

CIVIC ACTION PLAN

Serving as the implementation plan
of Goal #3 in UNI's 2017-2022
Strategic Plan

Spring 2018



In 2016 the University of Northern Iowa's (UNI) President signed an Action Statement, a declaration of shared commitment to the public purpose of higher education and a promise to develop a Campus Civic Action Plan. In 2016 UNI also started developing a new university strategic plan. The efforts in developing a Civic Action Plan and new strategic plan complemented each other. Today, UNI's Civic Action Plan serves as part of the implementation plan of UNI's 2017-2022 Strategic Plan.

The development of UNI's Civic Action Plan involved five phases:

- Phase I:** Implemented Iowa Campus Compact's Community Engagement Capacity Assessment (Spring 2016)
- Phase II:** Formed the Civic Action Planning committee (Fall 2016)
- Phase III:** Developed a draft Civic Action Plan (Spring 2017)
- Phase IV:** Solicited feedback on the Civic Action Plan (Summer/Fall 2017)
- Phase V:** Edited the Civic Action Plan based on the feedback received (Spring 2018)

The purpose of UNI's Civic Action Plan is to provide students experiences that prepare them for lives of engaged citizenship, with the motivation and capacity to deliberate, act, and lead in pursuit of the public good. Students may have the opportunity for community engagement experiences through general education, their majors, in student organizations and clubs and have access to individual volunteer and service experiences.

It is important to highlight the university strategic planning process and outline UNI's 2017-2022 Strategic Plan. Understanding the university's strategic plan provides a framework and context for the development and implementation of UNI's Civic Action Plan.

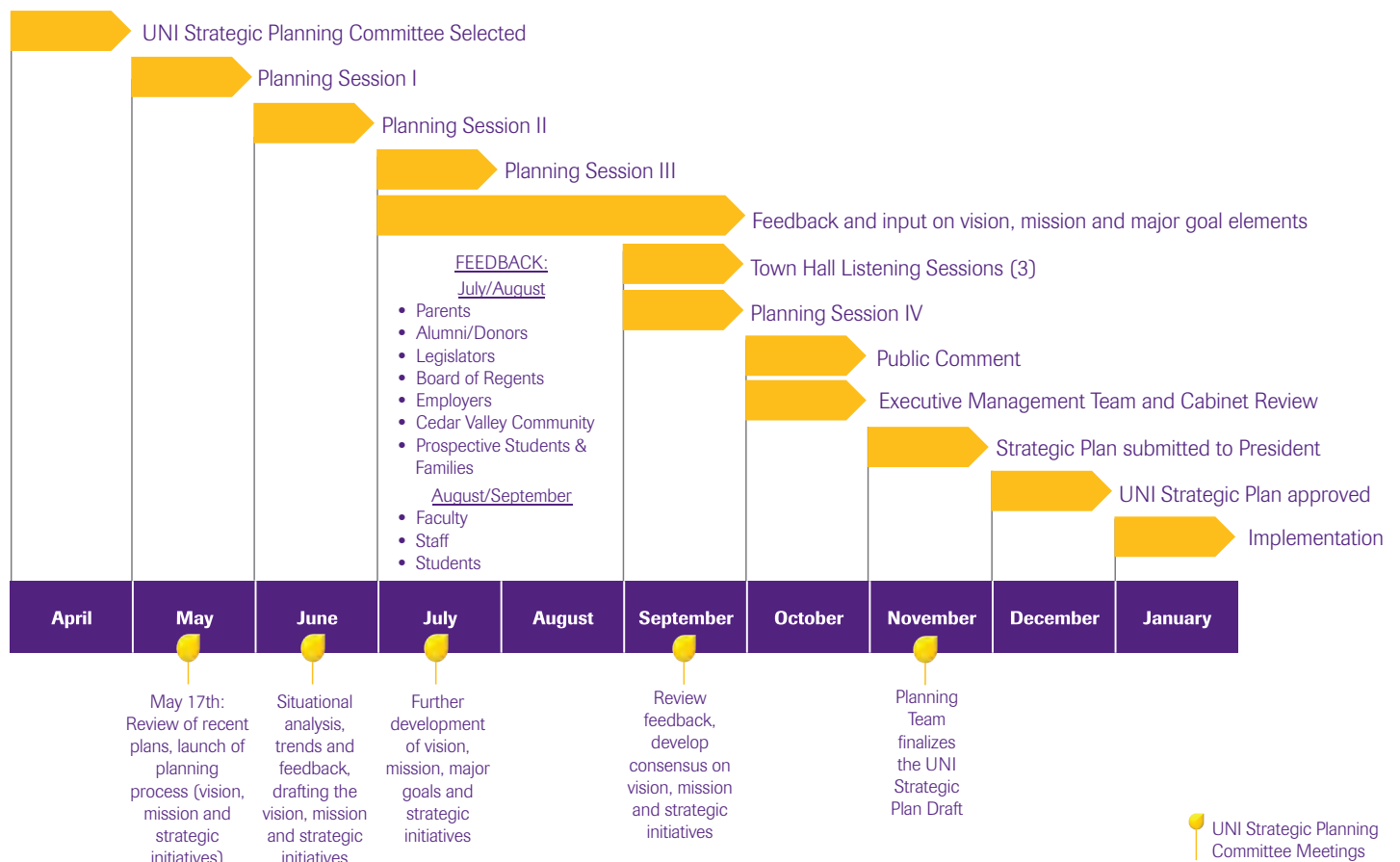
UNI Strategic Planning Process, Timeline, and Model

The University of Northern Iowa, supported by the UNI Institute for Decision Making, facilitated a broadly inclusive strategic planning process that began in May 2016. The process began with a leadership retreat that included 160 student, faculty and staff participants who represented a broad cross-section of the campus community. Following the retreat, a 30-member Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) was appointed with representatives from all areas of the campus and from the Cedar Valley community. During the summer of 2016, the SPC participated in multiple interactive planning sessions to craft new plan elements, including the university's vision, mission, values, and strategic goals and initiatives.

SPC facilitated a broadly inclusive public input process to develop the strategic plan. Eight public input sessions were conducted by SPC members in Waterloo, Cedar Falls, Cedar Rapids, Des Moines and Marshalltown. Nearly 150 participants attended input sessions and included representatives from economic development organizations, nonprofit organizations, K-12 teachers and administrators, community leadership, alumni, elected local and state officials, members of the Board of Regents and Foundation Trustees. In addition, an online survey gathered input from more than 300 UNI students, parents and representatives from the broader community.

Public input was reviewed by the SPC to help revise the Strategic Plan components. A series of Town Hall feedback sessions were held on campus to obtain further responses and prepare a final draft for review by the Board of Regents. The final strategic plan was approved by the Board of Regents on October 20, 2016.

UNI 2017-2022 Strategic Planning Process



UNI's Strategic Plan includes a unifying goal of Student Success and three supporting goals: 1) Engaged Learning, 2) Diversity and Inclusion, and 3) Community Engagement. To implement the Strategic Plan, a Strategic Plan Action Committee has engaged with faculty and staff from across the university to prepare metrics and targets for each goal and initiative. After a campus-wide implementation process, the UNI Foundation and Alumni Association gathered input from trustees, alumni and donors.

During the 2017-2022 strategic planning period, UNI will actively measure its progress toward the strategic plan goals. The university will remain engaged with the campus and broader communities as we work collectively to achieve our shared goals and priorities for student success.

VISION

Offering personalized attention to students, the University of Northern Iowa will be a diverse and inclusive campus community that provides an engaged education empowering students to lead locally and globally.

MISSION

Within a challenging and supportive environment, the University of Northern Iowa engages students in high-quality and high-impact learning experiences and emphasizes excellence in teaching and scholarship.

Unifying Goal: Student Success

Develop and support engaging experiences, dynamic and high quality academic programs, and outstanding faculty and staff to foster student success

- **Supporting Goal 1:
Diversity and Inclusion**
Provide a campus culture that reflects and values the evolving diversity of society and promotes inclusion.
- **Supporting Goal 2:
Campus Vitality**
Enhance resource and facility development to provide an enriched campus life experience which is both environmentally and fiscally responsible.
- **Supporting Goal 3:
Community Engagement**
Create opportunities for students, faculty and staff to build external relationships that enhance local and global learning experiences and contribute to the cultural and economic vitality of the Cedar Valley and Iowa

UNI's Civic Action Plan

Implementation of Supporting Goal #3 - Community Engagement

The University of Northern Iowa is a Carnegie Classified Institution for Community Engagement. Building on the strengths of community engagement work at the university, UNI's Civic Action Plan (CAP) enhances high-impact practices, and outlines how community engaged learning activities can "...help students achieve the essential learning outcomes that both educators and employers endorse" (Kuh, 2008) to become civic-minded professionals. UNI's CAP provides purposeful pathways for students to connect their academic coursework and experiential learning opportunities to build their sense of civic engagement and responsibility while enhancing the skills required in the workforce. The CAP provides faculty and staff various frameworks that bring together the university and its community (local to global) to provide learning opportunities and meet community needs. Community partners are offered opportunities to develop a formal relationship with UNI and know how to access the university. The CAP provides connections for the community, the university, its faculty, staff, students, centers and institutes. The Civic Action Plan serves as the implementation plan for Supporting Goal #3 - Community Engagement, in UNI's Strategic Plan.

GOAL 1

Students

Provide students with paths for involvement in community engagement activities including service-learning classes and co-/extra-curricular activities.

OBJECTIVE 1

Support and create paths for community engagement for students within majors across campus contributing to student success and retention.

- Designate service-learning courses using clear criteria informed by national best practices
- Work with interested departments to create paths for student engagement, with the intent of promoting diverse and inclusive experiences
- Work with faculty and staff, particularly advisors, on promoting high quality and high impact community engaged learning experiences

OBJECTIVE 2

Support and promote co-/extra-curricular experiences for students providing access to resources and opportunities with on- and off-campus organizations.

- Coordinate with on-campus organizations such as but not limited to: the Office of Student Life, Service and Leadership Council, the American Democracy Project, Northern Iowa Student Government (NISG), Nonprofit Leadership Alliance, Career Services, Rod Library, and others
- Coordinate with off-campus organizations and businesses such as but not limited to the Volunteer Center of Cedar Valley, Greater Cedar Valley Alliance, Cedar Valley Nonprofit Association, Veridian Credit Union, and John Deere
- Develop co-curricular transcripts by forming a committee to investigate best practices, determine the co-/extra-curricular activities to be documented, define the processes needed, and work with Career Services and the Office of Student Life to assist students in articulating a co-curricular transcript

OBJECTIVE 3

Recognize and celebrate community engagement and establish a process for the recognition for students at graduation.

- Recognize students with significant engagement experience as demonstrated by their co-curricular transcript at graduation
- Host an annual Community Engagement Celebration Day that recognizes students, faculty, staff and community members/agencies

Indicators of Success

- NASCE: Fall 2019 - increase POP score to at least 23, increase 5 pts (30 by 2022) ^
- Transcript: Fall 2020 - SL courses designated for Fall 2020 courses*
- Fall 2020 Highlight the departments that can show the map of engagement for students in their major (baseline)
- NSSE: Spring 2020 - increase the percent of students planning to hold a formal leadership role in student org (first-year) to 50% and increase those who held a formal leadership role (seniors) to 50% (Base: 2015 36% first-year; 43% seniors)
- Spring 2021 - Co-curricular transcripts available to students by spring 2021, thereafter annually increase number of students/hours with community engagement activity
- Community Engagement Database - increase # of community engagement projects annually (students project increase 10% annually ^)
- Spring 2018 - Host annual Community Engagement Day*
- Spring 2020 - Recognition at graduation
- NASCE: Fall 2019 - increase percent of students that report participating in community service to 55% (increase 5%); 80% by 2022 ^
- Spring 2021 - students are recognized at graduation for their community engagement work

Notes:

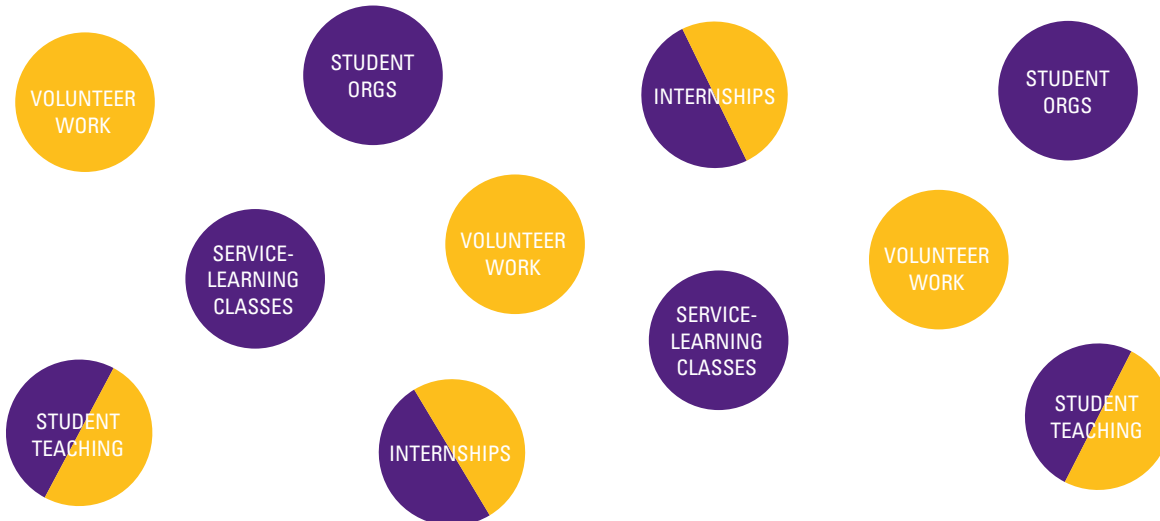
National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) - administered every other year, on even years, in the spring

National Assessment of Service and Community Engagement (NASCE) - administered every four years, in the fall

Fall 2015 (baseline), Fall 2019, Fall 2023, Fall (continues every 4th year)

^ Metrics outlined in Board of Regents report

**Higher Learning Commission - QIP Components*



Students have many opportunities while at UNI, however struggle to understand and articulate how the connectedness of their curricular and co/extra-curricular activities develop their skills for the workforce and citizenship.

The CAP aims to provide students an intentional pathway to become a civic-minded professional.



GOAL 2

Faculty/Staff

Support faculty and staff in aligning community engagement with teaching, scholarship and service, hiring practices, resources, recognitions, and tenure and promotion decisions.

OBJECTIVE 1

Provide professional development for faculty and staff and resources for implementing service-learning courses.

- Define community engagement and service-learning for faculty and staff and identify already-existing courses fitting these definitions
- Provide faculty and staff with disciplinary examples of community engagement and service-learning
- Implement the Service-Learning Institute every summer matching 10 faculty/staff with 10 community members/agencies to co-create a service-learning project, prioritizing projects that address issues of diversity and inclusion

OBJECTIVE 2

Support faculty and staff's efforts to align community engagement with teaching, scholarship and service, hiring practices and tenure and promotion.

- Support academic affairs, dean's council and department heads work to

create strategic plans to incorporate community engagement in teaching, scholarship and service

- Work with Human Resources to provide support for departments/centers/institutes across campus that want to incorporate community engagement in their hiring practices
- Support the Faculty Evaluation Committee and academic departments in incorporating the scholarship of engagement in tenure and promotion practices

OBJECTIVE 3

Recognize faculty and staff for their service-learning and community engagement work, prioritizing projects that address issues of diversity and inclusion.

- Implement an annual Community Engagement Day that recognizes students, faculty, staff, centers and institutes and community partners (local and global) for their excellence
- Support university, colleges and department's efforts to recognize service-learning and community engagement

Indicators of Success

- NSSE: Spring 2022 - increase percent of students that report at least some of their courses included a community-based service-learning project to 60% and 90% by spring 2022 (2015 48% first-year; 68% seniors) ^
- NASCE: Fall 2019 - increase percent of students that report service coming from courses to 25% (increase 5%)
- NASCE: Fall 2019 - increase percent of students that report participating in service-learning courses to 38% (increase 5%)
- Satisfaction Survey - 100% of faculty/staff report the SLI as being helpful in designing a service-learning project/course*
- Fall 2020 review departmental strategic plans to know if community engagement activities are embedded in teaching, scholarship and service (baseline) ^
- Fall 2020 work with HR to determine departments that incorporated community engagement in their hiring practices (baseline)
- Fall 2020 review how Faculty Handbook and Scholarship of Engagement has been incorporated in tenure and promotion
- Fall 2020 - 80% of faculty are satisfied with their own program's inclusion of community engagement in teaching, scholarship & service
- Spring 2018 & annually thereafter - 90% of participants will be satisfied with Community Engagement Celebration Day & agree it supports UNI's strategic plan*
- Fall 2020 review university, colleges and department's efforts to recognize community engagement work

Notes:

National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) - administered every other year, on even years, in the spring

National Assessment of Service and Community Engagement (NASCE) - administered every four years, in the fall

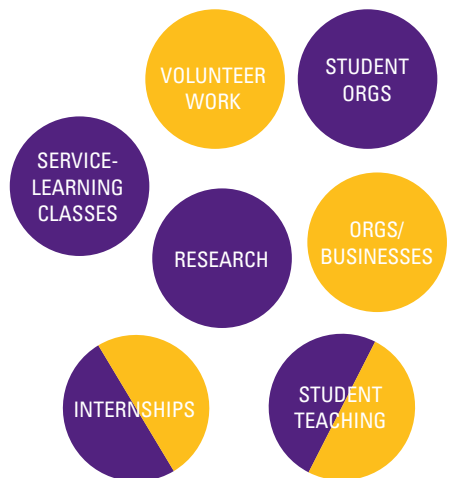
Fall 2015 (baseline), Fall 2019, Fall 2023, Fall (continues every 4th year)

^ Metrics outlined in Board of Regents report

*Higher Learning Commission - QIP Components

Faculty and staff deliver a variety of community engaged learning opportunities within their own departments, centers and institutes, however may struggle with access, information and resources to support and deliver community engaged work.

The CAP aims to provide information, support, and resources that can enhance faculty teaching, research and service, student development, and address community needs



GOAL 3

Community Partners

Establish a process for community partners to opt-in to being a recognized partner with UNI.

OBJECTIVE 1

Recruit and launch a Community Engagement Advisory Board made up of University and community organizations whose purpose is to serve as an ambassador and advisor for UNI - Cedar Valley partnerships and community engagement.

- The initial priority of the committee is to assist in the establishment of a process for community partners to opt-in to being a formal partner with UNI
- Other responsibilities include ensuring UNI Community engagement processes and activities are mutually beneficial and reciprocal for community partners

OBJECTIVE 2

Create a recognized network of UNI community partners.

- Design a process for community partners to opt-in as a recognized partner of UNI
- Provide recognition of partner's commitment to UNI community engagement (i.e. PURPLE CIRCLE or other branding)
- Create a formal, straightforward process for community partners to share their needs and interests with faculty, staff and students.
- Define processes for matching UNI faculty, staff and student with community partner needs according to Advisory Board Guidelines

Indicators of Success

- Fall 2020- determine the number of Community Partners (baseline)
- Satisfaction survey: 90% of community partners are satisfied with their partnership with UNI
- Board Meetings: Fall 2018 - Advisory Board is formed and meetings are held each semester

Notes:

National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) - administered every other year, on even years, in the spring

National Assessment of Service and Community Engagement (NASCE) - administered every four years, in the fall

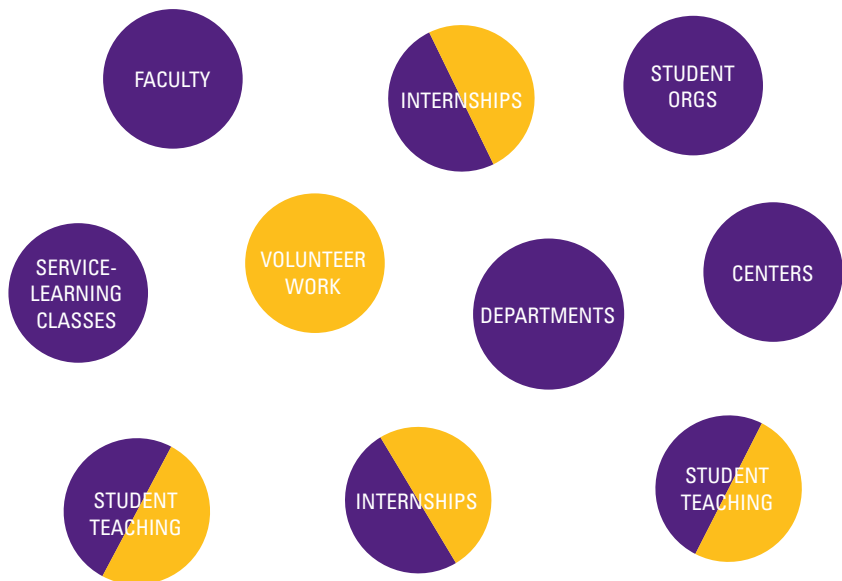
Fall 2015 (baseline), Fall 2019, Fall 2023, Fall (continues every 4th year)

^ Metrics outlined in Board of Regents report

**Higher Learning Commission - QIP Components*

Community partners often struggle on how to access faculty, staff, students, centers and institutes for volunteers, project development, and support for research.

The CAP aims to provide access for community members to develop partnerships that support students learning and meets community needs.



GOAL 4

Office of Community Engagement

Provide leadership, access and support for students, faculty and staff to reach out and partner with community agencies/business and provide an access point for community partners to reach in and partner with university students, faculty and staff.

OBJECTIVE 1

Elevate the Office of Community Engagement and its work.

- Strengthen the “outreach” presence in the Cedar Valley and engage as a leader in community conversations (Director of Community Engagement)
- Establish and strengthen the “front door” for community engagement at UNI to allow community members and agencies a “go to” place at UNI (Program Coordinator)
- Continue building capacity of service-learning and community engagement through recruiting AmeriCorps ICAP member through Iowa Campus Compact
- Continue, and expand, memberships, network associations, and participation in conferences that support community engagement growth and improvement at UNI with organizations such as (but not limited to) Iowa Campus Compact, Imagining America, Engagement Scholarship Consortium, Carnegie, President’s Honor Roll, etc.

OBJECTIVE 2

Expand support for existing UNI/community partnerships and actively seek opportunities for faculty, staff, and student engagement with community partners.

- Support UNI’s network of partnerships to provide opportunities for students to have meaningful experiences, especially to explore issues of diversity and inclusion
- Provide examples of community engagement and best practices within various disciplines
- Build capacity of community partners to address important problems in collaboration with UNI
- Align faculty, staff, and students with UNI’s centers and institutes that provide community engagement opportunities
- Define the barriers to community engagement work such as the academic calendar, location, etc. and diminish their effect
- Work in partnership with UNI’s Foundation to increase resources for community engagement activities

OBJECTIVE 3

Enhance the marketing and public relations of service-learning and community engagement, both internally and externally.

- Provide ongoing communications about the role and support provided by the Office of Community Engagement to UNI faculty, staff, and students
- Work with university public relations to publish more stories on community engagement and market community engagement opportunities
- Enhance the Community Engagement website
- Maintain the Community Engagement Database and promote its use across campus with faculty, staff, students, centers and institutes
- Design marketing materials such as newsletters, Facebook, etc.
- Connect efforts with the Office of Admissions to see how community engagement can help recruit students & illustrate the importance of community engagement in student success and retention

Indicators of Success

- NASCE: Fall 2019 - increase the percent of students that report being satisfied with their level of involvement in community service to 38% (increase 5%) and 60% by 2022 ^
- NSSE: Spring 2022 - increase the percent of students (first-year and seniors) that report connecting their learning to societal problems or issues “very often” or “often” to 60% and 90% by spring 2022 (2015 53% first-year; 67% seniors) ^
- Community Partners: annually increase the number of formal community partners
- Satisfaction survey: 90% of community partners are satisfied with their partnership with UNI
- BOR Centers Report
- NSSE: Spring 2022 - increase percent of seniors that report planning or did an internship/field experience to 95% (2015 82%)
- Track analytics
- Spring 2018 - start and continue monthly newsletter
- PR: publish a minimum of two UNI community engagement stories each month
- Community Engagement Database - increase # of community engagement projects annually (faculty/staff projects increase 10% annually to 50% by 2022 ^)

Notes:

National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) - administered every other year, on even years, in the spring

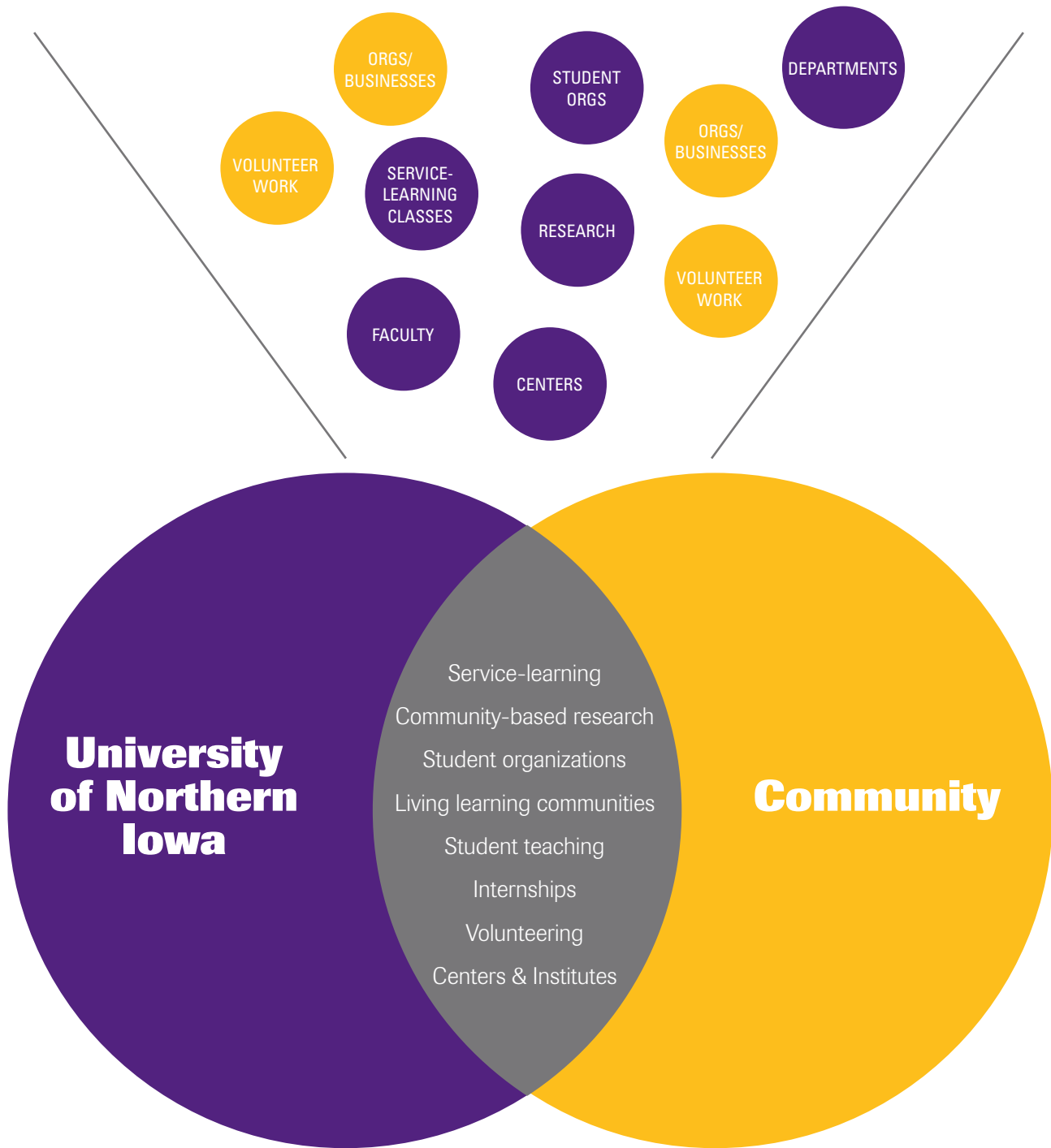
National Assessment of Service and Community Engagement (NASCE) - administered every four years, in the fall

Fall 2015 (baseline), Fall 2019, Fall 2023, Fall (continues every 4th year)

^ Metrics outlined in Board of Regents report

**Higher Learning Commission - QIP Components*

Community Engaged Learning



The Civic Action Plan provides structure for how students, faculty, staff and community partners can create beneficial, reciprocal relationships that together, are greater than the sum of their parts. Students graduate to become civic-minded professionals, faculty and staff are supported in community engagement work, and community needs are addressed.



Community Engagement Office

University of Northern Iowa | Cedar Falls, IA 50613



engagement.uni.edu



[UNIEngagement](#)



[UNIEngagement](#)