

EASTERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY
STRATEGIC PLAN
2020-2025



PREFACE

The 2020-2025 Strategic Plan represents Eastern Connecticut State University's third strategic planning cycle under the leadership of President Elsa Núñez. While the public liberal arts mission of the University remains unchanged, the next five years are likely to present unprecedented challenges and opportunities. The goals of this strategic plan are to help the University navigate these challenges while continuing to capitalize on our strengths, and to seize opportunities to position the University as a national leader in public liberal arts education. As such, the 2020 Strategic Plan continues our work on the five objectives from the 2013 Plan, while addressing new opportunities that have arisen.

During the fall 2018 semester, the Committee on the Future of Eastern III (COFE III) was convened to begin work on the next strategic plan. As a first step, the committee undertook a full evaluation of the current state of the objectives and initiatives outlined in the 2013 Plan. The committee sought to address questions regarding which initiatives had been completed, progress made to date on other initiatives, and

areas where additional attention and resources were needed. After a thorough review of the data produced in response to the last plan, the committee developed a set of strategic priorities for the next planning cycle and shared them with the community.

The University has made substantial gains over the past two strategic planning cycles, achieving many of the goals identified in those plans, including success in the areas of student graduation rates, faculty creative activity, implementation of high-impact practices, and campus engagement with the community, among many others. This plan is intended to build on the successes of the previous plans, and therefore support for those successful initiatives will continue.

Initial feedback on the emerging strategic priorities was collected from the University community in the spring of 2019 at the University Meeting and through a University community survey. COFE III reviewed and incorporated feedback into the priorities.



The committee then created smaller working groups to produce a more detailed review and set of recommendations in each priority area. Committee members identified subject-matter experts on campus, as well as external sources of expertise, and consulted those individuals in crafting the recommendations and initiatives for this plan. In addition, the committee reviewed the New England Commission on Higher Education (NECHE) standards for strategic planning, consulted with the NECHE planning groups, and incorporated the work of the Liberal Arts Core Learning Outcome Revision Committee (LACOR) and the Employability Council in drafting the plan. Once initiatives for each priority area were drafted, University feedback was sought again via public forums and an additional University-wide survey. Again, feedback was collected and incorporated, resulting in this final iteration of the plan.

Through this planning process, several needs became evident to improve the strength of the

University. First, institutional changes accomplished in the previous plans must be maintained so that progress made is not lost. Second, throughout the planning process, the committee encountered challenges in the availability of data to inform planning and substantiate accomplishments. Thus, the need to promote data-collection processes that allow for nimble and informed decision-making, and to provide evidence of our gains as a University, became evident.

Third, the committee sought to ensure that the plan was grounded in the realities of the internal and external pressures we are facing, while also anticipating future challenges. For example, given the fiscal challenges faced by the University, the plan focuses on solutions that are, whenever possible, low-cost, cost-neutral or potentially money-saving. Finally, the committee has attempted to create initiatives that are goal-driven rather than prescriptive, to allow flexibility in how these initiatives are accomplished as the landscape shifts.

The 2020–2025 Strategic Plan maintains the five Objectives from the 2013 Plan, but each Objective contains a new Area of Emphasis. The plan covers eleven Priority Areas that address the Areas of Emphasis, with multiple initiatives under each. Success in implementing this plan will be assessed through Performance Measures for each Objective that will be consistently monitored to ensure progress is being made over the next five years. As part of the planning process, Eastern’s Mission Statement was also revised.

MISSION STATEMENT

Eastern Connecticut State University engages students from diverse backgrounds in a transformative, liberal arts learning experience that provides knowledge and skills to lead enriching, purposeful lives.



OBJECTIVE 1: MAXIMIZE THE VALUE OF AN EASTERN DEGREE

Eastern will advance itself as a model of outstanding and affordable public liberal arts education by continuing to foster a culture of achievement and excellence.

Area of Emphasis: Promote Academic Excellence and Relevance

Priority Area #1: Promote processes to review and revise curriculum as disciplines and employer needs change

Our University's liberal arts mission is essential to providing a private college experience at a public university. Central to this mission is the core undergraduate curriculum. While Eastern's existing Liberal Arts Core (LAC) was well intentioned, it has proven difficult to fully implement and assess. As a result, the University revised the LAC learning outcomes in three ways: (1) the student learning outcomes in the common core have been reduced to a more manageable num-

ber of five; (2) the faculty have agreed on the definitions of those outcomes; and (3) a method for effectively assessing those learning outcomes has been created. These student learning outcomes are also contained within the Employability Plan, as they are routinely cited as those in greatest demand by employers.

The next step in the LAC revision process will be to evaluate the course structure in the LAC to ensure the structure fits our liberal arts mission and that we are effectively assessing student achievement of those outcomes and substantiating our progress toward consistent academic excellence. Support will also be provided to academic departments to ensure they are assessing common and distinct learning outcomes within their majors.

In addition, the University must generally strengthen our ability to update our curricula in response to changes across disciplines.

Significant progress has been made to assess and modify graduate programs relative to workforce needs and student demand. However, given the rapid shifts in workforce requirements and changes in technology, Eastern will continue our focus on evaluating and modifying undergraduate and graduate programs to ensure they are relevant to today's economy. Given that graduate education in particular is highly competitive, additional attention is needed to ensure course locations and modes of delivery continue to match student demand, particularly online offerings, while maintaining academic rigor and vitality. Further, to ensure that the curriculum in each major is relevant, the Academic Program Review (APR) process and the Academic Major Annual Report will be revised to encourage all departments to review and revise their curricula as appropriate.

1. LACLOR has reduced the number of student learning outcomes in the LAC to five, developed definitions of those outcomes, and developed tools to assess each outcome.
2. The Employability Council has incorporated the revised learning outcomes into the Employability Plan.
3. By fall 2020, a process will be created to revise the curriculum of the LAC to ensure that students are achieving the milestones as assessed.
4. By fall 2021, an Assessment Plan will be developed to assess the learning outcomes in the LAC to ensure that students are achieving the required milestones.
5. By fall 2021, Assessment Plans will be developed to assess the common and distinct learning outcomes in the majors to ensure that students are achieving the required milestones.
6. By fall 2024, the Assessment Plan will be implemented to assess the common learning outcomes in the LAC to ensure that students are achieving the required milestones.



7. An evaluation of graduate program design, support services, degrees, certificates and course offerings will be conducted for relevance to current employer needs, and match between location and modes of delivery and student demand.
8. The Academic Program Review Committee and Annual Report processes will be revised to incorporate review of curricular changes related to employer/disciplinary needs.



Priority Area #2: Support and encourage faculty development in teaching and creative activity

A related Priority under this Area of Emphasis involves increasing support for faculty development to assist them with teaching and assessing student learning outcomes and innovative curricula. Increased focus on faculty development in teaching will be paired with continued support for creative activity. This development will also assist all departments with reviewing and revising their major curricula to ensure common learning outcomes are being taught in major courses, and that the content and skills taught in all courses are in line with what graduates will need as they pursue careers or graduate school after Eastern. To implement this initiative, the Faculty Development Committee will be restructured to develop and implement a sustained Faculty Development Plan. This committee will work closely with the Center for Instructional Technology (CIT) to ensure faculty are utilizing effective pedagogical technology.

As part of this Development Plan, faculty will receive training, particularly in teaching the new learning outcomes and innovative disciplinary approaches through high-impact practices and creative activity.



1. By spring 2021, the Faculty Development Committee will be restructured to provide stronger leadership in the creation and implementation of a Faculty Development Plan, which will include development in teaching and creative activity.
2. A funding mechanism will be identified to incentivize faculty development in teaching the revised LAC/Employability learning outcomes and innovative disciplinary content utilizing high impact practices.
3. A funding mechanism and process will be identified to train faculty on assessment procedures related to the new LAC/Employability learning outcomes.
4. A funding mechanism will be sought for development of graduate faculty skills in creating, delivering and assessing online programs.



Performance Measures for Objective I:

1. Number of defined learning outcomes in the LAC
2. Number of learning outcomes in the LAC with approved assessment plans
3. Percentage of students assessed in each learning outcome
4. Percentage of students reaching milestones in each learning outcome
5. Number of faculty participating in development related to teaching and assessing LAC learning outcomes
6. Percentage of undergraduate and graduate programs identifying curricular review and/or changes related to employer/disciplinary needs in each annual report, including evidence that programs were reviewed for match to employer needs annually; evidence that programs have a plan to respond to disciplinary changes; and/or evidence that programs have adapted curricula in response to disciplinary changes
7. Creation of graduate curriculum committee
8. Number of support services (registrar, financial aid, helpdesk) offering new hours or modes of communication for graduate students
9. Percentage of faculty engaging in creative activity development opportunities
10. Percentage of faculty applications for funding of creative activity (i.e., sabbatic leave, research reassigned time, travel funding, internal grant finding) met





OBJECTIVE II: ENSURE THAT PROGRAMS ARE RELEVANT, EFFECTIVE, AND CHALLENGING

Eastern will strengthen its academic excellence, vitality and relevance.

Area of Emphasis: Support Evidence-Based Decision Making

Priority Area #3: Ensure adequate technology resources

Eastern needs to continue to ensure that adequate technology resources are available to all students, faculty and staff. Prevalent trends in education include providing continual access to education to support “everywhere, all-the-time learning” that will encourage lifelong and collaborative education, and to change the culture of education from degree-driven to learning throughout one’s life. To support this vision, many learning options must be imagined, including degree programs, certificate programs, credential acquisition and customized training. At the heart of this environment will be the convenient access across time and space — to

digital learning technology and materials that can facilitate both formal and informal learning.

1. The Information Technology Committee and Information Technology Services (ITS) staff members will identify technologies as they emerge, evaluate technologies for use at the University, and disseminate information about emerging technologies to faculty and staff through the Faculty Development Committee.
2. In line with the curricular reviews described in Priority Area #1, a review of online and hybrid offerings will be conducted, with attention to possibilities for new degree, certificate, credentialing and other training programs that meet employer needs and may be offered using emerging technology platforms.
3. A plan for assessment of student digital literacy will be created, with enhanced training provided to remediate skill acquisition for students with needs in this area.

- ITS and CIT will work with the Faculty Development Committee to offer professional development to faculty and staff to assist with onboarding technologies that enhance pedagogy and improve efficiency.

Priority Area #4: Collect, analyze, and use data to enhance decision quality

While the field of academic analytics is relatively new, Eastern will embrace this opportunity and continue to strengthen our ability to analyze and use data in decision making. Led by the Dean of Academic Analytics and the Provost, Eastern will establish a data warehouse with common data definitions, which will be widely accessible to data users across campus. To date, the data resources and needs of the University are unknown because data may be collected but housed in separate units or departments. Once the data warehouse is established, data analytics will assist departments in making course scheduling decisions, advisors in identifying efficient paths to graduation, and administrators in monitoring resources, and will provide a platform for communication and coordination of



decision-making across campus. The Dean of Academic Analytics and the Office of Planning and Institutional Research will coordinate with units and departments to ensure that data collection is relevant and useful.

Data analytics will also be used to inform admissions decisions and to model student success in retention and timely graduation. While the academic profile of each incoming freshman class has improved over the past several years, this area will require continued attention in light of demographic changes and growing competition for traditional students. Eastern will continue to develop predictive models of student success to make better informed admissions decisions and will continue to refine the new financial aid model to target both merit- and need-based aid most effectively. Data will be used to inform decisions in all other appropriate areas to ensure they are more transparent and rational.

Related to the use of data analytics in decision making is assessment of student achievement regarding learning outcomes in the LAC and the majors. While Eastern has made significant





progress in assessment, more needs to be done. Specifically, a more holistic approach to assessing the revised student learning outcomes in the LAC will begin in fall 2020, summarized in a multi-year LAC Assessment Plan. Further, academic departments must continue to make progress in establishing student learning outcomes that are unique to their major and assessing those outcomes. The charge of the University Senate's Assessment Committee will be reviewed and strengthened, so that the Committee can provide leadership in these efforts.

1. The University will conduct a self-assessment of institutional data analytics and research. Data collection needs will be evaluated, including a review of aligning the Strategic Plan, APR, Annual Report, NECHE and other data collection processes. This review will include an assessment of data security and privacy needs.
2. Eastern will establish a centralized and secure data warehouse, with common data definitions, available to users across campus (with consideration for privacy needs and permission levels) and will begin to collect baseline data on identified data needs.

3. Faculty and staff development will be provided to assist users across units in assessing and enhancing decision quality utilizing the newly established data warehouse.
4. Each unit will be encouraged to review their use of paper forms and storage. Opportunities will be supported to move from paper to electronic forms with optical character recognition for easy search and organization.





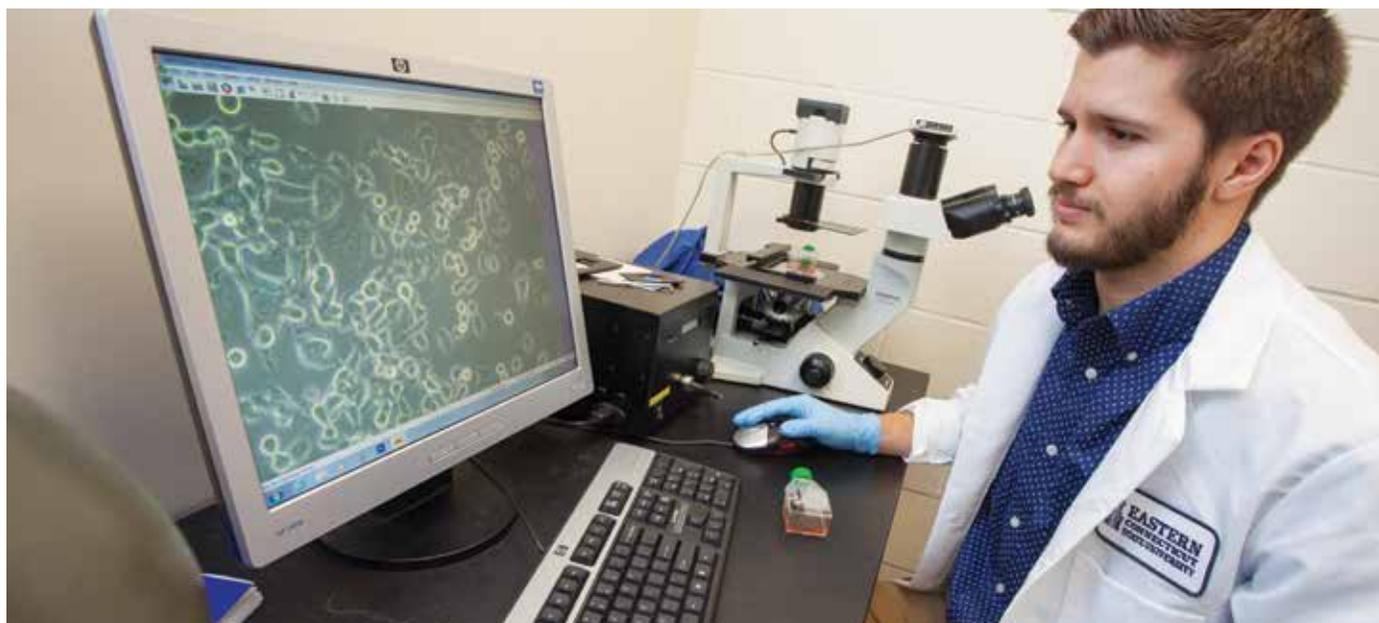
5. Predictive models for student admission, success and financial aid (both merit- and need-based) will be strengthened. These models will be used in admission decisions, to better target enhanced intervention for students to improve retention and graduation rates, and in optimal use of need- and merit-based financial aid.
6. Burning Glass data will be available to all academic departments and incorporated into the Annual Reports and APR process.
7. An enhanced focus on assessment will be supported across academic departments, with the development, definition and assessment of learning outcomes incorporated across all departments. The APR and Annual Report processes will be revised to strengthen focus on careful assessment and responsiveness to data. The role of the Assessment Committee will be clarified and enhanced.

8. Data collection on campus use of energy, resources and sustainable behavior will be coordinated between the Green Campus Committee and the Institute for Sustainable Energy and used in promoting sustainability on campus with a goal of achieving AASHE Gold status.
9. The Office of Planning and Institutional Research will be responsible for collecting and reporting data on all Performance Measures contained in this Strategic Plan.

Priority Area #5: Ensure adequate numbers of faculty or staff for each unit's mission

As Eastern continues to face budget challenges, stronger data-informed approaches must be applied when assigning staff and faculty lines across campus. This is particularly critical given the potential for a substantial number of retirements in 2022. As employees retire or leave the University, mission-based, data-informed decisions will be needed to determine whether to refill the position, reassign the line to a new area or keep the line vacant to realize savings.

1. A transparent approach to hiring, that is both mission and data informed, will be adopted to respond to the anticipated attrition of faculty and staff to retirement in the coming years.





Performance Measures for Objective II:

1. Number of faculty technology requests (met/unmet)
2. Number of emerging technologies evaluated by ITS and disseminated to faculty/staff annually
3. Total hours of online, hybrid, distance-learning and other technology-assisted learning offered (with a focus on graduate and certificate programs)
4. Percentage of students demonstrating technology competency
5. Stakeholder satisfaction with University technology
6. Number of optical character recognition-stored documents in data warehouse
7. Number of unique variables defined and collected in data warehouse
8. Gigabytes of data in warehouse
9. Percentage of faculty/staff who have participated in data-analytics related professional development
10. Hours of data analytics professional development offered
11. Increase in retention and persistence rates within major and at the University
12. Evidence of improved admissions outcomes
13. Evidence of improved targeting of financial aid awards
14. Increase the percentage of courses taught by full-time/tenure-track faculty





OBJECTIVE III: EXPAND INTEGRATIVE LEARNING ON CAMPUS AND IN THE COMMUNITY

Eastern students will develop valuable skills through an integrative learning approach that allows them to make connections between learning in the traditional classroom and applied experiences on and beyond campus. As part of this process, we will explore models for improving communication among and between departments and units to ensure better service to our students. These models will look at communication between the academic departments and administrative offices such as the Office of Alumni Affairs and the Center for Internships and Career Development.

Area of Emphasis: Support Students' Academic and Career Preparation

Priority Area #6: Support students' career and employability skills

The 2013 Strategic Plan sought to create more integrative learning opportunities through the

Liberal Arts Work (LAW) initiative. While a number of courses and other opportunities have received the LAW designation, there is still work to be done. Not all majors offer a credit-bearing LAW opportunity to the students, and fewer than half of all students graduate with a LAW designation on their transcript.





In fall 2020, Eastern will begin to implement the Employability Plan created by the Employability Council. This implementation will ensure that all Eastern graduates achieve the four goals of the Employability Plan: (1) develop a Four-Year Employability Plan, (2) complete at least one experiential learning activity, (3) utilize career resources on campus, including the Center for Internships and Career Development and Burning Glass, and (4) leave with a polished resume. In fall 2020, Eastern will also implement the Employability Liaisons Program, which will designate one member of each academic department to ensure all majors are receiving exceptional employability preparation. Finally, a valid assessment plan for learning outcomes of integrative learning experiences needs to be created, and more can be done to engage alumni in these learning experiences.

1. Beginning in fall 2020, the Employability Plan will be implemented to ensure that students are developing employability skills and can articulate those skills. This work will include all students achieving the four goals of the Employability Plan.

2. The Employability Plan will be implemented to enhance the quality and quantity of student experiential learning by fall 2021.
3. A plan for assessing LAC learning outcomes regarding experiential learning will be developed and implemented by fall 2021.
4. Employability Liaisons will be appointed in academic departments and the work of these liaisons will be assessed annually.
5. By spring 2021, four-year career plans will be developed for each major and incorporated into the “Eastern in 4” plans.
6. LAW designation, data collection and transcript reporting will be revised to better account for the wide range of experiential learning our students complete.

Priority Area #7: Expose students to successful alumni and professionals from their discipline

More also needs to be done to increase the interaction of academic departments, faculty and students with successful alumni and professionals within relevant fields.



This will help ensure that each program’s curriculum is aligned with the knowledge and skills required by employers and graduate schools, while also helping to identify opportunities in newly emerging fields and careers.

1. A plan to engage alumni in specific initiatives within the Employability Plan will be developed by fall 2021.
2. Each department will engage alumni in the curricular review described in Priority Area #1, to ensure that curricula reflect the input of alumni who have entered the workforce.
3. A formalized plan for collecting and warehousing alumni data for use by units across campus will be created to assist in these endeavors.
3. Percentage of students graduating with the LAW attribution or alternate “employability” experience, such as an internship or research
4. Percentage of students meeting benchmarks in assessment of experiential learning assessment
5. Percentage of University experiential learning experiences involving alumni
6. Percentage of departments engaging alumni in curriculum review processes
7. Percentage of alumni with current (prior year) data in data warehouse
8. Number of unique variables included in alumni database, including variables that will assist in future predictive modelling of alumni success (e.g. graduate education, employment data)
9. Percentage of students completing Four-Year Career Plans
10. Percentage of students utilizing the Center for Internships and Career Development

Performance Measures for Objective III:

1. Percentage of students participating in experiential learning experience
2. Number of LAW-approved opportunities across all majors



OBJECTIVE IV: ENSURE THAT STUDENTS, STAFF AND FACULTY ACHIEVE THEIR FULL POTENTIAL

Eastern will ensure that all students, faculty and staff receive the support and opportunities for development necessary to help them achieve their full potential.

Area of Emphasis: Ensure Adequate Resources for All

Priority Area #8: Identify ways to make Eastern more affordable to students

While the University has made progress in educating students on debt and providing financial support to ensure access to an Eastern education for all students, more can be done. The Student Outreach Liaison in the Financial Aid Office, who was appointed in fall 2019, will work with the First Year Program, academic departments, Student Affairs and the Academic Success Center (ASC) to enhance the financial literacy training our students receive. Students will be educated on the financial aid process and the consequences of student debt. Further, the new financial aid award model, which was first

used in the 2019-20 recruiting cycle, will continue to be improved so that Eastern's limited aid dollars are most effectively used to attract diverse students who are most likely to succeed at our University. The financial aid model will be assessed each year so that it can evolve as student need evolves.

As a public institution that is funded primarily by student tuition and state tax dollars, Eastern has an obligation to ensure that our resources are used effectively in the pursuit of our mission.

All administrators, faculty and staff will continue to seek ways to reduce costs in areas that are not central to this mission. Further, the President and her senior staff will consider developing a strategic budget planning process that establishes long-term budget priorities aimed at achieving the objectives of this Strategic Plan. Budget planning will also be used to ensure that each organizational unit has sufficient staff and other resources to make a meaningful contribution to the success of our students.

1. The Student Outreach Liaison in the Financial Aid Office will work with the First Year Program, academic departments, Student Affairs and the ASC to enhance financial aid literacy offerings.
2. The new financial aid award model will be strengthened to effectively attract diverse students who are most likely to succeed at Eastern.
3. All units will continue to seek ways to reduce costs without reducing student-facing services and programs.
4. The President and senior staff will consider developing a strategic budget-planning process with established long-term budget priorities that are grounded in this Strategic Plan.
5. A process will be developed to collect and use data regarding cost-saving measures for students (for example, tracking the use of open educational resources in courses, course textbooks on reserve).

Priority Area #9: Provide resources to faculty and staff to enhance advising quality

As more data become available to identify students in need of support, professional development is also needed for faculty and professional advisors to ensure they are well prepared to assist students. A campus-wide discussion is also needed regarding the most appropriate role of professional advisors, relative to faculty advisors, when working with students.

While the Academic Success Center (ASC) has greatly expanded the services offered to students since 2013 and student utilization of the ASC has increased, substantial room for improvement remains. Eastern will continue to identify populations of students who face unique challenges and provide support through the Opportunity Programs initiative. More generally, a top priority for the Institutional Research team is to develop models of student success in each major, so that faculty and students can see the path taken by successful students who have come before them.





These models will be incorporated into the “Eastern in 4” plans. This analysis will also identify the barriers and warning signs that indicate a student is less likely to succeed. This information can be used by faculty and staff across several offices to provide timely intervention when an individual student has gotten off track. Predictive modeling and focused intervention can similarly be applied in the STEM pathway and in at-risk courses across departments, and with students who may be in need of enhanced advising support (e.g., targeted career counseling for exploratory students).

1. A series of forums and focus groups regarding advising and student needs will be conducted. Faculty, staff, students and professional advisors will be encouraged to

engage in a process of discerning current strengths and weaknesses of the advising model and addressing those weaknesses.

2. Predictive modeling of student needs and intervention strategies will be strengthened, including the development of student success models to be incorporated into “Eastern in 4” plans and shared with advisors, led by the Student Academic Advising Committee.
3. Units will engage with the Institutional Research Team and Dean of Academic Analytics to develop a plan for data collection and monitoring of student success to improve targeted intervention within and across units.



4. A plan for improved communication across units and departments regarding at-risk students and interventions will be developed.
5. Enhanced professional development plans will be established for faculty and professional advisors.
6. Plans for identifying students in need and employing enhanced advising and career counseling interventions will be developed for exploratory and Bachelor of General Studies students.
7. Assessment plans will be implemented to ensure students are receiving high-quality academic advising in the Academic Success Center and at the department level.

Performance Measures for Objective IV:

1. Percentage of students receiving financial aid literacy training
2. Percentage of students utilizing the Academic Success Center

3. Percentage of identified high-risk students receiving targeted intervention prior to and during probationary status
4. Percentage of students failing to meet academic standards
5. Student admission outcomes (acceptance/admittance rates)
6. Retention and persistence rates of first-time, full-time and transfer students
7. Increase student satisfaction with academic advising as measured by the National Survey of Student Engagement and program-specific assessment
8. Proportion of faculty submitting mid-term grades
9. Percentage of faculty using advising systems to improve communication between faculty and other support offices regarding students of concern
10. Number of units with established models for identifying, monitoring and providing targeted intervention to students in need
11. Percentage of faculty and staff participating in professional development programs related to advising



OBJECTIVE V: INCREASE PUBLIC AWARENESS OF EASTERN'S UNIQUE MISSION AND COMMUNITY

Eastern must continue to build its reputation for providing an excellent liberal arts education and provide a more focused marketing approach that attracts and promotes the achievements of an increasingly talented and diverse student body and faculty.

Area of Emphasis: Tell Our Story Effectively

Priority Area #10: Create an effective and comprehensive marketing campaign

Eastern has made a sizeable investment in marketing since 2013, particularly in the creation of the website, and our marketing efforts have significantly improved. Further improvement is needed, however, given the competitive environment we face.

First, a Marketing Committee will be formed to examine best practices in the industry and develop a coordinated, data-driven, and cost-effective plan to better tell the story of who we are. With this plan in place, we will increase our investment in marketing, with a stronger focus on our liberal arts mission and its connection to the Employability Plan. Finally, we must increase investment in social media marketing to complement the investment in the new website.

1. A Marketing Committee will be created and co-chaired by the Provost and the Vice President of Institutional Advancement, consisting of marketing experts from University Relations and Admissions, faculty and marketing students.
2. The Marketing Committee will develop a marketing plan by spring 2021 based on best practices within higher educa-



tion across all media, but with emphasis on improving our social media presence. Funding for marketing will be unified and proportional spending on segments of the Marketing Plan will be reported.

3. Using the results of the LAC revision and the Employability Plan, the Marketing Committee will refine our marketing message to more clearly reflect our liberal arts focus and unique mission and values, e.g., focus on undergraduate research and experiential learning, directing appropriate resources to promoting this message. The Graduate Division will develop a communication plan for prospective students that emphasizes the distinctive contributions of each graduate program.
4. Graduate programs will be incorporated into a comprehensive marketing plan.

Priority Area #11: Develop and implement systems for communicating with potential students and alumni

One component of an effective marketing campaign should include a complete plan for communication with potential students and a plan for communication between faculty, academic departments and alumni. These efforts may both improve enrollment and support the employability goals outlined above.

1. In conjunction with the development of the Marketing Plan, the Admissions Office will develop a communication plan for prospective students and families that emphasizes the value of a liberal arts education and its fit within the Employability Plan.



2. The Marketing Committee will work with Alumni Affairs to develop a communication plan for alumni and a process to assist academic departments and graduate programs with that communication.

Performance Measures for Objective V:

1. Completion of a Marketing Plan
2. Dollars spent in each segment of the Marketing Plan
3. Proportion of marketing funds that have been centralized into a single, unified marketing account
4. Increase the yield rate of admitted students
5. Increase the average SAT scores and percentage of students from the top 10 and 25 percent of their high school class
6. Increase the percentage of out-of-state students
7. Increase the diversity of the student body and diversity across all majors
8. Increase enrollment and graduation numbers in Graduate programs
9. Increase the resources available for marketing
10. Social media metrics (followers, likes, subscribers, organic social media sources)

CONCLUSION

Eastern has made great strides in fulfilling its mission over the past decade. Following the appointment of Elsa Núñez as President in 2006, this document represents the third round of Strategic Planning completed under her tenure. Stable enrollment paired with successively stronger incoming classes, as measured by high school GPAs and SAT scores, are measures that demonstrate the success of these planning efforts. Since 2006, Eastern has risen to be the top ranked regional public university in New England according to U.S. News & World Report's "Best Colleges Guide."

With this 2020 Strategic Plan, Eastern's vision continues to be the pursuit of excellence as a premier public liberal arts institution. Eastern remains committed to being a university of first choice, providing an exceptional liberal arts education and working to better articulate the University mission to external constituencies. At the same time, Eastern is committed to sound fiscal management and efficient operations to provide the greatest value to our students, their families and the taxpayers of Connecticut. Further, the plan is responsive to the goals of the Board of Regents of Higher Education with a commitment to ensure an affordable education for our students; develop innovative educational programs, including the Liberal Arts Core Curriculum; and graduate students who are prepared to be engaged citizens and contributors to a globally competitive workforce.

The 2020 Strategic Plan continues the work of the 2013 Plan by refocusing our efforts on Areas of Emphasis and Prior-

ty Areas under the five Objectives from the previous plan. The current plan will build on our past accomplishments by including an emphasis on using data analytics to ensure the success of our students and the most effective use of our resources. The Liberal Arts Core will be streamlined to focus on five key employability skills, and we will provide training to ensure that our faculty have the tools they need to teach those skills most effectively. Further, academic departments will be asked to reexamine their curricula to ensure that they are preparing students for the 21st-century global economy.

As with the previous strategic plans, the Areas of Emphasis and Priority Areas outlined above will guide the actions and budget decisions that follow over the next five years. Progress and success will be measured by Eastern's continued role as the leading institution in the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities System and our ability to rise to the top third of the institutions in the Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges. With our focus on the academic core and the efficient use of resources, we will continue to increase the value of an Eastern degree and improve our institutional reputation. While this is an ambitious plan and there is much work ahead, we are proud of the progress we have made through our previous planning efforts. With the continued support and effort of the entire campus community, we look forward to continuing that progress as we deliver on the promise outlined in this plan.

COFE III MEMBERSHIP

Barbara Murdoch, *Associate Professor of Biology, Co-chair*
Michelle Delaney, *Dean of Students, Co-chair*
Kristalyn Salters-Pedneault, *Professor of Psychology, Co-chair*
Carmen Cid, *Dean of Arts and Sciences*
Joseph McGann, *Director of Institutional Advancement*
LaMar Coleman, *Director of Housing and Residential Life*
Emiliano Villanueva, *Associate Professor of Management and Marketing*
Brendan Cunningham, *Professor of Economics*
Scott Moore, *Assistant Professor of History*
Amy Bataille, *Assistant Professor of Health Sciences*
Elizabeth Scott, *Dean of Education and Professional Studies*
Jennifer Brown, *Dean of Academic Analytics*
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