

Fearlessly First:

Reclaiming Ohio University's position
as a higher education leader



Ohio University was the first

public university in the Northwest Territory, and it set the standard for public education in the state and the region. As we face dramatic shifts in the delivery of and demand for higher education across the nation, Ohio University must reclaim its position as an industry leader, actively redefining what public education can and should be and what it must deliver to a new generation of students.

This commitment will require a renewed willingness to take strategic risks in the pursuit of meeting student expectations, improving outcomes, and delivering an education that provides lifelong value.



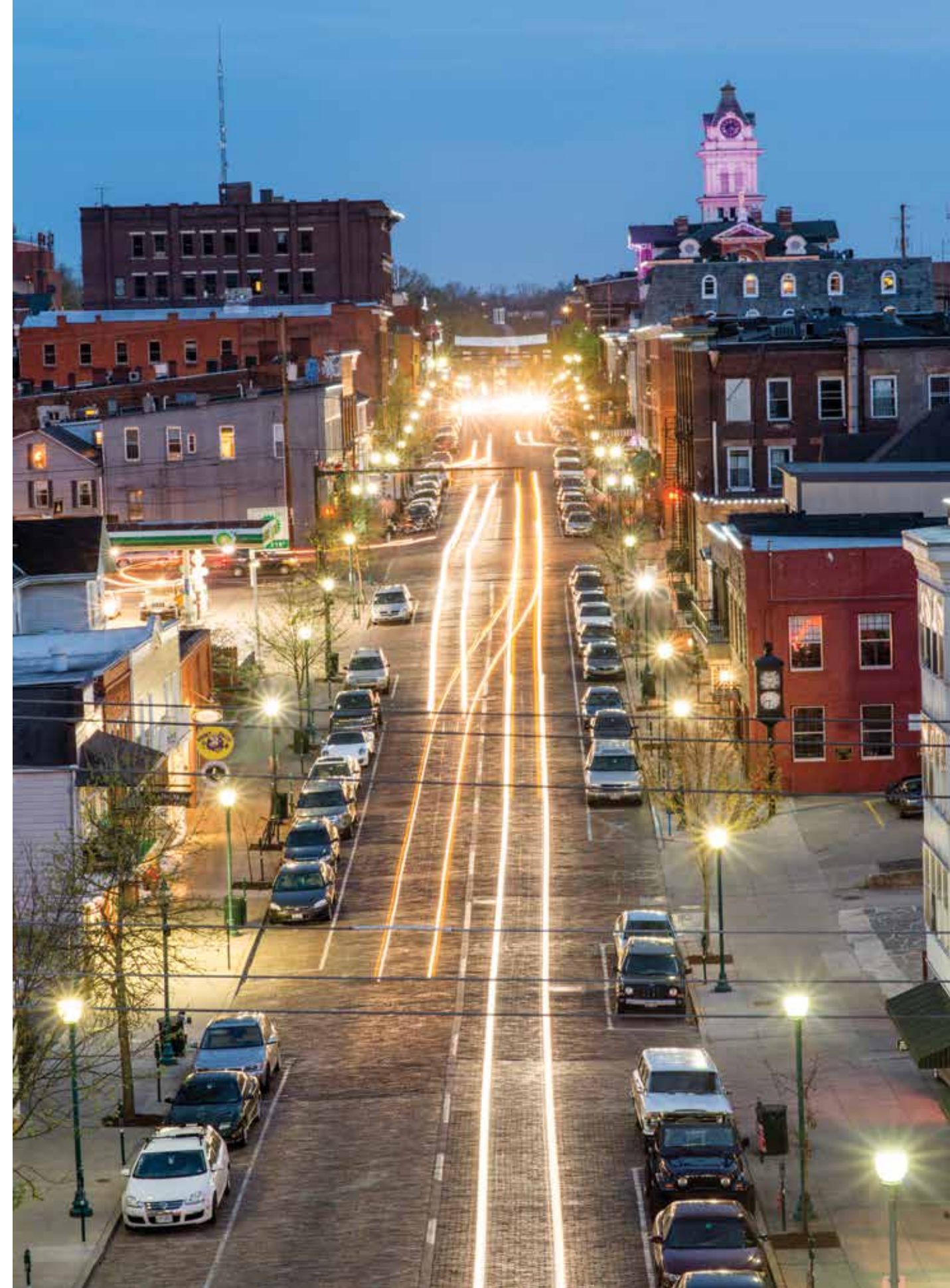
The Case for Change

Higher education is undergoing a fundamental shift and Ohio University must evolve to adapt and be on the leading edge of this new reality. Technology, in its multi-dimensional forms, is transforming not just how we reach students and how we do research, but also how our students expect to learn, how they form beliefs, and how they connect with each other. More and more people, of every age and from every walk of life around the world, have access to higher education in more modalities than we could have imagined only 25 years ago. And more and more, higher education has splintered into various sub-segments, e.g., the multiplying of online and for-profit educational options. Increasingly, students swirl—they take College Credit Plus classes in high school, summer classes from a community college, and online classes from another institution, all while attending yet another institution during the academic year. And what used to be called “nontraditional” students—students who didn’t go to college right

after completing high school—now make up the fastest-growing population of undergraduate students: They are the “new traditional” students.

This is not the first time American higher education has faced changes of this magnitude and shifted accordingly. While remaining true to its mission, Ohio University has also pivoted to respond to changes in enrollment, technology, and other issues in the past. We must now respond once again.

We must fundamentally and proactively reshape how we structure and operate our University for the realities of the new millennia, and do so boldly, decisively, and quickly. We have an opportunity to pivot the University in a way that sets the strategy of the University on the cutting edge for a dynamic future. In doing so, we can and must deliver on our foundational heritage and reclaim our position as a leader in higher education.





Fearlessly First Strategic Framework

Grounded in Our Values



For the past two years, we have focused on four strategic pathways—diversity and inclusion, enhanced academic quality, building an engagement ecosystem, and encouraging dialogue and rigorous civil debate.

Our Strategic Pathways and Priorities brought our values and strengths to the forefront, providing the

context to further refine our niche in an increasingly competitive landscape. It is essential to embrace our values as we continue to move forward to take control of our destiny in this changing, global landscape.

Strategic Framework Themes

We have identified four themes for our new Strategic Framework that will guide our decision-making. By advancing and realizing four themes, we will move

our institution in a new direction that is rooted in our history and values but not limited by traditional higher educational models.

Access and Inclusion

We will embody the purpose and promise of public higher education as an engine of social and economic mobility.

Student Success and Transformation

We will challenge and empower our students to discover knowledge in a collaborative learning environment that reaches across disciplines and into the broader community, preparing them to lead in an ever more connected world.

Research and Knowledge Discovery in Support of Vibrant Communities

We will build on the distinctive strengths of our intellectual community by harnessing research and creative activity that directly connects to the needs and interests of our region, and position OHIO as a leader in creating locally contextualized models that drive national and global solutions.

Sustainable Academic Enterprise

We will reimagine what it means to be a nationally-recognized, comprehensive public university through redesigning structures, reinventing systems, and breaking free of practices that fail to deliver value to our students, our region, our state, and our nation.

By fully realizing this vision, Ohio University will reclaim and reinvent the power and purpose of public higher education and will create a powerful new legacy. We will meet students where they are in their lifelong learning journey and take them further than they knew they were capable of going. We will be a vital partner to our communities and an influential source of discovery and human expression that makes an impact on the world. We, as individuals and as an institution, will be nimble, pivoting quickly and skillfully to meet

new learning needs and the needs of our communities. We will pursue new avenues of inquiry as societal needs evolve. Ohio University will lead the new world of higher education and will be seen as a cutting-edge, future-focused institution.

The following pages define 11 major initiatives that support reshaping OHIO through achievement of the Strategic Themes.



Reimagine the Academic Enterprise

The traditional model for structuring institutions of higher education has value but also is incomplete in its ability to meet the needs of students now and in the future. As a forward-thinking university, we will deeply redesign structure, process, and practice to increase our ability to deliver the career-ready leadership skills to meet the clear value expected by students. We will deploy strategies that increase collaboration across units, create the ability to pivot faster as the world changes, and ensure a return on investment for the individual student and society.

An important part of reimagining the academic enterprise is exploring the changing nature of faculty roles and basic processes such as developing and modifying curricula, multidisciplinary research collaboration, and community engagement. We will focus on intentionally creating teams with expertise from essential disciplines to address problems and capture opportunities relevant to our students, our region, and our nation. The purpose of reimagining the academic enterprise is to:

- Ensure total alignment of all administrative, academic, and academic support activity to the teaching, research, and engagement mission, delivered with an exceptional degree of quality and efficiency
- Advance both the teaching and research missions by embracing variable teaching, scholarly activity, and service ratios for faculty
- Focus faculty instructional effort on teaching and mentoring students by deploying professional support resources that enhance technology-rich course design and delivery and improve first- and second-year advising
- Eliminate redundancies, build effective incentive structures, drive operational efficiencies, and rapidly deliver market-responsive programs that call on multiple disciplinary lenses
- Redesign curricular processes with a goal towards the ability to pivot—to rapidly launch new programs and to responsibly sunset ineffective and/or end-of-life programs
- Explore the development of innovative business models that promise return on investment and greater financial stability
- Develop a rapid-response model for identifying and securing partnerships with community and global partners to address their challenges and extend our engagement ecosystem



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Student Success: Leading Retention, Persistence, and Completion

Student success is a primary focus of our University and reflects our core commitment: We expect every student who comes to our campuses to graduate in a timely manner. Improvement of student retention, persistence, and completion of degrees also allows us to fully realize the return on our increasingly significant pre-enrollment investment in recruitment and yield efforts.

Our students—across many campuses and online environments—come from increasingly diverse backgrounds and experiences that require varied approaches to ensure they thrive. The success of this initiative is closely tied to other elements of the strategy, including general education redesign, diversity and inclusion efforts, enrollment management, data analytics, and scholarship leveraging.

In pursuing this initiative, we will:

- Identify and deploy data-driven methodologies that are central to identifying, implementing, and assessing student success initiatives
- Develop and adopt innovative student success intervention and programming that reflect the differing needs and goals of many student populations
- Build an intentional culture of inclusion to meet the individual success and retention of an increasingly diverse student body that results in closing gaps in student success rates, with a focus on first-generation students, multicultural students, and Pell-eligible students on the Athens campus, and a focus on first-generation and Pell-eligible students on the regional campuses
- Achieve national recognition for inclusivity
- Increase diversity (race, ethnicity, and gender) of faculty within the academic colleges (each college should set their own goals in relation to growth areas)
- Increase first-time, first-year retention on the Athens and regional campuses over five years
- Increase second- and third-year persistence
- Increase 4-year and 6-year graduation rates on the Athens campus
- Increase 2- and 4-year completion rates on regional campuses
- Leverage the digital transformation strategy to identify and remove institutional barriers to student success, and realign student support services to support this strategy
- Ensure co-curricular engagements measurably impact student experiences
- Positively impact appropriate national rankings through improved student success and enhanced inclusion



Amplify Research, Scholarly Productivity, and Creative Activity

Ohio University has long been active in a wide variety of research, scholarly, and creative activities across multiple disciplines. Basic research that focuses on knowledge creation remains a vital foundation of our research activity. As we seek to increase research productivity across our campuses, we recognize that we have significant strength in applied research in many areas that inform the development of a vibrant community. As a public university in rural southeastern Ohio with regional and extension campuses around the state and engaged in numerous collaborative research endeavors around the world, we can leverage our academic strengths to solve problems for our communities, state, and beyond. Aligning with our vision for the future, we will focus

on problem solving through research and discovery that builds and supports vibrant communities—research in fields such as healthcare, biotechnology, small business development, sustainability, energy and the environment, and more. Our institutional support of focused research will enhance recognition for our work and increase external funding. Furthermore, we will target support around initiatives that have the potential to scale for broader regional and global impact.



This new focus will include:

- Increase applied research to inform the development of vibrant communities, leveraging expertise and scholarly activity that address challenges of our region
- Support of research-funded positions that are strategically aligned to existing strengths, opportunities, and community and global needs
- Expand partnerships with corporations and global partners who share our vision for building more vibrant, inclusive communities in ways that will yield national prominence
- Leverage strong undergraduate research activity and the OHIO Honors program to become a national leader in engaged undergraduate research focused on building and enhancing community success
- Strategically brand, market, and publicize Ohio University's research and creative activity with this newly defined focus
- Positively impact appropriate national rankings through increased research and creative activity and through faculty recognition and inclusion in international discipline-specific societies

4 *Realize General Education Reform*

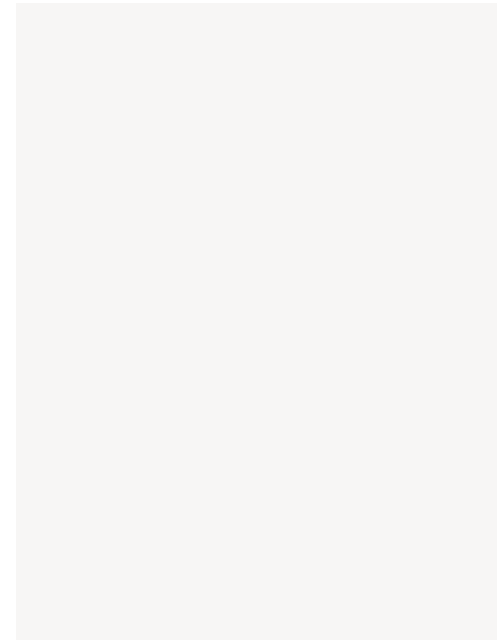


General education is intended to provide students with an academic foundation and a set of competencies that extend beyond their chosen pathway. While these goals remain relevant, changing national standards and expectations, growth of post-secondary dual enrollment opportunities and other transferred credit, and student expectations for streamlined enrollment processes are driving us to radically redesign our

model. General education must respond to this reality while remaining accountable for the learning outcomes and competencies expected of our graduates.

Ohio University will revise its general education curriculum with the goal of launching a new curriculum in the fall of 2021 that will:

- Provide a clear, easy-to-navigate curriculum that contributes meaningfully to student lifelong learning across all One OHIO locations and online
- Prepare students with distinctive skills such as communication, critical thinking, and leadership that are highly valued by employers and central to lifelong learning in a globally connected world
- Align with OHIO's Common Goals and the Ohio Transfer Module (OTM) learning outcomes and requirements
- Embed innovative opportunities for high-impact practices, linked co-curricular experiential learning, and evidence-based pedagogies



Catalyze Strategic Enrollment Strategy for Lifelong Learning



Shifting demographics among traditional freshmen and the shift towards more adult learners have forever changed what we must be as an institution if we are to thrive in the years ahead. In the last decade we have shifted from focusing somewhat narrowly on rising freshmen in Ohio to recruit students into hybrid and fully online programs, new face-to-face professional graduate programs, and undergraduate completion programs for adult learners from across the country. Now, we must accelerate that shift and further focus our enrollment attentions to attract more out-of-state undergraduate students, to meet adult learners

wherever they are in the education continuum with certificate programs and professional development, and to nurture a lifelong relationship with every student, retargeting them for relevant opportunities from high school to retirement and beyond. Our greatest opportunities for growth come from adult learners, part-time students, and more diverse populations. We will prepare our campus for the needs of a diverse student body. We must maintain acute awareness of the competitive landscape and be prepared to shift accordingly. To these ends, we will:

- Shift our enrollment efforts from heavily in-state undergraduate to a more balanced demographic aiming, to increase the overall percentage of adult learners and non-traditional students, transfer students, out-of-state and international students, and under-represented groups
- Continue to grow the OHIO Honors Program
- Coordinate and strengthen yield efforts centrally and across the system
- Refocus our scholarship strategy to target our competitive peers and support retention and graduation goals
- Deploy comprehensive marketing strategy to reflect needs and expectations of target audiences
- Expand utilization with marketing and enrollment partners to deploy an aggressive enrollment strategy for online programs
- Invest in more on-ground and digital marketing in regional hot spots and targeted out-of-state markets
- Expand programming on regional campuses and online in response to workforce needs and/or in partnership with corporate partners
- Explore a relocate strategy with regional campuses to increase the number of students who start at a regional campus and relocate to the Athens campus towards a goal of further supporting students' educational attainment and life-long learning needs at OHIO



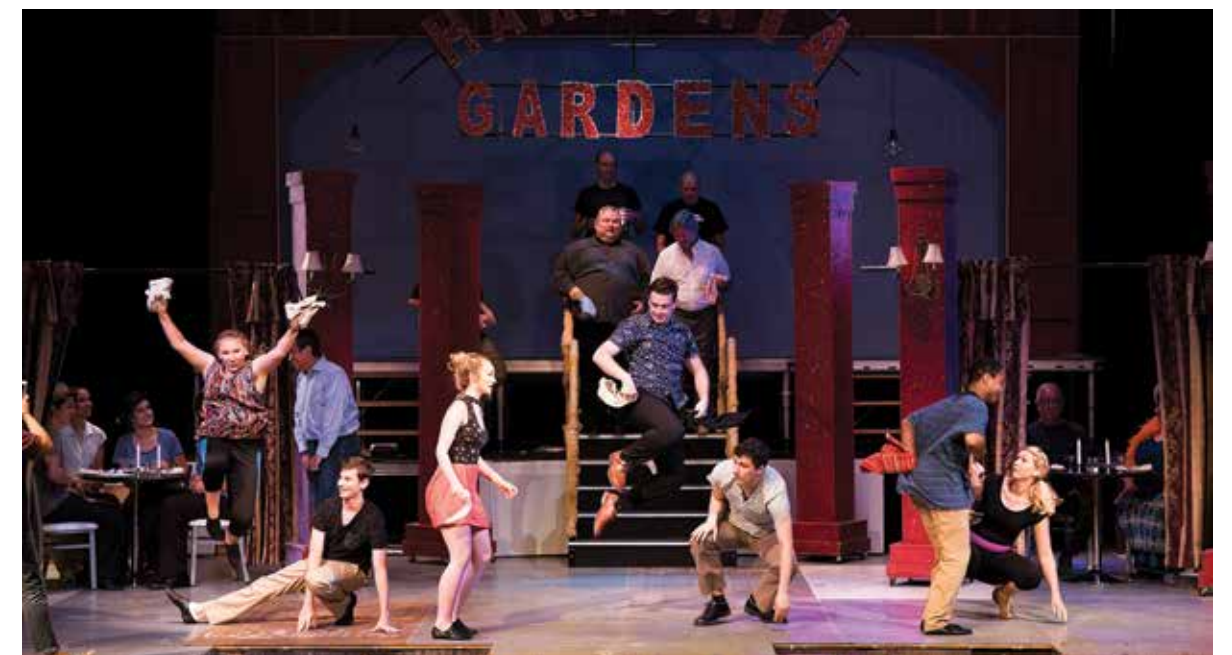
The One OHIO Integration initiative began in FY19 with a Regional Higher Education (RHE) Task Force charged with identifying a sustainable financial model for Ohio University's regional campuses. In addition to developing recommendations for a sustainable financial model, the study served a larger purpose:

providing a road map for improving efficiency across all academic units and campuses. The initial work of the RHE Task Force was then expanded to include and unite all OHIO campuses and functions. By adopting One OHIO, we are implementing a data-driven process to:

- Integrate all academic and administrative functions with a one university, system-wide approach
- Identify efficiencies and consolidation across the University system through coordination of scheduling and administrative efficiencies
- Generate new revenue streams through extension of Athens-based programs throughout the system and in response to new workforce and community demand
- Foster opportunities for interdisciplinary, multi-campus scholarly and creative activity
- Provide additional opportunities for students to engage with faculty and academic programs across campuses as well as with local communities where campuses and centers are located
- Prioritize new platforms for learning beyond single location brick and mortar classrooms
- Identify new partnership opportunities such as corporate, government, and non-profit partners who seek workplace skills development for a dynamic workforce

Uniting the System: One OHIO Integration Initiative

From Regional Higher Education Study Task Force to One OHIO Integration



Become a University of Digital Transformation

The digital world has created new business models and ways of working that were not possible or even imagined a decade ago. Universities, including OHIO, have been slow to move when it comes to adopting and deploying the latest technology to improve our processes, our student learning outcomes, our teaching environment, and our campus. Those that have invested in cutting-edge digital technology have made themselves more appealing to students and operationally more efficient.

Digital transformation requires significant investment. We must be strategic in where we place that investment given current budget constraints in order to maximize return on investment. Areas where we invest will be focused on supporting our framework themes and specifically enhancing the overall student experience and transformational outcomes.



Our digital transformation plan will:

- Re-envision the student experience through a comprehensive analysis of the student journey from recruitment through graduation with targeted investments to redesign areas of greatest need and highest value
- Support recruitment, enrollment, retention, and persistence by leveraging predictive analytics and targeted, data-driven interventions.
- Improve access to institutional data by wisely investing in modern infrastructure and processes that reduce barriers while managing risk
- Improve the velocity and accuracy of decisions by building analytical capability to interpret and act on institutional data
- Increase the efficiency and effectiveness of our workforce by redesigning processes, infusing new ways of working and collaborating into our practice and automating activities that do not directly enhance the student experience
- Partner with Southeast Ohio Broadband Coalition to expand broadband access throughout southeastern Ohio

Build a Dynamic Budget Model and Rebalance Budgets



The University will transition away from the current budget model that relies heavily on RCM principles and allocations based on prior year(s) performance. As we move away from RCM, the University will implement a simplified, transparent hybrid model that is dynamic and focused on the future impacts of existing trends, enrollments, and investments. This streamlined model will provide more clarity about resource allocations to support strategic goals and ensure a sustainable financial future.

Our enrollments have declined while our institutional expenses have increased. Our operating budgets must be resized to balance our revenues and expenses. Since FY17, Ohio University has implemented administrative reductions and established academic strategies to rebalance the operating budget. As we continue to reimagine OHIO's academic enterprise through the University's 2025 Strategic Plan, we are committed to:

- Enacting administrative and academic benchmarking to right-size the institution
- Investing in growing programs and developing new programs and certificates to poise the institution for strengthened academic quality and offerings
- Exploring restructuring traditional campus, college, departmental, and administrative unit functions to ensure fiscal sustainability
- Developing a budgetary model that is streamlined, data-driven, and more easily utilized by college and administrative units



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Re-Imagine Space Utilization and the University's Footprint

Our physical footprint is one of the highest expenses to the institution as it relates to capital and operational investment. Additionally, digital and technology needs are transforming the capital footprint and infrastructure needs of OHIO's students, faculty, and staff. The traditional construction of facilities

and space ownership are not generally conducive to interdisciplinary engagement. In order to maximize space utilization, enable flexibility for ever-changing programmatic needs and understand our capital investment needs, the initiative will:

- Conduct a comprehensive study of space ownership, management, utilization and needs across the University
- With a Digital Transformation University in mind, rethink how space should be deployed to meet the needs of a dynamic institution
- Enhance and increase momentum towards sustainability goals and commitments
- Realize a significant reduction in physical footprint through a mixed strategy of space assignment and room type cultural shifts, demolition, and public-private partnerships



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Elevate Marketing and Branding

We will leverage the development of a comprehensive marketing and communications plan and clear brand message strategy to unite all campuses toward the goal of telling OHIO's story across the state and far

beyond. The strategic vision will lift the OHIO brand and improve our reputation both regionally and nationally.

This initiative will include:

- Development of a brand messaging strategy that recognizes our long history as an institution but also moves us into the future and promotes an inclusive university community
- Development of a strategic marketing plan based on data and research that will elevate the University's national visibility and bolster enrollment and recruitment efforts
- Realignment of communications and marketing resources across the institution to support One OHIO and the new marketing plan
- Strengthening of partnerships between academic units, strategic enrollment resources, and University Communications and Marketing to ensure all are focused on business priorities
- Increase diverse representation in marketing campaigns



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Increase Alumni Engagement and Coordination

Recognizing that Ohio University's alumni are invaluable brand ambassadors who can enhance the institution's profile, the initiative will:

- Leverage alumni strategically to support student enrollment and recruitment efforts and connect our diverse alumni base in retaining an inclusive student body
- Increase the number of high-quality student internships and enhance career development by networking with our alumni around the globe
- Enhance curricular opportunities for alumni as guest experts and mentors
- Implement a strategic corporate engagement plan
- Increase participation and engagement of underrepresented alumni communities in recruitment, mentoring, career-development, and giving
- Increase private financial support with an emphasis on increasing alumni giving



Conclusion

We are at a convergence of economic and demographic challenges and emerging opportunities. Together, we will reinvent and refresh our academic model—demonstrating our relevance and value to our current and future students, our partners, and our communities. The scale of reinvention that we undertake will require mobilization of all faculty and staff. Over the past two years, countless dedicated faculty and staff have already moved forward with significant changes such as general education redesign and One OHIO Integration. There is increasing momentum for positive change. In this Framing Document, we have cast a vision and framework, but the operationalization of this vision will not be the work of an executive team alone; it is the work of deans, department chairs and school directors, staff members, faculty, and community partners. Together, we will add substance to the frame to achieve a sustainable future for Ohio University. Together, we will build a sustainable future for our University and the students we serve. That, after all, is our calling—to be stewards, for a time, of this incredible institution that came before us and will carry on long after us to help future generations grow in knowledge, wisdom, and love. We have an incredible opportunity to steer Ohio University forward in a time of uncertainty and to help reimagine what it can, should and will be and to reclaim our position as an industry leader.






OHIO
UNIVERSITY

Ohio University recognizes the value of human diversity and is an institution committed to upholding practices of equal access and equal opportunity for all, including but not limited to veterans, persons living with disabilities, and all protected classes. For more information about Ohio University's policies prohibiting discrimination, including grievance procedures, visit www.ohio.edu/equity-civil-rights.

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