

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA SYSTEM
ODYSSEY TO EXTRAORDINARY
FOUNDATIONAL PILLARS & STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

JANUARY 2025

In a world in which the most powerful forces are the most invisible, the University of Nebraska System is committed to the pursuit of excellence in teaching and learning, research and scholarship, and service to the state and the world. We are committed to the highest standards of academic excellence and to the highest standards of ethical conduct.

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EXTRAORDINARY TEACHING & LEARNING:

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Transforming the Learning Environment: Themes for this topic include using the most advanced technology to support the learning environment and learner experiences, enhancing customized student support services, and supporting facility innovation to enhance outcomes across the academic spectrum with focus on key high enrollment/high DFW pipeline courses and programs.

EXTRAORDINARY RESEARCH & CREATIVE ACTIVITY:

Establish the University of Nebraska System's research and creative activity scope and prominence as widely recognized for extraordinary societal impact as a top-tier institution.

After a review of campus suggestions, responses cluster into the following themes:

Building a Common NU Research Identity

Internal Programmatic Growth and Alignment

External Collaborative Growth and Alignment

Building a Common NU Research Identity: Themes for this topic include the identification and growth of specific top-tier, highly impactful federally funded research programs. Example NU strategies might be to focus on identifying and configuring such programs into optimal structural units (such as a "Human Performance", "National Security", "Digital Agriculture", "Economic Development", "Environmental Health", etc.) and ramping up these programs so as to improve metrics for federal, state and private research expenditures yielding continuous growth in each designated area of excellence.

Internal Programmatic Growth and Alignment: Themes for this topic include providing an integrated infrastructure that supports research and innovation (including personnel, facilities and advanced technology), setting measurable goals, creating cross-campus/integrated research collaborations, and creating avenues to foster talent and attract top-tier researchers.

External Collaborative Growth and Alignment: Themes for this topic include branching efforts between private sectors and NU, supporting pathways for accelerating innovation, technology transfer



Partnerships & Alignment Across NU: Themes for this topic include supporting sustainable collaborations and partnerships across all campuses and disciplines within the educational, research and service missions, using policy, technology, finances and incentives to eliminate silos and bridge existing and future gaps.

Partnerships Across the Nebraska Region: Themes for this topic include partnerships that create new and stronger opportunities for students, faculty and staff that provide community impact, expand K-12, agricultural, health care, military and industry collaborations that lead to overall betterment and growth of all populations within the state.

Partnerships Beyond Nebraska and the U.S.: Themes for this topic include fostering partnerships such as with alumni, businesses, agriculture, health care, military and public sector networks, including with private with national/global leaders to forge new and stronger relationships that support quality of life, economic development and allow NU to create future mission driven opportunities.

EXTRAORDINARY CULTURE & ENVIRONMENT:

Establish the University of Nebraska System campuses, across all their missions, as having an extraordinarily vibrant and engaging culture in environments that are safe and welcoming.

After a review of campus suggestions, responses cluster into the following themes:

Distinctive/Defining Culture

Community/Supportive

Work/Life Quality/Wellness

Defining a Distinctive Culture: Themes for this topic include creating a unified, defined and distinctive culture across our 500 mile wide NU campuses and our myriad of statewide partnership sites. The themes focused on arts and culture, supportive workspaces, engagement, belonging, communication, technology and thriving campus student and employee communities.

Campus Safety and Security: Themes for this topic include creating, rehearsing and continuously strengthening of integrated system wide safety plans with focus on advanced technology applied to incident prevention, early awareness, communications, management and recovery.

Work/Life Quality and Experience: Themes for this topic include creating an attractive workplace experience that provides exceptional benefits, health and wellness, entertainment, professional development, and personal support.

EXTRAORDINARY STEWARDSHIP & EFFECTIVENESS:

Establish the University of Nebraska System as an extraordinarily effective, efficient, and sustainable organization for planning and implementation of all mission-driven goals.



After a review of campus suggestions, responses cluster into the following themes:

Creating Sustainable Value, Effectiveness and Efficiency

Data Driven Decisions and Related Communication

Driving Value from Fiscal Responsibility and Stewardship

Creating Sustainable Value, Effectiveness and Efficiency: Themes for this topic include creating value by identification and evaluation of structures, systems, processes, and areas that are redundant or inefficient, raising an awareness of these issues, then eliminating redundancy and inefficiency where possible across the system.

Data Driven Decisions and Related Communication: Themes for this topic include using data and proactive communication to support decision-making to align financial, facility and human resources with strategic academic priorities and by eliminating unnecessary campus and program separations to streamline and improve efficiency.

Driving Value from Fiscal Responsibility and Stewardship: Themes for this topic include the efficient use of resources and committing to sustainability, including performance-based outcomes driven budget models that create incentives for extraordinary performance of individuals and programs across the system that focus on access, affordability and academic excellence.

