REALIZING UB 2020
A Window of Opportunity
Executive Summary

December 15, 2012
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At this moment in our history, UB has the opportunity to reimagine the central ambitions of our UB 2020 program. This statement of institutional direction describes the specific pathways UB will follow to realize the aspirations of UB 2020. In this effort, we will use and shift base resources as needed, invest the funds provided by SUNY and New York State through the NYSUNY 2020 program and create capacities to leverage our current investment with research and private funds with special attention to the financial and intellectual contributions of our alumni, friends and partners.

We can take full advantage of this window of opportunity and best respond to our challenges effectively by building and promoting our distinctive features. If we fulfill our mission with a higher degree of distinction, we will attract better students, more funding, new sponsors and will engage community and economic partners in new and exciting ways. At UB, attaining distinction will blend novel approaches and actions that move us to a position of leadership, depending on the situation. In these actions, we will always be striving for academic excellence and responsiveness to core values in those actions.

We would like the construction of this statement to be a community effort. We hope to hear from many voices representing many points of view, voices that may have been reluctant to be heard in the recent or distant past. This statement will be reflective of the campus community’s views only to the extent that the entire community engages this process.

THE STATEMENT OF INSTITUTIONAL DIRECTION

The statement of institutional direction will set a course of decision-making for years to come. The document has four major parts. We first state our key institutional goals:

I. Create a new and distinctive academic direction that integrates excellent research, teaching and engagement and positions UB as a thought and education leader around the world.
II. Prepare UB students to become effective leaders in tomorrow’s world.
III. Strengthen UB’s engagement in the region through focused and mutually beneficial community partnerships and efforts to create significant economic development.
IV. Become a top tier AAU public research university.

These goals drive all of our more specific decisions. Then, we describe the core values that guide our actions. The core of the narrative follows with the description of 11 strategies designed to accomplish our goals.

The academic strategy comes first articulating the key educational and scholarship priorities for UB. The 10 other strategies cohere around and are designed to support the UB academic strategy (see Figure 1).
The document concludes with a description of the key next steps and final thoughts about what UB might look like in 2020. In laying out our future in this way, and by participating in its development the entire campus will have a shared sense of where we are headed and why and how we will get there. This is the beginning step in realizing the full promise of UB 2020.

STRATEGIES FOR REALIZING UB 2020

The Academic Strategy

Over the past few months, a new strategic concept is emerging within the university community. This is the concept of the theme as a large scale interdisciplinary framework. The chosen theme areas would distinguish UB’s academic strategy in the originality of this concept, the integration of the teaching, research and service effort, the creation of new pedagogical innovations and in the signaling to the larger academic world where UB intends to be global around the world in these areas. The theme concept, properly advertised, supported and embraced will differentiate UB from other universities and will attract good students intrigued by our emphasis in these areas. We are suggesting that the university organize around four theme areas
The theme concept is one of two core elements of the academic strategy. The second is the definition of the characteristics we hope to instill in every UB student. UB will train tomorrow’s leaders, a new kind of leader who thinks for themselves, who can formulate new directions for a country, a corporation, a college or a community; leaders who have vision. These students can focus rather than let themselves be dispersed everywhere into a cloud of electronic and social input.

In the larger document, the proposed elements of the academic strategy are contained in a matrix that defines potential objectives framed as questions, the specific initiatives and actions that the university would undertake to achieve the objective and questions for the university community to discuss about each strategy element. What we share in this summary are the objectives framed as questions contained in the strategy. Later in February, these potential objectives will be framed as questions will be written as statements of action the university will pursue as a community together.
Academic Strategy Questions

1. What are the features required in a new UB curriculum for all degree programs that instill the characteristics we expect future UB graduates to exhibit? (Goals I and II)
2. What is the theme-based research and scholarship agenda that will enable UB to become an international thought leader? (Goals I, III, and IV)
3. Should UB’s 5-year enrollment plan be more responsive to demand and workforce needs? (Goals I and II)
4. What should be the size and mix of faculty by program rank and type to achieve the educational, research, scholarship and engagement needs of the new UB academic plan? (Goals I, II, III, & IV)
5. Should UB reinvestigate its commitment to serving life-long learning needs of the region with a more expanded and diverse menu of course, degree and certificate program options? (Goals I and III)

The Student Success Strategy

The strategies ensuring student success and satisfaction supplement and reinforce our core desire to prepare UB students to become a new kind of leader for tomorrow’s challenge. This discussion begins with ideas about how we improve our admissions practices to enroll higher quality and more diverse students over time. We then discuss a more expanded program of co-curricular experiences that supplement and complement the new UB curriculum. It will be a goal for all aspects of this strategy to implement programs and services that will be accessible, effective and appropriate. In the end, these strategies should create a learning experience that will have students becoming our most outspoken advocates for the way UB has treated them, has made their college years enjoyable and has prepared them for success in their future endeavors.

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Student Success Questions

1. How will UB implement an informed admissions plan that attracts diverse and increasingly selective student cohorts at all levels? (Goal II)
2. How will UB implement distinctive theme-based co-curricular experiences that improve the UB learning and student life environment? (Goal II)
3. How will UB best complete Finish- in-Four implementation? (Goals I and IV)
4. Should UB implement a need-based aid program and other measures that reduce Pell-eligible undergraduate student indebtedness by 20% by 2015/2016? (Goal II)
5. How will UB best improve the services and support systems for graduate students across the university? (Goals I and II)
6. Should UB implement the Heart of the Campus initiative as the highest priority capital project? (Goals I and II)
7. Should UB upgrade the Athletics Program to a peer public AAU competitive level? (Goals II, III and IV)
8. How can UB expand recreation facilities to levels comparable with peer AAU schools? (Goals II and IV)
The Research and Scholarship Success Strategy

This research and scholarship support strategy facilitates the full implementation of theme-based research objectives and ensures that the policies and infrastructures are in place to enable the faculty and their teams to achieve UB 2020 research and scholarship goals. In this section, we discuss research and scholarship space needs, identify the services required to compete successfully for more research funding as well as infrastructures that support and encourage the growth of arts and humanities scholarship. This strategy also examines how the university incentivizes and celebrates research and scholarly achievement.

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Research Success Strategy Questions

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<tr>
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<th>Question</th>
<th>Goal(s)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>What are the elements of a research and scholarship facilities master plan through 2020?</td>
<td>I, III, and IV</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>How can UB upgrade research grants management infrastructures to national best practice standards?</td>
<td>I, III, and IV</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Should UB create an organization to support arts/humanities scholarship?</td>
<td>I, III, and IV</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Should UB institute a more central model for the management of core instrumentation facilities and research computing infrastructures?</td>
<td>I</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>How should UB restructure financial policies for research activity to create greater impact and fund research support costs?</td>
<td>I, III, and IV</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>What would be effective guidelines for the management of research centers and institutes?</td>
<td>I, III</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>Should UB create a research and scholarship recognition infrastructure?</td>
<td>I, III, IV</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>What changes in organization funding, staffing and expertise are required to increase UB visibility as a thought leader in priority research fields?</td>
<td>I, III, IV</td>
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NEXT STEPS

The draft being released will be modified based upon feedback from the campus community. **Please make your voices heard about these important questions.** In the month of March, the next four strategies will be released for discussion. These strategies will speak to ideas about community engagement, economic development, marketing and branding and faculty hiring initiatives. This spring will be an exciting time at UB. We look forward to your participation and your ideas about UB’s future.