



STRATEGIC PLAN

JULY 2021 - JUNE 2026



Student Affairs

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN



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EXPERIENCE ILLINOIS

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

In the fall of 2018, the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign announced its new strategic plan, “The Next 150.” In alignment with the university’s academic mission and strategic goals, we created the Student Affairs Strategic Plan to articulate our vision, mission, values, and goals.

As our mission states, Student Affairs is a community that fosters belonging, imagines possibilities, enhances learning, and makes a societal impact. We provide quality programs, services, facilities, and living environments that empower students to succeed at Illinois.

We serve students by delivering transformative learning experiences, placing student success at the center of our work, supporting holistic health, encouraging accountability and responsibility, and promoting equity and inclusion to ensure justice. The 2021-2026 Strategic Plan incorporates the ideas of the Student Affairs community and campus partners creating a roadmap to achieve our mission.

The Student Affairs Strategic Plan encourages collaboration toward achieving shared goals for the betterment of Illinois students. Student Affairs units will craft complementary goals to fulfill their unique missions. Progress on the Strategic Plan will be reported annually.

The Student Affairs Strategic Plan is our guide to help students fully experience Illinois.

In Orange and Blue,

Dr. Danita M. B. Young

Dr. Danita M. B. Young
Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs



INTRODUCTION AND PROCESS



Student Affairs supports and fulfills the mission of the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign to enhance the lives of the people in Illinois, across the nation, and around the world through leadership in learning, discovery, engagement, and economic development. When the university announced “The Next 150” Strategic Plan at the close of the fall 2018 semester, Student Affairs devised a planning process for our own strategic plan that would build upon, define, and enhance the university plan with student success and engagement at the core of our efforts.

PROCESS

The Student Affairs Leadership Team charged Student Affairs staff members and students to serve on the Student Affairs Strategic Planning Team (SASPT) in summer 2019. The team was charged to lead an inclusive, transparent, and collaborative planning process that was informed by data, engaged a broad base of Student Affairs staff, students, and stakeholders, and create public trust and value for the plan.



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In September 2019, the SASPT identified important campus and community stakeholders to their work in Student Affairs, inviting nominees from Student Affairs directors, department heads, and leadership team who would be purposefully engaged throughout the planning process. From this list of stakeholders, work groups were identified to develop vision, mission, and values statements that guide the decision-making processes and inspired future directions. Through a series of meetings, these work teams developed statements that were shared with staff members for further input and comment before final submission for Student Affairs leadership team review and approval.

In November 2019, the SASPT hosted a series of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Challenges (SWOC) summits with identified stakeholders to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats for the current context of the division, describe the division's distinctive competencies, and identify factors critical to the current and future success of Student Affairs. The summits were guided and brainstorming sessions designed to gather diverse perspectives as participants identified themes individually and collectively. Data from all summits were combined, sorted and published on the planning website for public consumption and input. In January 2020, the SASPT used that data and public feedback to identify the key questions and issues that the Student Affairs plan must answer in the next five years, and then began the process of identifying the strategic initiatives to pursue. This iterative process was marked by months of feedback and revision by the team.

The Student Affairs Strategic Plan builds on the four fundamental goals of the university's "The Next 150" campus Strategic Plan. The SASPT organized initiatives into ten themes and again sought feedback from stakeholders inside and outside of Student Affairs through publicly sharing the draft document, presentations to units, and providing an open comment period. SASPT members met individually with each commenter who requested follow-up. SASPT continued to evaluate and incorporate relevant feedback until it was finalized in December 2019.



CONTEXT

No strategic plan is created in a vacuum and it is important to recognize the historical context that influenced the creation of the plan. We acknowledge that the university is on the lands of the Peoria, Kaskaskia, Piankashaw, Wea, Miami, Mascoutin, Odawa, Sauk, Mesquaki, Kickapoo, Potawatomi, Ojibwe, and Chickasaw Nations. These lands were the traditional territory of these Native Nations prior to their forced removal; these lands continue to carry the stories of these Nations and their struggles for survival and identity. We have a responsibility to acknowledge the peoples of these lands as well as the histories of dispossession that have allowed for the growth of this institution for the past 150 years. In the creation of the Student Affairs strategic plan, we actively reflected on this history, the role the university played, and worked to center marginalized voices.

In March 2020, the university transitioned to fully remote instruction in response to the COVID-19 pandemic causing Student Affairs professionals to reinvent their work to support students. The global pandemic has impacted all aspects of university life including a reduction in fiscal resources, increased demand for virtual services, and a campus commitment to improved physical and mental health. The pandemic had significant impact on what was included in the strategic plan and will no doubt raise significant obstacles to overcome as we strive to fulfill it.

Also in spring 2020, the movement for Black lives, criminal justice inequality, and a national reckoning with the systematic oppression of marginalized people drew overdue national attention. Justice is a fundamental value of Student Affairs and its work to promote equity and inclusion will continue to be an essential cornerstone of the division. The seismic events of the pandemic and the movement for Black lives had significant effects on the final product of the strategic plan.

These initiatives chart a bold future for Student Affairs that will enhance learning, foster community and belonging, and make a considerable impact on the campus community.





VISION

A community of excellence inspiring holistic growth and development for every student.



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MISSION

Student Affairs is a community that fosters belonging, imagines possibilities, enhances learning, and makes a societal impact.



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VALUES

Student-Centered:

We ensure all initiatives include a student voice and act in the best interest of students. Our work is grounded in service with student success at the heart of our efforts.

Justice:

We work to foster a just, inclusive, and fair campus environment where everyone in the Illinois community is treated equitably. We champion respect for each other, collaborative and inclusive decision-making, individual stories, and diverse perspectives.

Learning:

We are committed to a transformative learning process that is innovative, forward thinking, and inspires excellence. As educators, we value theory-driven and evidence-based practices to challenge and support student growth, knowledge, and understanding.

Wellness:

We support and encourage the holistic health of all members of the Illinois community. We understand that our well-being has significant impact on our ability to achieve our goals.

Integrity:

We strive for a community that acts with honesty, transparency, and in accordance with the highest ethical standards. We are a community that is accountable to one another, to the wider Illinois community, and beyond.



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GOALS AND INITIATIVES



150 GOAL 1:

FOSTER SCHOLARSHIP, DISCOVERY, AND INNOVATION

Student Affairs ensures the quality of learning by fostering a culture of assessment to enhance student learning, improve program effectiveness, and strengthen service implementation. We will use theory-driven, evidence-based, and culturally relevant practices to improve the student experience.

A. Assessment and Evaluation

- i. Promote and implement common division-wide data collection best practices to make data-informed decisions on student programs and services.
- ii. Create unit-level assessment plans that utilize student learning outcomes, student performance data, and tracking/analytics to inform programmatic, human resource, and financial decision-making.
- iii. Ensure the quality of learning by creating and sharing learning outcomes for all units that are consistent with campus-wide student learning outcomes.
- iv. Track and utilize student demographic trends to ensure our programs and services best serve our student population.
- v. Increase the division-wide capacity for assessment by offering regular professional development opportunities and connecting staff to assessment learning opportunities.
- vi. Identify and address gaps in data access, human, and financial resources to grow a culture of assessment that utilizes data to improve student learning and success.





150 GOAL 2: **PROVIDE TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING EXPERIENCES**

Student Affairs supports student learning and development, holistic health and well-being, and socially just practices through our co-curricular programs and services. We foster a collaborative culture that promotes a shared purpose to empower students to reach their highest potential.

B. Health and Well-Being

- i. Increase staffing and resources to strengthen mental health services to students.
- ii. Improve student overall health and wellness by coordinating wellness education, physical activity, prevention strategies, and resources.
- iii. Develop and implement collaborative well-being services and programs with a concentrated focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- iv. Invest time and resources to address student food insecurity.
- v. Lead the university's efforts to support students in emergencies and spearhead robust fundraising efforts geared toward student emergencies.
- vi. Reduce risk of targeted violence through early intervention and proactive community engagement.



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C. Equity, Inclusion, and Justice

- i. All Student Affairs units will engage in a systematic review of their policies and practices to ensure equity, inclusion, and justice. This includes valuing the voices of marginalized communities, engaging in training/development, participating in decolonization practices, and deconstructing policies that sustain systematic oppression and white supremacy.
- ii. Integrate and emphasize global perspectives within our work and benefit from the international diversity of our students, faculty, and staff.
- iii. Prepare students for living in a diverse, globally minded society through student-life activities, academic coursework, and international experiences that promote social justice and inclusion.
- iv. Increase the reach of social justice training and initiatives to attract and impact the entire campus community.
- v. Enhance support for students with diverse abilities to ensure that all students have the same opportunity to acquire information and receive services.
- vi. Collaborate with campus partners to conduct climate surveys at regular intervals and use the results to reduce inequality and expand socially just practices.

D. Leadership Development and Career Development

- i. Develop students to be leaders who work with others to create positive change in teams, organizations, and their communities.
- ii. Advise, coach, and mentor students to connect academic and co-curricular experiences with their career aspirations, civic engagement, and professional development.
- iii. Develop a more comprehensive approach to student organization support that includes leadership training, enhanced business operations, and improved event management.





E. Civic Engagement and Community Accountability

- i. Increase student opportunities for service learning, volunteerism, and internships through campus, local, tribal, national and international organizations.
- ii. Expand opportunities for students to explore their role in creating community change through civic education and democratic engagement.
- iii. Support the community standards of the university by promoting ethical decision making, encouraging personal and social responsibility, and facilitating the effective resolution of conflict.

F. Technology for Learning

- i. Innovate and deliver programs and services in a variety of formats to create a seamless and inclusive learning experience.
- ii. Explore and incorporate technologies to support digital learning in co-curricular programs and services.



150 GOAL 3:

MAKE A SIGNIFICANT AND VISIBLE SOCIETAL IMPACT

Student Affairs embraces our role as a community partner and will collaborate and communicate with all stakeholders to enhance the student experience and fulfill our public engagement mission.

G. Collaboration and Community Partnerships

- i. Enhance partnerships with state, local agencies, and tribal governments to further the mission of public engagement.
- ii. Create more opportunities for students to directly shape their Illinois experience.
- iii. Audit existing student services and programs to identify intersections and potential areas for increased collaboration.
- iv. Work with campus partners to address unmet student financial need and advocate to address barriers in financial aid policy review.
- v. Partner with academic affairs to develop a campus center for academic support.
- vi. Develop a comprehensive orientation, transition, and first-year experience program for new students, in partnership with campus stakeholders.

H. Marketing and Communication

- i. Develop and execute an integrated, coordinated, and sustained marketing and communications plan.
- ii. Establish a current, unified, and accessible web presence for Student Affairs departments.





150 GOAL 4:

STEWARD CURRENT RESOURCES AND GENERATE ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Student Affairs recognizes that employees are our most valuable resource and is dedicated to supporting a team that enhances the student experience. We embrace continuous improvement by stewarding fiscal, technological, physical, and human resources to improve our programs and services.

I. Fiscal and Capital Resources

- i. Increase capacity, scale efficiencies, and improve service quality while addressing the specialized needs of units through shared services and collaboration.
- ii. Develop an ongoing collaborative approach to fiscal and capital planning initiatives that promotes space optimization, greater equity, and stewardship of resources across the division.
- iii. Build transparency and improve understanding of budget, accounting, and financial planning for all divisional employees to foster trust, stewardship, and collaboration.
- iv. Establish continual business process improvement methodology to simplify the student experience, to reduce costs, and to enhance productivity.
- v. Develop a long-term divisional strategy to expand Student Affairs advancement.





J. Human Resources

- i. Engage in compensation and benefit benchmarking and address deficiencies to ensure we retain and attract high-quality student affairs professionals.
- ii. Improve efficiency and reduce the length of vacant positions by developing training materials while sharing and refining hiring practices.
- iii. Commit to hiring diverse, high-quality student affairs professionals.
- iv. Develop a division-wide professional development strategy focused on enriching and retaining talented professionals.



THE NEXT 150

Student Affairs Strategic Plan Theme Mapping

The chart below represents the ways the Student Affairs Strategic Plan maps to various goals in university’s strategic plan, The Next 150.

Student Affairs Strategic Themes		The Next 150 Goals			
		Foster Scholarship, Discovery, and Innovation	Provide Transformative Learning Experiences	Make Significant and Visible Societal Impact	Steward Current Resources and Generate Additional Resources for Strategic initiatives
A	Assessment and Evaluation	1	2.B		
B	Health and Well-Being	1.E	2.B		
C	Culturally Responsive and Socially Just Practices and Programs		2.C, 2.D, 2.E		4.D
D	Leadership and Career Development		2.B 2.E	3.C	
E	Civic Engagement and Community Responsibility		2.B 2.E	3.C	
F	Technology for Learning		2.G		
G	Collaboration and Partnerships		2.B	3.B	
H	Marketing and Communication			3.I	
I	Fiscal and Capital Resources				4.A, 4.E
J	Human Resources				4.D



STRATEGIC PLANNING LEADERS

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