

PURSUING  
EXCELLENCE

FOSTERING  
LEADERSHIP

EMPOWERING  
COMMUNITIES

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# MISSION STATEMENT

**Southern Connecticut State University** provides exemplary graduate and undergraduate education in the liberal arts and professional disciplines. As an intentionally diverse and comprehensive university, Southern is committed to academic excellence, access, social justice, and service for the public good.

## FULFILLING THE MISSION

As a student-centered institution, Southern regards student success as its highest priority. We seek to instill in all of our students the value of the liberal arts and sciences as a foundation for professional development and life-long learning. Our students receive exemplary professional training and are inspired by the research, scholarship, and creative activity of our teacher-scholars.

Through tradition and innovation, Southern strives to empower every undergraduate and graduate student with the knowledge, skills, and perspectives essential for active participation and impassioned, ethical leadership in our rapidly changing global society. Within the Connecticut State University System, Southern leads the way in graduate education and produces the largest number of graduates in Health/Life Sciences, Education, and Social/Public Services.

**In 2007, the university's Strategic Plan — Pursuing Excellence, Fostering Leadership, Empowering Communities —** was completed and presented to the university community as a strong statement of Southern's mission, vision, and core values. Over the past several years, since the Plan's adoption, the university has made great strides towards realizing many of the goals put forth in the Plan. In this Final Report, we take stock of how far we have come and how much we have accomplished, while also recognizing that striving to reach our goals is both an ongoing process and the mark of a vibrant institution.

The development of the Strategic Plan for 2007-2012 was truly a community effort. The process employed the time and energies of not only a 25-person steering committee, but also 10 working groups of 150 faculty, staff, and students. Hundreds of others participated in focus groups, e-surveys, committee discussions, and town hall meetings. A new mission statement for the university emerged from the process, and along with it a clear sense of Southern's Core Values: *Excellence, Student Success, Access, Diversity, Lifelong Learning, and Community Involvement*. Here, in this Final Report, you will see that the university community embraced the mission and the Core Values as it worked to transform our institution.

As we move forward with our strategic planning efforts and begin to chart the course for the future, I wish to thank all of those who helped to bring us this far and encourage everyone to take part at every opportunity in the new strategic planning process set to commence early in the Fall 2013 semester. A transparent and participatory process will enable the new plan to reflect the Southern community's aspirations for the institution for the next decade. With your help, we will continue to raise our expectations for ourselves, refine our values, and serve our students and our community as we always have — with dedication and excellence.



**Mary A. Papazian, Ph.D.** • President

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# FROM THE PRESIDENT



# SUMMARY

IN FEBRUARY OF 2006, Southern Connecticut State University launched a year-long university-wide strategic planning process with the intent of sharpening its mission and crafting a bold vision for the future. The University Strategic Plan for 2007-2012 draws substantially upon the 2004 Academic Strategic Plan to acknowledge the centrality of academics to the mission of the university. Because they constitute the heart of the university, academic programs and faculty received particular focus.

## A NEW MISSION STATEMENT EMERGED THAT HIGHLIGHTED THE FOLLOWING:

- The university's intentionally diverse character
- Its commitment to academic excellence and service toward the public good
- Its distinction of being the leader in graduate education within the CSUS
- Its distinction of producing the largest number of graduates in Health and Life Sciences, Education, and Social and Public Services in the CSUS
- Its exemplary training in a number of professions
- Its empowerment of students for impassioned, ethical leadership in our rapidly changing global society
- The ways students are inspired by the scholarly activities of our teacher-scholars
- The value of liberal arts and sciences as the foundation for intellectual pursuits

## WITH THIS CLEARLY DEFINED MISSION, THE UNIVERSITY ASPIRED TO:

- Become nationally recognized as an exemplary center of teaching and learning where all students are empowered to succeed at meeting the academic challenges presented by outstanding teacher-scholars
- Strengthen all academic programs and continue to provide one of the strongest graduate programs in New England
- Meet the growing state and national needs for graduates trained in nursing, education, social services, business, and STEM disciplines
- Expand the number of interdisciplinary programs in the liberal arts and sciences
- Become a visible and invaluable resource to the region through its contributions to intellectual, artistic, cultural, and economic growth and vitality
- Make significant contributions toward closing educational achievement gaps, reducing health disparities, and achieving social justice
- Prepare its graduates for global citizenship
- Increase the levels of support for faculty engagement in outstanding research and creative activity
- Become a leader in the employment of best practices in energy conservation and environmental stewardship





# VISION STATEMENT

## A MODEL UNIVERSITY

Southern Connecticut State University, a student-centered institution, will become nationally recognized as a model center for teaching and learning where faculty engage in outstanding research and creative activity and challenge students to reach their full potential. Our students will be empowered with the academic skills, intellectual tools, practical experiences, and extracurricular programs for success in their chosen fields of study and their life's work. Keys to their success will be excellence in critical thinking, problem-solving, technological literacy, oral and written communication, cross-cultural competence, global awareness, and collaborative, ethical leadership. We will expand our use of e-learning technologies to provide broader educational access and to introduce our students to technology as a tool for ongoing, interactive learning. Southern will employ best practices in energy conservation, the preservation of nature, and environmental responsibility to reflect our respect for the planet and future generations.

## BUILDING ON OUR STRENGTHS

Southern takes great pride in being the second largest institution of higher education in Connecticut and the leading graduate center in the Connecticut State University System. The institution will foster and promote the important synergies between undergraduate and graduate programs. One of our hallmarks is the unique ways in which graduate

programs enrich undergraduate programs and the ways in which the undergraduate liberal arts and sciences provide a foundation for more specialized study. Through careful assessments of our fiscal, human, physical, and technological resources, we will strive to meet the workforce needs of the state and nation, especially in the fields of education, nursing, social/public services, business and STEM disciplines (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics). At the same time, we will strengthen our liberal arts core and cultivate interdisciplinary programs.

## ENGAGEMENT WITH OUR COMMUNITY

Through a variety of curricular and extracurricular programs, Southern will become widely known for its contributions to the intellectual, artistic, cultural, and economic growth and vitality of the region. In collaboration with other organizations, we will make significant contributions to closing educational achievement gaps, reducing health disparities, achieving social justice, and preserving our environment. The university will prepare students for social responsibility and global citizenship through the provision of exciting opportunities for community internships, service learning, and expanded international education programs. Southern will also demonstrate itself to be a visible and invaluable resource to the Greater New Haven community and the region, through educational partnerships, professional development opportunities, and community service.

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# CORE VALUES

## 1. EXCELLENCE

The University values exemplary and distinguished performance in all aspects of University life by all members of the University community, especially in the areas of teaching, learning, scholarship, and service.

## 2. ACCESS

The University values its responsibility to provide opportunities for individuals with potential and motivation to become productive members of the University community and demonstrates that value by eliminating barriers that hinder full participation.

## 3. DIVERSITY

The University values an educational and work environment in which individuals and cultures are celebrated and respected for the unique talents, insights, and perspectives that they contribute.

## 4. STUDENT SUCCESS

The University values all students, believes in their potential to achieve, and commits to challenging, supporting, and empowering them to transform their lives.

## 5. LIFE-LONG LEARNING

The University values the pursuit of knowledge and provides an environment for all individuals to intentionally learn and develop throughout the various phases of their lives.

## 6. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The University values community service, civic engagement, and social responsibility by all university members and encourages the integration of these principles in the learning experiences of students, invites community participation in university affairs, and promotes local, regional, national, and international collaborations.



## GOAL 1 Strengthen Undergraduate and Graduate Academic Programs

### ACTIONS COMPLETED

- A new general education program, the Liberal Education Program (LEP), was designed and implemented to provide students with the broad knowledge and transferable skills necessary for success after graduation
- Several interdisciplinary courses and degree programs were developed, including the forensic science minor, 6th Year Educational Coach program, M.S. in applied physics, M.F.A. in creative writing, and Ed.D. in nursing education, created in conjunction with Western Connecticut State University
- Two Centers of Excellence were approved and launched: the Center of Excellence in Autism Spectrum Disorders and the Center for Excellence in Mathematics and the Sciences
- Periodic program review, including external review for all undergraduate and graduate programs, has been implemented to ensure academic quality
- Accreditation by New England Association for Schools and Colleges (NEASC) reaffirmed following an 18-month self-study process and site visit

### ACTIONS IN PROGRESS

- Buley Library's major revitalization is back on track, with renovated areas to include Learning Commons, a Teaching/Learning Center, and 24-hour study areas, as well as a café, a graduate study area, more group study spaces, five classrooms and an art gallery
- Assessment of LEP is ongoing to ensure its effectiveness
- A graduate program prioritization process is underway to make recommendations concerning the best use of the university's resources to improve graduate offerings
- A Center for Nanotechnology is under development



### A NEW GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR UNDERGRADUATES

**The 48-credit Liberal Education Program (LEP)** articulates a conception of general education that is brand new to Southern. The LEP serves as the framework for the structure of learning experiences at the undergraduate level and provides students with broad knowledge in the liberal arts and sciences as a foundation for more advanced disciplinary or professional coursework. The program incorporates both an intensive writing curriculum (WAC) and the First-Year Experience (FYE) program into general education. The LEP is built on three tiers. Tier 1 emphasizes the development of nine specific competencies for college readiness, such as quantitative reasoning, critical thinking, and technological fluency. While Tier 2 courses reinforce these competencies, they are primarily oriented around nine non-discipline specific areas of knowledge, such as Global Awareness, the Creative Drive, and the Natural World. Finally, a capstone experience that revolves around a discussion of values — Aesthetic Sensitivity, Civic Engagement, Environmental Awareness, Ethical Judgment, Human Diversity, and Rational Thought — constitutes Tier 3 of the LEP. The new program emphasizes depth and sequencing of learning throughout the program, representing a significant innovation to SCSU's earlier approach to general education.

Additionally, unlike the previous All University Requirements (AUR) system, a program director and faculty committee oversee the LEP. Finally, a primary feature of the LEP is the integration of assessment into all aspects of the program.

The LEP framework provides guidelines for the design of all general education courses and includes criteria for its evaluation. The LEP was specifically designed to break down the typical barriers in subject matter that exist among departments in higher education. Perhaps its greatest strength is that all LEP courses reinforce Competencies and focus on at least one contextual Area of Knowledge and one Discussion of Values, bringing recursiveness to this multi-tiered general education program.

Approved by the faculty in 2009, program implementation is being phased in over three years beginning in the fall of 2011.

## GOAL 2 Integrate Community Engagement, Campus Activities, and Student Services Into the Academic Life of Students

### ACTIONS COMPLETED

- Established by the Student Government Association (SGA), the SCSU Service Team has grown from five to 25 students since 2008. Team projects have grown from three annual events involving 50 student volunteers to more than 10 annual events involving more than 600 student volunteers.
- A three-year national benchmarking assessment has been implemented. Developed by the National Association for Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA), it measures the impact of student services on student development and civic consciousness. To date, seven areas have been studied: Student Conduct, Student Activities, Student Center Programs, Community Service, Residence Life, Career and Professional Aspirations, and Campus Recreation. Significant findings in the data are being used to inform practices.
- Residence Life has created three living/learning communities (LLC): Honors College LLC, Health and Wellness LLC, and Environmental/Sustainability LLC. Additional LLCs are planned, including an International LLC for fall 2013.
- Peer mentoring program to work with first-year students has grown from seven students to 43 since 2007. Mentors are assigned to INQ classes as advisers, role models, and classroom community-builders.
- Co-curricular transcripts have been introduced using a software program (Collegiate Link) which encourages students to be intentional in the choices they make about out-of-classroom experiences and permits students to document specific learning/skills acquired outside the classroom in a way that complements their academic experiences
- A Family/Parent Outreach Program was created in 2010 to communicate regularly with parents on campus activities and to coach parents on ways that they can support their students' success at SCSU. Components include a monthly electronic newsletter sent to more than 4,000 parents, an annual Parent Resource Guide, a more comprehensive Parent/Family Orientation, and an extended Parent/Family Weekend.
- SCSU is an active member of the Campus Compact, a national higher education coalition committed to promoting public and community service

### ACTIONS IN PROGRESS

- A Center for Civic Engagement is being established to further develop and enhance community-campus partnerships and service learning opportunities for students

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

#### The Student Government Association (SGA)

established the SCSU Service Team, a group of students who plan, coordinate and implement service initiatives and programs on campus and the greater New Haven community. Such initiatives included two large-scale service days involving more than 600 student volunteers: Day of Service, held every fall, and the Big Event, held every spring, serving approximately 25 agencies throughout New Haven and Hamden. Other annual programs supported by the Service Team include the Friends of Rudolph Holiday Party and gift distribution program for inner-city children (held in collaboration with the New Haven Police Department), and the Dean of Student Affairs' Adopt-a-Family Food Drive program that collects enough food to fill 250-300 large boxes for distribution to area families in crisis, homeless shelters, and community agencies. Numerous smaller service projects are also developed and conducted by the Service Team through the academic year.

Also, for the past three years, the SCSU Service Team has hosted an annual service fair in which more than 40 local community agencies attend to provide students and their clubs and organizations with service opportunities and monthly service projects.



## GOAL 3 Foster an Institutional Climate of Excellence in Teaching, Scholarship, and Creative Activity



### ACTIONS COMPLETED

- Two-day June Teaching Academy, started in 2007, has become an annual event with approximately 80-100 faculty participating each year. The Academy includes nationally-known keynote speakers and breakout sessions on various aspects of pedagogy.
- More than \$500,000 in grants from the Davis Foundation supported teaching innovation and curriculum innovation programs
- Since 2010, a Creative Activity Fund (\$170,000 per year) has supplemented contractually mandated travel funds and helps support research and creative activity projects
- Two junior faculty research fellowships, funded by an endowment, are awarded annually
- Faculty development opportunities for part-time faculty have been enhanced, including the addition of a part-time faculty orientation
- The Research and Scholarship Advisory Committee (RSAC) has been reconstituted to advise the Provost on increasing the visibility of research and creative activity

### ACTIONS IN PROGRESS

- Faculty mentoring through faculty development events and individual consultations is ongoing

### SUPPORT FOR PEDAGOGY

**Two grants from the Davis Educational Foundation** have significantly enhanced faculty development opportunities. The Teaching Innovation Program (TIP), funded at \$265,000 over three years, sparked a positive culture change by highlighting excellence in pedagogy and creating an infrastructure for exchanging innovative technology and methods. The TIP offered fellowships, travel funds, workshops, and resource sharing. Fifteen faculty fellows completed nine projects, ranging from assessing the impact of classroom response systems (clickers) to meeting the needs of diverse learners through universal design. A total of 33 faculty were awarded TIP Travel funds to attend conferences that focused specifically on pedagogical practices; 19 presented their teaching innovations at these conferences, and 13 presented at international conferences.

The Curriculum Innovation Program (CIP), funded at \$270,000 over three years (2010-2013), provides faculty support and training in assessment, curriculum design, and the creation of significant learning activities. To date, 23 competitively selected faculty fellows have been awarded \$2000 each to create model courses and mentor other faculty in curriculum design. In addition, 16 workshops, a curriculum summit, and annual retreats focusing on curriculum design, mapping, assessment, and student engagement have been held. To support further collaboration and resource sharing, a Curriculum Innovation Exchange is held each semester, and related information is posted on the Faculty Development website.

The grants have also supported the annual Teaching Academy. Sample faculty comments on changes they plan to make in their teaching as a result of their participation in grant activities include: collaborating with others on course design, making learning goals more explicit, using integrated course design, advancing a learner-centered rather than content-centered teaching approach, adding more student engagement, using more rubrics, and linking learning activities more directly to assessment. All of these practices strengthen teaching and learning practices. More than 150 faculty have participated in one or more of these events.

## GOAL 4 Become a Regional Leader in the Use of Technology to Support Student Learning

### ACTIONS COMPLETED

- Online Ed.D. program in nursing education in collaboration with Western Connecticut State University has been successfully launched
- The Women's Studies Program developed and launched an online graduate certificate program
- The university migrated to the Blackboard Learn 9 learning management system to enable support of mobile devices (smart phones, tablets)
- A Teaching and Learning Technologies Group was created to support faculty's use of technology in pedagogy
- A website for distance learning was created as a resource for students who take online SCSU courses
- An annual award for Technology Teacher of the Year was established to recognize faculty who use technology in innovative ways in the classroom



### ACTIONS IN PROGRESS

- Continued exploration of pedagogical potential of the iPad and other tablet-based technologies as part of a university-wide "bring your own device" environment
- Identifying ways of attracting and supporting non-place-bound learners remains an area of exploration
- Two telepresence classrooms are under development
- A faculty committee is studying ways of ensuring quality and variety of online offerings
- Ongoing efforts to create additional opportunities for faculty to learn how to incorporate technology into pedagogy



### DOCTORAL PREPARATION FOR NURSE EDUCATORS

**Nursing faculty at SCSU and WCSU** have collaboratively developed an online Doctorate in Education (Ed.D.) program in nursing education — the only one of its kind in the state of Connecticut and one of few across the country uniquely designed to prepare nurses for academic faculty roles. The Ed.D program admits students into the program every other year.

The program offers individuals with clinical expertise and a master's degree in nursing an innovative doctoral program focused on the necessary content and skills required to be effective faculty members, advance the science of nursing education, and transform the education of future nurses. To meet the needs of busy professionals, this program is delivered primarily online through the use of synchronous and asynchronous learning modalities. Three, three-day on-campus residencies are required before the start of the program and during each summer before the following Years 1 and 2 of the program.

This program has been licensed by the Connecticut Board of Regents and approved by NEASC.

## GOAL 5 **Develop an Effective Plan for Student Success**

### ACTIONS COMPLETED

- The First-Year Experience (FYE) program was implemented in 2007 and has resulted in increased credit completion, higher GPAs, and higher levels of engagement (as measured by the National Survey of Student Engagement)
- New Student Orientation Program, Welcome Weekend, and Transfer Student Orientation were substantially modified to better introduce and integrate students into the university community
- An Enrollment Management Council (EMC) was established in 2006 to set and monitor enrollment goals
- A First-Stop Center in the Wintergreen building was created as a “one-stop-shopping” information desk for students
- Faculty and Academic Advisement staff regularly visit primary feeder community colleges to help ensure course equivalency and understanding of LEP

### ACTIONS IN PROGRESS

- Assessment of the FYE and NSO programs is ongoing to ensure effectiveness
- Recommendations of the Transfer Student Task Force are being implemented to improve the experience of transfer students
- Processes related to graduate admissions are being audited as part of an effort to attract and retain graduate students
- A Student Success Task Force has been constituted and is examining current practices to identify barriers to student success and recommend action plans to improve student experiences and outcomes

### SUCCESSFUL REVAMPING OF NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION

**A new format for New Student Orientation** (NSO) and Parent/Family Orientation was introduced during summer 2007. Five mandatory two-day orientation sessions for groups of 250-270 new students replaced the one mega-orientation program for 1,300 students as conducted in years past. During the two-day NSO, students receive an overview of the university’s academic values and expectations and the many opportunities to become engaged members of the SCSU community. Students meet with faculty and advisement center professionals, attend a resource fair to learn about the university’s programs and services, and participate in a mock college class led by SCSU faculty. Students are overwhelmingly positive about the NSO experience. For example, feedback from the 1252 students during the 2012 NSO indicated that 97 percent felt welcomed at SCSU. During Parent/Family Orientation, held on the first day of NSO, administrators, faculty, and staff members engage parents in discussions focused on the university’s expectations of their children, strategies for supporting their children, and financing their children’s education. Feedback received from parents is overwhelmingly positive. For example, of the 226 parents who responded

to the 2012 orientation session survey, 97 percent were satisfied with the content and delivery of the sessions.

The restructuring of NSO has provided incoming students with more time to get acquainted with SCSU prior to the start of their freshmen year and has enabled the university to devote the months of July and August to the recruitment and enrollment of transfer students.

### FIRST-YEAR EXPERIENCE PROGRAM HELPS NEW STUDENTS TRANSITION TO COLLEGE LIFE

**First implemented in fall 2007**, the multi-faceted First-Year Experience Program (FYE) is intended to introduce freshmen to academic habits of mind through a 3-credit academic course, Introduction to Intellectual and Creative Inquiry, INQ 101, and to expand upon NSO in that course so that freshmen have a clearer sense of how to navigate the university. Building upon the foundation created at NSO, FYE helps new students transition to college life by continuing to educate them regarding academic programs, campus resources, and involvement opportunities. FYE instructors serve as academic advisers to their students throughout the freshman year.

Significant changes have also been made to FYE based on student survey data and faculty and staff feedback. A Peer Mentoring Program has been developed, and a Common Read program instituted for all first-year students. Since 2008, all first-year students have been in learning communities, but in 2010, more intentional linkages were made between the courses in those communities. For instance, five of those communities were themed on environmental and sustainability issues, and the students and faculty in those communities worked with related projects across the campus. Since 2011, INQ courses are linked with a Critical Thinking course now required by the new LEP. FYE also now includes sessions on academic advising, so students are better prepared to find the tools and resources needed for self-advising and faculty advisement can be more focused and effective.

Institutional assessment findings indicate that the FYE program has contributed significantly to increased student success as evidenced by more credits completed during the first year, higher grade point averages, and higher levels of engagement as measured by the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). First-to-second year retention rates increased during the first three years of the program but appear to have leveled off. By fall 2009, first-year retention rates reached an 18-year high of 79.7 percent.

Because of significant improvement in NSSE scores, SCSU was invited to participate in a Spencer Foundation study, *Learning to Improve: A Study of Evidence-Based Improvement in Higher Education*. The study is an in-depth investigation of select institutions that show a pattern of improved NSSE results over time on several measures of student engagement in educationally effective practice. The project seeks to identify the activities that led to improved performance and to draw lessons to inform reform efforts on other campuses.

## GOAL 6 Foster a Campus Climate That Respects and Celebrates Diversity

### ACTIONS COMPLETED

- Training and reporting requirements for all faculty searches have been significantly modified toward goals of increased awareness of diversity in search processes as well as increased percentage of minority faculty. The efforts have resulted in a 2 percent increase in the number of minority faculty since 2009. Faculty of color comprise 18.4 percent of the total number of full-time faculty.
- More than 40 programs annually are offered to the university community to enhance cultural understanding and competence
- Social justice training is now required for all Residence Life staff
- Diversity and difference are now major focuses of the Student Leadership Retreat
- The Diversity and Equity Leadership Council (DELIC), formed in 2008, created and revised a Diversity Action Plan, which will serve as a source of information going forward for further campus initiatives, including the strategic planning process and the President's Commission on Campus Climate and Inclusion
- The SCSU Foundation and the Office of Institutional Advancement have continued and increased funding of campus/community associations promoting and celebrating diversity and inclusion, including: Anti-Defamation League; Connecticut Women's Education and Legal Fund; B'nai B'rith; Greater New Haven branch of NAACP; Latin American Club

### ACTIONS IN PROGRESS

- The Office of Diversity and Equity has been reviewed and reorganized with a national search resulting in new leadership with exceptional qualifications and advanced understanding of affirmative action and Title IX
- The President's Commission on Campus Climate and Inclusion is being established and will be charged with review and recommendations regarding the university's goals and practices
- The university has critically reviewed, revised, and is about to submit an affirmative action plan that contains accurate data and that can be used as a basis for planning and assessing goals and actions



### SUPPORTING A DIVERSE CAMPUS CULTURE

To foster an atmosphere that respects and supports people of diverse characteristics and backgrounds, the Diversity and Equity Leadership Council (DELIC) was constituted and charged with drafting a Diversity Action Plan. The DELIC, comprised of 25 members representing all university constituencies, crafted the following diversity statement:

*The University values an educational and work environment in which individuals and cultures are celebrated and respected for the unique talents, insights, and perspectives they contribute. Diversity is a part of the human condition. Southern Connecticut State University is committed to reflect diversity in all facets of life and to foster a climate that values the opinions and ideas of every member of the campus community.*

The Plan's goals addressed faculty/staff climate as well as student climate. Goals included increasing the recruitment, retention and advancement of minorities (i.e., women, individuals from underrepresented populations, the disabled) into faculty, staff, and administrative positions; creating a climate that promotes respect for and understanding of equity and diversity; creating synergy among faculty, students, and staff both in-and outside of the classroom; creating and sustaining a welcoming, supportive, and inclusive campus climate for all students; encouraging meaningful address of human diversity in the curriculum; recruiting and supporting a more diverse student population; supporting programming that values human diversity; and collecting and analyzing data to systematically and effectively assess progress. The Diversity Action Plan will serve to inform further campus initiatives, including a new strategic planning process and the President's Commission on Campus Climate and Inclusion.

## GOAL 7 Increase Funding From External Sources to Support the University's Mission

### ACTIONS COMPLETED

- Annual Foundation support to the university has increased to \$1.6 million from \$1.4 million in 2008
- Scholarship support has increased to \$463,178 in 2012, an increase of more than 50 percent since 2008
- A new student philanthropy initiative has been established and resulted in more than 300 students participating in the second year of the program
- The "Choose Southern" theme was recently developed; all university marketing, recruitment publications, and related advertising materials now carry this look and theme
- A Director of Community Engagement is charged with the task of developing and implementing a community outreach plan
- In 2012, program support to the university reached an all-time high of \$754,308, an increase of over 75 percent since 2008

### ACTIONS IN PROGRESS

- Funds are being sought to support the School of Business, following the opening of its new facility in fall 2012
- With the anticipated groundbreaking of the new science building in fall 2013, opportunities to help secure necessary equipment are being explored



### RECONNECTING ALUMNI TO THE UNIVERSITY

Prior to 2007, the number of alumni events offered each year was largely limited to homecoming and the Distinguished and Outstanding Alumni Awards. Since 2007, the number of offerings has expanded dramatically to about two dozen programs each year. The Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) awarded the Office of Alumni Relations Gold and Silver Awards for District II for the high quality of its programming for 2012. Alumni Relations staff now visit cities around the country — Boston, Atlanta, Chicago, and Philadelphia, among others — to make contact with far-flung SCSU alumni, and SCSU alumni clubs are in the beginning stages in several of these locations. The office sends a monthly newsletter to alumni to keep them apprised of campus happenings, and the number of alumni attending homecoming has grown from about 250 each year to about 600. An Alumni Professionals Day has been established as part of the university's FYE program, with up to 70 alumni attending each year.

## GOAL 8 Develop an Effective Information Management System to Inform Decision-Making in All Areas of the University

### ACTIONS COMPLETED

- Review of all personnel action processes for conversion to automated processes has taken place. The initial approval process for all hiring and personnel changes on campus has been successfully automated.
- Time and attendance reporting and paycheck information retrieval have been fully automated in the Core-CT portal system
- The Budget Office and Human Resources successfully merged their position control processes through regularized communication and comparison of data. The result has been consistent reconciled reporting on vacant positions and available funding, resulting in more informed and flexible decision making regarding hiring and reorganization in a fiscally constrained and uncertain environment.
- Permanent leadership was established in the Office of Information Technology

### ACTIONS IN PROGRESS

- Review of processes is ongoing, concentrating in the Office of Human Resources, for automation opportunities. Automation of the adjunct hiring process and the search process are planned for academic year 2013-14.
- Review of potential realignment in the Office of Assessment and Planning to increase data availability and usefulness
- New leadership in IT will work with the system office in an effort to increase support in appropriate areas for the dissemination of information essential to effective decision making on campus
- A campus-wide process redesign task force is planned to expand the automation and streamlining process for all departments

### MOVING BUSINESS PROCESSES ONLINE

**Southern employees now report their time** worked and obtain paycheck information online, as personnel processes pertaining to payroll and reporting of time worked have moved to an automated system in the Core-CT portal, part of the Connecticut state government's HRMS (Human Resource Management System) / financials system. Core-CT replaced many older legacy systems in 2003, bringing with it the promise of standardization, increased ad hoc reporting capabilities, simplified reconciliation, and interactivity with its users. The state chose PeopleSoft (now Oracle/PeopleSoft) as the official EnterpriseReporting System (ERP) for Connecticut.

On campus, conversations have begun in the Data Stewards Group about utilizing business intelligence/analytical tools — for example, Evisions Argos and others — to help facilitate decision making that is data driven. OIT continues to work with partner administrative units and teams to improve existing services and identify ways in which technology can enhance and strengthen the university's business and programmatic functions.



## GOAL 9 Strengthen Organization Structures and Operations to Improve Institutional Effectiveness and Communication

### ACTIONS COMPLETED

- Opportunities have been increased for staff training, on topics such as health and safety, with many training courses offered online for increased employee convenience
- Guiding principles that were developed jointly by University Strategic Plan Review Committee (USPaRC) and the Budget and Planning Committee are used in building the budget
- The university has launched a new website, enhancing communications between the university and the general public
- Internal email list serves, as well as social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter, enable the university to communicate with its constituents
- Faculty annual activity reports are now completed through a web interface (Digital Measures), making this process easier and enabling faculty to create online portfolios to facilitate the review, promotion, and tenure process



### ACTIONS IN PROGRESS

- The "SCSU and You — Working Together" team is addressing the improvement of customer service in student service areas
- Employee recognition events and orientations continue, with the goal of supporting staff and recognizing their accomplishments
- USPaRC and the Budget and Planning Committee work together to keep aligned the University's Strategic Plan and the budgeting process



### "SCSU AND YOU — WORKING TOGETHER"

**In order to improve the student experience,** a working group comprised of representatives from student-service offices began focusing on customer service and ways to work more collaboratively. This group planned and implemented a day-long "customer service orientation." With seasoned leaders from Student Life and NSO, during spring break 2013, nearly 100 staff members from Academic Advisement, Admissions, Bursar, Career Services, Financial Aid, Graduate Studies, Registrar, Residence Life and University Card Office participated in the orientation-like day of team building and collaborative customer service workshops.

As part of the "SCSU and You: Working Together" program, a summary report was prepared and shared with the Enrollment Management Council in April. As a result of the successful professional development day, the group is continuing its work and expanding its focus to include additional aspects of customer service. The group is focusing on the following areas: developing cross-departmental knowledge, from application through graduation; training and process review/improvement; and initiatives to keep staff connected and morale high.

## GOAL 10 Ensure a Campus That is Environmentally Responsible, Safe, Attractive, and Conducive to Learning and High Levels of Productivity

### ACTIONS COMPLETED

- The former Student Center was renovated for the new School of Business, and following its completion, the building achieved a LEED Gold certification
- The 1,200-vehicle Wintergreen parking garage, completed and open for use, is fitted with energy-efficient LED lighting and three charging stations for electric vehicles
- An annual transportation fair promotes alternative means of transportation, including Zip cars, U-Pass for state buses, NuRide program for ride sharing, and SCSU shuttle service, all available to the Southern community
- The Plant It Forward gardening project was created to introduce urban gardening at Southern
- Campus conservation efforts in the residence halls saved 76,000 KWL of electricity
- Recyclemania 2012 reduced overall campus waste by 14 percent
- The university developed an emergency management plan to ensure the continuing viability of the university in the event of emergencies affecting the institution
- An identified emergency management team has undergone trainings and tabletop simulations to prepare for possible threats to the campus

### ACTIONS IN PROGRESS

- The University's Master Facility Plan is scheduled to be updated in 2014
- The Buley Library renovation has been restarted
- Design for the new Academic and Science Laboratory building was completed and construction is under way
- Upgrade of the card access and control system started in January 2013



### SCHOOL OF BUSINESS HELPS CAMPUS GO GREEN

The new **School of Business facility**, which opened in fall 2012, received LEED Gold certification, only the second building in the state to receive this recognition of "green" construction. The School of Business project involved the complete renovation of the former university Student Center. The 23,000-square-foot structure was revamped to address the programmatic needs of the School of Business while incorporating sustainable practices and materials and using alternative energy solutions.

The existing three-story building was built in 1959 and originally contained dormitory rooms, bathrooms, common areas, and a student activity center. The building's exterior and interior were renovated and all new mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems installed.

LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) is a program providing third-party verification of green buildings. Its rating system offers four certification levels for new construction — Certified, Silver, Gold and Platinum — that correspond to the number of credits accrued in five green design categories: sustainable sites, water efficiency, energy and atmosphere, materials and resources, and indoor environmental quality. Buildings in the LEED rating system earn points toward levels of certification

depending on how many green features are included in the building's design and construction. Buildings must be rated by an independent rater certified by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC).

Since January 2009, all construction projects in Connecticut, both public and private, in excess of \$5 million have been required to meet green building standards. All renovation projects costing more than \$2 million have had to meet the standards since 2010.

## GOAL 11 Prepare Students and Faculty for Life and Work in a Global Society

### ACTIONS COMPLETED

- An Office of International Education with a full-time director was established to increase global awareness and international opportunities for students, and international faculty collaboration
- Global awareness has been integrated as an area of knowledge into the Liberal Education Program (LEP)
- SCSU was chosen to participate in the American Association of Colleges and Universities' Shared Futures: *General Education for a Global Century* initiative
- A new Global Education Advisory Committee, with a mix of elected and appointed faculty, has become a standing committee
- A \$100,000 State Department grant was secured and used to establish an exchange program in Vietnam
- The number of students studying abroad has increased by 25 percent in the past five years, with 120 students participating this past year



### ACTIONS IN PROGRESS

- Increased recruitment of international students is planned
- New agreements are in process with institutions in China, Thailand, and Armenia, with others being explored
- SCSU is joining the National Student Exchange to provide "study away" opportunities

### A GLOBAL REACH

In 2011 SCSU was selected as one of 32 universities to participate in the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) *Shared Futures: General Education for a Global Century* project. During the August 2011 conference, the SCSU team brainstormed methods for integrating global learning and social responsibility throughout our curriculum and throughout our community. Faculty Development programming throughout the year was targeted to international education and diversity. Workshops, a day-long program on Minority Recruitment and Retention, a Southern Dialogue devoted to global and international studies, the launching of the LGBTQI Faculty and Staff Alliance, a keynote speaker on "Teaching Inclusively," and a Teaching Academy session on "Teaching and Learning Social Justice" all supported the year's focus for professional development.

The Office of International Education (OIE) was established to serve both inbound international students — degree-seeking and short-term exchange — as well as outbound SCSU and CSU consortium students interested in studying either abroad or at a partner institution in the United States. The office also serves members of Southern's faculty interested in establishing programs abroad, as well as members of the Southern community interested in participating in a Fulbright Program.

Our current international students come from all over the world, including countries such as Venezuela, Canada, the United Kingdom, China, Germany, Nigeria, Spain, India, Bermuda, Korea, Belarus, and the Netherlands. Southern students can participate in one of Southern's reciprocal exchange programs, an SCSU faculty-led, credit-bearing program, or an approved study abroad provider at an approved university abroad.