



Universities of Wisconsin Strategic Plan Progress Report

Board of Regents, December 5, 2024

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UPDATE OVERVIEW

Current Strategic Plan

- Background and Context
- High-Level Overview of Objectives
- Process for Today



CORE VALUES

Purpose-driven

- Student-centered
- Pursuit of truth
- Advancement of knowledge
- Service

People-focused

- Collaboration and teamwork
- Diversity
- Mutual respect and trust

Commitment to Stewardship

- Accountability
- Integrity
- Innovation
- Sustainability



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



STRATEGY 1

We will increase access to higher education and improve rates of success for historically underserved students.



STRATEGY 1 GOALS

RESULTS TO DATE

Close participation gap of underrepresented students

● Enrollment of WI freshman students of color exceeded F24 target: 3,324 vs. 2,960

Increase Pell-eligible WI students to 35,000

● Enrollment of WI Pell-eligible students exceeded 2023-24 target: 26,061 vs. 25,442

Increase 1st gen new freshmen enrollment to 10,000

● Enrollment of first gen freshmen was 8,450 in F23 vs. 8,422 in F24

Significantly reduce retention and graduation rate gap for underserved students

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- 2nd year retention of URM and Pell students increased to pre-pandemic levels; a gap remains. UWs remain within 1 percentage point of F23 institutional targets.
 - Graduation rate gaps have narrowed for underserved students



STRATEGY 1 TACTICS

- Direct Admit Wisconsin
- Affordability study
- Open educational resources
- Tuition Promise in F23 and F25
- Tribal Consultation Workplan Update
- Charter schools
- Fostering Success
- Dual enrollment
- Budget advocacy



STRATEGY 2

We will champion student success across the higher education life cycle.

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Program Level Area of Interest Campus FIND PROGRAM

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UWO OSHKOSH PARKSIDE PLATTEVILLE RIVER FALLS Stevens Point

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STRATEGY 2 GOALS

Ensure all UG students participate in 2 or more HIPs

Increase participation of UG in research activity with faculty to 25% at each UW

Double number of proactive Navigate engagements

Implement & promote use of virtual well-being programs

Increase learners enrolled in only online programs to 24K

RESULTS TO DATE

- UW seniors' participation in 2023
 - Up 1 percentage point for ≥ 2 HIPs from 2020 to 2023 survey: 69% vs. 68%
 - Internship/field experience rates exceeded national average: 58% vs. 46%
- - Research activity with faculty exceeded national average: 29% vs. 21%
 - 8 of 13 UWs met target, up from 6 in 2020
- UG student engagement with Navigate more than doubled from F2020 to S2024: 37% to 81%
- Mantra Health & You@College funded through 2025; adding Togetherall online peer support
- Online only enrollment met 94% of 2023-24 target: 19,913 vs. 21,250



STRATEGY 2 TACTICS

- Navigate360 dashboard
 - Advising assessment workshop
 - HIPs grants
 - Mental health advisory committee
 - Culturally responsive mental health approaches
 - Wisconsin Online Portal
 - Tele-mental health/well-being services
 - MyMajors
 - National Alumni Career Mobility Survey
 - Chancellor incentive for student retention
- State-of-the-art facilities and digital platforms for student learning and academic excellence:
- EAB Navigate360 contract extension
 - OKTA platform
 - Enhancements to digital learning environment
 - \$1.7 billion in 2025-27 capital requests



STRATEGY 3

We will promote excellence in teaching and prioritize the recruitment, development, and retention of high-quality, diverse faculty and staff.





STRATEGY 3 GOALS

Measure & enhance employee engagement

Increase overall compensation to be competitive with peers

Distribute \$300,000 in grants annually to UWs to enhance faculty and instructional staff professional development

RESULTS TO DATE

● Standardizing exit interview process/survey after Workday implementation

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- Pay plan increases of 4% and 2% secured in 2023-25 biennium
 - Invested \$1M to assist campuses in raising minimum salaries
 - Requested 5%-3% pay plan, as well as market and merit adjustment pool, for 2025-27 biennium

● Completed year one of student affairs professional development facilitated by UW-La Crosse



STRATEGY 3 GOALS

RESULTS TO DATE

Identify priority staffing needs; develop and implement plans to address

- Reviewed and provided compensation recommendations for high need/turnover areas
- Developed new supervisory and other employee training courses

Improve retention, progress to tenure, and time-at-institution of individuals from underrepresented groups

- Conducted preliminary analysis of patterns of retention and promotion of faculty, breaking down by gender and race/ethnicity



STRATEGY 3 TACTICS

- Leadership training financial support
- Training and development coordinator
- Creation of instructional design team with existing positions
- Workday scope training modules
- Systemwide supervisor and other employee training courses
- Streamlined recruitment processes



STRATEGY 4

We will champion the democratic principles of free expression, academic freedom, and civil discourse.

THE FRONTLINES OF DEMOCRACY
STORIES FROM A NEW GENERATION OF LEADERS

Sunny Cheung
Hong Kong

Hager Eissa
Sudan

Mariia Levchenko
Ukraine

Takudzwa Ngadziore
Zimbabwe

Wednesday, October 30, 2024

Hors d'oeuvres:
MLK Lounge
5:30 PM

Program:
UW-Milwaukee Student Union
Ballroom
6:30 PM

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
MILWAUKEE

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UNIVERSITIES OF WISCONSIN

MCCAIN
INSTITUTE
Arizona State University

WISCONSIN INSTITUTE FOR
Citizenship & Civil Dialogue



STRATEGY 4 GOALS

Heightened awareness of critical thinking, civil discourse, freedom of expression, and academic freedom

Robust instructional climate of open inquiry and critical thinking

RESULTS TO DATE

- Conducted student free speech survey and presented results
 - Incoming class of 2024 received freedom of expression training
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- Completed substantial training in civil discourse and critical thinking for faculty and instructors



STRATEGY 4 TACTICS

- Student survey and educational module
- Faculty and staff professional development
- Stakeholder events
 - Hosted “It’s Just Coffee” events with students
 - Sponsored Wisconsin Civics Games
 - Civil and deliberative dialogue training
- Campus support
 - \$180,000 in grants for civics and civil dialogue efforts
- \$2.5 million budget request dedicated to civic engagement
- Rebranding
 - Wisconsin Institute for Citizenship and Civil Dialogue
 - Wisconsin Institute for Public Policy and Service
- Communities of practice
- System Administrative Policy on Institutional Statements



STRATEGY 5

We will ensure our universities are financially and environmentally sustainable so that they are positioned to fulfill their strategic missions.





STRATEGY 5 GOALS

Cost savings of 10%-15% through efficiencies/shared services

Increase returns on current resources

RESULTS TO DATE

- Added shared services (payroll, IT, and compliance functions), additional services coming with Workday implementation
 - Began discussions for program structure, including customer feedback and metrics
 - Completed build of Hybrid Cloud, migrating initial campuses (allowing for server decommissioning)
 - Implemented zero-based budgeting efforts at UWSA
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- Established cash management program to invest in the capital markets; conducted liquidity analysis and added UW-Milwaukee
 - Accelerated deposit of short-term cash to take advantage of money market rates



STRATEGY 5 GOALS

RESULTS TO DATE

Secure program revenue bonding authority



Continued advocacy efforts ongoing

Maintain Composite Financial Index of 1.1 or greater at all campuses



11 of 13 campuses reported CFI above threshold, based on FY23 financial statements

Ensure capital projects incorporate sustainability and resiliency measures



Updated capital planning criteria in Regent Policy 19-15 to incorporate sustainability

- Developed sustainability guidelines with UWs & Dept. of Administration
- Drafted Greenhouse Gas Emissions Dashboard
- Registered 5 projects for federally funded tax incentives; anticipate \$1.2 million tax credit
- Identified buildings for demolition or sale



STRATEGY 5 GOALS

Eliminate structural financial deficits at all universities



Of 10 campuses with deficits at beginning of FY24:

- 4 eliminated deficit in FY24
- 3 anticipate eliminating in FY25
- 3 anticipate eliminating in FY26

Improve cybersecurity across the system to protect sensitive and confidential information



- Security Operations Center pilot for UW Administration provides 24/7 monitoring
 - Additional campuses adopting or plan on adopting in Spring 2025
- Implemented Hybrid Cloud to improve security posture
- Implementing penetration testing and “threat hunting” in 2025



STRATEGY 5 TACTICS

To eliminate structural deficits:

- 3rd party reviewer assistance
- Base tuition and differential increases
- FY25 updated forecasts
- Benchmark operations
- Revenue diversification
- UWSA zero-based budgeting
- \$855 million biennial budget request

To apply sustainability principles:

- Virtual Power Purchase Agreements
- Energy conservation projects
- Software solutions for utility/utility billing
- Campus sustainability planning assistance

To identify sound financial opportunities:

- Implementation of Workday to enable standardized business processes and better management data
- Additional active Intermediate Term operating cash management
- Public-Private Partnerships
- Program Revenue bonding
- Entrepreneurial real estate opportunities



STRATEGY 5 TACTICS

To build strong relationships with key stakeholders:

- Budget advocacy
- Engagement on state legislative proposals
- WI Merit Scholarship Program
- Tuition Reciprocity Program
- Support for federal awards
- Support access and affordability

To increase access and affordability:

- Budget request context of WI moving from 43rd in U.S. to the middle
- Double the Pell efforts
- Higher Education Act reform/reauthorization
- Funding increases for basic and applied research



STRATEGY 5 TACTICS

- Academic program alignment with workforce needs
- Academic program re-evaluation regarding elimination and suspension
- 60 academic programs eliminated or suspended between November 2023 and November 2024



STRATEGY 6

We will focus on being a global leader in research, scholarship, and creative activity, as well as knowledge dissemination that benefits society.





STRATEGY 6 GOALS

RESULTS TO DATE

Increase research expenditures throughout system, including by 15% at MIL and by 10% at comprehensives

Increase Higher Education Research & Development MAD ranking to #6

Strengthen MAD status as a top 10 public university and MIL R1 status

● 2023-24 research expenditures increased 3.5% at MIL and 3.6% at comprehensives

● MAD topped \$1.7 billion in total research expenditures in 2023-24; 6th out of 900 universities surveyed

● Working toward UW-Milwaukee R1 status retention in new cycle (2023-24: \$59M research expenditures and 162 research doctorates)



STRATEGY 6 TACTICS

- Wisconsin Hessen collaborative research initiative program
- Systemwide research summit
- Strategic framework for research compliance
- WiSys task force formation



STRATEGY 7

We will foster a culture of innovation in support of advancing human knowledge and economic prosperity.





STRATEGY 7 GOALS

Award \$1 million annually to support new university-driven initiatives

RESULTS TO DATE

- Developed Innovation Grant in 2023-24 to award a total of \$5 million over 5 years to recipients
 - Jan. 2024: Announced \$575,000 in first round of awards for 2 years of seed funding
 - Nov.-Dec. 2024: Second round of award proposals under review for announcement in Jan. 2025



STRATEGY 8

We will provide support for the universities to drive enrollment to meet the needs of the state and the knowledge economy.

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FIND YOUR UW
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STRATEGY 8 GOALS

RESULTS TO DATE

Grow the talent pipeline by graduating 41K annually

● Degrees conferred in 2023-24 of 35,606 were short of target of 36,851

Increase high school graduate participation from 27% to 34%

● Up 1 percentage point to 27% in 2023 from 2022 low of 26%

Increase transfer students from outside UWs 7,000-10,000/yr.

● 2023-24 transfer student number was 7,273 vs. 2028 goal of 10,000

Improve graduation rates by 5 percentage points (70%-75%)

● 6-year graduation rates have improved slightly overall, and gaps have narrowed for URM and low-income students

Recruit back and graduate 1K former students per year

● Targeted efforts to recruit back students who opted out



STRATEGY 8 TACTICS

- Direct Admit
- Online offerings expansion to international market
- Transfer strategies
- Centralized web project
- Universal Credit Transfer Agreement update
- Dual Enrollment task force recommendation implementation
- General education equivalencies indicators and Transferology implementation
- Targeted efforts to recruit back students who opted out
- 2025 transfer summit



STRATEGY 9

We will engage thoughtfully with the employer community to identify and address employer talent, support, and research needs.





STRATEGY 9 GOALS

RESULTS TO DATE

Engage 500K WI residents per year in workforce/career education/professional development, community engagement, and other high-demand programs

● Served 320,188 non-credit students in 2023-24 (excludes 500K non-credit students served by Division of Extension at MAD)

Ensure professional development activities remain 75% of total activity

● Program offerings: 56% in PD
Enrollments: 77% in PD programs

Increase non-credit students served by each UW by a specific % per year

● Non-credit students served systemwide increased 19% from 2022-23 to 2023-24: 265K to 320K

Develop and document a broad-based array of microcredential programs to support specific workforce demand areas

● Sub-degree programs responsive to workforce needs exist at UWs and documentation is under development



STRATEGY 9 GOALS

RESULTS TO DATE

Increase the percentage of new system graduates who remain in Wisconsin 3 years after graduation from 72% to 80%

● No new data available

Periodically survey Wisconsin employers and provide resulting data to the universities to inform their academic planning and career advising

● Sector-based workforce dashboards are currently under development



STRATEGY 9 TACTICS

- Online portal development and addition of certificate programs
- Task force on sub-degree microcredentials
- Academic program alignment with workforce needs
- Determination of stakeholder needs: digital marketing, capital readiness, small business finance
- Student led digital marketing clinic
- EDA grant with biotech workforce partners
- Workforce dashboard
- Training for entrepreneurs and small businesses
- Small businesses start-up support
- Increase Small Business Innovation Research applications/awards
- USDA funded project on financial support for farmers
- UW engagements with biohealth, energy, and ag tech employers