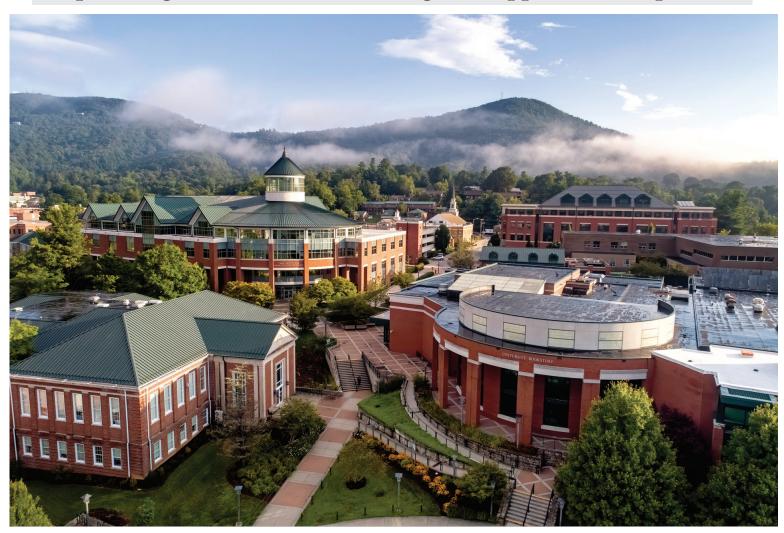# Appalachian State University Strategic Plan
2022 - 2027

Empowering Human Potential through the Appalachian Experience

Appalachian State University's University Planning and Priorities Council (UPPC) developed the strategic plan that will guide App State through the next five years. The UPPC is a group of nearly 60 individuals representing faculty and staff from every college and division, and includes the heads of Faculty Senate, Staff Senate and Student Government.

Listening sessions open to the entire campus were held in November 2021, followed by meetings with constituent groups that included Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, the Student Government Association and Alumni Council. Feedback from these listening sessions was incorporated into the plan, and it was again shared with campus for feedback in Spring 2022. The final version was presented to the Board for approval in June, 2022.

I extend my appreciation to everyone who has been working on this plan — it has been a comprehensive, transparent and collective effort that has allowed everyone who wants a voice in the process to have one.

Sheri Everts
Chancellor

Our Mission

Appalachian State University, a constituent member of the University of North Carolina sustained by the generous support of North Carolinians, is a long-established public institution that honors our founding commitment to educational access and excellence and our rural mountain heritage through teaching, research and service. The university's vibrant culture shapes students into globally minded, responsible members of society who engage with and actively contribute to their communities. Our exemplary faculty and staff prepare undergraduate and graduate students to be the leaders of the future.

Our Vision

Appalachian State University aspires to strengthen its role as a leading public institution in the Southeast. We commit to empowering learners through innovative academic programs accompanied by experiences that take place beyond the classroom, excellence and equity in all our activities, and the cultivation of scholarship, engagement and creativity.

Our Essential Character and Core Values

Founded in the Blue Ridge Mountains in 1899 to provide North Carolinians expanded access to education, Appalachian State University is located in a place of great beauty, cultural heritage and recreational opportunity. Appalachian's core values include:
• Faculty excellence in teaching and all forms of scholarship
• Diversity, equity and inclusion
• Sustainability and resilience
• Public service and engagement with community
• Global perspective

For each of the strategic priorities, metrics, benchmarks and procedures will be utilized to assess impact, and annual updates will communicate the overall impact. Examples of assessment tools include (but are not limited to): a universitywide financial plan, climate action plan, strategic plan for the research/creative endeavors enterprise, diversity, equity and inclusion plan, and a comprehensive fundraising campaign.

Strategic Priority 1: Providing Exceptional Educational Experiences

Provide all students with inspirational learning experiences that foster student success and add demonstrated value to their investment in higher education.

Deliver innovative, relevant academic programs.
Provide an engaging general education program and exemplary degree and certificate programs at both undergraduate and graduate levels that focus on beneficial learning opportunities and preparing all students for future education and career opportunities.

Foster teaching excellence.
Incorporate a variety of robust and student-centered instructional strategies that demonstrate effective practices and excellence in teaching.

Expand experiential learning.
Increase real-world, active learning opportunities through faculty-led student research, scholarships, creative activities, apprenticeships and internships.

Support co-curricular learning experiences that augment classroom learning.
Enrich student learning beyond the classroom through co-curricular engagement that advances career readiness through programs that enhance community connections, leadership development and civic responsibility.

Leverage technology to support teaching and learning.
Utilize emerging and innovative technologies to support teaching excellence, student engagement and student success.

Strategic Priority 2: Advancing Research, Innovation and Creativity

Advance knowledge and promote discovery and the application of findings that benefit our region, state, nation and world.

Cultivate undergraduate scholarship.
Uphold opportunities for students to engage in faculty-led research and creative activity.

Elevate graduate programs.
Strategically strengthen graduate programs to elevate the research and creative enterprise.

Prioritize areas of identified excellence.
Identify existing and aspirational areas of excellence in research and creative activities, and focus investment of resources in these identified areas.

Maximize support for scholarly and creative activities.
Utilize resource allocation strategies that expand infrastructure and broaden access to physical, digital, financial and human resources for the pursuit, advancement and dissemination of research, innovation and creative endeavors.

Amplify transformative partnerships.
Foster innovation and entrepreneurship by strengthening government, business and community partnerships to benefit society by transforming university discoveries into solutions.

Strategic Priority 3: Advancing Local, Regional and Global Engagement

Foster lasting economic vitality through local, regional and global engagement:

Foster student career readiness.
Collaborate with business and industry, non-profit agencies, and government entities to develop global awareness, community engagement opportunities and other career readiness skills that prepare students for professional success.

Collaborate with external stakeholders in Western North Carolina.
Advance lasting economic vitality in the northwest region of North Carolina by emphasizing strategies that encourage graduates to live, work and contribute to rural and underserved communities.

Expand educational access to rural and underserved communities.
Expand opportunities to extend the university's mission of teaching, research and service into rural and underserved communities.

Promote local and global civic engagement.
Incentivize community-engaged learning and interdisciplinary outreach that advances our civic responsibilities and deepens relationships between the university and communities in North Carolina and beyond.

Strategic Priority 4: Advancing Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
Cultivate and support a welcoming university community and an academic culture of collaboration and respect through education and inclusive practices:

Advance scholarship related to diversity, equity and inclusion.
Incentivize and emphasize scholarship that addresses inequities, embraces inclusion and prepares students to meet workforce and societal challenges presented by a broad range of human differences.

Ensure equitable opportunities for student success and wellbeing.
Prioritize access, affordability, and holistic student success and wellbeing in ways that ensure equitable opportunities and inclusion for all students.

Integrate inclusive practices into educational and professional development.
Incorporate principles of diversity, equity and inclusion into curriculum, pedagogy and professional development to successfully respond to instances of inequity and to facilitate and navigate discussions around disparities and conflicting value systems.

Identify and remove barriers to the success of historically underrepresented faculty, staff and students.
Advance multicultural competencies and strengthen dedicated networks to successfully attract, retain and support historically underrepresented faculty, staff and students to learn and work at App State by removing identified barriers to the learning and career success of historically underrepresented communities.

Provide resources to the entire campus community that help infuse a culture of diversity, equity and inclusion.
Expand availability of engagement opportunities and implementation of information, coaching, professional development and instructional support resources to cultivate and enhance a university culture that values diversity as the expression of human similarities and differences.

Strategic Priority 5: Investing in Faculty and Staff Excellence
Dedicate and ensure ongoing resources to recruit, retain and support exceptionally talented faculty and staff.

Emphasize innovative recruitment and retention strategies.
Support the development and implementation of innovative work-life integration strategies and compensation packages that recognize and address current and potential challenges to recruitment and retention of talented faculty and staff, and effectively blend personal and professional responsibilities.

Identify and invest in ongoing and clear paths for career advancement.
Enhance and foster a collaborative professional environment that supports productivity and opportunities for meaningful and significant professional development, leadership development and career advancement.

Incentivize employee innovation and collaboration.
Build collaborative cross-functional and interdivisional teams to support employee engagement and career progression. Increase institutional agility to respond to innovative ideas for increasing productivity and job satisfaction.

Foster a team-oriented community of employees committed to quality of life and work.
Ensure ongoing resources in support of personal development for the university's employees. Emphasize wellness as a shared value and responsibility, in support of productivity and reduced health risks, costs, and improved quality of life and work.

Strategic Priority 6: Strengthen Resilience and Sustainability
Strengthen our culture of sustainability that protects and supports the physical environment, the wellbeing of people, the university's economic vitality, and the resilience of our campus community.

Expand the integration of sustainability throughout the curriculum and through co-curricular experiences beyond the classroom.
Expand the development of innovative methods for teaching and student engagement, modeling a holistic view of sustainability and effective strategies for meeting the present and future needs of our students, surrounding communities, the state of North Carolina, the nation and world. Develop and advance sustainability and resilience in academic programming and scholarly activities.

Galvanize business and operational practices that prioritize sustainability and resilience initiatives.
Strengthen the university's climate and resilience goals to advance business practices that acknowledge the urgency for transformative action and pragmatic solutions and timelines to meet them through a collaborative process.

Identify and support resilience and sustainability initiatives that complement the university's strategic priorities.
Facilitate curricular, operations and engagement activities that prioritize collaboration and integrate campus health, safety, diversity, equity, inclusion, wellbeing and career advancement goals across university divisions and units. Continue active community partnerships in identifying and implementing university-related solutions to address food and housing access for students, faculty and staff.