



Undergraduate Education Strategic Plan

2020–2025

Who We Are

Welcome to Penn State Undergraduate Education!

The seventeen diverse units that comprise Undergraduate Education (UE) are united in our mission to collaboratively create a Penn State academic environment that supports the success of all undergraduate students. We know that students take different paths to begin and complete their Penn State education and one of our strengths is the flexibility that we can provide our students through the development of robust institutional structures and pathways. As we strive to carry out this mission each day, we are guided by our 2020–2025 Strategic Plan, which was developed collaboratively by a group of UE leadership and staff, and reflects our shared values and priorities.

Our mission communicates what we are striving for, and the three overarching goals within the Strategic Plan outline how we can best advance this mission over the next five years:

Goal 1: Improve success of minoritized and marginalized students, thereby having a positive effect on all students

Goal 2: Foster institution-wide connection and collaboration

Goal 3: Prioritize and model student-centeredness, equity, diversity, inclusion, and transparency in our work

These goals are ambitious, but our UE team and our partners across the University are determined and committed to making each a reality. By achieving the vision laid out in our Strategic Plan, we can fulfill Penn State's historic commitment as a land-grant institution to serving students from every background while also preparing students to thrive within a diverse, global, twenty-first-century society.

Whether you are a student, parent, faculty or staff member, donor, or friend to Penn State, thank you for taking the time to learn more about Undergraduate Education. I hope you are inspired by the important work we have ahead of us!



Vice President and Dean
for Undergraduate Education



PennState
Undergraduate Education



Mission

The mission of Undergraduate Education is to facilitate a Penn State academic environment that enhances the success of all students

- **Who is impacted in our mission?** Students, faculty, staff, and the broader community
- **What do we do to make the mission a reality?** We leverage the expertise of UE Units
- **How do we accomplish the mission?** Through collaborative work with campuses, colleges, and communities, we demonstrate boldness to lead change

Vision

The vision of Undergraduate Education is to ensure equitable outcomes for all Penn State students through effective collaborations, responsive and adaptable practices and policies, and informed decision-making

Values

Integrity – We act with integrity in accordance with the highest academic, professional, and ethical standards

Respect – We respect and honor the dignity of each person, embrace civil discourse, and foster a diverse, inclusive, and safe community

Responsibility – We act responsibly and hold ourselves accountable for our decisions, actions, and their consequences

Discovery – Through advanced research and scholarship, we seek and create new knowledge and understanding, and foster creativity and innovation, for society's benefit

Excellence – We strive for excellence in all endeavors as individuals, an institution, and a leader in higher education and research

Community – We work together for the betterment of our University, the communities we serve, and the world

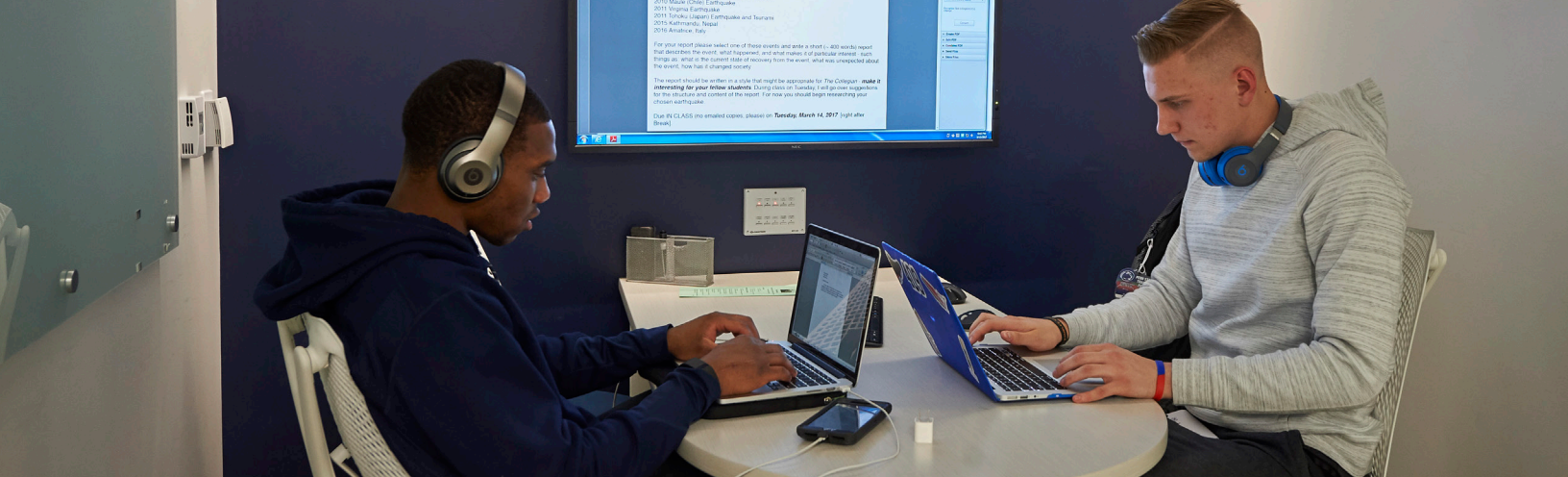
In addition to embodying the Penn State Values listed above, we strive to uphold the values of:

Student-Centeredness – We are committed to student success and seek to enable students to engage actively in their education and achieve their academic goals

Collaboration – We believe that working across organizational boundaries creates opportunities and improves outcomes

Equity – We believe in the potential of all students and strive to create meaningful opportunities for all students to belong and achieve success

Innovation – We believe creativity and opportunity go hand-in-hand and that breakthroughs inherently involve risk



Goal 1 —

Improve success of minoritized and marginalized students thereby having a positive effect on all students

Objective 1.1 Develop and utilize data to guide decisions regarding student success

Key Performance Indicators

- Development and use of key data sources in all UE units/offices to drive decisions on student success (ATI, APLU, OPAIR, etc.)
- Regular citation of data that supported decisions being made
- Minoritized and marginalized student profiles developed

Mapped Connections to University Plan

- F1: Enabling Access to Education
- F3: Advancing Inclusion, Equity, and Diversity
- DI3: Develop a more robust digital infrastructure and culture
- OP2: Establish processes for continual institutional assessment, improvement, and innovation, including more systematic review of administrative and academic organizational performance and financial stewardship

Action Items

1.1.1—Identify and build data measures on gaps, barriers, and differential experiences by minoritized and marginalized students (One Penn State 2025 GP 1)

Metrics

- Usage and reference of data source for decision and in reports
- ATI/APLU data demonstrates improvements in retention and graduation rates
- Actions by colleges to address DFW rates

1.1.2—Build data connections with other units to share information and decision-making (One Penn State 2025 GP 5)

Metrics

- Student data referenced in support of decisions
- Practices adjusted within units based on data usage
- Dashboards built using partners' data
- Creation and maintenance of an inventory of collaborating partners including indications of partners who have used UE-developed data



Objective 1.2 Lead in efforts to reduce gaps in graduation rates

Key Performance Indicators

- Minoritized and marginalized student retention and graduate rates improve at campuses
- Increased numbers of minoritized and marginalized students participate in engagement opportunities
- Minoritized and marginalized students report improved access to success information
- Minoritized and marginalized student use of UE services increases

Mapping Connections to University Plan

- F3: Advancing Inclusion, Equity, and Diversity
- TE4: Prepare our students for success in their careers and in life
- OP1: Improve the design, oversight, integration, and effectiveness of organizational processes

Action Items

1.2.1—Reform Undergraduate Education practices and policies to enhance the success of marginalized and minoritized students from pre-matriculation to graduation

Metrics

- Increased engagement by students in programs that are developed
- UE policies and practices are revised
- Assessment of students' experience with programs developed and resources provided
- Increased engagement and success by 2+2 students in becoming a part of UP culture and activities

1.2.2—Advocate for change to university-wide policies and curricula that create barriers for graduation, retention, and engagement for marginalized and minoritized students (One Penn State 2020 GP 1)

Metrics

- Track changes in University, UE and unit policies with pre-change and post-change data on students impacted by policy change
- Increased graduation, retention, and engagement by marginalized and minoritized students
- Students and parents recognize financial barriers and utilize Student Aid resources

1.2.3—Develop accessible pathways and programs for marginalized and minoritized students that facilitate greater probability of success (One Penn State 2025 GP 1, 3)

Metrics

- Students report increased access to information
- Marginalized and minoritized student participation in programs increases
- Use of student organizations as reviewers of communications
- Assessment of students' information usage and program participation experiences



1.2.4—Create and socialize processes for students to build intentional success actions (e.g: Student Engagement Plan) into their educational journeys (One Penn State 2025 GP 1)

Metrics

- Assess student use of tools and resources to make choices intentionally considering outcomes
- Development of new options for student journeys
- Growth of participation in programs
- Increased resources for students who leave prior to degree completion

1.2.5—Build greater and simplified student access to information and resources of all types (One Penn State GP 1)

Metrics

- Students find information more readily as measured by web page usage and assessing student experiences using information
- Program adjustments to assist in student access
- Greater use of web and other marketing approaches

Objective 1.3 Collaborate to improve professional practices that better equip individuals to respond to student needs

Key Performance Indicators

- Increased number of diverse Undergraduate Education employees
- Development of practices that promote equity, diversity, and inclusion
- Citation of student needs that influenced decisions
- Creation of longitudinal qualitative data measuring impact of trainings on participant perceptions, attitudes, awareness, and actions associated with diversity, equity, and inclusion principles

Mapped Connections to University Plan

- F3: Advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion
- TE3: Support and empower our outstanding faculty and staff
- IS1: Prioritize investment in our people

Action Items

1.3.1—Sponsor and advance professional development for understanding and promoting equitable practices

Metrics

- Training messages are reflected in the work of units and individuals
- Messages for diverse audiences are developed and show more impact than prior messages
- All UE staff participate in DEI training
- Assessment of knowledges/skills gained from improved professional practices for promoting equitable practices
- Annual performance reviews include individual DEI goals that are assessed each year



1.3.2—Implement proactive and inclusive measures to improve recruitment and retention of employees and prioritize DEI-focused skills

Metrics

- Increased diversity in search pools
- Increased hiring of diverse candidates for positions in UE
- Diverse employees in UE are retained within UE or at Penn State
- New practices developed and implemented to ensure diversity, equity, and inclusion within searches
- DEI-focused skills are references in reasons for retention of employees

Goal 2 —

Foster institution-wide connection and collaboration

Objective 2.1 Grow UE collaborations with students

Key Performance Indicators

- Student participation in UE committees
- Student perspectives increasingly present in UE activities and materials
- Flexibility for representation of changing student opinions and perspectives
- Development and activity of Student Advisory Committee

Mapped Connections to University Plan

- F2: Engaging our students
- TE3: Support and empower our outstanding faculty and staff
- TE4: Prepare our students for success in their careers and in life
- OP1: Improve the design, oversight, integration, and effectiveness of organizational processes
- CO1: Focus on impact through partnerships

Action Items

2.1.1—Develop connections with student perspectives and develop a UE Student Advisory Group including students from multiple campuses and colleges

Metrics

- Students regularly attend UE meetings
- Students are consulted on design and presentation of materials
- Students serve as ambassadors for UE programs
- Assessment of student experiences serving on and providing feedback through these activities



2.1.2—Systematically seek qualitative and quantitative data on student experiences for decision-making

Metrics

- Student participation on committees and task-forces is significant
- Improved data used for recommendations and decisions
- Assessment of student experiences serving on and providing feedback through these activities

Objective 2.2 Grow connections and collaborations within UE

Key Performance Indicators:

- Increased UE collaborations around objectives rather than by unit
- Accomplishment of objectives are visible through intentional assessments
- Greater connection of UE employees to UE unit objectives

Mapped Connections to University Plan:

- OP1: Improve and design, oversight, integration, and effectiveness of organizational processes
- IS1: Prioritize investment in our people

Action Items

2.2.1—Organize work in themes and topics (One Penn State 2025 GP5)

Metrics

- Thematic groups work together for implementation and assessment
- Increased collaboration between UE units to develop unified approaches to issues
- Intentional connections stimulate future collaborations
- Thematic groups, planned activities, participant assessment of the collaborative work are evident on UE Strategic Plan dashboard suite

2.2.2—Expand internal activities for connection (ex: job shadow, United Way, social Spikes game)

Metrics

- Productive connections between individuals from different units
- Increased general knowledge through UE of the work done in other units
- Intentional connections made between individuals from different units
- Participating units and # of staff participating with participant feedback is added to UE Strategic Planning communications

2.2.3—Improve onboarding and retention strategies for employees

Metrics

- New procedures for onboarding staff are implemented and assessed
- Greater understanding of the work of UE units is evident throughout UE
- Feedback from onboarded employees demonstrates short- and long-term benefits and applicability to responsibilities



Objective 2.3 Pursue UE collaborations with other university entities (One Penn State 2025 GP5)

Key Performance Indicators

- Growing interactions with external contributors
- Increased development opportunities
- Increase of interest in the work of UE from external audiences

Mapped Connections to University Plan

- F1: Enabling Access to Education
- F3: Advancing inclusion, equity, and diversity
- DI: Empowering through digital innovation
- CO1: Focus on impact through partnerships

Action Items

2.3.1—Reduce barriers (silos, budgets, communication, etc.) to collaborations (One Penn State GP5)

Metrics

- Networks of collaborations defined around themes
- Greater shared responsibilities with other units
- Projects completed or gaps and challenges to completion identified

2.3.2—Map links and lead connection efforts to other units regarding student success (One Penn State GP5)

Metrics

- Increased data on student success
- Creation of collaborative map regarding student success
- Increase of stories on successful collaborations and student success
- Resources developed and shared for promoting student success
- Use of Starfish Interventions Inventory and Referral flags to track usage of collaborative efforts

2.3.3—Establish faculty academy for theme-driven research and creation of resources regarding student success

Metrics

- Establishment of Faculty Academy
- Publication of research born out of the Academy
- Creation and use of resources
- Assessment of resources applicability and effectiveness



Objective 2.4 Build meaningful UE connections and collaborations with individuals and community entities (One Penn State 2025 GP5)

Key Performance Indicators

- Growing interactions with external contributors
- Increased development opportunities
- Increase of interest in the work of UE from external audiences

Mapped Connections to University Plan

- F1: Enabling Access to Education
- F3: Advancing inclusion, equity, and diversity
- DI: Create digital solutions to new and emerging challenges
- CO1: Focus on impact through partnerships
- CO3: Promote contributions through strategic communication
- IS5: Align fundraising to address specific needs

Action Items

2.4.1—Intentionally identify and foster relationships to develop fundraising plans to further the mission of UE

Metrics

- Development of promotional materials for Achieve and Engage Penn State
- Increased UE participation in development efforts as directed by the Director of Development and UE Development officers
- Acquisition of additional funding

2.4.2—Create a means for increased input from external communities to appropriate elements within UE

Metrics

- Creation of means for regular communication with external community
- Greater use of federal work study funds



Goal 3 —

Prioritize and model student-centeredness, equity, diversity, inclusion, and transparency in UE work

Objective 3.1 Review and revise policies and processes to be student-centered, equitable, and sustainable

Key Performance Indicators

- Senate discussions on curricular and inclusivity issues
- Inclusivity is increasingly recognized by UE staff as a primary hallmark of UE
- Increased number of transfer students year by year
- Policies re-written for student access and understanding

Mapped Connections to University Plan

- F1: Enabling access to education
- F3: Advancing Inclusion, Equity, and Diversity
- F6: Ensure a sustainable future
- TE2: Foster a curriculum that integrates multiple modes of delivery, while leveraging online capabilities and enhanced and emerging digital learning options
- OP2: Establish processes for continual institutional assessment, improvement, and innovation, including more systematic review of administrative and academic organizational performance and financial stewardship
- CO1: Focus on impact through partnerships

Action Items

3.1.1—Collaborate with Senate and other University entities to increase flexibility for students in meeting curricular requirements (One Penn State 2025 GP 2)

Metrics

- Students achieve completion of curricular requirements in additional ways including greater prior learning acceptance, greater flexibility between campuses and colleges in General Education requirements accepted, etc.
- Use of new curricular management system
- Increasing number of students using the Engagement Plan model through SEN or MAX Penn State
- Implementation of Student Financial System

3.1.2—Expand opportunities for prior learning to meet curricular requirements (One Penn State 2025 GP 2)

Metrics

- Development and launching of transfer articulation tool
- Increased tracking of what credits transfer students are losing and why



- Reduction in time to degree for students who achieve credit by exam or portfolio
- Credit by exam and portfolio becomes available for all colleges and campuses

3.1.3—Assess UE structures to best promote inclusivity (One Penn State 2025 GP 5)

Metrics

- Practices are adjusted resulting in greater participation and representation
- Increase of UE stories told with a greater variety of content
- Connections with diverse organizations increased and impacts UE practices

Objective 3.2 Promote and model a culture of equity and inclusion among UE professionals

Key Performance Indicators

- Regular professional development for UE professionals regarding equity and inclusion
- Language of UE materials reflect valuing of diverse populations
- Employees recognize implicit biases
- UE recognized as a model for diversity, equity, and inclusion

Mapped Connections to University Plan

- F3: Advancing Inclusion, Equity, and Diversity
- TE3: Support and empower our outstanding faculty and staff
- OP1: Improve the design, oversight, integration, and effectiveness of organizational processes
- IS1: Prioritize investment in our people

Action Items

3.2.1—Sponsor UE professional development to better understand and act in consideration of issues of equity and inclusion

Metrics

- All UE staff participate in diversity, equity, and inclusion training resulting in changes in practice
- Regular availability of training opportunities
- DEI is recognized as a foundational principle for all UE work
- Assessments of the effectiveness of training following the experience

3.2.2—Incentivize and reward innovations in UE that shape a transparent, equitable, and inclusive culture impacting the university

Metrics

- New policies and procedures that clearly address issues of equity and inclusion
- Use climate survey data for UE and/or anonymously survey UE staff regarding feelings of safety and to address issues and concerns
- UE is acknowledged by those outside of UE that the efforts toward equity and inclusivity are impactful



Objective 3.3 Practice critical reflection that challenges assumptions

Key Performance Indicators

- Changed procedures to grow discussion on issues
- Staff training in critical reflection
- Increased opportunities for staff to contribute

Mapped Connections to University Plan

- F3: Advancing Inclusion, Equity, and Diversity
- TE3: Support and empower our outstanding faculty and staff
- OP3: Develop a culture of academic business modeling to support innovation

Action Items

3.3.1—Train staff in practice of critical reflection

Metrics

- Decisions are assessed by the impacts on students and staff through a variety of means
- Open discussions regarding issues and challenges become a regular occurrence
- Critical reflection development regularly appears in UE performance goals and reviews

3.3.2—Collaboratively identify issues and implications of decisions, options, and practices

Metrics

- Greater transparency in communication about needs and issues
- Increased opportunities to discuss and assess critical issues
- Assessment of UE staff regarding sense of safety in presenting dissenting perspectives demonstrates increasing receptivity to multiple voices