

## University Core Values

The University is engaged in the general enterprise of identifying, articulating, and promoting growth of those universal aspects of humanity, such as intellectual development, artistry, beneficence, empathy, industry, and endurance, that have historically proven crucial to the health, well-being, and advancement of man individually and mankind collectively.

This enterprise leads the University to focus on the following elements:

**Intellect:** the ability to discover and synthesize knowledge and to think critically, objectively, and independently. Among the means through which the University develops intellect are classroom instruction, honors fraternities, and the UWA Honors Program.

**Vocation:** the appropriate knowledge and skills to accommodate the successful pursuit of work in a field that allows the fullest realization of potential and desire. Among the means through which the University develops vocation are upper-level courses, business internships, and various professional fraternities.

**Culture:** the ability to appreciate, and perhaps participate in, creations in the arts and humanities that enrich lives through their power to awe and inspire. Among the means through which the University provides opportunities for culture are the programs of the Department of Fine Arts and of the Sumter County Fine Arts Council.

**Social Discourse:** the capacity not simply to tolerate, but to welcome the opportunity to examine opposing points of view and the ability to interact in a congenial and respectful manner with others. Among the means through which the University encourages social discourse are the activities of service organizations and the Student Government Association, expanded curriculum offerings, and modification of existing courses to include material reflective of the nation's cultural and social diversity.

**Character:** the ability to establish, in an informed and proactive manner, a personal philosophy of life and to recognize and value the concept of personal integrity. Among the means through which the University works to develop character are course offerings that focus on values and character issues and course policies that require personal responsibility on the part of students.

## Environmental Assessment

### Environmental Opportunities (In Priority Order)

1. Strategic alliances with community colleges and high schools in its service area.
2. Various populations which are sources of potential students for the University.
3. The University name change.
4. Area businesses which can benefit from University expertise, assistance, and collaboration
5. The need for additional degree programs in the region.
6. Greater University involvement in community and public service.

### Environmental Threats (In Priority Order)

1. The cutback on exemptions of out-of-state-tuition.
2. A declining student pool.
3. The rural location of the University.
4. Inadequate financial resources.
5. Rising operational costs.
6. Mississippi's Teacher Scholarships.
7. Inadequate course and program offerings.
8. Negative response to the name change.
9. A declining population in our service area and increased competition for students among the two- and four-year colleges across the state.

### Internal Strengths (In Priority Order)

1. Academic Programs.
2. Dedicated faculty and staff.
3. Visionary administration.
4. Shared governance and open communication.
5. Classroom instruction.
6. Planning process.
7. Employee benefit package.
8. Location.
9. The willingness of the members of the University community to work together for the betterment of the institution.

### Internal Strengths (In Priority Order)

1. Financial Resources.
2. Class offerings
3. Internal and external promotion and publicity.
4. Community relations.
5. Location.
6. Parochial view on the part of faculty and staff.
7. Turf attitude among programs.
8. Apathy toward campus cultural events and programs.

## Mission Statement

The University of West Alabama is a state-supported, coeducational institution of higher learning governed by a Board of Trustees appointed by the Governor. As a regional institution, the University's foremost commitment is to meeting the educational needs of the state and particularly of the West Alabama area. Valuing a diverse student population, it also welcomes students from throughout the United States and from other countries.

The primary purpose of the University is to provide opportunities for students to pursue a quality education through associate, baccalaureate, and master's degrees in liberal arts, natural sciences and mathematics, pre-professional programs, nursing, technology, business, and education. Additionally, the University will assist its students in developing the important qualities of independent thinking and respect for the ideas of others and in building firm foundations of personal integrity and character in order to realize their quests for a philosophy of life and for self-fulfillment. Importance is placed on providing opportunities within the curricula for the development of enhanced skills in critical thinking, communication, leadership, and computer literacy. The University also seeks to provide students opportunities for growth beyond the classroom through a wide range of extracurricular activities, programs, and services and through the maintenance of an environment of cultural and intellectual diversity and through the encouragement of the free exchange of ideas among faculty, administration, and students.

At the University of West Alabama, the emphasis is on the traditional learner, but the institution is also committed to the concept of life-long learning and to serving non-traditional students. These include workers in area schools, businesses and industries, governmental agencies, and the professions. In serving these diverse publics, the institution not only employs traditional means of delivery, but also seeks to expand its use of innovative technologies, including distance learning, and to networking with other educational institutions and agencies in order to more comprehensively address the needs of its region.

The University seeks to employ a vibrant, talented, and diverse faculty whose members are committed to providing leadership and fostering positive growth throughout West Alabama through research and public service, with primary emphasis on that which meets the educational, social, cultural, and economic needs of the region. In the recruitment and retention of this faculty, as with all members of the University community, the institution, consistent with its academic heritage, maintains openness to all qualified persons.

## Long-Range Goals

**Goal 1:** The University, through distance learning, research and service, and partnerships with both the public and private sectors, will address the major educational, social, and economic issues of the region and in doing so will promote a positive self-image of the institution and the area.

**Goal 2:** The University will raise the level of compensation for faculty and staff to at least the State average for regional institutions and will enhance the opportunities for professional development for faculty and staff in order to recruit and maintain highly qualified personnel from diverse ethnic and geographic backgrounds.

**Goal 3:** The University will raise its student success rate through improved student counseling and enhanced quality of residential life and extracurricular experience.

**Goal 4:** The University will improve recruiting and its success rate by promoting an environment of excellence in academics through a vibrant instructional program, a challenging honors program, appropriate accreditation for academic programs, and enriched opportunities for intellectual exposure and exchange of ideas.

**Goal 5:** The University will better meet the needs of its various publics, both internal and external through the comprehensive use of current information technologies.

**Goal 6:** The University will provide effective administrative services to support its mission.

**Goal 7:** The University will improve its financial status by increasing its efforts at productivity and by seeking additional funding from public and private sources.

**Goal 8:** The University will strengthen its academic environment through an increased emphasis on the importance of its place in the international community, specifically through incorporation of an international focus into the curricula and through more active recruitment of international students.