# University of La Verne

# 2025 Strategic Vision

*"Achieve Beyond Imagination"*

## Vision

The University of La Verne will be a distinctive, inclusive educational institution of choice that prepares all for success and meaningful engagement in their communities.

## University Mission

The University of La Verne offers a distinctive and relevant educational experience to a diverse population of traditional-age, adult, and graduate learners preparing them for successful careers and a commitment to life-long learning across the liberal arts and professional programs.

## Core Values of the University of La Verne

Every student will be immersed in and will graduate committed to the university's four core values with the full support and encouragement of faculty and staff who are dedicated to these same values:

- **Ethical Reasoning**

  The university affirms a value system that actively supports peace with justice, respect of individuals and humanity, and the health of the planet and its people. Students are reflective about personal, professional, and societal values that support professional and social responsibility.

- **Diversity and Inclusivity**

  The university supports a diverse and inclusive environment where students recognize and benefit from the life experiences and viewpoints of other students, faculty, and staff.

- **Lifelong Learning**

  The university promotes intellectual curiosity and the importance of lifelong learning. It teaches students how to learn, to think critically, to be capable of original research, and to access and integrate information to prepare them for continued personal and professional growth.

- **Community and Civic Engagement**

  The university asserts a commitment to improving and enhancing local, regional, and global communities.

# 2025 Strategic Vision

**The Context:** The University of La Verne recognizes that higher education in the United States is at a crossroad. Several forces are reshaping the competitive landscape and our strategic response:

**Economic:** Median income is remaining flat, state/federal financial aid is under constant threat, and there is continued pressure to increase tuition as a way to increase salaries, absorb escalating costs, and adhere to compliance expectations. California is forecasting a deficit budget which may impact funding for public institutions and Cal Grants.

**Demographic:** Underserved students (especially Latinx) and adult students (many of whom are veterans) are growing populations in California. All other student demographics are decreasing, with a precipitous national drop in high school graduates forecasted for 2026. This is already leading to increased recruitment by Northeastern and Midwestern universities in California and across the Sunbelt.

**Value Proposition:** There is skepticism around the perceived value of a degree in the face of rapidly increasing student debt and uncertain career outcomes. Career focus, placement levels, and time-to-degree are imperatives for prospective students of the future, and the need to clearly articulate the value of the liberal arts is pressing.

**Information Revolution:** New technologies (including Artificial Intelligence), adaptive learning, and predictive analytics remain unpredictable disruptors. How we adjust learning, student support, and engagement will be critical.

**WSCUC Review**: The development of the 2025 Strategic Vision coincided with the university's reaffirmation of accreditation with WSCUC (WASC Senior College and University Commission). This process afforded the opportunity for self-reflection on how we can better support student success through continuous improvement. This mindset is interwoven into the Strategic Vision goals and initiatives. In addition, the 2020 WASC recommendations developed by an expert Visiting Team have been mapped to the Strategic Vision initiatives and appear in their entirety at the end of this document.

**2020 Crisis Year:** The COVID-19 global pandemic, the economic downturn, and the social reckoning with systemic racism have presented all of higher education with unique challenges. Among these are the need for adaptability and a keen understanding of what it means to serve our students, who have been particularly impacted by these crises. The university is well positioned to convert these challenges into a strategic opportunity given our mission of access, our values-based education, our deep commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and an assets-based approach to social mobility. An adept strategic response in this era can further distinguish from the competition.

**Our Strategic Response:**

The 2025 Strategic Plan positions the university to successfully compete in this environment. Distinctiveness will arise from both the programs that we offer and quality delivery of what we offer. The former involves high potential health programs that address regional needs. The latter rests upon educational excellence in delivering existing and new programs, undergirded by four strategic themes (listed below and described within):

1. High-Value Education
2. Inclusive Environment
3. Holistic Education
4. Performance Excellence and Innovation

Consistent with our values, the first three themes focus our efforts on delivering clear educational value for learners as whole persons in an affirming environment conducive towards intellectual, personal, civic, and career growth. The

final theme makes strategic pursuits viable and sustainable by emphasizing evidenced-based, continuous improvement in university operations and processes.

The strategy also takes into account future student demographics that will be increasingly Latinx, adult, veteran, transfer, and low-income by embracing our Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) status and building upon our traditional strength with adult learners. The university will be a destination of choice for these fast growing student demographics by offering a flexible, personalized, career-focused education within an inclusive learning environment for all students.

# 2025 Strategic Themes and University-wide Goals

## Strategic Theme I: High-Value Education

**Opening Statement**: The University of La Verne will provide a high return on one's educational investment by providing all students with high quality learning experiences inclusive of intellectual rigor, high-impact practices, career readiness and advancement, and timely degree completion.

**Goal:** *The university will promote learning that increases career preparation, placement, and advancement while optimizing time-to-degree resulting in increased social mobility.*

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## Strategic Theme II: Inclusive Environment

**Opening Statement:**  The University of La Verne will provide a climate that is appreciative of diversity and that fosters academic and professional success through a supportive environment that creates a deep sense of belonging and affirms the identity of all students and employees.

**Goal:** *All students, faculty, and staff will say "The University of La Verne is a place where I belong."*

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## Strategic Theme III:  Holistic Education

**Opening Statement:** The University of La Verne will provide a values-based educational and professional experience integrated with one's cognitive, social, emotional, spiritual, physical, and professional self among traditional-age undergraduates, and as appropriate at the Regional and Online Campuses and across graduate programs.

**Goal:** *The University of La Verne will increase student overall well-being to support learning.*

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## Strategic Theme IV: Performance Excellence and Innovation

**Opening Statement:** The University of La Verne will operate within a culture of excellence and innovation that focuses on quality, efficiency, and high-performance teams. We commit to financial sustainability, multiyear planning, and a culture of accountability.

**Goal:** *University administration, staff, and faculty will continuously assess and improve effectiveness and efficiencies.*

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# 2025 Strategic Initiatives

The 2025 Strategic Vision sets the primary areas of university focus for the next several years and categorizes university initiatives as transformative, bridge, or incremental. The implementation efforts of the initiatives outlined in this document will pull from various college and unit plans, which are *living documents,* allowing for flexibility and nimbleness in the execution of the 2025 Strategic Vision. The various units of the university will work interdependently with one another in order to accomplish the university-wide goals, as the 2025 Strategic Vision relies on collaboration to be successful. Furthermore, all initiatives will be implemented in alignment with shared governance as emphasized by WASC Recommendation 4.

## Transformative Initiative

*Linkages between the strategic initiatives and the 2020 WASC Recommendations are noted in blue and the WASC Recommendations are listed on page 8. Objectives in green are continuations from the 2020 Strategic Vision.*

### Establish a College of Health and Community Well-Being

- Establish distinctive academic and co-curricular programs, aligned with the institutional mission, that connect students to our region's needs, especially in the field of allied health.

The timing is right for the university to move progressively towards establishing a College of Health and Community Well-Being as the critical transformative and long-term strategic initiative in the 2025 Strategic Vision. The need for timely, relevant, and distinctive approaches to advancing this vision is acknowledged and the speed at which we move forward outlined in a phased and intentional approach:

- **Phase I** – Capitalize on existing expertise within the university colleges, combined with strategic investment and deployment of certificate programs that address immediate and future healthcare and community well-being needs.
- **Phase II** - Advance the institution's footprint in health and community well-being with an endowed dean position that will be tasked with laying the foundation for the launch of the College of Health and Community Well-Being though strategic partnerships, new program identification and development, and funding cultivation.
- **Phase III** - Transform the University of La Verne and the region with a distinctive and relevant College of Health and Community Well-Being that is evolving and responsive to the needs of the region and serves as a national model for educating future leaders in healthcare and related fields. The college will maintain a deep commitment to the core values of the university and leverage student characteristics to transform how the healthcare system addresses structural and policy inequities and underlying social determinants of health and well-being in our communities.

# Bridge Initiatives

*Linkages between the strategic initiatives and the 2020 WASC Recommendations are noted in blue and the WASC Recommendations are listed on page 8. Objectives in green are continuations from the 2020 Strategic Vision.*

## Identify and Launch New Academic Programs

Working in tandem with the program review and assessment incremental initiative, as well as the faculty curricular innovation bridge initiative, the initiative to identify and launch new programs will identify new programs that meet student interest and employment market demand to be created and launched at the University of La Verne. The recommendations for new programs will be generated by individual colleges, ROC directors and leadership, enrollment management data, trend forecasting, and donor interest. Potential areas for new programs include media, entrepreneurship, and artificial intelligences. Part of this initiative will also identify appropriate national accreditations to pursue.

## Improve Student Retention and Career Success

When students choose the University of La Verne, it is with the expectation that they will complete their degree within a program-appropriate timeframe and be prepared for career success, benefiting themselves, their families, and communities. The Student Retention and Career Success initiative aims to pave this pathway to social mobility, fulfilling both our mission and the commitment to our students and their aspirations. The first step on this pathway, retention, involves identifying and addressing systemic impediments to degree progress. This includes, but is not limited to, academic support, well-being support, affordability, proactive advising, and addressing administrative hurdles. Post-graduation career success is aided by integrating career preparation into the educational experience through career-relevant learning outcomes and experiential learning. This initiative requires support across the entire university community, with academic chairs, academic advisors, Provost Office personnel, the Retention Success Group, and a soon-coming Title V advisory board serving in key facilitation roles. (WASC Recommendations 3, 6)

Examples of how this initiative will be implemented include, but are not limited to:

- **Student Affairs** (through an asset-based lens) to implement inclusive well-being services and programs in partnership with the Randall Lewis Center; adult student engagement efforts; and revamp new student onboarding.
- **LVE 2.0 + T5 Grant** will add career and financial literacy; combine career and academic advising to offer mentorship; LVE will develop an intentional pathway for transfers, student success tracking, and proactive interventions.
  - *Embed La Verne Experience (LVE) 2.0 across all programs with a focus on student well-being, sense of belonging, career, and community engagement.*
- Commit to expand our data collection and knowledge of our alumni success post-graduation.
- Institutionalize Academic Justice 2.0 with UGAP, Grad Council, Registrar, and Academic & Student Affairs.
- Embed professional skill development across all programs; expand professional advisors and training across colleges and ROC.

## Embed a Culture of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

The university's initiative to embed a culture of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) within our University of La Verne community requires commitment and effort from all parties. Every area, unit, department, and college will assess how it currently provides its services, and whether or not those services are equitable and inclusive for the population it serves (e.g. students, faculty, staff, alumni, etc.). This initiative will require continued partnership across all areas and functions of the university as every member of the university community will have a role in shifting the culture to become more inclusive, safe, and culturally engaging for all. (WASC Recommendation 3)

Examples of how this initiative will be implemented include, but are not limited to:

- **New programs and curriculum** will include LVE 100 as a new requirement focusing on DEI along with new minors and majors being updated or developed.
  - Support innovative and responsive curricula and programs informed by principles of equity, inclusion, and social justice that reflect the university's commitment to achieving DEI outcomes, reviewed by departments and colleges.
- Ludwick Center programming focused on improved cultural understanding and awareness related to interfaith, multicultural, international, and community engagement.
- Improved recruiting and hiring practices (updated mandatory training, policy implementation, and intentional recruitment efforts); DEI added to PDQs, review and evaluations; Institutionalize cultural agility training across all employee groups.
- **Faculty development and accountability** in cultural agility (Handbook; IDEA course feedback for faculty development).
- **Student Affairs** to implement a Black Student Success program; develop cultural agility across programs; and enhance international student engagement.
- Invest in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Office and related programming (education, trainings, and workshops).

### Enhance and Ensure the Sustainability of Regional and Online Campuses (ROC)

This initiative focuses on creating a value proposition to differentiate University of La Verne from our competitors that would justify our tuition cost. We will create value in the following ways: tailoring our programs and services to serve the needs of adults; being flexible by making hybrid our signature delivery model supported with online options; and supporting the career development and advancement of our students both inside and outside their classroom.

Examples of how this initiative will be implemented include, but are not limited to:

- Create flexible scheduling by converting ground courses into hybrid; increasing class size by centralizing scheduling (as appropriate) and shifting to an academic calendar that permits semester and term cross-enrollment across campuses and online.
- Implement career focus throughout ROC curriculum and all sites.
- Expand professional advisors and training across colleges and ROC.
- Adjust academic program mix to offer relevant and in-demand degrees.

### Emphasize Faculty Curricular Innovation

Consistent with 2025 Strategy of High Value Education, and Performance Excellence and Innovation, the Curriculum Innovation Task Force (CITF) is a faculty-administration group that was formed with the purpose of offering adaptive, creative, and informed recommendations based on evidence and student feedback, about innovations in educational delivery and efficiencies that will enhance student learning. Rising expenses have caused university faculty, staff, and leadership to examine questions about access to the university for all students, and to consider if curricular and co-curricular programs are in fact meeting the needs students bring with them. As universities grapple with their own sustainability, particularly in the context of the COVID-19 crisis, it is important for stakeholders, especially faculty and staff, to explore curricular, pedagogical, and programmatic innovations that could lead to higher quality, efficient educational delivery that contains cost to students. (WASC Recommendation 1)

Examples of how this initiative will be implemented include, but are not limited to:

- Identify and implement strategies to enhance educational quality and student experience, including curricular and pedagogical innovations, optimizing processes and reducing inefficiencies to reduce degree cost while increasing graduation placement
- Establishment and work of the Faculty Curriculum Innovation Task Force
- Development and adoption of an academic calendar that permits semester and term cross-enrollment across campuses and online.

# Incremental Initiatives

*Linkages between the strategic initiatives and the 2020 WASC Recommendations are noted in* <span style="color:blue">*blue*</span> *and the WASC Recommendations are listed on page 8. Objectives in* <span style="color:green">*green*</span> *are continuations from the 2020 Strategic Vision.*

## Provide Faculty and Staff Development and Support

The Faculty and Staff Development and Support initiative is focused on providing learning, teaching, scholarship, and wellness resources, opportunities, and support for faculty and staff. Technology, workshops, training, and other programming are all part of this initiative in an effort to prepare faculty and staff for the future of higher education, respond to rapidly changing teaching, learning, and working environments, and provide professional development support.

Examples of how this initiative will be implemented include, but are not limited to:

- Cross-unit well-being working group (current faculty, staff, and student survey analysis and future ACHA).
- Faculty development and technology support through the Learning Commons and Center for Teaching and Learning
- Deliver courses, programs, and services in the manner most appropriate for excellence in student learning that is fiscally responsible.
    - Faculty-driven review and implementation of innovative pedagogies with CTL and Educational Effectiveness.
- Implement and maintain a technology infrastructure that supports, promotes, and enhances quality teaching, learning, co-curricular, and administrative environments.

## Enhance Human Resources

The Human Resources initiative will focus on driving human resources excellence and innovation, deploying recruitment and retention strategies, investing in employee development, creating a culture of accountability, and enhancing the employee experience. (WASC Recommendation 2)

Examples of how this initiative will be implemented include, but are not limited to:

- Create new compensation model (Step Compensation, Red Circle, and Performance).
- Create new evaluation process and new employee development program.
- Recruit, support, and continually develop employees to achieve a culture of inclusivity, quality service, accountability, and dedication to high performance.
    - Staff performance review and development plan; implement Total Rewards plan.
    - Develop and implement equitable employee compensation plan using external industry standards.

## Enhance Data Governance

The data governance initiative will work to assess and enhance current data governance activities, investments, and tools to enable data driven decision-making. Data governance is focused on planning, monitoring, and enforcing quality- and security-focused policy on data and systems, and recognizing data as an asset worth institutional stewardship. (WASC Recommendation 5)

Examples of how this initiative will be implemented include, but are not limited to:

- Assess and enhance current data governance activities, investments, and tools to enable data-driven decision-making.

## Institutionalize Program Review and Assessment

The Program Review and Assessment initiative is aimed at continuous improvement in fulfilling our commitment to student success through evidenced-based approaches. While the university has long had program reviews and assessment, the quality of these processes and their use in decision-making has been uneven. Through a variety of measures, this initiative will enhance quality, while making program review and assessment more manageable and more central to decision-making, including resource re-allocation. These measures include more explicit expectations, more comprehensive data support, faculty and staff training, and greater clarity and accountability across all roles. This initiative is led by a collaborative partnership between the Educational

Effectiveness Committee, the Office of Educational Effectiveness, and the Deans Offices Educational Effectiveness Group. (WASC Recommendations 1,6)

Examples of how this initiative will be implemented include, but are not limited to:

- Revise program review process and support leading to quality reviews that are more central to decision-making.
- Facilitate prudent resource reallocation decisions given comprehensive assessments of student success, program quality, mission fit, educational effectiveness, future enrollment potential, and efficiency.

### Implement Lean Six Sigma Methodology

The "Leos Lean Together" initiative is a university-wide effort to incorporate the Lean Six Sigma methodology to facilitate continuous improvement and realize efficiencies. Lean Six Sigma is methodology and associated tools to reduce non-value added elements (e.g., wait/process time, duplicated effort, re-work, confusion, etc.) and variation in a process. Lean Six Sigma is a problem-solving framework/methodology geared toward continuous improvement to help everyone at the university work *smarter*, not harder.

Examples of how this initiative will be implemented include, but are not limited to:

- Develop and deploy internal White Belt training to all university employees to establish a foundational understanding.
- Train approximately 70% of all university faculty and staff to be Green Belt certified to serve on and lead project teams.
- Grow internal expertise to include a team of Black Belt certified employees to lead complex projects.
- Integrate Lean Six Sigma duties and goals into appropriate management and leadership position PDQs.

## WSCUC (WASC) 2020 Recommendations

- **Recommendation 1.** Inculcate a culture of assessment and program review across academic and co-curricular programs that reflects leadership by and engagement of ULV's faculty. (CFR 2.4, 2.7, 4.1, 4,4)
- **Recommendation 2.** Achieve stability in leadership through the appointment and retention of permanent administrative and academic leaders. (CFR 3.6, 3.7)
- **Recommendation 3.** Implement diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives to benefit constituents at all locations and modalities and foster a culture of student success for diverse undergraduate and graduate students. (CFR 1.4, 2.10, 2.13)
- **Recommendation 4**. Pursue a sustainable, strategic approach to decision-making that includes a shared governance model, ensuring that faculty and other key constituents are collaboratively engaged in institutional reflection, planning and evaluation. (CFR 3.7, 3.10, 4.6, 4.7)
- **Recommendation 5.** Systematize data ownership to ensure data integrity and develop effective processes to harness, share, and use data for institutional decision-making. (CFR 4.1, 4.2, 4.3)
- **Recommendation 6.** Rigorously and consistently implement and assess the La Verne Experience across all four components to substantiate the larger structural integrity of GE and BLO attainment across all disciplines, locations and modalities. (CFR 2.2a, 2.2b)

# 2025 Strategic Vision Development Timeline: Spring 2018 – Fall 2020

This is a basic overview of how/where/when each of the constituent groups below have been involved throughout the 2025 Strategic Vision development process.

| Timeline | Constituents Involved |
|---|---|
| **Spring 2018**<br>• Strategic planning process begins with Board of Trustees retreat.<br>• Strategy Advisory Task Force (SATF) created.<br>• University-wide visioning sessions held with faculty, staff, students. | • Board of Trustees<br>• SATF<br>• Students<br>• Faculty<br>• Staff |
| **Fall 2018**<br>• Strategic themes and vision statement drafted;<br>• Draft unit plans created;<br>• SATF continued to refine the university's strategy. | • President's Executive Cabinet<br>• Individual colleges, departments, units |
| **Spring 2019**<br>• Board of Trustees provided feedback, direction of draft strategy, and approved vision statement.<br>• Strategic theme concept papers developed.<br>• University goals drafted; Unit plans updated.<br>• SATF sub-group recommended initiatives/objectives from individual unit plans.<br>• Board of Trustees approved strategic themes and university-wide goals. | • Board of Trustees<br>• President's Executive Cabinet<br>• SATF<br>• Individual colleges, departments, units |
| **Fall 2019**<br>• President's Executive Cabinet and Deans prioritize initiatives (incremental, bridge).<br>• Proposals for transformative initiatives drafted. | • Deans<br>• President's Executive Council<br>• Special committees |
| **Spring 2020**<br>• Proposed plan shared with university community.<br>• Board of Trustees approved transformative initiative (May 2020) | • Faculty<br>• Staff<br>• Board of Trustees |
| **Summer/Fall 2020**<br>• Bridge and Incremental Initiatives refined<br>• Plan presented to university community<br>• Continued work connecting to multi-year budgeting, determining metrics, accountability.<br>• Board of Trustees approves 2025 Strategic Vision (Nov. 2020) | • President's Cabinet<br>• Provost Council<br>• Faculty<br>• Staff<br>• Students<br>• Board of Trustees |

Dr. Shannon Capaldi, director of the Office of the President & board affairs, and Dr. Louise Kelly, professor of management and College of Business and Public Management liaison, co-chaired the Strategy Advisory Task Force that consisted of the following members:

• **Dr. Mia Basic, Chief Human Resources Officer,** *Staff Liaison*

• **Dr. Karen Beavers, Research & Instruction Coordinator,** *Library Liaison*

- Dr. Joseph Cabrera, Asst. Professor of Sociology, *College of Arts & Sciences Liaison*

- Rick Hasse, Senior Adjunct Instructor, *Faculty Senate & Adjunct Liaison*

- Jodi Jewell, Associate Professor, *College of Law Liaison*

- Dr. Nelly Kazman, Interim Dean, *Regional & Online Campuses Liaison*

- Jackie Ku, ASULV President, *Student Liaison*

- Wendy Lau, Trustee, *Trustee & Alumni Liaison*

- Dr. Rich Whitney, Associate Professor of Organizational Leadership, *LaFetra College of Education Liaison*

- Dr. Richard Simpson, Professor Emeritus*, Strategic Planning Consultant*