



Strategic Plan 2013



EASTERN
CONNECTICUT
STATE UNIVERSITY





Preface

The year 2013 marks the successful completion of the 2008–13 Strategic Plan and the launch of a new Strategic Plan for Eastern Connecticut State University. Now part of a newly integrated structure of public higher education in Connecticut, and in the seventh year of the presidency of Elsa Núñez, Eastern remains committed to its mission, vision and core values.

Building on that commitment, the goal of the new 2013 Strategic Plan is to provide students with rigorous and affordable academic programs and pre-professional experiences that prepare them for careers and graduate school. The plan promotes a diverse campus culture through which students are inspired by outstanding faculty and motivated classmates, develop a lifelong network, take on leadership roles, and become responsible and engaged citizens. Eastern continues

to advance its position as a university of first choice, attracting students, faculty and staff who value its mission as a public liberal arts college.

In early 2012, the University began identifying key issues and lessons learned from the 2008-13 plan. Spearheading the planning effort, the President designated the Committee on the Future of Eastern (COFE II), a working committee composed of administrators, faculty and staff, to provide leadership throughout the planning process. Seven working committees were created and met throughout the fall of that year. These committees developed a series of proposals with input from the University community that became the basis for the new Strategic Plan. At the end of the fall semester, COFE organized the working committees' proposals into five objectives and several initiatives, with input from the President's extended staff during a two-day retreat. The resulting structure and content of the



plan were then introduced to the Eastern community at the January 2013 University Meeting. Additional input from the community was gathered through several forums held early in the spring 2013 semester.

COFE II continued to refine the plan and its organization throughout the spring semester. In early April, the final draft of the plan was promulgated for additional community feedback, and additional community forums were held. As a result of the input from the working committees and broader community, the Strategic Plan embodies five objectives and related initiatives that will act as a guiding strategy for moving Eastern forward over the next several years.

Since the adoption of the 2008-13 plan, the University has successfully enacted academic initiatives aimed

at promoting student success and achievement, including the Expanding Horizons and Liberal Arts Work programs. Implementation of other initiatives resulted in integration of the liberal arts core and First-Year Program, as well as the creation of an Academic Services Center. Curricular and co-curricular service activities were aligned with the creation of the Center for Community Engagement. A more engaged and learner-focused campus culture was promoted through better utilization of the Student Center to meet Eastern's cultural and academic objectives, expanded intramural and recreation offerings, and a series of initiatives that enhanced Eastern's residential environment.

Innovative academic initiatives were developed through the implementation of an academic plan, and excellence and distinctiveness were promoted through the Exemplary Program review process. Administrative alignment with the mission, vision and values was furthered with the development and implementation of a Physical Master Plan, an Information Technology Plan, an Institutional Advancement Plan, a University Relations Plan and a comprehensive Diversity Plan. Significant progress was made in attracting students who can benefit from Eastern's academic programs. At the same time, these students also make significant contributions to curricular and co-curricular activities, to the residential campus culture, and to strengthening relationships between the campus and the local community.

While the new Strategic Plan builds on the success of the previous plan, shifting external conditions provide context for the next five years. These external conditions include increased concern about college costs and changing state-wide workforce needs, both of which pose challenges while also creating unique opportunities. The new plan continues to build on the

identity of Eastern as a residential liberal arts college, strengthened by core values of academic excellence, engagement, inclusion, integrity, empowerment and social responsibility. The plan also reflects the new structure of public higher education in the state and the imperative to enhance the value of an Eastern education and degree. It reflects Eastern's commitment to a diverse student body with a range of aspirations and need for support services, scheduling options and course formats.

The new Strategic Plan reinforces Eastern's unique position in the Connecticut higher education community as the state's only public liberal arts university. The University's public mission separates it from the state's private colleges. Moreover, the small size of Eastern, its close-knit campus community, and the focus on undergraduate education distinguish Eastern from larger universities. Eastern's mission to provide an interdisciplinary liberal arts education — grounded in applied learning — in a residential setting makes the University unique among the four state universities in Connecticut. Maintaining and





strengthening this differentiated identity is a core premise of the new Strategic Plan. Eastern will gauge its success in pursuing its distinctive mission through comparison to other Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges, as the University aspires to increase its rank from the middle to the top third of those colleges in measurable outcomes.



Highlights of the 2013 Strategic Plan include:

- A focus on Eastern's high quality but affordable liberal arts education: Further increase the value of the educational experience offered on this primarily undergraduate residential campus. Reinforce that an Eastern degree is a good investment in terms of career opportunities and that, equally significant, students benefit from personal growth and transition to independence; the creation of lifelong professional and personal networks; community involvement; leadership opportunities; and exposure to arts, culture and diversity.
- An emphasis on increasing the four-year graduation rate.
- Strategies focused on preparing students for immediate career entry through structured pre-professional experiences; integrative learning opportunities in curricular and co-curricular settings; new advising practices prior to graduation; the creation of new majors; and the updating of existing majors. These strategies prepare students for the demands of growing economic sectors and for modern workplace practices.
- Greater emphasis on students' ability to take advantage of the new Connecticut State Colleges and Universities (ConnSCU) structure as a way to complete degrees on time, with an emphasis on the transferability of courses and experiences into Eastern.
- Reinforcement of the importance of high-impact practices, such as mentored research and creative projects and global field courses, to further academic rigor and aid recruitment of a diverse and talented student body and faculty.
- Increased emphasis on public awareness about Eastern's uniqueness and about the accomplishments of students, faculty and alumni.
- Support for curriculum review to ensure that the "core abilities" of a liberal arts education are embedded and



infused across the curriculum. Such skills as critical thinking, oral and written communication, collaboration, information literacy, informed cultural and historical perspectives, and a commitment to adaptability and lifelong learning will be practiced by all students regardless of major.

- Renewed focus on providing a range of student support services that enable students to meet the demands of a rigorous curriculum while ensuring that well-prepared students find challenge and intellectual stimulation. Eastern aspires to enroll students who are well-prepared for college. At the same time, the University's commitment to access requires continued provision of student support. With two-thirds of non-retained students transferring to other institutions, Eastern will also direct its energies to providing stimulating opportunities for students who might otherwise transfer.
- Review of Eastern's offerings at the undergraduate and graduate levels will inform resource allocations and ensure that graduate programs are self-supporting or contribute to the vibrancy of undergraduate programs.
- A focus on engagement with the local community to address disparities in educational outcomes, the need to support a vibrant home for Eastern; and take advantage of the town of Willimantic as a learning and research laboratory.
- Priority placed on having a skilled, diverse workforce at Eastern, through a range of initiatives that address employee professional development and the promotion of an inclusive, diverse campus community.

Mission

The mission of Eastern Connecticut State University, the state's designated public liberal arts university, is to provide high quality undergraduate and select graduate programs to a diverse population of talented students. Eastern's inclusive residential campus, outstanding faculty, emphasis on teaching excellence and exceptional facilities raise students' aspirations and cultivate engagement, inquiry, integrity and social responsibility. In the traditional arts and sciences, as well

as in pre-professional programs that are grounded in the liberal arts, Eastern students apply theory in practical settings. Faculty research, scholarship, creative work and community engagement inform teaching and learning, advance knowledge and enrich the liberal arts curriculum. The University is committed to serving the state of Connecticut and the nation by preparing its students for their future personal, professional and public roles, as leaders in both their communities and professional fields.





Vision

Aspiring to be a public liberal arts college of first choice, Eastern Connecticut State University will create an unparalleled college experience for its students and achieve national distinction for its academic programs. Eastern's faculty, students and staff will enhance the University's position as an intellectual community, acknowledged for its engaged teaching, learning, research and creative work. Advancing its position as a model for social responsibility, environmental stewardship and educational access, the University will be recognized as a resource that is responsive to the needs of the region and the state.



Core Values

As members of a learning and teaching community committed to academic excellence, the faculty, students, staff and administration of Eastern Connecticut State University, the state's public liberal arts institution, share this set of values:

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Eastern embraces rigorous academic standards and intellectual inquiry as a benchmark for educational achievement for all of its students, faculty and staff. This expectation informs every mode of learning on campus, from individual courses and degree programs to university presentations and cultural events.

ENGAGEMENT

Members of the university community develop intellectually, creatively and socially through active and reflective learning in and outside the classroom, interdisciplinary studies, and individual and collaborative research.

INCLUSION

Eastern is committed to providing educational access while building a campus community that embraces diversity and differences, enriched by a global perspective.

INTEGRITY

Members of the university community are expected to behave ethically and honorably. Learning encompasses both intellectual and character development.

EMPOWERMENT

Eastern fosters a safe, nurturing environment that promotes intellectual curiosity, student achievement and lifelong learning. Through rigorous inquiry and personal interaction, members of the community grow confident as independent, critical thinkers.

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Social responsibility is promoted and encouraged at Eastern through service to those in need, being active in the community, protecting our natural resources, engaging in the democratic political process and other socially responsible actions. Social responsibility includes an ethical commitment to oneself and the community at large.



Strategic Plan: Objectives



I: Maximize the Value of an Eastern Degree

II: Ensure that Programs are Relevant, Effective and Challenging

III: Enhance Learning through Campus and Community Engagement in Integrative Learning Experiences

IV: Assist Students, Staff and Faculty in Achieving Their Full Potential

V: Increase Public Awareness of Eastern's Unique Mission and Community



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.

Provide a residential private college experience at a public university price

Through the living-learning experience at Eastern, students develop skills and behaviors to prepare them for responsible citizenship, successful careers and independence. Within a safe and secure environment with attractive and modern facilities, the campus allows students to engage in a host of enriching activities, such as academic and cultural events, exposure to a diverse community and extensive civic engagement opportunities. Since Eastern faculty are active researchers, scholars and artists, students have many opportunities to collaborate with them on research and creative projects. Participation in clubs, leadership organizations, athletics and study abroad further expands students' horizons. Students who attend residential liberal arts universities like Eastern have high aspirations. They challenge and motivate each other, becoming lifelong friends and creative project collaborators, and forming the foundation of a valuable network of alumni. Eastern offers an affordable liberal arts education adapted to modern conditions.

Establish policies and procedures to facilitate degree completion in four years

Ensuring that students are able to complete their degrees within the expected timeframe is one way to address the growing cost of higher education. As such, Eastern will promote timely graduation in four years or less through policies that help students work with advisors to create and follow a four-year plan



for graduation. Academic departments will review their curriculum and design procedures to make certain that students are able to graduate on time. The creation of more comprehensive articulation agreements will help transfer students apply more credits toward an Eastern degree, and the creation of an Office of Student Transition Services will help all first-year and transfer students quickly understand Eastern's academic requirements so that they can immediately begin progressing toward graduation. Additional initiatives include the provision of student-focused class scheduling, alternative ways to earn credit and improved approaches to remedial education.

Educate students and families on debt accumulation and provide additional financial support

Excessive student loan debt is a growing problem for college students in Connecticut and across the country. Much of this problem stems from a lack of knowledge regarding financial aid options on the part of students and their families. To help address this issue, Eastern will continue to develop ways of educating students and their parents about the costs of student loans and alternative ways to finance college degrees. These educational efforts will be developed through the collaboration of numerous departments across campus and will be provided at multiple stages of the college experience, all in an effort to limit the amounts that students borrow. Financial aid and merit-based awards will be increased and lower-cost, on-campus housing options will be explored.

Connect students to alumni and professional networks

One of the greatest benefits of a liberal arts education is the potential for close connections that students develop with their classmates, faculty and alumni. These connections grow into networks

that help students succeed in their professional fields and enrich their lives after graduation. To better foster the development of these networks, academic programs will increase and formalize professional connections and create mentoring partnerships among alumni, students and faculty. They will promote additional pre-professional experiences for current students. Students will also gain valuable experience and connections by engaging in undergraduate research, scholarship and creative work with faculty mentors and classmates.



Control costs and ensure effective use of Eastern's resources

As a public institution that is funded primarily through student tuition and state subsidies, Eastern has an obligation to make certain that its resources are used effectively, and is committed to carefully managing its operating costs. The University will review and revise the Academic and Exemplary Program Review process to make certain that resources are targeted to those programs that contribute the most to Eastern's overall mission and provide each student with

an excellent and affordable education. Departments will explore additional external sources of funding in an effort to bring more resources to campus. To ensure that this plan is effectively implemented, all administrative units will develop operational plans that align with the 2013 Strategic Plan and promote the continued effective use of Eastern's public resources.

Benchmarks:

- I.1.** Increase the average SAT scores and percentage of students from the top 10 percent and 25 percent of their high school class
- I.2.** Increase four- and six-year graduation rates
- I.3.** Increase the percentage of students receiving merit and need-based aid
- I.4.** Monitor average loan debt of Eastern students
- I.5.** Increase the percentage of students participating in mentoring programs with alumni and professionals
- I.6.** Increase the percentage of students entering a career of their choice immediately after graduation



Objective 2

Ensure that Programs are Relevant, Effective and Challenging

Eastern will strengthen its academic vitality and relevance by continually reviewing and refining undergraduate majors, graduate programs and co-curricular programming to align with advances in the disciplines and pedagogy, student development and the changing workforce needs of the state.

Prepare students for a complex and evolving global economy

Eastern will continue to assess and update its liberal arts core and program curricula to make sure that students are developing as creative and critical thinkers and leaders with highly marketable skills. Faculty will continue to engage in research and creative activity so that they remain connected to their evolving disciplines and can convey current theories and information to their students. Eastern's curriculum will increasingly ensure that all students develop critical thinking, writing, information literacy, and analytical skills and abilities. Given the centrality of these skills to each student's education, all academic programs will be revised to make certain that students are aware of the importance of these skills early in their academic careers and continuously work to develop and appreciate them as they move through their academic programs. Opportunities for global study through study abroad, global field courses and co-curricular programming to broaden each student's educational experience will be expanded.

Enrich the Graduate Program offerings at Eastern

As with undergraduate offerings, Eastern's graduate programs are in need of continuous review to make certain that they are relevant to the needs of Connecticut's workforce. To begin this process, Eastern will systematically review all graduate programs, enhancing graduate offerings by assessing the viability of existing programs and adding new programs that meet current workforce demands. This ongoing process will ensure that delivery methods match the needs of the target market. Options will be reviewed for off-site locations in nearby high-demand communities, and for online and other alternative course delivery and financing strategies. This review process will also make sure that incoming graduate students

receive appropriate orientation into their program, while graduate faculty will be provided developmental support. Once revised graduate programs are in place, a marketing strategy to better target and recruit new students will be implemented.

Increase the academic nature of campus programming

A residential, liberal arts campus should provide seamless connections between formal and informal campus activities and the academic content in the curriculum. To strengthen these connections, the existing Student Center Advisory Board will be merged into a new Campus Co-Curricular Programming Board composed of faculty from an assortment of departments, residence life and student activities staff, and students. This Board will solicit ideas from the academic departments, establish yearly themes and plan events well in advance so that faculty members can incorporate these activities into their syllabi.

Benchmarks:

- 2.1. Increase the retention and persistence rates within majors
- 2.2. Increase the percentage of students entering graduate school or a career of their choice immediately after graduation
- 2.3. Increase the percentage of students completing Global Field Courses or Study Abroad
- 2.4. Increase enrollments and completions in graduate programs
- 2.5. Increase the productivity in research and creative activity of faculty
- 2.6. Assess innovation in new and existing undergraduate majors and graduate programs through annual reports and the Academic Program Review Process
- 2.7. Increase resources available to support faculty research and creative activity
- 2.8. Create a campus co-curricular programming board





Objective 3

Enhance Learning through Campus and Community Engagement in Integrative Learning Experiences

Eastern students will develop leadership and civic engagement values and skills through an integrative learning approach that allows students to make connections between learning in the traditional classroom and applied experiences on and beyond campus. These experiences will transform Eastern students as they transform their communities.

Provide a liberal arts education with practical applications through integrative learning

The value of any college degree must be linked in part to career planning and preparation. Eastern will enhance the number and quality of its pre-professional experiences, strengthening the link between student success in academic programs and preparation for successful careers after graduation. To accomplish this goal, academic departments will update program offerings and provide new programs so that the curriculum aligns with changing employment trends and student interests. Eastern will





continue to expand and strengthen Liberal Arts Work opportunities, provide early professional connections and mentorship through alumni and professional partnerships, offer early and continued training needed for career success after graduation, and expand opportunities to engage in undergraduate research and creative activities. The Center for Internships and Career Development and Eastern's Work Hub will also continue to develop non-credit Liberal Arts Work and other opportunities to provide students with valuable career-related skills.

Provide meaningful connections between residence halls and the larger community

Eastern's residence halls will expand themed housing with links to social and other issues, and to community service opportunities coordinated by the Center for Community Engagement. Residents will be provided the opportunity to organize and participate in numerous ongoing activities that involve external organizations issues and interests.

Provide integrative learning experiences for Eastern students by supporting the Windham community with early childhood social and cognitive development programs

Early childhood education is an essential piece of every person's educational success. As such, Eastern can provide vital support to the Windham community to assist in preparing young children to enter kindergarten with a strong educational foundation. Eastern's Center for Early Childhood Education and Child and Family Development Resource Center will increase their outreach to local community

agencies, schools and families, to support them in preparing young children to begin their formal education. At the same time, these programs will provide Eastern students with meaningful integrative learning opportunities for developing leadership and administrative skills and their understanding of how to contribute to the well-being of their community.

Provide integrative learning experiences for Eastern students by supporting the Windham community with coordinated engagement programs for Windham Public School students

As with early childhood education, Eastern can provide substantial support to assist Windham middle and high school students in achieving academic success, while providing university students with valuable learning opportunities. Working through the Center for Community Engagement, Eastern will develop and implement a number of ongoing programs that connect university students with the Windham Public Schools in the areas where their support will be the most effective in helping Windham close its achievement gap. Eastern students will receive valuable





training in tutoring in specific content areas, cultural competency and working with English Language Learner students, while also developing their leadership and administrative skills and their understanding of how to contribute to the well-being of their community.

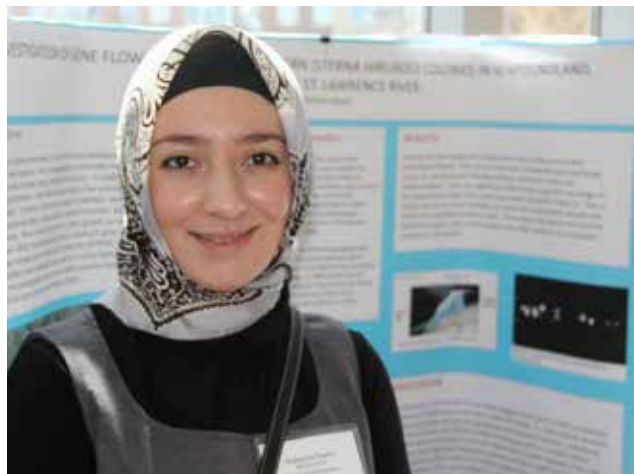
Provide integrative learning experiences for Eastern students by providing health and wellness programs for Windham Public School students and their families

Health and wellness can have a significant impact on students' academic performance. In an effort to help address the need for health and wellness education in the Windham community, Eastern's Health and Physical Education Department will work with the Center for Community Engagement to

develop school day and after-school programs to teach Windham students about healthy eating and other habits. These programs will provide integrative learning opportunities for Eastern students, helping to develop their leadership and administrative skills and their understanding of how to contribute to the well-being of their community.

Benchmarks:

- 3.1.** Increase the number of Liberal Arts Work approved opportunities across all majors
- 3.2.** Increase the percentage of students graduating with the Liberal Arts Work attribute
- 3.3.** Increase the percentage of students presenting or publishing their undergraduate research or creative work
- 3.4.** Increase the percentage of students completing Global Field Courses or Study Abroad
- 3.5.** Increase the percentage of students engaged in integrative learning experiences within the Windham community
- 3.6.** Increase the number of Windham Public School students attending Eastern activities
- 3.7.** Increase the number of Windham Public School students enrolling at Eastern or another university



Objective 4

Assist Students, Staff and Faculty in Achieving Their Full Potential

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

Increase student success through targeted support and improved support services, including counseling, advising, tutoring, library services and financial aid

Procedures will be implemented to identify and assist those students in need of supplementary academic, psychological and motivational support as they adjust to college life. Different evaluative tools will be employed to identify students in need of various supplementary services, develop new services, provide additional resources where needed, and track student utilization and improvement.



Enhance advising services provided to students by faculty and professional advisors

Effective academic advising is essential to student success. The role of the faculty advisor in this process is crucial and goes beyond assisting students with course scheduling. Faculty and professional advisors are also an essential source of information about campus resources. To make sure that all students receive effective academic advising, Eastern will continue to develop and strengthen its advising programs, so that attention is paid to the particular needs of first-year, transfer, continuing, part-time and graduate students.

Create a coordinated Parents Engagement Program

So that parents can better understand their student's college experience and be better prepared to offer appropriate support, Eastern will coordinate the University's communications with parents through a central office. Communication will be designed to inform parents about the expectations and

experiences their students are encountering at each stage of their progress toward their degree. Communication will be provided through an expanded orientation program for parents of incoming first-year students and a website for parents of all students.

Enhance professional development opportunities for all members of Eastern's workforce

To ensure that all Eastern employees are able to utilize professional development opportunities, a new Office of Professional Development (OPD) will be created as a centralized and comprehensive office that provides professional development to all faculty and staff.

The OPD will replace the existing Center for Educational Excellence, which had focused exclusively on instructional faculty. The scope and mission of the OPD will be to provide development opportunities to all Eastern employees so that each member of the campus community can strive to reach their full potential and advance their careers in ways that serve Eastern's unique mission.

This office will identify the developmental needs of specific workgroups and actively work to meet those needs. Foremost among its duties will be the organizing of workshops, conferences, in-service training and other professional development-related opportunities on campus. This office will also serve as a clearinghouse for various off-campus developmental opportunities and coordinate the review processes that award money to take advantage of those opportunities.

Benchmarks:

- 4.1. Increase the percentage of students utilizing the Academic Services Center
- 4.2. Increase the percentage of students meeting the standards for Satisfactory Academic Progress and good academic standing
- 4.3. Increase student, faculty and staff awareness of Counseling and Psychological Services
- 4.4. Increase the number of counselors in Counseling and Psychological Services
- 4.5. Increase the retention and persistence rates of first-time, full-time and transfer students
- 4.6. Increase student satisfaction with academic advising as measured by the National Survey of Student Engagement
- 4.7. Increase the percentage of faculty and staff participating in professional development programs





Objective 5

Increase Public Awareness of Eastern's Unique Mission and Community

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

Attract talented and diverse students who are prepared to succeed at Eastern

In an effort to make certain that all incoming students are a strong match for Eastern's liberal arts mission, Eastern will develop a rigorous predictive model of student success. Using this model, Eastern will recruit first-year and transfer students who are most likely to excel in the university's liberal arts curriculum. Comprehensive articulation agreements with other state colleges and universities, along with the Office of Student Transition Services, will also ensure that talented and diverse students are able to transfer to Eastern with ease. The Office of Equity and Diversity, advised by a streamlined Diversity and Social Justice Council, will provide direction in these processes.

New and ongoing initiatives aimed at attracting talented and diverse students will include increased use of merit scholarships and institutional need-based aid for first-year, transfer and continuing students, more effective recruiting by departments, and the use of technology and data-based recruitment efforts.

Attract a talented and diverse faculty whose exceptional scholarly and pedagogical abilities strengthen Eastern's liberal arts education

Eastern currently has the most diverse faculty of all the universities in Connecticut but must take steps to make certain that this level of diversity is maintained.



Eastern's Office of Equity and Diversity will monitor hiring policies to maintain a high level of diversity across Eastern's workforce. New faculty will also be recruited based on their scholarly and pedagogical abilities, with an emphasis on their ability to promote undergraduate research and other applied experiences. Support will be provided to faculty to implement high impact practices, including mentored student research, scholarship and creative activity.

Increase public awareness of Eastern's unique mission and vision

One of Eastern's greatest strengths is its public liberal arts mission. This mission distinguishes it from other public and private universities in Connecticut. To ensure that it remains a university of first choice for students seeking a high quality yet affordable liberal arts education, Eastern must develop a more focused messaging platform to increase external awareness of its unique mission and all of the benefits that accompany an Eastern degree. This new messaging platform will emphasize that the value of an Eastern degree stems from an affordable liberal education grounded in applied learning. To demonstrate this value, Eastern will showcase the successes of its alumni, faculty members and

current students, while highlighting the effectiveness of a liberal arts education in preparing students for careers of their choosing. Eastern will also increase the promotion of its athletic programs to demonstrate the academic and athletic successes of its well-rounded student athletes. The new messaging platform will be conveyed to the public through an enhancement of Eastern's website and other online assets; and with more effectively targeted bought media.

Benchmarks:

- 5.1. Increase the yield rate of admitted applicants
- 5.2. Increase the average SAT scores and percentage of students from the top 10 percent and 25 percent of their high school class
- 5.3. Increase the percentage of students receiving merit aid
- 5.4. Increase the amount spent on merit- and need-based aid
- 5.5. Increase the percentage of out-of-state and international students
- 5.6. Increase the diversity of the student body and diversity across all majors
- 5.7. Increase the number of full-time/tenure-track faculty
- 5.8. Reduce the average class size
- 5.9. Increase the percentage of courses taught by full-time/tenure-track faculty
- 5.10. Increase the productivity in research and creative activity of faculty
- 5.11. Increase the resources available for marketing

Conclusion



Eastern has made considerable progress toward achieving its mission in recent years. Following the appointment of Elsa Núñez as Eastern's sixth president in 2006, the University embarked on an inclusive, campus-wide planning process which resulted in the 2008–13 Strategic Plan, aimed at advancing Eastern's public liberal arts mission. Higher SAT scores of entering freshmen and improved graduation rates are just two measures that demonstrate the success of those efforts.

With this 2013 Strategic Plan, Eastern's vision continues to be the pursuit of excellence as a premier public liberal arts university. Whether within the ranks of regional universities in the Northeast, as a member of the Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges, or through other measures, the University is poised to solidify its identity as a university of first choice for prospective students, faculty candidates and other stakeholders. At the same time, the University is committed to efficient operation and sound fiscal management to provide the greatest value to students, their families and the taxpayers of the State of Connecticut. Further, the 2013 Strategic Plan is responsive to the goals of the Board of Regents of Higher Education for the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities, with a commitment to ensure an affordable education for our students; develop innovative educational programs; and graduate students who are prepared to be engaged citizens and members of a globally competitive workforce.

This Strategic Plan continues the work that began in 2008. The destination of the University remains unchanged, with an unwavering commitment to provide an excellent, yet affordable, liberal arts education that is informed by practical and applied learning. Eastern remains committed to its other core values of engagement, inclusion, integrity, empowerment and social responsibility. As with the previous Strategic Plan, the objectives and initiatives outlined



above will serve as the foundation that guides the decisions and actions that follow. Progress and success will be measured by Eastern's continued role as a leader in the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities System and its ability to rise to the top third of the institutions in the Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges.

By enhancing its academic programs; expanding experiential learning and other student engagement opportunities; supporting the success of students, faculty and staff; and attracting more talented students and faculty, the University will heighten the value of an Eastern degree and improve its academic credentials and institutional reputation. To be sure, this is an ambitious plan, but the Eastern community is proud of the progress we have made. With the continued support and efforts of all stakeholders, we look forward to continuing that progress as we deliver on the promise outlined in this plan.





Objective

Objective 1. Maximize the value of an Eastern degree

- 1.a.** Provide a residential private college experience at a public university price
- 1.b.** Establish policies and procedures to facilitate degree completion in four years
- 1.c.** Educate students and families on debt accumulation and provide additional financial support
- 1.d.** Connect students to alumni and professional networks
- 1.e.** Control costs and ensure effective use of Eastern's resources

Performance Measures

- 1.** Increase the average SAT scores and percentage of students from the top 10 percent and 25 percent of their high school class
- 2.** Increase the four- and six-year graduation rates of students
- 3.** Increase the percentage of students receiving merit and need-based aid
- 4.** Monitor the average student loan debt of Eastern students
- 5.** Increase the percentage of students participating in mentoring programs with alumni and professionals
- 6.** Increase the percentage of students entering a career of their choice immediately after graduation

Objective

Objective 2. Ensure that programs are relevant, effective and challenging

- 2.a.** Prepare students for a complex and evolving global economy
- 2.b.** Enrich the graduate program offerings at Eastern
- 2.c.** Increase the academic nature of campus programming

Performance Measures

- 1.** Increase the retention and persistence rates within majors
- 2.** Increase the percentage of students entering graduate school or a career of their choice immediately after graduation
- 3.** Increase the percentage of students completing Global Field Courses or Study Abroad
- 4.** Increase enrollments and completions in graduate programs
- 5.** Increase the productivity in research and creative activity of faculty
- 6.** Assess innovation in new and existing undergraduate majors and graduate programs through annual reports and the Academic Program Review Process
- 7.** Increase the resources available for the support of research and creative activity

Objective

Objective 3. Enhance learning through campus and community engagement in integrative learning experiences

- 3.a. Provide a liberal arts education with practical applications through integrative learning
- 3.b. Provide meaningful connections between residence halls and the larger community
- 3.c. Provide integrative learning experiences for Eastern students by supporting the Windham community with early childhood social and cognitive development programs
- 3.d. Provide integrative learning experiences for Eastern students by supporting the Windham community with coordinated engagement programs for Windham Public School students
- 3.e. Provide integrative learning experiences for Eastern students by providing health and wellness programs for Windham Public School students and their families

Performance Measures

- 1. Increase the number of Liberal Arts Work approved opportunities across all majors
- 2. Increase the percentage of students graduating with the LAW attribution
- 3. Increase the percentage of students presenting or publishing their undergraduate research or creative work
- 4. Increase the percentage of students completing Global Field Courses or Study Abroad
- 5. Increase the percentage of students engaged in integrative learning experiences within the Windham community
- 6. Increase the number of Windham Public School students attending Eastern activities
- 7. Increase the number of Windham Public School students enrolling at Eastern or another university



Objective

Objective 4. Assist students, staff and faculty in achieving their full potential

- 4.a.** Increase student success through targeted support and improved support services, including counseling, advising, tutoring, library services and financial aid
- 4.b.** Enhance advising services provided to students by faculty and professional advisors
- 4.c.** Create a coordinated Parents' Engagement Program
- 4.d.** Enhance the professional development opportunities for all members of Eastern's workforce

Performance Measures

- 1.** Increase the percentage of students utilizing the Academic Services Center
- 2.** Increase the percentage of students meeting the standards for Satisfactory Academic Progress and good academic standing.
- 3.** Increase student, faculty and staff awareness of Counseling and Psychological Services
- 4.** Increase the number of counselors in Counseling and Psychological Services
- 5.** Increase the retention and persistence rates of first-time, full-time and transfer students
- 6.** Increase student satisfaction with academic advising as measured by the National Survey of Student Engagement
- 7.** Increase the percentage of faculty and staff participating in professional development programs.





Objective

Objective 5. Increase public awareness of Eastern's unique mission and community

- 5.a. Attract talented and diverse students who are prepared to succeed at Eastern
- 5.b. Attract a talented and diverse faculty whose exceptional scholarly and pedagogical abilities strengthen Eastern's liberal arts education
- 5.c. Increase public awareness of Eastern's unique mission and vision

Performance Measures

1. Increase the yield rate of admitted applicants
2. Increase the average SAT scores and percentage of students from the top 10 percent and 25 percent of their high school class
3. Increase the percentage of students receiving merit aid
4. Increase the amount spent on merit- and need-based aid
5. Increase the percentage of out-of-state and international students
6. Increase the diversity of the student body and diversity across all majors
7. Increase the number of full-time/tenure-track faculty
8. Reduce the average class size
9. Increase the percentage of courses taught by full-time/tenure-track faculty
10. Increase the productivity in research and creative activity of faculty
11. Increase resources available for marketing







EASTERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON THE FUTURE OF EASTERN

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