeling: Rob Godby, College of Business, and Steve Smutko, Haub School of Environment and Natural Resources

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