



## **RE-ENVISIONING UTICA UNIVERSITY**

Progress Report

December 2025

## PROGRESS ON OBJECTIVES

1. **Develop an academic portfolio focused on professional, pre-professional, and STEM offerings that is responsive to regional and national employer needs and student interests and fosters individual transformation.**

Eliminate programs as warranted to refocus resources on currently performing or growth opportunity programs.

- *In August 2025, the Provost proposed the deletion of the following: 17 undergraduate degree offerings, 4 graduate degrees, 2 undergraduate certificates, and curricular offerings leading to NYS teacher certification.*
- *The Provost further proposed the deactivation of 25 undergraduate minors, 5 themed pathways associated with general education, and the current general education program.*
- *Academic Affairs and the faculty are continuing discussions about and review of the academic portfolio using the processes and procedures outlined in the Memorandum of Agreement between Utica University and the AAUP-Utica regarding the deletion or deactivation of academic programs.*
- *In November/December 2025, Academic Affairs withdrew the proposed recommendations to delete one major (History) and deactivate 9 undergraduate minors.*

Develop new and existing programs for future growth and to meet student interest and employer needs.

- *Several of the current majors and minors that were targeted for deletion or deactivation were revised to align more closely with student needs and the re-envisioning plan. Based on these revisions, the proposed recommendations to eliminate these programs were withdrawn.*

Ensure the skills and dispositions that characterize undergraduate education are embedded in curriculum across the entirety of the academic portfolio.

- *The curriculum map for each academic program indicates where academic majors address and develop the institutional learning goals typically associated with general education.*
- *Students' perceptions of how well their undergraduate education helped them develop these skills and competencies are reported each January and June (Undergraduate Outcomes reports) and following the administration of an alumni survey given every 3 years.*

Develop educational offerings that meet students' short, mid, and long-term educational and professional needs, and reflect contemporary students' increasing interests in direct-to-employment educational opportunities.

Add Associate of Arts (A.A.), Associate of Science (A.S.), and Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.) degrees.

- *Exploratory work on developing two-year associate degrees has been initiated.*

Ensure targeted programs have an array of credit, non-credit, direct-to-employment training, certificate, associate's degree, bachelor's degree, certificate of advanced study, and master's degree paths to provide students with several more meaningful starting and stopping points in their educational journey.

- *The School of Business & Justice Studies has developed micro-credentials for the following programs: Digital Media Marketing, Cybersecurity, and Data Science.*

Create strong discipline-based and professional advisory councils to ensure the curriculum is current and relevant for our students.

- *The Business Advisory Council has been assembled and is currently functional. The well-established advisory board for Construction Management remains active in its support of the program.*
- *A half-time Partnership Development Specialist position was created for Dr. Patrice Hallock, former Dean of Health Professions and Education.*

Work with BOCES and regional schools to identify earlier and cultivate the career interests of prospective college students aged 12-18.

- *No progress reported with respect to this action step.*

Identify and develop appropriate 4+1, 3+1, and 1+3+1 tracks for students to achieve advanced degrees in specific disciplines. Explore partnerships with other higher education institutions to achieve these.

- *The School of Health Professions and Education and the Division of Enrollment Management are working with area community colleges to establish a clear pathway to the ABSN transfer track.*
- *The School of Health Professions and Education completed a full review of all community colleges in NYS for alignment with HPE healthcare-related programs. This review indicated opportunities for 2 + 2 and 4 + 1 program pathways.*

**2. Build a career exploration, readiness, and support operation that services our students and alums from their first internship experience and professional position through their mid-career.**

Embed career services in the Advancement operation of the university to better connect it with our alumni to strengthen student support and foster alumni and donor goodwill

- *The Career Readiness operation was moved under the supervision of the Advancement Division in August 2025.*

Working from the foundational themes, assess institutional needs and rebuild career services to meet these needs.

- *The Partnership Development Specialist position will work closely with Career Readiness and Advancement to assess needs and rebuild career services.*

Ensure the reconstituted career services leverages outside career services and employment organizations to maximize opportunities for students, develop strong industry and professional relationships to inform curriculum needs, and maximize operational efficiencies.

- *The University attempted to create a partnership with Working Solutions in support of this objective. However, the desired outcome was not achieved.*

**3. Complete the final components of the structural financial changes needed to sustain and grow an institution of 3,800 to 4,000.<sup>1</sup>**

Permanently remove a minimum of \$3.2 million from teaching costs.

- *A negotiating team was established by the incoming President to work closely with the AAUP-Utica to reduce teaching costs.*

Modify the General Education program to focus on student needs.

- *The General Education Council revised the current general education program and solicited feedback from each school/division on two occasions during the Fall 2025 term. The revised model will be brought to the schools/divisions for a vote in early January 2026 and submitted to the Curriculum Committee in February 2026.*

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<sup>1</sup> Several items in this section will require collective bargaining or approval by the Faculty Senate.

Eliminate a minimum 25 full-time faculty positions; subsequently further reduce the full-time faculty contingent through attrition.

- *Full-time faculty were notified in August 2025 that 31 positions were being retrenched; ongoing negotiations with the AAUP-Utica allowed for an initial postponement of retrenchments targeted for December 2025.*
- *Ongoing negotiations with the collective bargaining unit will continue with respect to this objective.*

Realign faculty resources to support programs that attract student interest and meet regional employer needs.

- *Progress related to this objective is pending the completion of the academic portfolio review.*

Increase class sizes in campus-based and online courses.

*The University and AAUP-Utica will be working collaboratively to address this issue in Spring 2026.* Reduce overload pay for regular faculty members by developing stronger pools of qualified adjunct faculty with applicable career experience and knowledge.

- *The Provost and school deans initiated a plan to begin addressing adjunct hiring.*
- *President Nesbitt and A.V.P. Kristin Phelps are developing a job description for a Human Resources specialist to focus on this objective and provide additional support for other essential Human Resources functions.*

Renegotiate portions of the AAUP collective bargaining agreement to reduce benefit and salary costs.

- *The University and the AAUP-Utica chapter continue to work collaboratively on these issues.*

Review all professional staff positions and identify the appropriate balance of 10-month and 12-month positions.

- *Ongoing*

Review opportunities to consolidate operations to improve service and operational efficiencies.

- *The University's leadership team continues to assess organizational structures to identify opportunities for consolidation and improved efficiencies.*
- *The schools/divisions were centralized in August 2025 to allow for greater efficiencies and avoid duplication of efforts.*

Review non-productive labor costs (sick time, leave time, flex time, paid time off) and adjust to ensure exceptional student service and reduce payroll costs.

- *Human Resources completed an assessment of Flex time. University leadership will collaborate with the Professional Staff Advisory Council (PSAC) to adjust this benefit to make it more equitable and cost-effective.*
- *Assessments are ongoing with respect to reducing non-productive labor costs.*

Continue efforts to reduce redundancies and automate processes.

- *There continues to be unexplained delays in the automation of some processes, such as the implementation of a change of major form.*
- *Human Resources is currently implementing new software to replace PeopleAdmin. This will reduce the paperwork associated with PAF and PPW forms and allow for time-saving efficiencies.*

Leverage technological improvements to support a lean professional staff that is better compensated reflecting the more technical nature of their positions.

- *Efforts to improve the computing infrastructure are ongoing and under review.*
- *Progress is being made with respect to maximizing the functionality of Ellucian products and increasing the use of Slate, all to avoid the purchase of niche products that accomplish what the current systems can also achieve.*

Perform a comparative analysis of retirement contributions for professional staff for similar or peer institutions and regional employers. Adjust the university's plan as warranted to reduce cost.

- *Data on contributions from peer institutions and regional employers have been collected. These data will be analyzed by senior leadership and used to inform decisions.*

Complete analysis of athletic programs and reduce the number to meet student interests and optimize operational and financial efficiencies.

- *Analysis is ongoing. No opportunities for significant savings have yet been identified.*

Complete the university's exit from satellite teaching locations in Miramar, FL, St. Petersburg, FL, and Clark City Center in Utica, NY.

- *Both the Miramar, FL and Clark City Center locations have been closed; applications for substantive changes were filed with and approved by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education.*

- *The St. Pete, FL site will stop offering instruction in May 2026, after all the currently enrolled students have completed their program of study.*

Rebuild the Division of Advancement to ensure appropriate skill and staffing.

- *Former President Dr. Laura Casamento was hired as an advisor to the President in June 2025. In this capacity, she completed an assessment of the Advancement Division and reorganized the staff, creating new positions to address institutional needs (e.g., Director of Annual and Athletic Giving).*

Continue reviewing all contracts and adjust as necessary.

- *The University's contract with Collegis has been adjusted to utilize this company's expertise with computing technologies.*
- *The contract with Orbis is currently being reviewed for possible revisions.*

Complete the exit from the Wiley-Risepoint partnership.

- *Risepoint stopped all services in May 2025. The University reached agreement on an amendment to the existing Master Services Agreement to officially separate in October 2025. Final payments for prior services rendered and the teach out of students recruited by Risepoint will continue through 2027.*