

MEMORANDUM

Annual Institutional Goals: AY 2025

As part of the annual planning process, members of the President's Council provide a set of goals for the current Academic Year. These Annual Goals are linked to and directly support the current strategic plan "**2018 – 2025 Strategic Plan: Care, Lead, Advance**", with each goal representing specific priorities established for the current academic year. These are then shared with the broader community.

The current Strategic Plan has nine goals and associated objectives organized into five shared themes:

- Student-centered experience (Goal 1)
- Academic excellence (Goals 2 & 3)
- Service to patients and community (Goals 4 & 5)
- Community and people (Goal 6 & 7)
- Effective foundational support (Goals 8 & 9)

Each of the themes is listed below along with annual goals to support them. In addition, this year there are several institution-wide goals that affect all parts of the institution. Please note that this is not a comprehensive list of all of the goals developed by senior management, but rather is a listing of those goals that may be of greatest interest to the community.

AY 2025 Institution-wide Goals

- Presidential Transition:* The focus for the 2024-2025 Academic Year will be to support the successful transition of leadership under the new president. To ensure a stable and effective transition, Clinical Professor Tracy Nguyen, OD PhD, has been appointed interim Dean for Academic Affairs while a national search for the next Vice President and Dean for Academic Affairs is underway. We also plan to conduct national searches for tenure-track faculty to fill other open positions, meet teaching needs, and expand laboratory and clinical research activity.
- New Strategic Plan:* This year, the development of the new strategic plan for 2025-2031 will be an institutional priority. The process will be led by the Institutional Research and Planning Committee (IRPC). This new plan will guide the College's future priorities and initiatives.
- Planning for the College of Optometry Upstate Extension Program:* The development of our Optometry Upstate Extension Program at SUNY Upstate Medical University will remain a top priority in 2025. The program will be a key driver of expanding our optometry training opportunities and increasing access to optometric care in upstate New York.
- Major Renovations and Infrastructure Projects:* Several key infrastructure projects are on track for AY 2025. The 7th-floor renovation of the Adult Primary Care Service is scheduled to be

completed by December 2024 with occupancy in early 2025. The space for the Center for Teaching and Learning on the 18th floor will be completed in early 2025. The 11th floor classroom and support space and the 16th floor laboratories are scheduled to begin. The 15th floor optics teaching laboratories and the 5th floor clinic will begin design development.

- E. *Ensuring Fiscal Responsibility and Growth:* In line with our commitment to financial stewardship, the President's Council will continue to focus on identifying new revenue streams, optimizing resource management, and exploring innovative growth strategies to strengthen the fiscal foundation of the College.

Theme: Student Centered Experience

Goal 1: Enhance the Student Experience through programs that promote student and alumni success.

- *Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL):* The CTL will formally open in AY 2025 year with all student support and faculty development programs, including enhanced student learning resources and faculty instructional design support, fully operational.
- *Mental Health Services:* Expanded mental health services will be offered to students, including the hiring of a full-time mental health counselor, offering off-hours services, and increasing access to mental health training and programming.
- *Internship Support:* Continue providing support for student internships by covering fees such as CPR certification, MyRecordTracker, and offering Externship Travel Grants for students assigned to remote externships in Upstate New York and other remote areas.
- *Students with Disabilities:* Fully operationalize the position of Learning Specialist to better support students with disabilities.
- *Summer Flex Program:* Expand the program to enable students to take courses before or after their first year to lighten their academic course load.
- *NBEO Preparation:* Develop strategies aimed at improving comprehensive board preparation, addressing all parts of the NBEO to support student success.

Theme: Academic Excellence

Goal 2: Deliver a dynamic curriculum that engages students and advances contemporary optometry.

- *Curriculum Review:* Academic Affairs will continue to work with course instructors and the Curriculum Committee to review the curriculum, course materials and learning objectives. Student outcomes will be measured by performance in courses, clinics, and on the Gap and NBEO exams to guide modifications.
- *Upstate Extension Site:* Continue the development of the College of Optometry Upstate Extension Program ensuring that the design of the physical space at the site in Syracuse is adequate to deliver the program effectively and provide students with a didactic and clinical

learning experience that is equivalent to, and fully compatible with, the program delivered at the College.

- *Optics Laboratory and Facilities Upgrades:* The optics teaching labs on the 15th floor will undergo significant redesign to improve the student learning environment.
- *Admissions:* Student Affairs and the Admissions Committee will develop a plan to consider the 'Whole Context' of a student's life and academic experience in the admissions review process to enable candidates to share insights into the unique challenges and experiences that have shaped their academic journey to optometry school, while considering their academic potential and needs for success. This process will guide student support planning for incoming students.

Goal 3: Grow the graduate and research programs to increase the institutional impact on the advancement of knowledge and to produce leaders in vision research (basic, translational and clinical).

- *Research Infrastructure Development:* Complete the design and start construction of the new translational research laboratories on the 16th floor in 2025.
- *Expand Research Initiatives:* Use SUNY Incremental Funds to support research investment for new faculty recruitment, increase pilot project funding, support OD student research projects, and increase PhD student stipends.
- *Tenure-track Faculty:* Conduct national searches for faculty with sustainable externally funded research programs in translational and clinical eye and vision research that complement existing research programs in the GCVR and CVRC.
- *Clinical Faculty Research:* Provide opportunities and incentives for clinical faculty involvement in sponsored or investigator-initiated CVRC programs.

Theme: Service to Patients & Community

Goal 4: Deliver unparalleled care to our University Eye Center patients.

- *Completion of 7th-Floor Renovation:* The Adult Primary Care Service renovation on the 7th floor is expected to be completed by December 2024 and will be operational in early 2025. This project will enhance our ability to serve the community with state-of-the-art care.
- *Increase patient visits:* Set a goal to surpass 56,914 visits in FY 2025, continuing to build on last year's volume of patient encounters. The target revenue remains above \$6.55 million.
- *Explore New Clinical Services:* Continue exploring ways to expand the range of clinical services offered at the University Eye Center, ensuring patient care keeps pace with emerging technologies and practices.
- *Clinical Equipment and Facility Upgrades:* Implement the Health Information Exchange (HIE) and other technological upgrades to streamline patient care and operational efficiency.
- *Patient Engagement and Satisfaction:* Improve patient engagement via enhanced technology platforms and continue efforts to increase satisfaction rates.

Goal 5: Provide service to the greater community.

- *Partnership with Syracuse Community Health:* Secure funding for expanding optometry services at Syracuse Community Health with faculty from the College of Optometry Upstate Extension Program, further supporting patient care in underserved communities while providing clinical training opportunities for students at the Upstate Extension Center.
- *Community Relationships:* Expand the relationship with Gotham Health by incorporating student rotation programs providing more clinical training opportunities for students while increasing patient service capacity.
- *Expand Community Outreach Programs:* Examine ways to restart vision screenings for myopia and other conditions in underserved communities and provide access to affordable community care at the college.
- *International Programs:* Conduct a comprehensive evaluation of current partnerships and prioritize the reintegration and advancement of key programs to align with institutional objectives.

Theme: Community & People

Goal 6: Cultivate an institutional culture that encourages a sense of community, inclusion, institutional pride, collective purpose, and shared responsibility.

- *Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB):*
 - Consistent with the 2023 SCOTUS ruling, continue development and implementation of race neutral admissions practices aimed at recruiting and retaining a diverse student body, faculty, and staff.
 - Continue to support holistic review in the admissions process and bias mitigation in the hiring process to recruit and retain a diverse student body, faculty and staff.
 - Promote and track the success of pathway programs to enhance the diversity of the applicant pool and student body.
 - Encourage civil discourse and create a culture of belonging through training and experiential learning.
 - Advance training and development focused on cultural humility and health equity.
- *Mental Health Services Expansion:* The College's Mental Health Counselor will work closely with the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) team to provide increased support for students.

Goal 7: Promote the growth and development of all members of the College community.

- *Staff Development:* Offer programs and workshops through Human Resources for staff development.
- *Faculty Development:* Continue offering academic development programs and workshops through Academic Affairs for faculty across all tracks and ranks.
- *Technology Enhancements:* Identify opportunities to implement and teach new technologies through the University Eye Center that enhance provider-patient communication and improve the patient experience.

Theme: Effective Foundational Support**Goal 8: Attract the brightest and most motivated students with demonstrated leadership potential.**

- *Admissions:* Enroll a highly qualified, diverse, and engaged student body of 100 matriculates that will contribute to a vibrant community and maintain an admissions yield above 60%.
- *Admissions Upstate Extension Program:* Plan and integrate the application and admissions process for the Upstate program with the College admissions program, create new marketing materials for both programs, develop complementary admissions portals on the College website, develop and begin recruiting strategies, and plan for initiation of an admissions process for the first cohort of sixteen students at the Upstate Extension Program in August 2026.
- *Reduce Costs:* Continue to explore strategies to alleviate the financial burden of the professional degree on students.
- *CSTEP Program:* Write and submit the 2025-2030 CSTEP grant renewal to support continued funding and growth of the CSTEP Program.

Goal 9: Provide the financial foundation, administrative support, and environment to achieve the College's mission.*Business Affairs:*

- Redevelop the Business Affairs website to include additional procurement and payment resources to aid and educate the College community via Share Point. Resources to include detailed workflows, job aids and updated forms (fillable, electronic signature, etc.).
- Provide educational opportunities to include periodic topic specific training and open office hours with Business Office staff.
- Develop Student Financial Services procedures for the Upstate Extension Program students.
- Coordinate financial aid, billing and revenue collection processes between the College and SUNY Upstate Medical University.

Facilities:

- Continue to implement the Energy Master Plan recommendations; continue making progress with upgrading fluorescent light fixtures to LED fixtures and eliminating single-use plastics.
- Promote employee job safety procedures, boost morale, and enhance service to the College Community.
- Continue to assist with the successful planning, design, and completion of capital projects throughout the building including the 7th floor renovation, the elevator rehabilitation project, 16th floor lab construction, HVAC replacements on the 5th and 16th floors, 15th floor teaching labs, 11th floor classroom, the building's façade repair, and roof replacement.

Human Resources:

- Work with SUNY System to load data into SUNYHR and launch electronic timesheets.
- Review the search process for open staff positions to improve the advertising, recruitment, and selection process.

Information Technologies:

- Continue to **enhance classroom technology** by upgrading audio-visual (AV) systems in teaching spaces to improve accessibility and interactive learning experiences for students and faculty.
- Work with the University Eye Center to implement advanced technologies aimed at improving **patient and student digital access**, streamlining interactions, and optimizing user experience.
- Collaborate with the Office of Academic Affairs to create advanced **remote access solutions** supporting synchronous and asynchronous learning. This includes seamless, interactive platforms tailored for the Upstate Extension Program, enhancing both teaching and learning experiences.
- Enhance and strengthen the College's **cybersecurity and information security** defenses in keeping with NIST standards and the newly-enacted SUNY Information Security Policy.

Institutional Advancement:

- Develop and launch the **Seeing the Value of Vision** initiative to raise an additional \$500,000 - \$700,000 in 2025.
- Identify and add 2-3 new **Foundation Board Members** in 2025.
- Initiate **market position analysis** to begin building a multi-channel marketing campaign that increases overall College visibility with emphasis on innovation in education, accomplishments in research and scholarship, translation of research to patient care, and community outreach and impact.
- Identify and implement a **stakeholder engagement strategy** that improves overall donor engagement and giving by 5-7% that includes alumni, donors, and partners.
- In collaboration with the UEC and Academic Affairs, assess and strategize a plan to develop **community outreach opportunities** with a system of patient identification and care delivery that includes lead tracking to yield potential revenue for support, more robust partnerships for research and educational outcomes, and improved market position from greater awareness.
- Enhance **alumni engagement** programs to foster meaningful connections by refining activities, communications, and events based on member feedback.