

Allen College

Strategic Plan 2020-2024

Transforming the Education Experience; Sustaining Success



Our Mission

Allen College offers educational healthcare programs of excellence to a diverse community while instilling the values of service, inclusion and lifelong learning.

Our Vision

Allen College will be the educational institution

- where students seeking healthcare education want to learn;
- where healthcare educators choose to teach; and
- from where healthcare systems and employers hire graduates as exceptional healthcare professionals.

Our Core Values

- **Foster Unity:** We are building a community of healthcare professionals who are inclusive, caring and collaborative.
- **Own the Moment:** All members of the Allen College community function with integrity and accountability.
- **Champion Excellence:** We create educational programs that prepare graduates to excel in their healthcare careers.
- **U:** Every person who is a part of Allen College shapes an inclusive culture and identity of the institution.
- **Seize Opportunities:** We will influence our community and professions through service learning, community service and lifelong learning.

Our Strategic Goals

Allen College will:

1. Create a campus community that fosters a positive student experience.
2. Create and sustain a culture of inclusion where people from different cultural backgrounds, abilities and identities are supported and valued in their learning, working, healing and living.
3. Foster a community committed to service, including underserved populations, and lifelong learning.
4. Design course curricula through innovation and creativity by engaged faculty members to deliver an education that produces exceptional student outcomes and meets workforce needs.
5. Leverage existing partnerships and seek out new opportunities for collaboration.
6. Align resources across our organizational system to ensure operational sustainability and student success.

Our Academic Goals

Allen College is committed to:

1. Preparing outstanding healthcare practitioners who are committed to lifelong learning.
2. Developing and implementing accessible academic programs of excellence that are responsive to the workforce needs of Iowa and the nation.
3. Recruiting and retaining highly qualified and engaged students, faculty, and staff who represent diverse populations and who embrace diversity, cultural and global awareness, and the inclusion of all its members.
4. Promoting a commitment by all members of the Allen College community to lives of service.
5. Adopting management practices that demonstrate outstanding stewardship of all resources to our constituents.

Strategic Goal #1: Create a campus community that fosters a positive student experience.

Rationale:

Allen College has built partnerships and collaborations with multiple private and public higher education institutions that have resulted in the recruitment of talented, highly qualified students. These students will be provided an educational experience that places them in an environment where a connection to the campus culture is built. Allen College students are the most valuable resource of the institution and all students will be served by a student-first culture. In keeping with the student-first culture, Allen College leaders will be mindful of the cost of education.

Allen College will:

1. Establish a campus-wide student-first culture.
2. Involve students in program development and curriculum changes.
3. Provide expanded clinical/fieldwork sites across a larger geographic area.
4. Adopt best teaching-learning practices in the classroom, virtual environment and clinical/fieldwork sites.
5. Deliver resources and support to facilitate students' academic success.
6. Engage in business practices that keep the cost of education affordable.
7. Support faculty development to advance educational programs and to promote achievement of outcomes.

Goal #2: Create and sustain a culture of inclusion where people from different cultural backgrounds, abilities and identities are supported and valued in their learning, working, healing and living.

Rationale:

Racial and ethnic diversity of the United States is projected to grow substantially in the 21st century, with racial and ethnic minorities accounting for almost half of the population by 2050. As a reflection of America's changing cultural landscape, Allen College seeks to embrace and celebrate the cultural diversity of its students, faculty and staff. Further, by focusing on diversity and inclusion, Allen College is preparing students for the globalization of the workforce.

Allen College will:

1. Educate all Allen College stakeholders of the importance of contributing to a diverse healthcare workforce.
2. Expand programs to recruit and retain a diverse student body through traditional and non-traditional collaborations.
3. Facilitate involvement of Allen College faculty, staff and students in local organizations that advocate for diversity and inclusion.
4. Integrate diversity and inclusion instruction in all academic programs.
5. Champion experiences to celebrate diversity and promote inclusion.
6. Increase efforts to recruit and retain a diverse workforce that reflects the communities we serve.

Goal #3: Foster a community committed to service, including underserved individuals, and lifelong learning.

Rationale:

Allen College faculty, staff and students are uniquely positioned to be in a career, or pursuing a career, dedicated to serving others. Individuals who work in healthcare or higher education find themselves as agents of change who help individuals, groups, families, and communities achieve the highest level of health and education possible. Allen College seeks to employ faculty and staff who will model lives of service and lifelong learning for our students who will graduate and be responsible citizens making positive contributions to their professions and communities.

In 2019, Allen College completed an Institutional Capacity Self-Assessment on Civic Action conducted by the Iowa Campus Compact. The results of the self-assessment highlighted areas that Allen College has capacity for improvement over the course of the 2020-2024 strategic plan.

Allen College will:

1. Provide multiple opportunities for service and service learning for all members of the Allen College community.
2. Facilitate service opportunities for students who study predominantly online and faculty and staff who work predominantly at a distance.
3. Expand partnerships with service organizations that include rural and underserved populations.
4. Promote interdisciplinary interaction among students, faculty and staff.
5. Integrate community involvement into student life through extra-curricular and/or co-curricular programs with the institutional goals and learning outcomes.
6. Develop an assessment plan that evaluates the community engagement partnerships, including community perceptions, quality of partnerships and community impact.

Goal #4: Design course curricula through innovation and creativity by engaged faculty members to deliver an education that produces exceptional student outcomes and meets workforce needs.

Rationale:

The needs of college students are constantly evolving. The traditional college classroom experience has shifted from a traditional, face-to-face lecture to hybrid course delivery models and flipped classrooms. Students are experiencing increased utilization of simulation, virtual reality, flipped classrooms, and online/hybrid learning in primary and secondary educational settings. The expectations of students in post-secondary settings include a personalized educational experience that facilitates student learning through diverse instructional methodologies. Allen College must continuously evaluate all curricula, instructional methodologies and workforce needs and integrate changes that promote faculty and staff development while enhancing student learning and the student experience.

Allen College will:

1. Support faculty development that fosters engagement and is based on pedagogical best practices.
2. Employ student and alumni feedback to appropriately adjust and continually improve curricula and instruction.
3. Explore expanded course delivery options for programs currently only offered in a traditional, face-to-face setting.
4. Expand the integration of simulation and virtual technology across all Allen College curricula.
5. Invest in educational technologies to ensure our students are prepared to enter the healthcare workforce.
6. Evaluate and adapt curricula and programs to meet the needs of the healthcare workforce.

Goal #5: Leverage existing partnerships and seek out new opportunities for collaboration.

Rationale:

As of August 2019, Allen College has 16 partnerships or collaborations with both public and private not-for-profit institutions of higher education. These mutually beneficial relationships help ensure that Allen College has a vast pool of students to recruit from and provide an avenue for students and potential students to meet the general educational requirements of all Allen College programs. Because of the shifting demographics across the United States, higher education institutions are becoming increasingly competitive in recruiting students because there are fewer number of students entering and graduating from high school. Allen College needs to continue to explore and engage in collaborative arrangements to be good stewards of our resources and ensure access to qualified students.

Allen College will:

1. Conduct a comprehensive assessment of each partnership and implement changes based upon the needs of the students.
2. Expand our current articulation agreements to include 3+3 programs for graduate programs.
3. Explore new partnerships from both the public and private higher education sectors.
4. Increase student recruitment efforts at our partner institutions through programs aimed towards student in STEM majors.
5. Enhance community service and service learning opportunities by strengthening existing community partnerships and exploring new organizations to collaborate with.
6. Collaborate with the Allen College Alumni Association to connect with and engage the College's alumni base.

Goal #6: Align resources across our organizational system to ensure student success and operational sustainability.

Rationale:

Over the past decade, Allen College has been fiscally sound, allowing the College to invest in academic programs, faculty development and facilities. Allen College leaders must continue to make sound fiscal decisions aimed at increasing revenues and managing expenses in order remain financially strong. Although Allen College has demonstrated operational success, other colleges and universities across the country are evaluating practices to ensure their sustainability. Across the United States in 2018, over 120 colleges and universities were exploring mergers or acquisitions. UnityPoint Health is in a unique position having four independent institutions of higher education across the system. Given the complex issues facing the healthcare system, coupled with increasing competition for students across the entire higher education sector, the four UnityPoint Health Colleges can work more closely together to ensure sustainability and student success.

Allen College will:

1. Engage with the other three UnityPoint Health Colleges on initiatives to increase sustainability.
2. Develop and implement strategies to reduce duplication of services across the four UnityPoint Health campuses.
3. Create an academic committee with representation from the four UnityPoint Health colleges to determine academic best-practices.
4. Leverage our position within UnityPoint Health to provide more opportunities for faculty, staff and student educational development.
5. Collaborate with the UnityPoint Health – Allen Foundation to partner with donors and community foundations to grow the Allen College scholarship endowment.