A Strategic Plan

2023-2027 REENVISIONING WVNCC

Adopted January 2023

Re-envisioning WNCC: 2023-2027

Vision Statement

A leader in community college education with focus on student success, excellence in teaching, innovative and relevant programs and services, and collaborations supporting dynamic partnerships inside and outside the College.

Mission Statement

To provide learning opportunities – **enriching** lives, **invigorating** communities, and **changing** futures

Values Statement

Lifelong Learning – WNCC provides opportunities for the continuing development and expansion of knowledge and skills for students of all ages, whether through enrollment at the College or training throughout the Nebraska Panhandle. This is accomplished, in part, through the College's commitment to the continued personal and professional growth of its employees.

Student and Community Service – WNCC endeavors to build and maintain productive relationships with our students and communities. Our goal is to meet the needs of the students and communities we serve by creating educational environments in which students can attain their educational goals and communities can thrive.

Student Success – WNCC strives to create meaningful learning environments to support each student in developing and accomplishing their personal, educational, and career goals and to prepare them for a lifetime of learning and contribution to society.

Honesty, Integrity, and Transparency – WNCC is committed to honesty, integrity, and transparent behavior in all of its academic, personal, and professional endeavors.   It is expected that all members of the community will speak and act with veracity and hold themselves accountable for their words and actions.

Collaboration and Communication – WNCC utilizes effective and timely communication to advocate for collaboration. The College is dedicated to working and communicating collegially, creating working and learning environments which are conducive to the open exchange of ideas, mutual understanding, shared consensus, and an increased return on investment.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement – WNCC understands the importance of embracing change to stay current and relevant. We strive to infuse innovation into the campus culture and curriculum in pursuit of continuous improvement and excellence in education, projects, processes, and services.

Respect for All People and Perspectives – WNCC recognizes the inherent value of each member of the college community and seeks to create a diverse environment where the dignity of each individual is honored and all members of the community are allowed to flourish and be their authentic selves.

Strategic Goals

Goal I: RE-ENVISIONING STUDENT SUCCESS

Students and their success are at the heart of WNCC. We best support students in their journeys by first acknowledging and honoring the expectations of students of today and relinquishing the beliefs that students will conform to the WNCC of yesterday.

Our priorities must be a reduction of barriers for students throughout the enrollment experience – from application to attainment – and the creation of a student experience that fosters a sense of belonging and support, regardless of the student's station in life. Ultimately, students should leave WNCC with the competence and confidence to succeed in whatever their chosen path.

OBJECTIVES

1.1   "Meet students where they are"

    1.11   Develop a definition for and consistent measurement of student success, dependent on varying educational goals—traditional-aged or adult learners, residential or non-residential students, students planning on transfer or entering the workforce, full-time or part-time students, or dual-credit students.

    1.12   Implement strategic course scheduling by expanding access in time, place, duration, and delivery in response to student and community needs and barriers created by current practices.

    1.13   Simplify and automate, as possible, enrollment, business, and service processes.

    1.14   Create a one-stop "welcome center" at each campus that is designed to provide positive and personalized student/customer service and staffed by a student services professional who can respond to and provide guidance on a multitude of questions about WNCC processes and services—credit or non-credit and in person or virtual.

1.2   Improved retention, persistence, and completion rates

    1.21   As part of the strategic enrollment management plan, develop a plan of action to increase persistence and retention rates of all student populations.

    1.22   Develop a superior student experience for all students regardless of their location and educational, career, and economic goals, to include:

- a reimagined first-year experience, including new student orientation;

- an assessment of the current first-year seminar requirement;

- expanded opportunities for meaningful civic, service-learning, and student engagement activities; and

- creation of an environment where each student has a sense of belonging.

1.23   Assess WNCC's current academic advising model and explore the development of an intrusive advising model utilizing professional academic advisors.

1.24   Ensure viability of guided pathways for all programs of study.

1.25   Expand "wrap around" services (e.g., short-term housing and meal plans, daycare services, food pantry, mental health, health services) to better support students with critical needs.

1.26   Expand career-exploration or work-based learning opportunities for all students.

1.27   Utilize co-curricular assessment data to strengthen support services and programming, which are based on standards grounded in student development theory.

SUCCESS MEASURES

Student retention | Completion rates | Persistence rates | Survey responses | Work-based learning opportunities | Co-curricular assessment

Goal II: RE-ENVISIONING ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

The number one responsibility of the College is to provide exceptional educational opportunities that support the individual needs of students and the collective needs of the communities we serve. Our greatest challenges are in providing academic and training programs that are not only relevant to immediate needs but sensitive to, and somewhat predictive of, the ever-changing needs of the future and ensuring that the quality of instruction is maintained with evolving technologies and modalities.

A comprehensive, student-centered academic master plan will demand agility in order to be responsive to current and future student needs and will require forward-thinking processes and planning in order to sustain the viability of the institution.

OBJECTIVES

2.1   Leadership in rural education through the expansion of educational opportunities throughout the service area

2.11   Create new academic and career & technical education programs that are tied to market demand and support the economic needs of the Panhandle.

2.12   Refresh existing academic and career & technical education programs based on program review and assessment outcomes.

2.13   Expand the delivery of academic and career & technical education programs and training in Alliance and Sidney and to communities in the Panhandle.

2.14   Expand educational opportunities through the Panhandle Advantage, as well as shared commitments to student success through recruitment, application, advising, and financial aid opportunities.

2.2   Accelerated credentialing to better meet the immediate needs of the Panhandle

2.21   Explore and implement industry certifications, micro-credentials, and badging opportunities.

2.22   Increase the number of stackable certificate programs leading to an associate's degree.

2.23   Expand non-credit to credit pathways through the recognition of learning acquired outside of the classroom – credential stacking, credit for prior learning, American Council on Education (ACE) credit, and other portfolio experiences.

2.24   Explore competency-based learning models, particularly those with clear labor market connections, to enable accelerated credentials.

2.3   Enhanced partnerships with high schools in the service area

2.31   In collaboration with high schools in the service area, develop a master plan for dual-credit education, addressing core issues such as:

- clarity of expectations for high schools and WNCC;
- processes that are more efficient and accessible for high schools and students;
- academic placement;
- annual enrollment targets;
- adjunct instructor onboarding;
- rigor of academic experience; and
- an improved overall student experience.

2.32   Develop clear academic pathways for dual-credit students to facilitate seamless transition to WNCC and increase enrollments from the population.

2.4   Exceptional academic quality

2.41   Support faculty in the development of high-impact instructional practices that meet the learning needs of diverse student populations.

2.42   Improve the delivery and design of online education to ensure the highest quality academic experience for students.

2.43   Incorporate a clear and consistent approach to program review and assessment, using the results to maintain curricular excellence and continuous quality improvement.

2.44   Redesign course-level evaluations to better support instructional design and delivery.

2.45   Expand the use of textbook alternatives such as open educational resources (OER) to enhance student access to course materials.

SUCCESS MEASURES

Total awards **|** Transfer rates **|** Post-graduation success **|** Academic programs **|** Dual credit **|** Assessment data **|** Online enrollments | Online evaluation data

Goal III: RE-ENVISIONING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

External Communities

WNCC plays a critical role in the success of the Panhandle of Nebraska. Education and market-relevant skills are key to individual, community, and county economic success, and through our academic and workforce training programs, WNCC is in a position to help fuel the economy of the Panhandle and drive economic mobility. We are only one element in this critical formula, and we can only successfully fulfill our educational mission by building strong and enduring relationships and partnerships with the communities we serve. When working together, we are all aligned toward student success and thriving, resilient economies.

As a strong, visionary partner, WNCC will be the preferred choice for the education and training needs for the communities it serves.

OBJECTIVES

3.1.   Greater WNCC presence in the Panhandle

3.11   Assess the viability of the Alliance and Sidney centers with a goal of re-vitalizing the locations as education centers for the northern and southern tiers of the Panhandle.

3.12   In collaboration with local city governments and industries, establish workforce training centers in Alliance and Kimball.

3.13   Implement an active community coordinator program to deliver WNCC educational and lifelong learning programming to communities throughout the Panhandle.

3.14   Develop a communication plan with participants of lifelong learning programs, particularly youth programs, to foster ongoing connections with WNCC and develop an untapped stream for future enrollments.

3.15   Actively use strategic storytelling to proudly share the positive impacts of our students, faculty, staff, and alumni.

3.2.   Strengthened connections with local, regional, state, and national industry leaders

3.21   Engage local and regional industries as partners in the development and maintenance of academic and training programs.

3.22   Explore and secure private, public, and corporate sponsorships to support innovative academic and training programs.

3.23   Develop expectations for WNCC's use of advisory committees to strengthen and bolster academic programs, particularly in the areas of recruiting students, aligning curriculum with current industry standards, connecting students to internships, and supporting program instructional needs.

3.3.   Strengthened connections with local, state, and regional educational institutions

3.31   Increase the number of program-level articulation agreements with four-year colleges and universities in Nebraska and beyond to expand smooth transfer opportunities for students.

3.32   In collaboration with the University of Nebraska Medical Center, create a regional center for healthcare education in western Nebraska, with expectations for cooperative recruitment and retention strategies.

3.33   Broaden relationships with pre-K – 12 schools in the Panhandle to establish WNCC in the minds of potential students as a preferred choice for post-secondary education.

Internal Communities

WNCC's most critical resource is its employees. They enable student success, respond to employer needs, and are the heart and soul of the difference WNCC makes to the Panhandle of Nebraska. And perhaps there is no other area more significantly impacted by nation-wide shifts in expectations post-pandemic than human resources.

In order to thrive as an institution, we must be innovative not only in our efforts to recruit the most qualified workforce, but also in how we support and engage employees in order to retain high-performing talent. Without such innovation, we lose our competitive edge in an environment that is rapidly evolving.

Central to the ongoing success of the organization is a commitment to shared governance. This process encourages and values an open dialogue which provides College leadership with access to the knowledge and expertise that exists at all levels of the institution. Our continued commitment to processes that are collaborative and transparent fosters a respectful and inclusive workplace that reinforces our collective responsibility to WNCC's mission and values.

Our goal is to be celebrated as a "great place to work," where excellent teaching and service are rewarded, professional development is supported, employees are held accountable, and all faculty and staff feel valued for their contributions to the mission of the College.

3.4.   Attract and retain a diverse, highly qualified workforce

3.41   Conduct a classification and compensation study to ensure positions are accurately defined, establish a transparent salary matrix, create pathways for advancement, identify internal equity issues, and position the College to successfully compete for existing and future employees.

3.42   Eliminate disruption in the delivery of critical functions and enhance the retention of skilled and talented employees through:

- succession planning in each functional area and

- the cross-training of employees in and between functional areas

3.43   Identify and support robust, meaningful professional development and training opportunities for all employees, tying expectations for professional development and training to annual evaluation.

3.44   Create more responsive work-life policies, including policies supporting full, partial, and temporary remote work.

3.45   Increase diversity in hiring as a tool to support student retention and enrich the institution by bringing in multiple perspectives.

3.5.   Improved overall employee satisfaction and performance

3.51   Enhance existing and develop new onboarding strategies to orient, welcome, and create a sense of belonging for all new employees to the College.

3.52   Design a program to develop a culture of service excellence and accountability in all employees.

3.53   Develop supervisory and leadership training programs, to include the use and interpretation of data.

3.54   Utilizing exit and stay surveys, identify and address issues impacting employee retention.

3.55   Promote excellence, innovation, and creativity among faculty and staff to support a positive and dynamic learning environment.

3.6   A thriving college community

3.61   Advance communication, collaboration, and decision-making through shared governance.

3.62   Provide programming and training to enhance intercultural competencies, inclusiveness, diversity, and a culture of caring.

3.63   Ensure programs and services are accessible by all in contact with WNCC.

Programming | Industry partnerships | Articulation Agreements

Hiring and retention | Diversity of employees | Professional development | Satisfaction surveys

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GOAL IV: RE-ENVISIONING INSTITUTIONAL VITALITY

Institutional vitality encompasses our business processes, our environment, and our reputation. We need to continue to assess our physical and virtual environments to meet the changing needs of students. Sustainable and agile financial and enrollment planning are essential to enabling us to realize our institutional goals. We must endeavor to adopt a continuous improvement model that ensures WNCC is adaptable and responsive to change.

It is imperative that we strengthen our operational effectiveness to ensure the long-term sustainability of the College.

OBJECTIVES

4.1   Optimum and sustainable enrollments for the College

4.11   Full implementation and ongoing evaluation of a comprehensive strategic enrollment management framework to achieve full program capacities in viable programs.

4.12   Through both recruitment and retention efforts, increase WNCC's enrollments, with a focus on the diverse populations of the service area and region (i.e., adult, first-generation, and multicultural students), as well as online, out-of-state, and international students.

4.2   A resilient and sustainable financial model that responds to enrollment fluctuations and economic uncertainties

4.21   Develop a formal multi-year predictive financial plan that allows for proactive budgeting and planning.

4.22   Expand revenue streams from alternative public and private sources, including grants, partnerships, and private giving.

4.23   Invest in a grants manager position to help WNCC identify and secure grant opportunities and support faculty and staff in navigating the College's grants approval and reporting processes.

4.24   Provide training for potential principal investigators on writing and managing grants.

4.25   Explore with the WNCC Foundation the next capital campaign for the College.

4.3   Sustainable operations

4.31   Explore "green initiatives" with the goals of better stewardship of resources and positively impacting operational efficiencies and financial savings, leading the Panhandle in sustainable measures.

4.32   Engage in an energy audit of WNCC facilities.

4.33   Explore technologies to assist the College in the efficient use of staff.

4.4.   Safe and secure learning, living, and working environment for all members of the WNCC community

4.41   Develop and implement a comprehensive safety and emergency management plan applicable to all three campus locations.

4.42   Develop, implement, and assess a schedule of safety and security training for WNCC's faculty, staff, and students.

4.5   Robust data and information technology resources that are designed to support student learning and promote continuous improvement

4.51   Examine the structure of information resource management at WNCC to identify long-term solutions for efficient access to data for reporting and planning and the effective use and reporting of analytics to understand student needs and eliminate barriers to student success.

4.52   Develop and implement IT master plan incorporating 2022 consultant's assessment recommendations, with priority given to:

- addressing security gaps and threats to minimize any potential security breach;

- implementing operating system and software solutions to ensure more effective and efficient operations;

- software training for business units, including, and in collaboration with the Office of Institutional Research, Informer V in order to transition from Informer IV; and

- establishing, in collaboration with Institutional Research, real-time data dashboards for the WNCC community.

4.53   Explore and implement a software solution to allow online registration and payment in Workforce Development.

4.54   Provide access to adequate data and training to ensure compliance with federal and state mandates.

4.55   Develop user manuals to standardize data input and allow for cross-training in Colleague.

4.56   Invest in and monitor technology advancements throughout the College to ensure state-of-the-art equipment and software is available to support student learning and institutional operational demands.

4.6   Progress in fulfilling WNCC facilities needs

4.61   Maximize use of state support to meet facility needs, leveraging the dollars to secure private funds to expand opportunities.

4.62   Update the Master Campus Facilities Plan to ensure the College is prepared to meet the needs and expectations of programs and students.

4.7   Institutionalized model for continuous improvement

4.71   Conduct a study of staffing patterns and needs to ensure appropriate levels of staffing needed to guarantee the success of academic programs, services, and operations.

4.72   Inculcate a culture of data-informed decision-making at WNCC.

4.73   Develop meaningful, ongoing institutional and program assessments that allow for the continued review of progress and alignment of institutional resources with institutional priorities.

4.74   Develop training and systems that enhance the transparency of budget management and development.

4.75   Establish a cycle for ongoing review and update of policies and procedures.

4.76   Create a more functional web-based presence for policies and procedures.

4.77   Continued institutional and program accreditations.

SUCCESS MEASURES

Enrollment | Program assessment | Financial effectiveness | Grant funding | Private giving | Capital projects | Division measures

Measuring Institutional Effectiveness

To fulfill the College's mission, vision, and values, WNCC is focused on six institutional priorities that are aligned with 25 strategic performance indicators.

Institutional Priorities	Key Performance Indicators
Engaged Teaching & Learning	• General education competencies

Student Recruitment, Retention, & Completion	12-month unduplicated headcount - Annual full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollment - Fall-to-fall full-time retention rates - Fall-to-fall part-time retention rates - Three-year graduation rates
Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion	- Student diversity - Employee diversity - Student perception of the College's emphasis on diversity - Three-year graduation rates of racially/ethnically diverse students - Three-year graduation rates of students receiving Pell Grants
Seamless Academic & Career Pathways	- Completion of all developmental education - Average years to completion – degree completers - Average years to completion – certificate/diploma completers - Licensure & certification pass rates
Community & Employer Responsiveness	% of WNCC graduate working in WNCC service area - CollegeNow! matriculation to WNCC # of programs offered - Credit student enrollment from WNCC service area - Non-credit student enrollment
Operational Efficiency & Effectiveness	- Academic awards per annual FTE - Total revenues per award and compared to NE and peer medians - Annual FTE per full-time faculty member - Composite Financial Index (CFI) - Student satisfaction with WNCC services

This strategic plan will utilize these key performance indicators, as well as additional measures, to assess how far we've come to meeting our institutional goals.