



University  
of Manitoba



**MOMENTUM:**  
LEADING CHANGE TOGETHER

University of Manitoba  
Strategic Plan 2024-2029

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## Message from the President and the Provost and Vice-President (Academic)

The University of Manitoba is nearly 150 years old, and its long history of serving Manitobans is one that makes the University proud. But universities, at their heart, are about the future. Universities develop new ideas, creative solutions, and deeper understandings of the world around us. They prepare students to be the critical thinkers, leaders, innovators, and skilled workforce of tomorrow.

The University of Manitoba bears this future-oriented mission in a way that few other institutions in Canada do. It has the province's only programs in multiple disciplines, including medicine, dentistry, law, architecture, agriculture, and engineering. It is Manitoba's leading institution in science. It teaches over two-thirds of all undergraduate students in the province and 85% of all its graduate students. Everything Manitoba needs to develop and grow in the knowledge-based society of the future happens here first—the future of the province is in our hands. By being bold and ambitious, we can bring about the socially just and prosperous future Manitoba deserves.

**MOMENTUM:** Leading Change Together 2024-2029 is a plan designed to do precisely this. Over the past year, we have engaged with faculty, staff, students, and other key groups and individuals, and reflected on what guides us, where we want to be, and how we get there. What we heard has led to a revised mission, vision, and core values that centre the people and communities foundational to our success, and challenge us to make meaningful impact, locally, nationally, and internationally. To excel and thrive, we must feel a sense of belonging with the confidence that how we learn, how we work, how we create, and how we play will be transformative. Building on our rich history we have the momentum to make a difference.

This plan, organized under three strategic themes—creating knowledge that matters, empowering learners, and reimagining engagement—builds upon our existing strengths, driving us forward as innovators, creators, life-long learners, and leaders of meaningful change across our campuses and in partnership with the communities with whom we engage. It allows us to share our stories with the world, our hopes for the future, foster new relationships and strengthen existing ones. It advances our ongoing commitment to Reconciliation, recognizing and taking action to address past and on-going harms. It reimagines our spaces to foster connections and idea exchanges, bringing people together across disciplines and units to better understand the world around us and to identify innovative solutions for the issues of today and tomorrow.

This is a university plan informed by our community. We appreciate your engagement, support, and the energy you have invested in sharing your ideas and aspirations. We look forward to working with you to achieve our goals over the next five years.

UM is a unique and extraordinary community that does great things. Together, we can do even more. Let's continue to be creative, be curious, be bold, be engaged, and think big.

Miigwech. Maarsi. Nakurmiik. Thank-you. Merci.

Michael Benarroch, President and Vice-Chancellor  
Diane Hiebert-Murphy, Provost and Vice-President (Academic)



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## WHAT GUIDES US

### Traditional territories acknowledgment

The University of Manitoba campuses are located on original lands of Anishinaabeg, Ininewuk, Anisininewuk, Dakota Oyate and Denesuline, and on the National Homeland of the Red River Métis.

UM respects the Treaties that were made on these territories, acknowledges the harms and mistakes of the past and present, and dedicates itself to move forward in partnership with Indigenous communities in a spirit of Reconciliation and collaboration.

UM recognizes that this acknowledgment only holds meaning when reflected in the actions taken to address the injustices and barriers that have disproportionately affected Indigenous Peoples and communities, systemically preventing them from accessing and benefitting from education. Grateful for the territories and lands on which the university community learns, conducts research, and engages with external partners, UM is guided by this acknowledgment in carrying out the core work of its mission, the priorities it sets, and the decisions made to move forward as an institution.

### Vision

The University of Manitoba will be a vibrant and thriving community, enriched by Indigenous knowledges and perspectives. We will lead change for a better Manitoba and world.

### Mission

We advance learning by creating, sharing, preserving, and applying knowledge in partnership with diverse communities to promote the cultural, social, and economic well-being and health of Manitoba, Canada, and the world.



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## Core Values

### Belonging

We foster trust, acceptance, and mutual respect, rooted in human rights and dignity of all. We strive to create the conditions for all to be their authentic selves. We change systems and structures that exclude. We empower success through our dedication to decolonization and Reconciliation, and to a university community that centers equity, accessibility, diversity, and inclusion.

### Curiosity

We value the pursuit of knowledge and uphold academic freedom. We celebrate curiosity and its essential role in learning, research, scholarly work, and creative activity. We empower the creation and sharing of knowledge in all its forms, including Indigenous knowledges and ways of knowing, to foster deeper understanding, create new connections, and address society's most pressing issues.

### Impact

We partner to find solutions to societal, cultural, economic, health, and environmental issues. Through collaboration, inclusivity, empathy, and valuing diverse ways of knowing, we create global citizens. We centre community as we participate in the process of Reconciliation, and contribute to positive and meaningful change in Manitoba, Canada, and the world.

### Integrity

We maintain high ethical standards and ensure ethical stewardship. We share a commitment to human dignity, open dialogue, transparency, professionalism, accountability, and collegial governance.

### Well-being

We advance the personal and professional growth and academic success of our community members. Grounded in respect and compassion for each other and our community, we cultivate a supportive environment that embraces the values of mino-pimatisiwin (good life) and mino-ayawin (good health).



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# HOW WE GOT HERE



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## Introduction

In 1877, the University of Manitoba (UM) was established with the passage of An Act to Establish a Provincial University for the purpose of “raising the standard of higher education in the province, and of enabling all denominations and classes to obtain academical degrees.” In this spirit, we continue to work together to advance and redefine what it means to provide an accessible education for all.

In 2023-2024, our 9,400 faculty and staff welcome over 26,000 undergraduate and 4,000 graduate students to our campuses. Indigenous learners make up 9% of our students, a figure expected to grow as we continue to work towards increasing access and participation in post-secondary studies. Nearly a quarter of our students come from over 120 other countries around the world. After graduation, many remain in Manitoba, further enriching the cultural diversity of our province and helping to meet the need for a highly skilled work force.

UM is a member of the U15 and Manitoba’s research-intensive (medical-doctoral) university, with world-class researchers who share their expertise with local, national, and international communities. Through our research, we solve problems in new and distinct ways to embrace challenges and act on the pressing issues of today and tomorrow. We lead in areas such as arctic system science, climate change, health and well-being, and social justice.

UM offers a diverse range of undergraduate and graduate programs in more than 100 different disciplines. Across programs, we have increased experiential learning opportunities and co-curricular programming. We invest in and provide students with access to financial, academic, and health and wellness supports to provide the foundation needed to succeed.

Manitoba’s growing number of Indigenous Peoples, including First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples, make-up 18% of the province’s population and Winnipeg is home to the largest Indigenous population in Canada. Within this decade it is estimated that one in five Manitobans will identify as Indigenous. In advancing Reconciliation efforts, it is vital that this unique diversity of communities, knowledges, and cultures across our province and Turtle Island is recognized. UM is a leader in Reconciliation, acknowledging that this ongoing work has only just begun. We are host to the National Centre of Truth and Reconciliation and welcomed Canada’s first Vice-President (Indigenous) in 2020. We are committed to advancing the Calls to Action and integrating Indigenous ways of knowing into what we do.

We recognize the value and strength of bringing together a diversity of voices and the need to make systemic and structural changes to ensure that this happens. UM’s efforts towards eliminating racism, and advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion, including the appointment of a new Vice-Provost (Equity), provides us with the foundations needed to move forward. We have committed to reaching net-zero emissions by 2050 and creating a sustainable environment for future generations.

UM injects \$7.3 billion into Manitoba’s economy annually. Our alumni become the province’s next generation of cultural, community, business, healthcare, and government leaders. With more than 188,000 alumni, spread across 134 countries, we create a global network that helps drive innovation, leadership, and excellence.

The world has changed significantly since the launch of Taking Our Place: University of Manitoba Strategic Plan 2015-2020. We have experienced a global pandemic, felt the increasing impacts of climate change, witnessed a rise in public disinformation and incivility, and felt the pressures of rising costs. These have created and exacerbated global tensions and conflicts that impact close to home as our worlds become more interconnected. As the world changed, so have our students. Students' needs have evolved. In response, it is critical that we offer programming and supports that enable success and increase access to post-secondary education.

While the 2020-2021 interim plan gave our community the opportunity to take a breath and respond to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is time to move forward as an institution with a renewed outlook that will guide us through this changed world.

### Community consultations

In responding to these challenges, we needed to hear from our community to better understand where we want to go next. Over the past year we have asked ourselves, how can we best come together? How can we inspire each other? How can we build upon the strengths of the University of Manitoba community to gain momentum and move forward our big ideas to solve the pressing issues of today and tomorrow? How can we lead change respectfully?

In December 2022, a Strategic Planning Committee, chaired by the President and the Provost and Vice-President (Academic) and including representation from faculty, staff, students, Senate, and the Board of Governors, was tasked with providing guidance and oversight of the development of the next UM strategic plan.

Extensive community consultations occurred over the first half of 2023, which included more than 2,300 touch points with faculty, staff, students, alumni, and external partners. The first phase involved almost 60 in-person and virtual community consultation sessions, in which approximately 650 faculty, 560 staff, 70 students and 70 others, including external groups, participated. The second phase consisted of two surveys—one sent to faculty and staff and the other to students—with questions that built upon themes identified by our community in the first phase.

As our guiding principles began to emerge, we identified five broad themes in the Where We Are Today report, released to the community in May 2023. These themes were refined after asking for and receiving feedback from over 110 community members in June and July to ensure that the shared vision accurately reflected the community's aspirations for the coming years and our ability to meet the challenges facing higher education, the province, and our world.

Guided by what was heard, in December 2023, the Strategic Planning Committee shared a draft strategic plan with our community for final feedback. The draft plan articulated what meaningful change would look like at UM and the direction needed to achieve our collective goals. The Committee received feedback from over 275 community members, including Senate and the Board of Governors, to inform this final plan.



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# WHERE WE WANT TO BE

Throughout consultations, our community expressed an overwhelming desire to make meaningful contributions and excel in all that we do—through our research, teaching, and the ways in which we engage as a community, both within the institution and beyond. Our community reaffirmed that our greatest strength is our people and that investing in our faculty, staff, and students is vital to gaining momentum and leading change together.

When asked where we want to be at the end of our new strategic plan, our community articulated aspirations as captured under the following strategic themes:

## Creating knowledge that matters

As the largest research-intensive university in Manitoba, UM responds to emerging issues and leads innovation in areas such as social justice, climate action, and the health and well-being of diverse communities. Through our scholarly and creative pursuits, we advance our understanding of each other and the world around us. We ignite a curiosity to identify and solve important, complex problems, and promote evidence-based decision making.

We acknowledge the value of work across academic disciplines and recognize that all forms of knowledge, including Indigenous knowledges and research, have the power to transform culture, and create positive societal and environmental impact. Through our degrees and programs, we engage with undergraduate and graduate students to create and share knowledge as part of the learning process. We value the role of staff in supporting this work and in bringing forward creative ideas and solutions to excel as an institution. Together, we celebrate the ideas that emerge through connecting as a community.

## Empowering learners

Sharing knowledge is core to what we do. We provide an accessible, inspiring, high-quality education and an exceptional student experience enriched by a diversity of communities, voices, worldviews, and ways of knowing. We promote life-long curiosity and provide the tools learners need to succeed and critically navigate a complex and rapidly changing world. We are innovators inside and outside the classroom and incorporate sustainable practices in how we teach, learn, and deliver services and supports. Faculty and staff are also learners—we provide opportunities to learn from each other, engage in professional development, and access the systems and supports needed to excel.

We embrace diverse learners who choose UM to advance their studies, enriching our institution's voices and perspectives. With more newcomers choosing Manitoba as their home, we welcome increasing numbers of first-generation and international students. Indigenous Peoples have been and continue to be underrepresented in post-secondary education, and systemic change is needed to increase access. We advance Reconciliation and promote Indigenous success through Indigenization in our programming and across our campuses. We create and foster inclusive and supportive learning environments to help students thrive no matter their background, experiences, or aspirations.



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## Reimagining engagement

UM makes meaningful impact by actively engaging and collaborating with those around us. Our outreach extends locally, nationally, and internationally, and we welcome visitors to our campuses as destinations for all. We provide opportunities and spaces to connect, collaborate, share, and promote meaningful knowledge creation and exchange. We centre authentic, respectful, and reciprocal relationships with communities, industry, organizations, alumni, and other groups to exchange knowledge and pursue innovative solutions together. We build relationships and work with Indigenous communities to create opportunities for capacity-building, support self-determination, and advance decolonization.

The heart of UM is its people—its faculty, staff, and students. We reimagine how we engage with one another, beginning with an environment in which there is a greater sense of collegiality, trust, integrity, collaboration, and shared opportunities. We value well-being and belonging to create conditions in which all can thrive. We work to dismantle all forms of oppression, address inequities in our systems, policies, culture, and structures to advance decolonization, and uphold human rights.

We recognize that physical and digital spaces play a vital role in creating community on our campuses. We reimagine our spaces to inspire, engage with each other, reflect the diverse needs of our community, and be accessible to all. We preserve and protect our environment through sustainable practices, promote stewardship for the benefit of current and future generations, and take climate action.



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# HOW WE GET THERE: LEADING CHANGE TOGETHER

Our community’s aspirations as captured under creating knowledge that matters, empowering learners, and reimagining engagement are accompanied by a collective desire and acknowledgement of UM’s responsibility to be leaders of change.

We take action to address societal issues and meaningfully contribute to the overall well-being of our internal and external communities. These actions are articulated as three fundamental commitments that encompass what we do and how we move forward—they guide us in framing our goals under each strategic theme and measuring our success in implementing this plan.



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In leading change, we commit to:

**FOSTERING A VIBRANT COMMUNITY**

We cultivate an accessible community rooted in equity, diversity, human dignity, inclusivity, respect, well-being, and care for one another, while acknowledging and addressing concerns and challenges with underlying structures. We commit to narrowing systemic inequities, removing barriers, and creating the conditions for all to thrive. By upholding the foundational tenet of academic freedom, we foster a vibrant and dynamic intellectual environment that strengthens our community through the free exchange of ideas and pursuit of knowledge.

**ADVANCING RECONCILIATION FOR TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE**

We walk together to advance Reconciliation. The University of Manitoba acknowledges and atones for both past and ongoing harms. We take action to change behaviour and move forward to establish and maintain mutually respectful relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples. By addressing root causes of inequities, we work towards social change and a more just, equitable future.

**BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE**

We meet the needs of today without compromising those of future generations. We pursue societal, cultural, economic, and environmental sustainability and address the impacts of climate change through our actions and operations—through ethical decision-making, continuous improvement, and the integration of sustainable practices into everything we do.

Informed by these fundamental commitments, our strategic themes centre our collective intentions through the following strategic goals that provide us with the framework to move forward together as an institution.



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## Creating knowledge that matters

In leading change, UM will demonstrate advancements in exceptional research, scholarship, and creative activities to create knowledge that matters and that positively impacts the communities with whom we engage. UM will be increasingly sought out for our expertise and recognized for our contributions.

To gain momentum, UM will:

### **Inspire knowledge creation by supporting and promoting an environment of excellence.**

Through this work, we will:

- Expand initiatives that provide faculty and staff with opportunities to succeed in their research, scholarship, and creative activities, recognizing the value of new perspectives and diverse ways of knowing.
- Increase opportunities for undergraduate students to participate in knowledge creation and exchange as part of their learning experiences.
- Elevate graduate-level training through increased access, improved supports, and enhanced opportunities.

### **Identify sustainable and high-impact solutions through increased collaboration and connection across our campuses.**

Through this work, we will:

- Identify and remove barriers to increase opportunities for inter- and multi-disciplinary research, scholarly, and creative activities.
- Connect diverse ways of knowing to identify innovative solutions that address major challenges faced today and tomorrow.
- Identify strengths to elevate UM's expertise on the local, national, and international stage, informed by the Strategic Research Plan.

### **Build reciprocal relationships with communities to anticipate and identify solutions to emerging societal, cultural, economic, health, and environmental needs of Manitoba and beyond.**

Through this work, we will:

- Increase investments to support more community-based research and to develop authentic relationships with community partners.
- Foster a reciprocal knowledge exchange network with community partners to work collaboratively on pressing issues.
- Promote UM expertise with communities to encourage the widest possible use of our knowledge creation.



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## Empowering learners

In leading change, UM will empower learners through learning experiences that meet the needs of an increasingly diverse student body. We will provide researchers, instructors, staff, and learners with the knowledge, skills, and supports they need to achieve their goals.

To gain momentum, UM will:

### **Respond to changing needs of learners through the creation and advancement of supportive systems for learning and success.**

Through this work, we will:

- Continuously reflect on and advance pedagogies that respond to the needs of learners across their lives and careers, including innovative ways of learning and teaching.
- Direct supports and services to students to improve access, recognize diverse needs, and foster success, including supports for Indigenous students and systemically marginalized groups and individuals.
- Identify and incorporate flexible and sustainable practices in the delivery of academic programs and courses.

### **Build sustainable futures for learners by increasing opportunities for innovative and meaningful learning experiences.**

Through this work, we will:

- Ensure students are exposed to Indigenous knowledge systems and ways of knowing and have opportunities to participate in and benefit from a variety of experiential learning opportunities in diverse settings, including digital, land-based, community, workplace, classroom, and co-curriculum.
- Increase opportunities for graduate and undergraduate students to connect with and contribute to diverse ways of knowledge creation through research, scholarship, and creative activities.
- Expand opportunities for students to identify and develop the skills needed to succeed in a changing world.

### **Foster an exceptional student experience by strengthening teaching and student support services across the university.**

Through this work, we will:

- Invest in supports to ensure faculty and staff have the tools needed to adapt to changing learning environments and to continue to provide high-quality learning experiences.
- Develop more initiatives to employ universal design and inclusive teaching methods that accommodate people with disabilities, varied learning styles, and diverse lived experiences.
- Increase opportunities for faculty and staff to collaborate to improve student success.



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# Reimagining engagement

In leading change, UM will be a partner of choice with the greater community. We will be a destination to learn, create, work, and play. In reimagining engagement, we will connect and thrive as a community for today and tomorrow.

To gain momentum, UM will:

**Strengthen and build mutually beneficial and reciprocal external relationships through meaningful and authentic engagement.**

Through this work, we will:

- Become the university for Manitoba by increasing opportunities for external partnerships and connections and expanding our impact across our province, including with rural, northern, and Indigenous communities.
- Increase outreach and external community access to UM to benefit the UM community and all Manitobans.
- Become a go-to destination by welcoming more visitors to our campuses through community events and programming.

**Empower staff, faculty, and students to thrive and succeed by creating a culture of belonging, well-being, and inclusion.**

Through this work, we will:

- Identify and work to dismantle systemic and structural inequities to foster an environment that encourages the full participation of systemically marginalized groups and individuals.
- Centre Reconciliation and institutional transformation to advance social justice and become a preferred destination for Indigenous faculty, staff, and students.
- Create a dynamic and engaged work environment by investing in people to encourage a culture of excellence, innovation, creativity, and connectivity.

**Achieve sustainability and accessibility targets through community decision-making processes and institutional initiatives.**

Through this work, we will:

- Build sustainable and accessible campuses designed to facilitate community building and community life.
- Reduce waste and greenhouse gas emissions to reach sustainability goals informed by our Climate Action Plan.
- Increase opportunities for faculty, staff, and students to engage in sustainability initiatives through learning experiences, research, and community programming to collectively advance the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.



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## GAINING MOMENTUM: NEXT STEPS

Together, we have identified who we want to be and how we get there. We will be engaged. We will be responsive. We will be strengthened by our diversity of voices. We will make an impact. We will lead change.

Our next steps will be to develop an implementation plan that outlines how we will meet the goals we've identified in **MOMENTUM: Leading Change Together 2024-2029**. A Strategic Plan Implementation Committee will be formed, led by the Provost and Vice-President (Academic), and will include representatives from faculty, staff, and students. This cross-functional, interdisciplinary committee will be tasked with identifying the strategies and associated actions the university will take to implement the plan and gauge our success moving forward.

The implementation plan will be guided by discussions with community members. It will identify and build on current initiatives, activities, and institutional reports. The Committee will work with and support academic and administrative units to develop unit-level plans that reflect their unique roles and strengths that help UM achieve its collective goals.

The Committee will bring its initial findings back to the community, providing details on the strategies, objectives, and key indicators developed. They will provide annual progress reports on our accomplishments, challenges, and any revisions required in response to changing pressures, internal and external to our institution.

**Together, we will build upon our existing strengths and gain momentum to respectfully lead change and shape a brighter future for all.**



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## Acknowledgements

A sincere thank you to all the faculty, staff, students, and community members who participated in consultations and provided feedback on the plan throughout its development. We look forward to future engagement during the implementation process.

Thank you to the Strategic Planning Committee, which reviewed the feedback from the community and provided thoughtful insight to structure a plan that will collectively move us forward as an institution.

### STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

#### Co-chairs:

**Michael Benarroch**  
President and Vice-Chancellor

**Diane Hiebert-Murphy**  
Provost and Vice-President (Academic)

#### From senate:

**Stephan Pflugmacher Lima**  
Dean, Clayton H. Riddell Faculty of Environment, Earth, and Resources

**Susan Prentice**  
Professor, Department of Sociology and Criminology, Faculty of Arts

**John Sorensen**  
Associate Head Undergraduate (Courses and Programs);  
Professor, Department of Chemistry, Faculty of Science

#### From board of governors:

**Lynette Magnus**  
Chair, Board of Governors

#### From deans/directors and senior administrative leaders:

**Tina Chen**  
Vice-Provost (Equity), and Distinguished Professor Department of History, Faculty of Arts

**Peter Nickerson**  
Vice-Provost (Health Sciences) and Dean, Rady Faculty of Health Science;  
Dean, Max Rady College of Medicine

#### From faculty:

**Shawn Bailey**  
Assistant Professor, Department of Architecture, Faculty of Architecture

**Namita Bhatnagar**  
Professor and F. Ross Johnson Fellow, Department of Marketing,  
I.H. Asper School of Business, Faculty of Management

**Afra Bolefski**  
Head, Library Social Sciences, Libraries

**Katherine Boyer**  
Assistant Professor, School of Art

**Robert Mizzi**  
Canada Research Chair and Associate Professor,  
Department of Educational Administration, Foundations & Psychology, Faculty of Education

**Kim Ominski**  
Professor and Head, Department of Animal Science, Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences

**Leisha Strachan**  
Associate Dean, Associate Dean (Research and Graduate Studies) and Professor,  
Faculty of Kinesiology and Recreation Management



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**From staff:**

**Jeff Adams**  
Registrar and Executive Director of Enrolment Services

**Carla Loewen**  
Director, Indigenous Student Centre

**From students:**

**Tracy Karuhogo**  
President, UMSU

**Uche Nwankwo**  
Senator, UMGSA

**Jaron Rykiss**  
President, UMSU

**Christopher Yendt**  
President, UMGSA

**From senior executive team:**

**Naomi Andrew**  
Vice-President (Administration)

**Catherine Cook**  
Vice-President (Indigenous)

**Vanessa Koldingnes**  
Vice-President (External)

**Mario Pinto**  
Vice-President (Research and International)

**Resources:**

**Cassandra Davidson**  
Academic Planning and Priorities Specialist, Office of the Provost

**Kelsey Evans**  
Associate Director, Office of the President

**Kerry McQuarrie Smith**  
Executive Director, Office of the President

**Randy Roller**  
Executive Director, Office of Institutional Analysis

Thanks to all faculty, staff, and students who organized and facilitated community consultations to ensure we received feedback from across our community. We also recognize and appreciate the support provided by members of the Office of External Relations in bringing this plan to life.

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