

INTRODUCTION

In January 2024, UNO STEM leaders began the process of developing Phase III of the UNO STEM Priority Strategic Plan (2025—2030). The objective for the creation of the Phase III STEM Priority Strategic Plan is to accomplish the STEM Priority mission by increasing STEM academic and economic energy across Omaha and the region.

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Priority TWO: Expand interdisciplinary STEM research and infrastructure.

- 2.01 Expand capacity to facilitate interdisciplinary grant funded research.
- 2.02 Design and develop infrastructure that facilitates interdisciplinary collaboration.
- 2.03 Leverage interdisciplinary expertise and synergies to create new intellectual property (IP) and innovations for the public good.
- 2.04 Elevate Discipline-Based Education Research (DBER) as a recognized research agenda that generates new knowledge about teaching and learning across STEM disciplines.

Priority THREE: Maximize local and regional STEM networks to increase economic energy.

- 3.01 Cultivate and sustain authentic partnerships to advance access to STEM education and employment opportunities.
- 3.02 Partner with K-12 schools, business and industry, and nonprofit agencies to amplify STEM community assets and address needs.
- 3.03 Leverage Omaha STEM Ecosystem to build the effectiveness of partnerships and programs.

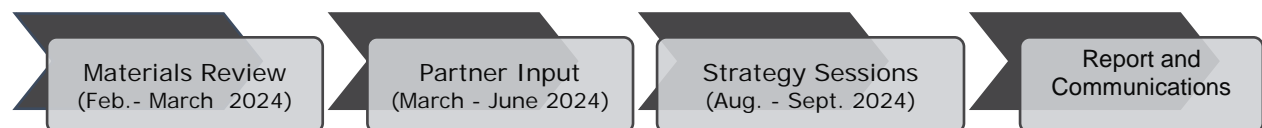
Priority FOUR: Effectively measure and communicate campus and community STEM impacts.

- 4.01 Regularly share STEM programming information and outcomes to a broad campus and community audience.
- 4.02 Elevate opportunities among key audiences to build engagement and advance STEM priorities and programs.
- 4.03 Assess and refine STEM programs and initiatives to align with strategic priorities and ensure high-quality and effectiveness.

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS AND METHODS

Steps and activities for the UNO STEM Priority Phase III strategic planning process included a review of relevant materials; collecting input from faculty, university leadership, students, and current and potential STEM initiative partners; a series of facilitated strategic planning workshops with UNO STEM leaders; identification of metrics to track progress on the plan and initial action steps. The strategic plan was reviewed and approved by UNO’s STEM advisors, leaders, and deans.

Figure 1. UNO STEM Priority Phase III Strategic Planning Process and Timeline



CONCLUSION

The UNO STEM Priority Phase III Strategic Plan will serve as a pathway for STEM leaders for the next five years. The four priorities of building STEM engagement campuswide, expanding interdisciplinary collaboration in STEM research and infrastructure, maximizing STEM networks, and measuring and communicating impacts will enable ongoing and new ways to accomplish the mission of the STEM Priority to improve quality of life on campus and in the community. The plan's four priorities with fourteen corresponding objectives will also facilitate advancement of the University of Nebraska at Omaha's four strategic pillars of educating all learners, pragmatic research and discovery, community engagement, development, and partnerships, and workforce development. The strategic plan will enable continued STEM growth and success for UNO's students, faculty, staff members

& Sciences; Dr. Susan Eldridge, Professor, College of Business Administration; Sara Woods, Chief Engagement Officer; Dr. Nikita Imani, Professor, College of Arts & Sciences; Dr. Suzanne Sollars, Professor and Dir. Neuroscience, College of Arts & Sciences; Dr. Roopa Venkatesh, Professor and Director, School of Accounting, College of Business Administration; Dr. Derrick Anthony Nero, Assoc. Professor, College of Education, Health & Human Sciences; Dr. Alfredo Perez, Assoc. Professor, Graduate Program Chair, College of Information Science & Technology; and Dr. Paul W. Denton, Assoc. Professor, College of Arts & Sciences.

Community members who participated in an interview to inform the development of the UNO STEM strategic plan include Wendy Boyer, Executive Director, Peter Kiewit Foundation; Pam Petersen, STEM Director, Metropolitan Community College; William Calderon, PE, Olsson; Nicole Shives, Assoc. Professor, Clarkson College; Todd Shackelford, HDR, Inc. and Industry Fellow; Melanie Olson, Coordinator of Secondary Programs, Millard Public Schools; Laurel Oetken, Executive Director, Tech Nebraska; Rob Trebilcock, Sr. Mgr., Public Affairs, Cox Communications; Carla Rizzo, CEO, Completely Kids; Dr. Rachael Arens, Director, College and Career Academies and Pathways at Westview High School; and Julie Sigmon, Executive Director, Omaha STEM Ecosystem.

UNO STEM leaders who participated in strategic planning sessions included Dr. Kelly Gomez-Johnson; Dr. Christopher Moore; Nikita Imani, Professor, College of Arts & Sciences; and Dr. Susan Eldridge, Professor, College of Business Administration.

ABOUT CALDERON RESEARCH AND CONSULTING SERVICES

Valerie J. Calderon, Ph.D., is Principal Consultant at CRCS. She served as facilitator for the UNO STEM Priority Phase III strategic planning process. She brings more than sixteen years of management and research consulting experience to client engagements, helping leaders get answers to their most pressing questions and creating thriving places for people to learn, serve, and work. She has designed and implemented strategic planning, employee engagement, strengths-based leadership development, program evaluation, and other mixed methods research initiatives, including nationally representative studies for public release on issues related to education and the workforce for hundreds of local, national, and global organizations. Valerie has published content for both popular and peer-