The University of Illinois at Chicago

Strategic Priorities
The University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) is an acclaimed research university that supports and inspires students in an urban environment. Our strength derives from our devoted top-tier faculty and staff who share a commitment to the promise of public education, the advancement of knowledge in their scholarly fields, and the imperatives of social justice and civic engagement. Furthermore, our entire university community embraces an ethic of care for the well-being of those we serve.

While there are many public research universities, none is, like UIC, so quintessentially positioned at the intersection of research and urban life. Located in the heart of Chicago, we are on the cutting edge of scholarship and service for a rapidly urbanizing world. We also hold the distinction of being one of Illinois’ leading health care providers, with an expansive health care education and services enterprise throughout the state. We benefit from the deep relationships we have with the neighborhoods we serve, and in turn we give back by helping build and support just and sustainable communities.

Today, UIC must look ahead even as we face a widening disjuncture between contemporary demands and our institutional capacity to respond. Limited state support, increasing demands, and an ever-changing economic and demographic environment require that we become a more entrepreneurial university – an institution positioned to fulfill its public purpose despite external constraints. To do so we must leverage our strengths to shape the future, while our commitment to education, scholarship, community engagement, and social justice will continue to be our guiding principle driving UIC forward.

The following set of strategic priorities provide fresh thinking for how, over the next five years, we can leverage our strengths to shape the future by supporting our students, enhancing our reputation on a national and international stage, engaging Chicago and its communities, and operating in new ways to foster and advance innovation. While the University has always excelled, we can, and will, do even better. By pursuing these priorities, we will continue to provide our students with a high-quality public education, support the efforts of our faculty and staff, and better serve the people of our city and our state.
UIC
STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Student Experience and Success

National and International Impact and Visibility

Chicago and Community Engagement

Entrepreneurial University
Students are at the center of UIC’s mission and its success. Diversity, equity, opportunity, an ethic of care, and a global outlook are the hallmarks of our University. As Chicago’s only public research university, we honor our commitment to high-quality education for all by preparing our students to be successful professionals, lifelong learners, active citizens and caring persons.

ACCESS EXCELLENCE
The University’s world-class faculty mentors our students in and beyond the classroom, advances our economy and culture, and improves the lives of people in our surrounding communities and beyond. To ensure student access to that excellence we will promote a culture that values and rewards high-quality, innovative teaching and advances critical thinking; recognition of injustices; collaboration; and entrepreneurial mindsets among students and faculty. We will facilitate open lines of communication among students, faculty, staff, and the administration. We will enhance and coordinate resources dedicated to teaching and mentoring.

FOSTER DIVERSITY
Diversity is a hallmark of the UIC experience. Life on campus will continue to reflect and celebrate human differences and affirm that diversity can make us all smarter and stronger. We will continue to cultivate an inclusive culture of diversity and a welcoming campus climate, to enhance enrollment of historically underrepresented students, and to enlist the knowledge and creativity of all students.
PROMOTE SUCCESS

The University’s success is defined by the success of all our students. We will continue to support students’ identities and strengths and address their individual needs. We will support and guide students during key turning points in their educational careers, and we will provide advice and guidance that is consistent and meaningful by promoting greater collaboration between academic and support services. We will promote the efficient and equitable use of technologies and facilities, from labs to common areas.

CULTIVATE POTENTIAL

Identifying goals, and pathways to achieve those goals, is critical to student success on campus and beyond. We will help students identify their academic and career goals and provide them with the support they need to succeed. We will align curriculum and course scheduling to facilitate timely graduation for all students, and we will provide hands-on learning and wide-ranging career-development opportunities, including a variety of internships. We will raise private funds to continue providing financial aid to those in need.

ADVANCE TEACHING

Attention to the strengths and needs of a new generation of learners is critical to the experience and success of our students. We will enhance and further develop teaching practices and adopt the most successful advances in face-to-face and online pedagogy. We will encourage and reward faculty efforts to innovate teaching. We will modernize our physical and technological infrastructure to support these efforts.

ENHANCE CAMPUS VIBRANCY

Student experience is also strengthened by a safe and vibrant campus environment to provide opportunities for personal and professional growth. We will maintain a safe, healthy and nurturing environment for our students to learn, live and play. We will create programs and support independent student organizations to advance opportunities for student leadership and community and civic engagement. We will upgrade and modernize our existing residence halls and build new residential capacity as needed. We will strive for excellence in our intercollegiate athletics.
PROMOTE EXCELLENCE
Increased national and international recognition of the outstanding work conducted at UIC can contribute significantly to further growth of the University. We will intentionally and strategically communicate the unique contributions and success of our faculty, staff and students. We will promote our mission of deep and reciprocal community engagement and its contribution to the health and well-being of Chicago residents and regions around the state. We will promote our status as a hub of cutting-edge research and innovation that advances the University’s public purpose. We will encourage faculty and administrators to take strategic risks in order to build a culture of excellence. We will advance the standards of teaching and research of the American Association of Universities.

ENHANCE REPUTATION
As a leading research institution, a minority-serving university and a statewide health care provider, UIC is a powerhouse. We will continue to work at the cutting edge of scholarship and practice for a rapidly urbanizing world. We will achieve National Cancer Institute designation and Carnegie classification for an engaged university. We will promote and support international research and collaboration, especially in the fields of global health, environmental stewardship, and economic development. As Chicago’s only public research university, we will continue to stress the importance and impact of community engagement in our mission and research.
SUPPORT FACULTY

UIC’s continued excellence in teaching and research depends on the work and success of our faculty. We will intensify our efforts to retain and recruit top-tier faculty members committed to the mission of our University. We will continue to nurture an open and friendly environment that celebrates diversity and promotes excellence. We will improve our facilities and physical infrastructure until they are at the level that our faculty deserve. We will eliminate bureaucratic obstacles that prevent the faculty from reaching its full potential.

INSPIRE DISCOVERY

UIC is diverse in ideas, people, and professions. We will foster an inclusive environment and create opportunities for our scholars, students, clinicians, and support staff from diverse disciplines to interact daily to create the serendipity that launches new ideas, inventions and advances. We will continue to promote cross-disciplinary and cross-campus collaboration to spur innovation, advance social justice and create new knowledge. We will strengthen professional advancement opportunities for staff and faculty and increase institutional support for doctoral and post-doctoral scholars. We will create new opportunities for the engagement of more undergraduate students in scholarship, creative activity and research. We will increase our international partnerships and exchanges to raise the standards and expectations of scholarly excellence across all disciplines.

CULTIVATE GROWTH

The University can remain vital by continuing to expand and improve. We will increase the size of the tenure-track faculty to achieve growth in research while maintaining quality in teaching. We will create the necessary infrastructure to encourage and support large multidisciplinary scholarship and research efforts. We will consider establishing a law school grounded in multidisciplinary approaches that emphasize social justice, public policy, and diversity. We will support entrepreneurial faculty members in their commercial and economic development work.
Civic and community engagement are at the heart of UIC. As a university created for and by the people of Chicago and Illinois, we have learned from and been transformed by the rich diversity of our surrounding communities and their people, and we embrace our mission to transform lives.

EMBRACE COMMUNITY

UIC can build upon a rich history of successful community engagement. We will continue to expand the meaning of engagement by striving for equitable, transparent, and reciprocal relationships. We will develop new collaborations between the University and communities in Chicago and regions throughout the state for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources to create opportunities for the engagement of students at all levels. We will collect and measure the impact of community engagement, listen to our partners, conduct needs assessments and broadly communicate our results. We will exceed the criteria for the highest Carnegie classification for university community engagement. We will strive to be the most engaged public university in the nation by creating incentives both internally and in Illinois’ communities to support wider access to education.
CREATE PARTNERSHIPS
The University can benefit significantly from new collaborations with state and city agencies, as well as the business, cultural, and arts communities in Chicago and throughout the state. We will pursue opportunities to increase engagement with the state and the city and to inform public policy and economic development through our research and scholarly work. We will extend our collaborations with and increase our presence in the Chicago Public Schools and the City Colleges of Chicago. We will explore the creation of joint academic, research and creative achievement programs with the top cultural and art institutions in Chicago. We will develop new partnerships with the business community to facilitate faculty research and student placement for internships and professional positions.

EXPAND CARE
UIC is committed to continuing to provide top quality health care to all, regardless of socioeconomic status. We will promote greater alignment of the health science colleges with the UI health care delivery system to better address the needs of the communities UIC serves and increase research in the health sciences. We will expand our clinical care delivery network to more areas and create new collaborations with safety net hospitals and clinics throughout Chicago to support their operations.
Due to reduced state financial support and an ever-changing economic and demographic environment, UIC faces a widening disjuncture between contemporary demands and our institutional capacity to respond. Preparing for the future, UIC needs to adapt and change to become more entrepreneurial and build a sustainable infrastructure, while maintaining an acute focus on our mission.

**INSPIRE INNOVATION**

The University can maintain its leading edge only if it utilizes new social, financial, and technological approaches to its own operations. We will create and support a culture of innovation within all academic, student, clinical and support operations. We will establish mechanisms for new ideas to be heard, evaluated and tested in a timely fashion to ensure that the University is primed and able to respond to emerging opportunities. We will increase incentives for faculty and staff to pursue new and expanded grant and contract funding for all aspects of research and entrepreneurship. We will expand alumni and corporate connections to take innovative ideas to scale and secure resources to sustain them.
DIVERSIFY FUNDING
UIC can no longer depend on state support or increases in tuition revenue to secure the necessary resources for the fulfillment of its mission. We will clearly align resource allocation with institutional priorities, reduce costs, and build new public-private partnerships to address capital infrastructure needs and improve support services. We will develop new and effective strategies to increase philanthropic support.

INCREASE EFFICIENCY
Innovation and excellence cannot thrive in the face of bureaucracy and without state-of-the-art support services, systems and staff. We will foster a culture of customer service and timely results in all of our internal operations. We will become even more efficient and transparent in the utilization of our resources by reducing administrative costs. We will streamline administrative, personnel, financial and support services, and reduce redundancies in our staffing structure. We will modernize the technology currently used by introducing new IT tools where needed. We will optimize the use of existing space.