

Strategic Compass: Goals & Areas of Focus

March 2026



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1

Goal

We are striving to...

sharpen our academic identity to make it increasingly clear and compelling

Areas of Focus

... and our likelihood of success will improve if we pay attention to...

demystifying the liberal arts label and better telling our story

contributing to statewide, regional, and national conversations on the liberal arts

creating clearer pathways between the liberal arts and careers

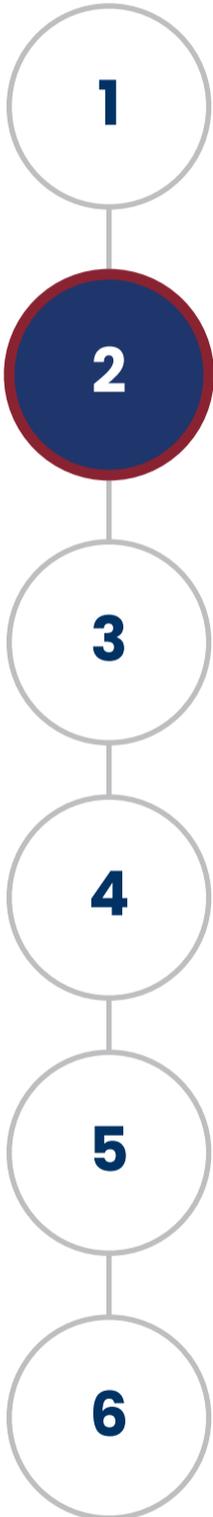
breaking down academic silos and enlivening interdisciplinary pursuits

introducing students to full-time faculty sooner (e.g., LAC 100/101)

tracking alumni success more systematically

providing opportunities for lifelong learning for all populations at all times of the year

modeling an equitable, accessible, and just democracy in which Eastern serves as a responsive and transformative agent of change



2

Goal

We are striving to...

elevate student success and improve the overall student experience

Areas of Focus

... and our likelihood of success will improve if we pay attention to...

deepening our culture of putting students first

investing in and better connecting supports for student mental health and wellness

strengthening collaboration among the Divisions of Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and Student Success and Enrollment

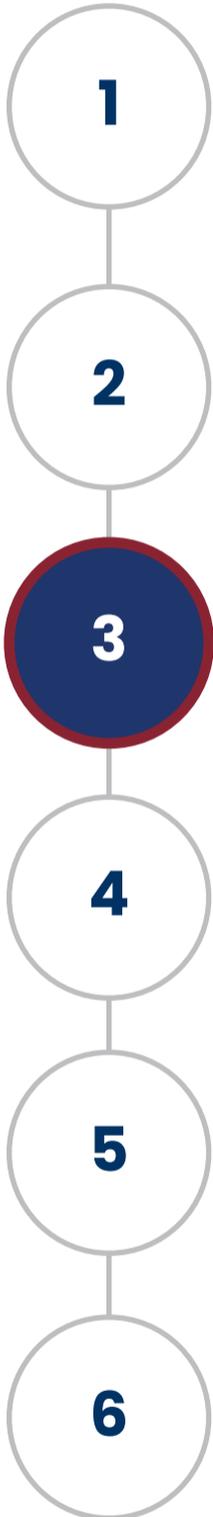
moving towards a more holistic and seamless model of student advising

increasing the equitability of access to high-impact practices and other co-curricular opportunities

building and/or modernizing student learning, living, and recreational spaces

improving retention through better case management

leveraging technology solutions to boost student success outcomes



3

Goal

We are striving to...

invigorate our relationships with the town and region to advance bolder and more imaginative initiatives together

Areas of Focus

... and our likelihood of success will improve if we pay attention to...

developing more compelling opportunities for the local community to visit campus

boosting educational, artistic, and athletics programming throughout the summer

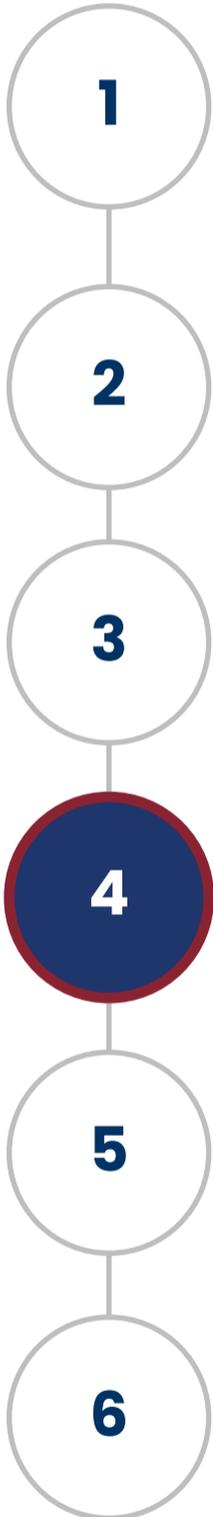
coordinating external relations efforts (proactive and responsive)

increasing public awareness for ECSU's socioeconomic impact on the local community

promoting Eastern Passport and other opportunities to support local businesses

Exploring possibilities for Willimantic and ECSU to create a bona fide "college town"

making meaningful connections to tribal organizations and living up to the commitments of the Land Acknowledgement



4

Goal

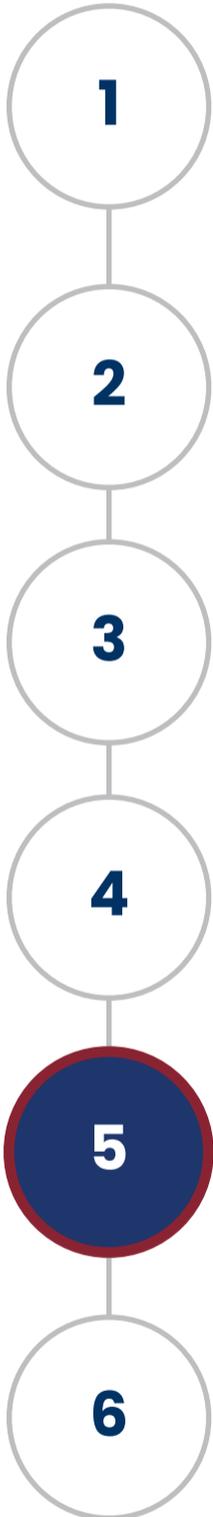
We are striving to...

nurture a university culture that continually seeks new opportunities and strives to operate at the leading edge of innovation

Areas of Focus

... and our likelihood of success will improve if we pay attention to...

- improving and modernizing the operations and processes of all divisions to support the needs and aspirations of the campus community
- developing better systems and processes for tracking, recording, and communicating institutional decision making and progress
- automating processes to free up faculty, staff, and student time
- making available shared spaces, resources, and data to encourage a spirit of innovation
- striving to achieve new academic and professional accreditations
- nurture a culture of evidence-based decision making
- building capacity to secure and manage external grants and other revenue-generating opportunities
- supporting the ECSU Foundation in boosting private support for the University's strategic priorities
- incentivizing curricular innovation and new program development
- positioning ECSU as the nexus of the liberal arts and responsible AI



5

Goal

We are striving to...

bolster our capabilities for attracting students from traditional and emerging populations

Areas of Focus

... and our likelihood of success will improve if we pay attention to...

clarifying the University's philosophy surrounding non-traditional academic backgrounds (e.g., online, evening, etc.)

clarifying terminology surrounding student and program types

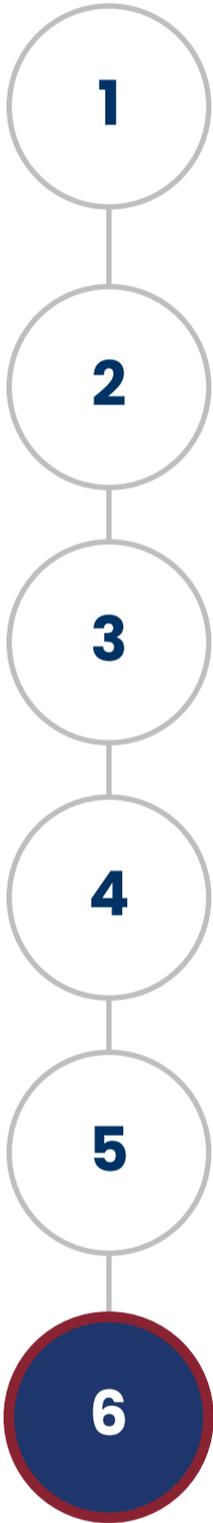
fostering a more welcoming and inclusive campus culture for non-residential students

creating more opportunities for "4+1" undergraduate-to-graduate programs and degrees

improving employee skill sets and adding talent to engage emerging student populations more effectively

strengthening lines of communication with family members of prospective students

harnessing the talent and connectivity of the greater Eastern community to support enrollment efforts



6

Goal

We are striving to...

strengthen Eastern's spirit of community and support its people

Areas of Focus

... and our likelihood of success will improve if we pay attention to...

advancing University spirit through the work of the Warrior Spirit Group

expanding opportunities for the recognition of faculty, staff, and students

creating shared opportunities for faculty and staff professional development in support of ECSU's strategic goals

energizing a culture of care through employee-centered initiatives

encouraging alumni engagement with students and faculty

focusing on ways to improve employee onboarding and retention

creating the conditions for Eastern to be recognized as a top place to work