



COMPASS 2021

MOUNT UNION'S STRATEGY TO LEAD, COLLABORATE, AND INNOVATE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In December 2015, the University of Mount Union concluded Advancing Excellence, an ambitious and successful five-year strategic plan. As the close of Advancing Excellence neared, the University began to create a new strategic plan, one that would build upon the successes of the previous plan and help propel the University into the future. After months of work and with input from members of the University community, the Steering Committee proposed Compass 2021: Mount Union's Strategy to Lead, Collaborate, and Innovate – a strategic plan that is realistic and aspirational, leverages the University's existing strengths and recent accomplishments, builds upon the successes of Advancing Excellence, and focuses on the student experience. The plan was approved by the faculty and members of the Board of Trustees in the fall of 2016.

THE MISSION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MOUNT UNION

The mission of the University of Mount Union is to prepare students for fulfilling lives, meaningful work, and responsible citizenship.

THE VISION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MOUNT UNION FOR 2015

In 2021, the University of Mount Union will be a vibrant, comprehensive Midwestern university of 2,700 students, including 2,200 undergraduates and 500 graduate students who will study on the Alliance campus, online, and potentially, at satellite sites. Technology will be imaginatively and flexibly deployed to enable effective teaching and learning, to bring the world into Mount Union classrooms, and to overcome obstacles of distance, time, and expense that often prevent students from achieving their educational goals.

To students and families seeking a personalized education combining breadth of knowledge and perspective with career-specific study and experiential learning, the University of Mount Union will offer an optimal combination of exceptional quality, reasonable cost, and preparation for career success. The University's scholarship and financial aid programs will allow the University's notably diverse student body to access an academic experience that inspires them for global engagement in the 21st century and prepares them to be valuable leaders for the world.

We will be known for offering an undergraduate curriculum that is integrative, encouraging students to gain the breadth of knowledge and perspective fostered by a liberal arts education, to understand the multiple means by which academic disciplines create knowledge and find meaning, and to prepare for career success and leadership in service to others. New academic offerings and active revision and updating of extant programs will help ensure that our students receive an education that is valuable and relevant. Experiential learning that leads to career success will continue to be strongly emphasized across the curriculum.

Graduate program offerings will build on the University's strengths in health and medical sciences, and teacher education and explore new opportunities in the social and behavioral sciences and management. All Mount Union students will study in an environment that features personal attention, small class sizes, active and experiential learning, and an emphasis on leadership development.

The University's diverse student body will live and learn in an inclusive environment that values, supports, and celebrates students of varied ages and cultural backgrounds. These students will participate in curricular and co-curricular programs that foster a global mindset and develop intercultural competence that will permit them to excel after graduation. Our efforts to attract and serve American students from a wider geographic area, more transfer and commuter students, more international students, and more part-time and full-time graduate students, will help diversify the University's sources of tuition revenue, strengthening the University's finances.

The University's historical commitment to accessibility will be undergirded by a capital campaign focused on significantly increasing the University's endowment for scholarship support and financial aid.

Mount Union's employees will have appealing opportunities for personal development, continuing education, and career advancement. They will jointly create a work culture that features effective communication, fosters cooperation and innovation, and that is nimble and inventive in responding to opportunities and challenges.

The main purpose of the University's strategic plan is to continue Mount Union's planned transition into a comprehensive university that offers our students an integrative liberal arts education while also providing pre-professional and professional education at the undergraduate and graduate levels. The plan honors the University's traditional strengths and commitments while positioning Mount Union to thrive in an environment that requires leadership, collaboration, and innovation.

THE SIX STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

The University's Strategic Plan focuses on six strategic initiatives. These initiatives overlap, interlock, and are designed to be mutually reinforcing. Each key initiative is elaborated through a series of goals. Those charged with executing the plan will work with metrics that allow measurement of results, timelines that detail progress toward goals, and regularly updated estimates of resources that will be needed to attain each goal.

The strategic initiatives lay out directions and set priorities, but in the changeable higher education environment, it is not possible to know, or sensible to commit to, the full particulars of how the initiatives will be implemented. Moreover, in an organization that highly values consultation and cooperation, rigid, top-down directives are not feasible or desirable. The University's strategic plan is, therefore, iterative and subject to adjustment.

ENRICH THE EXPERIENCE OF AN INCREASINGLY DIVERSE STUDENT BODY.

- Foster an inclusive culture that is focused on and values diversity.
- Provide programs and support services for our evolving student body.
- Strengthen student success and engagement initiatives.

CULTIVATE AN INNOVATIVE AND EXPANDING ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENT.

- Develop new academic programs and offerings while enhancing current academic programs.
- Develop programs and pathways to meet the needs of new types of students.
- Develop a teaching and learning community that fosters innovation.
- Foster a global mindset and development of intercultural competencies among members of the campus community.
- Develop interdisciplinary academic centers.

ENSURE FINANCIAL STRENGTH, AFFORDABILITY, AND ENROLLMENT SUCCESS.

- Diversify the University's sources of tuition revenue.
- Achieve desired changes in the makeup of the Mount Union student body.
- Enhance affordability through charitable gift support for scholarships that reduce the cost of attendance.
- Keep tuition increases at modest levels by increasing non-tuition sources of revenue.
- Ensure excellent management of resources to ensure quality, control costs, and limit tuition increases.

BRAND THE UNIVERSITY AS A REMARKABLE MIDWESTERN INSTITUTION.

- Use a data-driven approach to refine the institution's brand plan.
- Position the University as a well-recognized institution in the Midwest that offers exceptional value and a personalized experience rooted in: 1) an ideal combination of academic excellence and affordability, and 2) a focus on leadership development that helps our graduates achieve outstanding career success.

CREATE AN EFFECTIVE AND COLLABORATIVE WORKPLACE CULTURE.

- Establish benchmarks that define a quality-focused campus workplace culture.
- Empower open, productive, accessible, and clear communication.
- Build, communicate, and ensure compliance with trustworthy policies.
- Create a workplace culture that embraces and supports adaptation to mandated and strategic change.
- Foster innovation, collaboration, and employee empowerment.
- Improve and support faculty and staff diversity.

LEVERAGE EXISTING AND EMERGING TECHNOLOGY.

- Advance teaching and learning through technology.
- Enhance administrative processes and operations through the use of technology.
- Use technology effectively to project the University to the campus community and the world.
- Optimize and advance technology infrastructure to support the University's initiatives.