



## Southern 2015-2025

### Strategic Planning Process 2013-2015

The Strategic Planning Steering Committee<sup>1</sup> is pleased to present you with SCSU's 10-year strategic plan. This final version follows three previous drafts across two academic years that came before the campus community for feedback and vetting. Below, you may read a year-by-year digest of the Committee's work.

#### 2013-2014

- President Papazian charged the Steering Committee in October 2013 with developing a plan that would be appropriately visionary and realistically accomplishable.
- The Steering Committee organized itself into four work groups around four themes: *academic excellence, scholarship and innovation, engagement, and resources and infrastructure*.
- Each work group was co-chaired by one member of the faculty and one staff member.
- The Steering Committee conducted several months of primary and secondary research during fall 2013 and spring 2014 regarding the four themes. More than 60 individuals from across various campus constituencies assisted the Steering Committee.
- The Steering Committee created an initial framework of strategic goals and objectives in late spring 2014 and presented it during a Town Hall Meeting in fall 2014.
- During November and December 2014, the Steering Committee and the President conducted small-group meetings with a broad array of on-campus and off-campus constituents to collect feedback on the draft framework. Though not an exhaustive list, examples of the constituents who participated include the Faculty Senate, University Curriculum Forum, Graduate Council, Administrative Faculty Senate,

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<sup>1</sup> See appendix for Steering Committee Members

Student Government Association, Council of Academic Chairs, the Alumni and Foundation boards, and members of the local Chambers of Commerce.

#### 2014-2015

- The Steering Committee compiled and considered all community input in December 2014 and revised substantially the draft framework.
- Throughout the spring of 2015, members of the Faculty Academic Strategic Plan Committee<sup>2</sup> and the Steering Committee collaborated on developing and refining the action steps needed to achieve the objectives and goals outlined in the draft framework. This work was largely informed by the following recent University initiatives:
  - Student Success Task Force
  - Graduate Program Prioritization Review
  - President’s Commission on Climate and Inclusion;
- In early April 2015, the Steering Committee presented the revised draft to the campus community for a second round of feedback and vetting. Among those groups participating in small-group meetings during April 2015 were the Faculty Senate, Administrative Faculty Senate, Council of Academic Chairs, Graduate Council, Graduate Student Affairs Council, and Student Government Association.
- In early May 2015, the Steering Committee circulated the penultimate draft of the Strategic Plan to the campus community for anonymous feedback.
- Members of the Steering Committee considered all feedback received before creating this final document.
- Implementation of the plan begins July 1, 2015.

### Preamble

Southern Connecticut State University has a strong past and a bright future. As Southern embarks on a new era of excellence, it continues its commitment to intellectual rigor; creativity and innovation; community engagement; quality technological experiences; and a climate of civility, respect, and inclusion.

The next 10 years will be a time of exceptional development and change – a time during which Southern pledges the following:

- to provide exemplary, transformative, and accessible education;

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<sup>2</sup> See appendix for list of Faculty Academic Strategic Plan Committee

- to advance a university-wide climate and infrastructure that nurtures creativity and innovation;
- to promote community well-being, economic growth, and social justice by serving and leading in local and global communities;
- to steward the university's human, financial, technological, and physical resources forward in an ethical manner.

In Strategic Plan 2015-2025, we share our aspirations with the very clear understanding that Southern's outstanding faculty, staff, students, and partners make the difference. Together, we will collaborate in teaching and learning, research and creative activity, and local and global community activity for the public good.

#### Goal 1

*Provide exemplary, transformative, and accessible education in a student-centered environment.*

Southern is a comprehensive university dedicated to innovative teaching and to deep, broad, and powerful learning in the classroom and beyond. Southern will continue to build upon its strong foundation in the arts and sciences, professional disciplines, and enduring commitment to social justice. Effective collaborations within Southern energize various groups within our university, all of which play critical roles in supporting learning and the success of our undergraduate and graduate students. Faculty and staff cultivate minds and challenge students to reach their full potential. Southern promotes rigorous educational programs to provide opportunities for all students in the pursuit of knowledge, and helps those flourish who have not done so before. We value collaborative processes and student accountability in learning. Meaningfully engaged students are critical participants in their own education. Southern's transformative educational culture inspires the pursuit of intellectual, personal, and professional growth.

#### Objectives

- a. Be a recognized leader for teaching, learning, and student success.

##### Action Steps

1. Complete a fully operational Student Success Center.
2. Strengthen academic and career advisement.
3. Actively pursue innovative and emerging pedagogical practices to support the diverse learning needs and styles of students.
4. Increase academic experiential learning opportunities.
5. Support existing and encourage new experiences and opportunities to enhance students' intellectual, personal, and professional growth.
6. Enhance students' health and wellness.
7. Develop financial literacy with students, families, and advisers.
8. Maintain Southern's exemplary student-faculty ratio.
9. Explore, implement, and assess best practices to evaluate teaching effectiveness.
10. Enhance instructional design support for pedagogy to increase student achievement.
11. Enhance classroom and learning environments, including technological

capabilities, to enable faculty to deliver 21<sup>st</sup>-century learning experiences.

- b. Attract, retain, support, and recognize teacher-scholars and staff who demonstrate commitment to student and university excellence.

Action Steps

1. Provide reassigned time for new faculty.
2. Expand professional development for faculty and staff.
3. Expand and diversify our collective intellectual culture.
4. Enhance recognition practices for faculty and staff who are actively engaged in mentoring and other student-centered activities.
5. Improve the recruitment, transition, orientation, and development practices for faculty and staff.
6. Enhance support for and integration of part-time faculty and staff into the university community.

- c. Develop an enrollment management strategy that includes attracting and retaining high-achieving students who are academically prepared, while advancing the university's mission of educational access.

Action Steps

1. Expand the Honors College.
2. Create intellectual programs which appeal to high-achieving students.
3. Increase support for undergraduate and graduate student research and creative activity.
4. Competitively fund graduate assistantships and internships.
5. Expand outreach and recruitment to high-achieving high school and community college students.
6. Grow "Early College" programs in alignment with best recruitment practices.
7. Enhance bridge and access programs.
8. Tap new and emerging markets to build a diverse university community, including a larger international presence.
9. Leverage financial aid and scholarships to attract and retain students.
10. Increase merit-based scholarships to align with our aspirational peer institutions.

- d. Embrace diversity and nurture inclusivity to enable faculty, staff, and students to learn and live fully engaged in a global and multicultural society.

Action Steps

1. Advance the work of the President's Commission on Campus Climate and Inclusion.
2. Increase and support study abroad and other international educational experiences.
3. Develop domestic alternatives to study abroad that provide global awareness.
4. Increase international student enrollment and create a campus culture to assure success.
5. Increase and provide additional support to retain underrepresented faculty, staff, and students.

6. Create a campus cultural environment that embraces and supports all campus community members.
  7. Enhance social justice programming in support of our mission.
- e. Increase interdisciplinary and interdepartmental collaboration across the university.
- Action Steps
1. Expand innovative, collaborative, and interdisciplinary learning opportunities.
  2. Streamline and adjust policies and procedures to facilitate innovation and collaboration.
  3. Reward and support innovative and sustainable interdisciplinary activities.
  4. Create systems to address emerging campus issues and facilitate opportunities for communication and collaboration.
  5. Create a climate to facilitate collaboration across the university.
- f. Strategically review, strengthen, and enhance academic and co-curricular offerings.
- Action Steps
1. Create and implement a sustainable Academic Strategic Plan.
  2. Create and implement a sustainable Student Affairs Strategic Plan.
  3. Identify new program needs and opportunities.
  4. Align resources to support areas of distinction, where student needs and demands are greatest, and/or have capacity to grow.
  5. Broaden special academic sessions to provide a rich array of educational options for all students and courses to support students pursuing timely degree completion.
  6. Align all programs and policies with best practices.

## Goal 2

*Develop and sustain a university-wide climate and infrastructure that nurtures research, scholarship, creativity, and innovation.*

Southern will be known as an institution that encourages, supports, and celebrates innovative research, scholarship, creative activity, and entrepreneurial initiatives. We will clear the obstacles that block the pursuit of creativity and innovation through the creation of a campus infrastructure that supports and encourages these activities across the university. By actively fostering relationships throughout the campus and with private organizations, government agencies, and other institutions, Southern will create an environment in which creative ideas, scholarly pursuits, and entrepreneurial endeavors are nurtured and applauded.

## Objectives

- a. Create an organizational structure at the university that facilitates and supports all types of research, scholarship, creative activity, and innovation.

### Action Steps

1. Identify the units and structures that exist to facilitate and support all types of research, scholarship, creative activity, and innovation on campus.
  2. Identify and consider best practices and organizational structures at aspirational institutions that exist for this purpose.
  3. Establish a process or entity to recommend the new organizational structure.
  4. Establish and staff the new organizational structure.
  5. Introduce and integrate the new structure and processes into relevant units and resources at the university.
- b. Identify and foster opportunities for partnerships with external entities.
- Action Steps
1. Identify an individual to serve in the creation process who will act as liaison with relevant university entities charged with external relationships.
  2. Identify those individuals who have previously been successful in forming relationships with outside entities.
  3. Create database of existing and potential external partnerships.
  4. Recruit and retain faculty and staff who have experience at creating external partnerships.
  5. Establish a forum to train faculty and staff in the art of establishing partnerships.
- c. Become a recognized leader in best practices relative to research, scholarship, creative activity, and innovation.
- Action Steps
1. Examine peer institutions to determine best practices.
  2. Expand research, scholarship, and creativity activity support for faculty, including research-reassigned time and funding.
  3. Increase start-up funds and equipment for new faculty.
  4. Examine and restructure staffing to aid in grant writing and expertise in securing funding.
  5. Expand support for those with large, complex grants.
  6. Develop a system to manage the processes, interagency agreements, and policies that safeguard the intellectual property resulting from collaboration with external entities.
  7. Devote fundraising efforts and resources in the library to allow for greater access to journals and texts necessary for faculty.
  8. Provide clear guidelines for expectations regarding scholarship, research, and creative activity relative to the tenure and promotion process.
- d. Enhance recognition and reward structures to sustain a climate of creativity and innovation.
- Action Steps
1. Develop a process or entity to review and recommend additional reward structures.
  2. Fund newly created awards for outstanding research, creativity, and innovation.
  3. Develop processes for choosing award recipients.

4. Develop and implement a process to brand faculty and faculty-student creative activities and innovations.
  5. Develop and implement a remuneration process that feeds significant share of any profit for innovations and creative products back to the faculty for support of further creative and innovation activities.
- e. Support initiatives that foster hubs of intellectual activity and interdisciplinary and interdepartmental collaborations.

Action Steps

1. Develop “Centers of Intellectual Inquiry” in each of the academic schools and have faculty determine the mission and operation for interdisciplinary and interdepartmental collaborations both within the school and across to other academic schools.
  2. Develop competitive research assistantships at undergraduate and graduate levels to foster student-faculty intellectual engagement.
  3. Increase funding for the Faculty Creative Activity Grant and create seed grants to support research time and provide stipends for collaborative scholarly activity.
  4. Develop more support for participation in conferences and workshops on campus.
  5. Develop support for international interdisciplinary and interdepartmental collaborations between Southern faculty, staff, and students and potential global partners.
  6. Create on-campus physical spaces that are cyber-equipped, where members of the Southern community can gather to brainstorm, share creative activities, and exchange ideas.
- f. Institutionalize successful creative and entrepreneurial endeavors.

Action Steps

1. Provide professional development for faculty who aspire to develop and launch creative and entrepreneurial endeavors.
2. Identify and evaluate those processes and structures already in place that facilitate institutionalization of successful creative and entrepreneurial endeavors.
3. Develop new processes and structures to institutionalize successful creative and entrepreneurial endeavors.
4. Create pathways for ideas to grow, develop, and become sustainable.
5. Develop and sustain research centers and other centers of excellence.

Goal 3

*Engage with local and global communities through exemplary leadership and service to promote community well-being, economic growth, and social justice.*

Southern will make meaningful and measurable differences in regional, state, national, and international communities through innovative partnerships, academic programs, and experiences. A strong and continued commitment to social justice and service for the public good remains a top priority. Honoring its mission as a public university, Southern

is committed to enhancing the educational, political, environmental, economic, and health needs in the state of Connecticut and beyond.

### Objectives

- a. Become a recognized leader for best practices in supporting a culture of and infrastructure for local and global community engagement.

#### Action Steps

1. Establish a Center for Community Engagement that serves as the hub for advancing relationships between students, faculty, and staff and the external community to foster student learning, with an emphasis on service learning; advance community-engaged scholarship; and benefit community partners.
2. Develop courses university-wide and at all levels with curricular service-learning opportunities.
3. Recognize curricular experiences that include community engagement as valued in the work of faculty and students.
4. Implement a systematic process in order to foster existing and future opportunities for global community engagement.
5. Embrace multiple avenues for developing new community service and service learning experiences for students.
6. Demonstrate priority for community engagement through funding commitments.

- b. Develop and implement measures to determine the scope and effectiveness of SCSU's community engagement to inform the development of future initiatives.

#### Action Steps

1. Formalize a process to implement, track, report, and assess impact of all community engagement initiatives and partners.
2. Establish a community pipeline that includes a systematic process to identify the community needs, communicate those needs across campus, and collect ongoing feedback based on reports.
3. Develop an online database of community partnerships that provide service experiences for students.
4. Create a process for coordinating and tracking all services and facilities provided to the community.

- c. Develop innovative and comprehensive programs to cultivate a strong transition from student to alumnus(a) and create a culture of engaged alumni.

#### Action Steps

1. Enhance student initiatives that create awareness of and build interest in the Alumni Association with consideration for a student alumni association.
2. Increase opportunities for alumni to engage with the university.
3. Track and document student affiliations throughout their collegiate journey at SCSU, using the data to enhance communication with students as they become alumni and give them an opportunity to stay connected to various parts of the university.
4. Create unique opportunities for immediate engagement with new graduates.
5. Recognize and support SCSU/CSU intergenerational alumni families.

6. Recognize SCSU alumni-owned businesses.

d. Define, assess, and promote SCSU's impact on the economy of the state of Connecticut.

Action Steps

1. Establish a representative university work group to provide leadership and oversight of an economic impact analysis.
2. Initiate a process by which the economic impact of Southern on the greater New Haven region and the state of Connecticut is assessed.
3. Strategically share and market the results to increase understanding and raise awareness of how Southern contributes to the greater New Haven region and the state.
4. Set up an online platform for faculty, staff, students, and local and international experts to offer consulting services to local and international entities concerning doing businesses in Connecticut and abroad.

e. Identify and assess the impact of SCSU's service activities on members of the campus communities.

Action Steps

1. Develop systematic campus-wide assessment and feedback processes to measure the impact of community engagement on students, faculty, alumni, and the institution.
2. Create opportunities for students to reflect on, document, and share their learning resulting from community engagement opportunities.
3. Track and report total voluntary contributions raised and donations dispersed by recognized clubs and organizations.
4. Integrate community engagement with other institutional initiatives such as diversity and inclusion work and efforts aimed at student retention and success.
5. Create and brand a community service certificate program.

f. Leverage athletics, the arts, and other university events for increased visibility and engagement with alumni, the university, and regional communities.

Action Steps

1. Identify new opportunities to promote events and increase visibility using Southern's website, social media, and other means of communication.
2. Create alumni events that uniquely engage former student athletes.
3. Create a plan to increase Southern's presence in the community through representation on boards, civic organizations, and related activities.
4. Enhance and develop ways the community can use campus facilities that will create a stronger connection to Southern.
5. Expand opportunities to showcase athletics, arts, and other university entities on and off campus.

Goal 4

*Provide exemplary, ethical stewardship of human, financial, technological, and physical capital.*

Southern will build on its success and optimize its strong and diverse human, physical, technical, and financial networks and resources. Southern's commitment to its people, campus climate, processes, and products makes it an exceptional learning and work environment. We seek to honor and cultivate the key values of civility, respect, excellence, efficiency, collaboration, innovation, balance, and sustainability.

## Objectives

- a. Foster a culture of inclusion, support, and success for faculty, staff, and students.

### Action Steps

1. Evaluate long-standing and current processes and approaches that serve to positively impact a culture of respect and inclusion.
2. Support inclusion-building efforts with identified activities promoting dialogue and professional development.
3. Deliberately provide professional development and training opportunities for all university employees to improve and increase capabilities and build and maintain knowledge, skills, and motivation.
4. Expand opportunities for student employment, graduate assistantships, and other financial or work-based incentives to support student recruitment and success.
5. Define and promote health, wellness, and sustainable work-life balance.

- b. Transform the physical environment and infrastructure of the university and expand the university's position as a nationally recognized leader in sustainability.

### Action Steps

1. To reflect existing and projected campus needs, implement the new 10-year master plan, which considers visual character, space utilization, renovation of existing facilities and construction of new facilities.
2. Develop five- and 10-year plans for improvements to the university's infrastructure, taking into account the projected enrollment growth and expected innovations in energy systems, transportation, information technology, sustainability, and health and safety.
3. Expand upon and promote best practices in waste reduction and recycling.
4. Integrate LEED planning concepts into all aspects of the university's built environment and require all major new construction and renovation projects to be at least LEED silver certified. Every project will strive for a higher LEED certification/Net Zero and include the latest proven energy efficient systems into existing buildings, renovations, and new construction projects.
5. Develop a clear and comprehensive Facilities Use Plan, as well as plans for deferred maintenance and energy use, to optimize space utilization, and extend the life and energy efficiency of existing facilities while reducing the need for constructing new facilities.

6. Measure and verify direct and indirect greenhouse gas emissions and make reports available to the campus community and general public.
- c. Provide an accessible, seamless, state-of-the art digital experience for every member of the campus community.
- Action Steps
1. Undertake substantial improvements to the digital infrastructure, improving network capacity and performance and implementing new technology platforms to increase efficiencies.
  2. Improve the utilization of and expansion of instructional technology to better support teaching and learning.
  3. Expand and improve supports for understanding and use of technology: help desk 24/7 for students, faculty, and staff, including library support.
  4. Improve and make more efficient faculty access to, and use of, technological tools for research data collection, analysis, and reporting.
- d. Advance university-wide processes to maximize effectiveness and efficiency.
- Action Steps
1. Conduct an inventory or needs assessment to identify key processes, components, resource impacts, and personnel and stakeholders involved.
  2. Institute a system to crowdsource ideas for improving processes and reporting inefficiencies.
  3. Consider how to address human capital issues related to efficiency: faculty and staff professional development to increase knowledge of effective systems and practice; increases in technology use; models for best practice; training for job shadowing or sharing; and other professional development activities.
  4. Define and implement ways to employ technology for administrative processes as well as interpersonal interactions when appropriate and desirable.
  5. Develop systems for tracking progress.
  6. Develop and utilize a single university calendar.
- e. Build a climate and infrastructure that supports and increases the university's financial well-being.
1. Increase total enrollment to 12,500 by 2025.
  2. Develop and enhance enrollment predictive models, and academic program planning and delivery modes, for optimal resource utilization and institutional competitiveness.
  3. Develop creative approaches to encourage financial literacy, financial advising, and pursuit of alternative external resources for financing students' education and supporting the broader campus.
  4. Realign procedures and practices to provide better service to our mission without adding costs.
  5. Recognize that revenues will increasingly be based on performance outcomes.

6. Expand use of activity-based costing analyses as one of several ways to determine the appropriate allocation of resources.
- f. Maximize external financial support to keep Southern sustainable well into the future.

Action Steps

1. Increase awareness of and advocacy for the university, resulting in recognition of research, teaching, and learning, and service excellence.
2. Establish an appropriate university brand and market it effectively to all constituencies with consistent messaging across all platforms.
3. Broaden and deepen constituent engagement with the university, developing more meaningful relationships with alumni, friends, and students.
4. Expand philanthropic support to the university annually to support students, faculty, and core institutional priorities.
5. Build a high performing advancement organization, with first-rate talent, integrated infrastructure, and a highly collaborative culture.

## Appendix

### Strategic Planning Steering Committee

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### Faculty Academic Strategic Plan Committee

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