

# Western Nevada College 2019-2025 Strategic Plan

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Introduction	p. 2
2019-2025 Strategic Plan	
Vision, Values, and Mission Statements	p. 4
Core Themes, Goals, and Objectives	p. 7
Key Performance Indicators and Strategic Plan Grid	p. 9
Annual Strategic Planning and Assessment Cycle	p. 11
Appendix A: Overview of Committee and Workgroup Membership	p. 12

## Introduction

The Western Nevada College (WNC) 2019-2025 Strategic Plan was completed as a collaborative and inclusive community process between August 2017 and January 2019. It is the first Strategic Plan in Nevada created under and in alignment with the new Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) goals. Additionally, this Strategic Plan reflects the shift within the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU), our regional accrediting body, toward more streamlined strategic plans with focused Key Performance Indicators at the institutional level. Annual strategic planning across all academic programs and administrative offices allows for clear goal alignment with this institutional plan and improves the College's ability to track and assess nimble initiatives that respond to the changing needs of the students and communities we serve.

As a result of the guidance from NSHE and NWCCU, and under the direction of our WNC community input, the WNC 2019-2025 Strategic Plan takes on an innovative structure and leaner format that captures the heart of our ongoing mission and goals.

## Process and Narrative Timeline

In the fall of 2017, a Strategic and Master Planning Steering Committee was assembled as a subcommittee of the Strategic Planning for Institutional Excellence (SPFIE) committee in order to organize initial steps toward plan creation (see Appendix A for an overview of related committee and workgroup membership). The new WNC Master Plan for physical infrastructure on the Carson City campus was in development concurrently, and the Steering Committee facilitated joint Strategic and Master Plan feedback sessions on and off campus for internal and external stakeholders during the fall semester. In addition to these feedback sessions, the Steering Committee held regular open meetings, collaborated with other committees and advisory boards on campus, and maintained a public website to keep the WNC community informed of progress and gather additional input.

After several months of gathering and sharing feedback, Acting President Mark Ghan, SPFIE, and the Steering Committee worked together to form a new Strategic Planning Committee in January 2018 that would take on the work of writing the Strategic Plan. Key external community leaders and industry partners were invited to join this new committee, as well as internal representation from students, full-time and part-time academic faculty, administrative faculty, classified staff, and executive leadership.

The full Strategic Planning Committee met on January 26, 2018, and Career and Technical Education Division Director Dr. Georgia White was voted Chair. A representative subgroup of this committee volunteered to form a smaller workgroup that would be available to meet more frequently for drafting the Strategic Plan, with the intention of checking in regularly with the larger committee for guidance. Over the course of the spring and summer of 2018, Dr. White and Strategic Planning Committee members held a number of feedback sessions with different stakeholder groups, including students, faculty, staff, and community members.

The workgroup met regularly during the fall of 2018 to begin drafting the final plan, and new President Dr. Vincent Solis was brought into the process. Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs Scott Morrison suggested a plan structure in which a grid is formed between Core Themes along one axis and

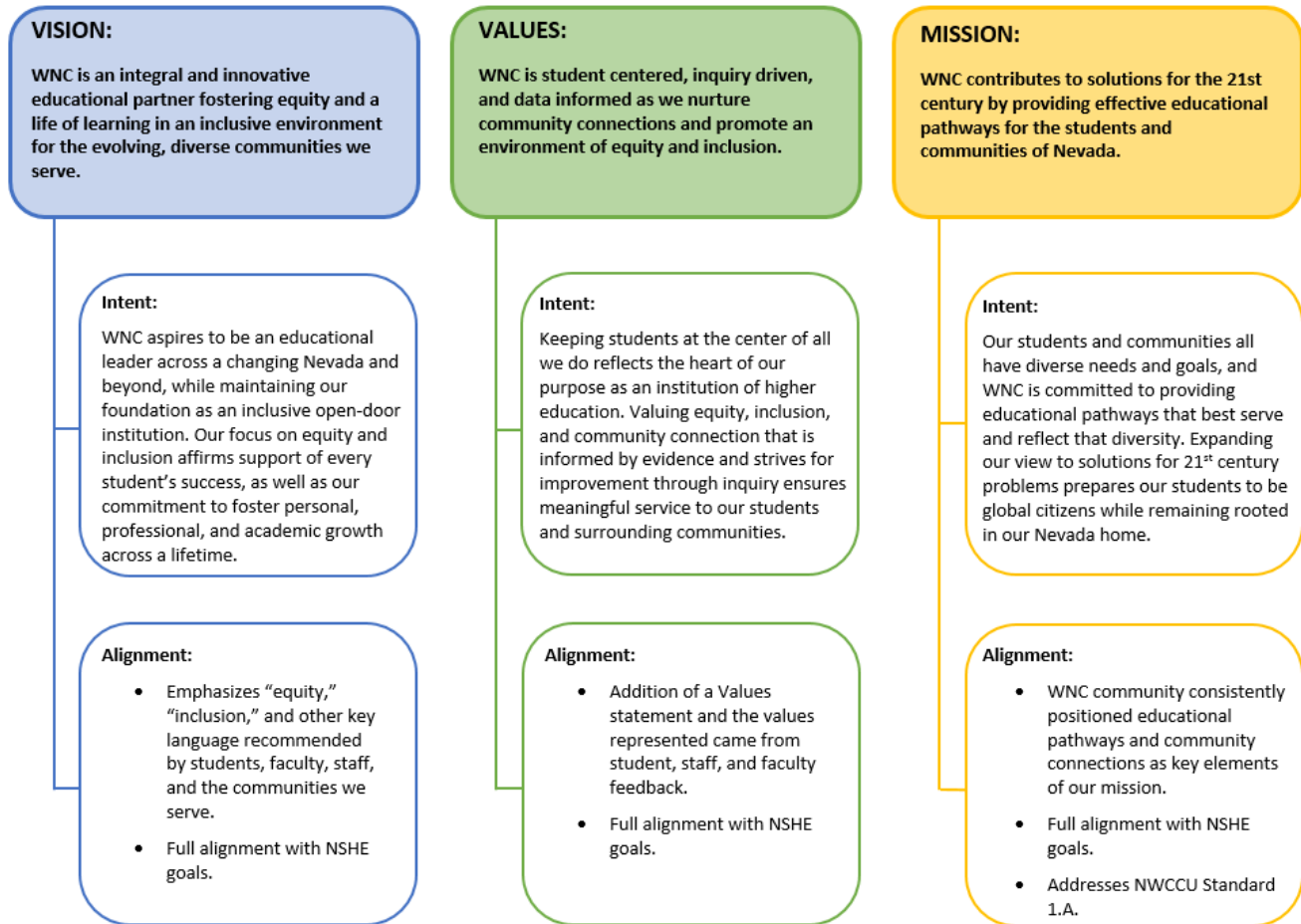
shared common Objective areas along the other axis. The workgroup decided to adapt this structure to fit WNC's needs as it provides both a streamlined structure and scaffolding for alignment with NSHE goals (see "Key Performance Indicators and Strategic Plan Grid," pp. 9-10).

In April 2018, WNC underwent a Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities Year Seven accreditation site visit. One recommendation from that visit involved the need for better systematic planning and assessment across the College. A related piece of feedback from the WNC community was the difficulty in using the prior WNC 2012-2018 Strategic Plan to meaningfully measure and guide progress across all of WNC's different academic programs and administrative areas. In response, the College moved to create annual strategic plans with dynamic goals and performance indicators in alignment with the institution's 2019-2025 Strategic Plan. This shift better allows academic programs and administrative departments to respond to changing needs within their areas under the guidance of the larger College plan (for more information, see "Annual Strategic Planning and Assessment Cycle," p. 11).

Throughout the creation of the plan, some within the WNC community expressed concerns that the process would not be transparent or that stakeholder feedback might not be considered. To alleviate these concerns, all Steering Committee and Planning Committee meetings, including workgroup sessions, have been open. Meeting minutes and related documents are available to the community, and myriad in-person and anonymous online feedback opportunities have been presented. As a result, much of the specific language and phrasing present in the final Strategic Plan comes directly from community input. The NWCCU Year Seven site evaluation team additionally commended WNC for being "committed to a broad-based, participatory and transparent planning process" in the creation of the 2019-2025 Strategic Plan.

The WNC 2019-2025 Strategic Plan was completed and shared to the WNC community in January 2019, with plans to present to the NSHE Board of Regents in March 2019. This final plan reflects WNC's central focus on our students and commitment to foster inclusive, equitable opportunities for learning and growth throughout the communities we serve. We give our sincere thanks to everyone who contributed their feedback, work, and time to create this plan.

## Vision, Values, and Mission



### Statements, Intent, and Rationale

**Vision Statement:** WNC is an integral and innovative educational partner fostering equity and a life of learning in an inclusive environment for the evolving, diverse communities we serve.

Our vision statement reflects our objective to be an educational leader across a changing Nevada and beyond, while maintaining our foundation as an inclusive open-door institution. WNC strives to be woven into the communities we serve through responsive, supportive programming for rapidly changing educational and workforce needs. WNC also positions itself to be accessible beyond our local service area to meet students where they are across the state, the country, and the world. Our Vision Statement’s focus on equity and inclusion affirms support of every student’s success, as well as our commitment to foster personal, professional, and academic growth across a lifetime.

**Values Statement:** WNC is student centered, inquiry driven, and data informed as we nurture community connections and promote an environment of equity and inclusion.

Our values statement informs decision making across all levels at WNC. Keeping students at the heart of all we do is critical, and we are best able to serve our students when planning and programming is shaped by thoughtful inquiry and thorough assessment of key data. Highlighting our connection to the communities we serve as a value ensures that we focus on developing and growing initiatives that meet the needs of the students, families, organizations, and businesses throughout our service area.

WNC actively champions equity and inclusion as we place students and their success at our center. A community member shared that, “College may not be for everyone, but WNC is the college for anyone.” Being the college for anyone means providing educational pathways and support services that open opportunities for all students to succeed. Equity and inclusion are values fundamental to that success.

**Mission Statement:** WNC contributes to solutions for the 21st century by providing effective educational pathways for the students and communities of Nevada.

Our mission statement focuses on the diverse and meaningful educational pathways that we provide for our students and communities. These pathways include transfer degrees for students continuing their education at the university level, professional degrees and certificates designed to match the workforce skills needed for today’s Nevada, and a wide range of continuing educational opportunities for personal enrichment and professional development. Our mission is actively guided by our values, and the development and expansion of our educational pathways is informed by the aspirations in our vision.

### **Vision, Values, and Mission Alignment with NSHE Goals**

**Access:** Increase participation in post-secondary education.

WNC’s vision, values, and mission are all in direct alignment with NSHE’s “Access” goal. Our vision to serve evolving, diverse communities across a life of learning speaks to increased and improved access to our educational offerings, both in-person and online, as we grow into the future. Access to higher education likewise cannot be increased without remaining centered on our students, valuing equity and inclusion, and informing our strategic initiatives with useful data, as outlined in our values statement. Our mission to provide effective educational pathways can only be fulfilled if those pathways are accessible to the growing communities we serve.

**Success:** Increase student success.

Increasing student success is essential to WNC’s vision, values, and mission. Our vision to provide innovative educational opportunities guides the development of programs and support services to increase success for all students. Valuing our community connections helps WNC increase student success by better understanding who our students are and how we can best support their educational journey. WNC additionally increases student success by valuing equitable opportunities and support for all students. Similarly, the educational pathways of our mission statement are only effective if they comprehensively support student achievement and success.

**Close the Achievement Gap:** Close the achievement gap among underserved student populations.

WNC serves a student population diverse in many facets of identity and experience, including race, ethnicity, age, disability, educational background, veteran status, and LGBTQ identity, among many others. We endeavor to support equitable educational opportunities across all student populations, including those from traditionally underserved or marginalized student populations.

Our vision, values, and mission statements situate WNC as an innovative, inclusive, and equitable educator focused on advancing achievement for all students through educational opportunities and pathways that meet students where they are and provide the support necessary to foster their success in alignment with NSHE's "Close the Achievement Gap" goal.

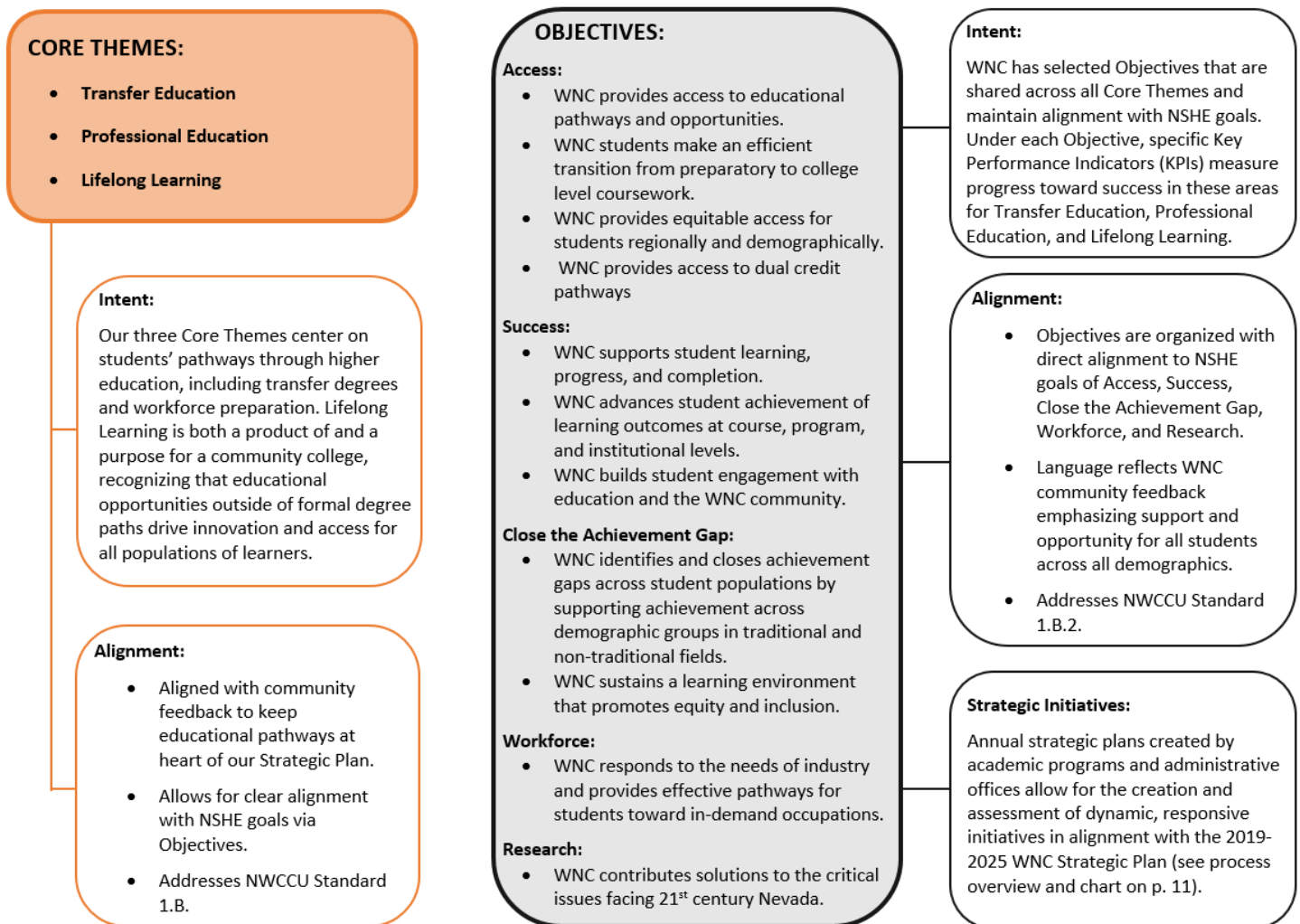
**Workforce:** Collaboratively address the challenges of the workforce and industry education needs of Nevada.

Innovative educational partnerships that foster a life of learning across a growing Nevada economy, as described in our vision, allow WNC to respond quickly and effectively to the developing needs of workforce and industry education. Valuing community connections and our collaborative relationships with local business and industry informs our program offerings and ensures that we are addressing the needs of Nevada's workforce. The educational pathways discussed in our mission keep pace with evolving workforce needs and enrich our communities by advancing career opportunities for our students. This is in direct alignment with NSHE's "Workforce" goal.

**Research:** Co-develop solutions to the critical issues facing 21<sup>st</sup> century Nevada and raise the overall research profile.

As a community college, WNC does not routinely participate in the kind of academic research typically associated with universities. WNC does, however, see itself as a significant partner in developing solutions for a 21<sup>st</sup> century Nevada, as stated in our mission. These solutions come in the form of dynamic educational pathways formed and expanded in collaboration with education and industry partners, as well as analysis of institutional data to support initiatives best positioned to improve student success.

## Core Themes, Goals, and Objectives



### Core Themes, Intent, and Rationale

WNC has decided on three core themes that broadly encompass the educational pathways included in our mission statement:

- **Transfer Education:** Associate of Arts (AA), Associate of Science (AS), and Associate of Business (AB) degrees that may be transferred to four-year institutions and applied toward the completion of a bachelor’s degree.
- **Professional Education:** Associate of Applied Science (AAS), Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS), and professional certificate programs that prepare students to enter the workforce or advance their careers.
- **Lifelong Learning:** Continuing education or credit courses taken for personal enrichment, professional development, or skill enhancement.

Centering our core themes on the educational pathways we provide builds a framework focused directly on our students and their achievements. Transfer education and professional education pathways serve our students and the communities in which they live by advancing career opportunities and imparting skills to successfully navigate our increasingly complex and connected world. Lifelong learning is both a product of and a purpose for a community college, recognizing that educational opportunities outside of formal degree paths drive innovation and access for all populations of learners.

### **Goals and Objectives, Intent, and Rationale**

WNC has adopted NSHE's goals to organize objectives shared across all three core themes:

#### **Access:**

- WNC provides access to educational pathways and opportunities.
- WNC students make an efficient transition from preparatory to college level coursework.
- WNC provides equitable access for students regionally and demographically.
- WNC provides access to dual credit pathways

#### **Success:**

- WNC supports student learning, progress, and completion.
- WNC advances student achievement of learning outcomes at course, program, and institutional levels.
- WNC builds student engagement with education and the WNC community.

#### **Close the Achievement Gap:**

- WNC identifies and closes achievement gaps across student populations by supporting achievement across demographic groups in traditional and non-traditional fields.
- WNC sustains a learning environment that promotes equity and inclusion.

#### **Workforce:**

- WNC responds to the needs of industry and provides effective pathways for students toward in-demand occupations.

#### **Research:**

- WNC contributes solutions to the critical issues facing 21<sup>st</sup> century Nevada.

Organizing our objectives under NSHE's five goal areas allows for clear alignment between WNC and NSHE, while sharing objectives across all three of our core themes ensures that we monitor achievement of these critical goal areas throughout all educational pathways.



## Key Performance Indicators and Strategic Plan Grid

Our key performance indicators (KPIs) at the institutional level are aligned with NSHE indicators for progress within NSHE goal areas. Annual strategic plans are in alignment with the institutional plan and allow academic programs and administrative offices to create localized performance indicators that better reflect dynamic initiatives and priorities (for an overview of cascading annual strategic plans, please see p. 11).

One concern shared across academic programs and administrative offices when working with our previous Strategic Plan was the difficulty in articulating which KPIs were impacted by specific projects and initiatives. In the past, this had led to adding in additional KPIs in an attempt to be more inclusive and representative of the work done across campus. The result, however, was a cumbersome list of KPIs which still did not fully represent the work being done across the campus in our previous core theme areas.

Allowing academic programs and administrative offices to create annual strategic plans with goals and performance indicators specific to their areas while still in alignment with the WNC 2019-2025 Strategic Plan streamlines the plan at the institutional level and makes planning more effective and responsive.

WNC 2019-2025 Strategic Plan KPIs are listed on the following chart, which shows the grid formed between the core themes and shared goal and objective areas. These institutional KPIs are nimble by design, and their development and finalization is ongoing.

WNC Institutional Core Themes and Objectives Grid

		WNC Core Themes		
		Transfer Education	Professional Education	Lifelong Learning
NSHE Goals	WNC Institutional Objectives	Key Performance Indicators	Key Performance Indicators	Key Performance Indicators
Access: Increase participation in postsecondary education	WNC provides access to educational pathways and opportunities	Fall Enrollment	Fall Enrollment	Annual enrollment (unique and total headcount)
		% <18 yr olds/Dual Enrollment	% <18 yr olds/Dual Enrollment	% <18 yr olds/Dual Enrollment
		% 18-24 yr olds	% 18-24 yr olds	% 18-24 yr olds
		% 25+ yr olds	% 25+ yr olds	% 25+ yr olds
	WNC students make an efficient transition from preparatory to college level coursework	Length of time to enrollment in college-level coursework	Length of time to enrollment in college-level coursework	Adult Language and Literacy SLOs
		Length of time to completion of college-level coursework	Length of time to completion of college-level coursework	
		Developmental course pass rates	Developmental course pass rates	
		Rates of enrollment in college-level courses after passing developmental courses	Rates of enrollment in college-level courses after passing developmental courses	Rates of co-enrollment in credit courses
	WNC provides equitable access for students regionally and demographically	Participation by county, age group, race/ethnicity	Participation by county, age group, race/ethnicity	Participation by county
	WNC provides access to dual credit pathways	Participation in dual credit pathways toward transfer degrees	Participation in dual credit pathways toward certification	Participation by high school students, college preparatory pathways
Success: Improve completions/student success rates and increase the number of individuals with a post-secondary credential	WNC supports student learning, progress, and completion	Graduation Rates	Graduation Rates	Completion rates
		IPEDS Education Outcomes	IPEDS Education Outcomes	
		Number of degree/certificates awarded	Number of degree/certificates awarded	Number of successful completions
		Persistence and Retention Rates	Persistence and Retention Rates	
	WNC advances student achievement of learning outcomes at course, program, and institutional levels	SLO achievement rates for institution, program	SLO achievement rates for institution, program	Engagement survey
	WNC builds student engagement with education and the WNC community	CCSSE/Noel Levitz Survey Results	CCSSE/Noel Levitz Survey Results	

WNC Institutional Core Themes and Objectives Grid Continued

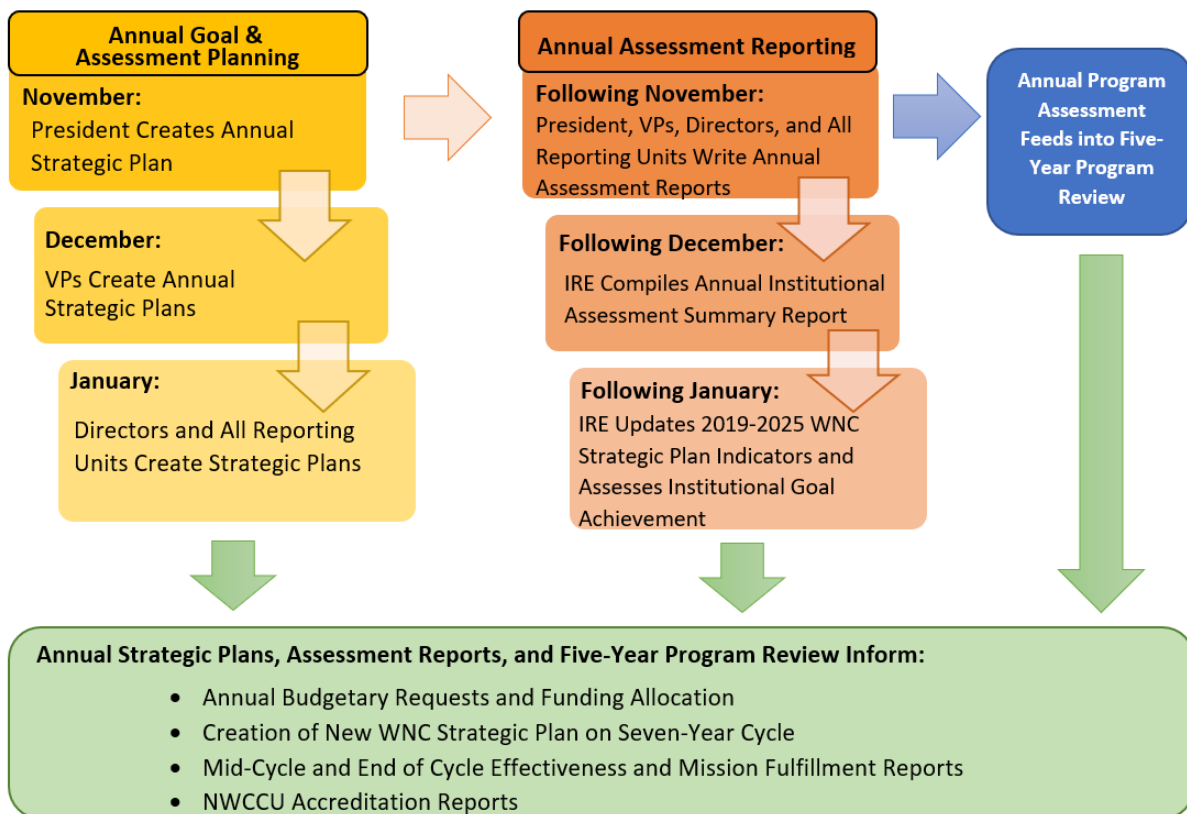
		WNC Core Themes		
		Transfer Education	Professional Education	Lifelong Learning
NSHE Goals	WNC Institutional Objectives	Key Performance Indicators	Key Performance Indicators	Key Performance Indicators
Close the achievement gap among underserved student populations	WNC identifies and closes achievement gaps across student populations by supporting achievement across demographic groups in traditional and non-traditional fields	Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity	Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity	Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity and identified employment barriers
		Number Degree/Certificates by Race/Ethnicity	Number Degree/Certificates by Race/Ethnicity	Completion rate by race/ethnicity, by employment barrier
		Graduation Rates by Race/Ethnicity	Graduation Rates by Race/Ethnicity	
		Persistence by Race/Ethnicity	Persistence by Race/Ethnicity	
		Enrollment and completion for students in non-traditional fields (NAPE/PIPE)	Enrollment and completion for students in non-traditional fields (NAPE/PIPE)	
	WNC sustains a learning environment that promotes equity and inclusion	CCSSE/Noel Levitz Survey Results	CCSSE/Noel Levitz Survey Results	
Workforce: Collaboratively address the challenges of the workforce and industry education needs of Northern Nevada populations	WNC responds to the needs of industry and provides effective pathways for students toward in-demand occupations	Percentage of NSHE in-demand occupations with established WNC pathways	Percentage of NSHE in-demand occupations with established WNC pathways	Number of programs and courses that are career prep/workforce training, and number of those that are for NSHE in-demand occupations
		Student participation in WNC pathways leading to NSHE in-demand pathways	Student participation in WNC pathways leading to NSHE in-demand pathways	Number students participating in workforce training programs/courses, and # participating in those programs/courses for NSHE in-demand occupations
		Percentage of students who transition to next level training or workforce (NSHE in-demand occupations)	Percentage of students who transition to next level training or workforce (NSHE in-demand occupations)	Percentage of students who participate in workforce training programs/courses, and percentage that are for NSHE in-demand occupations
Research: Co-develop solutions to the critical issues facing 21st century Nevada and raise the overall research profile	WNC contributes to solutions to the critical issues facing 21st century Nevada	<i>Rather than having separate KPIs for this objective, progress in this area is measured by evaluating the success of innovative projects and initiatives aimed at increasing access and student success, closing the achievement gap, and preparing students for the workforce. Successful initiatives will have a positive impact on KPIs in these other goal areas.</i>		

*\*Institutional KPIs are currently under development and are designed to be nimble and responsive to community needs. Please see p. 9 for more information.*

## Annual Strategic Planning and Assessment Cycle

The WNC 2019-2025 Strategic Plan provides the College with an essential, unified charge and direction forward. The rapid changes and growth happening in our service area, in higher education, and across our student populations make it difficult to develop one institutional plan flexible and inclusive enough to retain consistent value across the course of seven years.

As a result, WNC is transitioning to the creation of annual strategic plans across all academic programs and administrative offices. Beginning with executive offices and moving down through supervised departments and academic programs, strategic plans are created at the beginning of each calendar year. Individual programs and departments track goals and indicators that are specific to the area, but written in direct alignment with supervising units above them and with the WNC 2019-2025 Strategic Plan. Assessment reports of annual progress toward strategic plan goals and recommendations for improvement are written at the end of each calendar year, and this assessment process informs the creation of annual strategic plans for upcoming calendar year. This annual assessment and strategic planning process informs annual resource allocation, five-year program reviews, WNC 2019-2025 WNC Strategic Plan indicator updates, and cyclical Mission Fulfillment reports. This annual planning and assessment process allows WNC to more quickly and agilely adapt to best support the changing needs of our students and the communities we serve. The chart below illustrates this cycle.



**Appendix A: Strategic Planning Committee and Workgroup Membership**

<b>Strategic Planning Committee Membership and Involvement, Fall 2017-Fall 2018</b>	
<b>Name and Title</b>	<b>Committee Involvement</b>
Deborah Alves, Admin Assistant 2, Facilities	Committee and Workgroup Member
Ron Belbin, Student Success Librarian, Fallon	Committee Member
Rebecca Bevans, Academic Faculty, Liberal Arts	Committee Member
Mandy Billings, Planning & Assessment Coordinator, Institutional Research and Effectiveness	Recorder for Steering Committee, Committee, and Workgroup
Sandy Burnette, Admin Assistant 2, Disability Support Services	Steering Committee Chair, Committee and Workgroup Member
Deb Conrad, Assistant to the President	Committee Member
Judy Cordia, Nursing & Allied Health Director	Committee Member
Sean Davison, WNC Foundation Member	Committee Member
Kim DesRoches, Liberal Arts Director	Steering Committee, Committee, and Workgroup Member
Darla Dodge, Vice President of Finance & Administrative Services	Committee Member
Ellie Dulton, Nursing Laboratory Technician	Committee Member
Lisa Dunkelberg, Academic Faculty, Nursing	Committee Member
Barbara Ford, Personnel Technician II, Human Resources	Committee Member
Denise Frohlich, Learning & Innovation Director	Committee and Workgroup Member
Cathy Fulkerson, Institutional Research & Effectiveness Director	Steering Committee, Committee, and Workgroup Member
Larry Garcia-Castillo, Student	Committee and Workgroup Member
Mark Ghan, Vice President of Special Projects & General Counsel	Committee Member
Niki Gladys, Development & WNC Foundation Director	Committee and Workgroup Member
Dianne Hilliard, Dean of Students	Committee Member
Jamie McNinch, Information Services & Marketing Director	Committee Member
Scott Morrison, Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs	Committee and Workgroup Member
Brian Ridpath, Academic Faculty, Liberal Arts	Committee Member
Heather Rikalo, Admin Assistant 4, Counseling Services	Committee Member
Vincent Solis, President	Committee and Workgroup Member
Michele Stokes, Part-Time Academic Faculty & Community Member	Committee and Workgroup Member
Rochelle Tisdale, Principal, Oasis Academy College Preparatory School	Committee Member
Cesar Vega, Programmer/Analyst, Institutional Research and Effectiveness	Committee and Workgroup Member
Lilly Leon-Vicks, Student Life Coordinator, Student Services	Steering Committee, Committee, and Workgroup Member
Georgia White, Career & Technical Education Director	Chair of Committee and Workgroup