The UNIVERSITY of WEST ALABAMA

UWA

STRATEGIC PLAN
2026 – 2035

Bridging Tradition and Igniting Transformation: UWA's Path Forward

A Strategic Plan Rooted in Vision, Driven by Impact

VISION

To be an innovative and transformative leader in rural, regional public higher education by empowering students, enriching communities, and advancing knowledge

MISSION

Our mission is to deliver innovative, accessible, and affordable education that fosters profound student experiences, cultivates personal growth and professional success, and builds an engaged community of learners committed to lifelong learning, meaningful impact, and embracing the unique opportunities of the region.

PEER INSTITUTIONS

> Delta State University
> University of Arkansas at Monticello
> University of North Alabama
> Georgia Southwestern State University
> West Texas A&M University
> University of South Carolina Aiken
> Valdosta State University
> University of West Florida

ASPIRATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

> Jacksonville State University
> University of Central Missouri
> Arkansas Tech University
> Appalachian State University
> Southeast Missouri State University

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CORE VALUES

INTEGRITY

We act with honesty, accountability, and transparency in all we do, holding ourselves to the highest ethical standards and fostering trust through consistent and principled actions.

COLLABORATION

We believe in the power of partnerships and teamwork within the university and with our regional stakeholders to accomplish shared goals.

EXCELLENCE

We are committed to achieving and promoting the highest quality in teaching, scholarship, service, and operations.

COMMITMENT TO LEARNING

We promote a culture of intellectual curiosity, critical inquiry, and lifelong learning for students, faculty, staff, and the broader community.

RESPECT AND TRUST

We value the dignity and worth of every individual, fostering supportive campus culture.

REGIONAL RESPONSIBILTY

We embrace our role as a regional institution by responding to local strategic opportunities, supporting economic and cultural development, and preparing graduates to contribute meaningfully to their communities.

SERVICE

We uphold and serve the public good through community engagement, partnership, stewardship, and civic leadership.

STRATEGIC THEMES

SUCCESS

Foster a personalized, transformative student experience through holistic support, vibrant campus life, athletic excellence, and proactive alumni engagementensuring students thrive from enrollment to graduation and beyond.

GROWTH

Expand UWA's reach by strengthening enrollment pipelines, building strategic partnerships, enhancing student access, and creating new opportunities that reflect the university's mission and regional commitment.

EXCELLENCE

Advance high-quality, data-driven academic programs that align with workforce needs, support faculty development, promote innovation in teaching and learning, and expand access to experiential opportunities.

IDENTITY

Create a unified and clearly understood institutional identity by fostering effective communication, building trust, enhancing transparency, and connecting internal and external stakeholders through strategic messaging and collaboration.

IMPACT

Deepen UWA's role as a regional catalyst by developing sustainable, mission-aligned partnerships with K–12 schools, industry, community organizations, and alumni to enhance educational and economic opportunities.

RESILIENCE

Ensure UWA's long-term sustainability through strategic investments in people, technology, operations, and financial stewardship—leveraging innovation to enhance efficiency, strengthen institutional capacity, and drive future growth.

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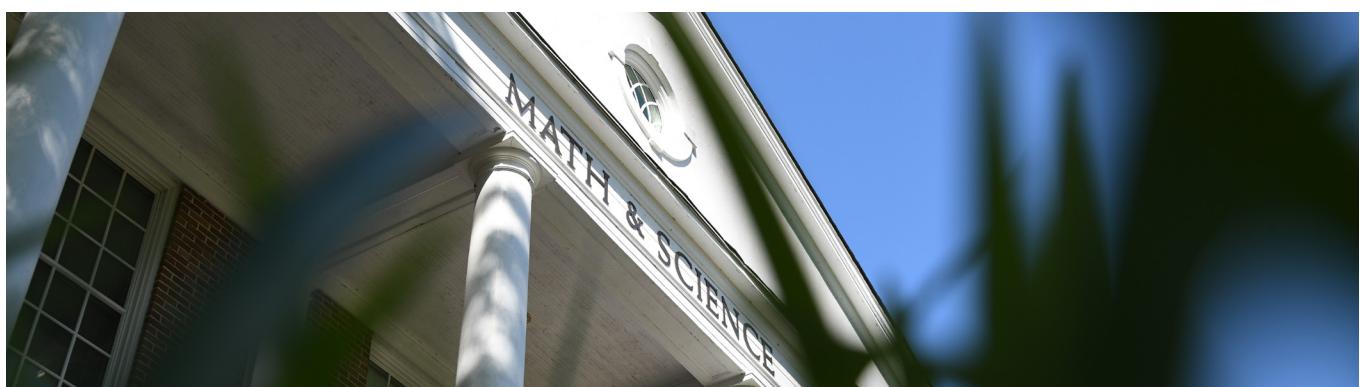
STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Enrollment Growth and Student Access

Expand UWA's student population through strategic recruitment, retention, and access initiatives that reflect the university's mission and vision

> Strengthen enrollment pipelines by building partnerships with high schools, community colleges, and regional employers.

> Prioritize strategic recruitment including transfer students, adult learners, rural students, and international students.

> Enhance student retention through proactive support services, clear academic pathways, and personalized student engagement strategies.

> Develop targeted marketing and storytelling campaigns that highlight the strengths of UWA, the Black Belt region, and the transformational student experience.

> Leverage flexible delivery models—including on-campus, online, and hybrid programs—to meet the evolving needs of prospective and current students.

> Enhance the transfer experience through streamlined articulation agreements, expanded scholarship opportunities, and dedicated transfer-focused advising practices.

Empower Student Success Through Engagement, Belonging, and Support

Create a transformative student experience by personalizing support, increasing retention, and fostering belonging—from admission through graduation and beyond.

> Prioritize student-centered decision-making using real-time data and student feedback.

> Enhance student well-being, safety, and mental health.

> Strengthen advising, tutoring, mentorship, and career pathways.

> Elevate campus life through enhanced engagement, leadership opportunities, and vibrant programming.

> Develop a community of active and engaged alumni.

> Integrate Athletics as a key contributor to student engagement, school spirit, leadership development, and community connection.

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STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Deepen Regional Impact Through Community Engagement and Strategic Partnerships

Strengthen UWA's role as a catalyst for regional prosperity by developing sustainable, mutually beneficial strategic partnerships with organizations, communities, and industries

> - Define and focus community engagement strategy through a shared "why."
>
> - Create collaborative relationships between UWA and K–12, community colleges, employers, nonprofits, and alumni.
>
> - Prioritize high-impact initiatives.

Advance Academic Excellence and Strategic Program Development

Ensure all new and existing academic offerings align with workforce needs and student demand through a focus on quality, viability, and innovation in teaching and learning

> - Conduct regular program assessment, evaluation, and revision using clear data and faculty input.
>
> - Improve consistency and quality across course modalities and instructional design.
>
> - Expand access to experiential learning opportunities, strengthen faculty development, instructional design support, and scholarly engagement.

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STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Build Institutional Capacity Through Innovation, Technology, and Financial Stewardship

Ensure UWA's sustainability and growth through strategic investment in people, technology, spaces, and funding sources, utilizing strategic financial planning and industries

> Improve centralized access to academic, student, and technology resources.

> Increase institutional agility through AI initiatives, system integrations, and the adoption of strategic digital tools.

> Strengthen funding strategies through expanded state/federal support, grants, private investment, donor support, and endowment growth.

> Streamline operations and enhance efficiency by strategically integrating software platforms and technologies across the university.

> Support long-term financial resilience through continuous operational improvement and resource optimization.

Foster a Shared Understanding of our Institutional Identity supported by a Culture of Effective Communication

Cultivate a culture of trust, transparency, and shared purpose by strengthening communication systems, enhancing collaboration across units, and ensuring clear, consistent messaging to both internal and external stakeholders to ensure a shared and understood identity.

> Develop and implement a comprehensive university-wide communication strategy that reaches internal and external audiences

> Break down internal silos through cross-training, shared processes, and collaborative practices

> Align policies, role expectations, and decision-making pathways to ensure institutional consistency.

> Invest in modern digital communication infrastructure, tools, and training to support broad stakeholder engagement.

> Foster a shared and understood institutional identity

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