



2020-2021 AY Presidential Priorities

In light of current circumstances related to the COVID-19 pandemic, my priorities will focus on navigating the university through the immediate fiscal and enrollment challenges. The top priority is to do so in a way that puts the university in a good position to rebuild and refocus after an approved vaccine is broadly administered.

1. Effectively navigate the University through the financial, operational, and enrollment challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic

The pandemic presents unique and daunting challenges to the University. The goal is to meet those challenges while also reorienting the University's operations to establish greater financial stability and accountability. This includes resetting the University's relationship with the UMW Foundation to mitigate risk and protect the University's endowment.

Toward this end, there should be a reassessment of all existing University plans: Student success plan, strategic vision, six-year plan, legislative agenda and master plan, etc.

2. Success with the legislature and governor in the promotion of UMW's legislative priorities

This entails advancing the priorities and initiatives in the Board of Visitors-approved six-year plan. However, in light of the pandemic, these priorities and initiatives should be revisited. In all likelihood, there will be little or no money for new projects. However, to advance our goal of greater access and equity, increased need-based financial aid should remain a top legislative priority.

3. Maintain and leverage relationships with alumni, donors, industry, education, and community partners

The need to preserve and enhance these relationships will be more important than ever during and after the pandemic. Beyond thinking about our adaptability and resiliency during a time of unrest and uncertainty, UMW needs to demonstrate how partnerships and community engagement can demonstrate its value to the region, state, and nation. I will continue to work closely with Advancement to build relations with those donors most capable of giving major and transformative gifts.

4. Effectively communicate UMW's mission, vision, distinctiveness and value to internal and external audiences

The rebranding work with MindPower was complicated by the pandemic, so the plan is to finish that work this fall. As with everything, our ability to effectively communicate the relevancy of UMW's mission, vision, and distinctive qualities will be even more important as the traditional market contracts in both expected and unexpected ways.

This year presents some unique opportunities to articulate why our vision focused on civic and community engagement, an adaptable liberal arts education, high impact learning experiences, and diversity and inclusion is more relevant and needed than ever.

5. Make concrete progress in the promotion of civic and community engagement and the advancement of a more inclusive and diverse community

Our country is simultaneously facing a health, economic, social, and political crisis. As a public university, our mission, in part, is to facilitate dialogue between those with whom we disagree. In an age of social media and increased anxiety about our country's future, this is a tall order. In any event, we need to be proactive to create an environment where our students feel a sense of community and wellbeing despite the obvious problems our country is facing.

The upcoming election and current activism for social justice presents an opportunity for UMW to promote civic and community engagement and create a more diverse, inclusive, and equitable university community. With help from the Board, we should reset our goals in this area for the coming year so that we can mark concrete progress by year's end.