

Northeast Community College
Strategic Plan
2004-2009

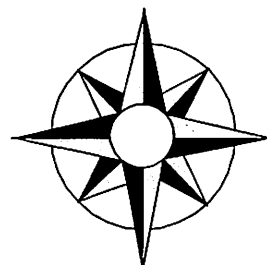


Northeast
Community College

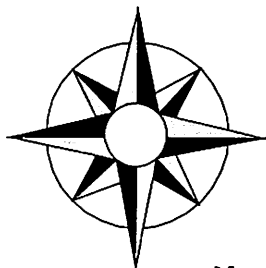
Norfolk, Nebraska

July 8, 2004

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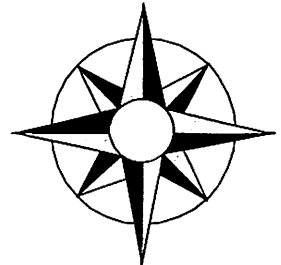
Introduction

Northeast Community College is a comprehensive public, two-year institution. The Northeast Community College Strategic Plan 2003-2008 was constructed with the assistance of many of the college's constituencies: community members, Board members, students, faculty, and staff. The Plan was developed to provide a brief description of the goals, initiatives, and strategies that would most dramatically allow the college to achieve its stated mission over a five-year period.

The Plan assumes a local governance structure and reflects the organizational structure of the institution, which includes the Administrative Services, Educational Services, Student Services, and Institutional Advancement Divisions. It is intended to provide guidance in making institutional decisions related to developing educational programs and services, division planning, and budget allocation.

The first year of implementation of the Plan resulted in many accomplishments and demonstrated institutional effectiveness in meeting the diverse needs of the college's public. The lessons learned during 2003-2004 have resulted in the revised Northeast Community College Strategic Plan 2004-2009.

Northeast Community College Mission & Purposes



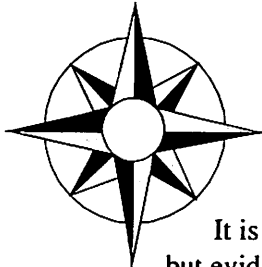
Mission

Northeast Community College provides comprehensive, lifelong, learning-centered educational opportunities and services to meet the diverse needs of our public.

Purposes

Northeast provides:

1. career education programs that develop knowledge and workforce skills;
2. the first two years of an undergraduate curriculum so students may successfully transfer to and perform at four-year colleges and universities;
3. a general education program that promotes the development of basic knowledge and skills;
4. customized educational programs that meet personal and professional needs of individuals, businesses, and industries;
5. student support services and student life opportunities that promote social, personal, and educational development;
6. transitional learning opportunities that enable students to be successful in subsequent related college course work;
7. resources and services that contribute to the intellectual and cultural life of the community; and
8. assistance to communities in furthering business, industry, community, and economic development.



Historical Background of Strategic Planning

It is uncertain when formalized, long-range planning was first introduced at Northeast, but evidence does support the fact that long-range planning existed prior to the North Central Accreditation visit in 1983. A statewide emphasis on strategic planning began in the early nineties and resulted in the 1992 document, *Strategic Directions for a New Century: Community College Education for the 1990s and Beyond*. Using the aforementioned document, Northeast began two initiatives that served to focus strategic planning for the college and its entire 20-county service area. The first effort resulted in a 1992 college-wide marketing plan. Following this, administrators developed a strategic plan for 1993-98. The 1993-98 Strategic Plan incorporated the views and ideas of college staff and board members. It focused on eight separate goal statements.

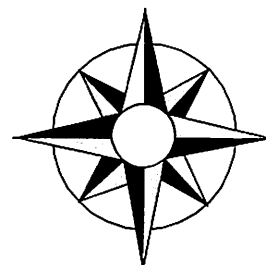
In 1995, a new president was hired and immediately began to refine Northeast's planning process. The process started with the preparation of a shared vision, followed by the determination of value statements, and culminated with adopted goals and strategies developed with input from the Board of Governors, students, faculty, staff, and the general public. The resulting 1997-2002 Strategic Plan had 12 major goals, 77 objectives, and more than 200 strategies. An institutional plan was also developed to supplement the 1997-2002 Strategic Plan. These two documents were to be updated on a constant basis so they would remain current and be an effective tool for Northeast's planning process. The strategic planning process was a function of the Assessment Committee that reported to the Administrative Council, the body of individuals who provided leadership to the college through a shared governance system from 1995 to 2002.

Northeast had a change in its presidency again in 2001. Committee structure was totally revamped in 2002. One major change included the president taking responsibility for strategic planning. In August 2002, the president initiated the strategic planning process through the development of a structured approach. An equal number of college staff members and community/constituent representatives met during a daylong retreat to provide input on institutional goals based on college and community needs. Five strategic goals emerged from this retreat. Goals were then put on the college Website and public comment was requested and utilized. This was the first time that Northeast had turned to its external community on such a scale to gather input relative to strategic planning.

Five strategic planning taskforces were then formed internally to draft initiatives and strategies for each of the strategic goals. Throughout the process, the following question was asked: "What are the right things for Northeast Community College to do in order to most dramatically achieve its mission over the next five years?" Within each of the five strategic goals, the question was asked: "What are the five most important initiatives to advance this goal?" The listing of institutional goals, initiatives, and strategies were refined into the body of the Strategic Plan.

The Strategic Plan also includes core indicators and a process of annual evaluation. Core indicators of institutional effectiveness measure institutional progress toward fulfilling the college's stated mission and purposes. Each year, core indicators will be compiled and serve as quantifiable benchmarks to evaluate and update the Strategic Plan. Because planning must never become static, the Strategic Plan is linked to Northeast's mission and purposes and should provide a clear blueprint for years to come.

Strategic Planning Goals



Strategic Planning Goals

The planning and editing process has identified five goals as the most important priorities for the Plan:

- Goal A - To provide quality education
- Goal B - To recruit and retain students and expand markets
- Goal C - To maintain and expand student support services
- Goal D - To promote utilization and growth of institutional resources
- Goal E - To expand partnerships with emphasis on rural revitalization

Plan to Achieve the Goals

This Plan consists of five institutional goals that should most dramatically allow the college to achieve its stated mission over the next five years. Under each goal, there are up to five initiatives that reflect the most important activities Northeast should support to ensure the accomplishment of its goals. Initiatives may be new or related to current activities of the college. Under each initiative, there are up to five strategies that spell out how initiatives can be accomplished. Strategies specify methods to be used by college personnel that will most likely result in a particular initiative being achieved.

According to the Northeast mission statement, the college “provides . . . opportunities and services to meet the diverse needs of our public.” This Plan has been designed to help ensure just that.



*Meeting the
Diverse
Needs of Our
Public
Through:
Quality
Education*

Goal A - To provide quality education.

Initiative 1: To provide programs and curriculum that meet the needs of the people and communities served by Northeast.

Strategies:

- a. Provide developmental education and transitional programs that improve a student's potential for meeting educational goals.
- b. Deliver educational programs that address the four general education goals (writing, problem solving, math, and social skills).
- c. Prepare students for successful transfer for continued education.
- d. Provide vocational programs that prepare graduates with entry-level job skills.
- e. Conduct a systematic assessment of student learning.

Initiative 2: To provide educational services and opportunities that enhance the learning experience.

Strategies:

- a. Continue to strengthen library resources.
- b. Maintain and foster the use of academic transition and support services.
- c. Provide a variety of student support services outside the classroom.
- d. Implement a comprehensive orientation to student life and student support services in conjunction with semester start dates.

Initiative 3: To encourage and support teaching methods that provide quality learning experiences.

Strategies:

- a. Evaluate classroom technology and determine what technologies are needed to meet instructional needs.
- b. Remain current with instructional supplies, equipment, and technology.
- c. Implement a planned replacement/upgrade cycle for instructional technologies.

Initiative 4: To promote accessible alternative course delivery of educational programming that fosters lifelong learning.

Strategies:

- a. Evaluate patrons' needs in terms of course scheduling and delivery and determine which desired delivery method(s) the college will acquire/provide.
- b. Expand current course offerings using alternative delivery methods and technology to support delivery beyond the traditional classroom.
- c. Support faculty as they develop and deliver on-line and distance learning courses and provide training on newly acquired instructional technologies.

Goal B - To recruit and retain students and expand markets.

Initiative 1: To increase efforts to attract additional markets.

Strategies:

- a. Develop recruitment formats targeted for nontraditional learners using mentors, support groups, and alumni.
- b. Design recruitment strategies to encourage new ethnic and cultural populations to attend Northeast.
- c. Promote on-line courses to attract Internet student learners.
- d. Investigate programs and processes that would appeal to area corporate employees.
- e. Explore methods of attracting students from beyond the Northeast service area.

Initiative 2: To enhance marketing of college programs and services.

Strategies:

- a. Create and implement a comprehensive marketing plan that focuses on all potential markets and populations.
- b. Market the benefits of Northeast's affordability, transferability, and accessibility.
- c. Explore ways to promote that attending college is an obtainable goal through financial assistance programs and flexible payment options.
- d. Inform potential students about the technologies used by the college and promote courses using alternative delivery methods.

Initiative 3: To strengthen ongoing recruitment efforts.

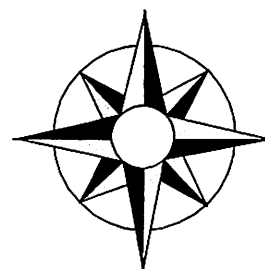
Strategies:

- a. Implement a recruitment plan to contact and communicate with prospective students.
- b. Continue the recruitment of traditional students from area and regional high schools.
- c. Include students and alumni in the recruiting process.
- d. Increase employees' awareness of their impact on the recruitment and retention process.

Initiative 4: To develop college-wide student retention strategies.

Strategies:

- a. Create and initiate a comprehensive retention plan.
- b. Develop support services and creative scheduling to meet the needs of the nontraditional learner.
- c. Investigate composition and needs of minority populations and devise a plan to best serve their identified needs.
- d. Ensure under-prepared students are placed in opportunities to succeed and transition successfully to college credit classes and programs.
- e. Bridge students from ABE/ESL/GED into college credit programs.



*Meeting the
Diverse
Needs of Our
Public
Through:
**Innovative
Enrollments***

Initiative 5: To plan for the opening of the South Sioux City Campus.

Strategies:

- a. Determine programs and support services to be offered.
- b. Develop a facilities plan for the campus.
- c. Investigate and identify funding sources.
- d. Complete required approval processes.
- e. Hire staff.

Goal C - To maintain and expand student support services.

Initiative 1: To create, expand, and support an interactive technological learning environment.

Strategies:

- a. Enhance support services using Web-based and other current technology.
- b. Maximize the utilization of the college e-mail system.
- c. Assess student technology skills early to incorporate appropriate placement and training.
- d. Implement online COMPASS Assessment on- and off-campus.
- e. Ensure college operations process information efficiently through software and hardware upgrades.

Initiative 2: To develop, market, and evaluate a plan to enhance nonacademic services.

Strategies:

- a. Expand affordable, on-campus housing and food services.
- b. Increase and market nonacademic activities and the utilization of student life areas and services.
- c. Enhance and promote student health services.
- d. Promote and expand counseling services.
- e. Establish methods to evaluate the effectiveness and use of all student services.

Initiative 3: To create a professional, student-centered environment that focuses on seamless services.

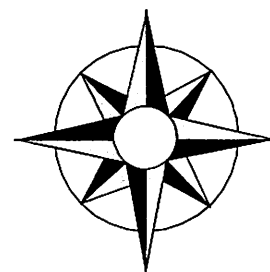
Strategies:

- a. Seek ways to centralize academic support services.
- b. Establish a comprehensive "one-stop" welcome and advisement center.
- c. Enhance customer service efforts from all employees.
- d. Improve off-campus support services.
- e. Continue to promote the safety and security of students.

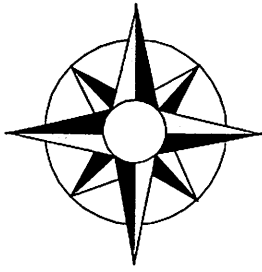
Initiative 4: To identify needs and methods of delivery for student support services.

Strategies:

- a. Provide a variety of college-wide programs and entrance exams that accommodate scheduling needs.
- b. Include on-line learning skills as part of a recommended College Success Skills class.
- c. Explore the need for an office of multicultural affairs to assist with assimilation and retention efforts for minority populations.
- d. Define outsourcing alternatives to increase delivery of support services.



*Meeting the
Diverse
Needs of Our
Public
Through:
Superior
Services*



*Meeting the
Diverse
Needs of Our
Public
Through:
Efficient
Operations*

Goal D - To promote utilization and growth of institutional resources.

Initiative 1: To ensure effective and efficient use of all financial resources.

Strategies:

- a. Provide efficient use of available financial resources through an annual budgeting process.
- b. Apply equitable distribution of funding to each administrative division.
- c. Ensure sound fiscal policies and practices to maximize use of financial resources.
- d. Review programs and services to ensure viability and cost effectiveness.
- e. Maintain compliance with external laws and regulations.

Initiative 2: To promote growth of financial resources in support of college operations.

Strategies:

- a. Enhance fund-raising activities of the College Foundation to support college initiatives.
- b. Strengthen relationships with businesses, foundations, and individuals to foster donations in support of college operations.
- c. Encourage increased grant development.
- d. Expand funding sources through increased interaction with federal and state lawmakers.
- e. Enhance Nebraska community college funding formula to ensure equitable distribution of funds.

Initiative 3: Provide, protect, enhance, and maintain college facilities.

Strategies:

- a. Utilize the master facilities plan for maintenance, renovation, and new construction needs.
- b. Promote an appealing and inviting learning environment for students.
- c. Ensure compliance with federal and state environmental and safety mandates to include accessibility concerns.
- d. Provide custodial and maintenance services to ensure effective and efficient operation of facilities.

Initiative 4: To provide quality human resources in support of college operations.

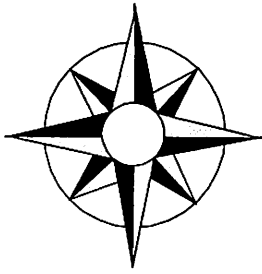
Strategies:

- a. Recruit and retain a qualified faculty and staff.
- b. Offer competitive salaries, benefit packages, and quality support services to employees.
- c. Initiate an employee development plan through continuing education and in-house training opportunities.
- d. Broaden employee diversity.
- e. Provide adequate staffing levels in addressing workload issues.

Initiative 5: To remain current with technology.

Strategies:

- a. Establish standards of technology literacy for personnel and provide training for employees to master current and emerging technologies.
- b. Evaluate the college's technology infrastructure and enhance it to meet current and future needs.
- c. Utilize a technology plan to address deficiencies and provide for innovative learning environments.
- d. Ensure that technologies for support services are regularly updated and supported.
- e. Provide assistance for students in the area of technology.



*Meeting the
Diverse
Needs of Our
Public
Through:
Strong
Partnerships*

Goal E - To expand partnerships with emphasis on rural revitalization.

Initiative 1: To create and foster partnerships with agencies and organizations.

Strategies:

- a. Identify entities and organizations for possible partnerships.
- b. Educate agencies regarding benefits of Northeast Community College.
- c. Explore common projects for expanded partnerships.
- d. Encourage divisions to become involved in off-campus activities and organizations.
- e. Expand and strengthen Lifelong Learning Center partnerships for higher education purposes.

Initiative 2: To expand partnerships with K-12 schools.

Strategies:

- a. Expand utilization of K-12 schools for training, lifelong learning, and workshops.
- b. Improve and expand K-12 activities on the college campus.
- c. Expand Project Challenge offerings.
- d. Expand technical/vocational opportunities to include: dual credit, articulated credit, and Tech Prep.

Initiative 3: To further partnerships with higher education.

Strategies:

- a. Expand partnership opportunities with higher educational institutions.
- b. Promote and enlarge associate to baccalaureate (A to B) programs.
- c. Continue to develop articulation agreements.
- d. Widen participation with statewide consortiums.
- e. Increase collaboration among the Nebraska community colleges in offering statewide programs and courses.

Initiative 4: To strengthen and expand business and industry alliances.

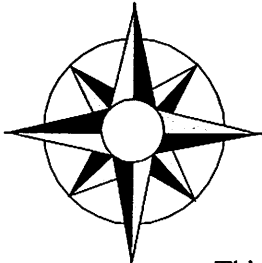
Strategies:

- a. Identify business and industry partnership opportunities.
- b. Expand customized corporate training opportunities in Northeast's 20-county area.
- c. Increase contact with business and industry by expanding the off-campus involvement of Northeast personnel.
- d. Partner with Business and Industry to increase acquisition of equipment and training resources.

Initiative 5: To facilitate community and economic development.

Strategies:

- a. Partner with economic development agencies to package a series that includes economic development, grant writing, and leadership training.
- b. Expand community visits and marketing to increase awareness of college programs.
- c. Partner with entities that encourage youth and adults to reside in northeast Nebraska.

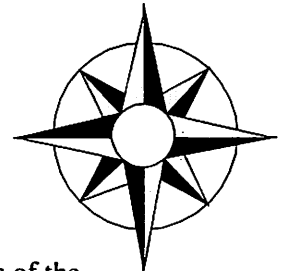


Implementation Guidelines

This Plan will become integrated into the institutional decision-making process used by all college leaders. The following guidelines permit those leaders who will be overseeing various elements of the Plan to be directly involved in the implementation and the establishment of timetables and budgets for the Plan:

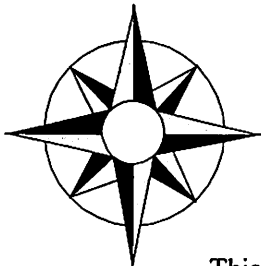
- President shall be responsible for the Strategic Plan and submit an updated Plan annually to the Board of Governors for their approval in July.
- The Strategic Plan shall be placed on the college Website. All employees will be expected to become familiar with the elements of the Plan and seek ways to incorporate them into the daily operations of the college.
- Plan shall be respectful to the mission of Northeast. It shall be interpreted in the context of the mission and purpose statements of the college, as approved by the Board of Governors.
- President and vice presidents shall request appropriate groups and individuals to develop specific strategies for implementing the Strategic Plan. Expectations and timelines for particular projects shall be established.
- Implementation of the Plan shall be subject to the availability of budgeted resources. Administration shall reconcile conflicts between the Plan and limited resources by developing budget proposals prioritizing budget requests in terms of their relevance and importance within the Plan.

Evaluation Guidelines



To keep the Plan current, there must be a process leading to annual adjustments of the Plan. The guidelines, below, shall govern the evaluation and revision of the Plan:

- Annual evaluation of the Strategic Plan shall be conducted at the direction of the president.
- Executive Director of Institutional Advancement shall regularly review the implementation of the Plan by receiving reports from those accountable for various aspects of the Plan and convey findings to the president and vice presidents. President shall report regularly to the campus community regarding progress toward the goals of the Plan.
- Identified core indicators of institutional effectiveness shall be compiled each year by the Director of Assessment and Institutional Research and used to assess the “well-being” of the institution.
- Taking into account implementation progress reports and core indicators of institutional effectiveness, president, vice presidents and executive director shall oversee revisions to and extensions of the Strategic Plan.
- All subsequent Strategic Plan updates, revisions, and extensions shall be subject to the Board of Governors’ approval.



Core Indicators of Institutional Effectiveness

This set of core indicators reflects the mission and purposes of Northeast Community College. These core indicators shall be quantifiable and measure institutional progress toward fulfilling the college's stated mission and purposes. If the Strategic Plan is a roadmap of how the college shall fulfill its mission over the next five years and if the college is effectively implementing the Strategic Plan, then progress should be observable at the "core" of the college - the fulfillment of its mission and purposes.

Student Progress:

- **Fall-to-Fall Persistence**
Proportion of a fall first-time, full-time student cohort who is still enrolled for at least one credit hour the following fall term and has not completed a degree or certificate, reported each year from entry to exit.
- **Degree Completion Rate (demonstration of mastery of program outcomes)**
Proportion of a fall first-time, full-time student cohort who completes a degree or certificate, as reported at annual intervals.

Career Preparation:

- **Placement Rate in the Workforce**
Proportion of a graduating student cohort who obtains employment within one year of graduation and the proportion who gain employment in a field directly related to the obtained skill within one year of graduation.
- **Employer Assessment of Students**
Proportion of a sample of regional employers in a given field indicating that their employees who received training at Northeast exhibit skills and job performance at rates equivalent or superior to other entry-level employees.
- **Employer Assessment of Programs and Services**
Proportion of Advisory Committee members and employers who have indicated that the program requirements meet the entry-level skills and needs for that industry.

Transfer Preparation:

- **Performance After Transfer**
Proportion of regular college-level courses at the transfer (receiving) institution completed with a grade of "C" or better by students who previously attended Northeast, compared to a parallel proportion obtained for students who began their studies as first-time freshmen at the transfer institution or transfer students from other institutions.

Developmental Education:

- Student Success in Subsequent Related Coursework
Proportion of a student cohort assessed as deficient in one or more of the basic skills (reading, writing, and computation) who successfully completes developmental work and a subsequent college-level course, with a grade of "C" or better, within one year.

General Education:

- Student Demonstration of General Education Goals (communication, problem solving, math, and social skills).
Proportion of graduating students who score at or above the national norm on the Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP) exam. Additional evaluation of general education skills will be reported based on the results of a writing sample and a self-reporting survey.

Student Satisfaction:

- Northeast surveys its students to assess how the college is meeting the students' expectations in various areas.
To establish benchmarks, the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) survey will be administered every three to five years. An in-house Student Satisfaction Survey (SSS) will be used during intervening years for comparison with established benchmarks. Student satisfaction data is collected in the areas of access, affordability, courses, programs, and support services.

College Participation Rates for Service Area:

- Enrollment Rate of High School Graduates
Proportion of high school graduates within the 20-county service area registered for credit courses as compared to previous years.
- Enrollment Rate of Nontraditional Adult Learners
Proportion of nontraditional adult learners (25 years of age and older) within the 20-county service area who are registered for credit and non-credit courses as compared to previous years. Market participation rates are based on the 2000 census data and current graduation records.
- Enrollment Rate of Minorities
Proportion of minorities enrolled at NECC compared to enrollment rates at other Nebraska community colleges, Nebraska population census, and the 20-county service area as compared to previous years.

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