

Make No Little Plans: A Vision for 2020

EKU University Strategic Plan

Vision

Eastern Kentucky University will be a premier university dedicated to innovative student engagement and success, advancing Kentucky, and impacting the world.

Mission

As a school of opportunity, Eastern Kentucky University fosters personal growth and prepares students to contribute to the success and vitality of their communities, the Commonwealth, and the world.

Eastern Kentucky University is committed to access, equal opportunity, dignity, respect, and inclusion for all people, as integral to a learning environment in which intellectual creativity and diversity thrives.

Values

Eastern Kentucky University's values shall permeate the mission and will be the fiber of the institution for it to achieve its vision.

- *intellectual vitality*, which is characterized by knowledge, scholarly inquiry, creativity, critical thinking, and curiosity, all with a global perspective;
- *sense of community*, which is characterized by a supportive environment with strong relationships and a commitment to service, shared governance, collaboration, and unity of purpose;
- *cultural competency*, which is characterized by equitable opportunities and treatment, mutual respect, and the inclusion and celebration of diverse peoples and ideas;
- *stewardship of place*, by which the University enhances the intellectual capacity, economic vitality, environmental sustainability, and quality of life of the communities it serves;
- *accountability*, which is characterized by fiscal responsibility, operational transparency, and responsiveness to the needs of internal and external stakeholders; and
- *excellence*, which is achieved through integrity, continuous quality improvement, and a focused emphasis on the personal and professional growth of students, faculty, and staff.

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The creativity, ingenuity, and dedication of ECU faculty, staff, and students have advanced our University to an unprecedented level of student success and faculty and staff excellence. We will continue the emphasis on the successful projects, services, activities, obligations, and policies that have brought us this far. With input from the University communities and the Strategic Planning Steering Committee, this plan outlines the areas we need to add, emphasize, or grow in order to achieve our vision of being a premier university dedicated to innovative student engagement and success, advancing Kentucky, and impacting the world.

In order to achieve our Vision for 2020, ECU will focus on six **Strategic Goals**.

- Academic Excellence
- Commitment to Student Success
- Institutional Distinction
- Financial Strength
- Campus Revitalization
- Service to Communities and Region

Strategic Initiatives and **Strategies** define the primary goals, outline our work for the next five years, and ensure we achieve our primary goals.

Ongoing Commitments highlight successful current projects, services, activities, obligations, and polices to which we remain committed.

Ongoing Commitments

Current projects, services, activities, obligations, and policies to which we remain committed:

- **Competitive and Equitable Pay:** achieving faculty and staff internal pay equity and competitive salaries;
- **Critical/Creative Thinking & Communication Skills:** maintaining and enhancing critical and creative thinking and communication skills initiatives;
- **Diversity:** increasing the number of diverse and international faculty, staff, and students;
- **Efficiency & Transparency:** improving financial efficiency and transparency;
- **Global Impact:** solidifying our local, regional, state, national, and global impact;
- **Liberal Arts Core:** providing a strong liberal arts core through the general education curriculum for all students;
- **Multicultural Experiences:** enhancing multicultural and international experiences;
- **Safety:** ensuring a safe and secure environment for our students;
- **Scholarship:** improving the lives of others through discovery, application, and integration of knowledge;
- **Service:** valuing faculty service internal and external to the University;
- **Strong Government Relations:** advocating for increased state support for higher education;
- **Student Learning:** continually improving student learning through Assurance of Learning efforts;
- **Sustainability:** improving our environmental impact; and
- **Teaching & Advising:** improving teaching and advising effectiveness.

Strategic Goal #1: Academic Excellence

Academic excellence, the cornerstone of the university's mission, begins with the faculty. Eastern Kentucky University seeks to build on its strong foundations as a school of opportunity by enhancing opportunities for professional development and by strategically developing and growing programs to meet the needs of our students. We are committed to achieving academic excellence by promoting innovative pedagogy and by investing in our faculty and our academic programs.

We will achieve academic excellence through recruiting, retaining, and supporting innovative faculty and through continuous assessment and strengthening of academic programs.

We will enhance our dynamic, diverse academic environment and ensure outstanding student learning outcomes by focusing on: promoting innovative teaching and learning practices; engaging students with an increasing emphasis on active and service learning and research opportunities; supporting faculty growth and excellence; and strategically strengthening academic program expansion and development while emphasizing program excellence.

Strategic Initiatives

➤ Invest in Our Faculty (1.1)

Strategies

- Enhance faculty professional development opportunities with a focus on developing skills and engaging students through high-impact learning strategies, including metacognition skills, teaching techniques, curriculum design, and providing customer-focused service to all. (1.1.1)
- Update promotion and tenure policies to reflect increased importance of engaging students, innovative teaching, advising, scholarship of teaching and learning, and support of our Region. (1.1.2)
- Increase opportunities for faculty scholarship, research and creative endeavors, and faculty-student collaborations. (1.1.3)
- Build academic leadership capacity among faculty. (1.1.4)
- Recruit and retain faculty who are highly qualified in their discipline and demonstrate excellence in teaching. (1.1.5)
- Design and implement a comprehensive recruitment and retention plan for diverse faculty. (1.1.6)

➤ Promote Innovative Instruction and Programming (1.2)

Strategies

- Embed and support high-impact teaching strategies and best practices for student engagement to promote learning and increase retention. (1.2.1)

- Focus on involving students in decision-making, research, and creative activities with faculty, scholarship, service learning, international education, co-op, and internships. (1.2.2)
- Provide students the opportunity and support to participate in and receive recognition for research, creative, and academic endeavors. (1.2.3)
- Increase the quality and capacity of pedagogical and technological support. (1.2.4)

➤ **Strengthen Academic Programs (1.3)**

Strategies

- Ensure relevance of all academic programs through ongoing curriculum development and program review. (1.3.1)
- Financially invest in and promote nationally recognized programs that attract students to ECU. (1.3.2)
- Identify, pursue, and promote opportunities for new high-quality, distinct, and compelling programs with capacity to grow enrollments. (1.3.3)
- Support and invest in opportunities for high-achieving students University-wide. (1.3.4)
- Increase capacity in existing programs identified as having high demand. (1.3.5)
- Invest in state-of-the-art, cutting-edge technology across all programs. (1.3.6)

Strategic Goal #2: Commitment to Student Success

Student Success is the core of Eastern Kentucky University's past, present, and future. It is the success of our students that fuels our passion to serve in the profession of higher education. Students succeed when we devote our energies to continuously improving their experiences in and out of the classroom. We will make data-informed decisions in our ongoing effort to fuel new opportunities for our students.

We will demonstrate our commitment to the success of our students through innovative engagement efforts that begin before arrival and continue after graduation.

We will enrich the lives of our students by intensely focusing on: growing, diversifying, and shaping our student body; building skills for success after graduation; enhancing the quality of student life; and promoting programs and policies that facilitate student success.

Strategic Initiatives

➤ Invest in Our Students (2.1)

Strategies

- Promote and emphasize the use of student learning outcomes, academic support, and retention in co-curricular programming. (2.1.1)
- Create new and support existing programs, activities, and services designed to assist students to adjust to and succeed in a university learning environment and to develop their full potential. (2.1.2)
- Develop and integrate career preparation opportunities to include co-op, internships, international education, civic engagement, and other activities that build the skills necessary to secure gainful employment in a globally competitive marketplace. (2.1.3)
- Develop and implement programming and services to enhance student well-being, health and wellness, civic engagement, and personal growth. (2.1.4)

➤ Focus on Strategic Enrollment (2.2)

Strategies

- Develop a University-wide, inclusive strategic enrollment process ensuring partnership between Enrollment Management and Academic Affairs. (2.2.1)
- Create a strategic enrollment plan with specific, but not exclusive, focus on enhancing our commitment to our Region, increasing educational opportunities for under-represented student populations, and serving students with diverse academic needs. (2.2.2)
- Recruit a prepared, intellectually curious, diversified student body. (2.2.3)
- Recruit increased numbers of international students. (2.2.4)
- Ensure University resources, including student financial aid, are sufficient to support the enrollment management plan. (2.2.5)

➤ Increase Efforts to Retain and Graduate Students (2.3)

Strategies

- Develop and promote University-wide best practices that provide collaborative and innovative student engagement in and out of the classroom. (2.3.1)
- Employ coordinated, data-driven advising that uses intentional intervention milestones for designated populations and strengthens academic advising. (2.3.2)
- Provide increased support for programs that address student preparedness challenges. (2.3.3)
- Enhance student experiences University-wide by enhancing academic learning environments and increasing participation in living/learning communities, student organizations, and student-life programs. (2.3.4)
- Create and upgrade existing facilities, including student recreation and intercollegiate athletics facilities. (2.3.5)
- Review policies, processes, and operations to enhance responsiveness to student needs. (2.3.6)

Strategic Goal #3: Institutional Distinction

In a higher education marketplace rich with options, Eastern Kentucky University must define itself or others will define us. We seek to advance the value of the ECU experience and unite our communities around powerful expressions of our core values, an expansion of the personal and strategic relationships we forge, and by the strategic positioning of the compelling distinctions that make the ECU experience exceptional.

We will demonstrate our commitment to the advancement our university by investing in the people, places, and programs that make us distinct.

We seek to create a groundswell of enthusiasm and engagement for our University through the implementation of a powerful new ECU brand strategy. Our successes will be measured by the extent to which we demonstrate that we are thoughtful stewards of our resources, by the quality of the personal and strategic relationships we forge with the people we touch and inspire, and by the extent to which the people of ECU embrace and live our brand promise every day.

Strategic Initiatives

➤ Invest in Our Staff (3.1)

Strategies

- Enhance staff professional development opportunities with focuses on leadership development, student support and engagement, and providing customer-focused service to all. (3.1.1)
- Develop employee best practices for collaborative support programs and co-curricular instruction. (3.1.2)
- Delineate and promote career pathways for all employees. (3.1.3)
- Recruit, promote, and retain staff who are highly qualified and high performing in their area of expertise. (3.1.4)
- Design and implement a comprehensive recruitment and retention plan for diverse staff and University administrators. (3.1.5)
- Ensure all employees receive detailed, comprehensive performance evaluations and feedback. (3.1.6)

➤ Advance the ECU Brand (3.2)

Strategies

- Craft a compelling brand identity and communication strategy. (3.2.1)
- Design and implement a five-year, integrated marketing campaign that leverages our brand identity to advance our institution, aligns with our strategic plan, fuels our capital campaign, positions ECU intercollegiate athletics, and increases the number of students for whom ECU is their 1st Choice. (3.2.2)
- Assess and share the impact of the University's brand initiative. (3.2.3)
- Promote the value of higher education. (3.2.4)

➤ **Create a Dynamic, Diverse, and Inclusive University Culture (3.3)**

Strategies

- Foster pride in ECU by developing a distinctive University experience for all students, faculty, staff, and visitors. (3.3.1)
- Create and support learning, work, and living environments that fully welcome and support diversity, inclusion, and equity. (3.3.2)
- Build can-do spirit among faculty, staff, and students with an emphasis on superior customer-focused service and adaptability. (3.3.3)
- Reward, recognize, and celebrate faculty, staff, and student achievements. (3.3.4)
- Promote opportunities for faculty, staff, and students to participate in significant and conscientious shared governance. (3.3.5)
- Ensure transparency in operations in order to unite the University communities. (3.3.6)
- Promote positive relationships between the University and the local community. (3.3.7)
- Create an institutional diversity plan that develops and implements comprehensive initiatives to promote access, diversity, intercultural competence, equity, inclusiveness and mutual respect for all members of the campus community. (3.3.8)

Strategic Goal #4: Financial Strength

Financial strength and stability is the bedrock upon which any successful strategic plan rests. At Eastern Kentucky University, it undergirds our commitment to academic excellence; without it, the University's ability to launch, sustain, grow, and evaluate quality academic programs is severely compromised. Financial strength and stability also buttresses our commitment to student success, whether we're attracting more of the best and brightest students, bridging the gap for those students with developmental needs, or developing programs that grow our enrollment and improve our retention and graduation rates.

We will operate from a position of financial strength by becoming as efficient as possible in our spending and maximizing resource generation.

Whatever the case, financial resources are needed to help all our students reach their full potential. Finally, as the share of our revenue from state appropriations continues to decline and as we continue to invest in our strategic goals, while striving to keep the Eastern Experience affordable, greater private support is an acute need.

Strategic Initiatives

➤ Optimize Campus Resources (4.1)

Strategies

- Ensure quality and efficiency in all University operations by implementing baseline budgeting focused on strategic initiatives and strengthening programs. (4.1.1)
- Include an evaluation of funding levels in the academic and administrative program reviews conducted on a rotating basis. (4.1.2)
- Conduct an annual departmental faculty workload analysis to ensure responsible stewardship of resources. (4.1.3)

➤ Increase External Support (4.2)

Strategies

- Build an expansive network of advocates, partners and champions for ECU by communicating effectively with external stakeholders and involving them meaningfully in the life of the University. (4.2.1)
- Increase revenue from private sources by engaging alumni, friends, and corporate partners to expand support for the people, places, and programs of ECU, including a comprehensive capital fundraising campaign. (4.2.2)
- Enhance resources through grants and contracts from federal and state agencies, corporations, and foundations. (4.2.3)

Strategic Goal #5: Campus Revitalization

Eastern Kentucky University stands at a unique moment in its historical arc. Ours is the opportunity to transform the campus in a way which is only presented once in a generation. We must be bold, creative, and innovative. A chance to reshape and remake our campus is available to us and we must take advantage not only for the present, but for future generations of ECU alumni, faculty, staff, students, and friends. Indeed, what we are proposing represents “no little plan.”

We will revitalize the Campus Beautiful by being relentless in our efforts to secure an investment in student-centric facilities.

The campus revitalization involves a significant capital investment in the Eastern campus. At the core of this revitalization will be the complete overhaul of the center of campus. The establishment of the Center for Student Life will focus on the holistic ECU student experience: intellectual, social, physical, emotional, spiritual, and mental maturation.

Strategic Initiative

- **Initiate and complete ECU Revitalization plan, which includes rehabilitation of existing facilities and construction of new ones with a focus on the ECU student experience. (5.1)**

Strategies

- Conduct a campus master plan, including a comprehensive space analysis. (5.1.1)
- Invest in the physical infrastructure of our campus, including improving technology, creating creative spaces, and enhancing curb appeal. (5.1.2)
- Locate and secure arrangements with private partners and state appropriations. (5.1.3)
- Address deferred maintenance. (5.1.4)
- Prioritize sustainability. (5.1.5)
- Prioritize efficient project administration. (5.1.6)

Strategic Goal #6: Service to Communities and Region

At Eastern Kentucky University, we will create a culture of outreach and engagement through innovative teaching and scholarship, as well as valuing engagement with our communities and regional partners. By applying our academic and professional expertise to collaborations with community stakeholders, we will improve the quality of life for the communities we serve.

We will demonstrate our commitment to our communities and Region by actively seeking out those strategic opportunities that will provide direct benefits to the people of Eastern Kentucky.

Engagement in our Region allows us to use our skills and resources in collaboration with the community to benefit both the university and our community partners. Our outreach and engagement through enhanced communication and deeper relationships will promote an improved quality of life for all community members. EKU's commitment to enhancing our efforts to promote sustainable and measurable leadership and service to our communities and Region will be positively recognized on a national level.

Strategic Initiatives

➤ Become the 1st Choice Partner in Regional Educational, Economic, Cultural, and Social Development (6.1)

Strategies

- Increase the number of and strengthen existing strategic partnerships in our Region with community colleges, local communities, employers, and other entities. (6.1.1)
- Enhance support of our Region's P-12 educational institutions for college success of students. (6.1.2)
- Advance EKU leadership participation in regional partnerships. (6.1.3)

➤ Become Nationally Prominent in Fields with Regional Relevance (6.2)

Strategies

- Bring distinction to our Region with nationally recognized programs, endorsements, and scholarship/research. (6.2.1)
- Build sustainable and distinct academic and social programs focused on our Region's critical needs. (6.2.2)

➤ Bring EKU to Our Service Region (6.3)

Strategies

- Support EKU faculty, staff, and student engagement in regional initiatives. (6.3.1)
- Actively promote and publicize public engagement activities to students, faculty, staff, and the community. (6.3.2)

- Address needs, challenges, and perspectives of our Region with innovative courses, research, service, and program offerings utilizing effective delivery methods. (6.3.3)
- Provide high-quality, responsive, and relevant programming for adults in our Region to help them complete degrees. (6.3.4)
- Support students throughout our Region by making programs and services available locally at regional sites, on-line, and/or via a combination of delivery methods. (6.3.5)
- Raise the knowledge capital in our Region by encouraging ECU students to remain active in or connected to our Region. (6.3.6)

➤ **Bring Our Service Region to ECU (6.4)**

Strategies

- Enhance and develop University facilities that draw visitors to ECU Campuses. (6.4.1)
- Increase the number and appeal of programs and activities for which visitors travel to ECU Campuses, such as sporting and arts events, conferences and workshops, commencement ceremonies, and annual University events. (6.4.2)

Glossary

Co-curricular Instruction	Co-curricular instruction and activities complement, but are not part of the regular academic curriculum, and assist in developing the range of skills and attributes that are important for graduates.
Diversity	Diversity at ECU includes, but is not limited to, race, ethnicity, religion, socio-economic status, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, and cultural or national backgrounds.
ECU	Or the term Eastern Kentucky University includes the Richmond Campus, Regional Campuses, and online instruction.
Faculty	Includes full-time, part-time, and adjunct faculty, unless otherwise specified.
Knowledge Capital	An intangible asset comprised of the information and skills of a group of individuals.
Our Communities	Refers to the areas surrounding the ECU campuses.
Premier	Best-in-class
School of Opportunity	Where all students are given the resources they need to realize their full potential and become leaders in their respective fields and productive citizens.
Under-represented Students	Under-represented students in higher education refers to racial and ethnic populations that are disproportionately lower in number relative to their number in the general population.