



DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

2025 - 2030 STRATEGIC PLAN



**CSUSM
SISTER**
#COUGARBLUEDAY

**FUTURE CSUSM
COUGAR**
#COUGARBLUEDAY

WE TRANSFER

One Student



FORM LIVES,

at a Time



California State University
SAN MARCOS

A MESSAGE FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT



I am pleased to present the 2025-2030 Strategic Plan for the Division of Student Affairs at Cal State San Marcos—a dynamic blueprint that reflects our collective vision and commitment to student success.

Building on the transformative foundation set by the university's Strategic Plan, *The Power of CSUSM*, we embarked on an extensive planning process to ensure our work remains aligned with the university's priorities and responsive to the evolving needs of our students.

At the heart of this plan is our commitment to shared ownership. Our planning process engaged Student Affairs staff/faculty, students, and campus partners—ensuring that the priorities set forth reflect the perspectives, experiences, and needs of our entire university community. Its success will depend on how we, collectively, bring it to life.

Our comprehensive plan establishes clear divisional goals and fosters a culture of continuous improvement and innovation. By incorporating diverse stakeholder

perspectives, we have developed a strategy that enhances the student experience with a dedicated focus on student success, partnerships and collaboration, employee well-being, and streamlined operations. Inclusive excellence is intentionally woven throughout the plan, shaping our priorities and practices at every level.

This Strategic Plan is not just a document—it is our shared vision for the future, a framework that ensures Student Affairs remains responsive, innovative, and student-centered. As we move forward, this plan will guide how we strengthen our programs, enhance collaboration, and ensure every student has the support they need to thrive.

Go Cougars!

With gratitude,

Viridiana Diaz, Ed.D.

Vice President for Student Affairs



STRATEGIC PLANNING APPROACH AND PROCESS

Our strategic planning approach was highly collaborative, involving staff, administrators, and students. This process was designed to strengthen our division by aligning our goals and outcomes with the evolving landscape of higher education, including budget and enrollment projections. The planning process was structured into four distinct phases.

Phase 1

Initial Data Gathering & Readiness

In phase 1, we laid a solid foundation by gathering essential data about our division and assessing our readiness for strategic planning. This involved understanding our identity in the post-pandemic landscape and reflecting on our journey thus far. Key activities included preliminary information collection, project design, readiness sessions, and discovery meetings to ensure we were well-prepared to move forward.

Phase 2

Data Collection Organizational Assessment

During phase 2, we focused on gaining a deeper understanding of how our division is perceived. We conducted surveys, focus groups, and stakeholder meetings to capture diverse perspectives from staff, administrators, campus partners, and students. The data collected during this phase was carefully analyzed and synthesized to inform the next steps. Additionally, members from the Senior Leadership Team developed and finalized Student Learning Domains, which help define the outcomes we aim to achieve through our programming and services.

Phase 3

Data Collection Organizational Assessment

In phase 3, we analyzed the data collected in the earlier phases. This analysis resulted in 10 divisional recommendations, which the Senior Leadership Team refined into four strategic goals. Furthermore, a dedicated workgroup developed our new mission, vision, and values, providing a strong foundation for these goals. A Strategic Goals and Objectives Workgroup, consisting of representatives from each unit, convened to identify actionable steps and develop assessment metrics for each goal.

Phase 4

Plan Launch and Implementation

In phase 4, we officially launch the strategic plan! This marks a significant milestone in our journey and set the stage for aligning departmental goals with the new strategic plan. Departments will begin tracking and reporting to continuously monitor our progress, ensuring we stay on course and hold ourselves accountable.

ENGAGING OUR STAKEHOLDERS

Our strategic planning process was deeply enriched by the active participation and input from a diverse range of stakeholders.

Students

Students were engaged through focus groups and participated in stakeholder surveys, providing them with opportunities to share their experiences and offer insights on how the division could better serve their needs.

Student Affairs Staff/Faculty

Student Affairs Staff/Faculty shared points of pride and participated in focus groups and stakeholder surveys. They also took part in various workgroups, playing a key role in shaping specific aspects of the strategic plan.

Student Affairs Leadership Team (SALT)

The Student Affairs Leadership Team (SALT) was actively involved in identifying strengths, challenges, and opportunities for the division. They participated in group discussions and exercises during their meetings, with feedback collected and shared with Batista Consulting for further analysis. SALT members were also part of workgroups.

Campus Partners

Campus Partners, including senior administrative teams, participated in focus groups and stakeholder surveys. These sessions provided a platform for them to contribute their perspectives on how Student Affairs could align more effectively with broader institutional goals.



MISSION VISION VALUES

MISSION

The mission of the Division of Student Affairs is to transform lives, one student at a time.

VISION

The Division of Student Affairs will champion student success and foster social mobility by meeting students where they are. We aim to promote well-being, cultivate a sense of belonging, celebrate our diverse community, support academic excellence, and equip students with lifelong skills.

VALUES

The Division of Student Affairs values serve as guiding principles that define our commitment to the campus community. We hold ourselves accountable to these values which shape our actions, decisions, and the overall environment we strive to create. The values form the foundation of our mission to transform lives and our vision to champion student success and foster social mobility.



INTEGRITY: Rooting our work in ethics, honesty, and trust. Our actions advance divisional goals, align with professional standards, and match our commitments.

RESPECT: Valuing all members of our community by treating them with dignity, kindness, and empathy.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, & BELONGING: Celebrating all identities, cultures, and backgrounds, and fostering an environment where individuals are respected, accepted, and heard.

CARE & WELL-BEING: Promoting an environment that supports the campus community's mental, physical, and emotional health.

SHARED PURPOSE: Embracing collaboration and working as one division towards shared goals.

ADVOCACY: Serving as champions for diverse voices and perspectives.

ADAPTABILITY & CREATIVITY: Adopting a growth-oriented mindset that embraces change and meets the evolving nature of higher education.



Our GOALS



Four strategic goals will guide Student Affairs over the next five years, shaping our priorities and driving our efforts forward. These goals define how we will fulfill our mission, realize our vision, and uphold our values.

Focused on student success, employee well-being, operational sustainability, and partnerships, they provide a framework for strengthening services, fostering collaboration, and ensuring our work remains adaptable, innovative, and student-centered.



GOAL 1

PROMOTE STUDENT SUCCESS

throughout

THE STUDENT LIFE CYCLE

Provide comprehensive, equitable, and student-centered support that adapts and responds to students' evolving needs from recruitment and outreach through graduation and beyond.

OBJECTIVES

1.1 Partner with Enrollment Management Services to increase visibility, applications, and enrollment, in alignment with the university's Strategic Enrollment Plan.

1.2 Monitor and analyze retention and graduation rates, including comparisons between students who participate in Student Affairs programs and those who do not, to inform targeted interventions.

1.3 Expand access to culturally responsive mental health and wellness support services to promote student well-being and overall success.

1.4 Enhance student services based on impact and satisfaction data, using findings to improve support structures.

1.5 Advance programs and initiatives that celebrate diversity, foster belonging, and recognize the contributions of historically underrepresented communities, enriching the campus experience for all students.

1.6 Ensure divisional policies and procedures promote equitable access to Student Affairs services and resources by identifying and addressing systemic barriers that may limit student engagement and success.

1.7 Inventory and assess programs, services, and initiatives that promote retention and student engagement to identify areas for improvement.

1.8 Promote opportunities that support career readiness, professional growth, and post-graduation success, including career pathways, internships, alumni networks, and graduate education.



GOAL 2

FOSTER EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING *and* PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

Cultivate an inclusive and supportive work environment that prioritizes employee well-being and professional growth.

OBJECTIVES

- 2.1** Assess organizational climate to strengthen employee morale, engagement, and effectiveness.
- 2.2** Support self-care initiatives, mental health resources, and wellness programs.
- 2.3** Develop a mentorship program that connects employees with leaders to support skill-building and career advancement.
- 2.4** Provide professional development opportunities that align with individual, departmental, and divisional goals.
- 2.5** Expand and enhance opportunities for employee input, involvement, and recognition.
- 2.6** Establish ongoing Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) training to build understanding and commitment to these values.



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GOAL 3

ENHANCE OPERATIONS *and* ORGANIZATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY

Enhance structures, processes, communication, and resource management to improve efficiency, agility, and long-term sustainability while ensuring operations remain inclusive, data-informed, and responsive to evolving needs.

OBJECTIVES

3.1 Leverage technology to enhance operations, communication, and student support, including optimizing Dynamics for student engagement.

3.2 Implement a communication strategy that ensures timely updates, fosters engagement, provides structured avenues for feedback, and prioritizes inclusive and accessible communication for respective stakeholders.

3.3 Ensure departmental spending aligns with divisional strategic priorities and long-term fiscal sustainability.

3.4 Develop cost-saving strategies to maximize resources and improve operational efficiency.

3.5 Assess and refine workflows to enhance responsiveness, eliminate inefficiencies, and strengthen collaboration across departments.

3.6 Strengthen inclusive, data-informed decision-making processes that enhance operations and ensure responsiveness to the diverse needs of students and employees.



GOAL 4

STRENGTHEN CAMPUS, ALUMNI, *and* COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Strengthen partnerships with the broader campus, alumni, and external organizations to enhance student engagement, foster collaboration, and create mutually beneficial opportunities.

OBJECTIVES

4.1 Deepen collaboration with campus divisions, alumni, and external partners—including local businesses, nonprofits, and industry leaders—to align student support efforts and enhance institutional impact.

4.2 Enhance partnerships that advance equity, expand access to academic, professional, and support resources, and create opportunities for historically underrepresented student populations.

4.3 Develop partnerships that increase access to experiential learning, mentorship, and career pathways for students.

4.4 Build community-based initiatives that foster student engagement, civic participation, and reciprocal benefits for students, alumni, and external partners.

4.5 Strengthen and expand partnerships that contribute to student success, institutional progress, and positive community impact.

LEARNING DOMAINS

The Student Affairs Learning Domains provide a common framework for planning and assessing programs and services, supporting an integrated learning environment. These domains empower students to apply the knowledge and skills learned within and outside the classroom through a myriad of intentional learning opportunities, ultimately preparing graduates for economic and social mobility. The eight Learning Domains below align our divisional efforts to enhance co-curricular development while allowing flexibility in developing programmatic tactics to achieve desired learning outcomes.

COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP

Develop the skills to harness both individual and collective team strengths to achieve shared objectives and goals.

CAREER AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Cultivate the capacity to identify and apply personal interests, strengths, values, and skills to inform and pursue academic and career pathways.

CRITICAL THINKING

Enhance the ability to actively and skillfully conceptualize, apply, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information gathered from observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication as a guide to belief and action.

HOLISTIC WELLNESS

Build resilience skills and establish lifelong habits to realize personal definitions of success.

EQUITY & INCLUSION

Integrate, be knowledgeable of, and engage with people from different backgrounds. Actively challenge systems, structures, and policies of inequity to create a more just community.

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Recognize and engage in opportunities to care for the environment, civic responsibility, community involvement, and moving toward social change. Apply concepts of sustainability to address one's social, economic, and environmental impacts.

ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

Effectively utilize diverse forms of communication to express ideas to targeted audiences, including verbal, written and digital styles.

TECHNOLOGICAL FLUENCY

Gain proficiency in ethically integrating technologies that support knowledge acquisition, collaboration, innovation, and productivity.

ACKNOWLEDGING OUR WORKGROUPS

MISSION, VISION & VALUES WORKGROUP

Alondra Lopez, Coordinator, ASI Cougar Pantry
Dr. Annie Macias, Executive Director, Associated Students, Inc. (Co-Chair)
Heather Northway, Director, TRIO Student Support Services
Jennie Ruiz, Interim Director, Success Coaching
Michelle Saavedra-Diaz, Counselor, Disability Support Services
Dr. Norma Larios, Assistant Vice President, Divisional Operations (Co-Chair)
Robert Aiello-Hauser, Director, Pride Center
Todd Snedden, Associate Director, Athletics

STUDENT LEARNING WORKGROUP

Alan Brian, Director, Compliance Title IX/DHR
Dr. Gail Cole-Avent, Associate Vice President, Student Life
Dr. Jason Schreiber, Associate Vice President & Dean of Students
Dr. Norma Larios, Assistant Vice President, Divisional Operations

STRATEGIC GOALS & OBJECTIVES WORKGROUP

Alan Brian, Director, Compliance Title IX/DHR	Jamie Acevedo, Associate Director, USU
Ashley Fennell, Associate Executive Director, ASI	Jason Stock, Associate Director, Compliance, Athletics
Christiana Moen, Director of New Student & Family Programs	Jennie Ruiz, Interim Director, Success Coaching
Daniel Melara, Assistant, Athletic Trainer	Josefina Espino, Assistant Director, DRO
Daphne Joie Smith, Student Engagement Coordinator, ASI	Leigh Quijada, Director, ACE Scholars Services
David Espinoza, Career Counselor	Makayla Hall, Coordinator, SLIC
Dr. Erik Ramirez, Director, Divisional Initiatives & Partnerships (Chair)	Paola Romo, Resident Director
Hector Mercado, Specialist, Financial Aid	Dr. Yasmine Farley, Director, Career Center



PROJECT TIMELINE

AUGUST 2023

- Student Affairs embarked on a comprehensive strategic planning process, in collaboration with Batista Consulting Services.

SEPTEMBER 2023 – DECEMBER 2023

- Engaged Student Affairs staff and stakeholders to foster trust and add value to the plan.
- Completed a comprehensive review of data and documents, including institutional reports, assessments, and strategic plans, to establish a foundation and identify key focus areas for the planning process.
- Collected insights and feedback from staff and stakeholders through surveys and focus groups to inform the strategic planning process.

JANUARY – FEBRUARY 2024

- Analyzed and synthesized data from surveys and focus groups.
- Workgroup proposed new Learning Domains to replace the Co-Curricular Learning Model.

MARCH 2024

- Presented the strategic planning report findings to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and the Student Affairs Leadership Team (SALT). The report included findings from surveys, focus groups, and other activities.

APRIL 2024 – MAY 2024

- Senior Leadership Team (SLT) began reviewing the recommendations from the strategic planning report presented in March 2024.
- Mission, Vision, & Values Workgroup proposed new mission, vision, and values for the division.
- Senior Leadership Team (SLT) conducted further review of the recommendations.

AUGUST 2024 – SEPTEMBER 2024

- Senior Leadership Team (SLT) refined strategic recommendations into strategic goals and priorities.

OCTOBER 2024 – NOVEMBER 2024

- Strategic Goals and Objectives Workgroup, with two representatives from each unit, convened to identify actionable steps and develop assessment metrics for each goal.
- Workgroup submitted recommendations to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and Vice President of Student Affairs for final review.
- Continued implementation planning and preparation for finalization.

FEBRUARY 2025

- Official launch and celebration of the completed strategic plan.

SPRING – SUMMER 2025

- Guidance and support will be provided to align departmental goals and objectives with the new strategic plan.
- Introduction of a tracking and reporting system to continuously monitor progress, keep us on course, and ensure accountability.

TRANSFORMING LIVES, ONE STUDENT AT A TIME

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