



# STUDENT AFFAIRS STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2021

**THE DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS STRATEGIC PLAN** was developed through the collaborative and intentional work of the Division's Assessment Committee and department staff in response to the 2020-21 University Strategic Plan. Through this plan, we seek to engage our students in meaningful ways, connecting them to experiences that separate them from their peers in higher education and provide both an intellectual epiphany and a competitive edge in the marketplace. Facilitating first year students to become engaged and then graduate four years later as significantly more sophisticated and articulate leaders for our society is an outcome that we seek for our students. That Eastern Experience, grounded in the liberal arts, is what separates this University from its peers and is what will foster the potential of each of our students.

The strategic initiatives identified will inform our work and will challenge us to reach the next level. Our goal is to become one of the leading student services programs among our peer institutions by placing emphasis on both the intellectual and interpersonal growth of the students we serve.

**Walter Diaz, Ed.D.**

*Vice President for Student Affairs*





## STUDENT AFFAIRS MISSION STATEMENT

The Division of Student Affairs creates a supportive and challenging environment that is conducive to academic achievement and is responsive to student needs through inclusive excellence. The division prepares students to be successful leaders in a global society through programs and services that enhance student learning, personal and professional development, and civic responsibility.



## STUDENT AFFAIRS STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

### Employability

The Division of Student Affairs supports the University's efforts to ensure that all students develop competencies that increase their competitive edge in the workplace and graduate programs. To that end, the Division works collaboratively with Academic Affairs, Student Employment and among Student Affairs units to help students develop their skills in areas including:

- Critical thinking
- Information Literacy
- Communication
- Ethics
- Intercultural Competency
- Teamwork

### Retention

The connections that Student Affairs staff make with students are integral to the successful retention and graduation of Eastern students. The Division of Student Affairs will:

1. Develop strategies to meet the needs of a diverse and changing student population, e.g., at-risk, first generation, transfer, veterans, honors, athletes, students with disabilities;
2. Increase student awareness of University support services;
3. Effectively engage with students to create meaningful student impact;
4. Enhance collaborations with academic departments and faculty to support student success; and
5. Increase collaboration with the Financial Aid Office to ensure staff members are familiar with financial support opportunities for students.

### Assessment

The Division of Student Affairs is committed to an intentional, rigorous and honest assessment of the programs and services provided by its offices. The purpose of such assessment is to foster a culture of learning within Student Affairs that determines the collective impact of the entire division on the education and development of Eastern students. The Division of Student Affairs will assess its programs and services through:

1. Development of goals and measurable outcomes
2. Measurement and analysis through quality assessment tools and strategies
3. Benchmarking for evaluation of best practices
4. Application of results for continuous improvement





## Engagement

Students who are actively engaged invest their time and efforts in activities that:

1. Encourage personal, social and professional development
2. Nurture curiosity and learning
3. Forge a connection with their peers, the University and the community
4. Develop the ability to mutually respect and understand others

The Division of Student Affairs will focus its efforts to enhance student engagement in several key areas:

1. Leadership development
2. Cultural, social and athletic activities
3. Personal development, wellness and positive decision-making
4. Experiential education and community engagement

## Professional Development

The Division of Student Affairs is committed to developing the knowledge and skills of our students and staff members. We value the education and career development of each student and employee and believe professional development is essential to promoting a standard of excellence within a learning organization. We focus on continued development of students and team members to ensure intentional preparation for the work of Student Affairs. The professional development process includes:

1. Formal and informal learning strategies for professional and personal growth;
2. Knowledge that is shared, skills that are expanded, new thinking and ideas that are stimulated and models of cooperation and collaboration and are provided to strengthen the community;
3. A lifelong commitment that includes development of skills at varying levels and at different stages throughout the career path.







## **Enhancing and Sustaining a Culture of Inclusion**

The Division of Student Affairs will provide effective leadership and support to create an inclusive life-long learning environment in support of the University's core value of Inclusion. The Division will:

1. Promote inclusive excellence across the Division of Student Affairs and the University;
2. Plan and deliver programs and services that embrace and advance the University's commitment to inclusiveness;
3. Enhance efforts to improve the diversity climate within campus life;
4. Pursue opportunities to collaborate with the academic community in areas that will enhance diversity and multicultural competence; and
5. Develop and implement effective strategies to recruit, hire and retain a diverse student and professional workforce within the division.

## **Enable Academic Achievement for all Students**

Student academic achievement is a core value of the University and is central to the mission of the Division of Student Affairs. In keeping with Eastern's liberal arts mission, the division will provide support for and will facilitate transformative student experiences that integrate academic learning with student development through:

1. Assisting and engaging students in their academic and co-curricular experience;
2. Development of student learning objectives and outcomes for all programs and services that connect to students' academic experiences;
3. Partnerships with academic departments and programs to meet the needs of students; and
4. Alignment divisional learning goals and departmental learning outcomes with the University's Strategic Plan.

