

**Governors State University**  
**Institutional Strategic Planning 2030**  
**Report on Steering Committee Feedback**

**6/8/25**



***Governors State***  
**UNIVERSITY**

## ***Institutional Strategic Planning 2030 - Report on Steering Committee Feedback***

### ***Executive Summary***

Since Fall 2024, GovState has engaged in institutional strategic planning for 2030 (ISP 2030). This process began with a review GovState's strategy 2025 and an environmental scan to assess institutional strengths, challenges, opportunities, and threats. This informed the February 2025 charrette, where the campus community gathered under the theme *Better Together*. From March through April, faculty and staff working groups developed and refined definitions for four strategic pillars and crafted SMART goals aligned with the university's mission, vision, and values. These groups laid the groundwork for the plan's structure and direction.

The ISP 2030 Steering Committee—composed of students, faculty, staff, administrators, and leaders from across the university—was formed to provide strategic feedback and ensure that the proposed goals reflect institutional priorities and shared aspirations. Committee members reviewed pillar definitions and draft goals through an online survey. A total of 12 (out of 22 invited) steering committee members responded to the survey by the deadline of 6/6/2025. Their input is summarized within this report and includes responses to survey questions and open-ended feedback and suggestions for the draft pillar definitions and goals.

Key findings in each of the strategic pillars include:

#### ***Student Success and Support***

- **Strong alignment with values and purpose:** 100% of respondents agreed the definition aligns with institutional purpose and values, emphasizing inclusivity and holistic student development.
- **Goal 3 (Mental Health and Wellness) most favorably received:** It received 100% agreement in all categories, likely due to its clarity and specific focus on reducing access barriers (e.g., wait times for counseling).
- **Critique of outdated engagement models:** Multiple respondents questioned the relevance of traditional student engagement approaches (e.g., clubs) for a largely commuter student body. They called for modern, inclusive alternatives like weekend programming and more tangible support services (e.g., childcare, job resources).

#### ***Community and Global Engagement***

- **Unanimous approval of pillar definition:** 100% of participants agreed it aligns with institutional aspirations and identity, though suggestions included making values like equity and innovation more explicit.

- **Strategic Goal 2 (Expanding Global Reach) well-received but ambitious:** While the goals are seen as clear and measurable, concerns arose about overextending global mandates to all graduate programs and unclear integration methods for “global perspectives.”
- **Need for measurable visibility metrics:** For Strategic Goal 3 (Elevating Visibility), respondents recommended defining what forms of visibility matter (e.g., digital traffic, community presence) and how impact will be measured.

#### *One Institution, Many Voices, One Message*

- **Opportunities for Clarification and Alignment:** While the definition was generally well-received, it showed room for improvement in resonating with the university’s identity, as reflected by a 67% agreement rate. Feedback encouraged streamlining the language and reinforcing alignment between "skills and strengths" and broader institutional goals.
- **Strong support for unified messaging (Goal 1):** Most respondents appreciated this initiative, though some wanted clarification on which platforms or groups would be targeted to ensure consistency and inclusivity.
- **Need for specificity in Goals 2 and 3:** Goals on professional development and grassroots collaboration were viewed positively in concept but criticized for lacking detail and measurability.

#### *Future Focused Academic Excellence*

- **Unanimous agreement across all metrics:** This pillar received the most positive feedback, with 100% agreement on the relevance and alignment of the definition and all three goals.
- **Call for measurable outcomes:** While the ambitions were clear and well-supported, respondents emphasized the need to specify metrics (e.g., enrollment growth, job placements, or new program counts) to properly evaluate success.
- **Emphasis on equity and employment:** Some noted the definition should explicitly mention equity. Others stressed the importance of addressing employment outcomes, especially for international students, to ensure long-term impact.

**Steering Committee Feedback on Strategic Pillar Definitions and Strategic Goals**

**Student Support and Success – Percent of ‘Agree’ or ‘Strongly Agree’ Responses (N =12 )**

	The definition demonstrates a clear connection to the university’s purpose and aspirations.	The definition supports and upholds the university’s stated values.	The definition contributes to a coherent representation of the university’s identity and ambitions.
<i>Draft definition for Student Support and Success:</i> At GovState, we are dedicated to cultivating an inclusive, empowering, and supportive educational environment where every student, regardless of their background, is equipped with the holistic support and resources needed to thrive academically, personally, and professionally as we shape the future of education together.	100	100	92
	This goal aligns with the university’s long-term purpose and institutional identity.	This goal would likely receive broad support across the institution.	The goal strikes an appropriate balance between ambition and practicality.
<i>Strategic Goal 1: Increase Student Participation in Organizations and Clubs</i> SMART Goal 1: Through targeted outreach and programming strategies that accommodate diverse schedules, enhance student participation in campus organizations and clubs and increase student retention and graduation rates by 2030.	100	92	67
<i>Strategic Goal 2: Enhance Academic Support Through Peer Tutoring</i> SMART Goal: Enhance the existing peer-tutoring program to increase student-faculty interaction outside the classroom while addressing diverse academic needs and increasing retention and graduation rates.	83	83	75
<i>Strategic Goal 3: Promote Holistic Well-being Among Students</i> SMART Goal: Address barriers (such as appointment wait times) preventing students from accessing resources provided by the Counseling and Wellness Center. Increase awareness of mental health resources to support our student's well-being and positive impact on retention and graduation rates.	100	100	92

## **Student Support and Success – Open-ended Responses**

Please share written feedback on the pillar definition and strategic goals for **Student Support and Success** below, including any suggestions you have for editing these goals.

**Strengths:** The language is inclusive and supportive. Emphasizes holistic development, encompassing academic, personal, and professional aspects. Reflects institutional commitment to equity and student success.

**Suggestions for Improvement:** The sentence is quite long and could be more impactful if broken into two parts. Consider explicitly aligning with institutional mission or values (e.g., access, innovation, community impact).

**Suggested Revision:** At GovState, we are committed to creating an inclusive and empowering educational environment. We ensure that every student, regardless of background, has access to holistic support and resources to thrive academically, personally, and professionally, preparing them to shape the future of education.

**Strategic Goal 1: Increase Student Participation in Organizations and Clubs**

**SMART Goal:** Through targeted outreach and programming strategies that accommodate diverse schedules, enhance student participation in campus organizations and clubs, and increase student retention and graduation rates by 2030.

**Strengths:** Targets both engagement and long-term academic success. Acknowledges the importance of accommodating diverse student needs.

**Suggestions:** The goal attempts to combine multiple outcomes (participation, retention, graduation), which could dilute focus. Consider rephrasing for clarity and active voice.

**Suggested Revision:** By 2030, increase student participation in campus organizations and clubs by implementing targeted outreach and flexible programming. Use these efforts to support improved student retention and graduation rates.

**Strategic Goal 2: Enhance Academic Support Through Peer Tutoring**

**SMART Goal:** Enhance the existing peer-tutoring program to increase student-faculty interaction outside the classroom while addressing diverse academic needs and increasing retention and graduation rates.

**Strengths:** Connects academic support with retention goals. Highlights the importance of interaction beyond the classroom.

**Suggestions:** There's a mismatch: peer tutoring may not directly increase student-faculty interaction. Clarify whether the goal is focused more on tutoring or broader academic engagement.

**Suggested Revision:** Expand and strengthen the peer-tutoring program to better support diverse academic needs and improve retention and graduation rates. Explore complementary strategies to foster meaningful student-faculty engagement outside the classroom.

**Strategic Goal 3: Promote Holistic Well-being Among Students**

**SMART Goal:** Address barriers (such as appointment wait times) that prevent students from accessing resources provided by the Counseling and Wellness Center. Increase awareness of mental health resources to support our students' well-being and positively impact retention and graduation rates.

Strengths: Addresses a real, tangible barrier: access to mental health resources. Connects wellness to student outcomes.

Suggestions: Refine grammar and structure for clarity. Specify how success will be measured (e.g., reduced wait times, increased usage).

Suggested Revision: Improve student access to Counseling and Wellness Center resources by reducing barriers such as long wait times. Increase awareness and usage of mental health services to promote student well-being and positively influence retention and graduation rates.

The connection between clubs and graduation is unconvincing and unmatched to our campus. As a largely commuter and part-time campus, relying on the traditional club/organization model as our engagement vehicle is outdated and impractical. We need a fresher, future-focused approach to engagement. I'm more concerned about the lack of weekend student programming, library services, tutoring/support, and food service for our residential students. We offer nothing for weekend engagement.

How does peer tutoring increase student-faculty interaction? Faculty are not peers. Goal 2 needs revision.

Good overall goals. A little vague but I expect action items will be expanded upon.

The definition is good. Smart goal 1 seems achievable, but is a bit vague. Perhaps setting some benchmarks would help establish a good measure of success. Goals 2 and 3 are definitely encompassing of the definition and would be beneficial to the university if achieved, and I would be interested to see a breakdown of the strategies of these specific goals.

I believe that in order to get students to participate more, there must be a way outside of Jaguar Connection to invite students. Most students don't care to and will not use Jaguar Connection. Too many emails and steps to RSVP to events.

What about sharing of resources to help remove barriers. child care, jobs, financial resources.

My main suggestion for the S.M.A.R.T. Goals for 1 and 2 is to be more specific in terms of what exact problem is the university tackling. The S.M.A.R.T. Goal for Strategic Goal 3 noted a specific barrier to providing well rounded and holistic mental health care for students, the appointment wait times. I liked this detail because it shows that the school already knows about the problems students are facing, and it gives the impression that the university will be equipped to handle those problems. The other two S.M.A.R.T. Goals, while still being very good, just need a bit more detail in terms of what exactly they're trying to solve.

In terms of strategic goal 3, maybe refining the specific barriers that students face here and how specifically we are going to address awareness for students, faculty, staff etc.

**Community and Global Engagement – Percent of ‘Agree’ or ‘Strongly Agree’ Responses (N =12 )**

	The definition demonstrates a clear connection to the university’s purpose and aspirations.	The definition supports and upholds the university’s stated values.	The definition contributes to a coherent representation of the university’s identity and ambitions.
<i>Definition of Community &amp; Global Engagement Pillar : Governors State University will strengthen its role as a regional and global leader by unifying internal communication and external collaboration, expanding community and industry partnerships, increasing global learning opportunities, and enhancing its public presence.</i>	100	100	100
	This goal aligns with the university’s long-term purpose and institutional identity.	This goal would likely receive broad support across the institution.	The goal strikes an appropriate balance between ambition and practicality.
<i>Strategic Goal 1: Connecting Campus, Community, and Industry</i> SMART Goal 1: By April 2026, implement a unified infrastructure featuring a central platform and begin quarterly forums to improve internal university communications and resource sharing aimed at expanding community and industry partnerships by xx% by 2030.	92	75	83
<i>Strategic Goal 2: Expanding Global Reach</i> SMART Goal: Expand study abroad offerings by 100% (4 programs) and increase student participation in foreign learning experiences by 60% (50 students). Renew, modify, and/or create at least 7 strategic partnerships to increase faculty and student exchange and integrate global perspectives into 100% of undergraduate and graduate programs by 2030	100	92	75
<i>Strategic Goal 3: Elevating GovState Visibility</i> SMART Goal: Increase GovState’s visibility in the local and global communities through strategic marketing, public awareness campaigns, and expanded course offerings by 2030.	100	92	92

## **Community and Global Engagement – Open-ended Responses**

Please share written feedback on the pillar definition and strategic goals for **Community and Global Engagement** below, including any suggestions you have for editing these goals.

The draft definition of the Community & Global Engagement pillar effectively reflects Governors State University's commitment to serving as both a regional anchor and a global collaborator. Its emphasis on communication, collaboration, partnership expansion, and public presence aligns well with the institution's mission and values. To further strengthen the definition, consider explicitly referencing the values of inclusivity, equity, and innovation to ensure consistency with institutional language. Strategic Goal 1: Connecting Campus, Community, and Industry This is a timely and relevant goal that promotes internal efficiency and external impact. The emphasis on a centralized platform and quarterly forums is commendable. To enhance clarity, the target percentage for partnership growth ("xx%") should be specified. Additionally, examples of desired community or industry collaborations (e.g., internships, service learning) could offer a clearer vision for implementation. Strategic Goal 2: Expanding Global Reach This goal is ambitious and well-structured, with clearly defined targets for program growth, student participation, and partnership development. The inclusion of global perspectives across all academic programs demonstrates a strong commitment to internationalization. To improve practicality, consider including strategies for increasing accessibility (e.g., funding support, virtual global learning) to ensure broad student and faculty participation. Strategic Goal 3: Elevating GovState Visibility The goal appropriately focuses on raising the university's profile through marketing and course offerings. However, it would benefit from greater specificity regarding what forms of visibility are prioritized (e.g., digital presence, media outreach, academic rankings). Including measurable indicators—such as increases in web traffic, enrollment, or partnership inquiries—will strengthen the SMART structure of the goal.

Teacher education programs prepare students for domestic ISBE education licensure in Illinois. These programs are focused on CRTL standards to meet the needs of all learners in their K-12 classrooms and related stakeholders (i.e., parents, community). Global engagement is not in the NELP standards for K-12 leadership. Requiring all graduate programs to globally engage is overreaching. Goal 3 is incomplete without a measurable goal to increase fiscal and human capital investments for program-level marketing. .

For goal 2, I am unsure what "integrate global perspectives into 100% of undergraduate and graduate programs by 2030" means? How will this be accomplished? Also, for Goal 3, how will we measure our visibility?

Alot of students complain about our facilities being used for outside groups and not being available to students.

i believe there should be something about promoting and supporting economic development surrounding the university

All of these goals are well written and reasonably realistic. I personally favor seeing exact numbers and explicit strategy plans as they seem much more measurable and allow us a way to track progress in one way. Goal 3 did not have exact numbers, but did include the ways in reach it would increase GovState's visibility in a certain time span. The only suggestion I would have would be to input the actual percentage in the S.M.A.R.T. Goal for one, which I assume would be fixed regardless since this is a draft.

As far as strategic goal 3, I like the idea of expanded course offerings

**One Institution, Many Voices, One Message – Percent of ‘Agree’ or ‘Strongly Agree’ Responses (N =12 )**

	The definition demonstrates a clear connection to the university’s purpose and aspirations.	The definition supports and upholds the university’s stated values.	The definition contributes to a coherent representation of the university’s identity and ambitions.
Draft definition for One Institution, Many Voices, One Message strategic pillar: Through unified messaging, deliberate development, and deepened collaboration, the Institution will amplify its impact and foster a culture of trust, transparency, and shared purpose. This shall be achieved through a mission-focused initiative, identifying and establishing the skills and strengths of the institution and those that serve it.	83	83	67
	This goal aligns with the university’s long-term purpose and institutional identity.	This goal would likely receive broad support across the institution.	The goal strikes an appropriate balance between ambition and practicality.
Strategic Goal 1: <i>Unified Messaging</i> SMART Goal 1: GovState will establish a university-wide strategic communication plan that ensures consistent messaging across all platforms, departments, and stakeholder groups in an effort to streamline operations by 2027.	92	92	75
Strategic Goal 2: <i>Deliberate Development</i> SMART Goal: Bridge cross campus visions through unified voices by creating new initiatives that provide opportunity for professional growth amongst University Employees by 2028.	100	83	67
Strategic Goal 3: <i>Deepening Collaboration</i> SMART Goal: Engage the university community and its stakeholders through meaningful, grassroots enterprises that will focus on fostering collaboration and offering creative solutions with a wide impact.	75	75	58

## ***One Institution, Many Voices, One Message – Open-ended Responses***

Please share written feedback on the pillar definition and strategic goals for ***One Institution, Many Voices, One Message*** below, including any suggestions you have for editing these goals.

The draft definition for the "One Institution, Many Voices, One Message" pillar is compelling and aligns with the university's overarching mission. It emphasizes unity, collaboration, and transparency—critical themes for fostering a strong institutional culture. The focus on mission-driven communication and internal capacity-building is both timely and strategic. To enhance clarity, consider simplifying some of the phrasing and explicitly linking the "skills and strengths" language to institutional goals such as retention, equity, and excellence.

### Strategic Goal 1: Unified Messaging

Establishing a university-wide communication plan is crucial for enhancing consistency, alignment, and operational effectiveness. The timeline is reasonable, and the outcome is practical. It would be helpful to include specific platforms or audiences (e.g., students, faculty, external stakeholders) to contextualize the goal further and ensure inclusivity in messaging.

### Strategic Goal 2: Deliberate Development

This goal supports institutional cohesion and employee engagement. By promoting professional development tied to unified messaging and shared purpose, it reflects a deep investment in internal stakeholders. To improve specificity, consider adding measurable outcomes (e.g., number of initiatives, participation rates, or impact assessments).

### Strategic Goal 3: Deepening Collaboration

This is a particularly valuable goal that acknowledges the importance of grassroots innovation and collective problem-solving. The emphasis on community-driven solutions encourages inclusivity and ownership. However, to make this more actionable, the goal could benefit from examples of "grassroots enterprises" or proposed methods for measuring "wide impact."

Overall great descriptions, quite vague. Tangible examples would be helpful if not already included in aspects of goal descriptions.

I do agree communication could be executed in a better manner and I like the cross bridging touch. I would just want to know how these will be achieved.

I am still not sure how measurable Goal 3 is.

The professors must be valued and apart of the building process, they are tired of bureaucracy

The main details that would need more support are for Strategic Goals 2 and 3. In my perspective, they need to be more specific in how they would be creating initiatives and enterprises. They need to give something more concrete that people can hold onto, and to ground the S.M.A.R.T goals in a more understandable manner. It doesn't have to be exact numbers, but a bit of detail in the "how", so that way it can be determined if the goal itself is measurable and achievable.

I feel like deepening collaboration was kind of touched on with the community goals

**Future-Focused Academic Excellence – Percent of ‘Agree’ or ‘Strongly Agree’ Responses (N =12 )**

	The definition demonstrates a clear connection to the university’s purpose and aspirations.	The definition supports and upholds the university’s stated values.	The definition contributes to a coherent representation of the university’s identity and ambitions.
Draft definition for Future-Focused Academic Excellence strategic pillar: <i>GovState is dedicated to future-focused academic excellence. This pillar requires our commitment to innovative outreach and engagement, adaptive pedagogic excellence, and dynamic career and workforce preparation. These elements are critical to building institutional reputation and increasing student enrollment.</i>	100	100	100
	This goal aligns with the university’s long-term purpose and institutional identity.	This goal would likely receive broad support across the institution.	The goal strikes an appropriate balance between ambition and practicality.
Strategic Goal 1: <i>Expanding Access Through Innovative Education</i> SMART Goal 1: GovState will increase student access to an exceptional educational experience by raising awareness of our high-value programs. GovState will become the market-leader in delivering innovative and accessible online and hybrid education to serve the learning needs of students in the Chicago Southland and beyond. GovState will strengthen our position as the first-choice institution for first-generation students, adult learners, and non-traditional students to meet students’ goals, needs, and learning preferences.	100	100	100
Strategic Goal 2: <i>Inclusive and Flexible Learning for Success</i> SMART Goal: GovState will foster student success by embracing inclusive, responsive, flexible, and forward-looking instructional strategies. GovState commits to ensuring all students achieve their academic, personal, and professional potential by advancing evidence-based and engaging learning environments. We emphasize the continuous improvement of instructional design, delivery, and assessment responsive to all learners’ needs, informed by data, and aligned with evolving workforce demands.	100	92	100
Strategic Goal 3: <i>Education Fueling Economic Vitality</i> SMART Goal: GovState will inspire future leaders to create societal impact, lead community vitality and regional economic growth through the acceleration of career-relevant program development and cultivation of modern workplace skills.	100	100	100

## **Future-Focused Academic Excellence – Open-ended Responses**

Please share written feedback on the pillar definition and strategic goals for **Future-Focused Academic Excellence** below, including any suggestions you have for editing these goals.

The draft definition for the Future-Focused Academic Excellence pillar clearly articulates Governors State University's forward-thinking approach to pedagogy, outreach, and workforce alignment. It strongly supports the institution's mission to serve diverse learners and proactively address regional and global educational needs. The emphasis on innovation, adaptability, and dynamic career preparation reflects an appropriate and strategic direction. To strengthen the definition further, consider explicitly referencing equity and access—two key drivers of academic excellence in diverse learning communities. Strategic Goal 1: Expanding Access Through Innovative Education This goal is timely and vital, especially as the demand for flexible and accessible education continues to rise. The focus on first-generation and non-traditional students aligns well with GovState's core mission. To enhance the SMART structure, the goal would benefit from measurable targets, such as specific increases in enrollment, program offerings, or technology investment benchmarks. Clarifying how "market-leader" status will be defined or assessed could also add clarity. Strategic Goal 2: Inclusive and Flexible Learning for Success This goal is well-conceived and impressively student-centered. Its emphasis on data-informed instructional strategies, continuous improvement, and responsiveness to learners' needs demonstrates a deep commitment to inclusive academic practices. The language is strong and clear. One suggestion would be to identify key performance indicators (e.g., retention rates, satisfaction metrics, learning outcome improvements) to ground the vision in measurable results. Strategic Goal 3: Education Fueling Economic Vitality This goal effectively positions the university as a driver of regional economic development through career-relevant education. The reference to modern workplace skills and leadership development is important, especially for preparing students to be both workforce-ready and civically engaged. The goal would benefit from specifying partnerships or sectors (e.g., healthcare, technology, public service) and outlining what constitutes "societal impact" in this context. Adding metrics related to job placement, internship opportunities, or employer satisfaction could further enhance impact.

Needs more measurable outcomes. We should consider adding language focus on vision and be thinking of policy that prevent nimble and responsive changes to curriculum development, both new programs and future-focused improvements to existing curriculum.

We must make sure we are finding employment opportunities for the foreign students and stop using them for money, then leaving them dry. Make sure the Director of CSEIP isn't controlling student orgs instead of being an advisor.

What is GovState known for. How do we make ourselves stand out from other universities.

I have no comments on what to improve for the strategic goals and pillar definition. They all connect to the university's mission and goals and give enough detail in what exactly they will be doing to achieve their goals. The only thing missing is a time frame, as the lack of it makes measuring success difficult, but not impossible.