

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA SYSTEM

ODYSSEY TO EXTRAORDINARY

FOUNDATIONAL PILLARS & STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



DECEMBER 2025

We lead the world in transforming lives and communities to an extraordinary future through our enduring commitment to creating and sharing knowledge, inspiring and nurturing discovery and through forging and sustaining relationships built upon trust.

We do this as a University community by building upon our legacy of excellence and our commitment to a future of the extraordinary.

Metrics: All metrics will be collected quarterly, reviewed, and transparently distributed.

EXTRAORDINARY TEACHING & LEARNING:

Establish the University of Nebraska System with all of its educational programs as the most extraordinary learner-centered university with nationally recognized programs and top-tier faculty and staff.

Inspiring All Future Learners: Themes for this strategy include inspiring all learners with multidisciplinary experiential learning/internships, clear paths to graduation, and rethinking ways to create unique and personalized opportunities that create distinctive learning environments that create true student success.

Transforming the Learning Environment: Themes for this strategy include optimizing the most advanced technology to support the learning environment and experiences, enhancing customized student support services, and supporting facility innovation to enhance outcomes across the academic spectrum with focus on key high enrollment and “bottleneck” pipeline courses and programs

Curriculum Innovation and Alignment: Themes for this strategy include reimagining traditional curriculum, pedagogy and assessment strategies (e.g. competency-based curriculum), non-curricular opportunities, high technology skills and incorporating unique workforce readiness into all academic programs.

Supporting Faculty Success: Themes for this strategy include stimulating innovation by supporting educators, creating a culture of extraordinary scholarship based upon teaching excellence, and implementing new and transformative teaching strategies.



EXTRAORDINARY RESEARCH & CREATIVE ACTIVITY:

Establish the University of Nebraska System research and creative activity scope and prominence as widely recognized for extraordinary societal impact as a top tier institution.

Building a Common NU Research Identity: Themes for this strategy include the identification and growth of specific top-tier, highly impactful federally funded research programs. Example NU strategies might be to focus on identifying and configuring such programs into optimal structural units (such as a “Human Performance”, “National Security”, “Digital Agriculture”, “Economic Development”, “Advanced Technology”, etc.) and ramping up these programs so as to improve metrics for federal, state and private research expenditures yielding continuous growth and productivity in each designated area of excellence.

Internal Programmatic Growth and Alignment: Themes for this strategy include providing an integrated infrastructure that supports research and innovation (including personnel, facilities and advanced technology), setting measurable goals, creating cross-campus/integrated research collaborations, and creating avenues to foster talent and attract top-tier researchers.

External Collaborative Growth and Alignment: Themes for this strategy include building sustainable programs between private sectors and NU, supporting pathways for accelerating innovation, technology transfer and commercialization, building frameworks across campuses, disciplines and external organizations by setting measurable goals for national rankings.

EXTRAORDINARY PARTNERSHIPS & ENGAGEMENT:

Establish the University of Nebraska System and our engagement partners as having the highest-quality and impact that are recognized for extraordinary rural and urban outcomes.

University Collaboration and Internal Alignment: Themes for this strategy include supporting sustainable collaborations and partnerships across all campuses and disciplines within the educational, research and service missions, using policy, technology, finances and incentives to eliminate silos and bridge existing and future gaps.

Partnerships Across Nebraska and Beyond: Themes for this strategy include fostering state, national and global partnerships that allow NU to create and grow future mission driven opportunities for students, faculty, staff and alumni that provide positive community and educational impacts by forging agricultural, health care, military, public sector, and business collaborations that lead to overall quality of life and economic development improvements for all populations within the state and beyond.



EXTRAORDINARY CULTURE & ENVIRONMENT:

Establish the University of Nebraska System campuses, across all their missions, as having an extraordinarily vibrant and engaging culture in environments that are safe, welcoming.

Defining a Distinctive Culture, Workplace and Experience: Themes for this strategy include creating a unified, defined and distinctive culture across our 500-mile-wide NU campuses and our myriad of statewide partnership sites. The themes focused on arts and culture, supportive workspaces, engagement, belonging, communication, technology and thriving campus student and employee communities.

Campus Safety and Security: Themes for this strategy include creating, rehearsing and continuously strengthening of integrated system wide safety plans with focus on advanced technology applied to incident prevention, early awareness, communications, management and recovery.

EXTRAORDINARY STEWARDSHIP & EFFECTIVENESS:

Establish the University of Nebraska System as an extraordinarily effective, efficient, and sustainable organization for planning and implementation of all mission-driven goals.

Creating Sustainable Effectiveness and Efficiency: Themes for this strategy include creating value by identification and evaluation of structures, systems, processes, and areas that are redundant or inefficient, raising an awareness of these issues, then eliminating redundancy and inefficiency where possible across the system.

Strengthening Data Driven Strategic Decisions: Themes for this strategy include using data and proactive communication to support decision-making to align financial, facility and human resources with strategic academic priorities and by eliminating unnecessary campus and program separations to streamline and improve efficiency.

Enhancing Fiscal Responsibility and Stewardship: Themes for this strategy include the efficient use of resources and committing to sustainability, including performance-based quality and productivity outcomes driven budget models that create incentives for extraordinary performance of individuals and programs across the system that focus on access, affordability, and academic excellence.

