



FY23

Strategic Priorities for Action

UM Vision

The University of Montana will be a Flagship for the Future, fostering inclusive prosperity and democracy and creating new knowledge and ways of learning.

FY23 Priorities for Action

The FY23 Priorities for Action (PFAs) plan outlines the University of Montana's commitments for the coming year. These commitments represent the concrete objectives, strategies and actions our collective community will take to give shape and life to our vision and to ensure that we make progress worthy of our students and our State.

Our Vision and Priorities for Action are aligned with the Montana University System strategic plan as well as with our accreditation efforts through the Northwest Accreditation Commission.

Emergent themes

Many of the strategies we will pursue connect to three broad themes: sustainability, diversity, and health. These concepts reflect UM's commitment to promoting inclusive prosperity and apply outwardly to our desired impact on our community, State, and natural environment. They also guide our internal commitments to the organization and the people who work at UM.

Culture of execution and accountability

The good ideas of the UM community are best honored by a culture of operational execution and mutual accountability. Creating the conditions for campus to develop new and refined ideas in response to our identified strengths and opportunities is vital. Even more important is that we are disciplined in executing on those ideas. We bring our best ideas to life through stepwise action and accountability. This is the purpose of our FY23 Priorities for Action.

Ongoing strategic thinking

The Office of Strategic Planning and Implementation supports not only the implementation of our strategies but also our process—the Strategic Operating Rhythm—to refresh our Priorities for Action by July 1 each year. This annual update ensures we continually evaluate and make strategic choices about where to invest our talent and resources.

PFA 1: PLACE STUDENT SUCCESS AT THE CENTER OF ALL WE DO

Objective 1: Increase student persistence and graduation rates

Strategy 1.1.1: Improve advising through staffing, technology, and partnership

Executive Sponsor: Leslie Webb, Vice Provost for Campus Life

Strategy Lead: Brian French, Director, Office for Student Success

Strategy 1.1.2: Build for students a vibrant campus experience, a sense of belonging and a uniquely Griz identity

Executive Sponsors: Leslie Webb, Vice Provost for Campus Life; Jenny Petty, Vice President for Marketing & Communications; Kent Haslam, Director of Athletics

Strategy Lead: Karen Schlatter, UM Brand Experience Manager

Strategy 1.1.3: Enhance student wellbeing

Executive Sponsor: Leslie Webb, Vice Provost for Campus Life

Strategy Lead: Kayli Julius, Wellness Director

Objective 2: Strengthen co-curricular options that support career readiness

Strategy 1.2.1: Establish ElevateU as a signature element of the UM experience

Executive Sponsor Leslie Webb, Vice Provost for Campus Life

Strategy Lead: Andrea Vernon, Executive Director of Experiential Learning and Career Success

Objective 3: Strengthen support for students from historically underserved populations

Strategy 1.3.1: Provide enhanced DEI programming for students, faculty and staff

Executive Sponsors: Leslie Webb, Vice Provost for Campus Life; Kelly Webster, Chief of Staff

Strategy Lead: Brian Reed, Associate Vice Provost for Student Success

Strategy 1.3.2: Develop an equity dashboard that supports efforts to identify and address equity gaps

Executive Sponsor: Leslie Webb, Vice Provost for Campus Life

Strategy Lead: Brian Reed, Associate Vice Provost for Student Success

PFA 2: DRIVE EXCELLENCE AND INNOVATION IN TEACHING, LEARNING, AND RESEARCH

Objective 1: Design academic structures and offerings that empower students and faculty as creators and problem solvers

Strategy 2.1.1: Structure Academic Affairs to support UM's academic strengths and build interdisciplinary opportunities

Executive Sponsor: Pardis Mahdavi, Provost and Executive Vice President

Strategy Lead: Pardis Mahdavi, Provost and Executive Vice President

Strategy 2.1.2: Align summer offerings to student needs

Executive Sponsor: Kimber McKay, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs

Strategy Lead: Julie Cahill, Director of UM Summer

Strategy 2.1.3: Foster a community of faculty well versed in evidence-based and equity-minded teaching practices and curricular design

Executive Sponsor: Pardis Mahdavi, Provost and Executive Vice President

Strategy Lead: Kimber McKay, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs

Objective 2: Expand the types of learners UM serves through enhanced and new learning opportunities

Strategy 2.2.1: Grow market-driven online programs

Executive Sponsors: Pardis Mahdavi, Provost and Executive Vice President; Kimber McKay, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs

Strategy Lead: Julie Wolter, Associate Vice Provost for Innovation and Online Learning

Strategy 2.2.2: Strengthen rural two-year education and workforce development

Executive Sponsors: Pardis Mahdavi, Provost and Executive Vice President; Kimber McKay, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs

Strategy Lead: Tom Gallagher, Dean of Missoula College

Strategy 2.2.3: Develop and begin implementing plan to be the nation's most military friendly university

Executive Sponsor: Mary Kreta, Vice President for Enrollment Management and Strategic Initiatives

Strategy Lead: Pat Beckwith, Director of Military and Veteran Services

Objective 3: Maintain and leverage UM's R1 status to further expand research and creative scholarship

Strategy 2.3.1: Develop research areas of excellence in line with funding opportunities and institutional strengths

Executive Sponsor: Scott Whittenburg, Vice President for Research and Creative Scholarship

Strategy Lead: Scott Whittenburg, Vice President for Research and Creative Scholarship

Strategy 2.3.2: Grow PhD completers

Executive Sponsor: Scott Whittenburg, Vice President for Research and Creative Scholarship

Strategy Lead: Ashby Kinch, Dean of the Graduate School

Strategy 2.3.3: Increase non-STEM research awards

Executive Sponsor: Scott Whittenburg, Vice President for Research and Creative Scholarship

Strategy Lead: Katherine Swan, Research Development Manager

PFA 3: MISSION FIRST, PEOPLE ALWAYS

Objective 1: Retain excellent and diverse talent at UM

Strategy 3.1.1: Build deeper organizational capacity in support of UM's people and culture

Executive Sponsors: Seth Bodnar, President; Kelly Webster, Chief of Staff; Paul Lasiter, Vice President for Operations and Finance

Strategy Leads: Amy Kinch, Deputy Chief of Staff; Terri Phillips, Associate Vice President for Human Resources

Strategy 3.1.2: Provide performance appraisal mechanisms; offer training and education opportunities that promote an empowering, inclusive workplace environment

Executive Sponsors: Terri Phillips, Associate Vice President for Human Resource Services; Leslie Webb, Vice Provost for Campus Life; Kelly Webster, Chief of Staff

Strategy Lead: Amy Kinch, Deputy Chief of Staff

Strategy 3.1.3: Develop an internal communications strategy

Executive Sponsor: Jenny Petty, Vice President for Marketing and Communications

Strategy Lead: Dave Kuntz, Director of Strategic Communications

Objective 2: Recruit excellent and diverse talent to UM

Strategy 3.2.1: Develop capacity and implement new strategies in seeking and attracting talent

Executive Sponsors: Terri Phillips, Associate Vice President for Human Resources; Jenny Petty, Vice President for Marketing and Communications

Strategy Lead: Marcie Briggs, Director of Recruitment and Compensation

Objective 3: Improve systems to empower employees and create efficiencies in workload

Strategy 3.3.1: Identify and begin to implement efficiencies in institutional operations and services

Executive Sponsor: Anta Coulibaly, Director of Enterprise Risk Management and Internal Audit

Strategy Lead: Anta Coulibaly, Director of Enterprise Risk Management and Internal Audit

Strategy 3.3.2: Modernize Banner

Executive Sponsor: Zach Rossmiller, Chief Information Officer

Strategy Lead: Corey Cardoza, Deputy CIO, Enterprise and Strategic Technology

Strategy 3.3.3: Design data structures and processes that support UM's data needs

Executive Sponsor: Zach Rossmiller, Chief Information Officer

Strategy Lead: Pope Ashworth, Director of Institutional Research

PFA 4: PARTNER WITH PLACE

Objective 1: Listen to and learn from tribal communities to enhance educational and research partnerships

Strategy 4.1.1: Enhance recruitment and retention programming through greater cooperation

Executive Sponsors: Kelly Webster, Chief of Staff; Mary Kreta, Vice President for Enrollment Management and Strategic Initiatives; Leslie Webb, Vice Provost for Campus Life

Strategy Lead: Brad Hall, Tribal Outreach Specialist

Strategy 4.1.2: Support indigenous research and research-oriented partnerships with tribal communities

Executive Sponsor: Scott Whittenburg, Vice President for Research and Creative Scholarship

Strategy Lead: Annie Belcourt, Senior Indigenous Research Specialist

Objective 2: Protect and steward our environment

Strategy 4.2.1: Create sustainability guidelines for all physical plant projects

Executive Sponsors: Paula Short, Associate Vice President for Campus Preparedness, Response, and Operations; Paul Lasiter, Vice President for Operations and Finance

Strategy Lead: Eva Rocke, Sustainability Director

Objective 3: Cultivate and nurture partnerships that foster talent, innovation and prosperity

Strategy 4.3.1: Develop a comprehensive approach to tracking, enhancing and increasing K-12 partnerships

Executive Sponsor: Mary Kreta, Vice President for Enrollment Management and Strategic Initiatives; Scott Whittenburg, Vice President for Research and Creative Scholarship; Pardis Mahdavi, Provost and Executive Vice President

Strategy Lead: Nathalie Wolfram, Director of Broader Impacts Group; Natalie Abernathy, Assistant Director of Admissions for Events and Experience

Strategy 4.3.2: Partner with industry to expand economic development and workforce initiatives

Executive Sponsors: Scott Whittenburg, Vice President for Research and Creative Scholarship; Pardis Mahdavi, Provost and Executive Vice President; Leslie Webb, Vice Provost for Campus Life

Strategy Lead: Paul Gladen, Executive Director of Accelerate Montana

Strategy 4.3.3: Establish Mental Health Montana to address statewide need for mental healthcare providers

Executive Sponsors: Pardis Mahdavi, Provost and Executive Vice President; Brad Goan, Senior Advisor for Strategic Innovation; Scott Whittenburg, Vice President for Research and Creative Scholarship

Strategy Leads: Ashby Kinch, Dean of the Graduate School; Brad Goan, Senior Advisor for Strategic Innovation

Strategy 4.3.4: Strengthen UM's position as the cybersecurity training and education center for Montana

Executive Sponsors: Pardis Mahdavi, Provost and Executive Vice President; Scott Whittenburg, Vice President for Research and Creative Scholarship; Brad Goan, Senior Advisor for Strategic Innovation

Strategy Lead: Tom Gallagher, Dean of Missoula College

PFA 5: PROUDLY TELL THE UM STORY

Objective 1: Ensure UM's enrollment management approach sustainably supports our mission

Strategy 5.1.1: Transition Strategic Enrollment Planning to Strategic Operating Rhythm

Executive Sponsor: Mary Kreta, Vice President for Enrollment Management and Strategic Initiatives

Strategy Lead: Brad Goan, Senior Advisor for Strategic Innovation

Strategy 5.1.2: Implement sophisticated Admissions strategy and execution

Executive Sponsor: Mary Kreta, Vice President for Enrollment Management and Strategic Initiatives

Strategy Lead: John Massena, Director of Admissions

Strategy 5.1.3: Reimagine Financial Aid to better serve students and enrollment goals

Executive Sponsor: Mary Kreta, Vice President for Enrollment Management and Strategic Initiatives

Strategy Lead: Emily Williamson, Director of Financial Aid

Objective 2: Increase positive public sentiment toward and awareness of UM

Strategy 5.2.1: Cement UM Brand

Executive Sponsor: Jenny Petty, Vice President for Marketing and Communications

Strategy Lead: Andy Chapman, Director Brand Strategy

Strategy 5.2.2: Strengthen national media strategy

Executive Sponsor: Jenny Petty, Vice President for Marketing and Communications

Strategy Lead: Dave Kuntz, Director of Strategic Communications

Strategy 5.2.3: Improve UM website

Executive Sponsor: Jenny Petty, Vice President for Marketing and Communications

Strategy Lead: Stephanie Geyer, Director of digital strategy and innovation

Objective 3: Grow annual philanthropic support of UM

Strategy 5.3.1: Increase philanthropic support received through major and principal gifts

Executive Sponsor: Cindy Williams, UM Foundation President

Strategy Lead: Kate Jennings, UM Foundation Vice President of Development

Strategy 5.3.2: Increase philanthropic support received through annual gifts

Executive Sponsor: Cindy Williams, UM Foundation President

Strategy Lead: Kate Jennings, UM Foundation Vice President of Development

Strategy 5.3.3: Position fundraising priorities for successful outcomes

Executive Sponsors: Cindy Williams, UM Foundation President; Seth Bodnar, UM President; Pardis Mahdavi, Provost and Executive Vice President

Strategy Leads: Kate Jennings, UM Foundation Vice President of Development; Seth Bodnar, UM President; Pardis Mahdavi, Provost and Executive Vice President