Notre Dame de Namur University - Strategic Plan Executive Summary

During 2020 and 2021, the Board of Trustees of Notre Dame de Namur University (NDNU) made decisions to discontinue residential undergraduate programs and pivot to a focus on graduate programs and undergraduate degree completion programs. This pivot positions NDNU to serve the needs of the only growing population demographic, the "post-traditional" student.

Over the past 171 years, NDNU built a reputation for educating the whole person, fostering in its students concern about humanity, their communities, and personal well-being. Supported by strong academic programs, our students develop networks that not only serve them professionally, but serve the Hallmark values that are at the core of their NDNU experience. Graduates of NDNU demonstrate repeatedly that they have both the hard and soft skills to succeed at what Nathan Hatch, (former president of Wake Forest), calls "the business of living."

Between November 2021 and May 2022, the Cabinet engaged the community in a series of strategic planning workshops followed by strategic planning retreats to conduct a PEST (political, economic, social, and technological) analysis. This analysis identified internal and external factors influencing and impacting the organization. Following this assessment, the team did a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and strengths) analysis to better inform NDNU's Strategic Plan and direction. The outcomes of these sessions underpin the four goals that guide the Strategic Plan:

- **Goal 1: Fiscal Sustainability**
  Increase revenues from enrollment, development, facilities utilization, investments, and other sources while seeking efficiencies and expense reductions.
- **Goal 2: Rebranding and Market Recognition**
  Redefine and effectively market Notre Dame de Namur University as a graduate and degree completion university focused on professionally oriented programs in which community engagement and professional experiences are integral to the learning experience.
- **Goal 3: Academic Sustainability**
  Design and support a high-quality mix of academic programs that is mission-centric, coherent, and designed to meet the future needs of our communities and the world.
- **Goal 4: Human Capital Management**
  Hire and develop faculty and staff to ensure the integrity of academic programs and business processes, that they may support our students in their work at NDNU and in their transition from NDNU to their professional lives in a way that distinguishes them among their peers and aligns with NDNU's mission.

With its new positioning, Notre Dame de Namur University is poised for great opportunity. Hiring managers seek college graduates and interns who can demonstrate strong analytical skills, an ability to

work in a team-focused environment, and a strong work ethic. The NDNU model of providing each student with an experiential learning component as a part of their degree program takes the guess-work out of understanding the value of our master's degrees, professional certificates, credentials, and upper-division undergraduate degree completion opportunities. NDNU will become sustainable by focusing on degree programs in Business, Education, and Psychology while transforming the curriculum to be offered both on-line and in-person. The option to purchase agreement with Stanford University by 2025 will provide a sufficient runway to become economically and independently sustainable over the next several years, by being innovative, creative, courageous, and, of course, indefatigable.

Notre Dame de Namur University – Strategic Plan Goals and Strategies

Goal 1 – Fiscal Sustainability
Increase revenues from enrollment, development, facilities utilization, investments, and other sources while seeking efficiencies and expense reductions

Strategy 1.1: Increase Student Enrollment through Enhanced and Collaborative Recruitment and Retention Efforts
Ensure easily accessible support for graduate and degree completion students' enrollment needs. Engage the campus community in process mapping and analysis to better understand, and potentially redesign, processes that will best serve students from the prospect stage to graduation. Promote institutional collaboration and innovation to respond to leads generated by marketing. Monitor student progress to identify ways in which we may be able to better support their progress through the student cycle from admission through graduation and/or certificate completion at a higher rate.

Strategy 1.2: Conduct Research to Inform the Creation of our Value Proposition and Enhance the Student Experience
Improve data that informs NDNU's enrollment strategies, ensuring continuous access to data on the impact of our outreach and engagement efforts, that measures and gauges the needs and interests of those who are likely to enroll in our programs. Engage an agency to support data collection and analysis to assess what prospective students want and to target our recruitment and marketing expenditures there. Conduct annual assessments (e.g., surveys, focus groups) to gauge student satisfaction and measure the level to which the overall NDNU student experience meets their expectations.

Strategy 1.3: Create "Pathways to Success" for Students from Underrepresented and Traditionally Underserved Communities

Establish deliberate guided pathways for students from underrepresented and traditionally underserved communities to receive their Associate, Bachelor's, and Master's degrees. Create branded relationships with community college partners, establishing ourselves as the second half of their path to attaining a bachelor's degree. Connect with non-profit organizations to provide their clients and constituents with affordable degree completion and certificate options. Establish seats and scholarships for graduates of Minority Serving Institutions (HBCUs, HSIs, and TCUs) in our graduate programs through connections with organizations such as the United Negro College Fund and the Tribal College Fund.   Using an integrated team advising approach, provide students with peer and alumni mentors, faculty and professional coaches, cultural affirmation opportunities, and service project guidance.

Strategy 1.4: Develop International Pipelines for Graduate Students

Partner with high performing undergraduate degree conferring international schools to create pipelines for their graduates to enroll in our Master's degree programs. Consider membership in organizations such as the Consortium for North American Higher Education Collaboration (CONAHEC) or independent ventures to bring NDNU faculty to schools around the world as guest lecturers for short visits and hosting their faculty to visit NDNU in the same capacity. Pipeline strategies may also include early admission opportunities, greater and more meaningful onboarding support, remote guest lectures, establishing relationships with prospective hiring agencies, and scholarship opportunities.

Strategy 1.5: Boost Development Yield

Identify NDNU short-term and long-term fundraising priorities and initiatives, including grant opportunities and cultivation of major gifts and donors. Create an Advancement Plan outlining the development goals and initiatives that NDNU will pursue and the staffing needed for success. Hire staff and pursue the plan in coordination with other strategic efforts. Develop ongoing means for determining which funding needs will be prioritized.

Strategy 1.6: Create a Strong Culture of Philanthropy

Build a strong culture of philanthropy through personal engagement with alumni, donors, and friends through special events, a robust NDNU Annual Fund, major gifts, and grants program outreach. Position events as a primary means to cultivate donors and attract new supporters. Improve identification of donor prospects through data and reporting.

Strategy 1.7: Optimize Auxiliary Income Opportunities
Consolidate staff offices for efficiency and to maximize rentable space. Hire a coordinator to market and oversee conferences, events, and rentals. Refine cost basis of rentable spaces for short-term rental and longer-term leasing. Create a budget and marketing plan for conferences, events, and rentals and aggressively market. Explore auxiliaries such as on-campus catering and food service.

Strategy 1.8: Assess Processes for Opportunities to Increase Effectiveness
With our smaller size, continue to review the structure and composition of campus operations for best practices, relative to peer institutions.

Strategy 1.9: Secure Short-term Financing and Plan for Long-term Financial Sustainability
Ensure that NDNU has financing to address short-term deficits while it grows to sustainability in the time before the campus land is sold. Develop budgets, enrollment projections, and financial arrangements that demonstrate financial stability through this period. Develop revenue and expense projections for the period after the campus land is sold. Develop a sound investment strategy and spending rules for a larger endowment that includes the proceeds from the campus sale.

Goal 2: Rebranding and Market Recognition
Redefine and effectively market Notre Dame de Namur University as a graduate and degree completion university focused on professionally oriented programs in which professional and community engagement is integral to the learning experience.

Strategy 2.1: Develop and Implement Rebranding Initiative Across Constituencies
Build a library of alumni, faculty, and student testimonials as part of an overall marketing plan to leverage social media and digital platforms. Deploy social media campaigns on multiple platforms to increase awareness and lead generation. Outreach to local media and associations to promote NDNU's on-campus events and recruitment activities. Engage an agency to support the development of future NDNU brand strategy.

Strategy 2.2: Update/Create/Implement Marketing and Enrollment Plan
Create a Marketing and Enrollment Plan for NDNU that addresses current environmental factors, increases positive awareness of NDNU, and includes go-to-market strategies and tactics along with multi-year enrollment targets.

Strategy 2.3: Strengthen Marketing and Advertising
Build the marketing team to support recruitment and brand identity development by defining and hiring key positions in Marketing and Advertising. Develop marketing strategies to support our value

proposition to prospective students and their associated communities. Develop new marketing collateral for various marketing channels. Re-engage local organizations and chambers of commerce and develop new partnerships to build awareness and reignite pubic relations with our surrounding communities.

Strategy 2.4: Continue to Promote Awareness of NDNU, its Programs, and Funding Needs
Expand external communications to include monthly Alumni newsletters, press releases, special events, and other real-time NDNU announcements. Develop an Alumni Relations plan to reengage with NDNU alumni and understand their needs. Develop a Community Advisory Board to reengage local communities and government agencies in our mutual success.

Goal 3: Academic Sustainability
Design and support a high-quality mix of academic programs that is mission-centric, coherent, and designed to meet the future needs of our communities and the world.

Strategy 3.1: Successfully Launch Approved New Programs and Programs in Approval Process
For programs approved for development that are not yet fully approved to be offered, create and submit proposals, to faculty, Board, WSCUC, and SEVIS, as needed, on approved timelines. For fully approved programs not yet implemented, begin marketing, hire faculty and program director, and develop courses.

Strategy 3.2: Review, Revise, and Document Academic Processes
To align with NDNU's smaller size and adult student focus, review, revise, document, and formally approve academic processes in light of WSCUC standards. Such review will include processes for curriculum approvals, changes to academic standards, and academic program review.

Strategy 3.3: Create a New Academic Plan For NDNU
With strong faculty involvement, create a vision for NDNU's academic program mix that is mission-centric, coherent, aligned with NDNU's new direction, and leads to enrollment growth. Based in a SWOT analysis, plan parameters should include consideration of new programs and new populations to serve, evolution of academic program modality (in-person, hybrid, online) to meet adult student needs, and metrics for program sustainability.

Strategy 3.4: Honor and Facilitate Social Justice Work, inspired by Sr. Dorothy Stang
Inspired by NDNU's previous Sr. Dorothy Stang Center for Social Justice and Community Engagement, create a vision for honoring the legacy of Sr. Dorothy. A possible approach is to create an umbrella

network of social justice organizations (including SNDdeN learning communities) committed to the issues that Sr. Dorothy championed. Look for ways to connect this work to academics at NDNU.

Goal 4: Human Capital Management

Hire and develop faculty and staff to ensure the integrity of academic programs and business processes, that they may support our students in their work at NDNU and in their transition from NDNU to their professional lives in a way that distinguishes them among their peers and aligns with NDNU's mission.

Strategy: 4:1 Develop Hiring Needs Plan

Analyze workforce needs across the institution and the timing of those needs aligned with NDNU's growth to sustainability. Develop a hiring plan that anticipates and supports that growth, while building institutional strength through opportunities for cross-training and advancement. Improve and reimplement systems for employee appraisal and position management.

Strategy 4.2: Define Staffing Needed to Effectively Support Students

Support and expand academic support for NDNU's diverse adult learners. Through surveys, institutional comparisons, and self-studies, determine where student needs are not being met at a high standard and develop improvement plans that respond to the broad range of student needs. Such student needs include effective student services; support for social, emotional, and belonging needs; academic support; career assistance; and financial help.

Strategy 4.3: Develop a Strong and Diverse Campus Community

Assess faculty and staff needs for current and future programs and determine opportunities to strengthen and diversify the faculty and staff. Define metrics for diversity and inclusive excellence. Build a plan for faculty and staff hiring, orientation, professional development, community building, and recognition that drives diversity and inclusive excellence. Reestablish the Diversity Council that brings faculty and staff (and students) together to address diversity-related issues across all campus constituencies.

Strategy 4.4: Cross-Training and Support Across Functional Silos

Assess opportunities for cross-training in current and future staffing. Develop plans for cross-training and integrate into the Hiring Plan. Support employees and managers in arranging cross-training. Encourage frequent and open communication among employees in which they talk about what they do at the university.

Strategy: 4:5: Improve Communication Among Employee Groups

Establish regular Community Forums for broad communication across all functional areas of the campus of university issues, plans, and concerns. Reestablish governance groups for faculty and staff. Support faculty and staff development and use it to develop community and communication.

NDNU administration is grateful to the many faculty, staff, students, and Board members involved in this plan, and we will continue to solicit input and guidance from our constituents.