

Approved by

Decision No. ____ of the YSMU Board of Trustees dated ..2020

Chairman of the Board of Trustees: _____

STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN OF YSMU FOR 2021-2025

Yerevan 2020

MISSION OF THE UNIVERSITY

Yerevan State Medical University after Mkhitar Heratsi (hereinafter referred to as the University) is a higher medical educational institution of educational and scientific orientation, whose main mission is the preparation of highly qualified personnel for the healthcare sector in accordance with international standards, aiming at the preservation, strengthening, and improvement of public health.

VISION OF THE UNIVERSITY

The University strives to become a leading regional higher education institution with international recognition in the fields of education, science, and healthcare. Through its activities, the University aims to:

- Ensure an educational environment where, based on the requirements of the National Qualifications Framework of the Republic of Armenia and the fundamental principles of the European Higher Education Area, it is possible to organize high-quality higher and postgraduate medical education.
- Provide accessible conditions for studying for various social groups of citizens of the Republic of Armenia and foreign nationals.
- Improve the teaching methodology and enhance the activities of educational-scientific and educational-industrial complexes.
- Ensure a fast and adequate response process to scientific progress, social and economic changes, and labor market demands.
- Ensure the integration of modern technologies into educational and research processes.
- Carry out scientific, educational-methodological, and scientific-pedagogical research in the fields of medical, natural, and social-humanitarian sciences.
- Implement clearly defined programs for evaluating the effectiveness, continuous monitoring, review, and improvement of the educational system and educational programs based on learning outcomes.
- Promote the development of the university's quality assurance culture.
- Ensure the introduction of modern information technologies into educational and research processes.

- Realize the preparation of competent specialists for full professional advancement and the healthcare management system.
- Ensure financial stability and social guarantees for all employees.
- Be guided by a universal perspective of strategic significance, with a benchmark on the internationalization of the educational-scientific system and integration into European standards.
- Ensure the education of students in the spirit of moral, national, and universal values.
- Implement postgraduate and supplementary educational services.
- Provide professional consulting to stakeholders.
- Provide supplementary continuing education and professional consulting services in accordance with public demand.
- Ensure the university's accountability, transparency of processes, and accessibility of information for all stakeholders.

The University is committed to:

- Remaining faithful to its traditions, ensuring the continuity of lasting values acquired in medical science, and creating conditions where new ideas and achievements will contribute to maintaining and strengthening the university's stability.
- Ensuring the student's professional progress, viewing it as the university's success.
- Fostering an ethical atmosphere that will contribute to the preservation and development of the individual's ethical standards in academic relationships.
- Supporting students in realizing the importance of moral conduct throughout their future professional activities, careers, and entire lives.
- Developing an independent medical educational policy, taking into account national characteristics and international standards, ensuring continuous reforms.

CORE VALUES OF THE UNIVERSITY

- Accessible and quality education
- Highly qualified scientific and pedagogical staff
- Student progress
- Academic honesty and freedom
- Academic environment
- Responsibility

This strategic plan is the University's vision. It is a description of the process of realizing the University's mission and main goals over a long-term (5-year) period. The strategic plan is subject to monitoring and may undergo certain reforms in accordance with new situations.

HISTORY OF THE UNIVERSITY

Over its 100 years of existence, the University has played an important role in the region. Based on a medical school organized by a number of prominent doctors in 1919, the republic's first higher medical educational institution, the "Medical Faculty of Yerevan State University," was established by a decision of the Government of Armenia in 1920. In 1930, the "Medical Faculty of Yerevan State University" was reorganized into the Yerevan State Medical Institute; in 1995, the institute

was granted University status, which since 1989 has borne the name of the great medieval Armenian physician "Mkhitar Heratsi," and since 2014 it has obtained the status of a foundation.

During its 100 years of existence, the University has prepared around 44,000 highly qualified specialist graduates, 4,900 of whom are citizens of foreign countries. Many of the graduates have become renowned scientists, skilled healthcare organizers, state, public, and cultural figures, making their significant contribution to the organization of healthcare, disease prevention, and the resolution of medical issues in the republic, as well as in the fields of medical science development. The achievements of the University's scientists in the fields of theoretical and practical medicine are also evident.

Remaining true to its principles—the traditions and ideas of medieval Armenian medical schools—the University is guided today by the requirements of the higher educational system of the Republic of Armenia and, by ensuring universally comparable degrees of qualifications and specializations in the European area, as well as creating mobility conditions for lecturers and researchers, is step-by-step integrating into the European educational-scientific area. Through the introduction of mechanisms for the development of a quality culture, the University has adopted a strategy of continuous quality improvement.

Today, the University's higher educational system is three-tiered: with integrated Bachelor's and Master's educational programs and researcher educational programs. The University also implements postgraduate, continuous supplementary educational programs. The University operates faculties of general medicine, stomatology, pharmacy, military medicine, public health, and postgraduate education, 81 departments and educational-scientific simulation centers, as well as the medical college and a pre-university preparatory education department.

The structural subdivisions of the University are faculties, departments, scientific centers, clinical complexes, the college, the scientific library, the student dormitory, the publishing house, educational-industrial bases, etc. The University also features a number of services: computer centers, cultural and sports clubs, catering and recreation facilities, as well as educational-sports-health centers. The governing bodies of the University are the University's Board of Trustees and the executive body (the Rector). The student self-governing body is the Student Parliament.

In the field of strengthening and expanding international ties, the University cooperates with higher medical educational institutions of the Russian Federation, France, the USA, Iran, Germany, Georgia, and others. The University is a member of international organizations such as the "International Association of Universities," "World Federation for Medical Education," "American International Health Alliance," "International Pharmaceutical Students' Federation," "International Federation of Medical Students' Associations," and "European Medical Students' Association," and is also involved in numerous European and international educational and scientific programs. In 2020, the University underwent international accreditation for the 2nd time for a period of 7 years.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND WAYS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNIVERSITY'S STRATEGY

GOAL 1

To implement reforms in the University's management system, ensure financially stable and diversified streams aimed at the modernization of the medical educational-scientific concept, long-term development, and transparency of processes.

Objectives:

- Optimize the University's management structure aimed at increasing the effectiveness of strategic, current programs, and management processes.
- Develop short-term, medium-term, and long-term action planning programs stemming from the University's mission and objectives, alongside clear mechanisms for monitoring their implementation.
- Conduct internal personnel and functional audits to ensure the targeted and efficient use of workplaces.
- Ensure the collaborative activity of the University's Board of Trustees and other governing bodies.
- Introduce a system of indicators for evaluating the effectiveness of the University's operations and the implementation of the strategic plan, and use it as a basis for the analysis and reporting of the University's annual performance results.
- Develop a risk management concept aimed at ensuring the University's resilience against various risks.
- Select comparable university(ies) and conduct benchmarking.
- Improve the University's legal and normative trilingual database.
- Support students' career advancement, professional orientation, and job search processes.
- Increase the foreign student body by improving relevant conditions and become a leading regional center for medical education.
- Establish financial indicative targets for the University's strategic development according to the objectives presented in the strategic plan.
- Base the planning and redistribution of the University's financial budget on the assessment of subdivisions' needs and a policy for allocating financial resources that ensures the implementation and continuity of educational program goals.
- Review the management policy and procedures of the university's information and documentation processes, making it more accessible, modern, and cost-effective for strategy implementation.
- Promote the increase in the volumes of the University's state funding through expanded participation in educational-scientific, medical care, and service programs.
- Ensure cooperation among graduates, other stakeholders, and the University through continuous partnership in educational, scientific, medical, financial, and other forms of support.
- Improve the participation indicator in local and international research and educational grant programs.
- Revise tuition fees by specialties based on the calculation of the cost price of implementing educational programs and the priority of market demand.
- Expand the list of the University's paid services.
- Develop and introduce a comprehensive set of measures aimed at savings.
- Create new programs and introduce material encouragement mechanisms for various social groups of the University.
- Implement a policy of information dissemination and transparency regarding the University.

GOAL 2

To ensure quality education by fulfilling the current demands of the labor market and promoting mobility and internationalization through reforms of educational programs and forms of educational organization.

Objectives:

- Carry out structural and content transformations of educational programs, aligning them with the requirements of the National Qualifications Framework of Higher Education of the Republic of Armenia, the expected outcomes of the awarded qualifications, international subject benchmarks, and current labor market demands.
- Create councils per educational programs, including the relevant dean's offices, program heads, and educational quality managers of the programs.
- Based on the legislation of the Republic of Armenia on higher professional education, the studies conducted, and the decisions made at the university, review the components of educational programs and their allocated credit proportions.
- Base educational program reforms on multidisciplinary thematic teaching, ensure the vertical and horizontal integration of subjects, and refine learning outcomes.
- Improve the process of introducing a research component in the teaching process.
- Improve the student knowledge assessment system utilizing a multi-component assessment approach and the application of other formats.
- Continue the process of analyzing employers' opinions regarding the professional level of the university's graduates and the effectiveness of educational programs for the purpose of continuous review, modernization, and quality assurance of programs.
- Establish mechanisms and criteria for ensuring the content of educational programs, provision of personnel potential, analysis of learning outcomes, self-assessment, and periodic monitoring.
- Develop mechanisms aimed at improving the educational-scientific work of foreign students through the establishment of a separate faculty and an educational-scientific council.
- Turn the University into an educational-scientific center by ensuring the continuing education of the republic's medical workforce.
- Improve the internal university system for educational quality assessment and assurance, aligning it with the standards of ANQA and the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA).
- Implement international accreditation of educational programs.
- Ensure student and faculty mobility through the development and implementation of collaborative programs with universities in the region and the European Higher Education Area.
- Develop and implement a comprehensive program of measures aimed at improving educational internships.
- Continue and increase the effectiveness of surveys conducted online among students and graduates regarding teaching quality and effectiveness.
- Establish the necessary technological and methodological foundation for the development and introduction of electronic learning resources.
- Enhance the sustainability, predictability, and accessibility of the University and educational programs through the development and introduction of new technologies and platforms.
- Develop a new concept and methodological basis for foreign language instruction for multi-level language teaching.

GOAL 3

To develop the University's admission marketing processes and provide the necessary educational environment for students, contributing to the improvement of their educational process and social status.

Objectives:

- Plan annual student admissions by specialties based on an analysis of the external and internal demand for the given specialty and the University's capacity.
- Activate the information flow aimed at the professional orientation of applicants, including among foreign students.
- Improve pre-university educational programs to align the linguistic and educational knowledge of foreign applicants with the university's programmatic requirements.
- Revise the university college's educational programs, facilitating the influx of its graduates into YSMU.
- Review and improve the policy and procedures for studying students' educational needs.
- Expand the scope of consulting and other support provided to students.
- Expand and activate the operations of the Career Center.
- Develop mechanisms for assessing and ensuring the quality of educational, consulting, and other services provided to students, ensuring the transparency of results and evaluating effectiveness.
- Expand university support programs for socially vulnerable students.
- Learn about students' opinions regarding reforms implemented at the University through regularly conducted surveys and make it a subject of discussion.
- Promote students' participation in the cultural life of the university.
- Develop clear mechanisms for involving a broad segment of students in research work.
- Technologically re-equip lecture halls and laboratories.
- Modernize the infrastructures carrying out printing works.
- Repair and modernize sports halls.
- Expand the dormitory base.
- Develop a concept for the development of information systems.
- Develop the internal wired and wireless computer fiber-optic network by increasing bandwidth capacity, and modernize the server park of university information systems.
- Develop a concept for library development.
- Carry out repair works for educational buildings and construction of new educational spaces, ensuring adapted conditions for individuals with mobility impairments.

GOAL 4

To ensure the presence of a teaching staff endowed with high professional qualifications and moral values, acting as the main guarantor of the quality of higher medical education.

Objectives:

- Develop and implement a phased process for renewing the teaching staff based on competitive principles.
- Perfect the lecturer selection process by defining the requirements for the lecturer's professional qualities derived from the learning outcome.
- Refine the teaching workload calculation norms for the teaching staff (by categories).

- Improve the qualification assessment procedure for lecturers through the clarification of the criteria of the multi-component lecturer qualification system operating at the university.
- Refine programs for enhancing the professional and pedagogical quality of lecturers, also utilizing the potential of Armenian doctors working abroad.
- Increase the mobility of the teaching staff through the signing of relevant new inter-university agreements. Develop criteria for allocating financial support to those lecturers who have the opportunity to undergo professional training and/or deliver lectures abroad.
- Increase funding allocated to scientific works and plan a strictly defined quota in the university's financial budget for the implementation of scientific works conducted by lecturers.
- Develop a differentiation mechanism for the distribution of lecturers' salaries based on performance results, aiming to increase work efficiency and professional development.
- Develop and conduct training courses that develop the pedagogical, psychological, professional, and ethical skills of young lecturers.
- Expand the package of implemented social programs with the aim of improving the social living standards of employees.
- Identify the needs of the teaching staff through periodically conducted studies among them and develop a comprehensive set of measures aimed at addressing these needs.
- Develop new approaches for addressing health preservation and medical care issues of the university staff.
- Create a favorable working environment and conditions for the preservation, improvement, and replenishment of qualified personnel potential.

GOAL 5

To ensure the continuous development and effective utilization of the University's research potential.

Objectives:

- Refine the policy and strategy of the University's scientific activities, basing them on the University's 2018-2028/38 science development concept and the evaluation of research activities over the last 5 years.
- Implement structural reforms of the University's scientific block and refine the regulations and procedures of its individual components (Scientific Coordination Council, Science Department, Student Scientific Society) based on the refined strategy.
- Improve the connection between research and educational processes through the refinement of interconnection mechanisms.
- Refine the criteria and assessment results for evaluating a lecturer's research activity effectiveness within the qualification assessment system of lecturers and researchers, guided by objective scientometric indicators.
- Introduce scientific passports for employees and departments based on scientometric indicators and evaluate the research effectiveness of the University's teaching staff based on them.
- Ensure the funding of priorities based on excellence.
- Refine competitiveness-based toolkits that will ensure an increase in the financial resources necessary in the university budget for the research initiatives of researchers and lecturers,

scientific business trips, and the publication of scientific work outcomes in international scientific journals.

- Ensure the development of the material and technical base in the university's main prioritized scientific directions by repairing and re-equipping the existing laboratory-technical base, leading to the construction of a new scientific center based on excellence.
- Promote the internationalization of research activities through initiating joint projects, signing bilateral agreements, and forming consortiums with leading foreign universities and scientific centers.
- Improve and ensure favorable conditions for 3rd-level education, accepting the creation of new knowledge through research as an important condition.
- Stimulate students' active participation in research and educational-scientific programs, accepting the acquisition of new knowledge through research as an important condition.

GOAL 6

To ensure the continuous processes of the University's internationalization at both infrastructural and programmatic levels.

Objectives:

- Expand the existing experience of cooperation with leading universities in Armenia and abroad within the framework of bilateral (multilateral) agreements, co-financed projects, and consortiums between higher medical educational institutions.
- Refine policies and regulations promoting the university's international relations.
- Promote inter-university academic mobility for students, clinical residents, and lecturers, and develop mechanisms for the mutual recognition of learning outcomes and credit transfer based on the ECTS database.
- Ensure the University's participation in the programs of the European University Association, as well as other local and international inter-university organizations and networks.
- Within the framework of educational reform programs, invite leading foreign specialists in various fields of medical science to deliver lectures at the University, for the purpose of exchanging management experience, as well as exchanging clinical activity experience and introducing methods.
- Activate the University's participation in European and World Bank programs.
- Develop indicators for assessing the effectiveness of internationalization and external relations, viewing it as a mandatory and necessary condition for evaluating the work (rating) of individual university subdivisions and departments.
- Expand the information field about international exchange programs on the University's website, make news accessible and transparent for everyone, and regularly present sufficient information about the process of the programs.
- Create and announce programs in the field of medical science that, by their attractiveness, will contribute to international cooperation and the internationalization of research works.

GOAL 7

To improve the University's material and technical base, grounded on the requirements for ensuring the quality of educational programs, scientific priorities, and clinical services.

Objectives:

- Implement a policy of improving the University's material and technical base according to the priorities defined in the strategic plan.
- Conduct a technical examination of all buildings and draw up phased construction, repair, and reconstruction plans.
- Develop and introduce a university computer network ensuring information and documentation processes.
- Continue the landscaping and improvement of student dormitories and educational-industrial bases, and acquire (build) a new student residence.
- Increase the simulation center's capacity and equipment through the acquisition of new educational simulators.
- Renew the university's security system.
- Assist students with special needs by developing differentiated educational programs and provide appropriate service.
- Develop mechanisms for assessing the effectiveness of resources provided to the University's employees and students.
- Technologically re-equip lecture halls and laboratories.
- Modernize the infrastructures carrying out printing works.