

Quinnipiac University: The University of the Future Success Summary (2019 – 2025)

Introduction

Since 2019, Quinnipiac University has exemplified resilience, innovation, and a bold strategic vision. In the face of a rapidly evolving higher education landscape—shaped by demographic shifts, financial pressures, societal expectations, and the unprecedented challenges of COVID-19—we have advanced our mission to become the “University of the Future.” This strategic plan served as a powerful catalyst: driving the creation of innovative academic and alumni programs, expanding lifelong learning opportunities, deepening our engagement with the communities we serve, and inspiring transformative capital improvements. Most importantly, it reaffirmed Quinnipiac’s tradition of agility and ambition as we continue to chart a daring course toward the future.

Through four foundational pillars, we have worked together over the past six years to make this vision a reality:

1. Build an institution-wide mindset that prepares graduates for 21st-century careers and citizenship.
2. Create an inclusive, excellence-driven community.
3. Nurture and positively impact internal, local, and global communities
4. Foster lifelong connections and success

Pillar 1: Build an institution-wide mindset that prepares graduates for 21st-century careers and citizenship

Academic Innovation & Excellence

Program Development and Market Alignment

- Quinnipiac has strategically launched and refined a diverse portfolio of academic programs to meet evolving market demands and prepare students for future careers. Innovative programs developed in response to workforce needs include master’s degrees in social work (online) and Acute Care and Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner; bachelor’s degrees in Artificial Intelligence and Computing, Business Analytics, Data Science, Environmental Science, Exercise Science, FinTech, and Sports Communication, among others. Minors like Artificial Intelligence, Forensic Science,

Health Equity, Nutrition, and Social Media Strategy; and certificates such as Certified Nurse Assistants, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and Engineering Management.

- The university also introduced micro-credentials in areas such as Applied Google Data Analytics and HIPAA Compliance, ensuring students gain practical, industry-relevant skills. Strategic program reviews led to the closure of underenrolled programs, while new partnerships strengthened dual enrollment and degree-completion pathways, broadening access and flexibility for learners.
- Significant revisions were made to existing programs to enhance market alignment, such as the competency-based curriculum for the BSN Nursing program and the STEM designation for the MBA, which enables international graduates to work in the U.S. for up to three years post-graduation.
- The university also launched a Lifelong Learning office that has expanded micro-credentials and badges, including Blockchain Mastery for Executives and Healthcare Management, supporting lifelong learning and professional development.

Accreditation and Quality Assurance

- Quinnipiac consistently received positive accreditation outcomes. NECHE commended the university for its student outcomes, strategic planning, and financial management. AACSB reaffirmed accreditation for business and accounting programs, highlighting the new School of Business building and experiential learning initiatives.
- The Center for Excellence, Simulation, and Innovation (CESI) at Hartford Health Care was approved as a new instructional location, enabling innovative mid-career nursing programs and expanding QU's reach into high-demand health professions.

Faculty Excellence and Research

- Over 100 new faculty and staff were hired, further supporting our students through smaller class sizes and opportunities for one-on-one interaction. Faculty expertise was strategically aligned with emerging fields such as AI, fintech, and healthcare management.
- Research activity increased, with the SITE quadrupling available research space and grant submissions rising year-over-year. The university secured its first NASA grant and focused on larger, more impactful federal proposals.
- The total value of the university's grants and sponsored projects portfolio increased tenfold, from approximately \$700k in 2019 to over \$8 million at the close of FY25.

Enrollment & Student Success

Enrollment Trends, Retention, and Graduation

- While the University experienced new student enrollment volatility between 2019 and 2021, overall growth has been strong in subsequent years. New first-year enrollment increased by 24%, while graduate enrollment increased by 26% between 2019/20 and 2024/25, demonstrating sustained momentum in attracting new students. This growth was buttressed by increases in campus visitation through additional engagement and the expansion of campus recruitment events.
- The university became more selective, with rising GPAs (up to 3.68) and SAT scores (up to 1246) among incoming students.
- Diversity among new students increased, with URM representation reaching 25.8%.
- Retention rates improved for rising sophomores and juniors, and graduation rates for 4-year and 6-year cohorts trended upward. The “Get Them Back” retention framework, which uses data-driven interventions and cross-unit collaboration, was particularly effective for URMs and students with disabilities (a population that grew by 55% in two years).
- Licensure exam pass rates remained high, with the BSN program achieving a 96% first-time NCLEX-RN pass rate and graduate programs in nursing and health sciences consistently performing in the 95–100% range.

Creation of the Career and Experiential Learning Lab

- Career development was strengthened through a university-wide career map, new technology platforms, and expanded employer engagement. Signature events connected students directly with employers, and career workshops were integrated into leadership and immersion programs.
- Graduate placement rates remained exceptional, with 96–98% of students employed or committed to graduate school within six months of graduation, far exceeding national averages.

Pillar 2: Create an inclusive, excellence-driven community

Student Experience & Wellbeing

Residential Life and Campus Engagement

- Housing occupancy grew, supported by new facilities like The Grove residence hall, which fostered multi-cohort living and unique programming. Recreation and

Wellness Center usage soared, with over 247,000 tap-ins annually and expanded fitness and wellbeing offerings.

- Club sports expanded to 23 teams, with national/regional recognition in esports, softball, volleyball, and other sports.
- Student engagement in spiritual and religious life increased dramatically, with over 11,850 interactions—a 404% year-over-year increase.

Health and Wellness

- The partnership with Hartford Healthcare deepened, increasing access to health and counseling services (+2.1% and +7% respectively). Programming by HHC practitioners supports a wide range of health and wellness needs, and philanthropic support targets EMS, athletics, nursing, and scholarships.
- The university was recognized as a top military-friendly school, ranking #1 in Connecticut and #10 nationally, and #3 among private universities in the U.S.

Athletic Achievement

- Quinnipiac University won the NCAA Division I Men's Ice Hockey National Championship in 2023. The Bobcats secured the title with a thrilling 3-2 overtime victory over Minnesota, marking the university's first-ever national championship in men's ice hockey. Division I teams won multiple conference championships, with high academic performance among student-athletes (GPA up to 3.63, 295 on Dean's List). Teams competed in NCAA championships and national tournaments, and student-athletes contributed nearly 2,500 hours of community service.
- The university responded to the changing landscape of collegiate athletics, including the implications of NIL and the House settlement, by developing life skills and financial literacy programs for student-athletes.

Inclusive Excellence

Inclusive Community

- The Office of Inclusive Excellence (OIE) expanded programming, support of multicultural and LGBTQ+ communities, and leadership development for multicultural and first-gen students. The Critical Conversation Speaker Series and cultural heritage celebrations fostered a climate of engagement and understanding.
 - The Sawhney Leadership Program aims to expand leadership development and corporate immersion opportunities for primarily first-generation and students from non-traditional backgrounds. Participants work collaboratively with partners across campus and in the regional business community to

expose students to multiple examples of leadership and prepare them for entry into the workforce.

- Quinnipiac University has established a First-Year Immersion (QU FYI) summer program for admitted students for first generation students and those who could benefit from a college transition support. During this program, students fully immerse themselves in the Bobcat community while laying a solid foundation for future success.
- The Quinnipiac University Enriching Student Transitions (QUEST) program addresses social-capital challenges as some students, like first generation and international students, arrive without knowing people, key information, and the role of support systems. The program connects participants with peers in their major and professional mentors to aid in their success and adjustment to college.
- Alumni engagement among diverse groups increased, and faculty/staff hiring and retention improved. The PEACE Lab and Prison Project continued to deliver impactful programming for incarcerated individuals.
- Quinnipiac University is now an age-friendly institution, recognizing the value and contributions of individuals across all age groups. An example is the Bobcat Stride program, a community initiative for local senior community members who need a safe, warm place to exercise during the cold winter months.
- The Inclusive Excellence Teaching Lab was established to provide and cultivate an intellectual community for scholars from across the university who demonstrate their commitment to, and interest in, issues of equity, diversity, and inclusion within their curricular and co-curricular approaches. Through the Lab, we aim to transform teaching, learning, and scholarship by developing an inclusive learning environment that stretches across our campus and through the greater educational community.
- Human Resources engagement efforts now emphasize connection and recognition. New Affinity Groups for Working Parents and LGBTQ+ employees foster belonging, while Staff Council plays a larger role in leadership engagement and climate initiatives. A Suggestion Box offers direct feedback channels, and the *Bobcat Bravo* platform celebrates employees with shout-outs, milestones, birthdays, and welcome messages.
- The University expanded staff training and performance tools to foster leadership and skill growth. Key programs include *Leading with Impact* for managers and contributors, True Colors workshops for team dynamics, and advanced Microsoft Skills training via Biddle. The shift from WorkDove to Quantum introduces a more robust performance management system to support career development.

- Employee well-being initiatives now include enhanced time-off benefits, mental health resources, and a comprehensive wellness program. Highlights: improved vacation and parental leave, extra winter break days, \$0 co-pay telehealth during Mental Health Month, and a wellness platform with incentives. Employees also enjoy in-person events like cooking classes, pickleball, and positive psychology workshops, plus on-site health services and screenings.
- Employee compensation has steadily increased from 0% in 2021 to 3.5% in 2025, averaging 2.1% annually over five years. Benefits have expanded to include international prescription coverage, identity protection, global emergency assistance, caregiving support, and family-building options through Progyny. Financial wellness programs feature MSA coaching, ROTH investment options, employer-paid Savi Essential for student loans (2026), and no-cost virtual physical therapy and weight management programs.

Financial Health & Strategic Planning

- Each year ended with a balanced budget, strong endowment growth, and reaffirmed credit ratings (A- Stable by S&P and A3 Stable by Moody's). Financial discipline and proactive planning positioned QU to weather enrollment fluctuations and market volatility.
- Strategic adaptation included refinancing bonds, managing supply chain and tariff impacts, and proactive financial management in response to enrollment trends.

Pillar 3: Nurture and positively impact internal, local, and global communities

Community Engagement

- Students, faculty, and staff contributed tens of thousands of service hours and hundreds of thousands of dollars to local causes. Initiatives like Be Kind Leave Food Behind donated 2.5 tons of food to regional food banks, and the VITA program provided \$400,000 in tax refunds to low-income residents.
- Partnerships with local governments and organizations deepened QU's civic engagement, including tennis and track restoration projects, fire station upgrades, and public service fellowships.

Facilities, Capital Projects, Sustainability, & Technology

Wellness and South Quad Transformation

- One of the largest capital investments in QU history delivered a renovated recreation and wellness center and three new buildings (The Grove, SITE, School of Business), fostering interdisciplinary learning and student life.
 - Recreation and Wellness Center: The new health and wellness center at Quinnipiac brings together clinical health, mental health, and recreation under a single structure in support of whole-body wellness. The building also creates a new healthy living program with classes in cooking, nutrition, and other lifestyle elements.
 - The SITE: A 137,000-square-foot academic center designed to foster interdisciplinary study. It boasts advanced labs, modern classrooms, expanded computing spaces, and a versatile 700-seat auditorium.
 - The School of Business: A 79,000-square-foot hub with a Business Innovation Center, financial technology labs, flexible lecture halls, and green energy solutions.
 - The Grove: A 415-bed residence hall crafted to strengthen the living-learning community through lounge spaces, outdoor courtyards, and group study areas. The Grove residence hall is LEED certified gold and connects academics and student life through multi-year “grand challenge” projects.
- Numerous other projects improved campus infrastructure, sustainability, and energy efficiency, including new EV charging stations and diagnostic imaging lab expansion, all while continuing to address deferred maintenance.

AI & IT Innovation

- AI was integrated into curricula, operations, and professional development. Faculty development included workshops and retreats, and institutional AI policy emphasized academic integrity and responsible use.
- Modernization of current platforms and the addition of new software brought functional AI to life in the office and the classroom. The addition of Zoom AI assistant as well as the launch of FreshService ITSM, Canvas LMS and Juniper Mist AI optimized productivity, teaching and learning, technology support, and network performance.
- Finally, new and improved cyber security initiatives have been implemented. From the network edge to the workstation, modern software suites and a new Security Operations Center on the North Haven Campus serve to protect all of Quinnipiac’s constituents and institutional data.

Environmental Stewardship

- Sustainability goals were advanced through LEED-certified buildings, energy reduction projects, and the installation of fuel cells. Quinnipiac earned recognition from the Arbor Day Foundation as a Tree Campus and received a STARS Bronze rating from AASHE.
- The university reduced utility use by 3.05% and expects to save \$62M over 20 years through energy projects. The heating/cooling plant built as part of the South Quad will further reduce energy consumption.

Reputation & Communications

National Visibility

- Media placements and strategic communications elevated QU's profile, with record national media hits (over 112 in 2024, on track to exceed in 2025) and expanded digital reach. The Quinnipiac University Poll and faculty expertise gained broader recognition, with mentions in major outlets like the New York Times, USA Today, TIME, Newsweek, Forbes, and The Wall Street Journal.
- Marketing and Admissions partnerships increased campus visits and applications, and in-house paid media strategies outperformed previous agency results by nearly 9x in lead generation.

Pillar 4: Foster lifelong connections and success

Philanthropy, Partnerships & Alumni Engagement

Comprehensive Campaign and Fundraising

- The “For the Ambitious” campaign was launched, aiming to raise \$160M by 2029. With new leadership in Development & Alumni Affairs and QU's investment in a new CRM system, this area is more efficient and effective: annual fundraising and alumni participation have reached record levels, and the campaign is on track to succeed, with over \$91 million in gifts to date. Corporate partnerships, especially with Hartford Healthcare and M&T Bank, have generated great engagement and value and enhanced experiential learning, internships, and job placements. QU has created a Strategic Partnerships Council to manage these relationships more effectively across the various units of the university and to deliver greater value to external partners.

Alumni Engagement

- Alumni engagement increased as a result of enhanced communications strategies and expanded regional and affinity networks. In 2024-25, for example, QU executed 85 strategic events and volunteer opportunities, with 2,356 unique alumni attendees. New platforms facilitated donor-advised funds and matching gifts, and student-athlete giving reached 100% participation.

Conclusion

Quinnipiac University's last six academic years have been marked by robust academic innovation, enrollment growth, enhanced student experience, deepened inclusivity, record fundraising, transformative capital projects, and sustained financial health. The university has demonstrated resilience and adaptability in the face of external challenges, positioning itself as a forward-looking institution ready to thrive in a rapidly changing higher education landscape. The University of the Future strategic plan has laid a solid foundation upon which the next strategic plan will build, ensuring continued progress and impact. To remain competitive and responsive to the evolving needs of students and employers, the University is committed to continuous academic innovation and resource optimization.