

Prestige without Elitism: NEC's Strategic Plan 2016-2021

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

New England College's 2016-2021 Strategic Plan is designed to galvanize the NEC community around a compelling vision that will steer the institution's efforts over the next five years. This Plan is the result of a process that combined the leadership of the Board and senior administrators with the significant contributions of faculty, staff, students, and alumni. The ultimate purpose of the Plan is to engage and challenge the College community in the implementation of a comprehensive 5-year plan that specifies goals, initiatives, outcomes, measures, resources, and an implementation framework that will move the College successfully toward achieving its aspirations.

The Strategic Plan builds on the College's traditions and strengths to present bold Initiatives that respond to the changing dynamics of higher education and positions the College for a vibrant future.

The Strategic Plan's Vision Statement:

New England College will be the most highly respected and sought-after small private college in New Hampshire, known for its innovative academic programs and as a leader in experiential education.

The plan focuses on four College-wide priorities to achieve this Vision. To become a reality, these priorities require a coordinated effort across all College departments, divisions, and areas. Each priority includes components and operational items that cut across traditional organizational units in the institution.

We will achieve the 2016-2021 Vision by:

- 1** Continuing to reinvent and redefine the pedagogical model at the undergraduate and graduate levels, a model that continues to embrace the interconnection between the liberal arts and professional programs and that is distinctive and informed by the three shared commitments (our commitments to: a. Engaged and experiential teaching and learning; b. Natural environment; and c. Civic engagement).

How: A combination of bold and innovative practices in new programs, new delivery formats, and integration of the best aspects of each delivery format to support student success in all

programs; enhanced implementation of the three shared commitments. NEC will:

1. Strengthen the interconnection between NEC's liberal arts foundation and NEC's professional programs
2. Focus on assessment and the use of data to inform decision-making that reflects institutional priorities and shared commitments
3. Redefine the delivery of our pedagogical model utilizing the best parts of all modalities: face to face; online; hybrid; low-residency; competency-based; within individual courses or programs when appropriate
4. Create strong and seamless links between undergraduate and graduate programs
5. Operationalize the three shared commitments
6. Diversify the curricular offerings in undergraduate and graduate programs, in disciplines aligning to labor market trends and aligning with NEC's Mission
7. Provide links between students and employers, to better prepare students in furthering the practical application of their knowledge and skills
8. Create a robust, state of the art technology environment
9. Use educational technology in purposeful ways that will support the NEC infrastructure and student learning in all academic programs
10. Use technology tools to help track students' academic progress and use data to enhance our academic, co-curricular, and support programs

2 Communicating our whole-college (not just residential) distinctiveness to all constituents: prospective students, their families, teachers and counselors, alumni, the higher education community, funders, government, etc.

How: Communicating our distinctive features. NEC will:

1. Align mission and branding for traditional residential and non-traditional programs into a comprehensive institutional identity
2. Create a College-wide marketing plan with corresponding budget and infrastructure to achieve the plan
3. Develop and ensure content of the marketing plan delivers robust messaging consistent with institutional identity and branding to all constituents
4. Use the College's website as the primary hub of information for all prospective students as well as for other constituencies
5. Create venues to disseminate and publicize the intellectual capital of faculty and students
6. Provide effective and meaningful means of communication to the friends and members of the NEC community

3 Achieving excess demand for our undergraduate, online continuing education, and graduate programs

How: Creating a highly efficient enrollment and retention model. NEC will:

1. Recreate the Optimal Enrollment Planning Model
2. Define “best fit” NEC students aligned with mission, shared commitments, and institutional priorities
3. Develop seamless and proficient new student recruitment systems and processes
4. Develop new business model for online growth
5. Design and implement a comprehensive retention plan to increase student success and satisfaction at all degree levels and programs

4 Establishing and nurturing a truly positive internal culture and morale; making this happen in potentially unconventional ways

How: Establishing a positive internal culture that makes NEC a desired employer and admired organization to faculty, staff, students, alumni, and external constituents. NEC will:

1. Enhance facilities and physical environment in order to support shared commitments, student recruitment and retention, and promote a positive work environment.
2. Be recognized as one of the “best places to work” in New Hampshire
3. Attract the best employees to the College
4. Increase Faculty/Staff diversity by 10%