Student Success: Transformative educational experience

The University of Iowa has identified the following indicators as key to monitoring our effectiveness in delivering high-quality education and providing clear pathways for students to achieve their educational and career goals.

Current Status

Over the past decade, the university has significantly improved our four-year graduation rate, narrowing the difference between our rate and the median rate of AAU public universities. We see this improvement as evidence that we have become more efficient in delivery of instruction. As the university embarks upon efforts to increase financial resources, we must also commit to continued improvement in efficiency. The increased value the university provides by lowering “time to degree” is paramount for attracting students who can succeed in a rigorous academic environment.

Selected Accomplishments

- 1-year retention and 4- and 6-year graduation rates remain at or close to record levels.
- U.S. News and World Report ranks SUI 33rd among the nation’s best public universities, and ranks 24 SUI graduate programs and colleges among the 25 best in the country among all public and private schools, with 11 programs among the top 10 in the nation.
- SUI was named one of the top producers of Fulbright Students for 2017-18.
- In 2016-17, 32% of respondents to the Senior Exit Survey reported having participated in three or more high-impact practices (up from 30% the prior year).
- Created the Learning Design Collaboratory, a strategic initiative to enhance teaching and learning through a team-based approach to course design.
- Created and implemented Excelling@iowa, an early warning system to identify at-risk students.

Research and Discovery: High-impact research

The University of Iowa is proud to be a member of the Association of American Universities (AAU), an association of 62 distinguished public and private research universities in the United States and Canada. Below are selected measures of progress that parallel indicators the AAU uses to assess its current and potential new members.

Current Status

The University of Iowa’s overall research funding has increased, highlighting the diversification of our funding portfolio at a time when federal funding is stagnant. As a percentage of GDP, however, federal support for basic research is at a 40-year low. Hence, we are continuing to pursue alternative funding sources via corporate and foundation partnerships. Declines in expenditures and grant applications are linked to federal funding availability and tenure track faculty counts. The university has seen a decline in the number of tenure-track faculty over the past decade, and this faculty group is a primary driver of research proposals and external funding. A central goal of the university is to increase the number of tenured faculty, which should improve outcomes in both these categories. The university also remains committed to training the next generation of tenure-track-eligible faculty.

Selected Accomplishments

- In FY 2017, SUI researchers brought $557.7 million in external research funding to the university and state. Grants and contracts that support discovery at the UI increased from $437.9 million to $443.3 million—the most dollars awarded to SUI since FY11.
- Through its Cluster Hire Initiative, SUI is building multidisciplinary strength in areas that address “grand challenges” of the 21st century.
- SUI has established new research foci (and made new hires) in areas related to neuroscience and diabetes.
- SUI’s comprehensive electronic Research Administration (eRA) system has significantly reduced administrative burden in pre- and post-award processes and lowered research administrative unit operating costs.
Engagement: Broaden education, improve health, enhance economic development

The University of Iowa, particularly in its role as a state university, thrives on its commitment to public partnership and seeks to expand our public engagement to contribute to economic and cultural vitality and to the health and quality of life of the people of Iowa. Below are selected indicators that highlight just a few of the ways the university engages with its larger community.

Current Status

Statewide outreach activities, supported by colleges and the university’s central administration, have grown as we have expanded efforts to share faculty, staff, and student talents and skills in the arts, humanities, and sciences with a broader array and increased number of Iowans. Providing state-of-the-art health care services to over one million clinic visitors each year has a tremendous positive impact on the lives and well-being of people throughout Iowa. Study abroad activities are one way the university helps students engage with the world and understand their role as global citizens.

Selected Accomplishments

- SUI was selected to receive the 2015 Community Engagement Classification from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.
- University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics has been ranked as one of U.S. News & World Report’s “America’s Best Hospitals” for 27 years in a row. Seven medical specialties at UIHC are nationally ranked.
- In its second year, SUI’s partnership with the Iowa Resource Conservation & Development (RC&D) regions resulted in 5 statewide workshops and integrated more than 30 student-led community engagement projects involving nearly 150 students.
- The Iowa Flood Center’s Iowa Flood Information System (IFIS) provides flood condition information to more than 1,000 communities.
- The John Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Center supports entrepreneurship training across the state through community colleges and its “New Ventures” program.

Cultural Values:

Diversity, Innovation, Collaboration

In setting priorities and carrying out every aspect of its mission, the University of Iowa is guided by the values that have shaped us as an institution and as a community over time. These include our foundational commitments to diversity, innovation, and collaboration. Below are indicators related to our efforts to uphold those values.

Selected Accomplishments

- SUI is one of only four schools in the nation to receive the prestigious 2017 Senator Paul Simon Award for Comprehensive Internationalization by NAFSA: Association of International Educators.
- Two programs housed in the UI Center for Diversity and Enrichment—The Iowa Edge and TRIO Student Support Services—are improving the success of UI first generation and minority students.
- SUI celebrated the 30th anniversary of the annual UI Summer Research Opportunities Program (SROP) for underrepresented minority undergraduate students who are interested pursuing graduate work.
- Interdisciplinary Research Grants through the Obermann Center foster collaborative scholarship and creative work.
- The Office of the Provost created a senior associate position to focus on large-scale project development across interdisciplinary teams.
Student Success
Our goal is to provide a transformative educational experience that educates all UI students to be engaged citizens.

- University College increased academic support for students through Academic Support and Retention, resulting in 20,000 student visits for supplemental instruction (a 47% increase compared to the 2015-2016 academic year).
- UI became only the twelfth university in the country to offer the innovative new Computer Science and Engineering undergraduate degree program, designed to prepare students to thrive in today’s economy.
- The UI created two new collaborative, innovative, and interdisciplinary graduate programs—biomedical Science (Cancer Biology) and Civil and Environmental Engineering (Sustainable Water Development)—as well as a graduate certificate in Literary Translation.
- College of Law students consistently achieve bar passage and employment rates significantly above the national averages.
- The Tippie College of Business’s new RISE graduation requirement creates increased student engagement through Research, Internships, Study Abroad, and Experiential classes. The College of Public Health has established a similar requirement for its undergraduates.
- The College of Nursing has implemented several initiatives to enhance success of Ph.D. students with shorter time to degree, including yearly progression reviews, individualized advising plans, and curricular changes.
- The Graduate College collaborated with faculty reviewers, previous fellowship winners, and fellowship applicants to form collaborative “fellowships communities” to support graduate students as they apply for competitive external fellowships.
- The College of Dentistry has a 100% employment upon graduation rate.
- 50% of medical students are participating in “distinction tracks” such as global medicine, research distinction, and health care delivery science, giving them enhanced educational opportunities that better prepare them for future careers.

Research and Discovery
Our goal is to perform high-impact research.

- University of Iowa Health Care is investing $100 million to help the Carver College of Medicine recruit research-active faculty who have at least two operative R01 grants.
- Multiple UI colleges are actively pursuing strategies to increase levels of extramural support for faculty research activities. The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS), for example, is cooperating with the Office of the Vice President for Research and Economic Development to nurture selected themes that are candidates for large, interdisciplinary research grants. The College of Public Health has created a series of programs to support new investigators.
- The College of Engineering research enterprise saw a year-over-year 72% increase in competitive research funding. FY 2017 was the second highest year in terms of total amount of external funding (almost $45M) and the highest year ever in terms of total number of received research awards (235).
- Members of the faculty of the College of Law have served on two task forces on statewide law reform appointment by the Iowa Supreme Court and are also engaged in national law reform with the American Law Institute and the Uniform Law Commission.
- Since 2010, the College of Nursing’s National Institutes of Health-funded Pain and Associated Symptoms Research Training program has provided training to ten predoctoral and seven postdoctoral scholars. These scholars have published more than 40 papers on pain and symptoms.
- In 2016-17 the College of Dentistry was 18th among dental schools in funding from the Dental Institute the NIH, up from 33rd in 2015-16.
- Since fall 2015, faculty at the UI College of Education’s Center for Research on Undergraduate Education (CRUE) were PIs or co-PIs on external grants and contracts totaling nearly $3 million, more than 75% of which came from federal research grants.
- The UI College of Pharmacy maintains the largest community-based research program in a college of pharmacy in the nation ($10 million).
Engagement

Our goal is to engage with Iowa and the world to broaden education, improve health, and enhance economic development.

- Nearly 80% of Iowa’s dentists are alumni of the UI College of Dentistry, delivering an estimated $800M in dental care to Iowans annually. About 98% of Iowans live within a 30 minute drive of a practicing UI alum.
- College of Pharmacy graduates practice in 96 Iowa counties and reach about 80% of Iowans.
- The Department of Gender, Women’s and Sexuality Studies in CLAS has a service learning senior practicum, launched in 2010 and since expanded, in which students work with incarcerated women at the Iowa Correctional Institute for Women in Mitchellville.
- The Iowa Law Clinic serves indigent clients and public agencies in Iowa, including legal services in the fields of domestic violence, immigration law, criminal law, and disability rights. This year, the Law Clinic will add to its services a Community Development project and a Federal Defender Project. The federal defender project will be the second in the nation to be based in a law school (the first is at the University of Chicago).
- The College of Engineering’s K-12 STEM outreach programs, including FIRST Tech Challenge (FTC), Project Lead The Way (PLTW), and pre-engineering K-12 programs, reached 94 counties in Iowa last year.
- SUI’s India Winterim program sends more students to India than any other university in the U.S. (over 1,000 in the last decade). The program received IIE’s Andrew Heiskell Award for best practices in study abroad in 2016.
- UI Libraries’ Hardin Library for the Health Sciences opens Greater Midwest Regional office of the National Network of Libraries of Medicine, funded by a five-year $6.5 million grant from the National Library of Medicine, serving as a resource and outreach agency to health sciences libraries throughout the 10-state region.
- The College of Public Health’s Business Leadership Network community grant program fosters collaboration with businesses and communities across Iowa to support healthy lifestyles and address local public health needs.

Cultural Values

Diversity, Innovation, Collaboration

- The Building University of Iowa Leadership for Diversity (BUILD) initiative provides opportunities for UI faculty and staff to gain strategic knowledge and skills to contribute to a welcoming and inclusive environment for all. To date, 694 individuals have participated in BUILD, and 179 individuals have received their BUILD certificate.
- Starting in 2017-18, a “Diversity and Inclusion” class is a required unit of the CLAS core curriculum. These seminar-style courses encourage students to explore the historical and structural bases of inequality while learning about the challenges and benefits of diversity.
- In 2017, the Department of Mathematics renewed its designation as a University Center of Exemplary Mentoring, winning an $80,000 grant from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation to support the success of underrepresented minority students at the University of Iowa.
- University College has expanded Success@Iowa, a required course for all new students, to include topics on diversity, perspective and perspective taking, and individual strengths.
- 30% of Carver College of Medicine medical students come from traditional underrepresented minority or rural or first generation backgrounds.
- The Virginia A Myers Nexus of Engineering and the Arts, funded entirely by private donations, sponsors programs and activities that bring art and engineering students together. Recent developments include the launching of the Artineers student group, the development of several short courses, and the development of plans for a new Creative Matters Living Learning Community.
- The College of Public Health announced two “Collaboratory” projects in 2017. A Collaboratory is a creative group process that, when successful, creates new organizational networks and leads to sustainable research initiatives that build on areas of strength.
- The Belin-Blank Center (BBC) offered an online, above-level test for 4th to 6th graders—an innovative approach to identifying students with high potential. The BBC licensed the tests’ content from ACT and developed the online platform for delivery in schools.