



STRATEGIC PLAN

RE-IMAGINING UB

2018-23



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The University of Baltimore Strategic Plan 2018-23



The University of Baltimore (UB) approaches its centennial (2025) with a strong sense of purpose as an institution of and for Baltimore. This strategic plan recognizes the need to create a financially sustainable business model to achieve our goals.

It was developed by the University Strategic Planning and Budgeting Committee (SPBC) in conjunction with and informed by our 2017 MSCHE Self-Study and specific task force work, including the Strategic Enrollment Plan, the Student Retention and Success Plan, the Strategic Analysis of Academic Programs and the forthcoming Diversity Plan. All plans are linked to this document. (Development of the Strategic Plan in spring 2016 was initiated by President Kurt L. Schmoke.) This reflects extensive stakeholder input via town halls, small group meetings and multiple electronic feedback opportunities.

Re-Imagining UB comes at an opportune time. UB enrollments have declined, fueled in part by a national shift in enrollment patterns and by fewer college-ready students in Baltimore and the surrounding area. Given this scenario, we must carefully look at whom we serve and how we do so, while staying true to our mission. Four imperatives drive the plan:

- Grow revenues.
- Enable exceptional student experiences, outcomes and value.
- Build UB's reputation and brand.
- Build community connections.

The plan focuses on our strengths to forge a bold future, outlines the ways in which UB will respond to the challenges confronting the University and higher education in general, and lays out our shared goals for the coming years. UB has always excelled at serving adult students who aspire for advancement in their careers. We strive to be even better. Our six strategic priorities provide direction and invite the community to create an ambitious future together.

Our plan supports our vision to become the regional leader in educating students who seek undergraduate, graduate and professional programs that advance careers, provide opportunities in applied research and experiential learning, and prepare them to be leaders in their chosen fields and communities. Furthermore, it acknowledges UB's expertise in educating adult learners who are looking for flexibility and nontraditional options. We will meet those needs by leveraging our strengths in technology-enabled offerings, accelerated programs and stackable credentials.

Knowing that the best learning occurs when grounded in reality, this plan advances our history of community engagement and the powerful learning opportunities it presents. We embrace our responsibility to enhance student learning and career preparation by partnering with public, private and nonprofit organizations. The plan acknowledges our commitment to the Baltimore region while being mindful that our reach has to widen and that our programs must be focused, innovative and market-responsive.

Our plan harnesses the power of diversity and inclusion in a dynamic urban environment. As a multicultural community, we foster a diverse community where the contributions of all students, faculty, staff and alumni are valued. Cultivating diverse ideas, experiences and perspectives is critical in strengthening professional, intellectual and cultural agility in our communities and workplace.

Our plan addresses the rising costs of higher education and subsequent student debt, especially when students do not graduate. As enrollments and key revenue sources decline and the cost of college increases, we have to ask ourselves if we are providing our students, of which more than half are Pell-eligible, with the programs and services they need to graduate and to get jobs.

In addressing the University's four imperatives, our plan provides an innovative approach to the University's academic portfolio. UB's *Signature Areas of Excellence* will be a model for interdisciplinary collaboration, resulting in relevant and rich programs, research and centers. Strategically grouping programs allows us to maximize resources, provide more targeted recruitment and marketing, and attract stronger students. It also affords us the opportunity to hire joint faculty, share labs and equipment and differentiate our programs. This approach promises to break down traditional barriers to academic discovery between disciplines, between colleges and between academia and industry.

The *Signature Areas of Excellence* are:

1. Law and Justice
2. Business and Entrepreneurship
3. Communication, Design and Digital Media
4. Government and Public Service
5. Health and Human Services
6. Information and Cyber Technology.

We will differentiate ourselves in the marketplace through our:

- focus on high-demand professional programs strategically grouped in *Signature Areas of Excellence*
- student pathways from undergraduate to graduate, law and professional programs
- commitment to community engagement and experiential learning
- student-centered faculty with significant research and real-world experience
- dynamic urban location and proximity to business, government and nonprofit organizations
- flexible modes of program delivery including day, weekend, evening and online courses.

OUR MISSION

The University of Baltimore offers career-focused education for aspiring and current professionals, providing the region with highly educated leaders who make distinctive contributions to the broader community.

OUR VISION

To be the premier regional university for career advancement, where leaders grow, thrive and learn to apply their skills for solving local and global challenges.

OUR VALUES

- **Student Growth and Success:** UB is committed to the personal and intellectual development of all students through close mentoring and small classes taught by dedicated faculty in a welcoming environment made possible by talented and engaged staff.
- **Pursuit of Knowledge:** UB values intellectual curiosity, teaching that challenges and inspires outstanding scholarship and creative work, and education as a lifelong process of discovery and growth.
- **Community and Civic Engagement:** As an anchor institution, UB values our long history of engagement in Baltimore and commits to enhancing student learning and career preparation in conjunction with our community partners.
- **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion:** The University is committed to academic freedom and to an environment that encourages thoughtful and vigorous exchange of ideas within a culture of mutual respect. We value the dignity, worth and contributions of all individuals and promote thoughtful and respectful engagement of diverse perspectives and experiences.
- **Ethical Engagement:** UB expects students, faculty and staff to act ethically and to conduct themselves with the highest degree of integrity.
- **Affordability:** UB is dedicated to providing affordable education and to ensuring that opportunity is not limited by financial circumstance or background.
- **Responsible and Resourceful Stewardship:** UB is committed to the careful stewardship of institutional and environmental resources. It strives to empower its community members to think creatively, to take initiative and to demonstrate resourcefulness to sustain our environmental, human and financial resources.

OUR GOALS

GOAL 1:

POSITION UB AS THE REGION'S PREMIER PROFESSIONAL, CAREER-FOCUSED UNIVERSITY.

UB must leverage its strength and legacy in graduate and professional education if we are to effectively differentiate the University, grow enrollments and achieve financial stability. To do so requires realigning our academic portfolio of programs around professional career pathways, optimizing program delivery, developing a unique brand proposition which resonates in the market, and positioning UB as a leader in *Signature Areas of Excellence*. Accelerated pathways from undergraduate degrees to our graduate programs must be aligned with industry and market needs. The Strategic Marketing and Enrollment Plan and Strategic Analysis of Academic Programs provide detailed information.

STRATEGY 1.1: Align UB's academic program offerings around the *Signature Areas of Excellence* to ensure mission fit and enrollment growth.

- Consolidate programs and focus in *Signature Areas of Excellence*.
- Facilitate students' progression from undergraduate to graduate and law programs within the *Signature Areas of Excellence*.
- Expand UB's capacity for breakthrough innovation by appointing faculty from across academia and industry, colleges and institutions.
- Provide and promote more professional education through both academic and continuing education programs.

STRATEGY 1.2: Leverage the differential advantage of being the only Maryland university with both a law school and undergraduate programs.

- Expand the UB School of Law's portfolio of program offerings beyond the Juris Doctor (J.D.).
- Develop a dedicated pathway from specific undergraduate programs to the UB School of Law.
- Develop an online delivery option for certificate and non-J.D. programs.

STRATEGY 1.3: Rebrand the University for growth and strategic positioning.

- Engage key stakeholders in the development of a differentiated brand positioning.
- Create a multilayered brand that can be effectively deployed across the University.

- Refine and measure the success of the new brand strategy.
- Develop and execute a robust marketing and communication plan to enhance outreach and impact.

STRATEGY 1.4: Strengthen UB's academic reputation.

- Increase admission standards for freshman and lower-division transfer students.
- Expand the University's Helen B. Denit Honors Program and discipline/program-specific honors programs.
- Achieve national recognition for at least one program in each of the *Signature Areas of Excellence*.
- Differentiate programs through curricular and co-curricular experiences with stronger ties to business and community partners.

STRATEGY 1.5: Improve quality and effectiveness of online programming to optimize flexibility and program delivery.

- Build a comprehensive structure and strategy for online programs as a means to leverage flexible delivery.
- Increase the number of online programs, particularly at the graduate level.
- Revise tuition and fee structures to be more competitive with other online providers.

GOAL 2:

STRENGTHEN STUDENT SUCCESS.

UB will foster greater student success by offering exceptional experiences both inside and outside of the classroom in a supportive learning environment. We will provide the necessary tools to support timely degree completion, affordability and excellence in teaching and learning. The Student Retention and Success Plan provides detailed strategies that are summarized below.

STRATEGY 2.1: Increase degree completion rates and shorten students' time to degree.

- Review program structures and courses, streamline offerings, develop optimal course sequencing and assess the number of credits needed for degrees to ensure both rigor and student success.
- Mine academic performance data to identify patterns and support student success.
- Close the gap in educational achievement among all undergraduates.
- Maximize flexible course delivery, enhance winter and summer offerings, and develop multisemester course schedules.



- Enhance opportunities for awarding credit via transfer institutions, early college admittance, dual enrollment and military credit; create a campuswide structure and institute policies and procedures for awarding credit through Prior Learning Assessment (PLA).
- Develop a strong and proactive approach to academic advising that focuses on academic pathways and timely student completion; enhance academic, career and related support services to increase students' credits earned versus credits attempted.

STRATEGY 2.2: Enhance affordability and student financial literacy.

- Evaluate the tuition structure for all programs to ensure market competitiveness.
- Increase need-based financial aid.
- Revise financial aid processes to ensure clarity, consistency and ease for students.
- Enhance strategic use of funds for improving student outcomes and reducing negative financial impacts on students and on the institution.
- Develop a University-wide initiative to assist students in making prudent financial decisions.

STRATEGY 2.3: Grow student participation in high-impact educational practices.

- Expand internship and experiential learning opportunities; establish a Center for Internships and Experiential

Learning or re-envision UB's Career and Professional Development Center.

- Develop signature experiences that prepare students for lifelong success in their careers and enhance interest in civic engagement.
- Expand professional work-study opportunities.

STRATEGY 2.4: Strengthen excellence in teaching and learning.

- Revitalize the Center for Excellence in Learning, Teaching and Technology (CELTT) to inspire faculty members to strive for excellence and to offer resources related to learning, discovery, engagement and professional growth.
- Make high-impact teaching and learning practices a priority throughout the institution.

GOAL 3:

SOLIDIFY UB'S COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND SERVICE.

UB seeks opportunities that ignite untapped student talent and potential and leverages these experiences in our classroom, research and co-curricular activities. Through research, student learning experiences, applied practice and beneficial partnerships with public, private and nonprofit organizations, UB enhances opportunities for our faculty, staff and students to engage deeply. We will integrate employer and alumni networks as a source of lifelong learning, teaching, mentoring



and innovation. In doing so, we will ensure our academic programs meet the needs of these communities and elevate UB's role as an anchor institution.

STRATEGY 3.1: Promote faculty, staff and student engagement in tackling critical issues facing Baltimore and the region.

- a. Expand engagement with public-school systems to ensure more students are prepared for college (e.g., dual enrollments, community college pipelines).
- b. Commit UB to sharing knowledge about community building, economic development and social justice to demonstrate to UB students the value of lifelong engagement in their communities.
- c. Establish a mechanism through which UB can proactively organize and coordinate with its community partners to benefit students, faculty and the community.

STRATEGY 3.2: Cultivate lifelong community engagement.

- a. Continue to build curricular experiences on community engagement.
- b. Institute a Retired Faculty Council to use the wisdom and expertise of retired faculty in support of teaching, learning and scholarship.
- c. Engage with interested, retired staff to support the University community.

STRATEGY 3.3: Strengthen connections between members of the University and the region's business/professional leaders.

- a. Enhance alumni engagement by connecting our graduates with current students and campus initiatives in more intentional ways.
- b. Expand partnerships with key external stakeholders in government, nonprofit, public and private entities, and link these opportunities to the student experience.

GOAL 4:

ORGANIZE FOR LONG-TERM FINANCIAL STABILITY.

In order to flourish, UB must be financially secure. We must maximize our institutional capabilities, build efficiencies, grow revenue and increase the University's endowment to support outstanding education.

STRATEGY 4.1: Improve efficiency and effectiveness of administrative/business operations.

- a. Evaluate opportunities for efficiency improvements and the expansion of shared service centers for business operations.
- b. Leverage best practices in administrative operations to reduce costs and improve effectiveness.
- c. Develop UB as a year-round institution with a continuous and diversified revenue stream.
- d. Optimize campus facilities.

STRATEGY 4.2: Foster academic innovation to drive enrollment and improve operational performance.

- a. Reorganize academic structures to better support academic excellence and student success.
- b. Explore options for flexibility in faculty workload.
- c. Develop a "professional" track for full-time, non-tenure-track faculty to support institutional priorities.

STRATEGY 4.3: Modify budgeting process to better support enrollment growth.

- a. Revise budget model to reward innovation, growth and efficiency.
- b. Expand self-support models to fund summer and winter sessions as well as Universities at Shady Grove (USG) operations.
- c. Diversify revenue stream (enrollment, state funding, philanthropy, sponsored research and auxiliary service rentals) to support the institutional mission.

STRATEGY 4.4: Build endowments to ensure sustained support for students, faculty and programs.

- a. Meet the fundraising goals of the new capital campaign.
- b. Increase endowed professorships, student scholarships and support for enhancements to the student learning experience.
- c. Strengthen alumni development and annual giving.

GOAL 5:

ACHIEVE EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH, SCHOLARSHIP AND CREATIVE ACTIVITY.

Research, scholarship and creative activity (RSCA)—theoretical, applied, discipline-focused and pedagogical—are foundational to universities and integral to enhancing UB's reputation. By supporting RSCA, we will attract and retain excellent faculty while encouraging students to grow personally and professionally. UB will cultivate an environment that supports and rewards excellent scholarship, promotes opportunities for student research and encourages interdisciplinary collaborations. UB will leverage its libraries, centers, clinics and institutes (e.g., Jacob France Institute, Schaefer Center for Public Policy, Center for Drug Policy and Enforcement, Center for International and Comparative Law) to highlight our expertise and impact in the broader community.

STRATEGY 5.1: Expand research funding and leverage UB's centers, clinics and institutes to elevate UB's profile and commitment to the community.

- a. Expand RSCA partnerships and sponsored research with industry, government and community organizations and other academic institutions.
- b. Support and leverage centers so they are known as the resources of choice for policymakers.
- c. Ensure appropriate and streamlined support for sponsored programs' administration.
- d. Grow revenue generated by University centers.

STRATEGY 5.2: Enhance support for research, scholarship and creative activity for faculty and students.

- a. Explore options for flexibility in faculty workload to support outstanding RSCA.
- b. Increase the number of Fulbright Scholars among faculty and students.
- c. Increase the number of students participating in research; provide training to participate.
- d. Evaluate the resources of UB's two libraries to identify opportunities to enhance support for research.

STRATEGY 5.3: Nurture a campus culture of interdisciplinary collaboration and research.

- a. Strengthen collaborations by leveraging *Signature Areas of Excellence* and faculty expertise across disciplines to enhance RSCA.
- b. Increase the number of multi-investigator, interdisciplinary research proposals and projects.

GOAL 6:

STRENGTHEN UB'S COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION.

UB fosters a diverse community of students, staff and faculty. The experiences, perspectives and contributions of all individuals are valued and deemed central to intellectual growth. We will continue our commitment to supporting diverse ideas, experiences and perspectives that strengthen professional, intellectual and cultural agility.

STRATEGY 6.1: Cultivate a diverse, equitable and inclusive climate.

- a. Create a bold, ambitious and comprehensive plan to expand and instill the principles of diversity and inclusiveness for our faculty, staff and students.
- b. Develop and implement a strategy for the advancement, recruitment and retention of underrepresented and culturally competent faculty and staff.
- c. Address salary compression challenges and ensure that faculty and staff salaries progress toward a minimum of the 50th percentile of their respective peer comparison.

STRATEGY 6.2: Refocus the Office of Human Resources to strengthen organizational climate and to advance the professional growth of UB employees.

- a. Provide leadership training for academic and administrative leaders.
- b. Initiate 360-degree performance reviews for all in leadership positions.
- c. Review human capital policies, processes and tools to advance effective recruiting, professional training and development, and performance management.
- d. Develop an employee engagement/institutional climate survey.

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