



Strategic Plan PROCESS REPORT

August 2020



A word cloud centered on the word "Compassion". The word "Compassion" is the largest and most prominent, written in a teal color. Surrounding it are several other words in various sizes and colors: "Transparent" (orange), "Input" (orange), "Engaging" (red), "Respect" (dark blue), "Positivity" (green), "Reflection" (purple), "Excellence" (dark blue), "Innovation" (small, dark blue), "Stewardship" (small, dark blue), "Integrity" (dark blue), and "Inclusion" (small, dark blue). The words are arranged in a roughly circular pattern around the central word.

Engaging
Transparent Input
Compassion
Respect Positivity
Reflection
Excellence
Innovation
Stewardship
Integrity
Inclusion

This report describes the comprehensive process that Southeast Community College used to develop the 2020-2024 Strategic Plan; summarizes the data utilized to develop the plan’s goals and objectives; provides the context for decisions to retain, modify, or add a new goal or objective; and outlines the roles of the Board of Governors and the Higher Learning Commission (HLC).



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Letter from the President

Southeast Community College is committed to data-informed strategic planning to effectively navigate all aspects of the institution and to proactively meet the needs of our students, employers, and communities. The 2015-2019 Strategic Plan, which represented SCC's first institutional-level strategic plan, served as the catalyst for the successful navigation of several transformative improvements (noted on the following page). SCC is poised to continue this momentum with the launching of its 2020-2024 Strategic Plan.

The College's Administrative Director of Planning and Accreditation coordinated the efforts of the Strategic Planning Team throughout the process. The team consisted of faculty, staff, and administrators from all areas of the College. SCC's Administrative Team worked in collaboration with the Strategic Planning Team to outline divisional priorities and the College's general strategic direction over the next five years.

The strategic planning process was carried out in the spirit of Goal 9, which seeks to maximize a positive and engaging organizational climate by encouraging input, reflective and transparent communication, and respect toward the views and ideas of others. I want to thank everyone who participated in this collaborative, dynamic, and empowering process. I greatly appreciate the dedication and focus of the Strategic Planning Team, the Administrative Team, the Board of Governors, and faculty, staff, and community members for their engagement in the process.

Southeast Community College will continue its incredible transformation as a direct result of the time and effort invested into its strategic planning process, which is an ideal example of the power, inclusivity, and thoughtfulness of effective shared governance.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Miller". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized initial "P" and "M".

Major Initiatives 2015-2019

Developed and implemented **2015-19 Strategic Plan**

Developed first **Facilities Master Plan**

Established and began operation of **six Learning Centers**

Planned and implemented **calendar conversion** from quarters to semesters

Established **14 new academic programs**

Developed and implemented **processes to track and manage enrollment**

Designed, received approval for, and began implementation of **Quality Initiative**

Submitted **accreditation status** to the Higher Learning Commission

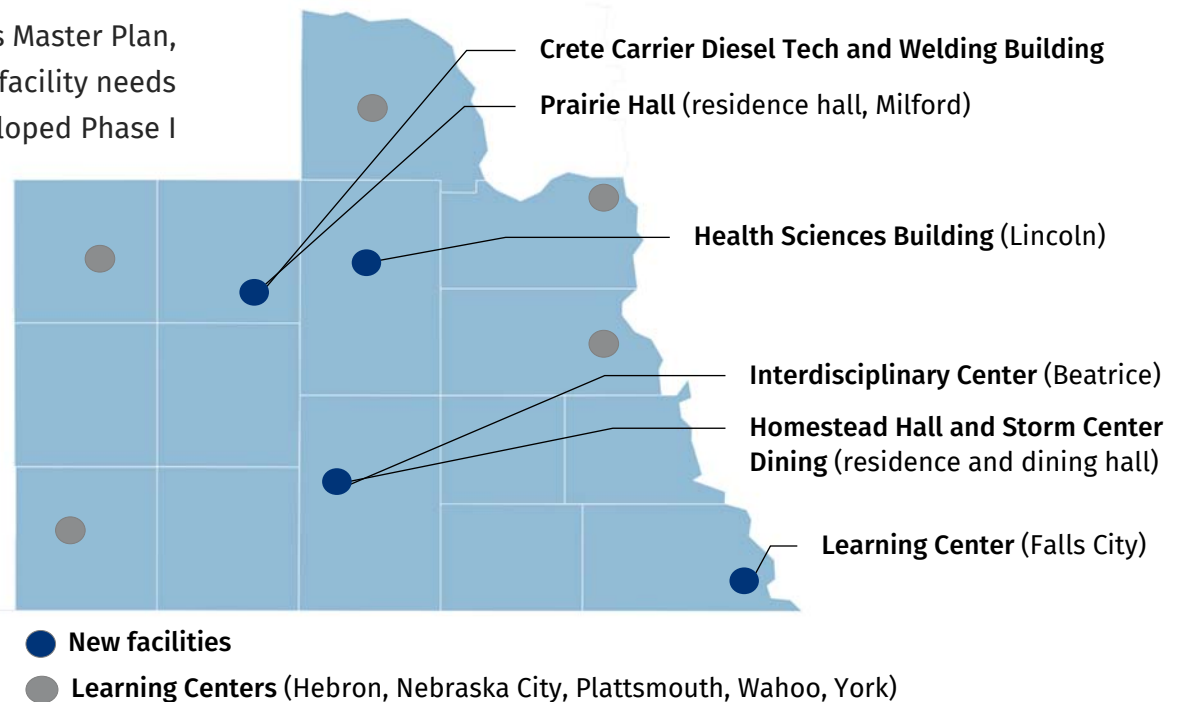
Designed and are nearing completion of **Phase I Facilities Master Plan Projects**

Identified and are planning **additional facilities projects**

New Facilities 2015-2019

Following Board approval of the Facilities Master Plan, Southeast Community College reviewed all facility needs across the 15-county service area and developed Phase I

of a construction plan. This phase included a new Learning Center in Falls City, along with a new building on each campus designed to meet the primary needs of that location. The projects listed here have been completed or are nearing completion. In addition, SCC has leased facilities in five additional counties to serve as new Learning Centers. Project planning for additional facilities is underway.



Strategic Planning Timeline

Building on the successes of the 2015-2019 Strategic Plan, Southeast Community College began planning for the next five-year cycle in late 2018. This planning process encompassed a wide array of planning activities and key stakeholders. This timeline outlines the major milestones in the development of the 2020-2024 Strategic Plan.



Comprehensive Environmental Scan

The Office of Institutional Research conducted a comprehensive scan of internal and external trends that impact SCC/higher education. These data were used throughout all steps of the planning process, which resulted in data-driven goals and objectives. The types of data included enrollment, student success, trends in programming, facilities, human resources/demographics, state and national trends, financial data, accreditation, student and employee climate, and student engagement.

Community forums in 15-county service area

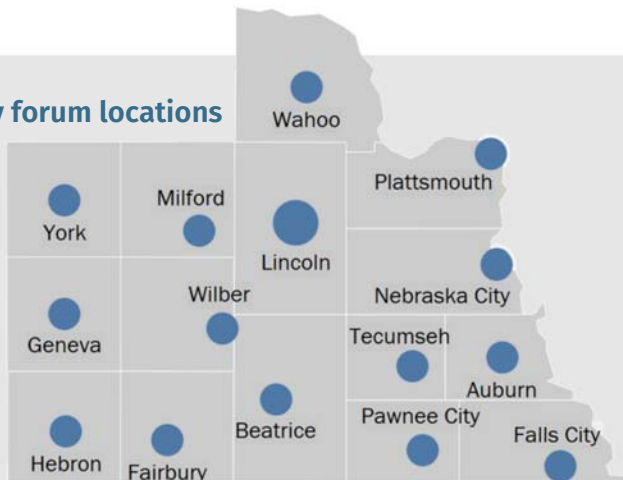
President Illich held 16 community forums throughout the 15-county service area to update constituents on the state of the College and to discuss community needs. A number of the service area forums were held at the new Learning Centers.

[More on page 8.](#)

Internal forums

The Office of Institutional Research conducted 30 open forums with all divisions and offices across the College. The presentations included results from the environmental scan and Strategic Plan 2015-19 Progress Report. Results were summarized and reviewed by the Strategic Planning Team, and were incorporated into recommendations for modifications to the new strategic plan. [More on page 9.](#)

Community forum locations



Internal forum groups

- Administrative Services
- Beatrice Campus
- Beatrice Student Affairs
- Beatrice Physical Plant
- Board of Governors
- CAT Team
- Human Resources
- Information Technology
- Lincoln Campus
- Lincoln Physical Plant

- Lincoln Student Affairs (2)
- Lincoln Student Senate
- Milford Campus
- Milford Physical Plant
- Milford Student Affairs
- Milford Student Senate
- Other Area Office
- Instruction:*
- Agriculture
- Arts & Sciences - Beatrice

- Arts & Sciences – Lincoln (2)
- Business
- Community Services
- Construction/Electronics/CIT/Manufacturing
- Continuing Education
- Health Sciences
- Learning Centers
- SENCAP/TCA
- Transportation and Welding

Feedback on drafted goals and objectives

Work sessions and presentations to the Board of Governors and Administrative Team to review drafts of goals and objectives.

Administrative Team approval

Board of Governors review and approval

Strategic Planning Team

Attended internal and external forum and listening sessions. Met over a nine-month period to review environmental scanning data to revise SCC’s mission and recommend goals and objectives for the new strategic plan. Administrative Team members presented at many of the meetings to talk about current trends and future plans for each of the College's operational areas. [More on pages 10-11.](#)

Adoption of 2020-2024 Strategic Plan: Mission, Vision, Values, and Strategic Goals and Objectives

●

Mission Action Plan (MAP) goals developed

Notify HLC of substantive change

Changes to mission were communicated to the Higher Learning Commission.

Final draft of new strategic plan available for all employees to begin the 2020-2021 academic year



Community forums

In spring 2019, President Illich held 16 open community forums—one in each county within the SCC service area except Lancaster County, where two were held. The three campus directors, several members of the Strategic Planning Team, Office of Institutional Research, and the Board of Governors also attended several of the forums.

A total of 102 people attended the forums. At each session, Dr. Illich gave a presentation that covered:

- Goals of strategic planning
- Feedback received during 2015 forums
- Strategic achievements during 2015-2019
- Establishment of Learning Centers
- Phase I facilities and residence halls
- Improvements to existing facilities
- Semester calendar conversion
- Improved communication/marketing
- New logo and branding

Following the presentations, Dr. Illich answered questions and gathered feedback from community members. Though feedback at the different locations varied according to local concerns, some of the topics raised were:

- SCC partnering with local businesses to offer apprenticeships
- The need for better pathways to state four-year institutions
- The need for shorter-term certifications that could ladder up to a degree
- The need for updated agriculture facilities
- A desire for more communication from SCC to its constituent communities
- Building on the substantial growth at the Learning Centers
- Retraining retirees for post-retirement
- Partnering with towns to help entice new businesses into rural areas
- Increasing dual-credit opportunities throughout the service area



Internal forums

In spring 2019, SCC's Office of Institutional Research organized a series of forums to engage employees from all divisions and departments across the College in the planning process. **The College held 30 forums**, including multiple forums on each campus and a videoconference with the Learning Center coordinators.

More than 700 members of the SCC community participated, including employees from all instructional and non-instructional areas and members of the SCC student senates. This level of input demonstrates strong engagement among faculty and staff and indicates that progress is being made on SCC's current strategic goals of improving communication and encouraging input.

In each forum, the facilitator presented an overview of key data from the environmental scan and asked for feedback on the College's progress in relation to the 2015-2019 Strategic Plan and input for the 2020-2024 Strategic Plan.

After the presentation, forum participants provided written responses to the following three questions:

- What should SCC's top priorities be for the next five years?
- Based on the data presented, where has SCC made progress in the last four years?
- Based on the data presented, where does SCC need to improve?

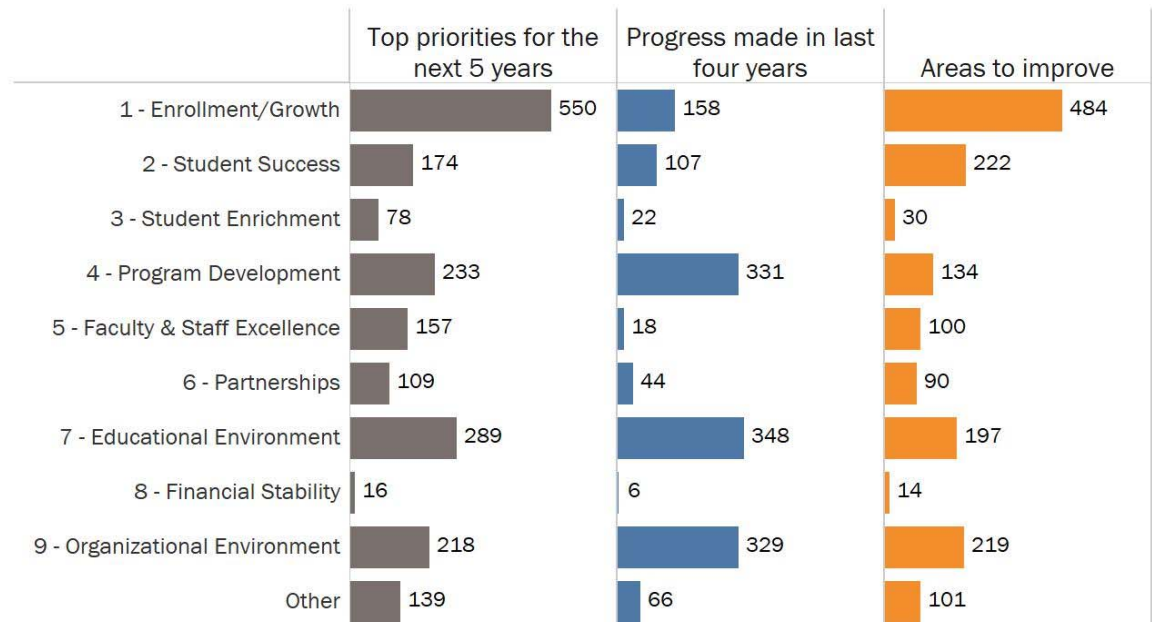
All written comments provided in the forums were coded and categorized by goal and objective (or by theme if it did not fit within the 2015-2019 Strategic Plan's goals or objectives).

The collected responses largely aligned with quantitative data and validated

college-wide efforts over the last four years. The responses also sparked ideas for new and modified goals in the 2020-2024 Strategic Plan. For example, the creation of a new goal (Goal 3) was prompted by a number comments about marketing and communications. Similarly, Objective 4.8 was established partly in response to a number of comments about increasing access through remote learning options.

The image below shows the number of comments received for each question broken out by the related 2015-2019 strategic goal.

Number of comments by topic and goal



Charting SCC's future with the Strategic Planning Team

A dynamic and engaged group of SCC employees met over the course of nine months to review environmental scanning data, revise SCC's mission statement, and recommend goals and objectives for the new strategic plan.

The Team included a wide representation of faculty, staff, and administrators from all campuses and all functional areas of the College. Ex-officio members attended meetings to provide additional context and to answer questions from team members.



The pillar words from Objective 9.6 (compassion, input, positivity, reflection, respect, and transparency) guided all team activities and interactions. During each of the first phase of meetings, a member of the Administrative Team provided an overview of current trends and future plans from their operational area of the College. These presentations sparked conversations about progress that has been made and opportunities for future improvement. Each meeting was full of engaged dialogue and critical self-reflection.

In addition, the Team reflected on the following questions to help Dr. Illich develop a Vision Statement, which was a new addition to the 2020-2024 plan: What do we see in five years as a result of SCC's strategic plan? What does success look like? What is the ultimate goal we'd like to accomplish through the strategic plan?

Throughout the entire process there was a high level of consensus among the Strategic Planning Team: truly a strong example of a collaborative governance structure in action.

Strategic Planning Team Members

Shawna Herwick (chair) *Administrative Director of Planning and Accreditation*

Jacob Bonander *Speech Instructor*

Marco Bravo *Spanish Instructor*

Amy Chesley *Dean of Continuing Education*

Kasey Edwardson *Program Director, Healthcare Services*

Marguerite Himmelberg *Senior Director of Workforce Solutions*

Kat Kreikemeier *Administrative Director of Admissions*

Kate Loden *Department Chair, English*

Jessica Murry *Career Counselor*

Mike Pegram *Dean of Student Enrollment*

Carolee Ritter *Dean of Arts & Sciences*

Kris Ruiz *Program Director, Practical Nursing*

Jessica Schuster *Administrative Assistant*

Terry Stutzman *Information Systems Technician*

Stefanie Svoboda *Associate Dean of Virtual Learning*

Kirby Taylor *Program Director, Precision Machining and Automation Technology*

Ex-officio members

Sabrina Schinstock (staff) *Administrative Assistant*

Rick Blessen *Director of Advancement*

Rebecca Carr *Associate Director, Institutional Research*

Aaron Epps *Director of Facilities*

Robin Moore *Administrative Director, Institutional Research and Effectiveness*

Katy Novak *Assistant to the President*

Jill Wightman *Qualitative Analyst, Institutional Research*

How the Team did its work: Goal by goal

Most of the rest of this report provides an overview of the following content for each goal in the new plan:

- **primary evidence considered by the Team,**
- **summary of progress made since the 2015-2019 strategic plan,**
- **primary topics that the Team discussed,**
- **recommendations for changes for the new strategic plan from the Team.**

The full 2020-2024 Strategic Plan can be found at <https://www.southeast.edu/strategicplanning>





Goal 1. Enrollment Growth

SCC continues to prioritize creating enrollment growth, and the 2020-2024 Strategic Plan brings an enhanced focus to increasing access to SCC and its educational pathways.

Though many areas of the country are struggling with a stable or decreasing number of traditional college-aged students, data from Center for Public Affairs Research at the University of Nebraska at Omaha indicates that SCC’s service area can expect a growing population among this age group. Maximizing access for these students, as well as for returning adult students, is an opportunity for growth at SCC.

During its work, the Strategic Planning Team concluded that SCC has made tremendous strides in the last five years on the availability of enrollment data. As one major initiative, the College implemented a data-driven enrollment management model that centralizes the building of undergraduate course offerings and focuses on meeting student demand.

The population for people aged 15-24 in the SCC service area

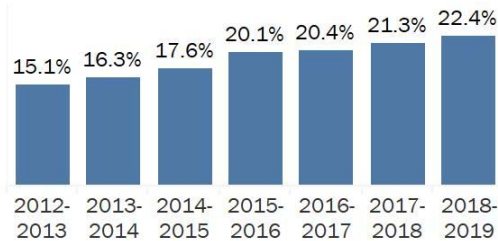
between 2020 and 2025. is projected to grow by:

6.7%

Diverse and underserved populations

The 2015-2019 Strategic Plan included multiple objectives about enrollment growth for specific diverse and underserved student populations. The College has made progress with many of these populations. In recent years, the percent of SCC’s undergraduate enrollment, which is more diverse than the service area, has grown considerably.

Percent of undergraduate enrollment that is minority



The Strategic Planning Team recommended that these efforts continue in the new plan, but that related objectives be consolidated into a single objective.

In addition, the 2020-2024 Strategic Plan includes a new objective to increase enrollment of female students in male-dominated STEM programs. This objective is tied to an agreement between the College and the Office of Civil Rights on this topic.

Barriers to enrollment

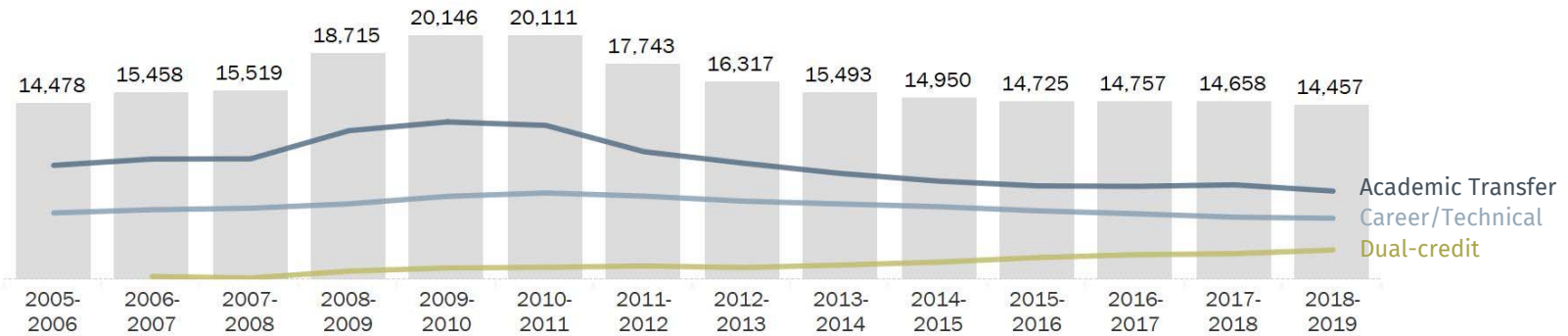
Many participants in the internal forums commented that SCC should remove various structural barriers to enrollment. For example, unlike all other Nebraska community colleges, SCC admits students to individual programs of study rather than to the College generally. SCC also lacks a college-wide standard for course placement test scores. The lack of streamlined, college-wide processes and requirements create confusion for students and are a barrier to enrollment.

SCC’s advising processes have also created barriers for incoming students. Previously, SCC had a piecemeal, program-specific approach to advising students who had been accepted rather than systematic advising at the college level. This approach began changing in fall 2018 with the pilot and planned expansion of a new college-wide advising model. While advising is targeted in Goal 2, it also is an important component of an integrated enrollment process that is focused on student success.

The 2020-2024 Strategic Plan highlights the following ideas for improving access:

- Simplify the enrollment process through improved institutional-level enrollment processes.

Undergraduate enrollment by student type



- Integrate college-wide recruiting and financial aid processes for a seamless, open-access enrollment experience.

Enrollment growth

The 2020-2024 Strategic Plan includes objectives to increase enrollment in career/technical, academic transfer, and dual-credit programs.

As shown above, after a large increase following the 2008 recession and a decline after 2010-2011, which was similar to that of other Nebraska community colleges, overall enrollment at SCC has stabilized in recent years while enrollment and dual-credit programs has grown by large percentages. (A trend of SENCAP and TCA enrollment is on page 19.)

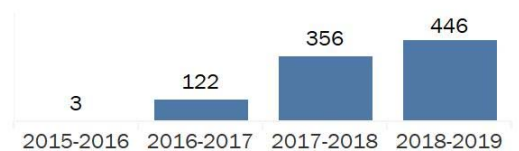
Given the large number of students at the peak in 2009-2010, it is clear that SCC has capacity to increase enrollment. Looking forward, the College expects that the addition of new facilities, renovation of existing spaces, and the shift to a semester calendar will contribute to higher enrollments.

Expansion of programming

The previous strategic plan included an objective to expand program and continuing education opportunities, especially at satellites and/or learning centers. As a result, the College opened six learning centers across the service area and generated a substantial increase both in the number of sections offered and in total enrollment. (A map of the Learning Centers is available on page 5.)

The new strategic plan continues to emphasize expanded access to non-credit educational opportunities that meet community and employer needs through enhanced programmatic agility.

Number of sections held at Learning Centers



Total enrollment at Learning Centers



Goal 2. Student Success

The Strategic Planning Team recommended combining the ‘Student Success’ and ‘Student Enrichment’ goals for the 2020-2024 Strategic Plan in order to focus on developing the whole student and to emphasize the importance of student participation in campus life opportunities as important elements in student success.

Retention, graduation, and transfer rates

As shown below, SCC’s graduation and transfer rates are lower compared to those of other Nebraska community colleges. The new strategic plan continues to prioritize improving the these indicators of student success through multiple initiatives.

Graduation and transfer rates for Nebraska colleges, 2017

	Graduation Rate	Transfer Rate	Graduation Transfer R..
Northeast	55%	13%	68%
Central	40%	17%	57%
Mid-Plains	35%	22%	57%
Western	31%	21%	52%
Southeast	31%	17%	47%
Metro	16%	20%	35%

Scope of "student success" in the plan includes:

- Academic performance and course grades
- Learning outcomes
- Research opportunities, academic honors
- Participation in student activities
- Personal enrichment
- Co-curricular activities
- Cultural and arts understanding
- Participation in athletics
- Supporting physical and psychological health
- Development of personal and professional relationships
- Retention, graduation, transfer
- Placement in related field
- Success in workplace

Co-curricular programming

The new plan recognizes the need for formal co-curricular programming and assessment of the learning outcomes associated with it. This objective addresses HLC’s Criteria for Accreditation and builds on processes already underway at the institutional level.

Resiliency and emotional intelligence

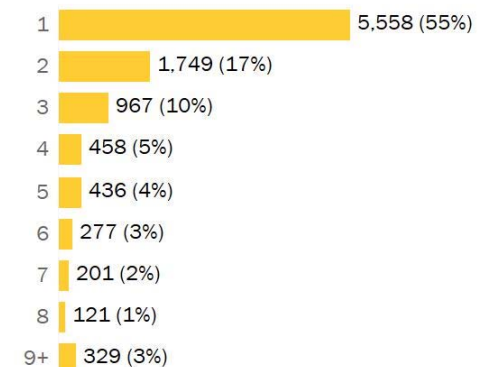
The 2020-2024 plan includes a new objective focused on improving students’ ability to overcome challenges through enhanced emotional intelligence and resiliency skills, which is tied to SCC’s Quality Initiative. (See following page.)

The College decided to focus its initiative on student resilience and emotional intelligence following a study of the factors that contribute to students receiving failing grades in credit courses at SCC and the completion or transfer outcomes of those students who received failing grades. (The full study is available at <https://bit.ly/38zd9sR>.)

47% of students received a failing grade during their time at SCC.

Term sequence in which students received their first 'F'

Number (and percent) of those who received an 'F'



SCC's Quality Initiative: The Pillar Project

In the Higher Learning Commission's Open Pathway for accreditation, each institution is required to develop a Quality Initiative as an integral part of its re-accreditation. The Pillar Project is SCC's Quality Initiative.

The purpose of the Pillar Project is to improve retention and completion by helping new students acquire and enhance academic resiliency skills to assist in the navigation of potential obstacles.

As shown on the previous page, a comprehensive five-year cohort analysis revealed that nearly half of students received a failing grade while attending SCC and more than half of these students received their first failing grade during their first term. Ultimately, these students end up with lower retention and completion rates. (Details at <https://bit.ly/38zd9sR>)

The Pillar Project focuses on three strategies to promote and reinforce academic resiliency skills among new students throughout all phases of their first-year experience, including admissions, advising, and early coursework.

- **Strategy #1:** Comprehensive professional development training on academic resiliency for faculty, advisors, and Student Affairs staff who have significant and frequent interactions with new students.
- **Strategy #2:** Engaged learning activities embedded into gateway courses that have the highest number of failing grades. Faculty teaching these courses will embed activities that will engage students in applying academic resiliency skills to facilitate learning of course content.
- **Strategy #3:** Implementation of a software solution, CRM Advise, to allow faculty, advisors, and other Student Affairs staff to utilize analytics to identify at-risk students based on a range of customized qualitative and quantitative parameters. Staff will utilize data to promote understanding and acceptance of the importance of academic resiliency.

Student support services

The new strategic plan brings a stronger focus to improving and expanding academic and student support services by specifying the need to strengthen College and program advising and to enhance Student Affairs programming.

Achievements of the 2015-2019 Strategic Plan provided a foundation for success in this area. Student Affairs has restructured its division and established several new positions. Most notably, the new position of Administrative Director of Advising will centralize all advising services, and the addition of a full-time director for the Counseling and Assistance Program for Students (CAPS) program will allow for its expansion.

However, a variety of data — including results from multiple student surveys, national data on staffing levels, and a “journey mapping” exercise to better understand the barriers in navigating student services — highlighted the need for further improvement.

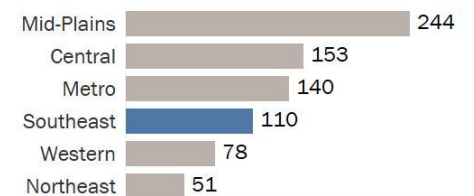
For example, the benchmark score at SCC for *Support for Students* from the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) is consistently lower than other Nebraska community colleges.

CCSSE benchmark score for *Support for Students* among Nebraska colleges



In addition, based on reporting available from the U.S. Department of Education, SCC has fewer student and academic affairs staff than most other Nebraska colleges, especially for its size.

Headcount of student and academic affairs staff among Nebraska Colleges 2017



Goal 3. Communication and Public Awareness

The College elevated its focus on improving communication and public awareness from objectives in the 2015-2019 Strategic Plan to a new goal in the 2020-2024 Strategic Plan.

The topics of marketing, recruitment, and improved communication, both within the College and to external constituencies, were common themes in written responses in employee surveys administered in 2015 and 2017, as well as in the internal and community forums conducted in 2019.

In the internal forums, participants were asked to provide their thoughts on SCC's top priorities for 2020-2024. The figure below shows the number of comments about enrollment growth priorities, categorized by objective from

Number of comments about top priorities related to Goal 1 (enrollment growth) by objective



the 2015-2019 plan. By far, the largest number of responses were related to Objective 1.9, which was *“Enhance and expand image and awareness of the College’s programs and services through innovative, comprehensive, and dynamic marketing and promotion strategies.”*

New logo and brand identity

SCC hired Firespring to boost its image and marketing efforts. Using multiple sources of information, Firespring developed a new logo and a comprehensive marketing and branding strategy, which were rolled out in 2019.

The brand identity strategy was built with two overall goals in mind:

- Increase enrollment among high school and adult students.
- Establish Southeast Community College’s new brand position as an inclusive and innovative thought leader in the community.

Communication with students

Drawing on the work by Firespring, as well as internal assessment and improvement processes in the Student Affairs division, a number of efforts are

underway to streamline and improve communications with prospective and current students in order to improve awareness and engagement.

Communication within the College

Another topic that emerged from the employee surveys and internal forums was the need for improved communication within the College. The strongest themes were: improved communication from administrators; more opportunities to provide input and participate in decision-making; and expanded communication and collaboration across departments, divisions, and campuses. These themes were incorporated into this new goal.

Public awareness

Community forums and other feedback indicated a need to enhance public awareness of SCC and its strategic direction among its constituent communities. The College added new objectives about improved communication with strategic partners: industry, community organizations, governing entities, economic development entities, and alumni.



Goal 4. Programming and Development

The College will continue to prioritize program development and expansion of course offerings within the new plan.

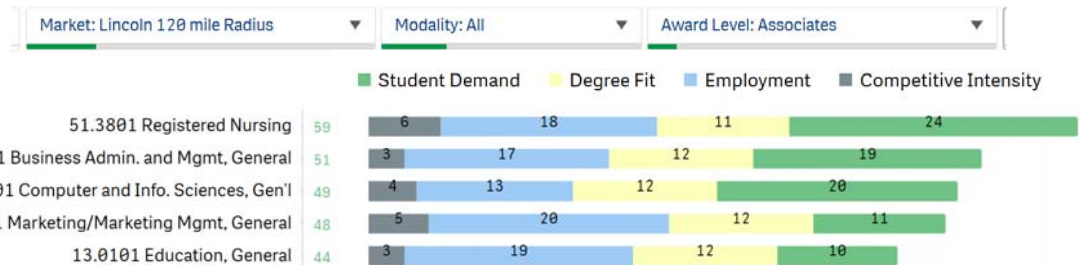
Program development

Under the 2015-2019 Strategic Plan, SCC made significant progress in improving its market research capacity to assess demand for existing and new career programs. SCC established the position of Vice President for Program Development, which was added to the portfolio of the Beatrice Campus Director, to allow for more proactive development of new programs that will meet student and employer demand.

New programs since 2015

- Academic Transfer (in Milford) AA AS
- Adult & Juvenile Services & Corrections AAS
- Business Communications AA
- Dietary Manager Certificate
- Dental Assisting AAS
- Health Care Services Certificate
- Health Sciences AS
- Horticulture & Turfgrass Management AAS
- Law Enforcement & Homeland Security AAS
- Livestock Management AAS
- Plumbing Technology Diploma
- Precision Agriculture Certificate
- Surgical First Assist Certificate
- Technical Skills Instructor AOS

Example data from Gray Associates



The College has contracted with Gray Associates, a higher education consulting firm, to help identify the best programs, serve our geographic market, grow student enrollment, and allocate resources to existing programs. This data-driven approach will help SCC to fulfill its mission.

Expanded offerings

One new objective is the expansion of online, hybrid, and other delivery options for credit, non-credit, and customized training courses. New technologies such as Zoom and iPad-based telepresence robots have played a role in driving this expansion.

The need for this expansion was highlighted in the feedback from the internal forums, with many participants indicating that flexible and remote learning opportunities are a priority for meeting the needs of adult learners.

Data show the need for delivering career education in a variety of alternate forms, such as specialized degrees, micro-credentialing,

competency-based education (CBE), and apprenticeships.

Participants in both the internal and community forums identified that apprenticeships should be a priority for the College. In addition, Gov. Pete Ricketts, the Nebraska Department of Labor, and the U.S. Department of Education have expressed a desire to expand the number of apprenticeships.

Curriculum alignment

SCC considers the strengthening of curriculum alignment with the skills, knowledge, and abilities required for professional success to be a continuing priority. SCC's Workforce Leadership Teams, which have replaced Advisory Teams due to a legislative change, will contribute to SCC's efforts to align curricula with job skills.

In addition, the College will improve the alignment between program curricula with four-year colleges and universities to help ensure successful transfer of SCC students and to expand articulation agreements.

Goal 5. Employee Excellence

The 2020-2024 Strategic Plan continues to promote excellence, innovation, and engagement among employees.

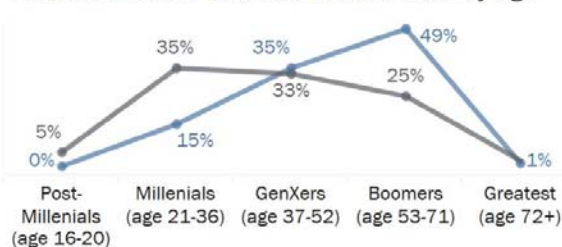
Recruiting and hiring processes

The new plan specifically focuses on improving employee recruiting and hiring processes. The importance of this issue emerged following an analysis of the data on SCC's current employees.

Largely because the College has both historically low turnover and high employee retention rates, SCC's workforce skews significantly older than the national workforce. As shown below, 50% of SCC employees are at least 53 years old as compared to 25% nationally.

With an aging workforce, the College will need to recruit and hire new employees in the coming years. Because of the low turnover, SCC has low brand recognition as an employer in a competitive market.

Percent of U.S. ● and SCC ● labor force by age

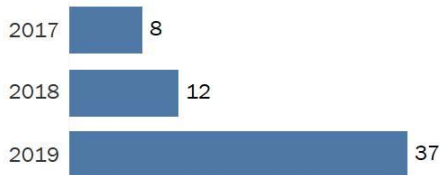


Professional development

The 2020-2024 Strategic Plan continues to emphasize improving opportunities to maximize the potential of all SCC employees.

Under the previous plan, SCC made significant progress on improving and promoting professional development opportunities for faculty and staff, including on-campus College conferences for faculty and staff in 2019, Pro-Dev Fridays, and a monthly professional development newsletter.

Number of professional development trainings held by year



In addition, the College worked to improve safety/security and diversity training for employees and developed a program to promote employee wellness. All these objectives will continue.

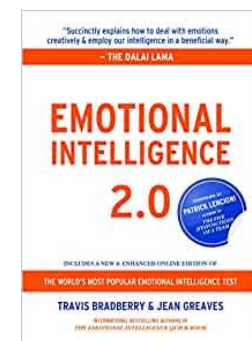
Participatory governance

Due to a change in the Criteria for Accreditation from the Higher Learning Commission, the 2020-2024 plan contains a new objective to strengthen employee engagement through comprehensive participatory governance. Participatory or shared governance refers to the set of practices under which college faculty, staff, and students participate in significant decisions concerning the operation of their institution.

Resiliency and emotional intelligence

Additionally, the plan includes a new objective focused on improving faculty and staff proficiency in student advising and on resiliency and emotional intelligence skills.

This objective relates directly to SCC's Pillar Project and its aim to increase student retention by promoting student resiliency across all instructional and student affairs interactions. See page 15 for more information on the Pillar Project.





Goal 6. Strategic Partnerships

This strategic goal and its associated objectives are connected directly to the College’s mission to transform the communities it serves in southeast Nebraska and to provide *“dynamic and responsive pathways to career and technical, academic transfer, and continuing education programs that contribute to personal, community, and workforce development.”*

In addition, this goal is tied to the College’s vision statement, which declares the commitment to *“work collaboratively and courageously with its higher education partners, employers, and local and state officials to address Nebraska’s skilled worker shortage and the need for everyone to have affordable access to the life-changing benefits of higher education.”*

Because the activities associated with this goal are so fundamental, SCC’s 2020-2024 Strategic Plan continues to highlight the need to strengthen SCC’s strategic partnerships with K-12 educational systems, four-year higher education institutions, industry, communities, government and other economic and workforce development entities.

Industry and economic development

SCC plays a vital role in economic and workforce development in southeast Nebraska. Most SCC graduates remain in Nebraska and contribute to the local and state economies for decades. Partnerships with industry and with state and local economic development programs allow SCC to fulfill its mission to transform both its students and the communities it serves.

\$2.20 is the *taxpayer return on investment* for every \$1 of public money spent in Nebraska community colleges.

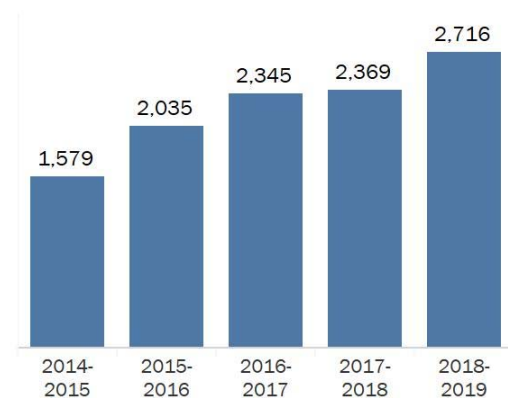
87% of SCC students remain in Nebraska upon completing their educational

K-12 and higher education

Under the 2015-2019 Plan, SCC bolstered its partnerships with K-12 systems through the expansion of the Southeast Nebraska Career Academy Partnership (SENCAP) and the creation of The Career Academy (TCA), a partnership with Lincoln Public Schools. Continuing to enhance these partnerships will be important for SCC’s success in the next five years.

In addition, the 2020-2024 Plan highlights SCC’s need to strengthen its strategic partnerships with the University of Nebraska and Nebraska state colleges, as well as other regional four-year institutions. Developing stronger partnerships, including true 2+2 transfer programs, will help to establish clear and unobstructed pathways for students to move beyond SCC and complete bachelor’s degrees.

Unique number of SENCAP and TCA students





Goal 7. Educational Environment

SCC has made considerable and tangible progress in expanding and improving its educational environment, but much work remains to be done.

Facilities and grounds

In 2015, the primary conclusion of SCC's facilities master planning process, the first in College history, was that the majority of the College's facilities on all campuses needed to be replaced or renovated at an estimated cost of \$369 million.

With such a monumental task ahead, SCC hired its first Director of Facilities in 2018. Among his first tasks was to oversee the first phase of construction projects (most of which are shown in these photos), which are either complete or nearing completion.

SCC expanded an objective in the new plan to include environmentally-conscious and renewable facilities planning and maintenance.



Homestead Hall and Storm Center dining facility, Beatrice



Learning Center, Falls City



Crete Carrier Diesel Technology & Welding Center, Milford



Interdisciplinary Center, Beatrice



Health Sciences Building, Lincoln

Safety and security

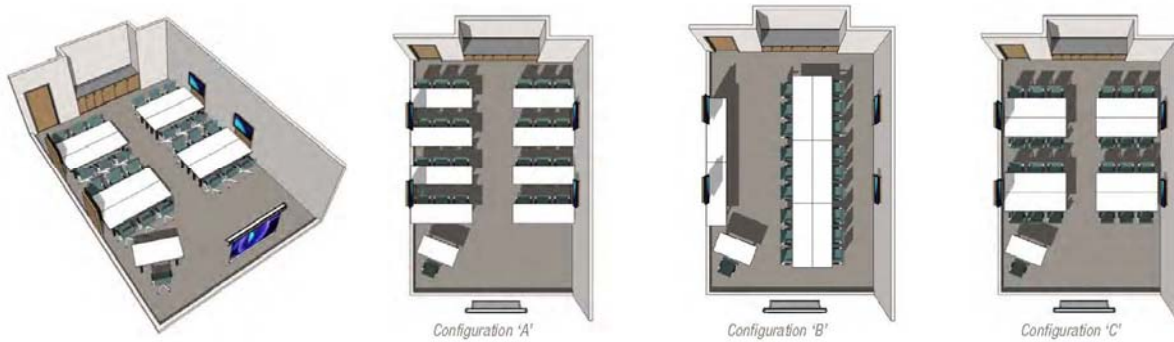
Improving safety and security at all College locations remains a priority. Prior to the previous strategic plan, the College had minimal security staffing. Since then, the safety and security philosophy and practices have changed substantially. Now, an expanded number of full-time security staff members are engaged in a coordinated security effort across all locations.

To address on-going safety and security challenges in downtown Lincoln, the College remodeled Education Square to ensure greater security at that location.

Overall, though more work is needed, students and employees have provided positive feedback about the changes that have been made so far.

Facilities Construction Status as of June 2020

Project with location	Ground Breaki..	Site Work	Framing	MEP Work	Finish Work	Move In!
Residence Hall and Dining (Beatrice)	●	●	●	●	●	●
Residence Hall (Milford)	●	●	●	●	●	●
Learning Center (Falls City)	●	●	●	●	●	●
Diesel Tech Building (Milford)	●	●	●	●	●	●
Classroom Building (Beatrice)	●	●	●	◐	○	○
Health Sciences Building (Lincoln)	●	●	●	◐	◐	○
Residence Hall (Milford)	●	◐	○	○	○	○
Agricultural Facility (Beatrice)	○	○	○	○	○	○
Student and Academic Support Project (Lincoln)	○	○	○	○	○	○



Flexible layouts for active learning classrooms and technology

Technology

As part of the previous plan, the College invested in comprehensive technology infrastructure and cybersecurity. These objectives remain in the new plan since technologies evolve rapidly and new cyber threats are constantly emerging.

The 2020-2024 plan has two new objectives related to classroom technology: (1) strengthen instructional programming with capital equipment and classroom technology and (2) improve use of innovative technologies in instruction and student services.

Under the previous plan, SCC switched to a new learning management system and updated classrooms with improved technologies and active learning design. The College will build on these activities going forward.

Student-centric spaces

Since the 2015-2019 strategic plan, SCC has renovated and refreshed many classrooms and created new student-centered spaces. For example, the College created private study areas and student collaborative spaces, the first at SCC, in many hallways on the Lincoln Campus. Students have flocked to these new spaces.

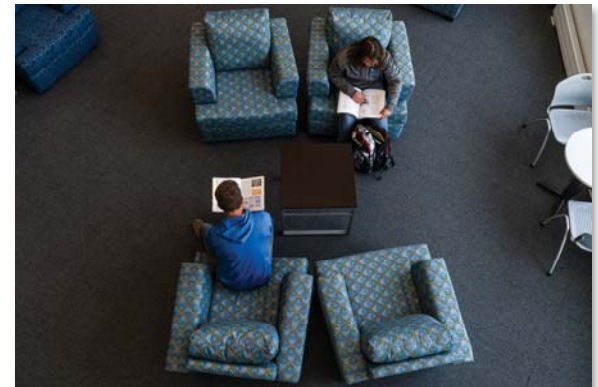
The 2020-2024 plan includes a new objective to promote campuses as destinations by creating high-quality student-centric spaces. Since research shows a strong correlation between students engagement on campus and higher levels of academic success, this objective represents a connection between Goal 2 (Student Success) and Goal 7 (Educational Environment).

Universal design and accessibility

Promoting accessibility was a theme throughout the strategic planning process. To that end, the 2020-2024 plan includes a new objective to expand on universal design principles for ADA compliance and equitable access. These principles will apply to renovation and new construction for both facilities and technology.



Student collaborative space



Student study space



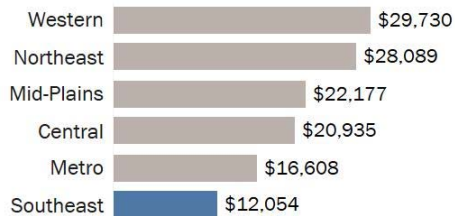
Goal 8. Financial Stability

Financial stability continues to be a key element of SCC’s strategic plan and is crucial to its continuing success. In recent years, SCC has taken several significant steps towards financial stability, growth, and the ability to complete capital projects but many areas for improvement remain.

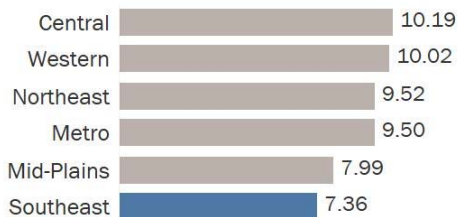
Strengthen financial position

Strengthening the College’s financial position is a priority of the new plan. SCC’s cash reserve has consistently been lower than other Nebraska colleges.

Cash reserve per FTE among Nebraska colleges | FY2018



Average total levy (in cents) among Nebraska colleges FY2014 to FY2018



Since 2018-2019, SCC has received donations for naming rights from:

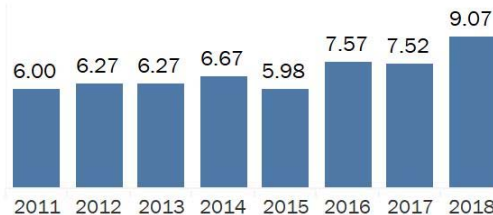
- Acklie Charitable Foundation (\$2 million) to establish the *Crete Carrier Diesel Technology and Welding Center* on the Milford Campus,
- Truck Center Companies (\$250,000) to establish the *Truck Center Companies Diesel Truck Lab* within the diesel technology center,
- ChefAuChef Catering (\$50,000) to establish the *ChefAuChef Culinary Lab* in the Great Plains Culinary Institute on the Lincoln Campus,
- Inland Truck Parts (\$50,000) to establish the *Inland Truck Parts Classroom* within the diesel technology center.

Similarly, SCC’s levy rates historically have been the lowest in the state. Under the 2015-2019 plan, the Board raised these rates to more comparable levels, which allowed the College to make progress toward other strategic goals.

Funding for capital projects

Following a failed public bond issue vote in 2016, the SCC Board of Governors raised the College’s tax levy for capital construction. With this foundation, the College secured certificates of participation and revenue bonds to finance the construction of multiple facilities projects. The College’s bond ratings are very strong.

Trend for total levy per \$100 valuation



Giving opportunities

SCC hired its first Director of Advancement in 2018; he has expanded external funding for programs and facilities. The College received its first donation for capital construction and its largest donation to date from the Acklie Charitable Foundation.

The new plan is more focused on growth of external giving by expanding the offices of Advancement and Resource Development and by strengthening the partnership between the College and the SCC Educational Foundation.

Flexibility on levy authority

The plan includes a new objective focused on promotion of legislation to improve state funding and enhance flexibility in tax levy authority. One initiative is to promote a bill that would remove the separate cap on capital construction within the current statute on community college taxing authority.



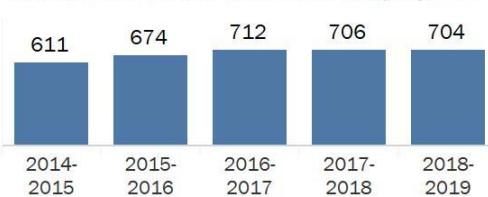
Goal 9. Organizational Climate

Of all the goals in the 2015-2019 strategic plan, “Goal 9” (referring to objective 9.6) has come to embody the strategic vision for the College, but the goal itself encompasses more than this objective.

Staffing

Under the previous strategic plan, SCC made significant progress increasing staffing levels in understaffed areas. Given this progress, the objective has been updated to emphasize promoting “effective and sustainable staffing and compensation levels to ensure excellence in all College operations.”

Headcount of full-time SCC employees



Headcount of full-time employees among Nebraska Colleges | Fall 2018

	Faculty	Staff
Southeast	359	296
Metro	246	507
Central	171	281
Northeast	127	215
Western	70	93
Mid-Plains	66	100

Positive Input Compassion Transparent Reflective Respect

Quarters to semesters

The College also made significant progress with its conversion of the academic calendar from quarters to semesters. The quarter calendar created a misalignment of terms for students in dual-credit programs and hindered the ability of students to co-enroll at SCC and four-year institutions.

With the completion of the calendar conversion, the 2020-2024 plan shifts to promoting integrated scheduling and calendar processes. Improvements to these processes will help the College operate and use resources efficiently.

Accreditation

Many of the initiatives in Goal 9 are driven by on-going accreditation requirements. SCC had been on monitoring status with the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) from 1992 until 2017. The College is committed to meeting all criteria for accreditation in the future. A key priority is preparing for SCC’s comprehensive evaluation in 2022.

In 2018, SCC entered into an Action Agreement with HLC to prioritize:

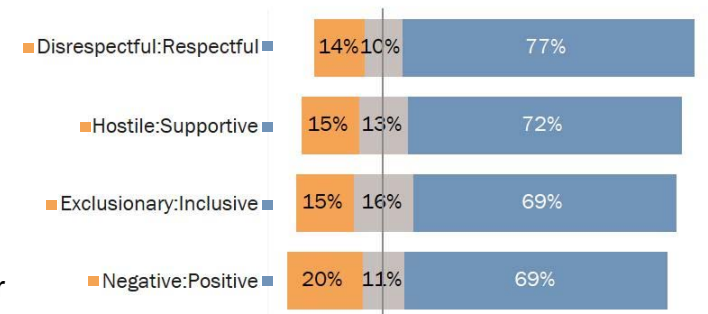
- the review, improvement and documentation of all College policies and procedures;

- the review and evaluation of existing organizational structures; and
- using integrated planning processes and assessment of student learning for continuous improvement.

Climate and objective 9.6

The College administered a satisfaction and climate survey to faculty and staff in 2015 and 2017. The following results from the 2017 survey both indicate that the College has made progress toward objective 9.6 and highlight the need to continue working toward these ideals.

How would you describe your work environment at SCC in a typical week?



How satisfied are you with the College's progress toward reaching Objective 9.6?

Dissatisfied Neutral Satisfied





Feedback from Administrative Team



Members of the College's Administrative Team participated in the 18-month planning process in a variety of ways. They attended community forums, encouraged their divisions and departments to provide feedback at internal forums, and provided a presentation to the Strategic Planning Team (the Team) about relevant qualitative and quantitative data, divisional progress on Mission Action Plan (MAP) goals from 2015-2019, and short- and long-term plans.



Those presentations were an **essential part of the process** because they empowered the Team to understand the direction that College leaders were setting with their respective divisions. The sessions also provided an integral **opportunity for dialogue** about divisional priorities, progress made under the previous strategic plan, and the implications of environmental scanning data for the next five years.



Upon consideration of environmental scan data, forum feedback, and Administrative Team presentations, the Team sent its recommendations for the new strategic goals and objectives to the Administrative Team in October 2019. The Administrative Team **reviewed, discussed, and validated** this work during two meetings in October.



The Administrative Team was **in full agreement with the recommendations** with a few minor suggestions. For example, it suggested adding an objective on advising and emotional intelligence training for employees in Goal 5 (Employee Excellence) after seeing the recommendation for a similar objective in Goal 2 (Student Success).



The Team reviewed the changes from the Administrative Team and then modified the plan to reflect those changes. After a final review, the Administrative Team sent the draft to the Board of Governors for consideration.



Admin Team Members (March 2020)

Paul Illich, President

Bev Cummins, Student Affairs

Dennis Headrick, Instruction

Amy Jorgens, Administrative Services

Ed Koster, Information Technology

Robin Moore, Institutional Research

Bob Morgan, Program Development

Stu Osterthun, Public Information

Jose Soto, Access/Equity/Diversity

Bruce Tangeman, Human Resources



Board of Governors approval

A primary function of the Board of Governors is adopting the new strategic plan and ensuring the College makes progress toward those institutional goals and objectives. President Illich notified the Board in late 2018 that the planning process was beginning and outlined the timeline. Board members attended many community forums, a valuable exercise as it allowed them to **engage with their constituents**. President Illich also included updates on the planning process as part of his President's Update during each Board meeting. Additionally, the Board participated in two special work sessions with the Administrative Team, Institutional Research, and the Administrative Director of Planning and Accreditation.

During the first work session in June 2019, the Board received an update on progress, reviewed some of the Environmental Scanning data, and worked on its own MAP goals for the 2019-2020 academic year. At the second Board work session, members heard a detailed overview of the **data-driven recommendations for changes** to each goal and topic area, including a description of the proposed additions of new objectives and removal or modification of the existing 2015-2019 objectives.

The Board **validated the work of the Strategic Planning Team** and agreed with all of its recommendations for changes. The Board provided some minor changes and moved that the final draft be considered at its December 2019 meeting. At a second reading in January 2020, the Board **unanimously approved** the revised mission and values statement, new vision statement, and new strategic goals and objectives.

Board Members (March 2020)

Nancy A. Seim, Lincoln (Chair)

Kathy Boellstorff, Johnson

Tim Cerveny, Wilber

Robert J. Feit, Lincoln

James J. Garver, Lincoln

Keith Hammons, Weeping Water

Dale Kruse, Beatrice

Edward C. Price, Lincoln

Lynn Schluckebier, Seward

Ellen Weissinger, Lincoln

Kristin Yates, Lincoln



College-wide adoption

Following Board approval, SCC notified the Higher Learning Commission of the newly modified mission statement in late January 2020. Because the mission statement did not change significantly, according to HLC policy, no further action was required to formalize its adoption.

In February 2020, SCC notified its employees about the adoption of the 2020-2024 Strategic Plan and invited all of them to attend presentations that highlighted the process and significant changes in the plan.

Using the new plan as a guide, each division, department, and program has developed three to five new MAP goals that align with one or more strategic goals and objectives. In other words, hundreds of people from all parts of the College are actively working on how they can help the College achieve the new strategic objectives. This process, which will be repeated each year, brings the strategic plan to life!

What are the major changes to the strategic plan moving forward?

This section describes the major changes to the goals and objectives between the 2015-2019 and 2020-2024 strategic plans. As reference, the objectives from the new plan are listed in parentheses at the end of each statement.



Goal 1: Enrollment Growth

Increased focus on accessibility of College processes (1.1, 1.2, 7.4)

Condensed several previous objectives about special population groups into one (1.6)

Added objective focused on increasing number of female students in STEM programs (1.7)

Added objective focused on increasing enrollment in dual-credit courses (1.8)



Goal 2: Student Success

Combined two goals from the previous plan: Student Success (goal 2) and Student Enrichment (goal 3)

New objective focused on building emotional intelligence and resiliency skills among students (2.2)

Expanded types of learning outcomes assessment to be addressed (2.3)

Added objective specifically about advising (2.5)

Changed language to describe student involvement in co-curricular activities (2.7)



Goal 3: Communication and Public Awareness

Established new goal to strengthen internal and external communication among all stakeholders and to enhance focus on public awareness

Aligned multiple objectives from previous plan as part of this new goal



Goal 4: Programming and Development

Expanded focus of program alignment to include apprenticeships (4.2)

New objective to expand online, hybrid, and other types of course delivery models (4.8)



Goal 5: Employee Excellence

Added new objective to focus specifically on improving hiring processes (5.1)

Modified objective to specify focus on a comprehensive participatory governance structure (5.4)

Added objective focused on enhancing emotional intelligence and resiliency skills among employees (5.5)



Goal 6: Strategic Partnerships

These objectives continue in the new plan without major changes



Goal 7: Educational Environment

Modified focus of facilities planning to include being environmentally conscious (7.1)

New objective on strengthening instructional programming with additional capital equipment and classroom technologies (7.2)

New objective on promoting universal design principles and strengthening student access/ADA compliance (7.4)

Expanded objective to describe campus experience as destinations with more college amenities (7.6)

New objective to improve the use of technology in course, program, and student services delivery (7.8)



Goal 8: Financial Stability

Added objective to promote legislation that strengthens financial position of the College (8.1)

Formalized objectives on proactive, long-term financial planning (8.2) and increasing fund reserves (8.3)

Expanded objective on external funding to include growth of the offices of Advancement and Resource Development and strengthening partnerships with the SCC Educational Foundation (8.4)

Added objective about promoting cost-effective and efficient auxiliary services (8.7)



Goal 9: Organizational Climate

Specified that staffing structure should be effective and sustainable (9.1)

Continued focus on calendar efficiency and processes (9.3)

Added new objective about strengthening accreditation relationships and compliance opportunities (9.4)

Expanded use of valid and reliable data to include continuous improvement processes such as planning, assessment, and program review (9.5)

The important work of 9.6 continues!

This report was developed by SCC's Office of Institutional Research. For additional information, contact ir@southeast.edu

