



University of New Hampshire

One UNH: Roadmap to 2030

KNOWLEDGE THAT POWERS IMPACT



A Pivotal Moment

Established in 1866, the University of New Hampshire has a long history of strong educational programs and impactful research for the public good. While we began as an institution focused on “agriculture and the mechanic arts,” we have grown to be a globally recognized research university, with campuses and extension locations in every county of New Hampshire. With these strengths as our foundation, we stand at a pivotal moment defined by both challenge and opportunity. UNH is the state’s flagship public research university, and also holds Land, Sea, and Space Grant distinctions. With deep roots in the Granite State and a global reach, we are committed to advancing knowledge, cultivating excellence, and serving the state in ways few institutions can. With this strategic plan, we answer two questions: given our current economic, political, and cultural context, what do we want UNH to be in five years, and how do we chart the plan forward that will get us there?

At the heart of this plan is a clear unifying theme: “Knowledge That Powers Impact.” This simple but powerful idea unites our efforts from the classroom to the community, driving progress for our students, our state, and our world. That progress is fueled by a culture of continuous learning—one that values curiosity, resilience, and growth—and transforms discovery into action.

Built through collaboration across our entire community and all of our campuses, colleges, extension locations, and with external partners, this plan is rooted in UNH’s core mission and public responsibility. It sets clear priorities for where we will focus our energy, invest our resources, and measure our progress. But this is only the beginning: together, we will meet this pivotal moment with purpose and unity, charting a course for UNH’s future that is rooted in our mission and dedicated to serving New Hampshire and beyond.



FRAMING THE FUTURE

The University of New Hampshire is entering a time of both challenge and opportunity. As the state's flagship public research university UNH has a responsibility not just to respond to change, but to lead it. How do we make good on our responsibility to serve our state and the region?

This strategic plan serves as our roadmap for the future. It reflects the ideas, priorities, and aspirations of the UNH community that helped shape it. It offers a clear and focused path to strengthen student success, expand our research impact, and foster a sense of belonging—all in service of deepening our impact on the state, region, and the world.

We know the road ahead is not easy. Demographic shifts, rising costs, and increasing skepticism about the value of higher education are already reshaping our landscape. But at UNH we navigate these headwinds by staying grounded in our values and focused on our mission. We know that a college education has significant lifelong personal and societal benefits. We must evolve as an institution to ensure we can sustain this value proposition and redouble our efforts to communicate it to a broader audience.

While many universities are tackling the same challenges, we know what sets us apart: our mission-driven approach, our deep commitment to New Hampshire, and our ability to combine the rigor of a top research institution with the heart of a public university rooted in community.

Our success depends on every member of the UNH community and the strength of our connections with New Hampshire communities. Together, we will meet the moment and chart our future for 2030 and beyond.

With gratitude,

Elizabeth Chilton

President
University of New Hampshire



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Mission

The University of New Hampshire, the state's flagship public research university, advances knowledge and innovation to serve the public good. We fulfill our mission by creating and applying new knowledge through teaching, research, outreach, service, and partnerships through engaged and applied scholarship, workforce development, cooperative extension, creative activities, and continuing education. We foster economic, social, and civic vitality for New Hampshire and beyond.

Vision

By 2030, the University of New Hampshire will no longer be a “best-kept secret.” We will be valued for driving innovation, fueling New Hampshire's economic and social well-being, and preparing students to lead and thrive in a rapidly changing world. UNH will be a regional leader in navigating the headwinds facing higher education through strategic contraction that reinforces our ability to deliver on our mission effectively.



Values

Academic Excellence and Discovery

We uphold the highest standards in teaching, research, and creative expression, fostering a culture of curiosity, innovation, and lifelong learning. We recognize that inclusive pedagogy, academic rigor, open access to learning, and a commitment to different ways of generating and sharing knowledge empower students, faculty, staff, and communities alike.

Student-Centered Learning and Growth

We prioritize student success for every learner in our community; this includes well-being and personal and professional growth through excellence in teaching, mentorship, experiential learning, research, and engagement. We support students as whole individuals, encouraging leadership, creativity, athletics, service, and belonging across the full spectrum of university life.

Public Service and Civic Responsibility

As New Hampshire's Land, Sea, and Space Grant university, UNH is deeply connected to communities across the state. Through applied research, public engagement, continuing education, and partnerships, we foster better-informed citizens, promote social and economic mobility, and confront our greatest challenges.

Inclusive Excellence and Belonging

We are committed to sustaining a welcoming, respectful, and equitable community where all students, faculty, staff, partners, and neighbors are supported, celebrated, and inspired to thrive. Our curricular and co-curricular programs are designed to promote diversity of thought and productive civil discourse. We cultivate a sense of pride and belonging that extends across the university and into the broader communities we serve.

Sustainability and Stewardship

We are dedicated to responsible stewardship of our natural, financial, and human resources. We embrace sustainable practices across our academic, operational, and technological systems to help preserve the unique beauty and environment of New Hampshire and New England for future generations. Through innovation, adaptability, and community partnerships, we advance sustainability in all we do.

Setting the Stage

The University of New Hampshire enters this strategic planning period at a time of profound change and upheaval in higher education. The landscape is shifting rapidly, challenging longstanding assumptions and demanding new approaches.

In the Northeast and nationally, we are facing a significant decline in the number of traditional college-aged students. At the same time, rising costs, shifting workforce needs, and growing public skepticism about the value of a college degree are pushing institutions to adapt quickly and earn public trust in new ways.

These pressures are especially acute in New Hampshire, where public investment in higher education ranks last in the nation on a per-student basis. This reality makes UNH highly tuition-dependent, underscoring the need to operate with both responsiveness and fiscal discipline. It also means we must remain attuned to the evolving expectations of students and families who entrust us with their education.

Meanwhile, all higher-education institutions are competing aggressively for a shrinking pool of students, and rapid changes in workforce expectations have created a demand for new forms of learning, credentials, and career preparation.

UNH will embrace this moment with purpose. We have a rare opportunity to shape the future of public higher education by becoming a more focused, agile university. In today’s environment, progress isn’t defined solely by growth; it’s defined by prioritization, impact, and strategic allocation of resources. By concentrating our efforts where we can have the most significant impact, we will deliver a more intentional student experience, one that is supported by our community, enhanced through research, and that prepares our graduates for successful lives and careers.

CATEGORY	KEY DRIVER
DEMOGRAPHICS	Northeast and national enrollment cliff: projected 10–15% fewer college-aged students through 2035.
ECONOMIC	Rising inflation, wage expectations, and affordability pressures for students and families.
POLITICAL / PUBLIC SENTIMENT	Growing political skepticism and attacks on the value of higher education, especially liberal arts.
STATE FUNDING	New Hampshire ranks last in the nation in per-student support for public higher education.
COMPETITION	Increased competition from all higher-education institutions.
WORKFORCE SHIFTS	Employers increasingly valuing skills over degrees, thus our need to adapt academic offerings.
TECHNOLOGY AND MODALITY	Pressure to innovate in flexible, hybrid, remote, and stackable credential offerings.
PUBLIC TRUST	Nationwide declines in trust in public institutions, including universities.
WELL-BEING	Significant rise in mental health needs, burnout, and desire for belonging.

HOW WE GOT HERE

The development of the University of New Hampshire's 2025–2030 Strategic Plan was a collaborative process rooted in inclusivity, transparency, and shared ownership. Led by a Strategic Planning Steering Committee of faculty, staff, students, and university leaders, the plan was developed over six months to reflect the voices and vision of the UNH community.

The committee drafted the plan's mission, vision, and values, and shaped four strategic priorities: Strengthening UNH's Impact, First Choice Destination, Interdisciplinary Teaching and Research Excellence, and Commitment to Well-Being and Belonging. Throughout the process, meaningful engagement was emphasized. Each priority held its own listening session—both in person and online—inviting feedback from faculty, staff, students, and community partners. Later in the spring, the full strategic framework was presented during a university-wide session for integrated feedback. Updates were shared regularly through campus communications and the strategic planning website, and an online form remained available for ongoing input.

The result is a plan that reflects both the long-term vision and day-to-day realities of our university, shaped by the insights, experiences, and aspirations of individuals across our campuses.

THE COMMITTEE

- Cyndee Gruden** (Co-Chair)
Interim Provost and Vice President,
Academic Affairs
- Danielle O'Neil** (Co-Chair)
Chief Marketing Officer
- Charlie French** (Co-Chair)
Department Head, Community &
Economic Development Division at
University of New Hampshire
Cooperative Extension
- Tom Cronin** (Co-Chair)
Chief of Staff
- Justine Stadler**
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- Mike Decelle**
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- Mary Stampone**
Associate Professor of Geography, New
Hampshire State Climatologist
- Michele Holt Shannon**
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- Raina Sprague**
Executive Director, Employer Relations
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- Jayson Seaman**
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Department of Recreation Management
& Policy
- Seth Oranburg**
Professor of Law, Franklin Pierce School
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- Jeremy Robbins**
Student, Ph.D. Education
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Vice Provost, Enrollment Management
- Vidya Sundar** (Co-Chair)
Associate Professor and Chair,
Department of Occupational Therapy
- Lu Echazu**
Associate Dean for Undergraduate
Education

STRENGTHENING UNH'S IMPACT

FIRST CHOICE DESTINATION

- Jesse Stabile Morrell**
Assistant Dean for Undergraduate &
Professional Studies
- Ashby Kinch**
Vice Provost and Dean of the
Graduate School
- Christa Ricker**
Director, New Student & Family Programs
- Tessa Marinello**
Student, First Year Representative of
Student Senate
- Sarah Dorner**
Assistant Dean for Graduate Admissions
and International Outreach, Franklin
Pierce School of Law
- Mihaela Sabin**
Professor of Computer Science,
UNH Manchester
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Hamel Center for Undergraduate
Research
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- Stephen Bird**
Professor and Director, Carsey School of
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- Sonic Woytonik**
Senior Lecturer, Department of
Security Studies
- Rawan AISarraf**
Student, Doctoral Candidate in Nutritional
Sciences Ph.D. Program
- Neil Sirota**
Assistant Dean for Career Services and
Strategic Initiatives, Franklin Pierce
School of Law

INTERDISCIPLINARY TEACHING AND RESEARCH EXCELLENCE

- Kathleen Grace-Bishop** (Co-Chair)
Director of Education and Promotion,
Health & Wellness
- Jeffrey M. Halpern** (Co-Chair)
Professor, Department of Chemical
Engineering and Bioengineering and
Chair, Faculty Senate
- Kendra Lewis**
Professor and State Specialist for Youth &
Family Resiliency
- Guangzhou Chen**
Assistant Professor, Department of
Recreation Management and Policy;
Extension Affiliate Faculty, Community
and Economic Development
- Annie Nevells**
Director, Graduate Enrollment
and Advising
- Nadine Petty**
Associate Vice President for Community,
Civil Rights, and Compliance
- Maggie McGrath**
Student, Student Senate Health and
Wellness Council Chairperson
- Lisa Enright**
Assistant Dean of Student Success,
College of Professional Studies at
UNH Manchester
- Fumi Kimura**
Deputy Director of Athletics

COMMITMENT TO WELL-BEING AND BELONGING

The Four Strategic Priorities

The University of New Hampshire's strategic plan is built on what we heard clearly from our community. Through several listening sessions and thoughtful conversations, four clear priorities emerged. These are areas where we can make the greatest impact by focusing our collective energy, talent, and resources.

Each priority includes broad objectives that will guide our actions, investments, and progress over the next five years, ensuring we stay aligned with our mission and accountable in our work.

By coordinating our efforts through the lens of these strategic priorities, we can ensure that the university's efforts are aligned, future-focused, and rooted in our mission to serve the public good, foster student success, and strengthen New Hampshire's vitality.



Strengthening UNH's Impact

We help New Hampshire thrive by preparing students with the skills they need for the careers of today and tomorrow, conducting research that addresses real-world problems, and partnering with communities and businesses to set priorities that drive impact. Together, we improve lives, protect natural and cultural resources, and build a stronger, healthier future for our state.

Support Economic Growth and Community Vitality

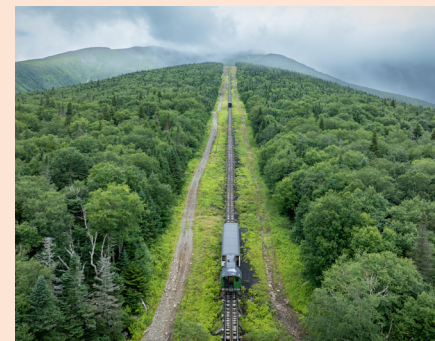
Strengthen engagement with New Hampshire's employers through research and development, talent recruitment, and responsive professional training. Partner with local leaders to grow the economy, improve quality of life, and support the health and well-being of the state's residents through civic engagement, volunteerism, community planning, technical assistance, and data-informed decision-making.

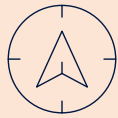
Deliver Research-Informed Solutions

Facilitate and promote university research that addresses New Hampshire's most pressing needs by supporting applied research, shaping policy, engaging residents and industry, and recognizing those who drive positive impact on the state.

Advance Workforce Readiness and Opportunity

Expand students' career opportunities and continue to help New Hampshire attract and retain workers through expanded internships, employer engagement, non-degree programs, alumni mentoring, and targeted outreach to high school and community college students.





First Choice Destination

While UNH is already a first-choice university for many, we're working to expand that distinction among motivated prospective students who are seeking a university that matches their ambition and values. By advancing academic excellence, research impact, a vibrant campus, and student success, we will continue to attract a highly driven student body and ensure every student thrives academically, socially, and professionally. With a focus on faculty excellence, research, career pathways, student support, and campus culture, UNH will reinforce its status as a premier public university in New England.

Advance Academic Excellence

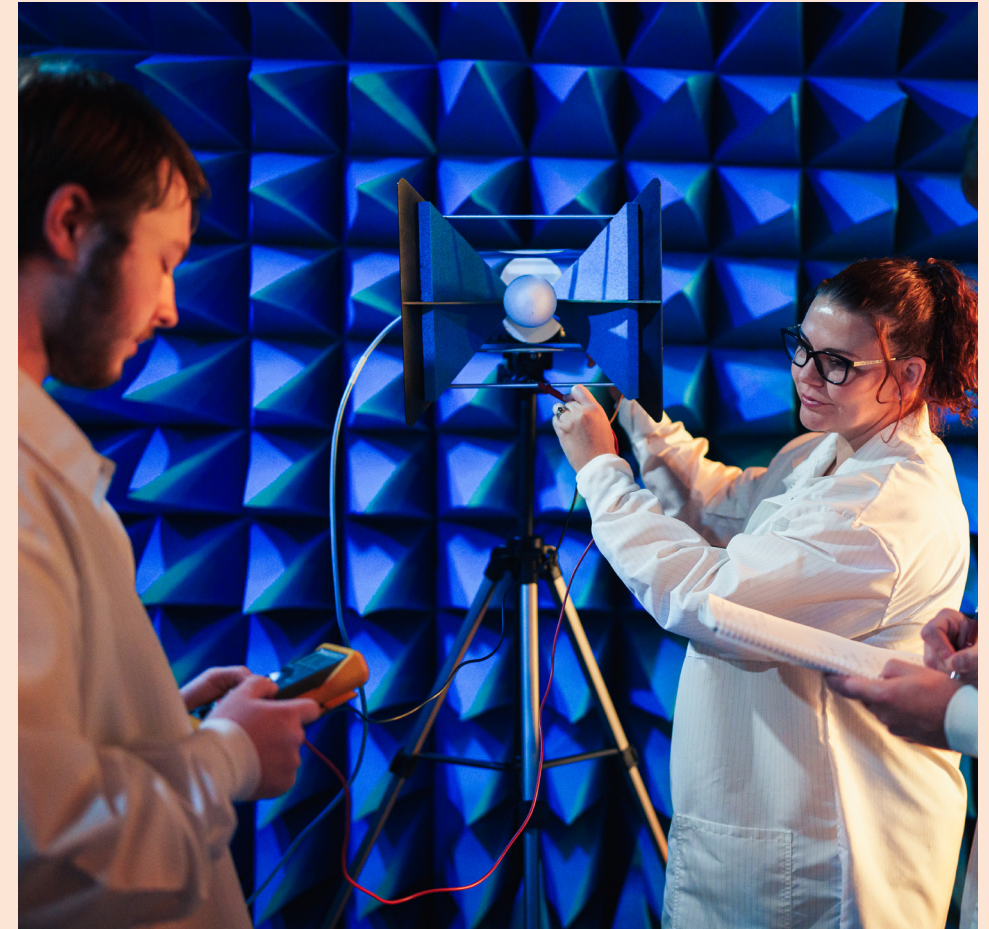
Strengthen education at all levels by reinvigorating our pedagogies and reevaluating our degree and credential delivery, expanding our high-impact experiential learning opportunities, and leveraging our research and innovation impact to meet evolving student needs. We will prepare our graduates to become informed and engaged citizens who are prepared to be successful not just for their first job but for the many twists and turns that life will offer.

Enhance Student Experience

Foster inclusive, supportive environments by transforming campus spaces and facilities, and tailoring services to help students thrive academically and socially.

Elevate UNH's Market Position

Differentiate UNH through strategic branding, a focus on access and affordability, strengthened alumni engagement, and dissemination of compelling stories to attract and enroll high-intent students.





Interdisciplinary Teaching and Research Excellence

UNH is a Land, Sea, and Space Grant university with recognized strengths across the arts, sciences, humanities, and professional disciplines. Our distinctive interdisciplinary education and research bring together world-class faculty from diverse fields to spark innovation, deepen understanding, and prepare students to tackle complex, real-world challenges in New Hampshire and beyond.

To support this and the other priorities of the plan, we must take steps to identify the unique programs that will set us apart from our peers. A focus on a small number of truly differentiated programs will lift the entire university through increased reputation and perception in a crowded, competitive marketplace for students, faculty, and funding.

Expand Interdisciplinary Learning

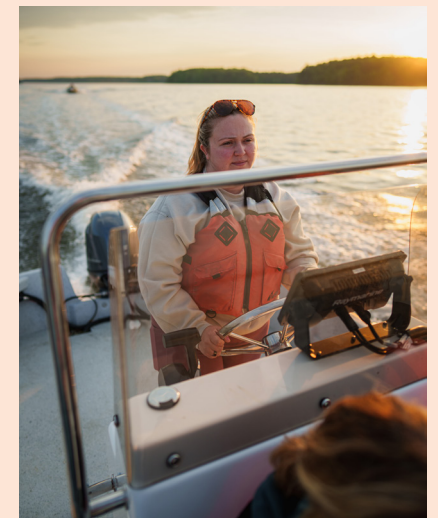
Provide all students with flexible academic and co-curricular pathways that connect diverse disciplines and support intellectual growth within and beyond traditional degree programs.

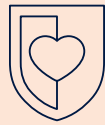
Strengthen and Focus Interdisciplinary Research

Equip the UNH community with tools, training, and funding strategies to tackle complex challenges through cross-disciplinary collaboration, while fostering research excellence from undergraduate to faculty levels.

Deepen Service and Outreach Impact

Partner with communities, industries, and K-12 schools to co-create innovative solutions to everyday challenges, align workforce training with regional needs, and broaden civic and educational engagement across New Hampshire.





Commitment to Well-Being and Belonging

Through collaboration and innovative programs, policies, and practices, UNH will promote and embody well-being, belonging, and accessibility, empowering students and employees to thrive both personally and professionally in a welcoming, inclusive, and supportive UNH community.

Promote Holistic Well-Being

Meet the community's evolving needs across all dimensions of wellness by enhancing wellness education, ensuring fair access to health services, supporting employees and students, and fostering collaboration with health networks.

Foster Belonging and Inclusion

Offer programs and training that support well-being, personal development, and social connection to create a connected and inclusive community.

Value and Support Employees

Build an equitable, rewarding work environment through fair policies on workload, pay, promotion, and professional development while ensuring transparency during organizational change.

Embed Health in Campus Culture

Integrate health and well-being into the university's culture, policies and practices, research, and communication to foster a thriving, supportive environment for all members of the UNH community.



Connecting the Dots

UNH's strategic plan is built on four distinct priorities, but real impact happens where those priorities intersect. Through extensive community input and analysis, six powerful themes emerged that cut across every area of focus. These shared priorities are more than supporting ideas; they are the connective tissue that unifies our work and amplifies our potential.

1. **Student-Centered Excellence:** Student success is the foundation of every priority, reflected through academic rigor, a vibrant co-curricular experience, career preparation, and a commitment to student well-being.
2. **Sustainability:** Sustainability is a strong, though sometimes implicit, thread that runs through the four strategic priorities, connecting environmental, economic, and social dimensions.
3. **Research and Innovation as Enablers:** Research and innovation drive progress across all priorities: advancing academic excellence and experiential learning, addressing community challenges, and fueling economic development statewide.
4. **Access and Belonging:** Building a community of access, opportunity, and belonging is central to UNH's future, supported through admissions strategies, robust student and employee support systems, and cultural initiatives that foster respect and pride.
5. **Strategic Partnership and Outreach:** Partnerships with industry, community organizations, public institutions, and alumni are key to extending UNH's mission beyond campus, accelerating impact, and strengthening New Hampshire's social and economic vitality.
6. **Data-Informed and Forward-Looking Planning:** Across all priorities, we commit to clear, measurable, and adaptive strategies, positioning UNH to lead in a dynamic, rapidly changing world.

These themes connect and strengthen the four strategic priorities that define our most critical areas of focus for the next five years. Each is grounded in our guiding theme: Knowledge That Powers Impact, a belief that education, research, and service together can drive meaningful change for our students, our communities, and the state of New Hampshire.



How We Deliver

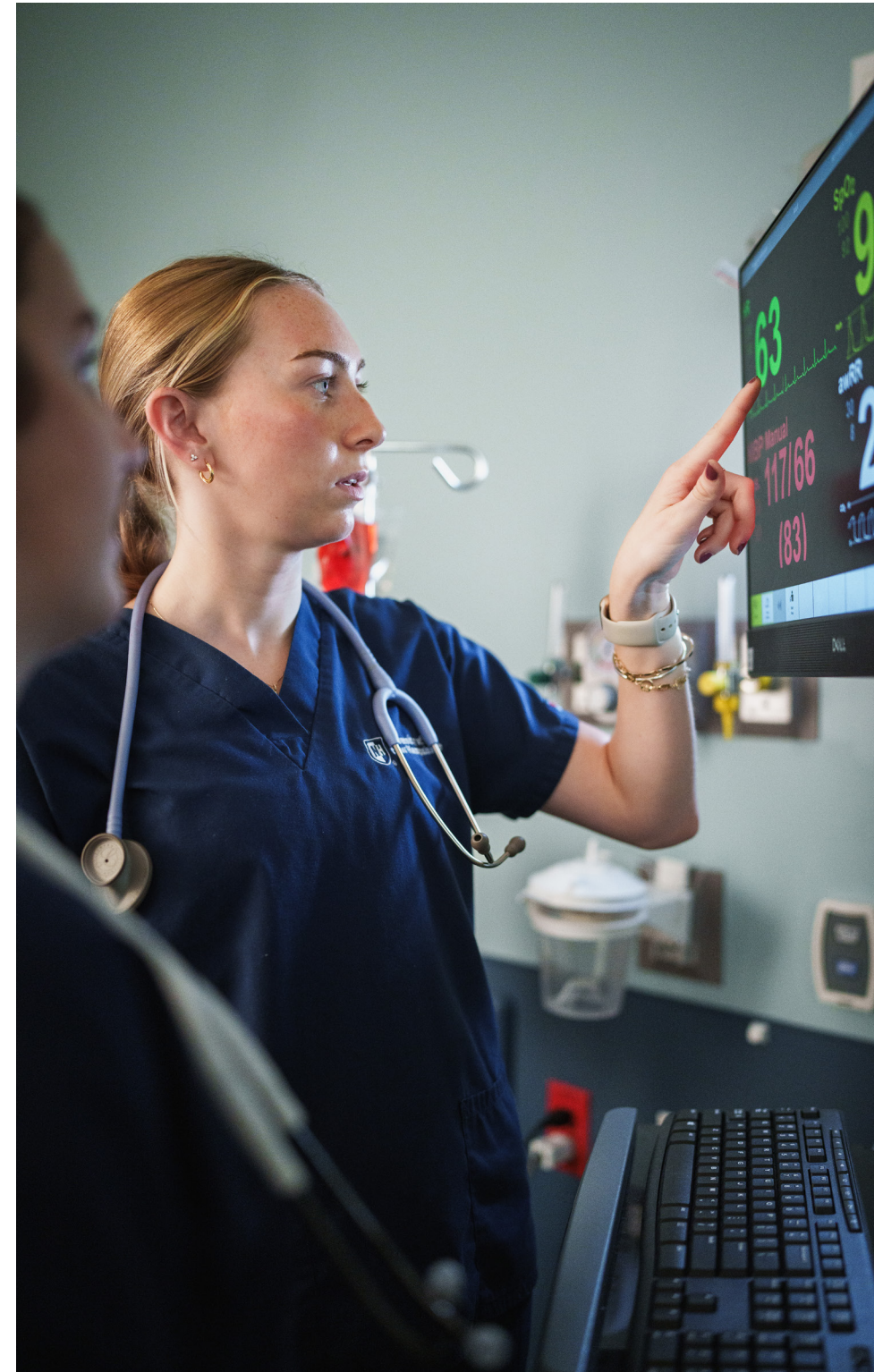
The success of this strategic plan depends not only on visionary goals but also on the disciplined and effective management of our resources and operations, and engagement with all our employees and students. As we pursue the priorities outlined in our four strategic priorities, UNH will anchor its work in a foundation of financial sustainability, as well as a recognition of the demographic, economic, and political realities in which we will implement this plan.

We are committed to designing and implementing a new priorities-based budget process that allows for transparent and informed decision-making, supports strategic goals, and fosters long-term financial health. We will rigorously scrutinize our operations to identify efficiencies, drive innovation, and foster continuous improvement. And we will work closely with our USNH sister campuses as we evaluate shared services across the system.

We will align our academic and program offerings with the evolving needs of students and employers, ensuring that what we offer is both mission-driven and market-responsive.

Supporting faculty and staff effectively will remain a top priority. We will invest wisely in our people, aligning talent with strategic needs and fostering a culture of adaptability, accountability, and excellence.

These operational commitments are not separate from our strategic vision; they are integral to its delivery. Every decision we make will reflect our responsibility to the students, families, partners, and citizens we serve.



Making It Happen

Achieving the ambitions outlined in this strategic plan requires more than goal setting; it demands disciplined execution, transparent measurement, and a commitment to continuous improvement. Implementation of the plan will be an integrated, dynamic process that engages leadership, faculty, staff, students, and partners across all campuses.

UNH will implement this plan through the following framework:

Governance and Leadership Oversight

A Strategic Implementation Committee, comprising university leadership, faculty, staff, and student representatives, will provide ongoing oversight of implementation. This body will monitor progress, recommend adjustments, and ensure strategic alignment across the university. Strategic oversight will also be incorporated into regular cabinet meetings, college dean reviews, and Board of Trustees reporting cycles. The committee will also report to the entire university community quarterly and provide updates on metrics through a public website.

Strategic Action Planning

Each college, school, and major administrative unit will develop and maintain a strategic action plan aligned with the university's four strategic priorities and the tenets of operational excellence. These action plans will specify unit-level and collaborative initiatives, resource allocations, timelines, and responsibilities, ensuring that every part of the university contributes to the plan's overarching goals.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Metrics

To make real progress, we need to know what is working and where we need to adjust. Each strategic objective will include a mix of quantitative and qualitative indicators to help us measure outcomes that matter. These metrics will be developed collaboratively with input from across the university and will be grounded in national best practices, peer benchmarks, and mission-specific outcomes.

Annual Review and Reporting

Progress against the strategic plan will be formally reviewed and reported annually through a public State of the University report and a dashboard available to internal stakeholders. This report will highlight accomplishments, areas requiring additional focus, and adjustments to tactics or priorities based on emerging opportunities or risks.

Continuous Improvement and Adaptability

Recognizing the dynamic nature of higher education and public needs, UNH will build flexibility into the implementation process. Feedback loops, environmental scanning, and regular stakeholder engagement will allow the university to refine approaches as conditions change, while remaining true to the core vision and goals.



Our Path Forward

The University of New Hampshire stands at an inflection point. Across the country, and especially in the Northeast, the ground beneath higher education is shifting. Demographic contraction, declining public trust, funding constraints, and rapidly evolving workforce demands are not theoretical threats; they are active forces already reshaping the landscape in which we operate.

UNH will be defined by how we respond to these headwinds. As the state's flagship public research university and one of the nation's only Land, Sea, and Space Grant institutions, we have a responsibility and a rare opportunity to lead with purpose and integrity. We combine the resources of a top-tier research university with the mission-driven heart of a public institution rooted in place, and with the grit and determination of the Granite State. A strong public higher education system and university is critical to the economic and social well-being of New Hampshire, and we take that responsibility very seriously.

This strategic plan is both a blueprint and a rallying cry. Guided by the principle of Knowledge That Powers Impact, it lays out a focused path to elevate academic excellence, expand interdisciplinary research, invest in student success and civic engagement, promote belonging and well-being, and expand our service to and partnership with the state of New Hampshire. It is also a call to operational rigor; to steward our people, programs, and resources wisely and boldly.

The next five years will challenge us to think boldly, adapt quickly, and lead with purpose. With our students, faculty, staff, alumni, and partners working in alignment, we will rise to meet the moment. Together, we will build a stronger UNH that leads with impact, lives its values, and lights the way forward for New Hampshire and the world.





University of New Hampshire

For updates on the implementation
of our strategic plan, visit:

unh.edu/leadership/unh-2030