UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH DAKOTA

STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2026

SD

UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTH DAKOTA

CONTEXT

Preface: The global COVID-19 pandemic has presented not only new challenges, but new opportunities, as the University of South Dakota navigates unprecedented complexities in higher education and embraces innovative ways to serve the state, nation and world. USD is committed to a dynamic and flexible strategic plan that re-prioritizes strategic themes as needed while preserving the mission and vision of the university.

During the 2019-2020 academic year USD was engaged in a collaborative strategic planning process that involved over 1,000 internal and external stakeholders. With this planning effort we generated and agreed on six strategic themes that will shape our time, attention and resources over the next five years.

MISSION

The University of South Dakota offers undergraduate, graduate and professional programs within the South Dakota System of Higher Education. As the oldest university in the state, the University of South Dakota serves as the flagship and the only public liberal arts university in the state.

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH DAKOTA VISION AND VALUES

A picture of the future.
"We Are South Dakota"

The University of South Dakota is regionally acclaimed and nationally recognized as a high-quality public liberal arts university with South Dakota's only schools of law, medicine, and business. We are recognized for the quality of our faculty. Their excellent teaching, effective service and innovative research are valued at USD. Our faculty are dedicated, experts in their fields and accessible to our students. USD educates leaders of communities, states, and nations.

Student Experience Focused.
Our students are engaged, thoughtful, and well-prepared for a global and complex world. The experience in and out of the classroom is robust, experiential, and practical. Lives are enhanced and changed by the breadth of experiences we provide.

Responsible Stewards.
We strive to make a USD education affordable to every qualified student by operating efficiently and effectively with high quality standards to minimize financial barriers to a life-changing experience.

Transparent.
We communicate frequently with our stakeholders, both internal and external. Our communication processes are informative, agile, and transparent. Our brand and identity are authentic, clear, and understood by all our stakeholders. People know who we are, what we do, and the connections we make to serve the citizens of South Dakota, members of tribal nations, the region, and the world.

Value Our Community.
We are community partners and neighbors who value the strength of our community. We invest in our people and strive to achieve appropriate levels of compensation and recognition. We value our employees and invest in their professional development. All employees play an important role in creating the USD experience.

Welcoming.
Community is one of our strengths. We are proud of our caring culture and embrace the uniqueness of our students, faculty and staff. We provide opportunities so all feel welcome here.

Resource Custodians.
We have a process for modernizing and upgrading our facilities so they can be fully utilized by our students, faculty, staff, and community. We leverage our technology resources to provide a flexible and adaptable learning and research experience.

Highest Integrity.
We are seen as a trusted partner by those with whom we collaborate and live up to the high expectations of South Dakota, tribal nations, and other stakeholders. We are optimistic and excited about the future we will create.

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Strategic Plan Champion

Chief of Staff and Director of Government Relations

STRATEGIC THEME ONE: ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Ensure that we offer an unsurpassed education, grounded in the Liberal Arts, for all our students

Goal 1: Improve long-term outcomes and success of USD students as it relates to Liberal Arts

Big Steps

- Identify types and sources of data associated with success in the Liberal Arts
- Collect and analyze data on student success as it relates to Liberal Arts
- Communicate student success stories to internal and external stakeholders
- Develop plan for improving student outcomes as it relates to Liberal Arts

Resources needed

- Technology
- State support
- Personnel

Champions

- Assistant Provost
- Assistant Vice President for Institutional Research, Planning and Assessment

Success

- Dissemination of data associated with outcomes and success of students as it relates to Liberal Arts.
- Programmatic changes based on the data
- Cyclical assessment of student success as it relates to the Liberal Arts

Goal 2: Align faculty teaching, research and service with the mission of the university

Big Steps

- Reevaluate USD's Expectations of the Faculty and workload documents at both the institutional and unit level to establish meaningful expectations for annual evaluations and the promotion and tenure process
- Reevaluate USD's Faculty Workload Policy documents to provide better guidance to faculty and their supervisors in the assignment of duties.
- Reconsider service loads by an audit of committee structure and membership.
- Develop structures for faculty advancement including
  - Mentorship program
  - Competitive fellows program with funding and training or retreat program
- Advocate for pre-tenure sabbatical and paid family leave

Resources

- Time and funding to research best practices

Champions

- Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Dean, School of Education

Success

- Updated faculty expectations and workload documents at the university and unit levels
- Revised workload policy documents in units across campus
- Increased faculty retention
- Disparities in service workload vs. service activities analyzed and addressed

STRATEGIC THEME TWO: ENGAGEMENT

Communicate USD's Mission, Vision and Values with all stakeholders

Goal 1: Engage internal stakeholders

Big Steps

- Each unit identifies how to align with the mission, vision and values
- Build an onboarding program that includes the entire campus community
    - Design an onboarding process suitable for year-round hiring
    - Establish 1st year faculty cohort program that includes social interaction and resource awareness training
- Develop greater transparency with current faculty and staff
- Explore/Adopt employee engagement tool for data feedback and analysis
- Increased student-focused marketing about USD's values

Resources

- Marketing staff time

Champions

- Chief Human Resources Officer
- Vice President for Student Services and Dean of Students
- Assistant Vice President for Communications and Marketing

Success

- Units review and revise unit-specific mission, vision and values to align with the university
- Deliver a successful onboarding program
    - Make welcome week a shared experience for new faculty, staff and students
    - Document enhanced communication with current faculty and staff from onboarding program
    - Implementation of a year-round onboarding program
- Document, collect and act upon data related to faculty and staff job-satisfaction, turnover and engagement
- Expand Coyote One Stop
- Establish and administer exit interviews of faculty
- Continuation and expansion of professional development programs

Goal 2: Engage external stakeholders

Big Steps

- Add staff role for government relations
- Expand staff role for tribal outreach
- We are South Dakota campaign
  - Engage with legislature on special studies to develop possible solutions
  - Increased external marketing
- Add staff role for industry relations
  - Coordination across areas of campus
- Increased engagement with potential students in the region
- Empower current faculty, staff and students to be ambassadors of USD's values

Resources

- Staff time
- Budget

Champions

- Vice President for Research
- Vice President for Enrollment, Marketing and University Relations

Success

- Increased engagement by faculty and students
- Identify current external engagement efforts and develop plan to address gaps
- Identify/collect/seek current needs of external stakeholders

STRATEGIC THEME THREE: FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Modernize campus buildings and infrastructure for students, faculty, and staff.

Goal 1: Renovate and modernize buildings to meet the needs of students, faculty, and staff

Big Steps
- Review previously developed master plans
- Determine priority for renovation or modernization
- Share renovation plan with stakeholders
- Renovate and modernize buildings

Resources
- Updated master plan
- Staff to implement funding

Champions
- Vice President for Finance and Administration
- Assistant Vice President for Research

Success
- Modernization of historic buildings
- Maintenance of existing buildings
- Added process for campus engagement
- Securing matching funds for renovations

Goal 2: Invest in technology and infrastructure to realize student success, research and creative scholarship

Big Steps
- Inventory supported software programs to look for efficiencies.
- Conduct a gap analysis for technology needs and prioritize projects to be initiated
- Develop a process to collect and vet ideas for new technology related to class delivery and research/creative scholarship

Resources
- Funding staff time

Champions
- Chief Information Officer
- Vice President for Research
- Director of the Center for Teaching and Learning

Success
- Create and launch a technology-projects dashboard for campus constituents
- Catalog age of research and creative scholarship infrastructure and propose replacement cycle
- Create a process for the collection of ideas and implementation of technology advancements in course delivery
- Technology needs addressed
- Additional projects funded

STRATEGIC THEME FOUR: COMMUNITY

Continue to Create a Supportive and Welcoming Environment for All

Goal 1: Review and revise campus policies, procedures and professional development

Big Steps
- Review current university and unit-level policies, procedures, and expectations for alignments with institutional goals related to creating a welcoming and supportive environment, and review as needed
- Review current professional development offerings, pursue continuous improvement, and extend as needed to meet our vision and values for the future
- Review current student, faculty and staff satisfaction and engagement surveys for their utility in informing campus data and collection needs
- Develop an inventory for staff participation in professional development

Resources
- Opportunity Center Director
- Human Resources
- Provost Council

Champions
- Opportunity Center Director
- Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs
- Assistant Provost and Director of Assessment

Success
- University and unit-level policies and procedures assessed and aligned with BOR policy
- Increased participation in professional development offerings that meet our vision and values for the future by faculty, staff and students
- Identification and adoption of an appropriate student engagement survey with the ability to add campus specific questions.
- Administer climate engagement survey of students, faculty and staff at least twice in five years

Goal 2: Recruit and retain faculty and staff

Big Steps

- Review baseline profile of faculty and staff at all administrative levels
- Explore tools to measure job satisfaction and engagement
- Analyze faculty and staff turnover
- Improve process for administrator evaluations
- Create a comprehensive plan for faculty and staff recruitment
  - Develop a plan for placing and supporting students into Ph.D. programs so they can be recruited back to campus
  - Create dissertation fellowships in targeted areas for students from other programs to come to USD
  - Expand benefits to increase retention
- Evaluate current outlets for placing job advertisements

Resources

- Funding
  - Dissertation fellowship
  - Variety of outlets
- Staff time
- Faculty professional networks
- Human Resources

Champions

- Director of Human Resources Development
- Director of EEO and Chief Title IX Officer

Success

- Increased recruitment and retention of faculty and staff to maintain a healthy turnover rate
- Collect, analyze and disseminate data of employee turnover
- Documented process of administrator evaluations
- Active dissertation fellowship participants
- Expansion of job announcements in a wider variety of outlets

STRATEGIC THEME FIVE: SERVING SOUTH DAKOTA

Foster Outstanding Service throughout South Dakota

Goal 1: Address key statewide issues by leveraging USD expertise

Big Steps
- Identify key statewide issues and establish teams to address them
- Establish relationships related to issues
- Increase stakeholders' awareness of USD resources

Resources
- Travel funds
- Funded time for team members
- Reports back to university leadership
- Involves marketing staff

Champions
- Chief of Staff and Director of Government Affairs
- Vice President for Research

Success
- USD understands and can communicate what we are doing to serve SD
- Increased grants and projects related to key statewide issues
- Increased service on committees related to key statewide issues
- Increase media coverage in local markets and increase digital engagement on stories related to serving SD

Goal 2: Collaborate with all constituents to improve the quality of life in South Dakota

Big Steps
- Identify additional opportunities to engage more fully with stakeholder groups across the state, including but not limited to Native American students and Tribal Nations, first generation students, PELL eligible students, New Americans, and veterans
- Improve student recruitment and retention in smaller rural communities
- Build upon success of student recruitment and retention in more populated communities

Resources
- Faculty and staff time
- State and federal funding

Champions
- Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Vice President for Research

Success
- Increased engagement of USD students through all modalities
- Increased collaboration with stakeholder groups across the state
- Increased recruitment and retention of students from smaller rural communities
- Increased recruitment and retention of students from more populated communities

STRATEGIC THEME SIX: AFFORDABILITY

Provide access to a First-Class Education Efficiently and Effectively

Goal 1: Increase financial resources for students

Big steps

- Develop a robust Emergency Fund program for students
  - Launch and market the program
  - Funding campaign
- Develop a need-based scholarship to address students' affordability gap
  - Research, propose and establish policy
  - Identify students with need
  - Campaign and implementation
- Define, review and assess current process of awarding scholarships
- Implement and grow the Coyote Career Kickstart program

Resources

- Development Officer tasked with this project
- People/departments who will champion
- Marketing support/student testimonials
- Collaboration and willingness to data share across departments
- Financial aid data/enrollment data
- Funding

Champions

- President and CEO, University of South Dakota Foundation
- Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students
- Vice President for Enrollment, Marketing and University Relations

Success

- Sustainable funds
- Award funds from need-based scholarship
- Increase retention and graduation rates of students with financial need
- Reduced the funding gap for students with financial need
- Increased participation of employers in the Coyote Career Kickstart program
- Increased communication with academic advisors and program directors

Goal 2: Increased affordability through a comprehensive review of all student-facing processes related to financial aid and academic progress

Big steps

- Review of Financial Aid process and policies
- Review of Registrar process and policies
- Review of Business office process and policies
- Review of Academic Advising process and policies
- Analyze and streamline critical processes that span multiple offices including Admissions, Academic Advising, Student Affairs, Information Technology, Registrar and Financial Aid

Resources

- Internal review and self-study of financial aid
- Tool to bring data from all the areas together
  - Assistant Vice President for Institutional Research, Planning and Assessment
  - Information Technology

Champions

- Vice President for Enrollment Marketing and University Relations
- Assistant Provost

Success

- Determine the synergies between Business Office, Registrar, Financial Aid, Admissions, Advising and Student Life
- Increased use of and reach of Coyote One Stop
- Increased student satisfaction with customer service by reducing processing time and accuracy rates of all service delivering units including the Business Office, Registrar, and Financial Aid
- Increased persistence and graduation rates.
- Improved progression rates through the financial aid process, bill payment, accounts receivable holds.
- Increased FAFSA participation rates

Special thanks to the time and effort of the 2020 Strategic Planning Task Force:

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