

STANDARD ONE—MISSION AND PURPOSES

DESCRIPTION

The University's first Mission Statement was developed in 1992 at the time of its transformation from Southeastern Massachusetts University into the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth and was based on a broad vision statement of the University of Massachusetts system that distinguished individual campus focus and missions. A strategic planning initiative that included faculty, staff, students and administrators led the institution's first strategic plan, *Engaged, Embedded, Evolving, 2000-2010* and the following focused [Mission Statement and Vision Statements](#), which were reaffirmed in the updated [Strategic Plan](#) that was adopted in 2007:

Mission Statement: The mission of the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth is to distinguish itself as a vibrant public university actively engaged in personalized teaching and innovative research and to act as an intellectual catalyst for regional and global economic, social, and cultural development.

Vision Statement: Within a climate that is inclusive, open, and diverse, UMass Dartmouth will be the University of choice for students seeking high quality liberal arts and science programs as well as professional academic programs that build a foundation for civic responsibility, individual skills and professional success. UMass Dartmouth will distinguish itself by providing a personalized academic environment where the scholarly research and creative activities of faculty and graduate students are interwoven with the undergraduate experience. UMass Dartmouth aspires to create additional Master's and Doctoral programs, with commensurable support, in addition to enhanced technological capabilities for the delivery of our educational and outreach programs.

The University's Mission Statement reflects the institution's commitments both to personalized teaching and, as a regional research University, to the economic growth of the South Coast. This statement has served as the University's cornerstone during a period of striking growth in the undergraduate and graduate student bodies, expansion of research and scholarship activities, and establishment of off-site locations that serve as significant academic outreach centers and economic drivers in the surrounding communities.

Both the Mission and Vision Statements are published on the University's website, in the student handbook, and in materials distributed by the Admissions Office including graduate and undergraduate catalogs. The six goals outlined in the strategic plan provide the practical framework that directs initiatives and activities undertaken to carry out the Mission and Vision.

APPRAISAL

Despite declining state revenues, the University continues to make significant progress toward actualizing its vision and meeting the goals outlined in the strategic plan. The focus on personalized teaching is evident both in small class sizes and in the opportunities for individual contact afforded to students both inside and outside of the classroom. Within the past five years,

personalized contact with students and greater student access have been enhanced by the implementation of “smart” classrooms, the Faculty Instructional Laptop Program (FILP), and the increased use of web-based learning. Additionally, the integration of scholarly and creative activities within the undergraduate curriculum has advanced through the senior design projects within the College of Engineering, the Undergraduate Research Fellowships within the College of Nursing, and participation in cranberry research within the College of Arts and Sciences, to name but a few examples. Academic programs have also expanded to meet emerging need, with undergraduate degrees in Crime and Justice Studies and Women’s Studies and doctoral programs in Nursing, Luso-Afro-Brazilian Studies and Theory, and Mathematics Education and a master’s program in Public Policy. Concurrently, the University has made strides in becoming more open, inclusive and diverse, increasing the percentage of African American, Latino, Asian, Native American students from 13.6% to 15.6% in just the past year.

In the past ten years, UMass Dartmouth has added two new graduate schools – the [School for Marine Science and Technology](#) (SMAST) and the [School of Education, Public Policy and Civic Engagement](#) (SEPPCE). New instructional locations host a myriad of educational services in the community: the Star Store Building in New Bedford houses an extension of the College of Visual and Performing Arts; the Advanced Technology Manufacturing Center and the Professional and Continuing Education Center are catalysts for growth in Fall River; and a Fairhaven site that encompasses the [Center for University and School Partnerships](#), the [Center for Marketing Research](#), the [Kaput Center for Research and Innovation in STEM Education](#), and nearly half of SMAST’s staff and programs. On campus, the [Center for Portuguese Studies and Culture](#) is a resource not only to the local community but also to the Portuguese-speaking community nationally and internationally through its support of scholarships, educational, and cultural programming.

Research and service activities of faculty and students at all sites are integrated throughout the Southeastern Massachusetts region. Examples include the [Northeast Coastal Ocean Forecast System](#) program, a partnership of the University and regional agencies and business focused on research specific to the New England coast; the Massachusetts [Marine Fisheries Institute](#), a partnership of SMAST’s Department of Fisheries Oceanography and the Massachusetts Department of Marine Fisheries that promotes sustainable fisheries through cooperative research between scientists and fishermen; the [Center for Marketing Research](#), which explores issues of concern to businesses in Southeastern Massachusetts; and the [Kaput Center for Research and Innovation in STEM Education](#), which engages in sustained investigation of foundational issues in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics education.

In recognition of its engagement and outreach in the community, UMass Dartmouth received the Carnegie Classification for Curricular Engagement and Outreach & Partnerships in 2008. These initiatives support the core mission and values of personalized education and engagement in research that serves the needs of the local and regional community. However, the University needs to assess more thoroughly whether research and teaching space needs are being fully met, improve its enrollment management practices to yield the desired growth through both recruitment and retention at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, enhance contact and involvement of its alumni, and increase communication with other University partners.

As noted previously, UMass Dartmouth reviewed its Mission and Vision statements as part of the 2007 update of the Strategic Plan. While the faculty and staff continue to be actively engaged in aligning curriculum and research to these goals, students are not as widely aware of the Mission and Vision. In addition, while each College, under the leadership of the deans, supports and advances the Mission and Vision of the University, some of the individual colleges have not yet articulated and posted their own mission statements.

PROJECTION

Mission and Vision: In order to ensure that the Mission and Vision statements continue to be aligned with the needs and aspirations of students, faculty and staff, a plan for periodic review and dissemination of these statements will be established as part of the Strategic Plan update process. The Chancellor and Provost will lead these efforts; input from all stakeholders will be incorporated.

Schedule and Activities:

- In AY 10-11, the Provost will convene a task force to initiate the review of the Strategic Plan. The review will include an assessment of progress in realizing the Mission and Vision through collection of data from alumni, local, regional and global partners. The task force will focus on better use of communication technology to engage these groups.
- In AY 10-11, as part of the review of the Mission and Vision, each college will review and update its Mission Statement, integrating input from each department and unit.
- In AY 11-12, a statement of Core Values, building on the Mission and Vision, will be developed.
- In AY 12-13, following an extensive process integrating the input and feedback of the University community, the updated Strategic Plan will be completed.
- AY 14-20, periodic review will continue.

INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

The University's Board of Trustees periodically reviews and affirms the institution's Mission Statement. The Mission and Vision have guided UMass Dartmouth during a period of significant undergraduate and graduate enrollment growth, research expansion, academic program development, new partnerships with surrounding communities as well as national and global partners. These priorities and goals also inform and guide the campus as it develops plans for addressing the challenges of the coming decade. The campus continues to improve the visibility of our guiding values statements among students, staff, faculty, and external constituencies; to further integrate mission statements for colleges and other major units in campus goal-setting and resource allocation; and to periodically review the Mission and Vision statements.