

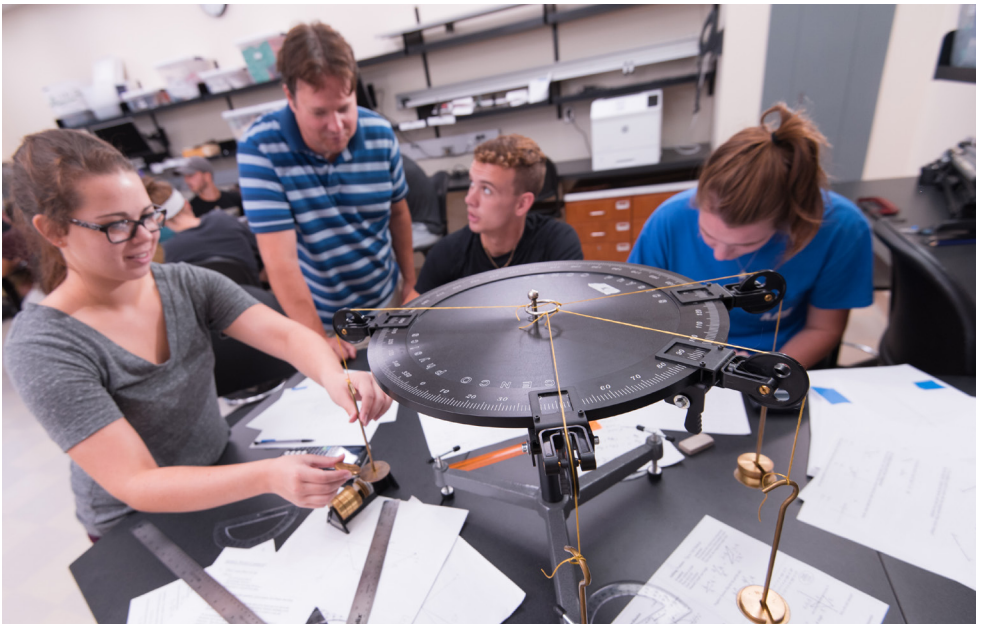
COMPASS 2021

MOUNT UNION'S STRATEGY TO LEAD, COLLABORATE, AND INNOVATE



UNIVERSITY of
**MOUNT
UNION**

Where *Exceptional* Begins



COMPASS 2021

MOUNT UNION'S STRATEGY TO LEAD, COLLABORATE, AND INNOVATE

The University of Mount Union has a long and storied history of adapting for success. In every era, it has been active in sensing the needs of the time and responding to meet those needs. Although today's challenges – affordability, doubts about the value of a college degree, and changing learning styles – differ from those of the past, our responses remain unchanged: steadfastness in facing difficulties, inventiveness in meeting society's needs, and an instinct for inclusion and service to others that expands our reach and our impact. Committed to leadership, collaboration, and innovation, Mount Union promises to prepare our students for exceptional futures.

LEADERSHIP IS OUR HALLMARK. Mount Union alumni are making a difference, both professionally and through service to their communities and beyond. Today's students, and those yet to come, will continue to thrive in an environment that is keenly focused on their future success. Classroom learning, practical opportunities, a diverse and inclusive environment, and the personal attention for which Mount Union is known will provide an intellectual and experiential atmosphere that fosters leadership development and growth.

COLLABORATION IS KEY. The members of the University's community will work hand-in-hand to move the institution forward and ensure an even brighter future for our students. Together, we will identify solutions to challenging issues like affordability, inclusivity, and enrollment. And, if the answers call for the extension of collaboration beyond our campus, we will actively seek partnerships.

INNOVATION IS IN MOUNT UNION'S DNA. Time and again, the University has risen to the challenge of change, and because Mount Union has remained nimble, it continues to be strong, vital, and relevant in the 21st century. Inventiveness with our curriculum, teaching pedagogies, and technology will position Mount Union as a contemporary University committed to preparing students for success in an ever-evolving world.

The plan that follows – *Compass 2021: Mount Union's Strategy to Lead, Collaborate, and Innovate* – is intended to guide Mount Union on a realistic yet aspirational path for the future. It is not possible to know with great specificity what Mount Union will look like in five years and what external influences will impact our direction, so the plan does not attempt to map out an unalterable course. Rather, the plan points to key priorities that will guide the University's efforts over the next five years while leveraging its existing strengths and notable accomplishments.

THE MISSION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MOUNT UNION

The mission of the University of Mount Union is to prepare students for fulfilling lives, meaningful work, and responsible citizenship.

THE VISION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MOUNT UNION FOR 2021

In 2021, the University of Mount Union will be a vibrant, comprehensive Midwestern university of 2,700 students, including 2,200 undergraduates and 500 graduate students who will study on the Alliance campus, online, and potentially, at satellite sites. Technology will be imaginatively and flexibly deployed to enable effective teaching and learning, to bring the world into Mount Union classrooms, and to overcome obstacles of distance, time, and expense that often prevent students from achieving their educational goals.

To students and families seeking a personalized education combining breadth of knowledge and perspective with career-specific study and experiential learning, the University of Mount Union will offer an optimal combination of exceptional quality, reasonable cost, and preparation for career success. The University's scholarship and financial aid programs will allow the University's notably diverse student body to access an academic experience that inspires them for global engagement in the 21st century and prepares them to be valuable leaders for the world.

We will be known for offering an undergraduate curriculum that is integrative, encouraging students to gain the breadth of knowledge and perspective fostered by a liberal arts education, to understand the multiple means by which academic disciplines create knowledge and find meaning, and to prepare for career success and leadership in service to others. New academic offerings and active revision and updating of extant programs will help ensure that our students receive an education that is valuable and relevant. Experiential learning that leads to career success will continue to be strongly emphasized across the curriculum.

Graduate program offerings will build on the University's strengths in health and medical sciences, explore new opportunities in data and computer sciences, and continue the University's outreach – begun with its MAEL program - to part-time graduate students with programs in the social sciences and business and management. All Mount Union students will study in an environment that features personal attention, small class sizes, active and experiential learning, and an emphasis on leadership development.

The University's diverse student body will live and learn in an inclusive environment that values, supports, and celebrates students of varied ages and cultural backgrounds. These students will participate in curricular and co-curricular programs that foster a global mindset and develop intercultural competence that will permit them to excel after graduation. Our efforts to attract and serve American students from a wider geographic area, more transfer and commuter students, more international students, and more part-time and full-time graduate students, will help diversify the University's sources of tuition revenue, strengthening the University's finances.

The University's historical commitment to accessibility will be undergirded by a capital campaign focused on significantly increasing the University's endowment for scholarship support and financial aid.

Mount Union's employees will have appealing opportunities for personal development, continuing education, and career advancement. They will jointly create a work culture that features effective communication, fosters cooperation and innovation, and that is nimble and inventive in responding to opportunities and challenges.

The main purpose of the University's strategic plan is to continue Mount Union's planned transition into a comprehensive university that offers our students an integrative liberal arts education while also providing pre-professional and professional education at the undergraduate and graduate levels. The plan honors the University's traditional strengths and commitments while positioning Mount Union to thrive in an environment that requires leadership, collaboration, and innovation.



ENRICH

THE EXPERIENCE OF AN INCREASINGLY DIVERSE STUDENT BODY.

Objectives

- Foster an inclusive culture that is focused on and values diversity.
- Provide programs and support services for our evolving student body.
- Strengthen student success and engagement initiatives.

CHANGE IS THE NEW NORMAL IN HIGHER EDUCATION. For most of our history, Mount Union has focused on educating full-time undergraduate students in a residential setting. Excellence in this realm of education will always be a hallmark of the University, but Mount Union must respond – as it always has – to social changes that are reshaping higher education.

Students of many ages, from varied backgrounds, and with widely divergent needs, are changing the higher education landscape. The University will respond to meet the needs of transfer students, commuter students, adults who need a flexible, part-time path to attaining a graduate degree or a career-relevant certification, and international students.

Our efforts to serve an increasingly-diverse student body can only succeed long-term through deliberate work to create an inclusive culture that values diversity. Interfaith understanding, gender-inclusivity, and increased dialogue regarding diversity will be critical to creating an environment in which all students can learn, engage, and excel. New services – advising, academic support, co-curricular programs, and enhanced experiential learning opportunities – will also be important.

We will be giving particular attention to preparing our students to succeed in a diverse world without borders, giving them opportunities to grow into leaders in our emerging global society. A growing international student population, along with emphasis on study abroad, will help all of our students become confident and competent in their interactions with people from other countries and cultures.

We will strive to live by the values expressed in the University's Diversity Statement: "We continuously strive to welcome, accept, and respect all people. We believe that through the union of disparate perspectives, we strengthen our community, facilitate global enlightenment, and enable collective self-discovery. As such, we embrace diversity and inclusiveness to facilitate the development of ideas, the advancement of global perspectives, and the creation of greater understanding and acceptance of all people. We actively promote a diverse and inclusive environment that obliges mutual respect and positive engagement to effectively enrich learning and living for our students, faculty, staff, administration, and community."



CULTIVATE AN INNOVATIVE AND EXPANDING ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENT.

Objectives

- Develop new academic programs and offerings while enhancing current academic programs.
- Develop programs and pathways to meet the needs of new types of students.
- Develop a teaching and learning community that fosters innovation.
- Foster a global mindset and development of intercultural competencies among members of the campus community.
- Develop interdisciplinary academic centers.

MANY OF THE IN-DEMAND CAREER FIELDS OF TOMORROW HAVE YET TO BE DISCOVERED. What does this mean for Mount Union and our students? First, it signifies that we must remain committed to academic offerings that are relevant and meet society's demands. The University has always excelled at providing an optimal combination of theoretical appreciation and practical preparation, which is vital to success in our rapidly-changing world.

Second, it implies that we must arm our students with transferable skills that will enable them to adapt in a progressive career landscape. Critical thinkers, effective communicators, compassionate citizens, and able leaders – these are the desired descriptors of our graduates. These are the criteria by which we measure our ability to develop the intellects of our students and prepare them for life after Mount Union.

The continual development of academic programs is at the very core of our ability to prepare students for success. It will be critical that we research, update and invest in existing undergraduate programs to maintain their attractiveness, academic experience, and post-graduate outcomes. We also must explore new undergraduate programs that will sustain a vibrant curriculum and enrollment. The continued growth of graduate programs – both residential and online – will remain a focus as well, especially in the areas of the health and medical sciences, education, social and behavioral sciences, and business management. Other curricular opportunities for the future include continuing education and professional and corporate training. All the while, the institution will further commit to incorporating program effectiveness measures and methods into the existing academic program review processes.

New academic programs and pathways will also be considered as a means of meeting the needs of new types of students. The utilization of new modes of program delivery, articulations, and programs with an abbreviated time to degree attainment all provide opportunities to attract students who may not have otherwise considered Mount Union as an option.

As we continue to develop a modern curriculum, innovation will remain at the forefront. Enhanced academic rigor and increased opportunity for experiential learning near campus and beyond will further prepare our students for career success. Our faculty will benefit from increased opportunities to advance innovation and engage new and changing student populations, and they will be recognized and rewarded for doing so. A robust endowment and charitable giving will provide further support for the innovative development of the academic curriculum.

Critical to the success of our graduates will be our ability to foster in them a global mindset and intercultural competencies. The integration of these principles into the curriculum and learning objectives of each major will enhance classroom learning. Experientially, students, faculty, administrators, and staff can further develop their global perspectives through study abroad, campus activities, and overseas internship and research opportunities. Enhanced opportunities for faculty development and training will further propel these efforts, as will a commitment to rewarding and recognizing faculty and departmental initiatives to internationalize campus programs and the curriculum.

Additionally, new interdisciplinary academic centers will supplement learning in the major, minor, and Integrative Core. These centers will provide an additional pathway to fulfill our mission to prepare students for fulfilling lives, meaningful work, and responsible citizenship. The establishment of University Scholars programs for these centers will support recruitment of top students to Mount Union.



ENSURE FINANCIAL STRENGTH, AFFORDABILITY, AND ENROLLMENT SUCCESS.

Objectives

- Diversify the University's sources of tuition revenue.
- Achieve desired changes in the makeup of the Mount Union student body.
- Enhance affordability through charitable gift support for scholarships that reduce the cost of attendance.
- Keep tuition increases at modest levels by increasing non-tuition sources of revenue.
- Ensure excellent management of resources to ensure quality, control costs, and limit tuition increases.

THE RISING COST OF COLLEGE AND INCREASING STUDENT DEBT ARE IN THE NATIONAL SPOTLIGHT. Both pose significant obstacles for students seeking an undergraduate degree, while also placing added pressure on tuition-driven institutions like Mount Union that rely on enrollment revenue to fund the majority of operating costs. Declining enrollments caused by the high cost of attendance can directly and significantly impact the University's future financial health. A highly competitive regional environment means we must work proactively as an institution to grow enrollments and increase our financial strength.

The University plans to grow enrollment to 2,700 students, requiring modest undergraduate enrollment growth (2,200 students) and more robust expansion on the graduate side (500 students).

Demographic predictions for traditional undergraduate students in Northeast Ohio will require an intent focus on expanding our definition of “student” to enable enrollment growth. On the undergraduate side, the University plans to increase the enrollment of racially and ethnically diverse American students to a total of 20% of the undergraduate student body and to increase international student enrollment to 7% of undergraduates. The University will be expanding recruitment efforts into Western Pennsylvania and Central and Southern Ohio. Other efforts aligned with enrollment growth will focus on the addition of emerging sports and active recruitment for co-curricular, non-athletic activities.

New scholarship opportunities to enhance affordability will be made possible through charitable gift support. Past Mount Union capital campaigns have focused on bricks and mortar, but a new five-year capital campaign will shift focus to building the endowment for scholarships. In addition, the institution will seek to annually secure gifts totaling \$100,000 to \$200,000 for the student rescue fund, enabling upperclassmen to complete their studies and earn their degrees.

Undoubtedly, increased scholarship funding will make a Mount Union education more accessible to students from all backgrounds, but a continued commitment to modest tuition increases also will be critical. By building non-tuition sources of revenue, including efforts to grow summer camps and conferences and secure external funding for programs and research, the institution will be better positioned to keep costs low. Progressive thinking on the part of the faculty and administration will result in the identification of other sources of non-tuition revenue, and innovation funds will be allocated to provide start-up dollars for new concepts.

Costs can also be contained through the prudent management of resources with a focus on ensuring quality while controlling costs. Through an effective administrative cost center review process, performance indicators dashboard, revised budget development timeline process, and multi-year funding priority plan, Mount Union will be primed to enhance its already strong history of fiscal soundness. The University will seek collaborative relationships with educational institutions and other non-profit organizations to reduce overhead and leverage our strengths.



BRAND

THE UNIVERSITY AS A REMARKABLE MIDWESTERN INSTITUTION.

Objectives

- Use a data-driven approach to refine the institution's brand plan.
- Position the University as a well-recognized institution in the Midwest that offers exceptional value and a personalized experience rooted in: 1) an ideal combination of academic excellence and affordability, and 2) a focus on leadership development that helps our graduates achieve outstanding career success.

REPUTATION AND BRANDING HAVE IMPACTED THE WORLD OF HIGHER EDUCATION.

As competition for a decreasing number of students increases, the use of terms like “marketing,” “differentiation,” and “identity” are now common on campuses across the country. Over the past few decades, Mount Union has worked to position itself as a leader in Northeastern Ohio with a well-established reputation and improved visibility. All the while, we have garnered regional and national attention from rankings bodies and news media. It behooves the University to leverage this regional and national attention as a means of changing Mount Union's reach and impact.

The University has an opportunity to build upon previous branding efforts to better position the institution for the future. Our ability to shape and share the authentic, unique, and compelling stories of our exceptional student experience has never been more important. As college-bound students and their families weigh their higher education options, they do so with high expectations for

quality, outcomes, and return on investment. It is not enough to simply tell them that we meet these needs; they want tangible proof that we make good on our promises.

Thus, establishing a strong brand with an extended geographic reach will be critical to establishing our identity outside of Northeastern Ohio and strengthening it in areas closer to home. A revised, data-driven brand plan that prioritizes input from prospective students, parents, and current students will be launched. The plan will focus messaging on academics and outcomes with affordability serving as a complementary message. In an effort to enhance word-of-mouth communication, the brand plan will be shared with internal audiences and will engage current students and alumni to serve as advocates for Mount Union. Plans for external communication will be mapped as well, and an enhanced data-collection infrastructure will allow for benchmarking and measurement.

The University's goal is to be positioned as a well-recognized Midwestern institution that offers an ideal combination of academic excellence and affordability with a focus on leadership development for exceptional success after graduation. To reach this goal, it will be important to alter existing perceptions that regard the University as a Northeast Ohio-based institution. Equally important will be the expansion of visibility into Western Pennsylvania and Central and Southern Ohio, in addition to other geographic areas that may be identified by the Office of Enrollment Management in the future. All the while, we will work to differentiate the institution from its current private higher education competitors.



CREATE AN EFFECTIVE AND COLLABORATIVE WORKPLACE CULTURE.

Objectives

- Establish benchmarks that define a quality-focused campus workplace culture.
- Empower open, productive, accessible, and clear communication.
- Build, communicate, and ensure compliance with trustworthy policies.
- Create a workplace culture that embraces and supports adaptation to mandated and strategic change.
- Improve employee morale by improving innovation, collaboration, and employee empowerment.
- Improve and support faculty and staff diversity.

IN ANY ORGANIZATION, PEOPLE MATTER. No institution can be successful in the long run without employees who believe in its mission and understand their role in achieving it. Mount Union is committed to continuously improving campus culture to ensure that the institution remains nimble, relevant, and a good place to work and study in the years to come. With a solid understanding of our history and tradition and a keen awareness of future opportunities, the University's faculty, administration, and staff will be positioned to play critical roles in its continued success.

From communication to policies and change management to innovation, the aspects that make up an effective and collaborative workplace environment are many. Campus culture is an extremely broad concept that touches on areas of work, study and research environments, leadership, and social interaction

between peers and through different departments, employee classifications, and ranks in the institution. Thus, it is challenging to study and understand the myriad of issues that play into a healthy university culture.

As a first step, Mount Union will continue its efforts to study current and evolving issues of workplace satisfaction, including regular and planned deployments of the Quality Culture Explorer (QCE). Based on the results, appropriate steps will be taken to improve workplace culture.

The most recent administration of the QCE highlighted the need for improved internal communication. We must continue to enhance our understanding of the issues that exist with campus communication and develop a plan for improvement. The development and communication of trustworthy policies will also aid in improving culture on campus. Steps will be taken to establish campus-wide procedures for creating, challenging, and changing policy, and the institution will commit to evaluating and improving communication and the consistency of policy enforcement. Faculty, administrators, and staff will also have opportunities to become better educated on policy development and implementation.

A commitment to improving innovation, collaboration, and employee empowerment will assist in the improvement of employee morale. Committee, working group, and task force membership and leadership will reflect the breadth of campus offices and departments. Ample opportunities for career development will further empower staff and supervisors.

All the while, the Mount Union community will be enriched by increased diversity. Efforts to enhance faculty, administrator, and staff diversity will be undertaken and proper support systems for these individuals will be a priority.



LEVERAGE EXISTING AND EMERGING TECHNOLOGY.

Objectives

- Advance teaching and learning through technology.
- Enhance administrative processes and operations through the use of technology.
- Project the University to the campus community and the world through the use of technology.
- Optimize and advance technology infrastructure to support the University's initiatives.

WE ARE EDUCATING A DIGITAL GENERATION. Today's college students have never known a world without the internet, email, cell phones, and other hand-held devices. They have grown up within a K-12 educational system that has incorporated technology at every turn, and they expect technology to play a central role in their higher education. From devices in the classroom to wireless accessibility on campus, the high-tech, high-touch approach must be at the forefront of the Mount Union experience. Our students assume that innovation will be used to actively engage them in learning and will quickly and reliably deliver information to their fingertips.

The technological revolution during which these students grew up has molded many of them into visual, collaborative, and hands-on learners. Thus, the benefits of further integrating technology on our campus are many. Through the development and implementation of a bring-your-own-device initiative, the University will put technology in the hands of every student and ensure that it supports the delivery of the curriculum both in and out of the classroom. New

technology-rich, active, and collaborative learning spaces will further enhance this environment of innovation and exploration, and additional staffing and development opportunities will ensure that faculty have the training they need to be successful in the ever-changing classroom environment.

Administrative operations can also be improved through the enhanced use of technology. Improvement in these areas will provide for increased efficiencies and cost savings. In addition, increased professional development and training, provided both by external sources and by internal power users, will improve processes and on-campus training opportunities.

As we bridge the gap between Millennials and Generation Z, digital technology will remain a powerful and preferred communication tool that can be used to expand the visibility of the institution. A flexible website with enhanced appearance, currency, and interactivity will be critical, and video can be leveraged as a promotional tool as well. In addition, the institution will review the adequacy of online resources to support the needs of distance learners and complete needed upgrades.

All the while, optimized and advanced infrastructure will lay the ground work that will support a number of other strategic initiatives. Information technology staffing and resources will be augmented to provide appropriate levels of support for the campus community. The institution will also commit to improving its network data security, preparing the network infrastructure for campus technology needs, and improving campus safety with the use of technology.