

# University of West Alabama Strategic Plan 2005-2009

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## VISION

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*To be nationally recognized for transforming the Black Belt into a region with an appealing quality of life*

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## MISSION

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*To provide opportunities for students to pursue a quality education and assist in developing the important qualities of independent thinking, respect for the ideas of others, personal integrity and character in order to realize their quests for a philosophy of life and self-fulfillment*

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## VALUES

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- Intellect
- Vocation
- Culture
- Social discourse
- Character
- Community service
- Diversity

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## STANDING UNIVERSITY GOALS

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- Address the major educational, social, cultural, and economic issues of the region and in doing so promote a positive self-image of the institution and the area
- Provide effective administrative services to support the mission
- Meet the needs of its various publics, both internal and external, through the comprehensive use of information technologies
- Improve its financial status by increasing its efforts at productivity and by seeking additional funding from public and private sources.

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## SPECIAL STAKEHOLDER GOALS

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**Board** – Develop and maintain a positive and cooperative relationship with the Board

**Faculty** – Recruit and maintain highly qualified faculty from diverse ethnic and geographic backgrounds

**Staff** – Attract and retain highly qualified and diverse staff  
**Graduates** – Provide quality programs that are accessible to qualified students, particularly those who are employed and seek to enhance their professional credentials

**Undergraduates** – Raise student success rates through improved student counseling and enhanced quality of residential life and extracurricular experience

**Potential Students** – Work through high schools in target counties to communicate the quality and benefits of attending UWA

**Alumni** – Foster a closer connection between alumni and UWA

**Competition** – Identify and understand the competition and develop strategy to meet the threats

**Government** – Develop relationships that help UWA communicate the value of the institution to the region and the state

**Community** – Address the major educational, social, and economic issues of the region through distance learning, research, service, and partnerships with both the public and private sectors

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## STRENGTHS

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- Rich academic environment
- Faculty-student relationship
- Caring faculty and staff
- Quality programs
- Campus setting
- Good students
- Additional training and experience outside the classroom
- Fringe benefits for faculty/staff

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## WEAKNESSES

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- Facilities
- Lack of undergraduate online registration
- Lack of faculty diversity
- Lack of recruiting scholarships
- Compensation/salary
- Lack of succession planning

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## OPPORTUNITIES

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- Alabama Black Belt
- Alabama/Mississippi industrial park
- Partner with community colleges
- Partner with local school systems
- Students/faculty in community service
- Leadership role in the Commission on the Future of East Mississippi and West Alabama
- Leadership/involvement in regional economic development
- Distance learning
- Building additional relationships with political leaders
- Enlisting students in recruiting

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## THREATS

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- State funding
- Lack of part-time job opportunities for students
- Competition from community college in Demopolis
- Declining population
- K – 12 education system
- Amenities and services in local community
- Possible government mandates
  - Out-of-state tuition
  - Remediation at two-year colleges
  - Viability review

# University of West Alabama

## Strategic Plan 2005-2009

### ASSUMPTIONS

- State funding as a percent of budget will continue to decline over five years
- Tuition will continue to increase faster than the rate of inflation.
- Population of traditional college bound students will continue to decline in the primary service area.
- The market of non-traditional students will grow.
- The transition in faculty/administration that is underway will bring new ideas while preserving the traditions.
- Alumni would like to stay connected to the university.
- There will be a change in the membership of the Board.
- The desire for help among K-12 schools will grow.
- The demand for K-12 teachers will continue to grow long-term.
- Amenities will become a more important part of the university selection process among students.
- Competition for a limited number of students will grow.
- The use of appropriate technology will grow in the classroom.
- Online and other new approaches in education will become a growing part of the university.
- A dynamic environment will require additional planning and assessment.
- There will be a growing interest in the Black Belt and greater resources to support research and development, but competition for these resources will grow.

### CRITICAL ISSUES AND ACTION PLANS

#### Fundraising

- Cultivate new funding through grant writing
- Evaluate the option of a full-time development person
- Design a fundraising plan

#### Scholarships

- Evaluate the impact of scholarship increased and re-budget accordingly
- Look at ways to fill clerical jobs with students instead of filling vacancies with full-time staff

#### Online Administration

- Evaluate administrative needs of the online program at the end of each session

#### Facilities

- Update the facilities plan over the next year

#### Technology

- Develop a central budget process for refreshing technology and fund it

#### Community/Partnerships

- Apply for grants to fund the Regional Center for Community and Economic Development
- Look for donors interested in helping the Black Belt

#### Image

- Communicate the successes of the faculty, staff, and students

#### Network Upgrade

- Replace current administrative computing system
- Update networking system

#### Student Housing

- Gather proposals from private organizations to supply student housing on campus
- Investigate converting existing housing to office and classroom space
- Research converting other housing to suites.

### CRITICAL ISSUES AND ACTION PLANS

#### Retention

- Move faculty/staff salaries to the average for regional institutions in the state within three years – funded by increases in enrollment and tuition
- Investigate a merit-based system for faculty
- Consider staff merit system after faculty system is implemented
- Increase operating funds to support faculty development

#### Board of Trustees

- Fundraising/scholarships
  - Establish Fundraising Committee
    - ◆ Develop a fundraising plan
    - ◆ Define expectation for board members
    - ◆ Coordinate with the foundation
- Political relationships (local/state/federal)
  - Visit Montgomery at least annually to meet with legislature
  - Invite members of state government to visit the campus (sporting events)
- Public Relations
  - Outreach committee work closely with the P/R department to invite/host people at on-campus events
- Best Practice
  - Continue to develop the process to review and evaluate the President
  - Develop and implement an annual board assessment process
  - Develop a Statement of Responsibilities for board members (President and Chair develop draft for board input)
  - Conduct sessions with the board to address selected issues in depth
  - Recognize current and past board service with awards and celebration

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