# Sisseton Wahpeton College

# Strategic Plan

## 2024 to 2030

Preserving the Past, Preparing for the Future

# Contents

# Mission Statement

Sisseton Wahpeton College provides extensive, relevant, and varied educational programs and opportunities for the intellectual, cultural, and personal growth of all its community.
The college values its roles as an educational leader, embracing change and responding to the complex needs of those it serves.

# Strategic Planning Process

Sisseton Wahpeton College began the process of developing a new strategic plan in the spring of 2019. Initial steps included discussions with the Executive Committee, Presidential Advisory Committee, and the Board of Trustees. A *Strengths*, *Weaknesses*, *Opportunities*, and *Threats* (SWOT) analysis employing the *Nominal Group Technique* (NGT) to engage a group of student leaders in a strategic planning session in December of 2019.

Subsequently, these techniques were employed in a session with the Board of Trustees. Later in 2021, two Faculty/Staff surveys were completed to gather additional insight needed to begin formulating the strategic goals which will guide the future development of the college. Data collected through these processes were submitted to an external consultant for analysis. The coding revealed four (4) major themes:
1. Expanded Degree and Learning Options
2. Student Recruitment and Enrollment
3. Student Support and Retention
4. Employee Recruitment, Support, and Retention

SWC then conducted SWOT sessions at the departmental level, using these themes as part of the criteria to evaluate their operations and to initiate departmental strategic planning. While these sessions primarily provide assessments of the current environment, ideas were generated for improvements and outlined the resources needed for future development at the college. This process helps ensure that any vision for the future is anchored to the present realities, while providing the information needed to create a realistic and more comprehensive roadmap to implement future growth.

Eventually, the information gathered began to coalesce around several often-interconnected goals. While the collection of data and why the goals provided here were chosen is provided in latter sections of this document, there is value in listing the five (5) identified Strategic Goals at this point.

1. Improve and Expand the Certificate and Degree Offerings at SWC to Meet the Needs of the Lake Traverse Reservation
2. Increase Enrollment at the Sisseton Wahpeton College
3. Increase Support Services to Improve Persistence, Retention, and other Student Success Metrics
4. Improve the Recruitment and Retention of Employees, along with Improving the Orientation Process and Professional Development
5. Enhance the Fiscal Stability of SWC to Support Future Growth

# Institutional Background

The Sisseton Wahpeton College (SWC), a tribal college located in Agency Village, South Dakota, was established to serve the Lake Traverse Reservation. The Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate (SWO), formerly the Sisseton Wahpeton Sioux Tribe, granted the charter to create the institution in 1979 to serve the educational needs of tribal members and the people of the surrounding communities. Tribal leaders realized that education was critical in addressing the high unemployment rates, poverty, and other social and economic conditions affecting the reservation. Education provides the opportunities, knowledge, and skilled workforce required for community-based economic development.

In 1980, SWC began receiving federal funds under the Tribally Controlled Community College Assistance Act. With this limited funding based on the Indian Student Count (ISC), the college was able to establish a few basic programs. Although the college receives no financial support for non-tribal members from the federal government or the State of South Dakota, SWC maintains an open-door policy and low tuition rates for anyone seeking an education. Over the course of its existence the college has been successful in securing both federal and private grants. As a 1994 Land Grant Institution, the college has access to additional financial resources from

the federal government, including the USDA Endowment that provides funding each year to SWC in lieu of the grants of land given to the 1862 institutions. Additionally, other grants from the federal government, notably the Department of Education's Title III TCCU Program, have been transitioned to a more stable formula-based format.

In 1983, SWC was granted educational candidacy by the North Central Association's Commission on Institutions of Higher Education, and received its initial accreditation in 1990. Since then SWC has made major strides in improving its academic programming and degree offerings. During this time the college has also greatly increased the services provided to its students and the community, especially in K-12 outreach programs.

SWC reached a major milestone in the fall of 2021, when the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) approved three substantive change requests. The college is now accredited to offer courses and existing programs at the certificate and associate levels through distant education. The accreditation of the bachelor of science degree programs in Behavioral Science and Business Administration have fulfilled a long-term goal of the institution to meet the needs of the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate and the Lake Traverse Reservation.

SWC remains dedicated to providing vocational programs which support the workforce development needs of the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate. Recently, the college has secured significant funding from the Department of Education's *Native American Career and Technical Education Program* and the National Institute of Food and Agriculture's *Tribal Colleges Education Equity Grants* program to strengthen existing vocational offerings, reactivate the Licensed Practical Nursing certificate, and develop new programs in Culinary Food Science.

November 29, 2021, the National Science Foundation's Tribal Colleges and Universities Program provided a grant to SWC to establish the Kaksiza Caŋhdeśka or "Hoop Hollow" Center for Dakota Linguistics. This $3.5 million award supports one of the key directives of the Vision Statement.

The driving principle governing the advancement of SWC has been, and will remain, the meeting the higher educational needs of the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate and the greater community of the Lake Traverse Reservation. To meet this vital and evolving goal, the college must have faculty, staff, and leadership that is talented, dynamic, inspired, and dedicated.  The purpose of this document is to develop a framework which will provide a consistency of vision in the future development of the college to meet this goal.

# Institutional Core Values

BRAVERY – Wowaditake

Bravery was basic and it was highly valued by traditional Dakota people. Living in an environment that could be hostile required a steadfast human character. The Dakota cultivated bravery early in life and it was one of the most coveted values. Courage was necessary for the survival of the individual and the village. The wolf symbolizes this value. The wolf hunted alone and sometimes with a pack, bravely providing for and protecting his family.

WISDOM – Woksape

Wisdom for the Dakota was that ability to see beyond the normal range of vision and understanding. True wisdom is always accompanied by humility. Wisdom thrives in the heart of a humble person. The Creator is the source of all wisdom and this wisdom is revealed through the creation. Wisdom was often associated with age and a thing to be desired as the true quality of an elder. An eagle has a vision that is said to be four times that of man and sees without being seen and thus symbolizes wisdom.

FORTITUDE – Wakisakapi

The Dakota lifestyle was not established in pursuit of material wealth or human comfort. They learned to endure physical and emotional hardships. If a person lacked fortitude, they would most likely succumb to the elements. The buffalo, which symbolizes this value, was an animal that could endure extreme physical elements and survive.

KNOWLEDGE – Wosdonye

Knowledge was necessary to a people who lived in close harmony with nature. The Dakota had to be able to read and understand nature's signs. Intuitive knowledge is gradually being replaced by intellectual knowledge, but intuitive knowledge is still needed when one needs to see beyond the material world in order to make more sense out of it. This is a natural means for getting at the real causes that are commonly observed in forms of symptoms and behaviors on the outer surface.

# Core Institutional Principles

To fulfill its mission the Sisseton Wahpeton College must offer high quality educational programs, engage in relevant research, and support the public outreach necessary to meet the diverse and changing needs of the individual student, the tribal community, and society at large.

**Instruction** - SWC shall provide instruction in undergraduate curricula through traditional, extended-day, distance learning, and other appropriate delivery systems in the liberal arts and professional disciplines that culminate in an associate degree, or to prepare students for baccalaureate and other advanced degrees.

SWC shall provide instruction in vocational/technical education leading to certifications and Associate of Applied Science degrees that enhance student employability and provide the SWO with a skilled workforce.

**Research** - SWC shall encourage and support those forms of research which support the institution's commitment to excellence in instruction and the needs of the students, faculty, and community at large.

**Public Service** - SWC shall make available various resources and capabilities of the institution for public service activities supporting the tribal community, when consistent with the mission of the institution.

**Support Programs** - SWC will provide support programs which effectively and efficiently fulfill and promote the primary mission of the institution.

# Essentials for Planning

Due to the changing requirements of the Lake Traverse Reservation and its people, SWC must continue to develop and evolve to meet the needs of the community it serves. As a result, these five (5) priorities provide a foundation to establish the strategic goals within this planning process.

I. Identify and meet the higher educational needs of the students and the communities of Lake Traverse Reservation

II. Ensure that there is a highly qualified workforce to support the continuing economic development of the Lake Traverse Reservation

III. Ensure the institutional stability required for the continuing development of the Sisseton Wahpeton College to fulfill its Mission

IV. Maintain a high degree of quality controls for the products and processes at the Sisseton Wahpeton College

V. Increase the infusion of Dakota culture and values throughout the curricula and operations of the Sisseton Wah peton College.

**Student Population**

Based on the knowledge of the community and on recent enrollment trends, the demographics of the student population are likely to be significantly different by 2030. The historical, current, and expected composition of the student population is provided in the following section.

*Headcount*: Between 2000 and 2005 the student population was increasing its highest levels at SWC, eventually reaching 290 students. Total headcount declined slowly during the period from the fall of 2006 through the spring of 2012, which is also marked by the lowest percentage of Native American students. While the average total headcount for this time period was 256.7, the Native American headcount averaged only 177.2 students (69%).

The years between the fall of 2012 and the spring semester of 2017 witnessed further declines in the student population, with an average total headcount of 163.9 students. Although the average number of Native American students also declined to 139.5, this was at significantly lower rate as the percentage of Indian Student Count (ISC) eligible students rose to 85 percent.

In the fall of 2017, a noticeable enrollment spike occurred with the advent of athletic teams and the temporary provision for student housing. The primary gain was amongst non-Native American students and was short-lived as headcount dropped significantly in the fall of 2019. The financial cost of the athletic programs, particularly Rodeo, as implemented at that time was unsustainable. However, the experience did provide first-hand evidence that a properly conceived and executed plan for athletics could be financially sustainable.

SWC has seen increasing enrollment after the fall semester of 2019, even with the COVID-19 pandemic. Activities were implemented to ensure the college is student-centered by revamping the Student Services Department and encouraging a culture of customer-service throughout the institution. These efforts included reducing student debt, a significant barrier to students

successfully achieving their academic goals, especially as SWC does not participate in the federal loan program. The number of students with an unpaid bill at SWC has declined dramatically since midway through the fall semester of 2019.
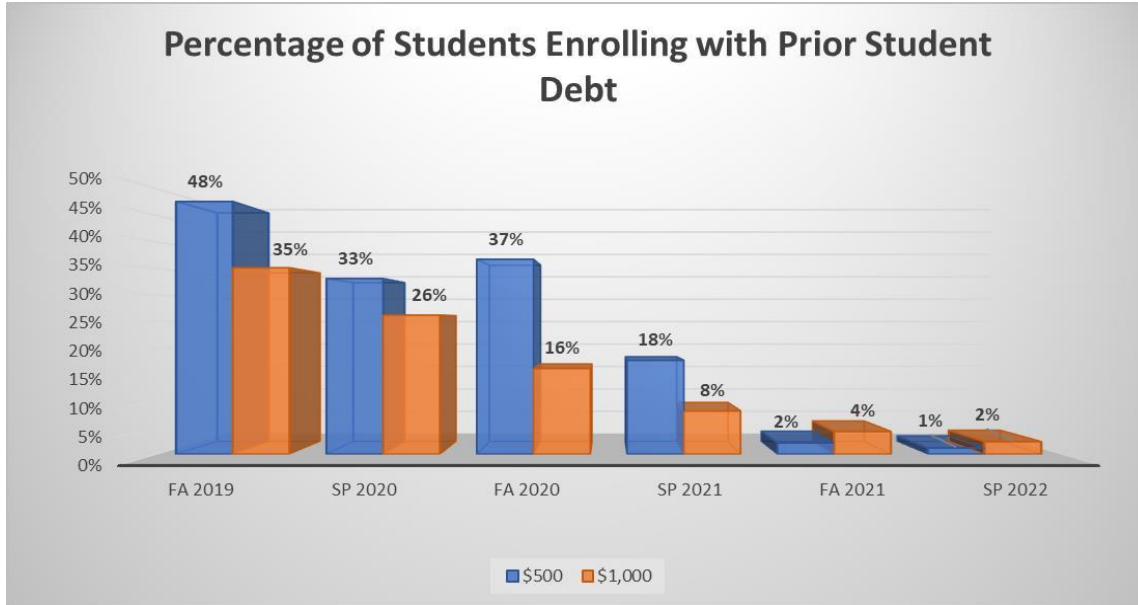


*Age*: The average age of students has declined significantly over last twenty years, however, majority of students at SWC are still non-traditional. The introduction of baccalaureate programs is likely to increase the enrollment of older students who have already completed an associate level degree. As a result, the composition of the student population is expected to be evenly divided between traditional college-aged students and those 25 years of age or older.
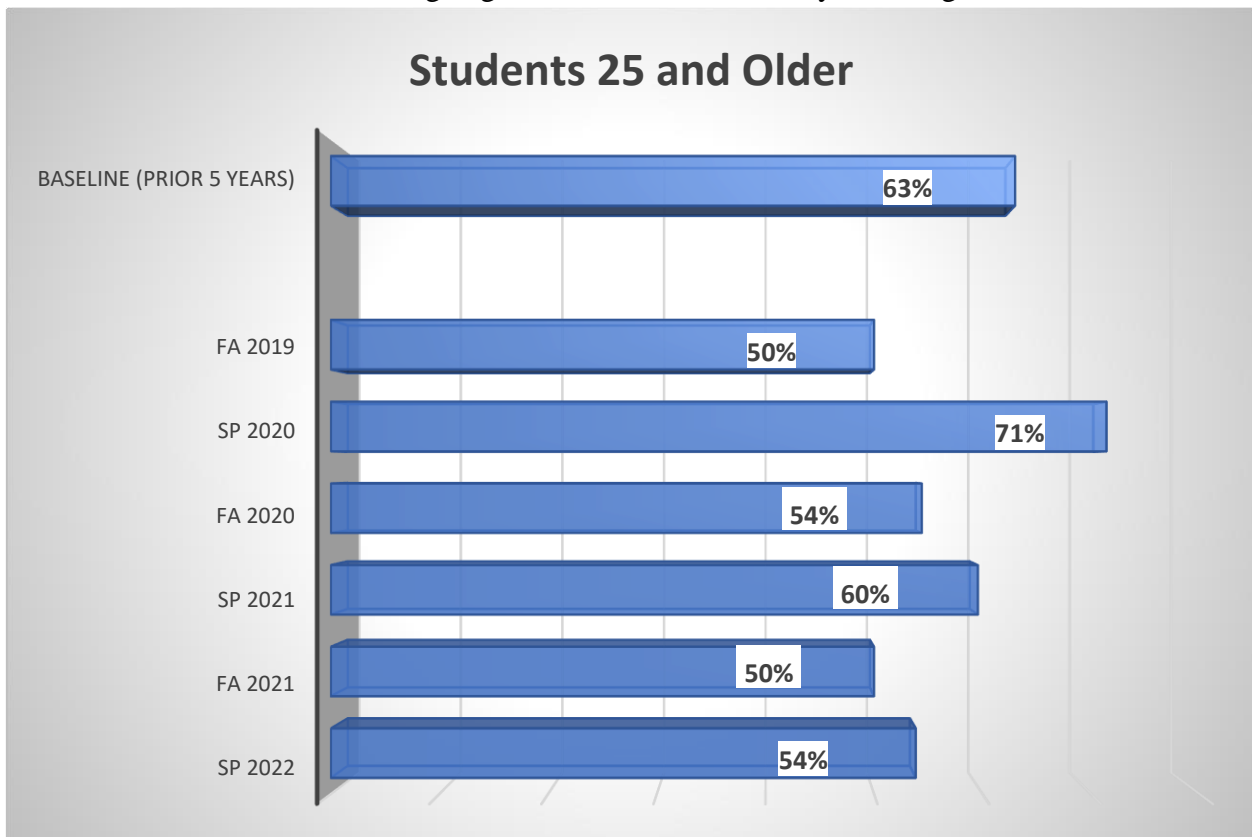
*Race/Ethnicity*: As a tribal college and as the only institution of higher education chartered by the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate, SWC's primary mission is to serve the communities of the Lake Traverse Reservation. However, since its inception the college has had an open-enrollment policy, admitting students of any race, creed, or ethnicity. This service to the greater community has also always been an integral aspect of SWC's mission and values.

for tribal college there are also inherent challenges. Although this has not been a recent issue, to maintain SWC's status as a tribal college over 50 percent of the students must be Native American. Additionally, the college only receives financial support from the Bureau of Indian Education based on the Indian Student Count (ISC). SWC receives no support from the State of South Dakota. As a result, the operational revenue generated by non-ISC students is approximate one-third of what the college receives for Native American students on a per credit basis. Several other federal grants utilize a formula funding system based on ISC, which compounds this situation.

In the last fifteen years there has only been two semesters that the percentage ISC student enrollment fell below 60 percent: the spring of 2009 (55.61%) and the spring of 2010 (53.82%). With some variations, the general pattern has been an inverse relationship to overall enrollment and the percentage of ISC students. Other factors have played a role in this relationship over the years, including economic recessions, athletic recruitment strategies, and academic



Percentage of ISC Students in Relation to Overall Enrollment
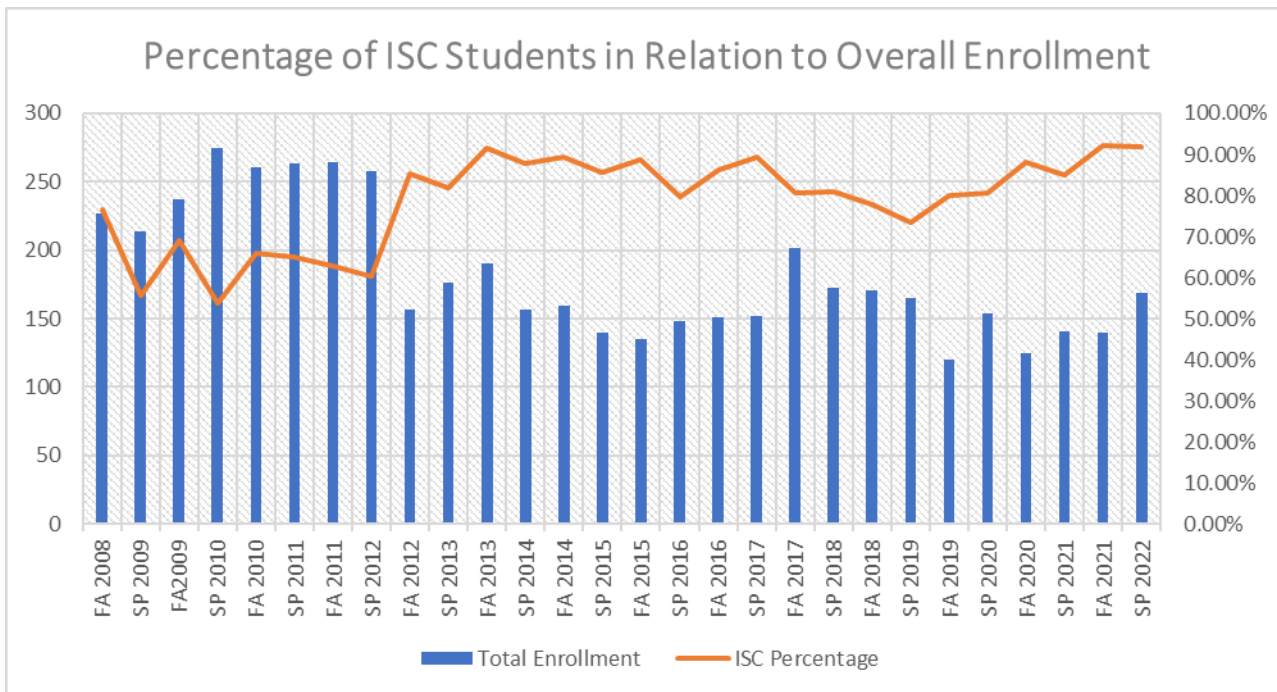
*Residence*: In the previous strategic plan, the Board of Trustees and other stakeholders identified that the lack of student housing was a limiting factor to increasing enrollment and attracting more traditional college-aged students. Based on the prior planning, SWC built its first dormitory providing affordable on-campus housing for both men and women.

programming. These considerations suggest that with introduction of baccalaureate program, the restarting of the LPN program, and with rising enrollment the extremely high percentage rates of ISC students in relation to overall headcount will fall to a more historical average of 75 to 80.



Percentage of Part-Time Students in Relation to Overall Enrollment



Student Age in Relation to Part-Time Enrollment
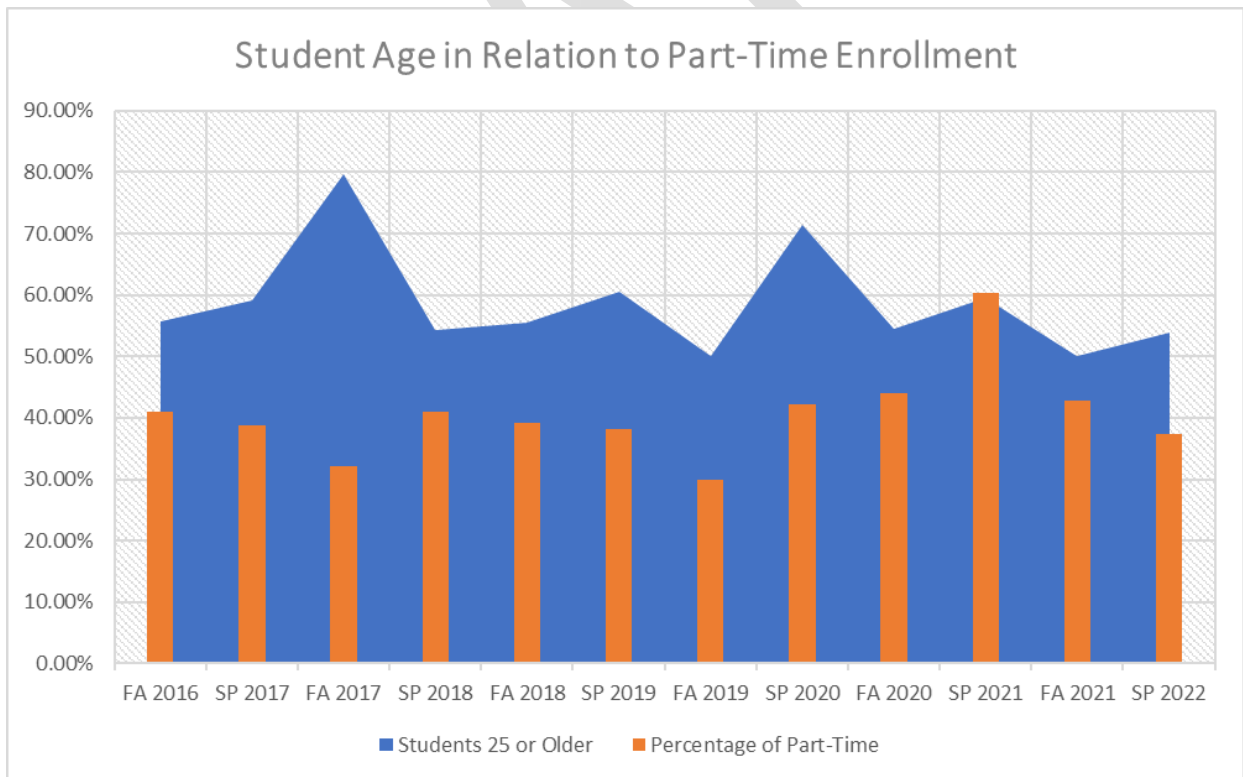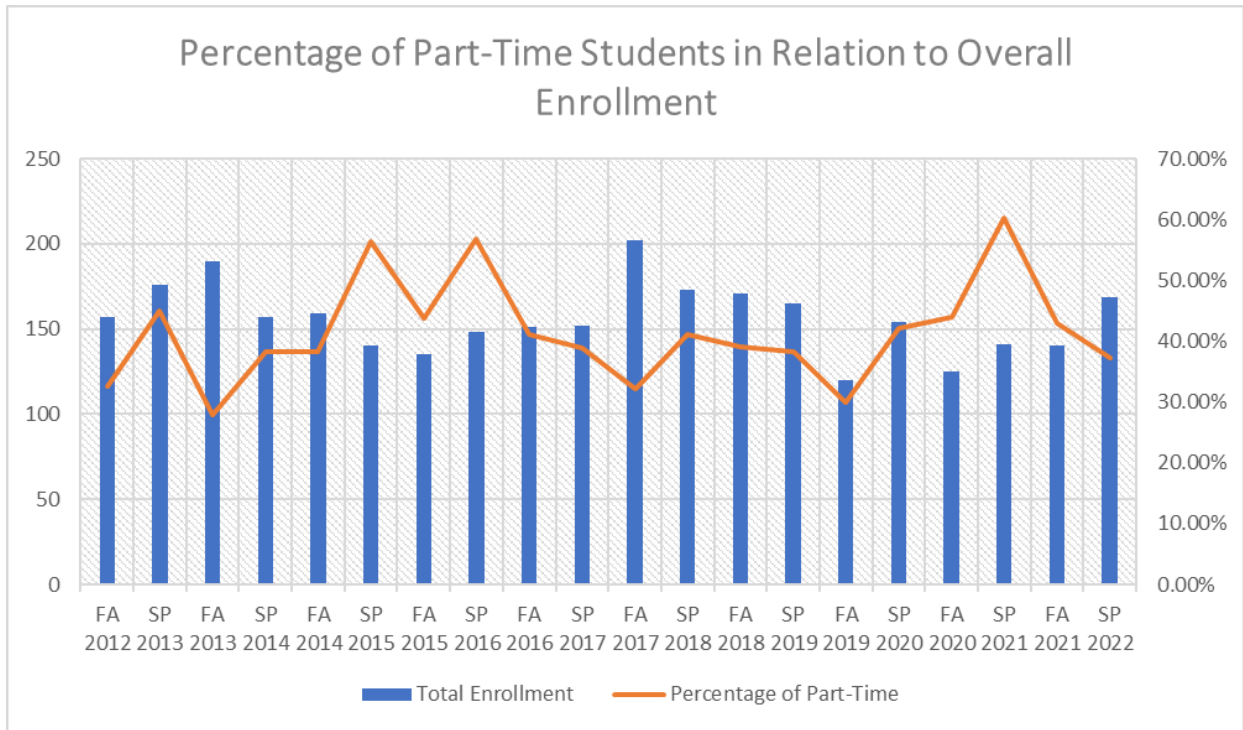
***Student Status***: The ratio of part-time and full-time students falls between the norm for primarily undergraduate institutions and that of vocational community colleges across the nation. Given the range of the vocational and academic programming offered at SWC, this should be expected. Typically, according to national data college students who are 25 years of age or older are more likely to be part-time. However, this correlation has not held true at SWC over the last six years. In the fall semester of 2017, nearly 80 percent of the student population was 25 years of age or older. During the same semester the percentage of part-time students fell to one its second lowest level. Since the fall of 2017 several intervening variables may be impacting the correlation between age and part-time enrollment rates. These include the introduction of athletic programs in 2017, the pandemic in 2020, and most recently the introduction of the college's first two baccalaureate programs in the spring of 2022.

***College Preparedness Levels***: Students enrolling at SWC are not required to meet any admission requirements, as a result the percentage of students test as remedial in English or Math or in both categories. During the five-year period from fall of 2017 through the spring semester of 2022, the average percentage of students testing into remedial courses was 57.58 percent. The lowest rate was 48.55 percent in the spring semester of 2018, while the highest rate was 72.50 percent in the fall of 2019.

# Strategic Goals

As discussed in a prior section, four primary themes were identified consistently by stakeholders for SWC to focus upon over the next seven years as the college continues to grow to meet the needs of the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate and the Lake Traverse Reservation. These themes were reinforced during the strategic planning sessions conducted with the faculty and other departments. A fifth theme was also raised, one of sustainability of programs and services.

1. Expanded Degree and Learning Options
2. Student Recruitment and Enrollment
3. Student Support and Retention
4. Employee Recruitment, Support, and Retention
5. Institutional Sustainability

<u>***Goal One***</u>***: Improve and Expand the Certificate and Degree Offerings at SWC to Meet the Needs of the Lake Traverse Reservation***

> **Objectives and Actions**
> A. Revise the SWC Academic Strategic Plan.
>> 1. Conduct community/student interest surveys biennially.

2. Survey and/or interview local employers biennially to identify workforce development needs.
3. Establish a working group which includes representatives from the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate's Planning Department and other economic development offices on the Lake Traverse Reservation.

B. Strengthen the academic assessment practices for evaluating courses, programs, and student learning.
1. Culture of assessment.
2. Ensure academic rigor and program standards/outcomes.
3. Evaluate and ensure academic programs have the proper personnel and instructional resources.
4. Monitor student persistence, completion rates, and the placement of graduates.

C. Ensure that students wishing to transfer into baccalaureate and graduate programs at other institutions are able to with the least amount of difficulty possible.
1. Strengthen partnerships with regional universities in order to establish course competencies which will improve student preparedness when transferring to more advanced degree programs.
2. Expand the number of program-to-program articulation agreements with regional universities in Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota.
3. Develop programs that expose SWC students with the faculty and campuses of regional universities prior to their transfer to another institution.

D. Expand the number of certificates and degrees offered at SWC in a prudent manner to better meet the current and future needs of the people and communities of the Lake Traverse Reservation.
1. Increase the use of External Advisory Committees composed of regional employers, SWO agencies, and community members to identify current and future workforce development needs. These committees will be able to provide critical insights into the development and evaluation of academic and certificate programs.
2. Establish certificate programs, whether one-year or ones that can be completed within a single semester, that address the workforce development needs of the Lake Traverse Reservation.
3. Determine which potential baccalaureate programs would meet community needs, garner the requisite student interest, and would have long-term sustainability.


*Goal Two: Increase Enrollment at the Sisseton Wahpeton College*

**Objectives and Actions**
A. Develop and Implement a Student Recruitment Plan.
1. Hire a consultant with expertise in marketing for higher education to develop effective strategies to reach potential students.

        i.   Traditional college-aged students may focus on marketing in targeted high schools. Outreach activities with K12 teachers, academic counselors, and administrators may also increase the visibility of the college.

        ii.   Non-traditional students may be targeted through community outreach activities or educational programs.

        iii.   Identify and create cost-effective advertising campaigns across different media platforms (radio, television, newspapers, magazines, billboards, flyers, and social media).

2. Expand the 'service area' to attract more students from outside the Lake Traverse Reservation, which includes a large portion of the enrolled members of the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate and their children.

        i.   Crow Creek, Flandreau, Lower Brule, Lower Sioux Indian Community, Upper Sioux Community, and Yankton are potential focus areas as SWC now has on-campus student housing.

3. Specific marketing strategies may be developed for appropriate programs, including workforce development (CDL, LPN, etc.) and academics (Dakota Studies, Dakota Language Teaching, Behavioral Science – Counseling, etc.).

B. Coordinate all recruitment activities under one cognizant administrator or office at SWC.

1. Unify recruitment activities in order to maximize impact. While targeted recruitment should be the focus of individual departments, such as Athletics, these activities should be leveraged for reaching a broader audience.

2. Develop recruitment materials highlighting academic programs, along with more generalized information to be utilized at events. This may include pamphlets, handouts, video presentations, and other materials identified by a marketing consultant.

3. Track the number of follow-up contacts and new student applications based on the type of recruitment event or strategy.

C. Establish enrollment targets for the college, individual academic and vocational programs, and athletics.

1. Enrollment targets should be realistic, focused on sustainability, and averaged over a four-semester period to off-set the natural fluctuations that occur and are exaggerated in small data sets.

        i.   Based on the overall headcount from FA 2020 to SP 2022, the average semester enrollment was 144.5 students. This will be used as the baseline for benchmarking future enrollment increases or decreases.

           1.   An average of 5 percent growth would have a target of 175.6 students after the 2025-26 academic year and 213.5 students at the end of the 2029-30 academic year.

           2.   An average of 7.5 percent growth would have a target of 193 students after the 2025-26 academic year and 257.7 students at the end of the 2029-30 academic year.

3. Either of these growth rates are reasonable given recent developments at SWC, which include the availability of on-campus student housing, the creation of athletic program, accreditation to offer two baccalaureate degree, and restarting the LPN program.
    ii. Credit counts, especially ISC, is particularly important as an increase of overall headcount can be offset by a higher percentage of part-time students or vice versa.
    iii. Enrollment targets for individual programs must be based on expected costs, expansion plans, and other factors.
D. Work with community educators, employers, and leaders to increase the awareness of the opportunities provided by a higher education. This effort should consider both traditional and non-traditional age groups.

## *Goal Three: Increase Support Services to Improve Persistence, Retention, and other Student Success Metrics*

**Objectives and Actions**
A. Develop and implement a Student Success Plan.
1. Formulate a comprehensive retention strategy, including earlier identification of high-risk students and more focused interventions.
    i. **Remedial**: the average rate of students who tested as remedial was 57.9 percent between FA 2017 and SP 2022. The highest rate was 72.5 percent in FA 2019, while the lowest was 48.6 percent in SP 2018.
    ii. **1st Generation**: SWC has not been consistently defining or tracking this category over a long time period. From the spring semester of 2017 through the spring semester of 2020, an average of 73.97 percent of students reporting were 1st Generation. It must be noted that during this time period more than half of enrolled students had an 'Unknown' status recorded. While there was a marked improvement in recording for this category between fall of 2020 and fall of 2022, there is evidence that students may be under-reporting being 1st Generation due to not knowing or understanding the definition. With an average 71.1 percent of students reporting as 1st Generation during this timeframe, it is reasonable to state that over 70 percent of SWC students are in this category.
    iii. Identify other high-risk categories.
2. Conduct studies examining how belonging to one or more of these categories impact student success rates, including retention.
3. Improve the tracking and reporting of students transferring to other institutions. B. Enhance the Student Experience on campus and in the community, including the awareness of the opportunities provided by a higher education.

        1. Pilot expansion of café service hours and menus, evaluate student satisfaction, and measure financial sustainability.
        2. Foster the creation and the variety of student organizations, clubs, intramural sports, and co-curricular activities.
           i. Provide resources and potentially 'seed' grants to faculty, staff, and students to establish group activities. ii. Participation in these activities could be measured and correlated to student persistence and other success rates. iii. Collaborate with tribal, county, state, and private businesses to address student transportation and daycare concerns.

C. Assign responsibility for career counseling for students, and to provide community outreach in this area.

D. Design and implement outreach programs that help address the Academic Preparedness of potential students.
        1. Continue and expand professional outreach activities with local K-12 schools, especially in the areas of STEM and English.
        2. Develop community education programs in the areas of STEM and English targeting potential non-traditional students, including basic computer skills.
        3. Develop short-courses for incoming freshmen with low Compass scores in mathematics, reading, and/or writing.

## *Goal Four: Improve the Recruitment and Retention of Employees, along with Improving the Orientation Process and Professional Development*

### Objectives and Actions

A. Identify cost efficient and effective recruitment strategies.

B. Identify and address barriers in recruiting new faculty and staff.
        1. Housing opportunities are very limited in area surrounding the SWC campus, in particular for apartments. As new employees would be hesitant to buy property or even sign a long-term lease, the college may consider acquiring suitable housing options on- or off-campus which it could rent on a semester basis.
        2. Establish a pay scale which is comparable to other institutions within the region

C. Develop a comprehensive orientation process to familiarize new employees with the campus, policies and procedures, along with the primary systems and processes used at SWC.

D. Improve interdepartmental communication within SWC.
        1. Empower faculty and staff by their inclusion on key committees and in decision-making processes.
        2. Disseminate information through an electronic newsletter or other platform(s) to faculty, staff, students, and/or other stakeholders on a regular basis.

E. Ensure departments have the appropriate staffing levels, skill-sets, resources, and clarity of mission to achieve expected outcomes.

1. Empower faculty and staff to invest in their programs by involving them in the identification of goals, objectives, benchmarks, and other aspects of strategic planning for their departments.
2. Improve the alignment of professional development resources, including the Education Assistance Program, to support targeted objectives/goals and identified leadership needs (short/long term).
3. Develop a strong second tier of leadership by empowering faculty and staff members by providing appropriate professional development opportunities.

## _Goal Five:_ _Enhance the Fiscal Stability of SWC to Support Future Growth_

**Objectives and Actions**
A. Increase enrollment, especially the ISC, as this will raise both unrestricted revenue and grant funding. Historically, the college frequently had between 250 and 300 students (headcount) per semester from 2000 to 2012. As the facilities and other infrastructure of SWC has grown since that time period, significant increases in enrollment can be supported.
   1. Expansion of academic and other programs must be made prudently and with foresight, as growth in these areas will increase costs. With proper planning, SWC can and has in the past offset most of the initial costs (generally three to five years) with grants.
B. Establish a Department of Institutional Advancement focused on private sector fundraising and public relations.
   1. Promote alumni activities.
   2. Initiate a public relations and advertising campaign to increase enrollment and to promote a positive public image of the college.
   3. Access additional private or charitable funding.
C. Develop strategic plans for individual academic and operational departments.
D. Increase the quality and use of institutional research to perform cost/benefit analyses, assign project priorities, and identify efficiencies.
   1. Gather data and formulate preliminary studies to support institutional decision-making processes.
   2. Initiate evaluations of departments and function areas to determine:
      1) optimal staffing levels tied to student enrollment numbers;
      2) potential collaborations that would reduce expenses or increase efficiencies;
      3) potential cost savings, including possible actions that would reduce overhead expenses such as utilities.
E. Establish an indirect rate with the federal funding agencies.
F. Increase base support (unrestricted funding) by having the BOT secure a commitment from the SWO to provide regular monthly payments, based on Gaming Revenues, to the college.

G. Develop or revise business plans for revenue generating areas at the college to ensure long-term sustainability of services.
1. Café
2. Vending agreements or services
3. Bookstore
4. Facility Rental
H. Establish a Strategic Reserve fund to counteract short-term fluctuations caused by enrollment or grant funding levels. Additionally, this fund would be used for emergency repairs and to support pilot projects.
1. Yearly Goal: place a minimum average of $200,000 per year into the Strategic Reserve through the year 2030 (nine years = $1,800,000 or greater).
2. 2030 Goal: a minimum balance in the Strategic Reserve of $1,500,000).
I. Review and Revise policies and procedures to streamline processes and to ensure accountability for quality control.
1. Develop, consolidate, and revise policies and procedures to create a single comprehensive Security, Natural Disaster, & Recovery Plan.
2. Appoint compliance officer(s) to ensure policies/procedures are being implemented properly, including the proper postings and/or notifications.
3. Address in a systematic manner issues related to working environment and expectations throughout the organization.
J. Ensure all elements of Governance, Policies, and Procedures are in alignment and are properly implemented by the appropriate personnel, officials, and/or bodies.
4. Develop and implement a required orientation for new Board of Trustees (BOT) members.
5. Develop and implement annual or semi-annual professional development sessions for the BOT and the President.
6. Conduct annual reviews of SWC policies and procedures with the BOT and college administrators.
7. Conduct training sessions for college administrators and other key personnel on issues related to policies, procedures, and strategic planning.
8. Ass the implementation of the SWC Strategic Plan, including related documents, on an annual basis.
9. Initiate a new strategic planning process no later than January of 2019.

## Appendix A: External Strategic Plan Data Analysis

**Introduction**

Sisseton Wahpeton College started its strategic planning process in November 2021. Data collected from stakeholders was analyzed to reduce redundancy in responses. The analysis resulted in a 31% reduction in responses from 203 to 140. The remaining 140 responses were rated by stakeholders. There were 40 responses collected. Each respondent was directed to

choose five items from the list and then to rank each item by priority on a 1 to 5 scale. There were seven respondents who rated the items they chose rather than ranking them. One respondent rated all five of their chosen items with either a "4" or a "5" for example. The data were analyzed with and without these seven responses in order to display a clear view of prioritized items.

## Data Analysis

The first step in the data analysis was to aggregate the prioritized items resulting from the ranking process. There were 87 items that received a ranking, including the 7 responses that were rated versus ranked. After the items were analyzed, the 7 responses would be removed to see if there was a significant difference in priorities, discussed later. Each of the 87 responses were coded using an open-coding method. There were 31 codes that were identified. Items that were essentially the same were consolidated and noted in the data set. The second step was to organized the codes into categories. These 31 codes were then organized through the lens of higher education. Six categories emerged according to patterns of meaning from the whole of the responses. These six categories were then organized under four themes that emerged. The final step was to organize the remaining items that were not ranked under the four themes as a means of conducting an iterative comparison. The themes remained relevant throughout this process. After the coding and theming process, the analyst calculated the total number of points, the mean ranking for each item, and number of responses for each item. The analyst then multiplied the mean ranking (rank sum/total respondents) by number of responses as a way to mitigate the seven responses that rated the items. For example, an item received a sum of 16 ranked points. This is divided by the total number of respondents (16/40) resulting in a mean of 0.40. This is then multiplied by the number of respondents who ranked the item (.040 x 7 respondents) results in a weighted average of 2.80. The same calculation was completed with the rated responses eliminated as a means of checking influence of their responses.

## Themes

The coding process resulting in 4 themes. The analyst is confident that the themes that emerged from the data are credible and appropriate for further action. The five themes are:
1. Expanded Degree and Learning Options
2. Employee Recruitment, Support, and Retention
3. Student Recruitment and Enrollment
4. Student Support and Retention

Each theme is discussed further below. A summary interpretation of the data is provided. However, it should be noted that college stakeholders have deeper understanding of the items discussed through the strategic planning process. The interpretation of the data analyst represents an external view that may be useful in determining strategic plan actions that are most meaningful to stakeholders.

**Theme 1: Expanded Degree and Learning Options**
The ranked sum for this theme was 233 by 77 respondents. Items that were ranked by 2 or more respondents were included in the prioritized list under this theme. The weighted mean was calculated using all 40 respondents and the validated weight indicated the weighted mean without the 7 responses. Priorities under this theme include increasing Career and Technical Education programs, expanding online program options, and increasing advanced degree options. The color scale in the chart below helps to illustrate the differences between the means of all 40 responses and the means without the responses who rated the items. The ranking does not change significantly when the rated responses are removed from the calculations.

**Theme 2: Employee Recruitment, Support, and Retention**
The ranked sum for this theme was 166 by 48 respondents. Items that were ranked by 2 or more respondents or had a "5" were included in the in the prioritized list under this theme. The weighted mean was calculated using all 40 respondents and the validated weight indicated the weighted mean without the 7 responses. Priorities under this theme include increased wages, employee benefits and professional development, increased communications, and increased personnel to accommodate planned student growth. The highest priority is placed on employee wages, which stays constant even with the removal of the rated responses.

**Theme 3: Student Recruitment and Enrollment**
The ranked sum for this theme was 115 by 35 respondents. All items that were ranked by 1 or more respondents were included in the in the prioritized list under this theme. The weighted mean was calculated using all 40 respondents and the validated weight indicated the weighted mean without the 7 responses. Priorities under this theme include increasing student enrollment through recruitment strategies and promoting the college in a variety of ways. The only item that is impacted significantly by removal of the seven rated responses is regarding the item that lists expanding enrollment for local and distant communities. However, this item is in the spirit of the other items included under this theme.

**Theme 4: Student Support and Retention**
The ranked sum for this theme was 59 by 23 respondents. All items that were ranked by 1 or more respondents were included in the in the prioritized list under this theme. The weighted mean was calculated using all 40 respondents and the validated weight indicated the weighted mean without the 7 responses. Priorities under this theme include providing daycare for students as well as other supports for student wellness. Removing the rated responses eliminates the expansion of athletics program from the list.

| Activity | Strategic Goal | Budget & Resources | Target Completion Date | Cognizant Officer: notes | ☑ Progress |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Conduct a community and student interest survey | 1.A.1 1.D.3 | Online Tool (Survey Monkey; Printing) $75/year | 4/15/2025 (biennial) | Vice President of Academics, Statistician | |
| Interview local Employers, Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Councils | 1.A.2 1.D.1 1.D.3 | Mileage, Meeting Expenses $500/year | 6/30/2025 (annually) | Vice President of Academics, President | |
| Establish Working Group focused on Academic Planning | 1.A.3 1.D.1 | Mileage, Meeting Expenses $800/year | 3/1/2025 (continual) | Vice President of Academics, Faculty | |
| Revise the SWC Academic Strategic Plan | 1.A 1.D.3 | Personnel Time; Printing Costs ($1,000) | 8/31/2024 | President's Leadership Team | |
| Establish a Certificate Program for CDL | 1.D.2 | Faculty Member; Fuel, Insurance (~$78,000/year) | 8/1/2024 | Vice President of Academics and Curriculum Committee; NACTEP PI | |
| Submit Substantive Change Request to HLC for B.S. in Elementary Education or Early Childhood | 1.D.3 | Personnel Time (EPSCoR fund) | 12/30/2024 | Director of Education Programs; Vice President of Academics; Curriculum Committee | |
| Restart the two-year Registered Nursing Program | 1.D.2 | Faculty Member(s) (~$115,000/year) | 5/1/2028 | Director of Nursing; Vice President of Academics; Curriculum Committee) | |
| Coordinate all recruitment activities under one cognizant administrator | 2.B | Personnel Time Travel/Supplies (~$10,00/year) | 10/01/2024 | Vice President of Students; Director of Student Success | |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Develop and Implement a Student Recruitment Plan | 2.A | Personnel Time Consultant (~$12,000) | 10/30/2024 | Vice President of Students; Director of Student Success, Vice President Academics | |
| Implement Marketing Plan | 2.A.3 | Personnel Time Travel/Media ($25,000) | 03/31/25 | Vice President of Students; Director of Student Success, Vice President Academics, President | |
| Develop Recruitment Materials highlighting Academic Programs | 2.B.2 | Personnel Time Printing/Supplies ($6,000/year) | 12/01/2024 ongoing | Director of Student Success, Vice President Academics, Faculty | |
| Evaluate Effectiveness of Recruitment Strategies | 2.B.3 | Personnel Time | Annual | Director of Student Success; Statistician | |
| Establish Enrollment Targets by Academic Program | 2.C 2.D | Personnel Time Meeting Expense ($1,500) | 01/05/2025 | Director of Student Success, Vice President Academics, Faculty, Vice President Students | |
| Establish Enrollment Targets by Athletic Program | 2.C. | Personnel Time | 01/05/2025 | Director of Student Success, Athletic Director, Vice President Students | |
| Develop a Student Success Plan | 3.A. | Personnel Time Supplies ($500) | 08/31/2025 | Director of Student Success, Athletic Director, Vice President Students | |
| Strengthen Tutoring Services and Remedial Mitigation | 3.A.1 | Personnel Time Supplies ($2,000) | 07/31/2026 | Education Specialist, Faculty, Vice President Academic, Vice President Students, AIHEC Student Success Team | |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Revise Café Hours and Menu (evaluate financial viability) | 3.B.1 | Personnel Time, restructuring ($20,000) | 08/01/2025 | Café Manager, Chief Financial Officer | |
| Grow & Support Student Clubs and Organizations | 3.B.2 | Personnel Time, Facility Use ($3,500/year) | Ongoing | Director of Student Success, Athletic Director, Vice President Students, Faculty | |
| Develop and Implement a Comprehensive Orientation Process for new Employees | 3.A.1 3.B.2 | Personnel Time Supplies/Planning ($30,000 startup $10,000 annually) | 08/01/2024 & ongoing | Director of Student Success, Athletic Director, Vice President Students | |
| Provide Career Counseling to Students | 3.C. | Portion of Time or Consultant ($70,000) | 01/10/2025 & Ongoing | Vice President Students Director of Student Success, Student Success Navigatorss | |
| Professional Development Opportunities and Outreach Activities with local K-12 schools | 3.D.1 3.A.1 | Personnel Time, Leverage Funding | 10/01/2024 & Ongoing | President, Director of Student Success, Athletic Director, Vice President Students, Vice President Academics | |
| Provide Community Education Programs in the areas of STEM and English | 3.D.2 3.A.1 | Personnel Time, ($40,000) | 12/01/2025 & Ongoing | Education Specialist, Vice President Academics | |
| Develop and Implement Camps or Short-Courses to address remedial Mathematics | 3.D.3 3.A.1 | Personnel Time ($15,000) | 12/01/2025 & Ongoing | Education Specialist, Vice President Academics, Faculty, Curriculum, Committee | |
| Develop and Implement Camps or Short-Courses to address remedial Reading and Writing | 3.D.3 3.A.1 | Personnel Time ($15,000) | 12/01/2025 & Ongoing | Education Specialist, Vice President Academics, Faculty, Curriculum, Committee | |
| Provide Extension Education for cred/non/credit enrollment | 2.A | Personnel Time | 07/01/2025 | Extension Director, Land Grant, Vice President Students, Curriculum Committee | |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Create a List of long- and short-term Housing Opportunities for new Employees | 4.A<br>4.B.1 | Personnel Time | 12/01/2024 | Human Resources Director, Facilities Manager, President | |
| Provide On-Campus or SWC-Owned Housing for new Faculty and Staff | 4.A<br>4.B.1 | Personnel Time Infrastructure ($50,000) | 07/01/2025 | President, Human Resources Director, Construction Committee, Facilities Manager, Building Trades Faculty, Chief Financial Officer | |
| Establish compensation philosophy and pay scale | 4.A<br>4.B.2 | Personnel Time | 12/01/2024 | Human Resources Director, Chief Financial Officer | |
| Develop and Implement a Comprehensive Orientation Process for new Employees | 4.B.3 | Personnel Time | 12/01/2024 | Human Resources Director | |
| Establish a Department or Office of Institutional Advancement and Communication | 5.B | New Staff ($95,000 annually) Supplies ($15,000 annually) | 01/01/2026 | Human Resources Director, President | |
| Develop Strategic Plans for Individual Academic and Operational Departments | 5.C | Personnel Time | 07/01/2025 | Vice Presidents, All supervisors | |