



STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE MAY 2008

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Path to Prominence: A Strategic Conversation

We stand at a critical milestone in the history of the University of Delaware. With roots reaching back to 1743, we now are a community of 16,000 undergraduates, 3,500 graduate students, 1,200 faculty, and 135,000 alumni, who excel in diverse fields and hail from all corners of the world. We stand as one of the top universities in the country, with growing international stature in vital areas of expertise. At this moment, we are setting out on a new path designed to engage closely with the critical issues of our day, to increase the global impact of the University, and to raise its prominence in the world.

This strategic plan, which charts our “Path to Prominence™,” is part of a continuing University conversation. Our dialogue has taken place in hundreds of meetings and communications across the campus, as well as the broader alumni and Delaware community. Across the community, there is enormous enthusiasm for the University’s current strengths and future potential. While our scope and timetable have been ambitious, this process has resulted in one of the broadest and most far-reaching discussions about the University’s future in recent history.

As the planning and implementation process now rolls out across the University at the college, school, and unit level, this dialogue will guide our steps, offering fresh ideas and approaches. While this dialogue will shape our steps, our overall path and destination remain constant: *to fulfill the mission of the University and to be recognized around the world as one of the great public institutions of higher education in America.*

To advance, we must build key strengths in areas critical to our region and the world, and increase recognition of our existing strengths. Outlined here and discussed in more detail in this plan are the common goals and values that will align the energies and efforts of a community as broad and diverse as the University of Delaware.

In pursuing this path, we carry the aspirations and dreams of generations of builders and graduates of the University of Delaware. This is our legacy. We invite you to join with us in pursuing this Path to Prominence. In the words of the Blue Hen’s fight song, “Let Delaware shine.”

Patrick T. Harker
President, University of Delaware

Guiding Principles: What We Value

In discussions across the University community, we identified five guiding principles that represent our commitments to the world:

- *Delaware First* – Our first commitment is to be the flagship of higher education for the State of Delaware – ensuring that every Delawarean has access to a top-quality education and applying our strengths to benefit the greater Delaware community.
- *Diversity* – We will foster a robust educational environment in which all people are welcome and feel welcome – one that supports critical thinking, free inquiry, and respect for diverse views and values.
- *Partnership* – We will create innovative partnerships for economic and community development, building knowledge and promoting ideas that serve the critical needs of the state, the nation, and the world.
- *Engagement* – We will engage students, faculty, staff, and alumni in the most compelling social, cultural, artistic, and scientific challenges of our age – taking our place among the world’s leading universities.
- *Impact* – Our job is not done until our ideas, our expertise, and our students are given the opportunity to make a significant difference in the world. To succeed, we must assure that the University’s innovation and accomplishments are publicly known throughout Delaware, academia, and across the nation and the world.

Strategic Milestones: How We Will Excel

Six strategic milestones define the aspirations and key initiatives that will propel us on the path to prominence:

I: A Diverse and Stimulating Undergraduate Academic Environment

- Attract and Support Students from Delaware and Diverse Backgrounds
- Enhance Curriculum Flexibility, Intellectual Exploration, and Discovery Learning
- Create a Stimulating First-Year Experience
- Recruit and Develop Highly Talented Undergraduates

II: A Premier Research and Graduate University

- Develop Faculty Leadership in Key Intellectual Areas
- Lead High-Profile Research Initiatives
- Build an Excellent Research Infrastructure
- Increase the Profile and Growth of Graduate Studies
- Provide Full Support for Graduate Students

III: Excellence in Professional Education

- Establish the University of Delaware Law Institute
- Create the University Health Initiative
- Launch the Educational Leadership Initiative
- Strengthen Education in Business and Corporate Governance
- Achieve Excellence in Non-Degree Continuing Education

IV: The Initiative for the Planet

- Lead Path-breaking Environmental Research
- Become “The Green University”

- Develop and Demonstrate Alternative Energy Technologies
- Integrate Environmental Programs Within the Curriculum

V: The Global Initiative

- Establish the Institute for Global Studies
- Educate Engaged Global Citizens
- Extend Our Geographic Reach
- Develop Strategic and Active Global Partnerships

VI: The Engaged University

- Inspire an Engaged Student Body
- Promote Lifelong Engagement with Alumni
- Cultivate a Culturally and Socially Engaged University
- Engage the Community as an Impetus for Innovation
- Strengthen Public Education in Delaware and Beyond
- Partner with the City of Newark
- Increase the University's Presence and Engagement in Southern Delaware

Key Capabilities: What We Will Need To Succeed

Underlying our strategic initiatives and milestones are fundamental capabilities that will strengthen the University of Delaware:

- Faculty Excellence
- Staff Excellence
- Outstanding Facilities
- Continually Advancing IT Infrastructure
- Exemplary Management Practices
- Leadership-Level Financial Resources
- Excellence in All We Do
- Readiness to Embrace Change

Timeline for Implementation

Key dates for initial planning and implementation stages:

April 2008	Strategic Planning Committee Report
May 2008	President's Announcement of Strategic Plan
May 2008	Board of Trustees Meetings
October 2008	College and Unit Plans
December 2008	Facilities Plan
December 2008	Implementation Plan
July 2009	Campaign Case Statement
July 2009	New Budget System

Initial Action Steps

We are already moving forward. Throughout this plan, initial action steps have been identified, and many already undertaken. These include, among others:

- The University of Delaware Diversity Task Force, appointed April 2008, will develop a concrete plan for how to improve diversity on our campus and throughout the community, to be completed December 2008.
- The new Office of Economic Innovation and Partnerships, to launch July 2008, will encourage innovation, leverage knowledge-based assets, and create new economic and community benefits.
- The new Associate Vice President for External Relations, appointed April 2008, will be responsible for University communications activities and for the development of strategic institutional relations.
- Effective July 2008, the University's Office of Research and Graduate Studies will be reorganized. The new Senior Vice Provost for Research and Strategic Initiatives will assume expanded responsibility to build leading-edge research programs. A newly created position, the Vice Provost for Graduate and Professional Education, will provide oversight and vision for graduate, professional, and post-doctoral studies.
- On May 19, 2008, the Board of Trustees approved a new coordinated degree program that will enable students to complete a bachelor's degree from the University and a doctor of pharmacy degree from Thomas Jefferson University in an accelerated program. In fall 2008, additional collaborative health initiatives will be announced with Jefferson, Christiana Care, and Nemours.
- The School of Education has initiated a major redesign of the programs that prepare school leaders and is hiring faculty for fall 2008 to implement the new programs in ways that positively impact public education throughout the state.
- On April 10, 2008, the University of Delaware announced its commitment to become carbon-neutral and launched a new sustainability Web site. On April 23, the President formally signed two agreements on sustainability sponsored by U.S. and international university leaders.
- In fall 2008, the University will officially launch the Institute for Alternative Energy, which will support the coordination and expansion of alternative energy programs in all fields. During the next academic year, a university-wide Institute for Environmental Research will be established.
- The University's new Alumni Virtual Community, "UDconnection," was launched on May 10, 2008.
- The newly developed budget system will be implemented in FY10.

Next Steps

Over the next year, each college, school, and unit will set its own strategic goals, aligned to the University's. Each will develop its own implementation plans, action steps, and timetables. Together, we will create powerful momentum on the University's Path to Prominence.

Following approval of this plan by the Board of Trustees, a new Web site will be launched, to inform the University community and its friends of the scope of our commitments and aspirations – and to share our ongoing progress. The "Path to Prominence" site will be available at the University of Delaware site: **www.udel.edu/prominence**.



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