



## Strategic Planning Forum Social Mobility

### Executive Summary

A Strategic Planning Forum was held in the Milo Bail Student Center on December 2, 2022. The purpose of the Forum was to engage faculty, staff, and students in UNO's objective of advancing economic and social mobility. The forum discussed how UNO's two strategic goals, namely Student Performance and Workforce Development, complemented each other and supported social mobility. The Forum included two panels on the topics of Student Performance and Workforce Development. The panelists provided campus updates on important strategic initiatives related to UNO's strategic goals. Chancellor Joanne Li provided remarks that discussed the strategic goals and how they support social mobility.

### Student Performance Panel

- Tori Sims – Importance of Student Engagement
- Cathy Pettid – Mental Health and Wellness
- Deborah Smith-Howell, Ph.D. – Competency-Based Education
- Matt Tracy, Ph.D. – General Education
- Rich Klein, Ph.D. – Metrics and the OUR Tuition Rate

### Workforce Development Panel

- Josie Schafer, Ph.D. – Workforce Landscape
- Jaci Lindburg, Ph.D. – Reskill and Upskill
- Martha Garcia-Murillo, Ph.D. – Learn and Earn
- Levi Thiele, Ph.D. – Career Connect
- David Brown – Engaging the Business Community

A mixture of Kahoot and paper responses were used to collect input from participants on the strategic direction of UNO. 187 faculty, staff, and students participated in the forum. Four questions were asked of audience throughout the forum. They were:

- What is the number one-way UNO is supporting students' economic and social mobility?
- What improvements can UNO implement to support students' social and economic mobility?
- Focusing on the retention component of student performance, in one word or phrase, what should UNO focus on?
- What are the Top 5 Things UNO should focus on to improve workforce development?

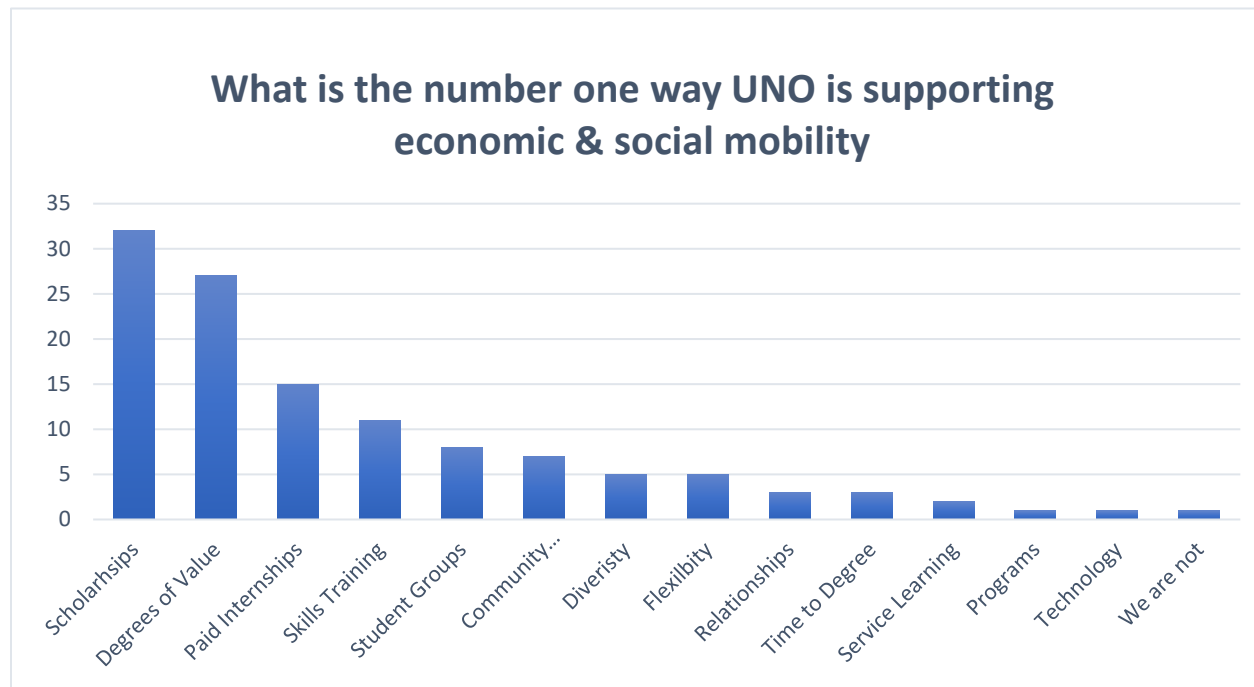
Responses to each question are discussed in more detail throughout this document. The most common responses to these questions included reducing economic barriers through scholarships or lower costs, increasing access to paid internships, skill development for students specifically practical and critical thinking skills, improving relationships between UNO students and community partners, and improving educational quality at UNO while offering flexible degree paths and modalities.



## Topic 1 - Social and Economic Mobility

The first question for participants was “what is the number one way UNO is supporting students’ economic and social mobility?” 110 answers were received. Answers were coded by common theme. Some answers were coded for multiple themes if they were multi-faceted. The most common response was Scholarships (32 responses), followed by Degrees of Value (27), and Paid Internships (15). A full list is provided below of all the categories.

What is the number one way UNO is Supporting Students’ Economic and Social Mobility?
Scholarships (32)
Degrees of Value (27)
Paid Internships (15)
Teaching Important Skills – critical thinking and practical skills (11)
Student groups and Learning Communities (8)
Student Services – food pantry, student health etc. (7)
Networking and Community Connections (7)
Diversity in UNO Community and Recruitment (5)
Flexibility and Non-traditional degree pathways (5)
Relationships with Faculty and Staff (3)
Shortening Time to Degree (3)
Service and Experiential Learning (2)





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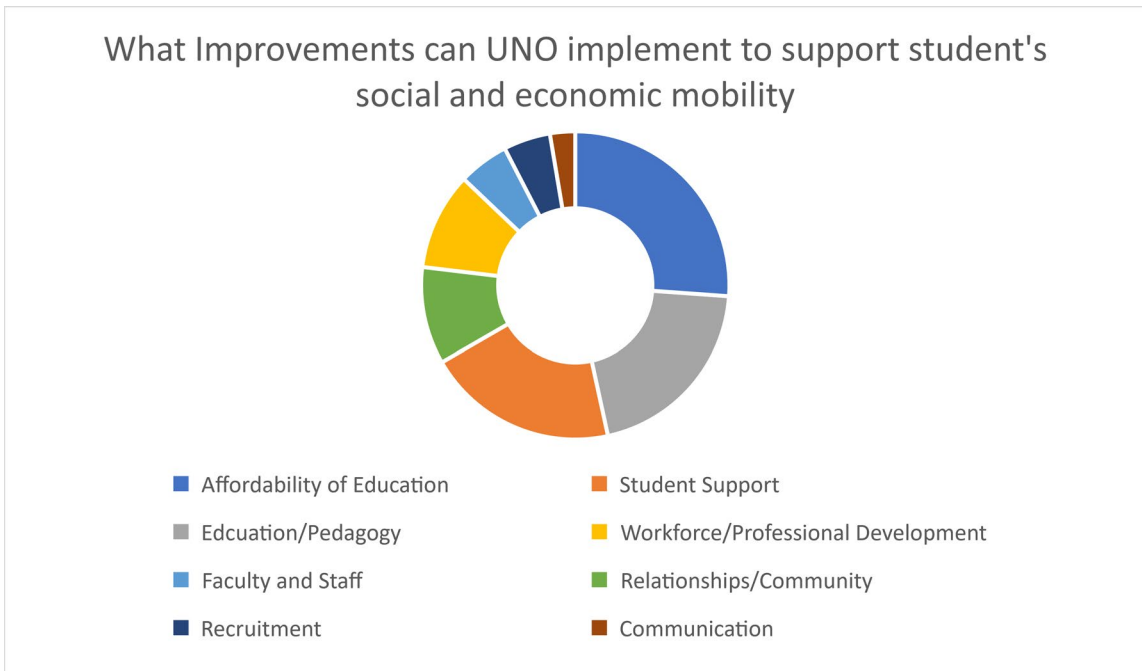
The second question was “What improvements can UNO implement to support students’ social and economic mobility?” Participants were able to submit up to three answers to this question. 322 responses were collected. Answers were reviewed and coded by common theme. There were eight major categories that emerged – Affordability of Education, Student Support, Education/Pedagogy, Workforce/Professional Development, Faculty/Staff Support, Recruitment, Relationships/Community, Communication. Each major category includes several subcategories. All categories and subcategories as well as their frequency mentioned are listed in the table below.

<b>Affordability of Education (69)</b>
More Scholarships (45)
Lower Cost of Education (9)
Remove or Reduce Fees (8)
More/Higher Paying On Campus Student Jobs (4)
More Fellowships and Paid Research (2)
Support of Transfer Credits/Recognition of Prior Learning (2)
Increase Dual Credit Options (1)
<b>Student Support (53)</b>
Resources/Support in General (11)
Support for Adult Learners (10)
Better Advising (7)
Meeting Basic Needs – food pantry, childcare, healthcare, housing etc. (6)
Support for Diverse Students (6)
Support for Mental Health (5)
Support for Student Workers (3)
Improved Accessibility for All (2)
Language Support (2)
Post-grad Programming and Career Connection (2)
<b>Education/Pedagogy (55)</b>
Teaching Professional/Practical/Critical Thinking Skills (14)
Flexible Teaching Modalities and Degree Pathways (11)
Financial Literacy (8)
Experiential and Service Learning (6)
Teaching about Local and Societal Issues (4)
Support for all Disciplines, Including non-STEM (4)
Robust Gen Eds (3)
Improve Classroom Culture (2)
Curriculum Reform/Quality (2)
Shorten Time to Degree Completion (1)
More Research Opportunities (1)
<b>Workforce/Professional Development (27)</b>
Paid Internships -- including for first year students and adult learners (19)
Networking and Job Shadowing (3)



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Skills Badging and Micro-internships (3)
Use Clifton Strengths for Students (1)
Career Services/Academic Coaching (1)
<b>Support for Faculty and Staff (14)</b>
Training Opportunities (5)
Higher Pay (3)
Recruiting Diverse Faculty (3)
Support for Employee Wellness (1)
Degree Support for Staff (1)
More Resources (1)
<b>Relationships/Community (27)</b>
Mentorships (13)
Expand and Maintain Community Partnerships (10)
Relationships between Students and Faculty/Staff (4)
<b>Recruitment (13)</b>
Intentional Diversity in Recruitment (6)
International Recruitment (4)
Recruitment of Previously Incarcerated Individuals (2)
Recruitment of Students with Disabilities (1)
<b>Communication (7)</b>
Better Communication and Transparency from Leadership (5)
Faculty/Staff Involvement in Strategic Planning (2)





## Topic 2 - Student Performance

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The first panel at the forum was on the topic of student performance. After the panel, participants were asked the question “focusing on the retention component of student performance, in one word or phrase, what should UNO focus on?” This was asked as a word cloud on Kahoot, with answers limited to a single word or phrase. 117 participants responded.

For a more detailed analysis, some responses that were similar (example: affordability and cost affordability; relationships and belonging etc) were combined. Responses were grouped into 6 categories as follows.

<b>Recruitment/Outreach</b>
<b>Affordability/Scholarships (9)</b>
<b>Outreach (1)</b>
<b>Advocacy (1)</b>
<b>Student Support</b>
<b>Support (7)</b>
<b>Advising (6)</b>
<b>Mental Health/Early Alert and Intervention (5)</b>
<b>Meeting Basic Needs (3)</b>
<b>Education/Pedagogy</b>
<b>Teaching Competencies/Skills (9)</b>
<b>Quality of Curriculum (4)</b>
<b>Flexibility (4)</b>
<b>Gen Eds (2)</b>
<b>Graduation/Completion (2)</b>
<b>Interactive Teaching and Learning (1)</b>
<b>Diversity and Inclusion</b>
<b>Diversity (3)</b>
<b>Inclusion (2)</b>
<b>Accessibility (2)</b>
<b>International Students (1)</b>
<b>Student Experience</b>
<b>Relationships/Belonging (5)</b>
<b>Student Engagement (5)</b>
<b>Students' Experiences (5)</b>
<b>Learning Communities (4)</b>
<b>Mentorship (3)</b>
<b>Networking (2)</b>
<b>Mobility (1)</b>
<b>Enrollment/Retention</b>
<b>Utilizing Technology and Best Practices (3)</b>
<b>Term to Term Reenroll (2)</b>
<b>Full Time Enrollment (1)</b>



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PROACTIVE OUTREACH Post graduate jobs People Opportunity costs Navigation  
Mobility Midterm grades Making connections Kindness's Job readiness  
Interactive teaching Holistic support Graduation Gen eds Free education Financing  
Expanding learning c early intervention data cost-effective rates Competency testing  
Communities Clear path to degree Campus experience advocacy Academic environment  
1st year experience Student experience remove barriers  
Learning communities Engagement Connections  
Affordability Flexibility Basic needs  
**Advising Support Belonging**  
**Mental Health Competencies Diversity inclusion**  
**MENTORSHIP Scholarship Technology** Academic advising  
accessible courses attendance in class career exploration Cohorts Community  
Completion skills Curriculum Early Alert examine course rigor Fall to spring Free books  
Full time enrollment general education High impact practices Improved experience  
International Jobs Life navigation market segmentation Minority inclusion  
**MORE scholarships not focus on retenti Part time students personalization**

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### Topic 3 - Workforce Development

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Finally, the forum included a panel on workforce development. Following this panel, participants were asked, as a table, to come up with what they believed should be UNO's top five priorities to improve workforce development. Responses were like the responses to prior questions with most responses highlighting paid internships, building community partnerships, and expanding professional development skills. 31 groups participated in the group activity, and groups were of varying sizes. Below are more detailed discussions on the topics most frequently mentioned.

- **Internships:** Internships were the most mentioned topic and were mentioned by over two-thirds of the groups in some form. Groups provided a variety of feedback and suggestion regarding internships. These included ensuring that pay was of a living wage and equitable across sectors, providing some form of paid internship to education students, finding a way for international students to have paid internships, internships opportunities for first year students, and the possibility of completing internships for credit. Many groups also mentioned investing in on-campus jobs and internships for students and ensuring that those had fair wages and were providing students with the opportunity to learn workplace skills. At least one group also mentioned micro-internships or other short term internship opportunities.
- **Job-skills and Professional Skills:** Another commonly mentioned topic was that UNO should focus on providing students with professional skills that would be relevant once they entered the workforce. This was mentioned in some form by 15 groups. Topics mentioned include teaching applied skills, practical skills, and professional socialization skills. One group recommended a career readiness program or course that would teach students work-place norms. Several groups also mentioned that UNO should teach students how academic and soft skills tie into their workforce readiness and teach them to articulate those skills on resumes or in interviews. Another group recommended that programs that require capstones find a way to make those projects more applied to teach career readiness.
- **Community Relationships/Networking:** 15 groups discussed some form of community partner or relationship building. This included relationships with businesses and tech companies. Many groups also specified that relationships should be in all sectors. One group specifically mentioned working with community colleges, and two mentioned building more connections in the nonprofit sector. Several groups also suggested gaining financial commitments from partners to fund and sustain the paid internship program, and also working with partners to ensure internships with meaningful. 5 groups also mentioned the importance of providing networking opportunities for students in a variety of sectors and with our community partners.
- **Career Services and Professional Development:** Another common topic was the importance for expanding career services offered to students while they are on campus. Many groups suggested having a career development office in each college and more career exploration services. One group suggested more professional development on campus and expanding student professional organizations. Three groups highlighted the importance of job shadowing in expanding professional skills. Another group stated there



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should be more exposure to career paths for students early on in their studies, and three groups discussed the importance of providing better career exploration in gen eds and direction for undecided students.

- **Campus Connections and Support:** Many groups discussed the importance of student support and connections. One group stated every student should have the opportunity to be in a learning community. Three groups highlighted the need for UNO to provide student services around mental health, childcare, and other social needs. One group suggested a first-year connectional support program. Finally, 6 groups mentioned the importance of connecting students to mentors whether they be faculty/staff or members of the community.
- **Social Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion:** Three groups stated that UNO should do more to advocate for social equity, including advocating for higher paying jobs and more diversity and inclusion. Several groups all said that UNO should set an example by providing better resources and professional development to staff and student workers. Two groups mentioned the importance of growing diversity on UNO's campus, and one stated that UNO should offer more programming focusing on diversity. Several groups mentioned providing more flexibility in degree programming and better support for nontraditional learners like adult learners, first generation students, and learners who are currently incarcerated. One group also suggested providing financial incentives like tuition reimbursement for grads who work in high need areas.
- **Financials and Reputation:** The last category combines financial considerations of the university and its reputation in the community. Two groups stated it was important for UNO to be recognized as a knowledge center in the region, and three groups highlighted the importance of providing a high-quality education.