



Southern Connecticut State University

Southern 2015-2025

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 ten 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;
- 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 deep commitment to social justice. The seamless collaboration within Southern energizes the 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 students in the pursuit of knowledge, and helps those flourish who have not done so before. We value the collaborative process 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 to help students become tomorrow's leaders.

Objectives

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

Action Steps

1. Advance a culture of student-centeredness.
 2. Complete a fully operational Student Success Center.
 3. Transform academic advisement.
 4. Actively pursue innovative and emerging pedagogical practices to support the diverse learning needs and styles of students.
 5. Support existing and encourage new experiences and opportunities to enhance students' intellectual, personal and professional engagement and growth.
 6. Increase experiential learning opportunities.
 7. Grow internship and practical learning opportunities beyond SCSU.
 8. Provide clear expectations for members of the campus community.
 9. Maintain Southern's exemplary student FTE per FTE faculty ratio and equivalent median class size comparable to aspirational peer institutions.
 10. Explore best practices to evaluate teaching effectiveness.
 11. Enhance instructional design support for pedagogy to increase student achievement.
 12. Expand technological capabilities and classroom/learning environments-spaces infrastructures to enable faculty to deliver learning experiences appropriate to the 21st century.
- b. Attract, retain, support, and recognize teacher-scholars and staff who demonstrate commitment to student and university excellence.

Action Steps

1. Provide research-reassigned time for new faculty.
 2. Expand research, scholarship and creativity activity support for faculty.
 3. Promote New Haven's location and local and regional educational communities.
 4. Offer competitive initial salaries tied to market forces.
 5. Provide appropriate start-up funds & equipment.
 6. Expand and diversify our collective Intellectual culture.
 7. Promote work-life balance.
 8. Create greater sense of campus community.
 9. Enhance reward structures to support faculty and staff who are actively engaged in mentoring and student-centered activities.
 10. Improve the recruitment, transition, orientation, and development practices for faculty and staff.
- c. Attract high achieving students who are academically prepared, while advancing the university's mission of educational access.

Action Steps

1. Expand the Honors College.

2. Provide increased access to undergraduate and graduate student research/creative activity support.
 3. Expand outreach/recruitment to the high achieving H. S. and community college students.
 4. Grow 'Early College' programs in alignment with best recruitment practices.
 5. Enhance bridge/access programs.
 6. Tap new/emerging markets to build a diverse university community including a larger international presence.
 7. Leverage financial aid and scholarships in support of attracting students.
 8. 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. Continue work of the President's Commission on Diversity and Inclusion.
 2. Increase faculty, student and staff international educational experiences.
 3. Increase number of international students.
 4. Increase percentage of underrepresented faculty and staff.
 5. Create a campus cultural environment that embraces and supports all campus community members.
- 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 connective 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.
 6. Align academic 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 what units/structures exist to facilitate and support all types of research, scholarship, creative activity and innovation on campus.
2. Establish a task force to define the new organization structure.
3. Establish and staff the new organizational structure.

- b. Identify and foster opportunities for partnerships with external entities.

Action Steps

1. Identify individual(s) to serve as External Partnership Liaison(s) (EPL) with relevant university entities whose charge is to facilitate external relationships.
2. Determine what makes for successful partnerships between SCSU and external entities.
3. Develop processes to foster opportunities for partnerships with external entities.
4. Recruit and retain faculty and staff who have experience at creating external partnerships.
5. Develop a forum to train faculty and staff in the art of establishing partnerships, thus equipping them with leveraging power in forging external partnerships.
6. Develop a system to manage the processes, interagency agreements and policies that safeguard the intellectual property that is the result of collaboration with external entities.

- c. Become a recognized leader in best practices relative to research, scholarship, creative activity and innovation.

Action Steps

1. Examine sister universities and peer institutions to determine best practices.
2. Restructure and increase staffing to aid in grant writing and develop expertise in securing funding.
3. Devote fundraising efforts and resources in the library to allow for greater access to journals and texts necessary for faculty.
4. Provide clear guidelines for expectations regarding scholarship, research and creative activity relative to the tenure and promotion process.

5. Expand support to those who have large complex grants.
- d. Enhance recognition and reward structures to sustain a climate of creativity and innovation.
Action Steps
 1. Develop and implement a process to brand (provide prestige) to faculty and faculty-student creative activities and innovations.
 2. Develop and implement a process for copyright and patenting with safeguards for intellectual property rights.
 3. Develop and implement a remuneration process that feeds significant share of any profit for innovations/creative products back to the faculty for support of further creative activity/ innovation activities.
 4. Develop and implement creativity and innovation forums for professional presentation of creativity and innovations to various publics (CSU community, SCSU community, alumni, state legislators, general public).
 5. Develop and implement an awards structure within each academic school to reward faculty and faculty-student creativity and innovation
 6. Develop and implement a university-wide awards structure to reward faculty, staff, and student creativity and innovation.
 - e. Support initiatives that foster hubs of intellectual activity and interdisciplinary/ interdepartmental collaborations.

Action Steps

1. Develop “Centers of Intellectual Inquiry” in each of the academic schools and determine the mission and operation for interdisciplinary/ interdepartmental collaborations both within the school and across to other academic schools.
 2. Increase the number and amount of 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 faculty and student participation in conferences and workshops on campus.
 5. Develop support for international interdisciplinary/ interdepartmental collaborations between Southern faculty and students and potential global partners.
 6. Create on-campus physical spaces that are cyber equipped where members of the Southern community gather to brainstorm, share creative activities and exchange ideas.
- f. Develop processes that institutionalize successful creative and entrepreneurial endeavors.

Action Steps

1. Determine those processes already in place that support successful creative and entrepreneurial endeavors.

2. Meet with faculty, staff and student groups to determine what other processes might be useful in this area.
3. From the combined lists, determine best practices, and costs to implement.
4. Implement identified best practices.

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, advance community-engaged scholarship, and benefit community partners.
2. Recognize curricular experiences that include community engagement as valued in the work of faculty, staff and students.
3. Implement a systematic process in order to foster existing and future opportunities for global community engagement.
4. Embrace multiple avenues for developing new community service and service learning experiences for students.
5. 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 by which to implement, track, report and assess impact of all community engagement initiatives and partners (both individual and university supported through a center for community engagement).
2. Implement a systematic process in order to identify where the community needs are and communicate those needs back to campus, and collect ongoing feedback based on reports; establish a community pipeline.
3. Develop an on-line database of community partnerships that provide service experiences for students.

4. Create a process for tracking all services/facilities provided to the community (e.g., Student Center, Lyman Center, academic buildings, athletic fields).
- 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. Develop student initiatives that create awareness of and build interest in the Alumni Association with consideration for a student alumni association (e.g., Students Today, Alumni Tomorrow).
 2. Consider new opportunities for alumni to engage with the university (e.g., departmental involvement, free online classes, student mentorships, programs for children of alumni).
 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 (e.g., Young Alumni program, continuation of Southern email account, affiliation reunions).
 5. Recognize and support SCSU/CSU intergenerational alumni families.
 6. Recognize SCSU-owned businesses (award plaque and Owls flare).
- 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. Contract the services of an independent firm to assess the economic impact of Southern on the greater New Haven region and the state of Connecticut.
 3. Strategically share and market the results to increase understanding and raise awareness of how Southern contributes to greater New Haven region and the state.
 4. Set up an online platform for faculty, staff, students, local and international experts to offer consulting services to local and international businesses 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 leverage events and increase visibility using Southern's website, social media, and other communication mediums.
2. Create alumni events that uniquely engage former student athletes (Hall of Fame, national championship anniversaries).
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 in which the community can use campus facilities to create a stronger connection to Southern (e.g. children's programming in Buley Library, the Chinese School, swim lessons, open track, Lyman events).

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 combine to make 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 with diverse intellectual orientations and cultural backgrounds.

Action Steps

1. Conduct a needs assessment; determine perceived needs of the university in this area. Isolate current and desired conditions.
2. Evaluate long-standing and current processes and approaches that serve to positively impact a culture of inclusion.
3. Establish a task force of all stakeholders to identify and guide a range of efforts to foster a culture of inclusion, bridging "what is" to "what might be".
4. Support inclusion building efforts with identified activities promoting dialogue and professional development.
5. Deliberately provide professional development and training opportunities for ALL university employees to improve and increase capabilities and build and maintain knowledge, skills and motivation. (Include motivational techniques in supervisors to encourage staff beyond state employee

contractual expectations and create university-specific expectations that are aligned with the university mission.)

6. Expand opportunities for student employment, graduate assistantships, and other financial or work-based incentives to support student recruitment and success.

- b. Expand the University's position as a nationally recognized leader in sustainability, guiding other improvements for effective, efficient, and sustainable resources and systems.

Action Steps

1. Integrate LEED planning concepts into all aspects of the university's built environment and require all major new construction and renovation projects to be LEED silver certified, and include the latest proven energy efficient systems into existing buildings, renovations and new construction projects.
2. Develop a clear and comprehensive Facilities Use Plan, as well as plans for deferred maintenance to optimize space utilization and reduce the need for constructing new facilities.
3. Focus on campus community awareness, engagement, and capacity building.
4. Maintain best practices in waste reduction and recycling.
5. Measure and verify direct and indirect greenhouse gas emissions, provide sustainability reports, published and available to the campus community and general public.

- c. Transform the physical environment and infrastructure of the University.

Action Steps

1. Provide a new 15 year Master Plan to reflect existing and projected campus needs, which considers visual character, space utilization, and renovation of old facilities, and construction of new facilities.
2. Design and construct new building programs (e.g., the Health and Human Services building, the new recreation center, and the cogeneration facility).
3. Develop a 5 and 10 year plan for improvements to the university's infrastructure that takes into account the expected innovations in energy systems, transportation, information technology, sustainability, and health / safety.

- d. Provide an accessible, seamless, state-of-the art digital experience for every member of the campus community.

Action Steps

1. Undertake multiple efforts at infrastructure differentiation and improvement:
 - Separate residential services network from university network; expand capacity.
 - Develop and implement new technology architecture
 - Address infrastructure expansion, improvement, and hardening
 - Develop and implement "Internet 2"
 - Replace ERP

- Identify and implement a new technology administration platform
 - 2. Improve the utilization of and expansion of instructional technology to better support teaching and learning
 - 3. Expand and improve supports for human 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 (more collective access to software without departments having to buy individual seats, etc.)
- e. Advance university-wide processes to maximize effectiveness and efficiency.

Action Steps

- 1. Conduct an inventory/needs assessment to identify key processes, components, resource impacts, and personnel and stakeholders involved.
 - 2. Institute an anonymous efficiency “hot line” to crowd source ideas for improving processes and reporting on inefficiencies.
 - 3. Consider how to address human capital issues related to efficiency: faculty/staff professional development to increase knowledge of effective systems and practice, increases in technology use, models for practice, job shadowing/sharing for training, and other professional development.
 - 4. Define and implement ways to employ technology for administrative processes as well as interpersonal interactions when appropriate/desirable.
 - 5. Develop systems for tracking progress.
 - 6. Review calendar of activities and meetings to see if these can be streamlined and optimize faculty/staff efficiency.
 - 7. Develop a university calendar.
- f. 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 /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 with students, families, academic counselors, other counselors/advisors, bridge programs, pre-attendance, First-Year Experience programs.
 - 4. Develop creative approaches to encourage financial literacy, financial advising, and pursuit of alternative external resources for financing students’ education and supporting the broader campus.
 - 5. Recognize that appropriations will be based on performance outcomes (i.e., student success) not inputs (i.e., new/continuing enrollment) and understand the impact on resource allocation.
 - 6. Expand use of the Activity Based Cost Model. (a costing methodology that identifies activities in an organization and assigns the cost of each activity with resources to all products and services according to the actual consumption by each.)
 - 7. Realign procedures/practices to provide better service to our mission without adding costs.