

**Northeastern Illinois University's  
Strategic Plan Initiative**

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**Northeastern**  
ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY



# Northeastern Illinois University's Mission and Vision

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## Mission Statement

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Northeastern Illinois University, as a public comprehensive university with locations throughout Chicago, provides an exceptional environment for learning, teaching, and scholarship. We prepare a diverse community of students for leadership and service in our region and in a dynamic multicultural world.

## Vision Statement

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Northeastern Illinois University will be a leader among metropolitan universities, known for its dedication to its urban mission, for the quality of its programs, for the success of its graduates, and for the diversity of its learning environment.

# Values

Northeastern Illinois University is committed to a set of shared values that, taken collectively, guides our actions and interactions as we work together to prepare graduates for the responsible exercise of citizenship. We, the NEIU community, believe it is critical for our democracy to create a space in which the commitment to these values results in a thriving educational community that transforms the lives of all. As we take stock of the present and look to the future, these values serve as the touchstone for planning how we will best achieve the educational mission entrusted to us.

## **Integrity**

NEIU is accountable to those we serve and to those from whom we receive support. We are committed to honesty, respect, and transparency in our words and in our actions. In that regard, we work to be good stewards of the resources we are entrusted to use. This includes human, physical, fiscal, and environmental resources.

## **Excellence**

In our pursuit of and commitment to excellence, we value the highest quality of learning and teaching, scholarship, and service. We value opportunities and experiences that support personal and professional development for all members of our community. In all that we say and do, we are committed to the process and products of excellence.

## **Access to Opportunity**

NEIU values access to opportunity; we value a welcoming environment that provides appropriate support as well as encourages mutual responsibility for and commitment to learning.

## **Diversity**

NEIU values the inclusion of a broad spectrum of students, staff, and faculty in the life of the University. We celebrate and foster global perspectives. We encourage the open and respectful expression of ideas and differences in thoughts, experiences, and opinions.

## **Community**

As a commuter institution, NEIU has a special obligation to provide an environment that is supportive, nurturing, and participatory. Such an environment is characterized by civility, fostering humanity and engagement, and creates a sense of community through inclusion, mutual respect, and empowerment. NEIU values our metropolitan setting as a laboratory for learning, and we foster partnerships for learning, research, and service throughout this dynamic region to promote the public good.

## **Empowerment Through Learning**

NEIU is dedicated to creating a culture that provides life-long learning opportunities for all members of the University community. We are especially committed to transforming students' lives by engaging them in an educational experience that empowers them to graduate with the skills and knowledge to become effective leaders and citizens in their personal and professional lives.

# Strategic Goals and Action Steps

## Strategic Goal One:

**STUDENT SUCCESS: Ensure student success from recruitment through graduation by creating a culture in which all members of the University community are engaged in attracting, educating, and graduating students who achieve the objectives for baccalaureate and graduate degrees.**

### Action Steps

- 1.1: Develop, implement, and invest resources in a comprehensive enrollment management plan that engages the University community.
- 1.2: Build well-defined articulation agreements and foster strong relationships with community colleges and other colleges and universities to ensure clear transition pathways for transfer students.
- 1.3: Raise undergraduate and graduate student recruitment, retention, and graduation rates, including those for students from historically underrepresented groups, to specific University benchmarks and goals.
- 1.4: Create a system that provides intentional academic advising for all students across the University.
- 1.5: Improve coordination among student and academic support programs and services with a focus on quality, customer service, and intentional integration with the curriculum.

## Strategic Goal Two:

**ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AND INNOVATION: Develop an environment that supports curricular and pedagogical innovation aligned with the mission of the institution, the standards of the disciplines, student needs, and career and civic opportunities in a global society.**

### Action Steps

- 2.1: Develop a Statement of Objectives for the Baccalaureate Degree and a Statement of Objectives for the Masters Degree at NEIU.
- 2.2: Review and revise general education based on national best practices and successful innovations at peer institutions.
- 2.3: Review and revise discipline specific curricula based on national best practices and work force needs.

- 2.4: Support professional development opportunities for students through internships, international study, research, service learning, and career services.
- 2.5: Support and create interdisciplinary courses and programs based on best practices and institutional strengths.
- 2.6: Strengthen and integrate the University's academic offerings at CCICS, El Centro, and the University Center of Lake County through traditional and non-traditional means of program delivery.
- 2.7: Utilize diversity as a curricular/pedagogical dimension integrated with global and cultural studies and throughout the curriculum.
- 2.8: Establish technology-enriched curricula to include hybrid and online courses.
- 2.9: Focus on academic programs linked to regional economic development and work force demands for the global society.

### **Strategic Goal Three:**

**URBAN LEADERSHIP: Work collaboratively with educational, social service, governmental, and business institutions in Chicago and the region to build upon NEIU's tradition of community involvement.**

#### **Action Steps**

- 3.1: Improve preparation for higher education by working with K-12 schools.
- 3.2: Review and integrate the University's outreach and community service functions, with special emphasis on the unique programs provided by CTC, CCICS, and El Centro, to strengthen our community partnerships.
- 3.3: Encourage and support research projects that focus on such contemporary urban issues as education reform, immigration, economic development, and the environment.
- 3.4: Strive to make NEIU, as a designated Hispanic Serving Institution, an institution of choice for Latino students.
- 3.5: Develop a brand for NEIU that expresses pride and conveys the University's special attributes.
- 3.6: Implement a marketing and public relations plan to communicate the University brand to external and internal audiences.

## **Strategic Goal Four:**

**EXEMPLARY FACULTY AND STAFF: Invest in faculty and staff to make NEIU a world-class metropolitan university and an employer of choice.**

### **Action Steps**

- 4.1: Build a culture of mutual respect and collegiality across the University and its multiple locations throughout Chicago.
- 4.2: Utilize innovative approaches to recruit and retain faculty and staff committed to student success.
- 4.3: Provide support systems and programs (including customer service training) that foster a positive work environment for all.
- 4.4: Increase collaboration and accountability across all units of the University.
- 4.5: Create a climate in which support for scholarship, professional development, and training is provided to faculty and staff based on best practices.

## **Strategic Goal Five:**

**ENHANCED UNIVERSITY OPERATIONS: Provide a supportive learning, teaching and working environment by improving operating productivity, physical infrastructure, and environmental sustainability.**

### **Action Steps**

- 5.1: Streamline and redesign operational workflows and processes with the intent of improving service quality and productivity.
- 5.2: Add a residential life component consistent with the mission of the University.
- 5.3: Identify locations and develop facility plans for future student service centers, such as a cultural center and a “One Stop Shop.”
- 5.4: Invest in technology infrastructure to support academic and operational goals.
- 5.5: Ensure that all classroom, laboratory, office, student, and support spaces are appropriate to accommodate current needs and long-term growth.
- 5.6: Establish environmental sustainability as a key element of NEIU’s identity.
- 5.7: Ensure that the University community is safe and secure; that facilities and infrastructure, including technology and critical data, are protected; and that plans are in place to continuously monitor and enhance campus security and emergency preparedness.

## **Strategic Goal Six:**

**FISCAL STRENGTH: Enhance the University's financial position by reducing reliance on state general funds and student tuition, diversifying revenue sources and strengthening institutional relationships with federal, state and local governments, and private sponsors.**

### **Action Steps**

- 6.1: Support faculty and staff efforts to secure external funding that strengthens curricular, co-curricular and community development.
- 6.2: Strengthen advocacy efforts with federal, state and local governments to secure new appropriations for the University.
- 6.3: Identify and capitalize on providing extended learning services.
- 6.4: Develop and implement the infrastructure for fundraising programs and alumni relations.
- 6.5: Increase corporate, foundation and other philanthropic support to the University.
- 6.6: Increase private support from individuals (including faculty, staff, alumni and others).

*Mission statement was approved by the Board of Trustees 9/18/08. Strategic plan was endorsed by the Board of Trustees on 9/18/08.*

# Diversity at Northeastern Illinois University: What Is It?

*During the strategic planning process in the spring and summer of 2008, the question was frequently asked: What is diversity? What does diversity mean at NEIU? How do we define diversity? Do we have a shared understanding of how significant it is for Northeastern? In consideration of this, the President's Council developed this reflection to provide a response to the University community. It serves as a complement to the planning process.*

Northeastern Illinois University is the most diverse university in the Midwest. This diversity affects the core of the institution—we learn, teach, and work in an environment that is made richer, more relevant and more rewarding by the deeply diverse group of individuals who make up our University community.

Our demographics reflect the urban environment of Chicago and the greater metropolitan area. Individually, we vary in ethnicity, race, age, and gender. We also vary in areas other than these traditional demographic measures. Nearly 50 languages other than English are spoken as a first language by our students. We come from various cultures and observe many different religions. Our students, faculty, and staff have a variety of economic backgrounds and bring a breadth of values, experiences, intellectual interests, and sexual orientations.

Our community is diverse in every sense and this transcends not only all that we do, but how we do it. We welcome, accept, respect, and embrace our differences because we value learning from others. We support divergent perspectives and expect our community to voice their differing views of history, politics, and world events—that is how we add value to our educational experiences and grow as individuals. We recognize the broad array of experiences and knowledge of cultures that our communities bring to the University and our learning experiences. These experiences transform our individual and institutional lives.

Diversity is at the core of all we do. This is illustrated by the inclusion of diversity among the core values adopted and embraced by the University community in our Statement of Values:

*Diversity—NEIU values the inclusion of a broad spectrum of students, staff, and faculty in the life of the University. We celebrate and foster global perspectives. We encourage the open and respectful expression of ideas and differences in thoughts, experiences, and opinions.*

The University, therefore, is a collection of values, ideas, experiences, and thoughts. As a community, we incorporate this diversity into how we learn, teach, and provide service to our metropolitan region. We feel that consciously weaving this diversity into all that we do is what makes Northeastern unique.



The President's Council  
August 27, 2008