Strategic Themes

• Integrated Student Experience

Colleges flourish when the student support experience empowers students to take ownership of their success. Every stop on the student pathway—from early college, to admissions and financial aid, to academic achievements, to completion and graduation—are guided and linked seamlessly, buttressed by an efficient organizational structure across campuses.

• Student Success

Student success is at the heart of the college's efforts. Through Achieving the Dream, and through the DHE Vision Project, Northern Essex is making progress in preparing students, many of whom are historically underserved, to be informed citizens. An emphasis on college participation and completion, and closing achievement gaps is central to these efforts. Utilizing analytics for performance tracking and intervention systems assists in measuring achievements and benefits students in the long-term.

• Career Exploration and Development

The student learning experience extends far beyond the classroom. Experiential learning and internship placements in the field provide hands-on experiences and enhance the student’s value to prospective employers. Mentorship opportunities also enable students to widen their knowledge and learn about the workplace. Providing students with comprehensive avenues and creative solutions for career exploration and development contribute to long-term success of students.

• Curriculum Innovation

Fully engaging students in the 21st century requires that colleges be flexible and innovative in the way curriculum is developed and offered. New models that can be explored provide transformative learning, guided pathways, global experiences, and competency-based education. Along with this, the college’s academic programs must continually be measured for their effectiveness and for their alignment with the needs of regional and local employers.

• External Partnerships

Northern Essex is a community college in which the concept of community is as vital as the term college. This is demonstrated when the college reaches out to forge partnerships and deepen its academic, cultural, social, and economic impact within the region. Partnerships with other institutions of higher education, and with businesses, community groups, donors, and others, all add value to the student experience and to the college as a whole.

• Professional Development

An important factor contributing to student success is the quality of teaching. Professional development helps to ensure that educators are able to continue to strengthen their practice throughout their careers. Whether that be through facilitated learning, conference attendance, cross-functional teams, or other collaborative opportunities, professional development is essential in supporting and engaging faculty and staff.