UNIVERSITY of MONTEVALLO

2021-2026 Strategic Plan

# 2024-2025 Executive Summary

## Overview

The University of Montevallo Board of Trustees voted to extend the 2021-2026 Strategic Plan by one year given pending changes in University leadership. As such, the 2021-2026 plan will be extended until the end of the 2026-2027 academic year with planning for the next cycle to occur during the same year. High-level assessment results for the 2024-2025 academic year are listed below by theme.

## FOCUS ON FIDELITY IN DEMOGRAPHIC DATA MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

The University of Montevallo complies with all federal and state data reporting requirements. The Office of Institutional Research Planning and Assessment is charged with ensuring there is fidelity in all reported data.

## THEME I: IDENTITY AND MISSION

**EMPHASIZE UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT A LIBERAL ARTS EDUCATION MEANS:**

- A focus on understanding what a liberal arts education means is integrated into our first-year experience course (UM 101) which is now required for all first-time freshmen and select transfer students.
- Preview Day and Orientation include an overview of the value of liberal arts.
- Montevallo Means More is a value-based campaign that includes the tenets of liberal arts education.

**FOSTER A SUSTAINABILITY CULTURE**

- Continued allocation to green fund grants.

- An analysis of energy reduction is currently underway to both facilitate cost savings and reduce the carbon footprint of the University.

# THEME 2: FOCUS ON GROWTH

**INCREASE RECRUITMENT, ENROLLMENT, AND RETENTION:**

- Undergraduate freshman recruitment level saw a slight decline with 548 in 2025 at census versus 559 in 2024.
- Graduate enrollment, including doctoral declined from 446 in 2024 at census to 419 in 2025. The Office of Graduate Studies is revamping their recruiting plan to include cohort development in partnering school districts and Slate optimization.
- Fall to Fall Undergraduate Retention Rate increased from 73% to 76% in 2025. The Graduate Retention Rate is steady at 84%.
- Implemented Slate, a new admissions platform, that will support recruiting both undergraduate and graduate students.
- The Office of Student Affairs compiles and distributes retention data to academic Department Chairs and Deans and is analyzing comparator COPLAC institutions.
- UM's Shelby County Dual Enrollment Partnership continues to grow serving over 900 high school students last year, while the University is now a full participant in Alabama's Direct Admissions initiative.

**DEVELOP NEW ACADEMIC PROGRAMS:**

- Launched the following new academic programs
  - BBA Data Analytics
  - BBA General Business
  - MS Nutrition Science
  - MEd Special Education (pending approval of the Alabama State Department of Education)

**BUDGET TRANSPARENCY**

- The University of Montevallo administration identified significant budget shortfalls for FY25 and appointed a new Interim Chief Financial Officer (CFO) to identify gaps and work with the Executive Cabinet to develop a plan to address the shortfall. Presentations regarding the state of University finances were then shared with the UM Board of Trustees, the UM Foundation Board,

Student Government Association, and UM faculty and staff. The Interim CFO was then named Vice President for Business Affairs, CFO, and Treasurer at the August Board of Trustees meeting.

# THEME 3: INNOVATION FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

**SUPPORT ONLINE EDUCATION:**

- The University adopted Canvas Catalogue and is working to develop additional online opportunities through the associated UM platform, Falcon Learn.
- Malone Center for Excellence in Teaching continues to offer professional development opportunities and instructional design support for online learning.

**ENCOURAGE ADOPTIONS OF LOW OR NO COST TEXBOOKS:**

- In Fall 2025, 30% of all courses adopted low or no cost textbooks such as open educational resources (OERs) versus 24% in Fall 2024.

**SUPPORT FACULTY, FACULTY COMPENSATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:**

- Due to budget shortfalls, faculty salaries were not increased for FY26. Faculty promotions, however, were honored using 2024 CUPA data so as to avoid compression.
- Faculty travel was capped at $1,500 and must be associated with a qualifying event.
- Faculty Development Advisory Committee grants and sabbaticals were honored in full for FY25.

# THEME 4: SUPPORT FOR LEARNING

**STRATEGIC EXPANSION OF ATHLETIC AND RELATED PROGRAMS:**

- Budget shortfalls necessitated a review of scholarships, including stacking in athletics and special programs. The out-of-state tuition scholarship was adjusted to cap the award at $12,480 per year.
- The Division of Athletics maintained rosters from Fall 2024 to Fall 2025.

**MAINTAIN AND EXTEND LIFE OF EXISTING BUILDINGS AND LANDSCAPING**

- For the 2024-2025 academic year, the Physical Plant completed projects in 15 academic and administrative buildings and 4 athletic facilities.
- The ground floor of Carmichael Library was renovated allowing the Falcon Success Center to relocate and serve as a one-stop-shop for student academic support.

**UPDATE AND EXPAND RESIDENCE HALLS**

- Eleven (11) residence hall renovation projects were completed in FY2025.

**ENSURE STAFF ARE APPROPRIATELY COMPENSATED**

- Staff Senate reviewed its compensation policy, eliminating merit pay. The UM BOT approved these changes.
- We continue to review the appropriateness of CUPA comparisons for staff salaries.
- We continue to look at industry norms to help assess appropriate compensation for staff.
- Due to budget shortfalls, staff salaries were not increased for FY26.