



Southern Connecticut State University

A VISION FOR SOUTHERN

President Joe Bertolino • March, 2017

These are challenging times for Southern Connecticut State University and public higher education in general. But such times also present great opportunity, when proactive institutions re-define themselves in ways that others fail to do, and become leaders among their peers.

Southern can take this vital step by drawing on the talents of our community, forming strong coalitions with on- and off-campus partners and focusing on both access and excellence.

We will re-dedicate ourselves to student success, providing the mentoring and guidance to complement exemplary teaching and research and ensure that a Southern degree is an attainable goal.

We will form closer ties with our feeder community colleges, providing a smoother transition for transfer students and better preparation before they come to Southern.

We will collaborate with area school systems to help close the achievement gap and we will work to diversify our revenue sources.

We will develop new enterprise centers for professional studies and continuing education; and reinvigorate our graduate programs to meet the needs of the economy and the schedules of today's working professionals.

And, we will expand Southern's reach as a regional university, increasing our presence both physically and visibly in Bridgeport, Fairfield and throughout the southern part of the state.

As we move forward, we will adhere to the following foundational principles:

Quality: a commitment to student learning and academic excellence, drawing on exemplary teaching, innovative research, creative activity and entrepreneurial initiatives.

Access: a commitment to ensuring that students from all backgrounds have the opportunity to pursue a college degree, on a path that is clearly defined and obstacle-free.

Responsiveness: a commitment to developing programs and providing the knowledge and skills that will give our graduates a practical and intellectual toolkit for success in Connecticut's new economy.

Location: a commitment to empowerment and engagement of the off-campus community, drawing on the challenges and opportunities of an urban setting and Connecticut's most culturally vibrant city.

Diversity: a commitment to social justice, embracing diversity and fostering inclusivity to enable faculty, staff and students to learn and work in a welcoming and supportive environment.

Affordability: a commitment to increasing resources of private support, reducing the number of students unable to complete their education due to a lack of financial resources.

As a result, Southern will become:

- The flagship institution of the Connecticut State University System.
- The Social Justice University of the State of Connecticut.
- The regional higher education institution of choice for students and community partners.

The following short- and long-term goals will be pursued to realize this vision:

Short-Term: (1 to 5 years)

- Stabilize enrollment by increasing retention and graduation rates.
- Improve all aspects of service delivery.
- Revitalize the curriculum through innovation.
- Implement a new model for undergraduate advising that creates a more consistent, supportive, quality advising experience for all Southern students.
- Streamline curricular delivery, with an emphasis on decreasing time to graduation.
- Grow both non-traditional and international student populations.
- Update, prioritize and adjust the goals of the Strategic Plan.
- Raise the institution's profile and expand public-private partnerships.
- Improve all technology platforms, including the website.
- Balance the budget and create new forms of revenue (Professional Studies).
- Be classified as a Hispanic Serving Institution – reflecting the region's changing population demographics.

Long-Term: (5 to 10 years)

- Launch a capital campaign and increase annual fund raising levels.
- Double scholarship dollars and create more endowed professorships.
- Leverage the former Gateway property on Long Wharf property to develop Fitch Street to Westville.
- Build new Schools of Business, Health and Human Services and the Strong Communications Magnet Lab School.
- Explore a new home for Fine and Performing Arts.
- Eliminate all temporary buildings.
- Renovate Morrill, Jennings and Davis halls.
- Build a new dining hall, police station, health and counseling center and field house.
- Be classified as a Minority Serving Institution: again reflecting changing demographics.

