



Empowering Excellence

STRATEGIC PLAN

2025–2030



From the President



At Southeast Community College, we have been on a transformative journey since the launch of our first strategic plan in 2015. Over the past decade, we have been focused on expanding our capacity to produce a skilled workforce and ensuring everyone within our service area has access to the extraordinary value of higher education.

Our 2025-2030 strategic plan, **Empowering Excellence**, represents an exceptional opportunity to leverage our transformational accomplishments over the past decade to accelerate our progress toward our updated vision to “be a national leader in developing high-contact technical and academic experiences.”

As we aspire to be one of the nation’s premier community colleges our new plan shifts our focus from developing and modernizing our infrastructure to empowering our students and communities through new and creative opportunities for collaboration, access, discovery, and growth. We will modernize and refine our internal processes and structures to promote institutional agility and student-centered experiences. We will strengthen our position to proactively engage in the development of collaborative and courageous partnerships and initiatives with our industry, educational, community, and governmental partners.

We are committed to our mission of empowering and transforming the diverse learners and communities of southeast Nebraska through accessible lifelong educational opportunities. **Empowering Excellence** embraces this commitment by establishing a transparent path for student growth and success through institutional agility and unwavering dedication to excellence in meeting the needs of our students, employers, and community.

Our new strategic plan will accelerate our pursuit of producing a skilled workforce and ensuring everyone within our service area has access to the life-changing benefits of higher education. Through this strategic approach, we continue to redefine what a community college can be—delivering extraordinary value that transforms lives and strengthens our region.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Paul Illich".

Dr. Paul Illich
SCC President





Paving the Path

Our strategic plans are an integral part of who we are as a College and who we intend to become. The first two plans have laid the foundation for the transformational improvements and accomplishments we've made in the past ten years.

» *Comprehensive renovation of existing spaces*

» *Strong enrollment growth based on student and employer demand*

» *Addition of more than 20 new academic programs*

» *Successful reaffirmation of accreditation requiring no additional follow-up for the first time in the College's history*

» *Modernization of the College's technology infrastructure*

» *Expansion of student housing on all three campuses*

» *Construction of more than a dozen modern and permanent academic and student-centered facilities*

» *Conversion from a quarter calendar to a semester calendar system*

» *Addition of six learning centers throughout the College's service area*

» *Expansion of collaborative alignment with high-schools and college and university partners*

» *Successful transition to a new funding model*



Mission Statement

The mission of Southeast Community College is to empower and transform the diverse learners and communities of Southeast Nebraska through accessible lifelong educational opportunities. The College provides dynamic and responsive pathways to career and technical, academic transfer, and continuing education programs that contribute to personal, community, and workforce development.



Vision Statement

Southeast Community College seeks to transform and empower its diverse learners for fulfilling careers, life-long learning, and community and societal advancement. The College is committed to ongoing intellectual, financial, and strategic investment in its infrastructure and all phases of its operations.

SCC strives to be a national leader in developing high-contact technical and academic experiences for students through personal and sincere relationships with engaged and invested faculty, staff, and administrators to optimize student persistence, completion, and excellence. These personal connections will be coupled with intensive learning opportunities through co-curricular involvement, research, service learning, and other hands-on learning opportunities. SCC's commitment to student transformation intentionally encompasses the development of essential life skills, including reflective thinking, resiliency, and emotional intelligence proficiency.

The College is dedicated to creating destinations and the highest quality learning climates for our students, employers, and communities through permanent, modern, and collaborative spaces; responsive programs and services; and transformational leadership. SCC will ensure its open-access mission is celebrated and realized through inclusivity, respect, and compassion toward the diverse views and ideas of its various student populations and constituents. The College will work collaboratively and courageously with its higher education partners, employers and industry partners, 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. SCC will utilize valid and dynamic data to respond to local and statewide needs to strengthen the College's diverse communities and economies.

Our Values

EXCELLENCE

Commitment to the highest level of performance in all facets of the College's programs, services, and operations through investment and support of all assets

INTEGRITY

Continuous pursuit of fulfillment of mission, vision, and goals through transparency, resiliency, tireless effort, and ethical practices in all College operations

INNOVATION

Commitment to proactive discovery and application of emerging concepts and technologies, and promotion of the respectful challenging of ideologies and practices to cultivate creativity, alternative viewpoints, and opportunities for ongoing discovery and intellectual growth

INCLUSION

Promotion of opportunities and advancement for a diverse and dynamic student, employee, and community population through the creation of a positive, compassionate, reflective, and respectful culture

STEWARDSHIP & ACCOUNTABILITY

Commitment to our students, employers, and communities through investment in resources to fulfill the College's mission, vision, and goals, and responsible management of human, physical, and financial resources





Empowering Excellence

The 2025-2030 Strategic Plan includes 9 goals and 54 objectives.

GOAL 1 Academic Excellence and Workforce Readiness

GOAL 2 Student Well-Being, Engagement, and Success

GOAL 3 Enrollment Growth and Student Access

GOAL 4 Employee Excellence

GOAL 5 Marketing and Branding Development

GOAL 6 Financial Strength & Resource Development

GOAL 7 Future-Ready Facilities and Infrastructure

GOAL 8 Institutional Agility and Innovation

GOAL 9 Organizational Excellence



GOAL 1

Academic Excellence & Workforce Readiness

Advance instructional programs, expand innovative learning modalities, and strengthen curriculum alignment with workforce and transfer pathways to prepare students for success.

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| 1.1 | Strengthen instructional programs through curriculum alignment with industry and data-informed program analysis and review. |
| 1.2 | Develop creative and adaptable educational pathways (e.g., micro-credentials, apprenticeships, guided pathways, credit for prior learning, community- and industry-based, etc.) that enhance high-quality learning, support the diverse goals and learning needs of all students, and address skilled workforce needs throughout the 15-county service area. |
| 1.3 | Pursue high demand instructional programming based on workforce needs. |
| 1.4 | Develop articulation agreements and transfer pathways to improve seamless student mobility to and from other institutions of higher education. |
| 1.5 | Embed essential skills—including emotional intelligence, professionalism, community engagement, effective communication, critical thinking, etc.—into instruction and student services to support career readiness. |

GOAL 2

Student Well-Being, Engagement, & Success

Enhance student experiences, retention, and engagement through comprehensive support services, accessible learning environments, and opportunities for leadership and personal development

- 2.1** Expand and adapt student success programs and initiatives to improve student retention, persistence, and completion, and meet the evolving needs of diverse student populations.

- 2.2** Prioritize students' physical and mental health by expanding on-campus and community-based services, increasing awareness for students and employees, and developing partnerships that support holistic student well-being.

- 2.3** Increase opportunities for student engagement to create a sense of belonging, community, and leadership across all campuses and learning environments through cocurricular programming, student organizations, on-campus employment, etc.

- 2.4** Promote reflective and critical thinking through enhanced global awareness, service-learning, internships, and other opportunities (e.g., community-based internships, curriculum enhancements, on- and off-campus events, study abroad, international enrollment exchange, and other collaborative initiatives).

- 2.5** Elevate academic excellence through expanded undergraduate research opportunities, academic honors programs, and other scholarly initiatives.

- 2.6** Enhance intercollegiate and intramural athletic programs and activities to align with student demand and promote student engagement and well-being.

- 2.7** Evaluate and expand student scholarship infrastructure to support holistic student needs, emergency aid, short-term credential, non-credit, and other educational opportunities.





GOAL 3

Enrollment Growth and Student Access

Expand access to high-quality education through innovative advising, program delivery, and recruitment strategies for career and technical, academic transfer, and continuing education programs.

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| 3.1 | Facilitate a seamless and accessible student enrollment experience through integrated and collaborative college-wide recruiting, admissions, and advising processes. |
| 3.2 | Streamline student access by aligning simplified institutional-level enrollment processes with responsive educational pathways. |
| 3.3 | Enhance access to programs and services for diverse and underserved populations. |
| 3.4 | Expand career and technical, academic transfer, continuing education courses and programs, and other educational opportunities based on student, employer, and community demand throughout the 15-county service area. |
| 3.5 | Expand engaging and dynamic learning opportunities through hybrid, remote, and flexible course delivery models based on student and employer demand. |
| 3.6 | Strengthen dual-credit offerings and infrastructure to increase accessibility for high school students and streamline matriculation into the College's programs. |
| 3.7 | Expand comprehensive academic and career advising services for all student populations, including prospective, declared, dual-credit, and visiting students. |
| 3.8 | Increase student housing options to meet student demand. |

GOAL 4

Employee Excellence

Foster an inclusive, supportive, and dynamic workplace that attracts, retains, and develops talent while promoting a culture of collaboration and engagement.

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| 4.1 | Broaden efforts to attract, hire, and retain a diverse, talented, and highly qualified faculty and staff. |
| 4.2 | Support, automate, and streamline functions related to hiring, onboarding, and professional development across all departments. |
| 4.3 | Modernize employee appraisal and performance evaluation processes to enhance continuous professional growth and accountability. |
| 4.4 | Invest in faculty and staff training and professional development through a comprehensive model that prioritizes excellence in teaching, learning, leadership, and operations ensuring alignment with institutional priorities. |
| 4.5 | Enhance employee benefits and wellness initiatives to promote overall well-being and employee excellence. |
| 4.6 | Evaluate and align staffing levels across the College to promote strategic priorities and institutional growth. |





GOAL 5

Marketing and Branding Development

Strengthen marketing, communication, and engagement strategies to elevate institutional perception, increase brand affinity, and enhance internal and external relationships in relation to enrollment and fundraising outcomes.

5.1

Develop marketing initiatives that create, reinforce, and increase positive and authentic perceptions of the College's brand.

5.2

Elevate the College's community image and perceptions through public relations and external engagement with media partners, and community and industry leadership.

5.3

Expand alumni and donor engagement efforts to build lifelong connections and encourage continued investment in the College's mission.

5.4

Develop and implement an integrated approach to marketing initiatives for all College locations and departments through audience-first, and other data-informed processes.

GOAL 6

Financial Strength & Resource Development

Strengthen financial planning, resource development, and strategic partnerships to support SCC's vision, mission, and strategic priorities.

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| 6.1 | Develop multi-year integrated budget planning to align with workforce needs and employer demands through the Community College Future Funding model. |
| 6.2 | Increase grant funding to support the College's priorities and operations. |
| 6.3 | Strengthen collaboration with the SCC Educational Foundation to support capital projects, college operations, and other strategic priorities. |
| 6.4 | Expand innovative revenue streams and funding strategies for capital projects, facilities infrastructure, and operations. |
| 6.5 | Optimize auxiliary services to enhance cost-effectiveness, operational efficiency, and service quality, ensuring institutional sustainability. |
| 6.6 | Enhance fund reserve planning and budgeting to strengthen the College's financial position. |





GOAL 7

Future-Ready Facilities and Infrastructure

Integrate advanced technology, modernized facilities, proactive maintenance, and secure digital environments to create and maintain the highest quality student-centered learning experience.

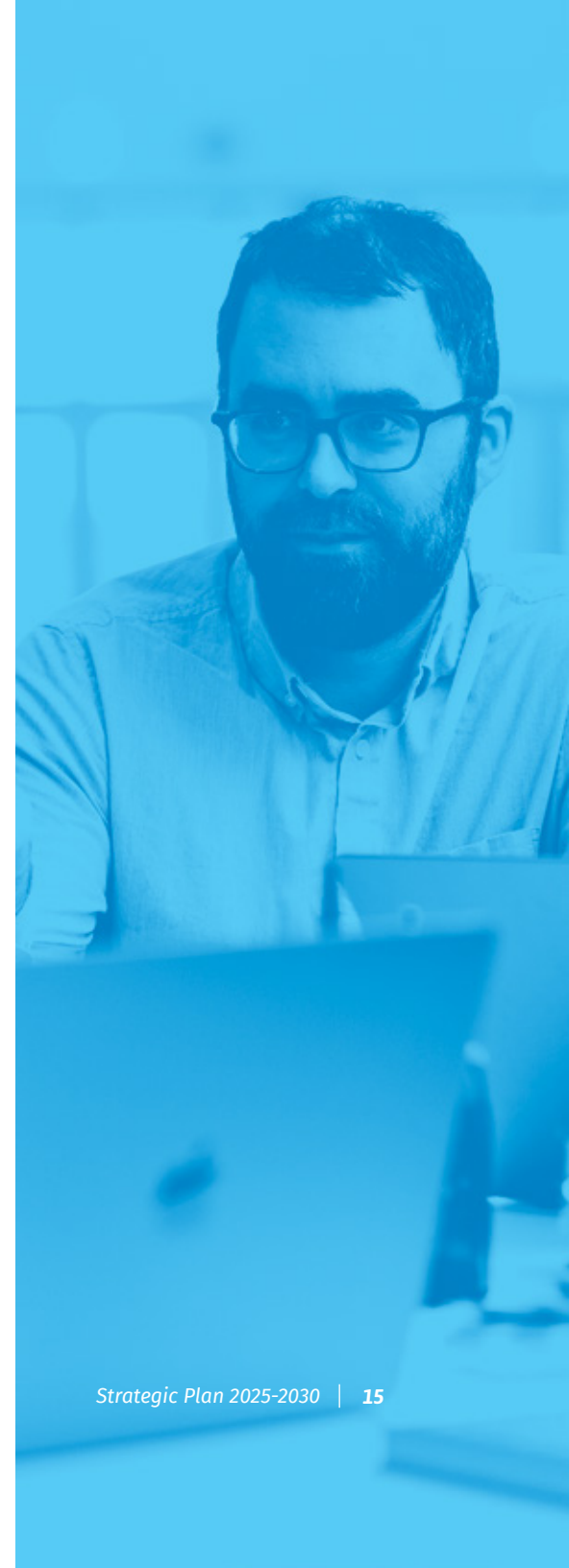
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| 7.1 | Develop proactive maintenance plans to ensure the longevity, safety, and operational efficiency of campus facilities and infrastructure. |
| 7.2 | Expand and improve College facilities, learning environments, and landscapes through the implementation of a comprehensive, sustainable, and renewable facilities master plan to guide campus modernization and expansion. |
| 7.3 | Promote Universal Design principles to support access to all aspects of the College's educational environment. |
| 7.4 | Enhance student-centered spaces by expanding housing, access to health and wellness services, childcare, dining options, and other services that enrich the student experience. |
| 7.5 | Improve safety and security through enhanced policies, procedures, staffing levels, and technology. |
| 7.6 | Invest in updated technology infrastructure and training to strengthen and protect the institution. |
| 7.7 | Enhance instructional programming through industry-aligned capital equipment and advanced classroom technologies. |

GOAL 8

Institutional Agility and Innovation

Strengthen institutional practices to enhance agility and responsiveness to workforce trends and community needs by advancing innovation, adaptability, and a shared commitment to excellence across all areas of the College.

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| 8.1 | Revise and enhance policies and procedures to promote adaptable and excellent student and employee experiences. |
| 8.2 | Evaluate new and modified initiatives, projects, policies, procedures, to ensure continuous improvement and effectiveness (e.g., advising model, placement scores, credentials, etc.), and implement action plans to address identified opportunities. |
| 8.3 | Enhance accreditation, state, federal, and other compliance-related processes to ensure institutional integrity. |
| 8.4 | Design and implement a proactive continuity of operations framework to promote seamless employee and student experiences during transitions or disruptions, ensuring consistency in effective leadership and institutional operations. |
| 8.5 | Assess advanced technology (e.g., artificial intelligence and software solutions) needs across all areas of the College to identify opportunities for innovation and efficiency. |





GOAL 9

Organizational Excellence

Cultivate a culture of excellence through a data-informed, dynamic, and engaged workplace where employees are empowered to contribute to the College's mission, vision, and strategic goals.

9.1

Strengthen internal communication strategies to promote transparency, engagement, institutional alignment, and collaboration across all locations and departments.

9.2

Promote the use of valid and reliable data in decision-making through improved integrated planning, budgeting, program analysis and review, assessment, and institutional processes.

9.3

Advance employee engagement in college-wide programs, committees, events, and initiatives that promotes a sense of belonging and a shared commitment to student success and empowerment (e.g., leadership development, research, educational attainment, committee participation, global awareness, emotional intelligence, etc.).

9.4

Inspire employee excellence, service, and commitment to the College's mission through intentional opportunities for recognition and celebration.

9.5

Position SCC as a premier community college by setting the standard for student-centered institutional excellence through transformative operational practices, data-informed decision-making, and a culture of innovation.

9.6

Maximize a positive and engaging organizational climate by encouraging input, reflective and transparent communication, and compassion and respect toward the views and ideas of others.

Strategic Planning Process

The development of **Empowering Excellence** was an 18-month, collaborative effort with a foundation of data-informed planning and broad-based engagement.

FALL 2023

Comprehensive environmental scan, which compiled internal and external data trends for all areas of the college, including enrollment, academic offerings, student success, human resources, accreditation, facilities, finances, technology, and other areas of operations.

SPRING 2024

The College launched a Strategic Planning Team that had broad-based representation of faculty, staff, and administrators. The Planning Team championed the process, attended presentations and listening sessions, and synthesized insights from SCC's comprehensive environmental scan.

SPRING TO FALL 2024

More than 600 employees and 50 students engaged with the process during more than 25 internal listening sessions. SCC hosted twelve community sessions across the 15-county service area. These conversations brought key themes to the surface to inform the plan's direction. As the themes were identified, the Planning Team hosted a gallery walk and discussions of those themes during Strategic Planning Week.

The Administrative Team worked closely with the Planning Team to refine objectives and respond to institutional trends and opportunities. Throughout the process, the Board of Governors remained actively engaged. Board members attended listening sessions, received regular updates, and reviewed early drafts of the plan.

SPRING 2025

Finalized a plan focused on empowering excellence across academics, access, student success, workforce alignment, and operational agility.

MAY 2025

The Board of Governors approved the plan.

JULY 2025

Implementation began on July 1, 2025.

STRATEGIC PLAN TEAM

Shawna Herwick	Team Chair; Associate Vice President, Accreditation & Strategic Initiatives
Rebecca Carr	Team Staff; Associate Director, Strategic Analytics
Michelle Birkel	Executive Director, SCC Educational Foundation
Jacob Bonander	Program Chair/Faculty, Humanities
Courtney Bruntz	Associate Dean, Arts & Sciences
Mackenzie Chapek	Advisor
Connor Diehl	Administrative Assistant
Scott Eiland	Program Chair/Faculty, Electronic Systems Technology
Nicole Trevena-Flores	Program Chair/Faculty, Social Sciences & Global Education
Marguerite Himmelberg	Executive Director, Office of Work-Based Learning
David Kamran	Assistant Director, Continuing Education
Hailey Klein	Advisor
Kat Kreikemeier	Administrative Director, Admissions
Michael Mellon	Program Chair/Faculty, Sciences
Carolee Ritter	Dean, Arts & Sciences
Barry Smith	Program Chair/Faculty, Automotive Technology
Brian Stark	Associate Dean, Dual Credit
Jes Vetter	Administrative Assistant
Theresa Webster	Dean of Students

ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM

Paul Illich	President
Brett Bright	Vice President, Student Success
Bev Cummins	Vice President, Campus Operations & Development
Shawna Herwick	Associate Vice President, Accreditation & Strategic Initiatives
Amy Jorgens	Vice President, Administrative Services
Seth Meranda	Administrative Director, Marketing & Communications
Joel Michaelis	Vice President, Instruction
Robin Moore	Administrative Director, Institutional Effectiveness & Research
Mike Pegram	Associate Vice President, Student Enrollment
Bruce Tangeman	Vice President, Human Resources

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