

THE UNIVERSITY OF AKRON STRATEGY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This strategy document is intended to guide UA's position for long-term success by articulating our strategic vision and values to drive distinctiveness. The basis for our strategy emanates from UA's core mission and purpose. As the bridge between vision and operations, UA's strategic values are intended to frame the goals and aspirations of our people around our institutional identity. To drive competitive advantage, we focus on leveraging our strengths to explore unique market opportunities. Through differentiation, we will enhance our viability. Our strategy document is supported by the goals and metrics in the attached action plan. The documents are complementary; actions prioritized in the next two years will uphold and support our strategic vision.

STRATEGIC VISION:

The University of Akron empowers our people to flourish by delivering an applied and community-connected educational experience and cultivating research excellence. Leveraging our passion and expertise, we create innovative academic opportunities, support the well-being of our students and employees, and prioritize community embeddedness and engagement to impact lives through transformative experience. Through this focus, UA aspires to be the leader in community-focused higher education.

STRATEGIC VALUES:

I. LIFELONG LEARNING through transformative and creative academic experiences integrating traditional programming with industry certification and micro-credentialing.

To establish the University of Akron as a lifelong learning partner, recognizing and valuing diverse learning experiences and combining traditional classroom experiences with innovative and robust approaches.

HOW WE LIVE THIS VALUE:

- By focusing on pathways that span the needs of all learners, from those fresh out of high school to seasoned career professionals seeking additional training.
- By recognizing the value of non-traditional credentials that serve our regional economy and position our students for workforce success.
- By providing a grounded liberal arts education that prepares our students to be leaders and effective communicators.
- By using faculty-led, expert-guided data collection and analysis to meet the diverse needs of students (multicultural, commuter, residential, UG, Grad, adult, nontraditional).

ACTION PLAN CONNECTION: Promise II – Academic Opportunity

II. FLOURISHING PEOPLE through growth and development, inclusivity and belonging, and meaningful experiences.

To prioritize the well-being of our students and employees, cultivate a culture and community where all can flourish, and act as responsible stewards of our resources and infrastructure by leveraging data to differentiate our processes and systems.

HOW WE LIVE THIS VALUE:

- By using the concept of flourishing to guide our decision making.
- By viewing our people as our greatest resource and investing in training and advancing our existing workforce.
- By building belonging into the student experience so everyone can see themselves at UA.
- By embracing our strategic position as the anchor public research institution in Northeast Ohio to advance research and innovation.

ACTION PLAN CONNECTIONS: Promise I – Well-Being & Stewardship, Promise II – Academic Opportunity, Promise III – Inclusive Excellence & Belonging, Promise IV – Research & Innovation, Promise V – Community & Connections

III. SOCIAL IMPACT through community leadership, programming, learning, and reciprocity.

To leverage our urban campus as a responsive and reliable partner to identify and meet the needs of the region and intentionally contribute to economic and workforce development, and civic life through research, innovation, and engagement. To provide community-embedded experiential learning opportunities for students to enhance the UA experience.

HOW WE LIVE THIS VALUE:

- By being visibly present in the Akron community.
- By sharing stories of community engagement.
- By listening and responding to the needs of our community.
- By connecting our students with the community.
- By leveraging our location and our resident expertise to create physical and collaborative connections with the Akron community.

ACTION PLAN CONNECTIONS: Promise II – Academic Opportunity, Promise IV – Research & Innovation, Promise V – Community & Connections