



STRATEGIC PLAN 2016-2021



Northwestern
OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY

DEFINING OUR FUTURE



Mission

Northwestern provides quality educational and cultural opportunities to learners with diverse needs by cultivating ethical leadership and service, critical thinking and fiscal responsibility.

Vision

We aspire to be a vibrant and innovative regional university of choice whose students, faculty, staff, and alumni succeed and lead in their academic, professional, cultural, and service endeavors.

Values

Academic Excellence

Northwestern will provide the best possible educational experience for every student.

- Focus on quality teaching and advising
- Respond effectively to the learning needs of each student
- Embrace the role of technology in the educational process
- Promote opportunities for teaching and learning outside of the classroom

Accessibility

Northwestern is committed to accessibility of its programs and services.

- Embrace our mission as a multiple site regional university
- Continually work to maintain affordability
- Seek new methods to deliver programs and services to our constituencies

Community

Northwestern will create a sense of community that extends beyond campus boundaries.

- Seek partnerships and initiatives that will improve the quality of life for area residents
- Promote institutional and individual service to others
- Embrace our role in a global society

Diversity

Northwestern will respect the individual rights of all persons.

- Value the differences in every individual
- Promote the expression of differing opinions and beliefs
- Appreciate the culture and backgrounds of each person
- Treat every individual with respect

Responsibility

Northwestern will maintain the highest levels of ethical standards and accountability.

- Act with integrity and accept responsibility
- Use our resources in the most effective and efficient manner
- Conduct business in an atmosphere of transparency
- Promote a culture of continuous improvement

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Dear Members of the Northwestern Community:

In the fall of 2015, Northwestern embarked on a process to create a new strategic plan that would guide the institution for the next five years. At the time, I remarked that creation of this plan might be the most important endeavor ever at Northwestern.

Along with all public colleges and universities in Oklahoma, Northwestern faced fierce economic headwinds that would lead to record cuts in state support. In addition, many universities became pawns in state politics, creating a climate where higher education's value to the people of Oklahoma was questioned. These factors, along with a rapidly changing educational landscape, affect our ability to serve students and the people of northwest Oklahoma.

In order to move forward and fulfill the mission of Northwestern, conducting "business as usual" is no longer an option. As an institution, we must not only adapt to change, but embrace it in a manner that better serves our students. We must view challenges as opportunities for innovation. To borrow a line from the Navy Seals, "The only easy day was yesterday."

Through the collective efforts of our constituents, we have crafted our new strategic plan, *Defining Our Future*. The title represents our charge to move Northwestern forward through effective leadership, a proactive approach to teaching and learning, and by seeking opportunities for greater service to Oklahoma.

The University's renewed strategic plan addresses four principal areas: (1) the nature, quality, and relevance of the academic programs it offers its students; (2) an enhanced student experience; (3) a campus environment that is sustainable and supportive of all its members; and (4) mutually beneficial partnerships for the future.

The content of this plan includes the collective work of many of our faculty, staff and students, based on feedback gathered from many stakeholders, including alumni and community leaders. I thank each person who contributed to this effort. I believe we are well on our way to *Defining Our Future*.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Janet Cunningham". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Janet Cunningham, Ed.D.
President



Strategic Direction 1

Northwestern will deliver and assess academic programs that include meaningful content and experiences to prepare graduates for successful careers and service to society.

Goal 1: *Review all current academic programs with respect to their content, format of delivery, and mode of assessment.*

- Continue assessment of programs for relevant and rigorous content, effective delivery, appropriate measures of student learning, and logical sequencing.
- Ensure that all accredited programs take necessary steps to continue to adhere to standards for national accreditation within their specified timelines.
- Sharpen the career focus of all academic programs by mapping clear professional pathways, incorporating experiential learning opportunities (including internships), and increasing external links to the larger business and professional communities.
- Comply with guidelines of the state and national Scaling Corequisite Initiative to address the needs of students at all academic levels.
- Apply best practice strategies from Title III efforts to decrease below average performance and withdrawal rates in gateway courses.

Goal 2: *With faculty, mutually establish the expectation that each department and division will conduct an assessment of societal trends and needs, including prospective students' interests, that would necessitate a change of content and/or pedagogical approach.*

- Using national and regional demographic and employment data, review all academic programs to ensure consistency with the university's mission, resources, and competitive position in the overall higher education context.
- As appropriate, review at the department and division level, findings from consultations within the discipline and with external constituencies that would call for modifications to curriculum, assessment, and career counseling.

Goal 3: *Develop a system that will provide relevant data concerning school outcomes, internship opportunities and program points-of-pride to Northwestern constituencies.*

- Define relevant data and establish a mechanism for its timely and systematic collection and dissemination.

Goal 4: *Increase participation in faculty professional development by improving communication about available resources.*

- Create timely and convenient opportunities for faculty members to exchange ideas and strategies in person or virtually.
- Update and maintain the existing Blackboard faculty development site.
- Include documented evidence of participation in on-campus or off-campus professional development as creditable activity in the annual faculty evaluation protocol.
- Increase faculty development resources related to new delivery modes (e.g., online and hybrid).

Continued



THE ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

Goal 5: *Maintain student advising as an integral part of a faculty member's professional responsibility while strengthening the effectiveness of advising across the university.*

- Review and reconfigure as necessary advising training workshops and resources to encourage timely degree completion.
- Maximize the use of existing technology and explore options for new technology for use in student academic advising.
- Through effective advising of new students, increase the number of students who move promptly into credit-bearing courses.
- Implement and evaluate strategies to increase the number of students who declare a major within their first 30 credit hours.

Goal 6: *Increase online course and other program offerings while ensuring rigorous standards and student learning outcomes.*

- Ensure consistency of instructional quality across all delivery modes.
- Increase the number of General Education courses offered online.
- Expand online learning orientation opportunities for students beyond those currently offered.
- Evaluate and upgrade as needed the technology and other resources that support reliable and user-friendly online teaching and learning.
- Complete implementation of Doctorate of Nursing Practice process by fall 2017.



Strategic Direction 2

Northwestern will provide a high quality educational experience for all students from time of first inquiry through graduation.

Goal 1: Implement the principal recommendations of the recent Enrollment Management Report and Academy for Student Persistence and Completion.

- Develop a data-driven branding initiative aimed at identifying the image of our product (in general and in terms of specific product features such as facilities, student life, technology, degree program offerings, etc.) in the mind of our consumer.
- Develop specialized professional development opportunities for faculty and staff members that will provide training and support for recruitment and retention efforts.
- Utilize assessment tools that will provide ongoing feedback from the current student body regarding academic and cultural experiences while at Northwestern.
- Maintain federal grant programs that support student achievement.
- Develop tools and trainings for current students to encourage and empower them to take a more active role in their advisement and education.

Goal 2: Provide a sustainable, user-friendly, and aesthetically pleasing campus environment.

- Develop a system for the evaluation of existing facilities and generate a set of priorities to assist in guiding existing facility upgrades (e.g., Herod Hall, campus mall, residential facilities), and identifying new construction goals and projects.
- Develop a system for collecting data on student preferences and needs related to facilities to inform recruitment and retention efforts.

Goal 3: Design and implement a consumer-oriented branding initiative that will engage both traditional marketing strategies and social media channels.

- Develop targeted messages to ensure prospective students and parents know of the educational opportunities available at the university.
- Develop a program focused on deriving desired word-of-mouth consumer communication.
- Develop a program for informing and educating university employees on strategic selling points derived from branding and marketing campaigns.
- Develop a system of evaluation and measurement to discern the effectiveness of specific marketing and branding efforts.



Strategic Direction 3

Northwestern will develop policies and practices that foster a university-wide culture of excellence, accountability, and collaboration.

Goal 1: *Review and update where necessary processes across campus that impact students, faculty and staff to ensure cost effectiveness and efficiency.*

- Review and improve where necessary the processes for travel requests, facility work orders, purchasing and other administrative operations.
- Upgrade administrative management software.
- Upgrade and fully utilize the degree audit software available through the Registry Office.
- Upgrade software and improve staff knowledge concerning automatic packaging of student financial aid and scholarship awards.

Goal 2: *Review and revise as needed all internal communication protocols and vehicles to ensure reliable, timely, and consistent sharing of information across all campus constituencies.*

- Implement a dedicated vehicle for presidential level communications.
- Work closely with campus media and the Northwestern Foundation and Alumni Association to ensure maximum distribution of information.
- Make available opportunities for constituencies to offer feedback and provide institutional response as appropriate.

Goal 3: *Conduct an assessment of health and wellness supporting resources for faculty, staff, and students and initiate new protocols as needed.*

- Promote wellness education and activities through partnership with health insurance provider.
- Target activities for health and wellness program at additional locations.
- Work with University food service partner to provide nutritional product information and provide healthy meal options for students and employees.
- Continue to support and review expansion opportunities for student intramural activities.

Goal 4: *Develop manager and staff training programs that will enhance individual performance and satisfaction as well as support collaboration across divisions and departments.*

- Identify training opportunities for faculty and staff that can be provided through a variety of delivery mechanisms to promote professional development and enhance work skills.
- Support efforts for new faculty and staff orientation programs as well as advanced training for experienced supervisors.

Goal 5: *Develop a plan to promote environmental sustainability, collaborating with the local community to promote green practices.*

- Continue support of the student group CORE and employees participating in green initiatives and awareness.
- Work with the cities of Alva, Enid, and Woodward to participate in recycling opportunities.
- Review and implement energy cost-savings opportunities across all campus buildings and facilities.
- Evaluate alternative choices for student lab printing of materials, assignments, and papers.
- Evaluate employee options for creating documents electronically in an effort to reduce printing costs.



Strategic Direction 4

Northwestern will forge strategic partnerships that advance the mission of the University.

Goal 1: Implement a comprehensive development program that secures private investment to support important initiatives and areas of most critical need.

- Successfully advance the three core objectives of the Imagine Northwestern campaign through meeting the stated financial goals.
- Develop initiatives to expand the base of donors who regularly support the University.
- Implement giving programs that provide unrestricted funding that can be directed to areas of critical importance.
- Raise the awareness of the importance of private giving and develop a culture of philanthropy with alumni, employees, students and friends.

Goal 2: Serve as a regional center for thought and action to improve the quality of life for northwest Oklahoma and the surrounding area.

- Develop a strategy to promote the University as the regional center for educational services, the arts and athletic competition.
- Serve as an active participant in organizations that promote the growth and development of the region and seek leadership roles as necessary.
- Successfully begin and grow the Doctor of Nursing Practice program to improve access to health care providers, especially in rural and underserved areas.

Goal 3: Strengthen mutually beneficial partnerships with business and industry.

- Develop and implement a reporting structure to target and engage business and industry entities across Oklahoma.
- Strengthen ties with business and industry through the active engagement of alumni working at selected companies.
- Increase employment opportunities for graduates and internship possibilities for current students.
- Increase the number of academic program-specific industry advisory councils.

Goal 4: Working with alumni and friends, demonstrate to policymakers the value of the University to the people of Oklahoma.

- Implement a communications strategy to better inform alumni and friends of trending topics that affect the mission of the University.
- Build a network of private sector advocates that can assist the University in its state legislative efforts.
- Support efforts to engage state Congressional leaders and federal agencies in order to expand funding of grants and sponsored programs.



Administration

Dr. Janet Cunningham, President
Dr. Bo Hannaford, Vice President for Academic Affairs
Dr. David Pecha, Vice President for Administration
Steve Valencia, Associate Vice President for University Relations
Caleb Mosburg, Dean of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management
Dr. James Bell, Associate Vice President for Academics and Dean of Faculty
Dr. Deena Fisher, Dean of the Woodward Campus
Dr. Wayne McMillin, Dean of the Enid Campus
Myra Davison, Administrative Assistant to the President
Skeeter Bird, Chief Executive Officer of the Northwestern Foundation and Alumni Association

Faculty

Matt Adair, Instructor of Mass Communication
Dr. Leslie Collins, Assistant Professor of Nursing
Dr. Kay Decker, Professor of Sociology/Chair, Social Sciences Department
Dr. Marc Decker, Assistant Professor of Fine Arts/Director of Bands
Dr. Cris Gordon, Assistant Professor of Psychology/Chair, Psychology Department
Shane Hansen, Instructor of Health and Sports Science Education
Dr. David Hawkins, Assistant Professor of Business/Chair, Division of Business
Susan Jeffries, Library Services Director/Assistant Professor of Library-Information Systems
Dr. Tim Maharry, Professor of Mathematics/Chair, Math and Computer Science Department
Dr. Steven Maier, Professor of Physics/Chair, Natural Sciences Department
Dr. Chandler Mead, Professor of Sports Science/Chair, HSSE Department
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Students

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Dr. Stephen Reno
American Association of State College and Universities-Penson Center for Professional Development



Regional University System of Oklahoma

Regent Lake Carpenter - Leedey

Regent Jeffrey Dunn - Tulsa

Regent Amy Anne Ford - Durant

Regent Joy Hofmeister - Tulsa

Regent Michael W. Mitchel - Woodward

Regent Gary Parker - Muskogee

Regent Connie Reilly - Okemah

Regent Mark Stansberry - Edmond

Regent Susan Winchester - Chickasha



*"The greater danger for most of us lies
not in setting our aim too high
and falling short;
but in setting our aim too low,
and achieving our mark."*

Michelangelo



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