

## Memorandum

**Date:** October 31, 2017  
**To:** UNO / Transition Advisory Council  
**From:** CFAR / Jennifer Tomasik, SM, FACHE  
**Subject:** **Executive Summary of TAC Outcomes Meeting**

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This memo captures themes from key discussions, notes, observations, and materials from the sixth meeting of the Transition Advisory Council (TAC), held on Tuesday, October 24, 2017. The focus of the meeting was on UNO's outcomes, as explored through three lenses: education, discovery and engagement.

The memo is organized as follows:

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• Educate Presentation	
• Discover Presentation	
• Engage Presentation	

## Introduction

### Update on the Initiative and the Transition Advisory Council (TAC)

The October 24<sup>th</sup> session was the fifth meeting of the TAC, which has engaged in a series of interactive discussions to explore the topics of growth, brand, efficiency, culture—and, now, outcomes. This work draws to a close the intensive SWOT analysis process designed to help Chancellor Gold to gain a deeper understanding of the strategic identity of University of Omaha, Nebraska (UNO) across its mission pillars of education, discovery and engagement. With this work complete, the TAC will be invited to review the full set of materials produced as a result of this effort, in order to advise the Chancellor on the most critical opportunities to strengthen UNO going forward. This memo summarizes the outcomes work, which in many ways captures features of what this group would like to see UNO accomplish in the future.

### Meeting Objectives

Specifically, the objectives of the Outcomes TAC meeting were to:

- ▶ Gain a 360° understanding of the strengths, opportunities, and challenges of UNO.
- ▶ Learn leadership team, faculty, staff, and community members' perspectives on the university's education, research, and public engagement missions.
- ▶ Develop working relationships with leadership and transition teams, allowing Chancellor Gold to share his core values, expectations, and leadership style.
- ▶ Focus on outcomes at UNO.

Approximately 25 members of the TAC were in attendance. The meeting evaluation survey had a 25% response rate, with all respondents indicating that they were either *somewhat* or *extremely satisfied* with their overall experience at the session.

### Chancellor's Remarks

Chancellor Gold started by thanking TAC members for their attendance and letting them know how helpful their input and feedback has been. The Chancellor also reminded TAC members to continue this important work by facing the *blatant truth* and focusing on the *horizon*, and by grounding it in UNO's mission statement: "The University of Nebraska at Omaha is Nebraska's metropolitan university — a university with strong academic values and significant relationships with our local, regional, national and international communities that transforms and improves life."

Chancellor Gold briefly reviewed the findings from the last TAC meeting, which was focused on culture at UNO. He reminded everyone about the themes that emerged across the pillar group presentations, his closing marks, and CFAR's observations.

The Chancellor reminded attendees that *every good conversation starts with good listening*.

Chancellor Gold spent the majority of his introductory time talking about what he means by outcomes. In order to help focus the conversations, the Chancellor made it clear that he was looking for long-term outcomes. He urged TAC members to focus on the horizon, aspirational goals, and where UNO is headed when discussing outcomes in their presentations and table group discussions.

## Themes Across the Pillar Group Presentations on Outcomes

Three subcommittees—on Educate, Discover, and Engage—presented their analyses for discussion to the full TAC (complete versions of the presentations are included in the appendix). Some overarching themes emerged among the three areas, including:

- ▶ *Communicating a clear, collective message is crucial*—One message that was clear across all group presentations on outcomes was the need for one voice. The importance of having a consistent message so that everyone is on the same page regarding priorities is critical. If communication is clear and consistent internally at UNO, then it will allow for external communication to be stronger.
- ▶ *Better use of metrics is key*—The theme about better using data to measure success and opportunities for improvement surfaced across each of the group presentations. There is strong agreement that UNO lacks a robust set of metrics to gage progress and success, and the opportunity exists to put a handful of meaningful metrics into place to measure things like the impact of translational research and applied research, graduation rates, job satisfaction, and donor relationships and impact.
- ▶ *Create alignment between priorities and resources*—It was noted across each of the presentations that identifying priorities and then allocating the necessary resources to achieve those priorities is key. When presenting on outcomes, TAC members acknowledged that not everything can be a priority and that difficult decisions will need to be made in order to most efficiently and effectively allocate resources.

## Themes, Ideas, and Opportunities Surfaced in Plenary Conversations

After each presentation, TAC members engaged in small group discussions at their tables to explore the following questions:

- ▶ What, if anything, surprised you about what you heard?
- ▶ What, if anything, did you expect to hear that you did not?
- ▶ What do you believe are the two to three biggest opportunities for UNO to enhance outcomes in the pillar that was just presented on (education, research, or engagement)? Why?

The following are highlights from the conversations.

► **Educate**

- The discussion following the Educate pillar presentation focused on a variety of different issues. One area that TAC members focused on was the importance of benchmarking—to help UNO benchmark against not only itself, but also against the “gold standard” in areas like retention and graduation rates.
- Another topic centered on the importance of strengthening math and algebra capabilities in UNO students. While progress is being made in these areas, additional progress is needed.
- One of the more significant points made was the importance of ensuring that students are sufficiently “networked” and connected to the UNO community. TAC members noted that some students may not be as clear as they need to about why they are at UNO, but when they feel plugged into the community, they are more likely to thrive and to stay.

► **Discover**

- One of the main areas of discussion in the Discover presentation was the importance of communicating priorities both internally and externally. If part of UNO’s mission is to engage with and serve as a leader in the community, then the work done with community organizations should be reported broadly to demonstrate impact and ensure maximum exposure.
- Another group talked about the internal and external silos at UNO. While some progress has been made, work remains to break down the silos and to improve collaboration across the campus—within UNO and beyond (e.g., UNMC). Co-creating knowledge was offered as a way to increase collaboration and mitigate silos.
- TAC members also discussed the need to identify more diverse funding sources to match different types of discovery (e.g., how to optimally target institutions like NIH versus a community foundation, depending on the questions researchers are trying to pursue). In the end, the group expressed the need to match faculty recruitment with research priorities. Effective recruitment will be essential to promote research priorities.

► **Engage**

- One theme from the discussion following the Engage presentation was the need to align around a set of goals and to speak with “one voice” so that everyone knows their role and is engaged. Having a common understanding of goals leads to increased engagement.
- Another discussion topic centered on connecting faculty research passions with donor passion. It was noted that there is a lot of interesting research being done by faculty at UNO, and there are donors with interesting needs, so it would be beneficial to utilize that partnership.
- TAC members also raised questions about shared outcomes for engagement that may help reduce the current silo mentality. For example, people raised questions such as, should everyone look toward the same set of outcomes? Is engagement a priority for everyone? Does everyone know what service learning engagement is and whether or how they are expected to contribute to it? These were posed as rhetorical questions, but should be thought about going forward to help the parts of the university find ways to contribute to the success of the whole.

## CFAR's Observations

As we have reflected on what we heard, these ideas feel most important to reaffirm:

- ▶ *We've observed a positive arc emerge across the five TAC meetings*—The earlier TAC meetings felt more embedded in the past, drawing largely on old stories related to negative stigmas. Today, you are more focused on a bold, inspiring future for UNO as the “pre-eminent” metropolitan university.
- ▶ *Brand is essential to a successful future*—The concept and importance of strengthening UNO's brand and creating greater awareness about it continues to serve as a strong thread across the different TAC meetings.
- ▶ *Creating a virtuous cycle*—You've been asking for and have already started to identify the elements of a Virtuous Cycle needed to create a thriving UNO:
  - Clear mission and vision—your north star (the outcome you are driving toward)
  - Clear strategic priorities—aligned with resources
  - Collective cultural assets and ways to support them (e.g., collaboration, communication, scholarship)
- ▶ *It's worth it to continue to pursue better communication and collaboration*—While it's hard work, it is clear that TAC members believe in the value of strengthening communication both within UNO (across the colleges and silos) and beyond in the community (so the right hand knows what the left hand is doing, and so that you have a real sense of the collective impact that you are making in the community).

## Concluding Remarks

Chancellor Gold thanked the TAC for their presentations, noting that the different presentations and discussions were incredibly impressive. He noted that some very profound strategic thinking occurred over the course of the meeting. He divided his closing reflections by the three pillars of Educate, Discover, and Engage.

- ▶ *Educate*—Chancellor Gold noted several reflections on the Educate discussions, including: the fact that accountability in the organization is key to this outcomes process, everyone is obligated to create well informed strategic thinkers, everyone should be globally and locally aware, there needs to be thought put into what it means to be a part of the Maverick community and owning the mission, and there needs to be an effort to help the community understand the value of a UNO education, and that it is much more than a degree, it is an experience that creates a capable young woman or man who should be highly sought after.
- ▶ *Discover*—The Chancellor's takeaways regarding the discussions on discovery included: the need to get a single definition of discovery so that it can be quantified and rewarded, taking the idea of translational research and applying it to social sciences and community engagement, connecting the RPT process to research and creating dashboards, ensuring the RPT is more collaborative and that recruiting language explicitly calls that out, connecting and measuring undergraduate research done by a student to their career success, leveraging UNMC infrastructure, the importance of the co-creation of knowledge, and the need to prioritize in a clear manner.

- ▶ *Engage*—When reflecting on the discussions about Engagement, Chancellor Gold had the following takeaways: it is important to quantify and capture the sharing of engagement data, not just internally, but externally as well, there is strong momentum around engagement, but not all student experiences have been connected to yet, there is work to be done to define service learning and student experimental learning, specific engagement goals need to be defined, developing an engagement scorecard is vital, and community engagement needs a way to be defined and supported.

Chancellor Gold concluded by talking about the different format for the next TAC meeting, on Tuesday, November 28, which is focused on wrapping up the TAC meetings and looking ahead to how to best apply the results.

## UNO Transition Advisory Council Meeting—Outcomes

### One-minute Essay

From October 24, 2017

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We summarized the responses to the one-minute essays thematically, followed by direct quotes pulled from the essays. They are organized by question on the following pages.

### 1. What are one or two insights you had in this session about outcomes at UNO?

#### ► *Prioritization will be key*

- Need to prioritize and define across almost all aspects
- It is great to see real discussion on data, prioritizing goals across all three pillars.
- We need to prioritize and align our outcomes
- Ensuring we know what we want to improve and what we value e.g. RPT for funding research
- Outcomes require us to look at the past, present and future. Culture guides behaviors which influences our outcomes. As we prioritize and strategize, culture must be challenged.

#### ► *Metrics are a vital part of success*

- Metrics are lacking in almost all areas
- Data and metrics are key
- We need to develop a few, clear metrics, but we shouldn't over-emphasize the number of metrics or that's all we'll do, measure
- The need to measure and communicate translational research/community impact

#### ► *The continued engagement of key stakeholders is crucial*

- It is clear that engagement is a part of education and discovery, which builds upon a true synergy between students, faculty, donors, and all stakeholders.
- Capturing partner's success is key to UNO's success – engagement cut across all three segments

#### ► *Leveraging all possible opportunities is important*

- Leverage UNMC research engine to benefit UNO faculty and students
- There are many un-leveraged resources and opportunities that if mobilized could improve outcomes – work is disjointed although strong and important

#### ► *Other comments included*

- Great bold new mission and vision!
- Capture Dr. Gold's comments and include them in this segment of the mission
- The aspirational goals for the education seem to be achievable and are within our current ability to obtain with limited resources

## 2. What are one or two things we need to do to further enhance our outcomes?

- ▶ *Better use of data and metrics will enhance outcomes*
  - Better connection of data and current activities, e.g. donor designations relationship to faculty research.
  - Data and data sharing is key
  - Metrics defined; especially ensuring UNO is capturing the metrics related to the organization it is impacting. Impact centered, e.g. number of grants received by partnering organization, number of people who were better served
  - Clear consistent measurement in outcomes
  - Need data capture to dissemination plan
  - UNO desperately needs to identify and measure institutional learning outcomes – this is a critical priority that drives time, talent and treasure
- ▶ *Engaging key stakeholders is valuable*
  - More on creative activities and the impact to the community.
  - Continue to engage alumni
- ▶ *Communication is vital to success*
  - Better communication/celebration of successes
  - Consistent message – one voice or choir
  - Coordination of goals and message will lead to a stronger outcome
- ▶ *Aligning priorities with resources is needed*
  - Align priorities with resources
  - Focus on key outcomes and educate.
  - Discuss, synthesize, and pick one or two goals we think leads UNO in the future directions
  - Next – need to develop an institutional priorities and investment strategy
  - Set priorities and align them with strategic plan
  - I liked the idea about strategic planning on the level of engagement, so that we can better define what we mean and better set goals

## 3. What didn't we talk about that we should have discussed?

- ▶ *TAC members are eager to know about what will happen after this process*
  - More on activities as a result of these meetings. I don't see how we are impacting the Chancellor's Transition. I am sure we are, but it is not flowing out beyond a certain level.



► *TAC members felt that some specific communication, data, resource and alignment issues were not addressed*

- More discussion about alignment and opportunities with UNO and UNMC
- Government collaboration with discovery and engagement
- Difficulties with data quality/consistency
- Utilizing system resources to leverage UNO success
- From a faculty member's point of view, I would like to discuss further the better communication between faculty and administration about engagement, but more specifically experiential learning
- You cannot monetize impact on everything but can move to measure and specify it
- How the external environment will influence and direct the creation and monitoring of our outcomes
- Use the educate pillar to be a center point of all core values, accomplishments and opportunities

## UNO Transition Advisory Council Meeting—Outcomes

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# UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT OMAHA

# UNO TRANSITION ADVISORY COUNCIL







UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT OMAHA

UNO TRANSITION ADVISORY COUNCIL

# TRANSITION

MEETING IV - October 24, 2017

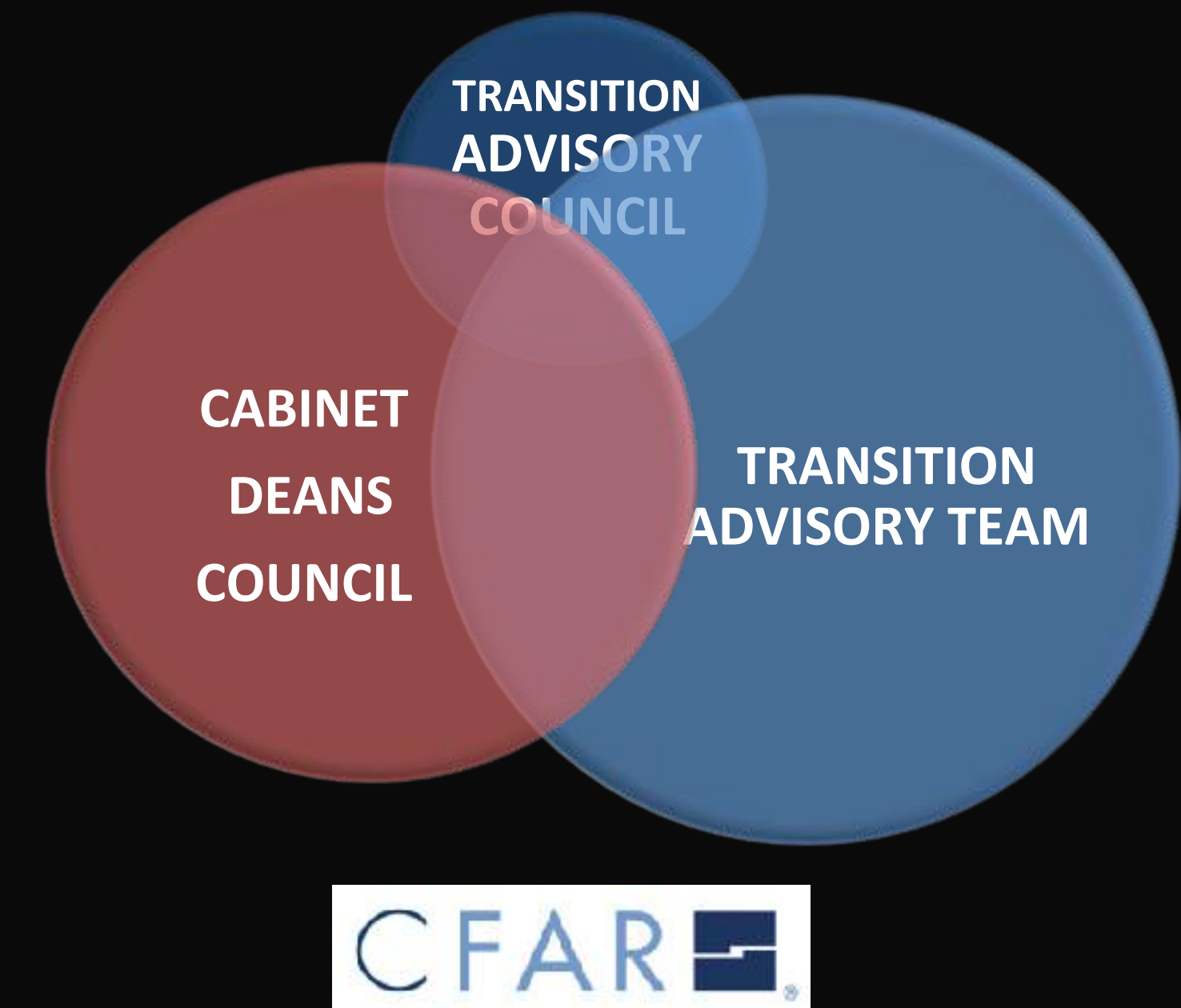
GROWTH, BRAND, EFFICIENCY, CULTURE, **OUTCOMES**



## UNO TRANSITION ADVISORY COUNCIL

The intent of this transition plan is to help:

- o Gain a 360° understanding of the strengths, opportunities and challenges of UNO in a methodical and expeditious manner.
- o Use regular and strategic meetings with the Chancellor's leadership teams (Vice chancellors, associate chancellors, deans and advisory team members) to help Chancellor gain a deep understanding of UNO
- o Engage the Transition Council and Team as widely as possible: Learn from the leadership, faculty, students, staff and community members' perspectives on the university's education, research, and public engagement missions.
- o Develop working relationships with leadership and transition teams, allowing Chancellor to share his core values, expectations and leadership style.



**Always face the blatant truth  
Always focus on the horizon**





**UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT OMAHA**

# **MISSION**

**The University of Nebraska at Omaha is Nebraska's metropolitan university — a university with strong academic values and significant relationships with our local, regional, national and international communities that transforms and improves life.**



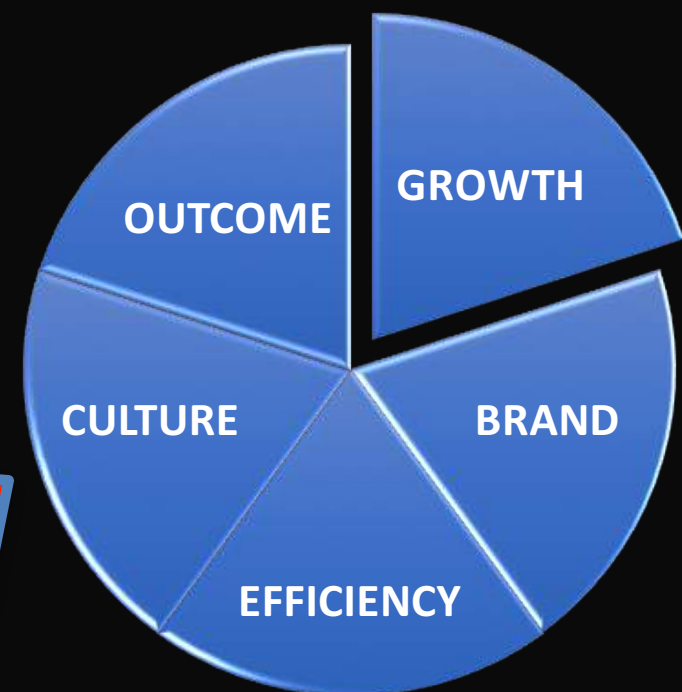
UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT OMAHA

## UNO TRANSITION ADVISORY COUNCIL





## Definitions for Pillar Group Presentations on Culture



**“Culture is the way we do things around here”**

**“Culture is the water that we swim in”**

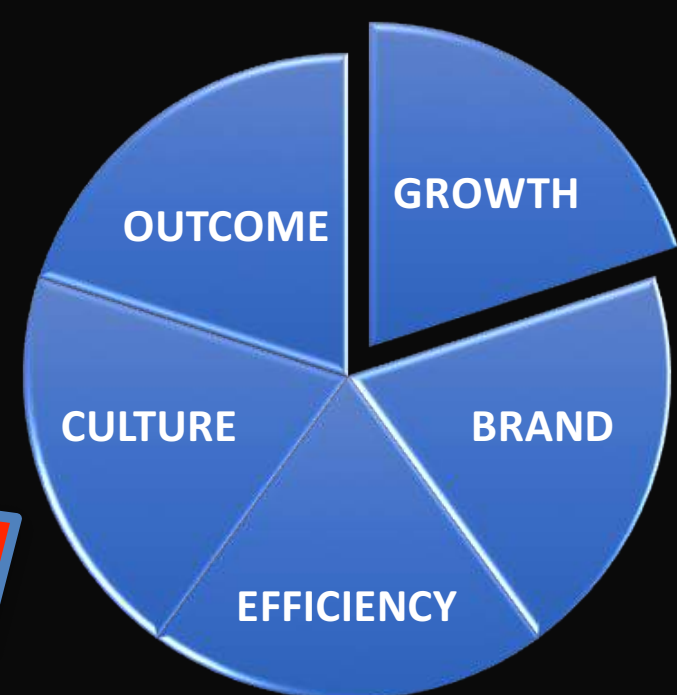
**“Culture is the learned and shared knowledge that specific groups use to generate their behavior and interpret their experience of the world. ”**

**BREAKOUTS**



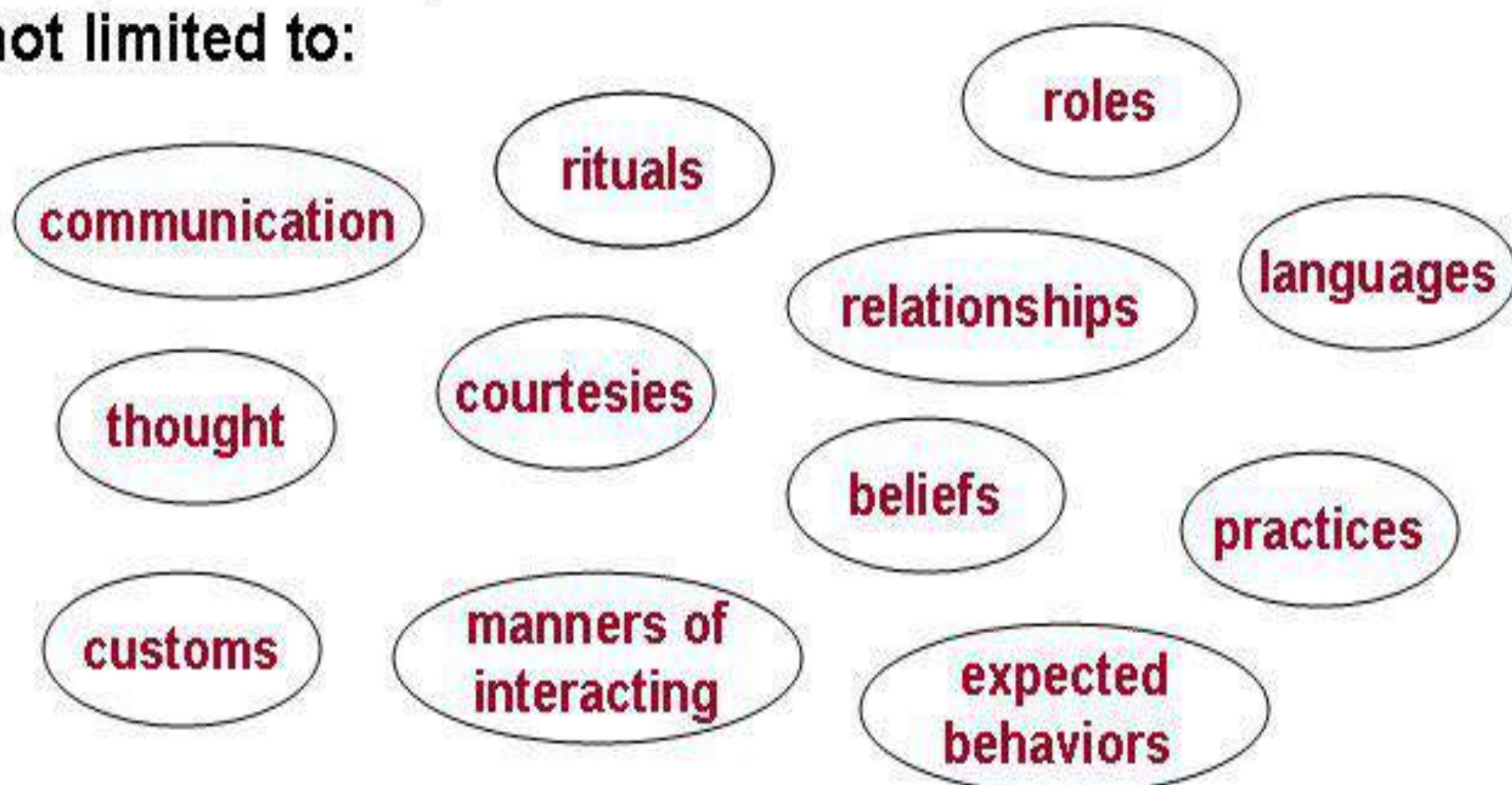


## Definitions for Pillar Group Presentations on Culture



**BREAKOUTS**

**Culture** is the learned and shared knowledge that specific groups use to generate their behavior and interpret their experience of the world. It includes but is not limited to:







## Themes Across the Pillar Group Presentations on Culture (1)

Three subcommittees—on Educate, Discover, and Engage—presented their analyses for discussion to the full TAC. Some overarching themes emerged among the three areas, including:

- **Aligning culture and strategy is crucial**—There was a strong sense that formally defining the culture and explicitly linking it to strategy will accelerate UNO's ability to thrive as an organization. Areas of strength, such as student-centeredness and engagement, are examples of values that could serve as the basis of UNO culture—to help Mavericks know what the "O" represents.
- **Student engagement is a strength at UNO**—Across the presentations, there was a sense that UNO's engagement of students and student-centeredness is a big part of what makes UNO special. The commitment that faculty and staff have to students and the engagement of students with athletics, musical performances, and events were all things that TAC members felt were a particular strength of the UNO culture.



**BREAKOUTS**



## Themes Across the Pillar Group Presentations on Culture (2)

Three subcommittees—on Educate, Discover, and Engage—presented their analyses for discussion to the full TAC. Some overarching themes emerged among the three areas, including:

- **Student diversity is a huge strength**—Each presentation explored the value that an increasingly diverse student body brings to UNO's campus and the community as a whole.
- **Continuing to invest in the culture of education and discovery at UNO is very important**—It was acknowledged in the presentations that the culture of engagement, particularly student engagement, at UNO is a strong one. However, it was also noted that the culture surrounding education and discovery could be stronger and more clearly defined.



**BREAKOUTS**



## Reflections & Observations on the One Minute Essays

### 1. What are insights you had in this session about the culture ?

- Creating a culture of “opportunity” is valuable
- UNO has an informal culture, defining & formalizing it would be useful
- Faculty and staff want to be rewarded for their engagement and service
- UNO’s culture is complex



BREAKOUTS



## Reflections & Observations on the One Minute Essays

### 2. What things we need to do to further enhance the culture?

- Define cultural values and communicate them.
- Be strategic and prioritize.
- Talk openly about culture to further strengthen and enhance it.
- Support and reward positive, desired behaviors in tangible ways.



BREAKOUTS





## Reflections & Observations on the One Minute Essays

### 3. What didn't we talk about that we should have discussed?

- History/evolution of our culture. We do not have the same culture that we did 30 years ago. What has changed? How is this good?
- Specifically, what is our culture, what are our values? (Do we have a sub-culture(s) across the campus, are these good?)
- As UNO's online presence grows, I wonder how our culture will change. What is the culture of the online environment and how is it similarly or/and different than the in-person, on-campus experience?
- Formalize entire campus values/commitments



BREAKOUTS



## CFAR's Reflections & Observations on the UNO Culture

As we have reflected on what we heard, these ideas feel most important:

- Culture of UNO has many different definitions
- Define UNO's values and cultural assets
- Align infrastructure to support behavioral change
- Ongoing pursuit of the blatant truth is important
- Strategy + Culture = Thriving Institution



**BREAKOUTS**



## Today's agenda



### BREAKOUTS

EDUCATE

ENGAGE

DISCOVER

UNO Transition Advisory Council

<b>1</b>	<b>7:30 - 7:45 AM</b>	<b>Purpose and Overview of the TAC Meeting</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>7:45 - 8:25 AM</b>	<b>Presentation by Educate Pillar Sub-Committee, Followed by Discussion at tables and full group</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>8:25- 9:05 AM</b>	<b>Presentation by Discover Pillar Sub-Committee, Followed by Discussion at tables and full group</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>9:05 - 9:45 AM</b>	<b>Presentation by Engage Pillar Sub-Committee, Followed by Discussion at tables and full group</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>9:45 - 10:00 AM</b>	<b>Reflections &amp; Closing, The One Minute Essay</b>





## Today's agenda



**BREAKOUTS**

EDUCATE

ENGAGE

DISCOVER

UNO Transition Advisory Council

**Every good conversation starts with good listening.**

**make space**

listen

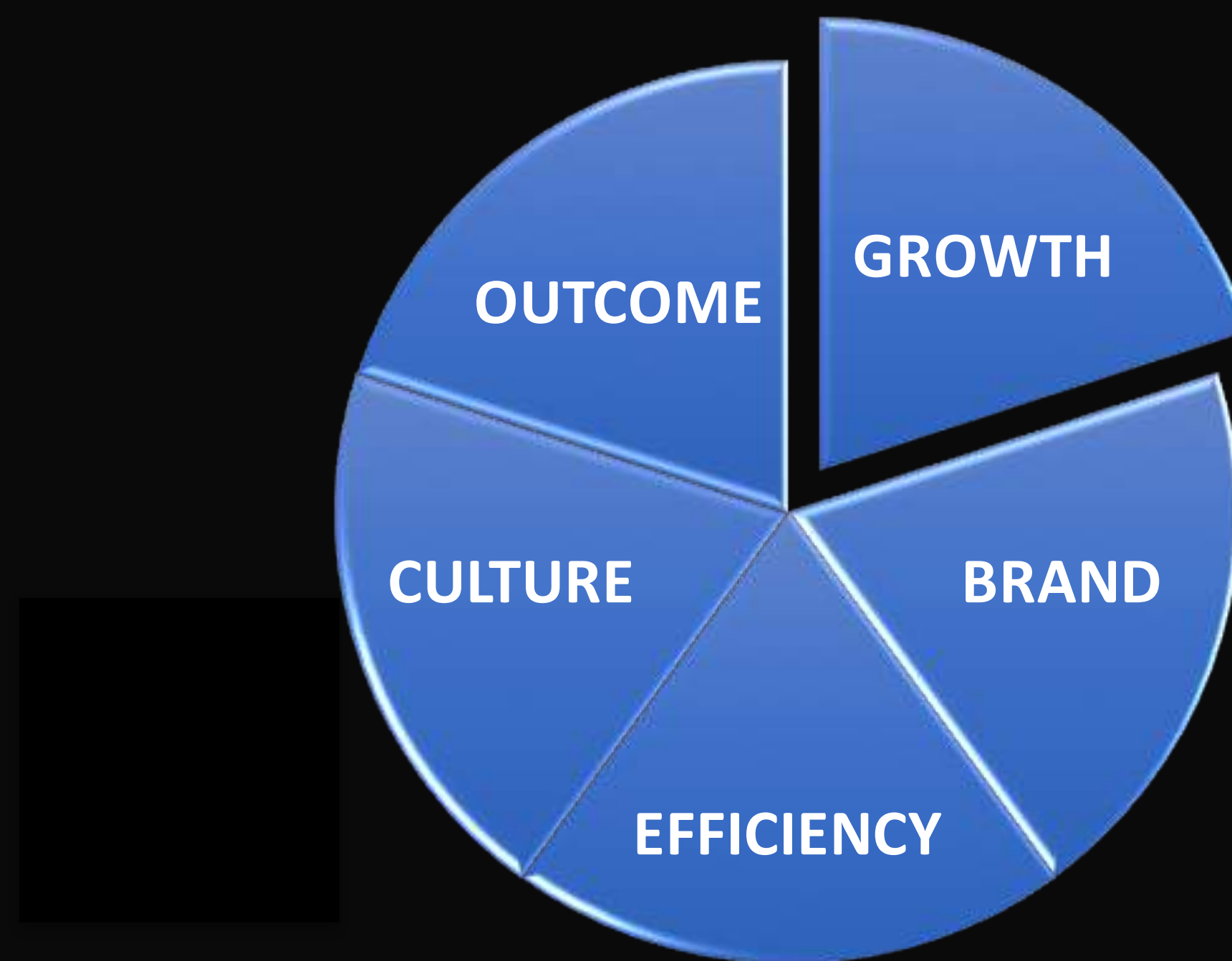






UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT OMAHA

## UNO TRANSITION ADVISORY COUNCIL



**BUT...WHAT DO WE MEAN BY OUTCOMES**

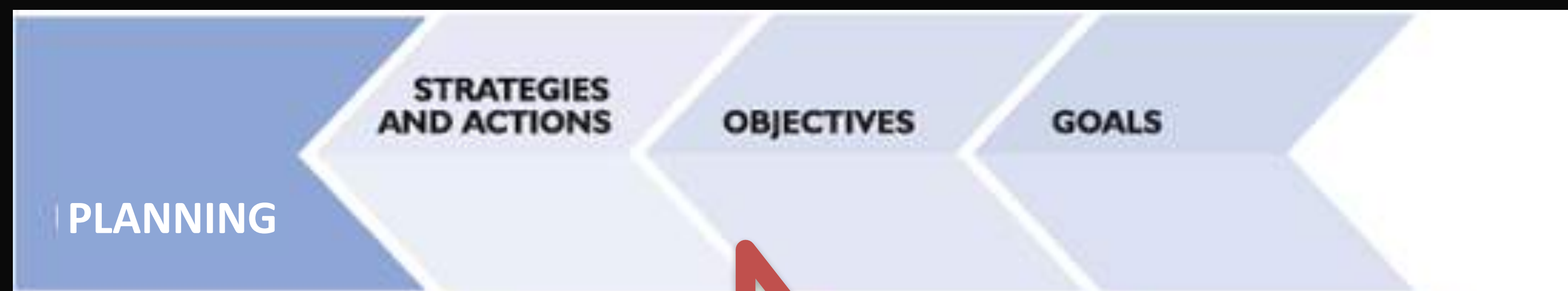


## Meeting Objectives for Today: **OUTCOMES FOR UNO**



**BREAKOUTS**

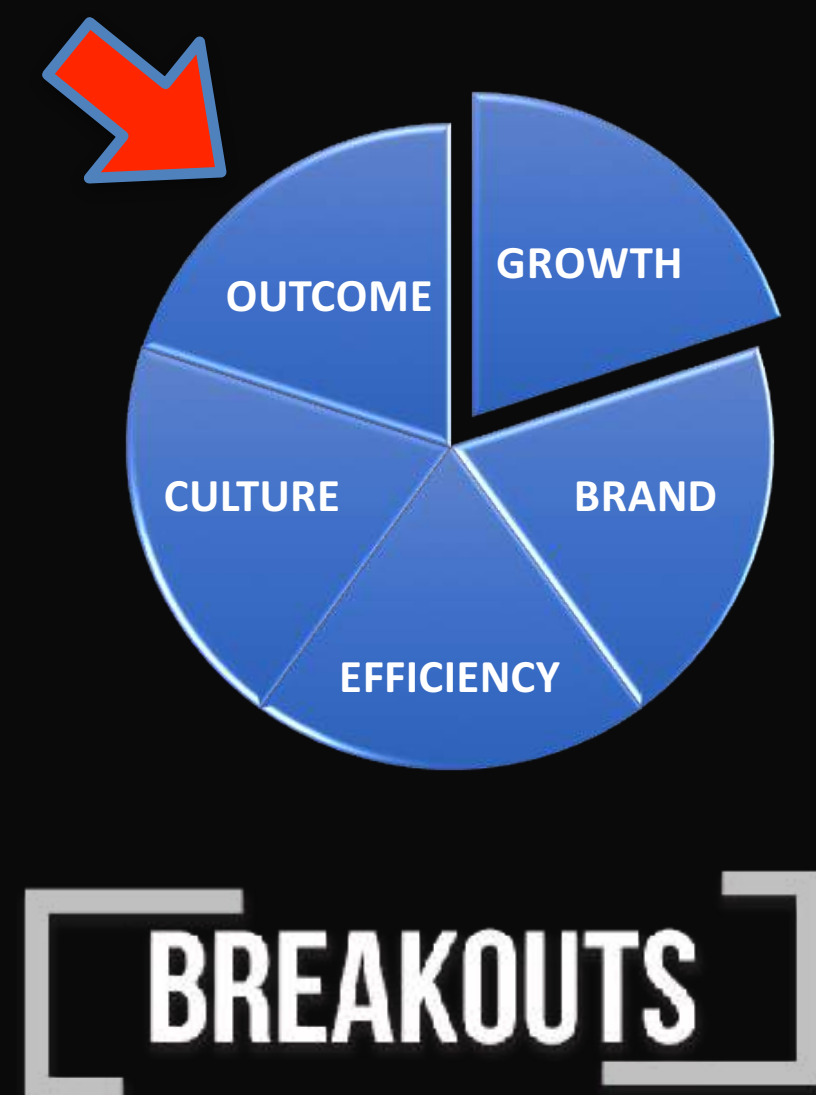
UNO Transition Advisory Council



**BUT...WHAT DO WE MEAN BY OUTCOMES**



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UNO Transition Advisory Council

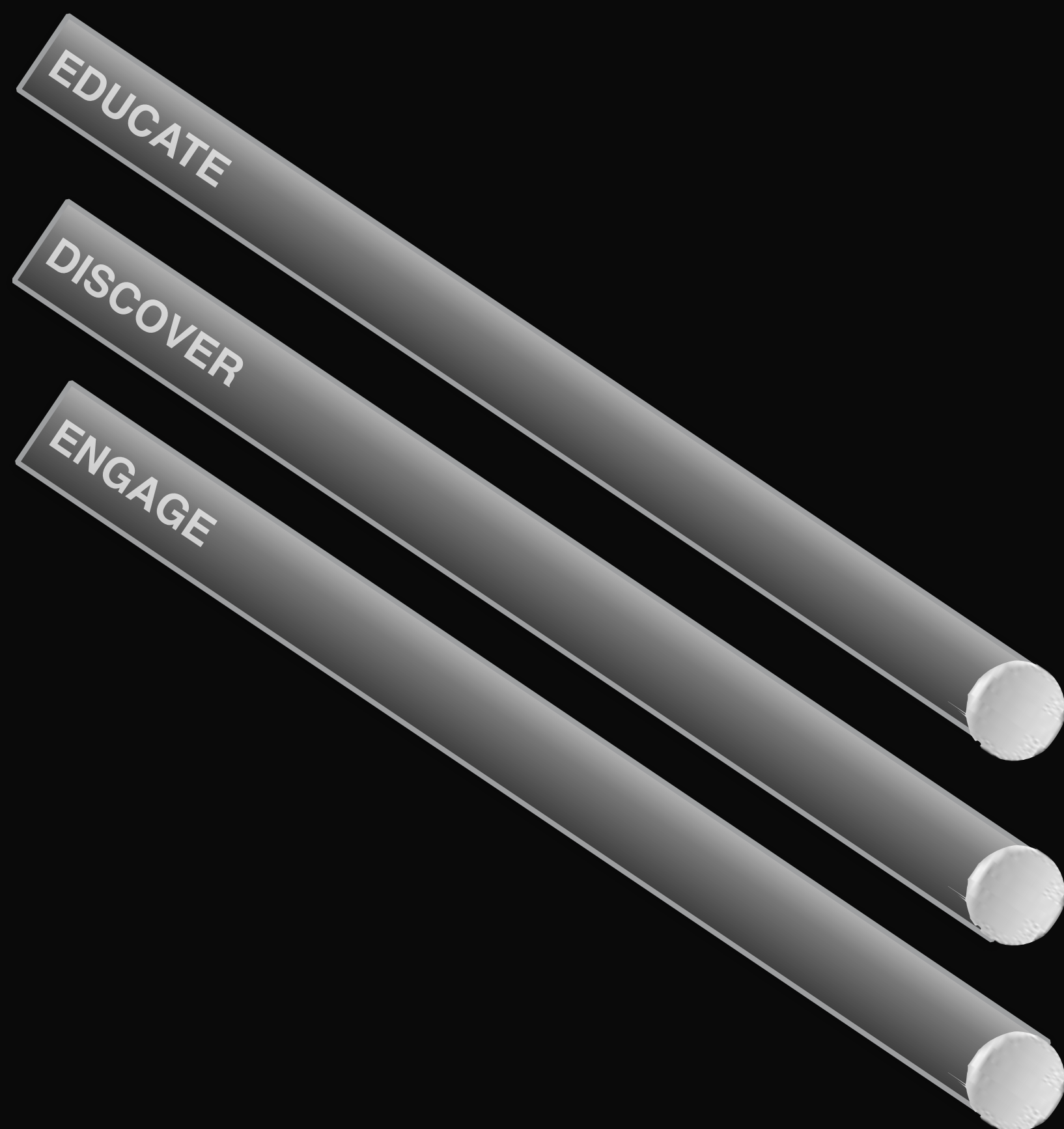


**BUT...WHAT DO WE MEAN BY OUTCOMES**





## PILLAR PRESENTATION DISCUSSION ON THE UNO OUTCOME



**EDUCATE PILLAR PRESENTATION**

**DISCOVER PILLAR PRESENTATION**

**ENGAGE PILLAR PRESENTATION**





## PILLAR PRESENTATION DISCUSSION ON OUTCOMES

**Please discuss the following questions in your table groups**

1. What, if anything, surprised you about what you heard?
2. What, if anything, did you expect to hear that you did not?
3. What do you believe are the 2-3 biggest opportunities for UNO to enhance the outcomes of UNO to the benefit of the community as a whole? Why?

- ▶ Please capture your full discussion on these questions and be prepared to share one answer to each question with the full group.





## Reflections on the day: One-minute essay

Take a minute to jot down your answers to the following questions:

### Question 1

**What are 1 or 2 insights you had in this session about our outcomes at UNO?**

### Question 2

**What are 1 or 2 changes we might make to improve our outcomes at UNO?**

### Question 3

**What should we talk about that we have not regarding our outcomes at UNO?**





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**Nebraska**  
Omaha





UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT OMAHA

# Transition Advisory Council

24 October 2017

## Outcomes: Educate

Ann Anderson Berry

Melanie Bloom

John Christensen

Dele Davies

Carlo Eby

Angela Eikenberry

Laura Grams

Nealy Grandgenett

Melissa Lee

Erin Owen

Bob Whitehouse



## Chancellor Gold: Guiding Questions

- What outcomes should be the focus during the next decade of leadership across the University of Nebraska at Omaha? (In this presentation, we examine the Educate pillar.)
- What is the horizon to which we aspire? What are the aspirational goals in education?



## INVESTING IN NEBRASKA'S FUTURE

Strategic Planning Framework 2014-2016

University of Nebraska Board of Regents

A goal for all four NU campuses: “We strive to be **the best public university in the country** as measured by the impact we have on our people and our state, and through them, the world.”

We are trying to “to help build and sustain a Nebraska that offers its citizens **educational and economic opportunity and a high quality of life.**”

**What is UNO's role in achieving the system-wide goals?**



## The NU Strategic Planning framework consists of:

“six overarching goals emphasizing access and affordability, quality academic programs, workforce and economic development, research growth, engagement with the state, and accountability.”

“The University of Nebraska will ...”

1. provide the opportunity for Nebraskans to enjoy **a better life** through access to **high quality, affordable** undergraduate, graduate and professional education.
2. build and sustain undergraduate, graduate and professional programs of high quality with an **emphasis on excellent teaching**.
3. play a critical role in **building a talented, competitive workforce ...**
4. pursue **excellence ... in research** and scholarly activity, as well as their **application ...**
5. serve the entire state through **strategic and effective engagement ...**
6. be **cost effective and accountable** to the citizens of the state.





# UNO Strategic Plan, 2017

## Vision

*As a Metropolitan University of distinction, the University of Nebraska at Omaha transforms and improves the quality of life locally, nationally and globally.*

## Mission

The University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO) is recognized as the premier Metropolitan University throughout the United States and the world.

## Four Goals

1. Student-centeredness
2. Academic Excellence
3. Community Engagement
4. Institutional Quality





UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT OMAHA

## Aspirational Goals

Transition Advisory Council, Outcomes: Educate





# UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT OMAHA

- ❖ To be the best metropolitan university in the country, maintaining national leadership in community engagement and military friendliness, and providing an excellent value in education.
- ❖ To continue transforming the lives of students from diverse backgrounds by creating opportunities for academic and economic success.
- ❖ To achieve an 85% retention rate and 70% six-year graduation rate.
- ❖ To develop well-informed critical thinkers and globally-aware citizens who will enhance civil discourse and collaborative problem-solving in our community, state, and beyond.
- ❖ To become a model institution for the practice of displaying, analyzing, and improving upon our educational outcomes.

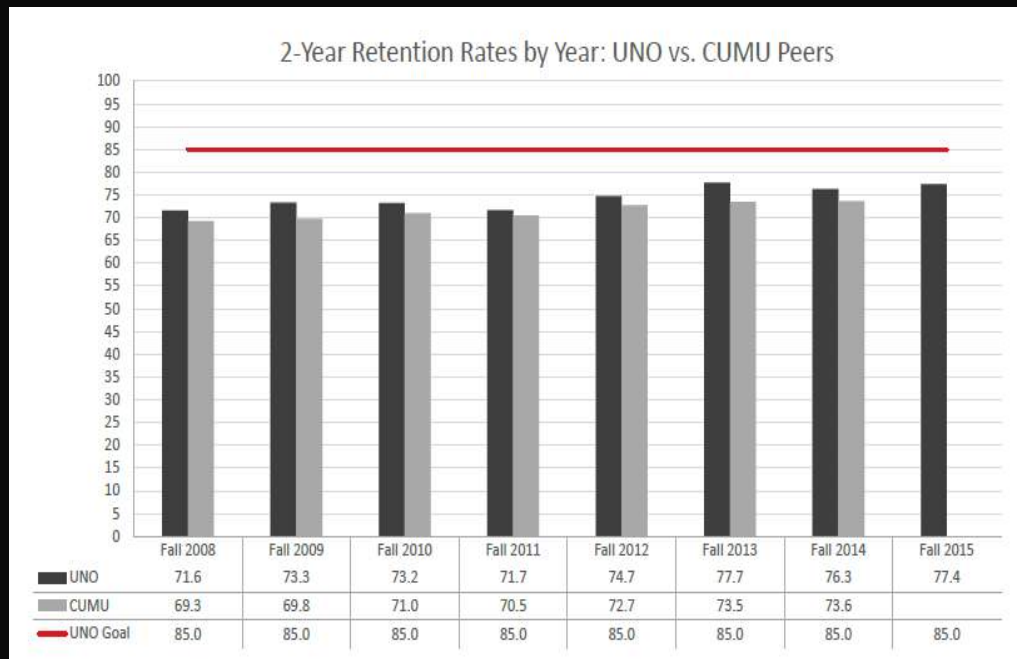


## Are these realistic aspirations?

2016 IPEDS Overall Graduation Rate = 45%; this year up to **47%**

UNO outperforms most of its peer institutions in this area  
(except UNC Charlotte, U Northern Illinois, and University of Northern Iowa).

UNI in 2014 = 65.2%



UNO 2016 First-Yr

Retention Rate = **77.9%**,

2015 2-Yr Retention =  
**77.4%**

(2016 Student Outcomes Report,  
UNO Office of Institutional  
Effectiveness, 8/17)

**Thompson Learning  
Community Retention  
Rate = 89%**

(UNO Gateway, (10/11/17))





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# Strengths



What strengths can help UNO achieve its educational outcome goals?



# Strengths: UNO offers excellent value for the cost of education, **because...**

- Faculty and staff are dedicated to student success.
- Student experiences include undergraduate research, study abroad, service learning, and internships.
- UNO benefits from the excellent school systems and community resources in the Omaha metro area.
- UNO has begun to focus strongly on assessment at the program, degree, and general education levels to ensure academic excellence.
- UNO has created innovative interdisciplinary programs and is well positioned to develop further in this area.
- And many more...
- **What other strengths do you see as essential to achieving UNO's educational outcome goals?**



*As a metropolitan university, UNO will continue to educate students with a wide range of academic preparation and ability, leading to unique **CHALLENGES**:*

- The inclusive admissions policy we wish to maintain requires strong student support services and responsiveness from programs.  
*Will we have sufficient “lifeguards and lifeboats”? How can we reach students who spend so many hours working off-campus?*
- Students who are successful in courses like Algebra and Composition are far more likely to succeed throughout the curriculum.  
*Through Sequential Learning Analysis (UNO IE) and Advising, can we help students who are not successful in these areas to find a more optimal pathway to a degree?*
- The educational experience may not be uniform in all programs.  
*How can we assure consistent high quality?*





# Challenges

- Excessive reliance on part-time faculty may affect academic outcomes, retention, and other program capacities.

To achieve our educational outcome goals, what benchmarks should be set for reducing the part-time to full-time ratio?

- College structures and budgets may create barriers to interdisciplinary collaboration.

How can we break down barriers while respecting the integrity and mission of distinct colleges and programs?

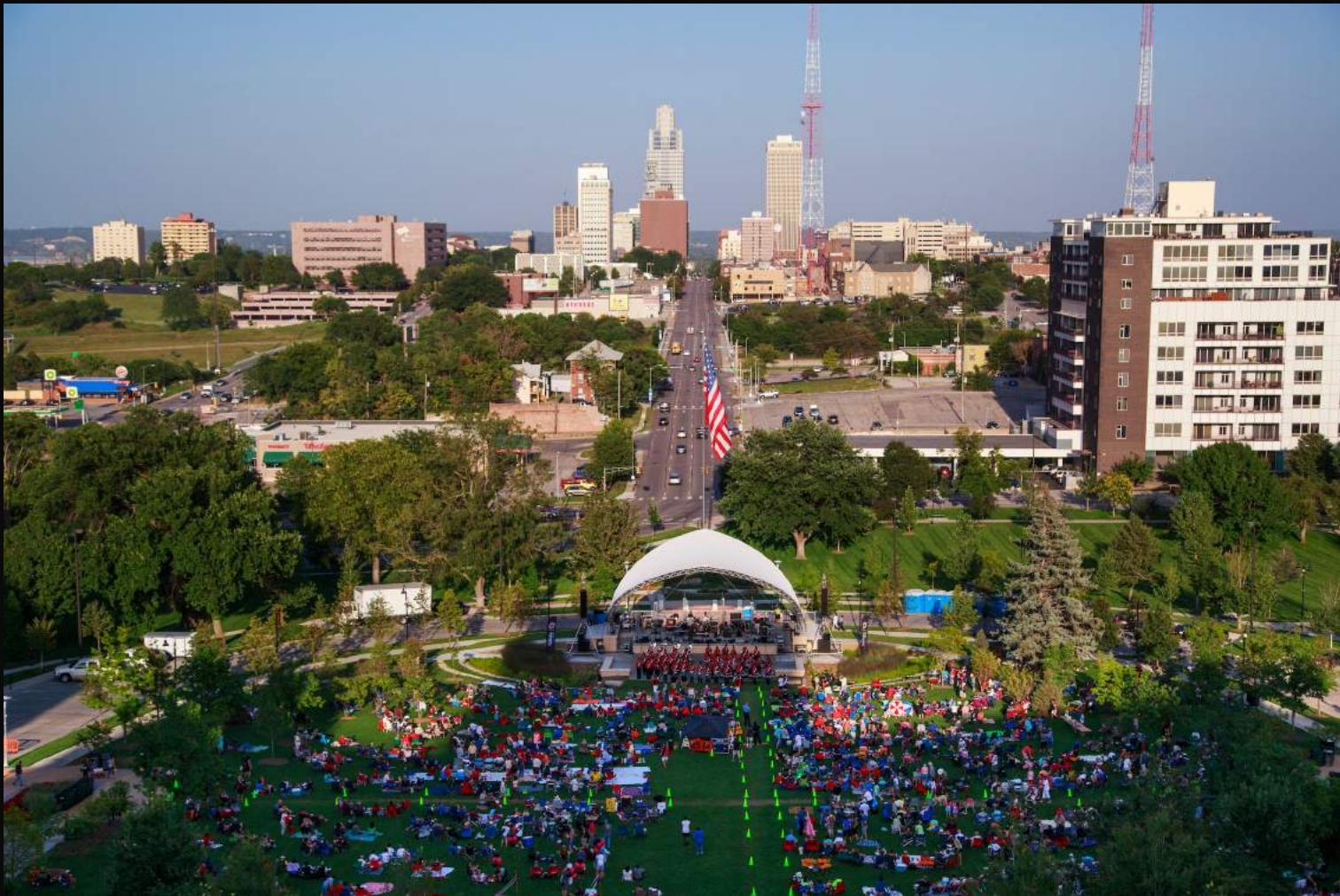
- Some educational outcomes important to UNO's metropolitan mission are difficult to quantify.

Can we find other ways to ensure these outcomes are adequately represented in our self-assessments?



UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT OMAHA

## OPPORTUNITIES





UNO's growing synergy with **the Omaha metro area** may lead to improved educational outcomes and innovative programs **because of:**

- New potential collaborations with UNMC in a wide range of academic areas (including but far beyond pre-health programs), as well as research partnerships and cooperative community engagement.
- UNO's ability to meet workforce needs and be the preferred destination for metro-area corporations whose employees need continuing educational advancement.
- Thirty-plus years of links with MOEC, metropolitan service units, community colleges, the STEM ecosystem, early childhood and K-12 educational connections.
- A large alumni network that can be engaged toward the goal of developing internships, service learning, and other career-building opportunities.



UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT OMAHA

# External Threats



Image Courtesy of FanPop





# Budget, Budget, Budget...

and a few other threats:

- Budget cuts include not only state budget but also federal changes that may affect research funding and student financial aid. Financial pressure can cause students to drop out or delay completion.
- Declining appreciation for the value proposition of higher education.
- Efforts to expand enrollment require investment of resources; improved retention may result in greater need for student support services.
- A dual need to tie educational outcomes to specific workforce and employer requirements, while simultaneously providing adaptability of preparation to students who will likely hold several different jobs over the course of a career.
- Private companies like Google or Apple could be competitive in areas like graduate education, if they decided to move in that direction.



## Back to Aspirational Goals:

(1) What action items are in place for these goals?

(2) What action items are still needed?

(3) Does UNO have a way to gather and evaluate measurable data with respect to these goals?





## Aspirational Goals:

- ❖ To be the best metropolitan university in the country, maintaining national leadership in community engagement and military friendliness, and providing an excellent value in education.
- ❖ To continue transforming the lives of students from diverse backgrounds by creating opportunities for academic and economic success.
- ❖ To achieve an 85% retention rate and 70% six-year graduation rate.
- ❖ To develop well-informed critical thinkers and globally-aware citizens who will enhance civil discourse and collaborative problem-solving in our community, state, and beyond.
- ❖ To become a model institution for the practice of displaying, analyzing, and improving upon our educational outcomes.



## Examples of Action Items in Place:

- Strong efforts underway to improve retention.
- Faculty and staff committed to student success.
- Enthusiastic involvement with the Community Engagement Center and its mission.
- Extensive student support initiatives.
- Academic and career fairs and increased support for internships.
- Learning communities, including as a model for best practices.
- Improved advising in the colleges.
- Improved Honors program.
- Good campus-wide strategic planning process as a campus.
- Budget Response Team working to keep current cuts as far away from the classrooms as possible.





## Examples of Action Items Needed:

- A systematic, institution-wide effort to create internship opportunities for students.
- Easier processes for cross-college collaboration.
- Target support for programs that are excelling nationally or regionally, or occupy niche areas not readily available elsewhere. Identify other programs that are poised to move to this level with further support.
- Analyze growth and employment trends to compare against UNO's academic and degree offerings.
- Examine potential distance education enrollment across Nebraska and the U.S., making it a more well-defined goal for departments.
- And...?



UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT OMAHA

What are YOUR  
aspirational goals and  
priorities for UNO's  
educational outcomes?



What action items are  
needed to move toward  
those goals and priorities?

Thank you!

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## Discover + Outcomes Pillar

### Collaborative Community Engaged Translational Research Impacting Stakeholders' Decision Making and Beyond

Community engagement research is a fundamental component of UNO's identity and mission as a metropolitan university. Our commitment to engagement is reflected in UNO's academics, research, student body, partnerships, and institutional framework. As an engaged campus, UNO values mutually-beneficial partnerships where information and expertise is shared and applied for the common good.





## **Discover + Outcomes Pillar**

- Gail Baker
- Theresa Barron-McKeagney
- Howard W. Buffett
- Ann Fruhling
- Sue Morris
- Lou Pol
- BJ Reed
- Randy Schmailzl
- Bev Seay
- Thomas Walker
- Regent Bob Whitehouse
- Don Leuenberger



## Reflection

- No explicit statement defining what is “DISCOVERY” in the context of UNO as a metropolitan university.
- If DISCOVERY is thought of as mostly being aligned with basic research then it doesn't fit UNO.



## Strengths

### Diversity of Research Funding Sources

- **Applied research** is systematic study to gain knowledge to apply towards a specific end.
- **Basic Research** is systematic study in search of fundamental knowledge without a search for a particular application of that knowledge.
- **Engagement** activities involve a collaboration with the broader community to provide knowledge and benefit to people and organizations.
- **Creative** activity funding supports the arts and humanities
- **Translational Research**





## Translational Research

- Translational research – often used interchangeably with translational **medicine** or translational science – is a highly interdisciplinary field, the primary goal of which is to coalesce assets of various natures within the individual pillars in order to improve the **global healthcare system** significantly.



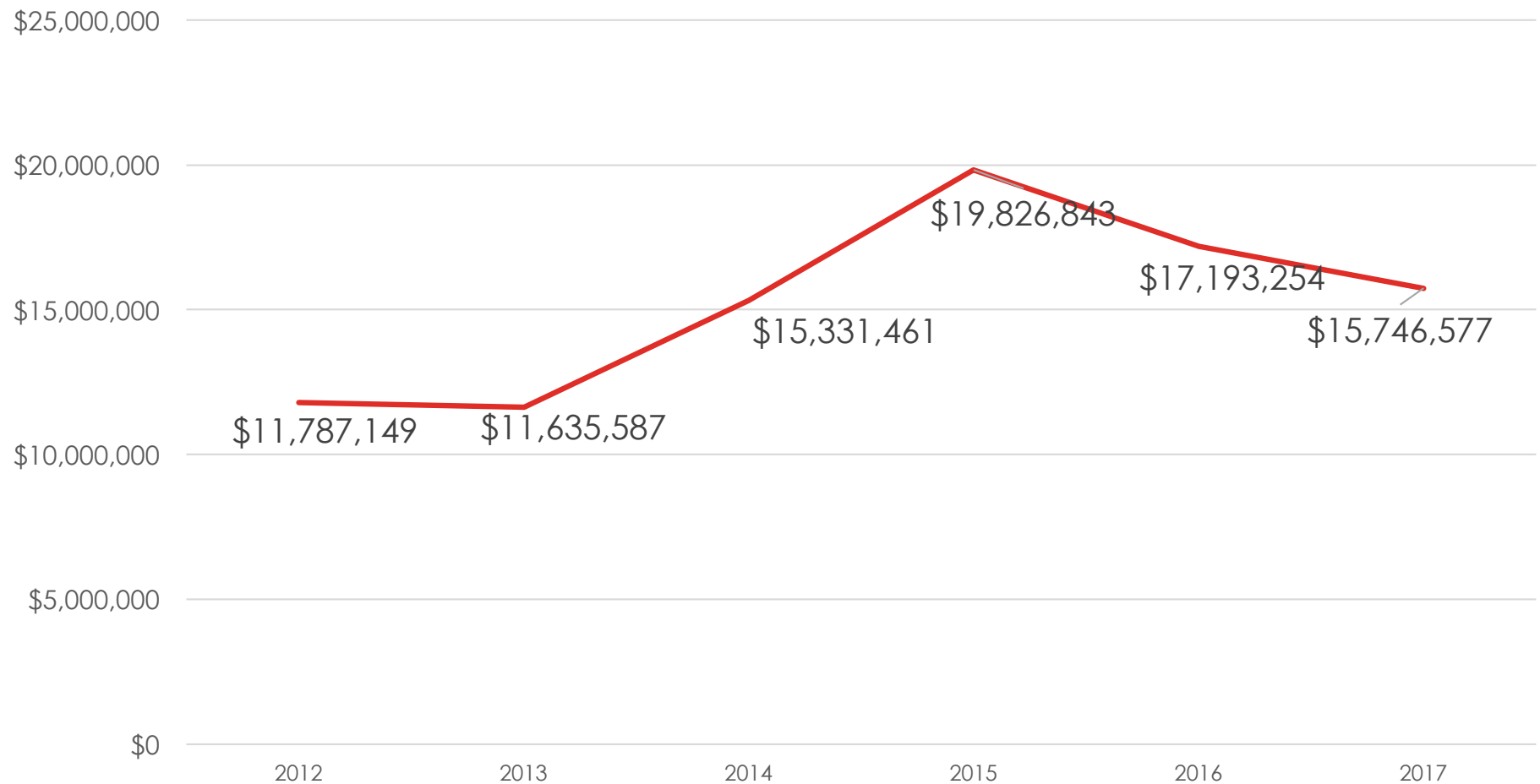
## Translational Research

- Translational research – often used interchangeably with translational **community engagement research** or translational science – is a highly interdisciplinary field, the primary goal of which is to coalesce assets of various natures within the individual pillars in order to improve our **community (in the broadest sense)** significantly.



# UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT OMAHA

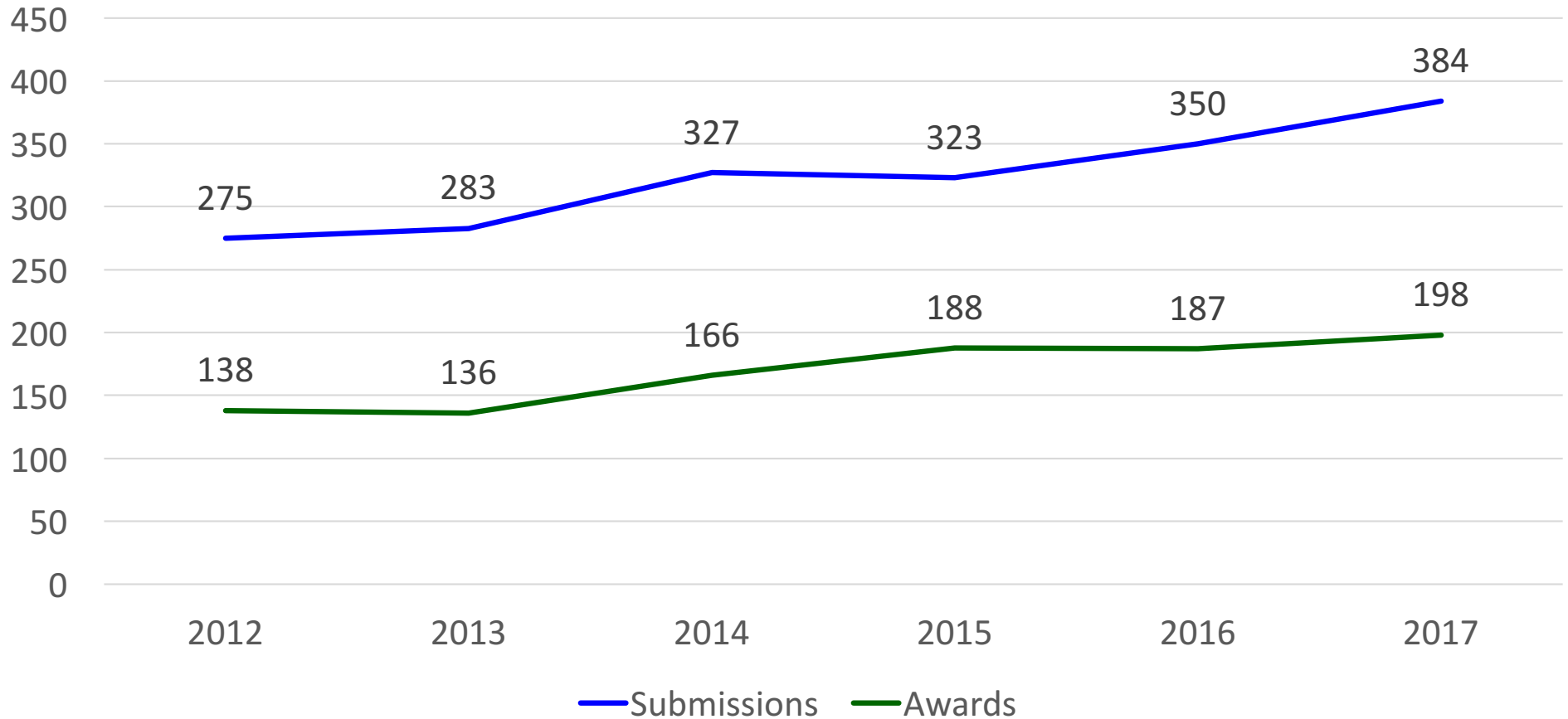
## Awards FY12-17







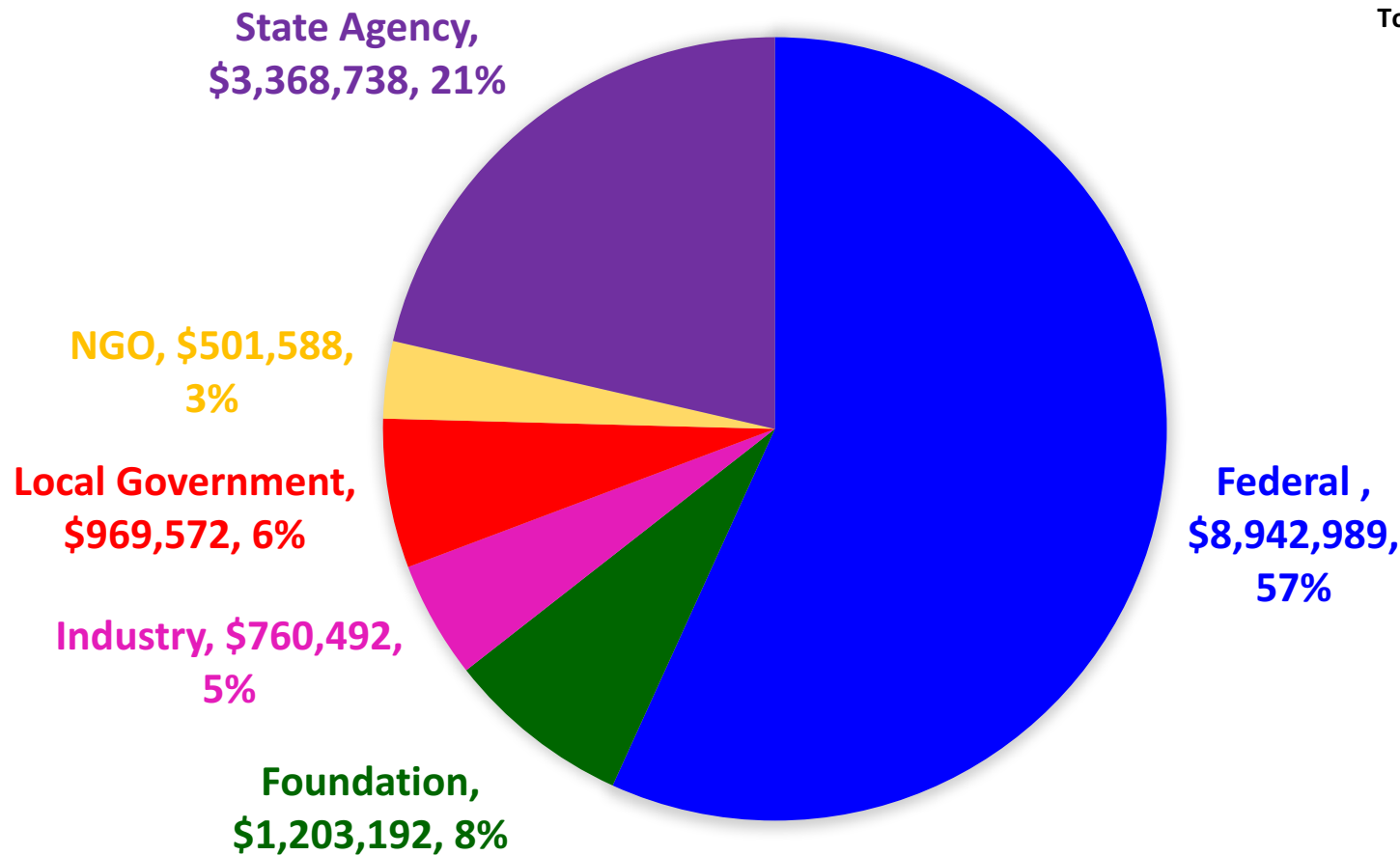
## NUMBER OF SUBMISSIONS AND AWARDS FY12-17





## FUNDING SOURCES FY17

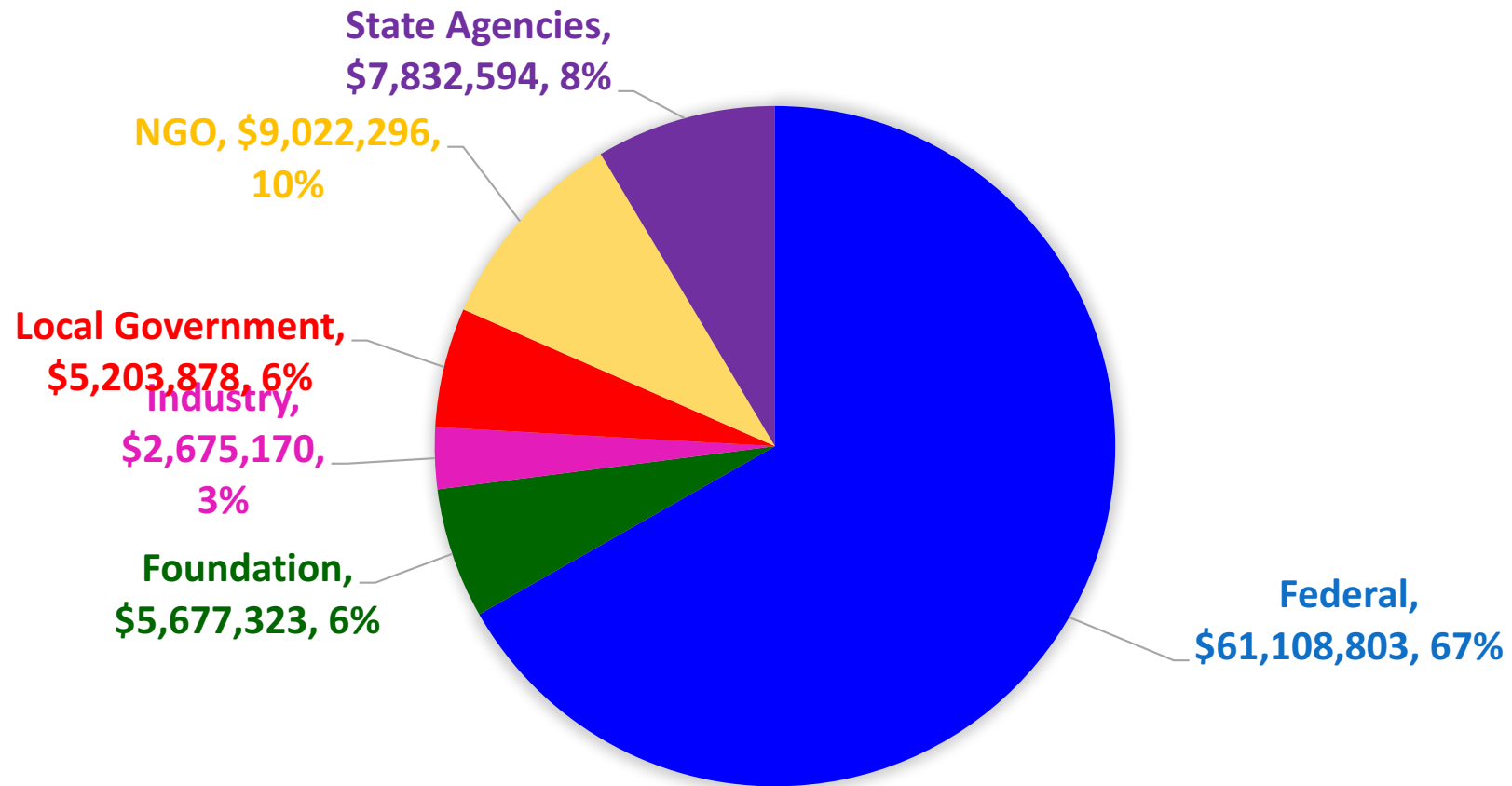
Total Funding \$15,746,571





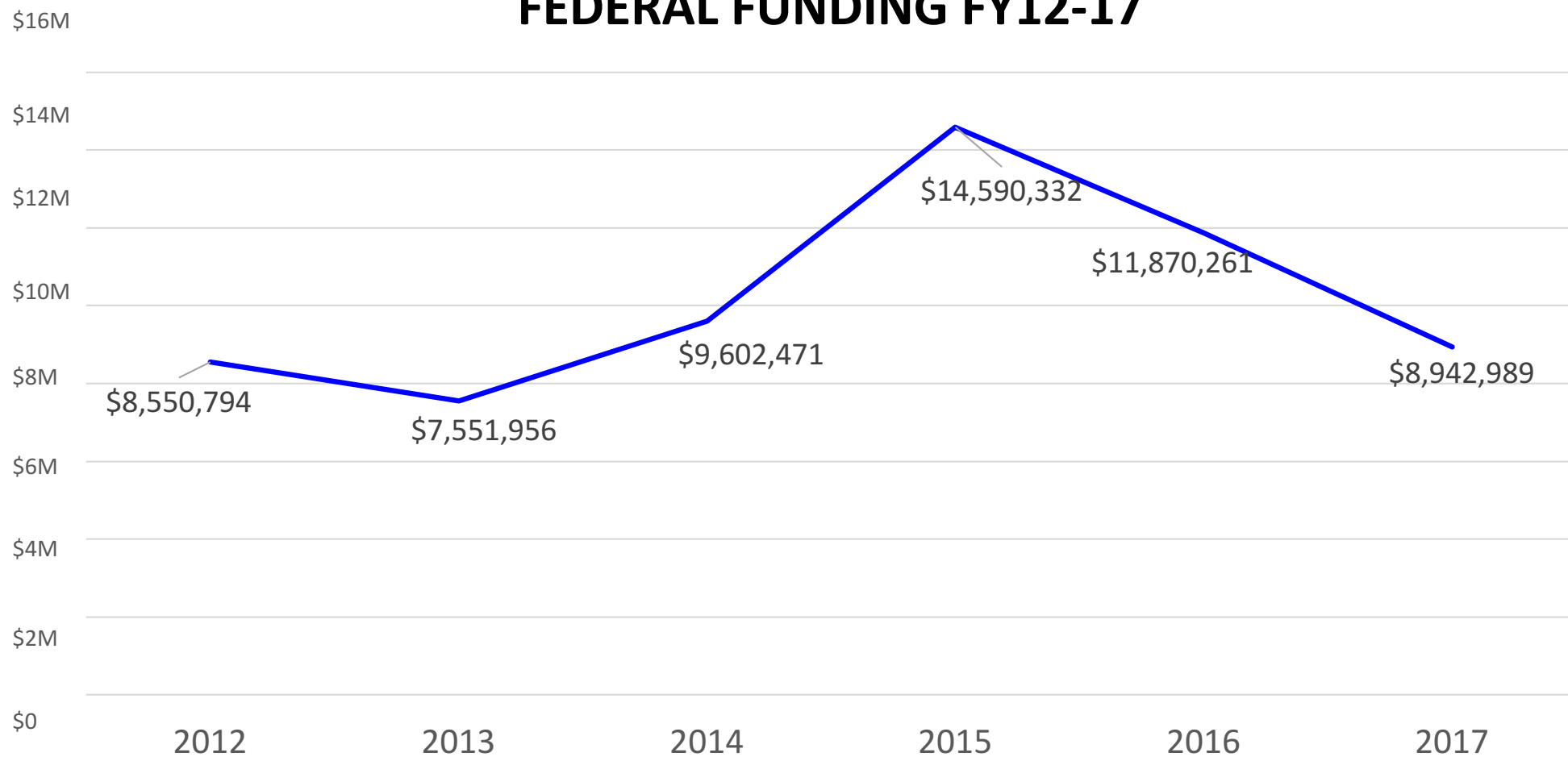
Total Funding \$91,520,064

## FUNDING SOURCES FY12-17





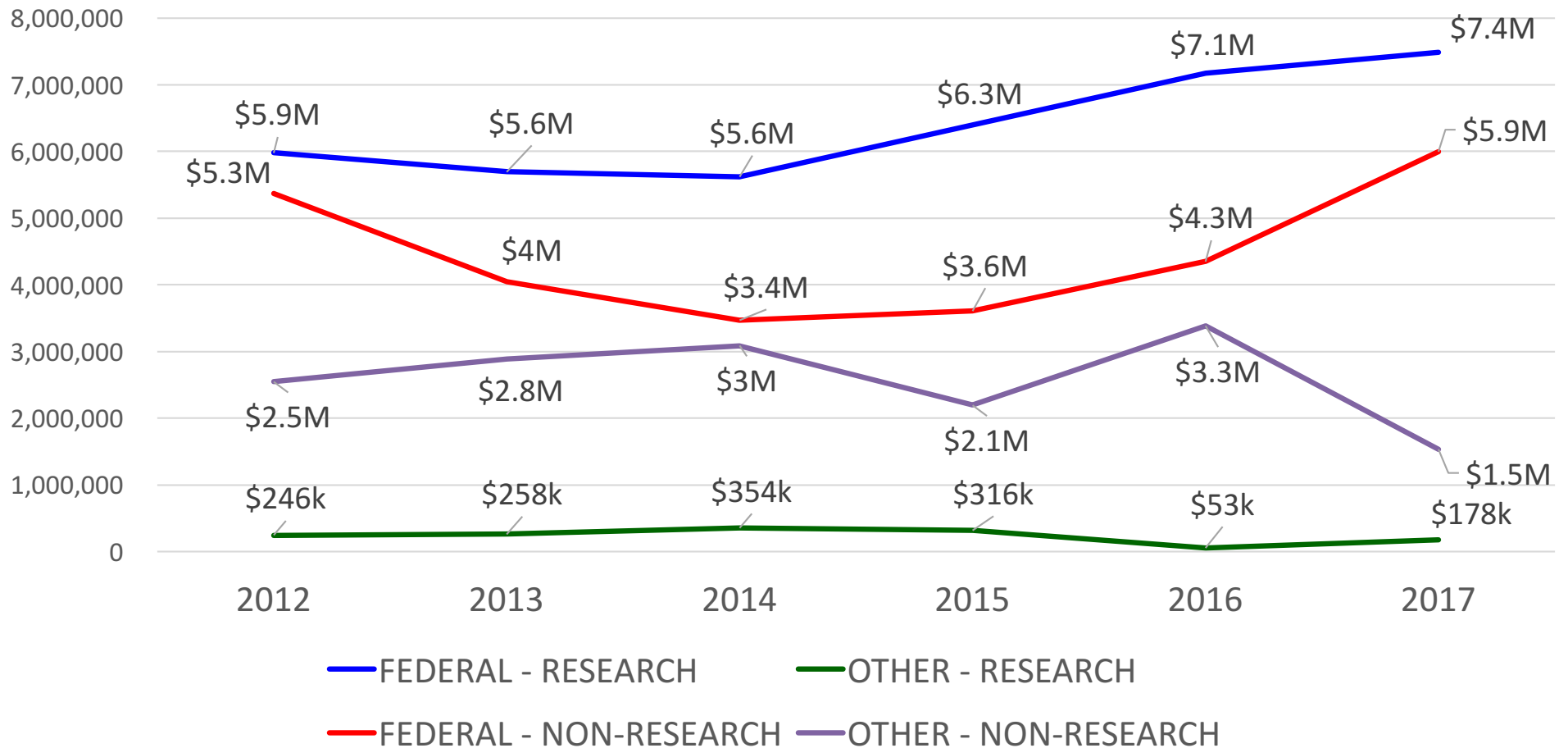
## FEDERAL FUNDING FY12-17







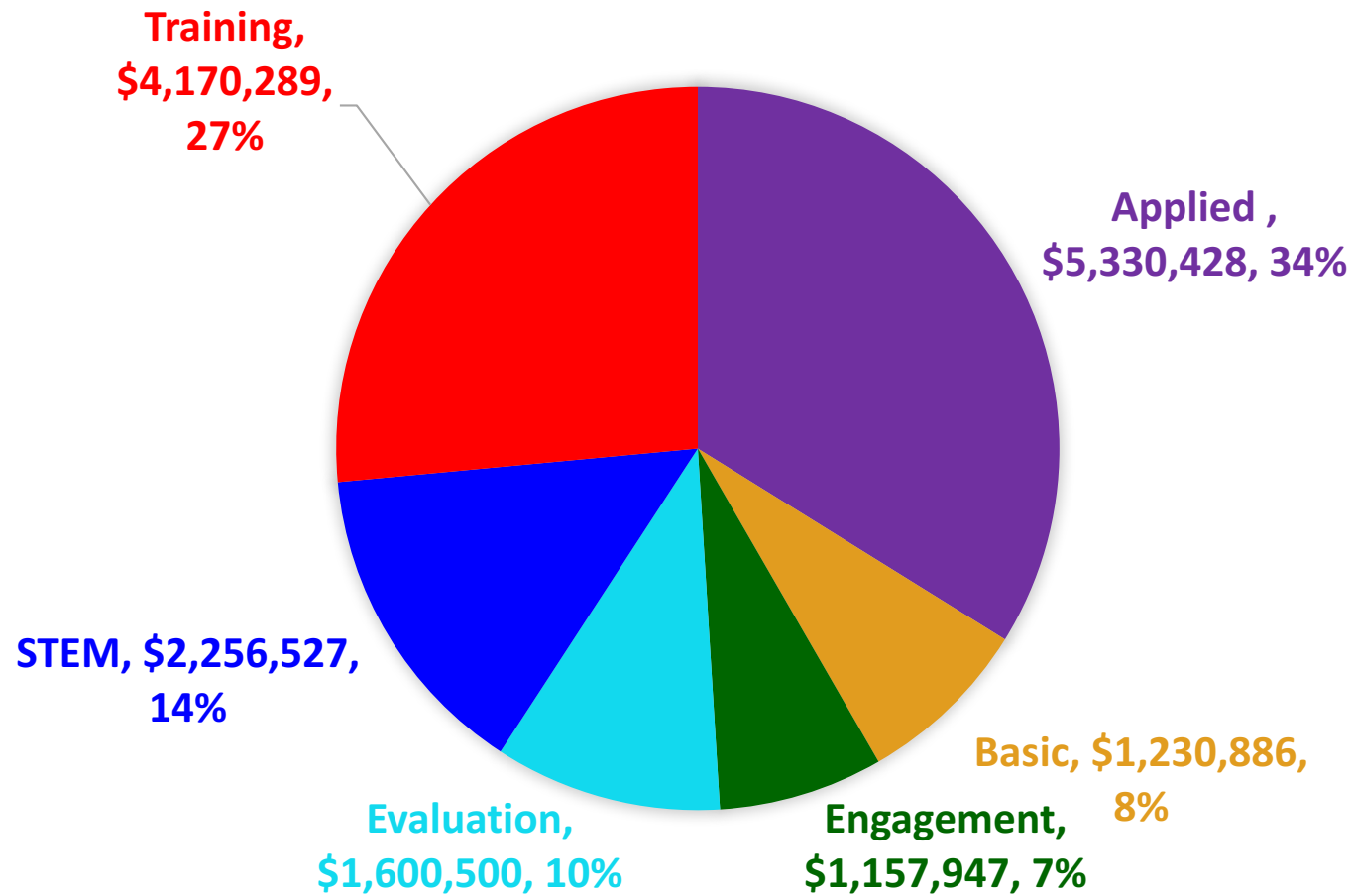
## UNO Reported Expenditures FY12-17





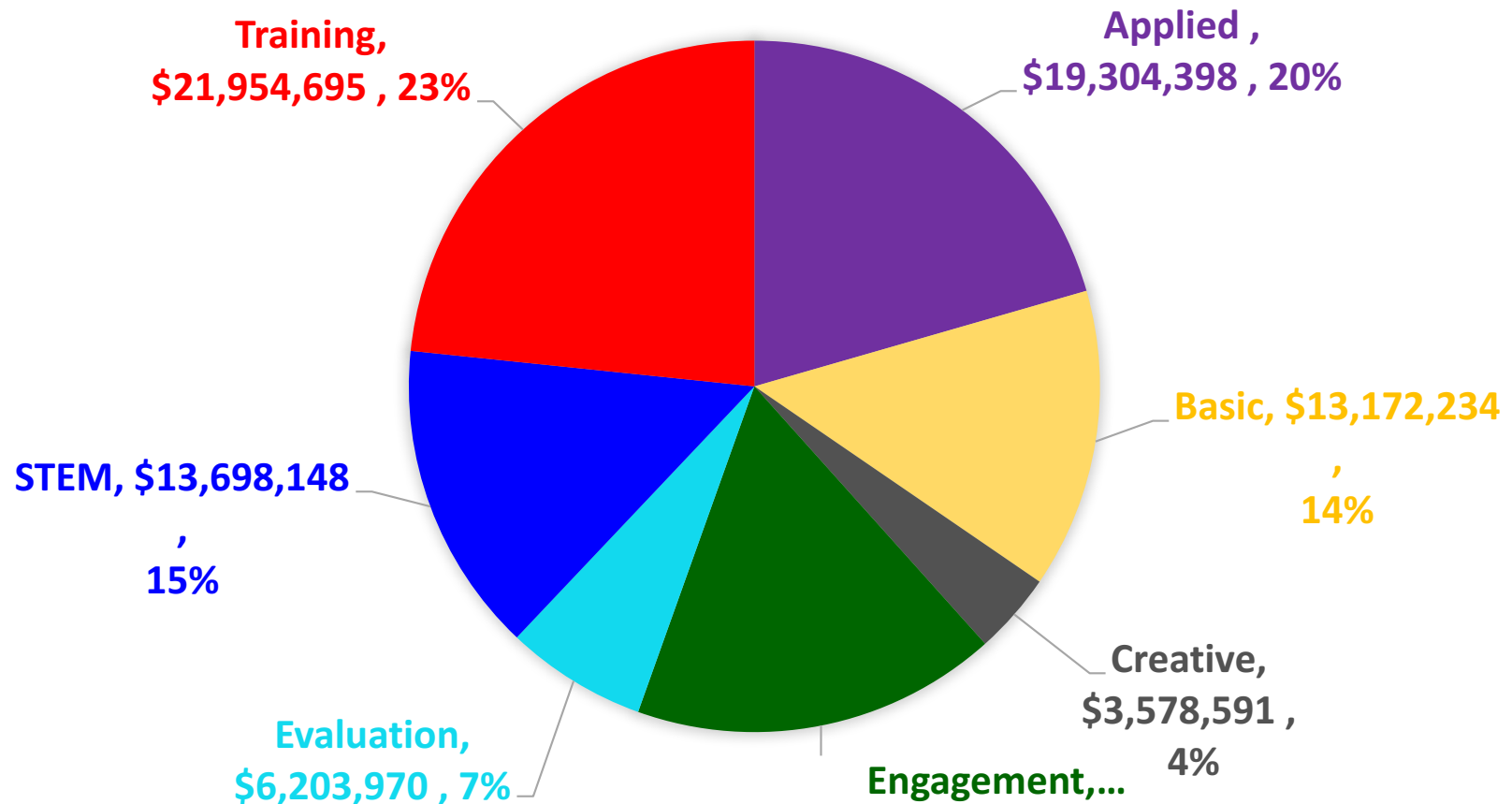
## FUNDING CATEGORIES 2017

Total Funding: \$15,777,093



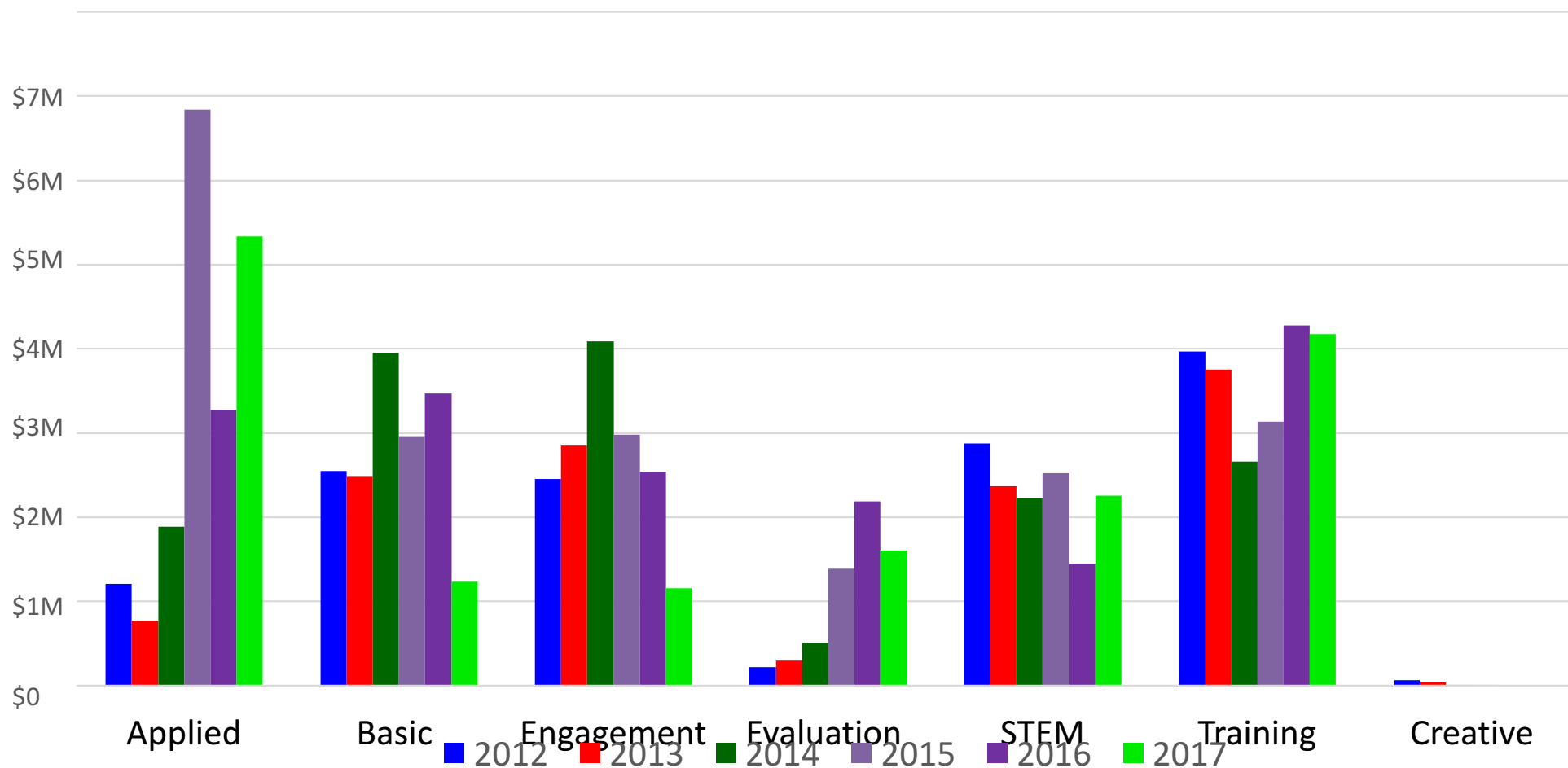


## FUNDING CATEGORIES FY12-17





## FUNDING CATEGORIES FY12-17







## Reflection

- Are we using the best (right?) metrics to understand the impact, productivity, collaboration, partnerships, economic impact, etc. UNO provides to the community and beyond?
  - Number of Community Engaged IRB Protocols
  - Legislative Policy Impact
  - Economic Impact
  - K12 Education Impact



## Strengths

- The Barbara Weitz Community Engagement Center (Weitz CEC) building **partner organizations** have the opportunity to work within the center where they **benefit** from unique **access** to UNO faculty (**researchers**), staff, and student resources, other UNO and community building partners, and the amenities within our state-of-the-art facility.
- Example: CPACS Urban Research Grants



## Strengths

- **Continuous growth** in community (business, industry, non-profit, education, government, etc.) **translational research**
- **Uniquely positioned** to collaborate and conduct research that focuses on **community needs**
- Translational Research has
  - Nebraska Economic impact (e.g. NBDC annual economic report)
  - Education impact – STEM (Impact in K12)
- Diverse Funding Sources:  
Grants/Contracts/Donor Designations (e.g. Wells Fargo, Sherwood Foundation, etc.)



## Strength Outcomes – Awards & Distinctions

(without research driven successes it would be difficult to be competitive)

- In 2014 UNO received the **Presidential Award for the Economic Opportunity** category. This is the highest level of recognition in the Honor Roll.
- The **Carnegie Foundation Community Engagement Classification** recognizes higher education institutions' commitment to community engagement.
- In 2006 UNO received the **Community Engagement Classification**, and in 2015 UNO was re-classified as an engaged university.
- In 2016, the **W.K. Kellogg Foundation** has recognized UNO with an exemplary designation for community engagement.





## Strengths

- Metropolitan University **role model** in community engaged translational research
  - At UNO translational research consists of research in action, solves real world problems, engages the community in practice
- UNO has a **special set of assets** that understand community engagement and who have an understanding of a metropolitan university mission
- UNO has **access to community leaders** who are promoting economic development, engagement, government, and who specifically want to partner with UNO



## Research Growth Areas - Models of Strategic Investments

- Emergency Management
- Biomechanics
- Cyber Security
- STEM Education
- Collaboration Science
- Entrepreneurship and IT Innovation
- Service Learning



## Strengths – Student Research Outcomes

- Tremendous opportunities for student-based research and involvement
- Students involved in all types of research
  - Basic research – e.g. traditional biology
  - Translational research
  - Applied research
  - Pedagogy research
- Student research fairs' growth
- We provide graduates with specialized skills. Undergraduates involved in research introduces them to expanded ways of solving problems in the workplace.



## Challenges

- Infrastructure limits us on certain grants such as NIH
- Recent decision of not being able to support undergraduate research from student fees could have serious negative impact on undergraduate research opportunities.
- We may not be moving fast enough and thus utilizing our strengths on growing our research in areas such as contracts, donor designations, and non-profits' needs.





## Challenges

- RPT tends to reward sole author publications and focuses on individual contributions and leadership rather than rewarding collaboration and team efforts.
- RPT criteria in some areas has not evolved to reward innovative and forward thinking in translational research



## Challenges

- How to organize UNO units to increase synergies of translational research
- Research incentives for PIs vary across Colleges
- Public/Private donors and special interest projects/contracts are not linked, so we don't know the magnitude



## Opportunities

- Measure the impact of translational research and applied research our students are learning
- Additional indicators on how we are doing:
  - Advisory Board Feedback
  - Alumni promotions
  - Job growth
- Conduct a focused study on the impact UG research experiences' impact the community as a whole.
- Strategize incentives for PIs, researchers, and DISCOVERY focus areas



## Opportunities

- Identify translational research opportunities for growth are grants/contracts/donor designations that interest community stakeholders.
- Better tracking of the diversity of funding awards such as Grants/Contracts/Donor Designations (work with NU Foundation)



## Opportunities

- Create entities that are poised interact with industry and have the infrastructure and resources to do this. Learn from UNeMed and UNeTech, Nebraska Enterprises, UNeHealth, Medical Center Enterprise, that provide new opportunities and have strong relationships with faculty. Model their strong leadership.





## Opportunities

- More explicit statement defining the purpose of “DISCOVERY” in the context of UNO as a metropolitan university and its role in the community.
- Better communication during our recruitment and onboarding process of faculty explicitly stating their role as a researcher at a metropolitan university. Shared understanding and expectation management on what it means to be a researcher (faculty) at a metropolitan university.



## Opportunities

- Build on and expand national prominence as a metropolitan university environment that fully supports community engaged translational research and actively promotes interdisciplinary research and scholarly activity.

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# Outcomes of Engagement

Why do we do what we do?



## Definitions:

### - Engagement:

1. "the collaboration between the university and its local, regional, national and global communities for the exchange of knowledge and resources." - *UNO websites, 2017*
2. "Facilitating activities and programs that strengthen connections with UNO." – *UNO Advancement materials, 2017*

### - Outcome:

1. a final product or end result; consequence; issue.
2. a conclusion reached through a process of logical thinking.

-*Dictionary.com, 2017*





According to *The Chronicle of Philanthropy*...

- College alumni-participation rate have slipped more than 4% annually since 2005. ...the number of households that reported volunteering for or giving to charity each went down by double digits from 2010 to 2014. It concluded America was suffering from “engagement fatigue.”

-Oct 2017



## Strengths

- Reputation as engaged university throughout the country
- Culture of engagement on campus (service learning and student volunteering continue to grow)
- Strong relationships with key philanthropic leaders
- CEC is a national example of how to connect university and community
- Proud group of new graduates
- Campus priority (Goal 3 in 2017-2020 UNO Strategic Plan)



## Weakness

- Lack of common understanding/goals for engagement and its importance
- Very few metrics in place to gauge success/failure
- Data – lack of historical data and sharing of new data with NU Foundation is lacking
- Not explicitly linking strategic plan and related activities to mutually agreed upon, community-based problem/solution priorities
- Alumni bond (especially pre-dorm era) is weak
- To the community, fundraising priorities appear to be disjointed because of lack of coordination and understanding



## Opportunity

- Common understanding of engagement and its importance as a priority
- Embrace engagement as an expectation for students, faculty and staff- build this into graduation requirements and faculty/staff accountabilities
- Increased sense of bond with alumni for advocacy and engagement in programmatic and financial support
- Identify audiences(i.e. students, business leaders, K-12, etc.) and develop a strategic engagement plan to intentionally engage each of them in campus/community priorities



## Threats

- Donor/engagement fatigue
- Many of UNO's signature engagement programs are largely funded on one-time funding (SLA, Collaborative)
- Continued lack of planning and coordination causing confusion in priorities on campus and in community
- Expectations not aligned with mission and purpose
- Limited resources





## Blatant truths:

- Need to define and prioritize our outcomes to ensure we are all looking at the same horizon
- Lack of common understanding around importance of engagement (why does it matter?)
- Weak bond among many alums
- Data sharing is difficult
- Limited resources



## What are our aspirational goals for engagement outcomes?

- Work with education/community partners to close achievement/access gap for kids in Omaha metro
- UNO/UNMC partnership leads to internationally recognized preferred destination for STEM students/careers
- Every UNO alum is engaged as a volunteer or mentor in their communities
- National leader in alumni giving participation
- Omaha's university—permission to be proud!
- Provide students with tools to be productive in careers and community
- Responsive to needs of industry (locally and globally)



## What should leadership at UNO focus on over the next decade for outcomes?

- Clearly defined, mutually agreed upon strategic engagement plan focused on solving community problems and engaging alumni and donor networks
- Build an engagement requirement into every student's program at UNO
- Set expectation for engagement with faculty/staff and include in performance appraisal
- Engage with middle/high schools to significantly improve core learning outcomes (particularly math and science)



What should leadership at UNO focus on over the next decade for outcomes?

(continued)

- Measurement tool around identified audiences (grad rates, job satisfaction, donor counts, & \$\$)
- Engage with corporate partners, Chamber of Commerce state-wide and legislators to utilize University programming and graduates to expand high/appropriate paying STEM career opportunities
- Leverage resources of all partners (campus, NU Foundation/Alumni) to accomplish these goals
- Fully-aligned marketing/communications plan with UNO and NU Foundation/Alumni Association – “one voice”

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