



# **THIS IS NOT A STRATEGIC PLAN**

Because this College Gets Stuff Done

College of Arts and Sciences  
Northern State University

**Two-Year Blueprint for Strategic Action**

Sept. 2019 - Sept. 2021

**ARTS AND SCIENCES** | **NSU**

[northern.edu](http://northern.edu)



April 15, 2020

Dear Colleagues,

We are pleased to present this progress report on the strategic initiatives undertaken by the faculty, staff, and students of the College of Arts and Sciences. The College accounts for nearly one-third of all faculty and students at Northern across three Departments housing some of the largest and fastest growing programs on campus spanning the Humanities, Languages, Mathematics, Sciences, and Social Sciences. The College provides the bulk of general education, freshmen seminar, and high school dual credit offerings, as well as major contributions in research, external grants, outreach, and community engagement.

The College began developing a framework for strategic planning and implementation in fall 2017 aligned with the Association of American Colleges and Universities' LEAP initiative. Those preliminary efforts resulted in a document titled *Investing for the Future: Strategic Priorities in the College of Arts and Sciences*. That document, submitted to the President and Provost in January 2018, contained several staffing, curricular, and professional development proposals framed around the imperative of making targeted investments in initiatives with the potential for significant growth.

As those initial proposals proceeded during 2018, the College shifted toward a more deliberative and formal process for long-term planning and implementation based on the model of Strategic Action, which is better suited to meet the opportunities and challenges over the coming decade marked by significant demographic change, shifting demands in the workforce, and an evolving financial model for higher education. After soliciting feedback from multiple stakeholders during spring 2019, the College adopted a new mission, vision, and values statement and structure for strategic planning and implementation in September 2019, concurrent with the University's adoption of the Strategic Action model and a new mission, vision, and values statement.

The College's two-year Blueprint for Strategic Action, titled *This is Not a Strategic Plan: Because this College Gets Stuff Done*, spans and unites four Pillars of Distinction – Teaching, Research, Engagement, and Administration – supported by specific pedagogical, curricular, staffing, professional development, and administrative initiatives. This progress report outlines that blueprint; including summary graphic illustrating the College's new Mission, Vision, and Values; Structure; and Pillars and Initiatives; a progress chart showing specific initiatives with preliminary start dates and responsibilities; and a timeline.

This Blueprint for Strategic Action is a dynamic project and will be assessed on a regular basis to reflect changing opportunities and circumstances. This progress report provides an overview of those efforts. The faculty, staff, and students of the College have accomplished a great deal over the last year and helped set a new direction for the University amid challenging times. Thank you for all your hard work and determination to strive toward continuous improvement aligned with our mission, vision, and values.

Sincerely,

Joshua Hagen  
Dean

Alyssa Kiesow  
Associate Dean and Chair

# THIS IS NOT A STRATEGIC PLAN

Because this College Gets Stuff Done

College of Arts and Sciences, Northern State University

**Two-Year Blueprint for Strategic Action** Sept. 2019 – Sept. 2021

## MISSION

To provide students with challenging educational experiences grounded in the liberal arts and natural sciences that develop the capacity to make an impact as critical thinkers, communicators, collaborators, and creators.

## VISION

To become a community of teacher-scholars dedicated to quality student-centered education, scholarship, and service that fosters professional, personal, and civic success.

## VALUES

Integrity, Excellence, Community, Leadership

## STRUCTURE

### Core Team

**Goal:** To cultivate a culture of collaboration, improvement, and reflection.

**Members:** Alyssa Kiesow (Co-Chair), Ginny Lewis (Co-Chair), Justin Bartel, Erin Brownlee, Ric Dias, David Grettler, Elizabeth Haller, Jacob Howard, Becca Johnson, Amy Kueter, Steven Usitalo, and Josh Hagen

### Teaching Team

**Goal:** To promote practical solutions to common teaching problems.

**Members:** David Grettler (Chair), Kristi Brownfield, Liz Sills, and Stacy Trentham

### Research Team

**Goal:** To support and stimulate scholarship.

**Members:** Ginny Lewis (Chair), John Long, Eric Pulis, and Courtney Waid-Lindberg

### Engagement Team

**Goal:** To improve engagement among College faculty and students, the larger Northern campus, and various external constituencies.

**Members:** Ric Dias (Chair), Justin Bartel, Lysbeth Benkert-Rasmussen, Guangwei Ding, Ben Harley, and Becca Johnson

### Departments

Language, Literature, and Communication Studies;  
History and Social Sciences; Science and Mathematics

## PILLARS and INITIATIVES

### TEACHING AND CURRICULUM

- Establish platforms for informal dialogue concerning challenges and opportunities in teaching with an emphasis on collaborative and cross-disciplinary pedagogy.

*Begin Fall 2019: Teaching Subcommittee*

- Support creation of a Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning.

*AY 2019-2020: Core Committee, Teaching Subcommittee*

- Establish an annual College of Arts and Sciences Academic Common Read focused on emerging trends and proven practices in higher education.

*AY 2019-2020: Teaching Team*

- Support curricular and pedagogical development through travel grants and other opportunities, such as the College of Arts and Sciences Travel Grant for Professional Development in Teaching.

*Begin Fall 2019: Dean, Associate Dean, and Chairs*

- Develop new undergraduate programs:
  - Global Language and Culture (Bachelors intent to plan and proposal)
  - Social Science Education (Bachelors intent to plan and proposal)
  - Information Technology (Bachelors intent to plan and proposal)
  - Pre-Engineering (partnership with SDSU)
  - German (Undergraduate Certificate proposal)
  - Science Education (Bachelors intent to plan and proposal)

- Biochemistry (Bachelors intent to plan and proposal)
- Public Relations (Minor proposal)
- Histology (Minor proposal)
- Native American Studies (Minor proposal)
- Film Studies (Minor proposal)
- Science Education (Minor proposal)
- Social Science Education (Minor proposal)
- Geography (Bachelors review feasibility)
- Analytics (Bachelors review feasibility)
- Social Work (Bachelors review feasibility)

*Begin Fall 2019: Departments*

- Develop new graduate programs:
  - English (Masters proposal)
  - Teaching English (Masters proposal)
  - Science (Masters intent to plan and proposal)
  - Science (Certificate proposal)
  - TESOL (Certificate proposal)
  - Criminal Justice (Masters review feasibility)
  - Creative Writing (Masters review feasibility)

*Begin Fall 2019: Departments*

- Review accreditation:
    - American Chemical Society (review feasibility)
    - Wildlife Society (review feasibility)
    - ABET (review feasibility)
- Begin Fall 2019: Science and Mathematics*

## PILLARS and INITIATIVES

### RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP

- Establish platforms for dialogue concerning challenges and opportunities in research with an emphasis on collaboration to secure external funding.  
*Begin Fall 2019: Research Subcommittee*
- Increase the visibility of faculty and student research through digital displays and other means.  
*AY 2019-2020: Research Subcommittee*
- Support opportunities to increase research productivity, such as the College of Arts and Sciences Research Award.  
*Begin Fall 2019: Dean, Chairs*
- Promote research of new faculty by minimizing service obligations.  
*AY 2019-2020: Chairs, Departments*
- Increase opportunities for sabbaticals and research leave.  
*AY 2019-2020: Dean, Chairs*

### ENGAGEMENT

- Enhance mentorship of new hires.  
*AY 2019-2020: Third Year Review Committee, Departments*
- Develop initiatives to support best practices in advising, such as through travel funding.  
*AY 2019-2020: Dean, Chairs, Advisors*
- Implement College Arts and Sciences Academic Speaker Series.  
*Begin fall 2019: Dean, Chairs*
- Establish Center for Public History.  
*Begin fall 2019: HIST and POLS faculty*
- Develop strategies to prepare students for success after graduation with an emphasis on opportunities for internships, service learning, and graduate school.  
*AY 2019-2020: Engagement Subcommittee*

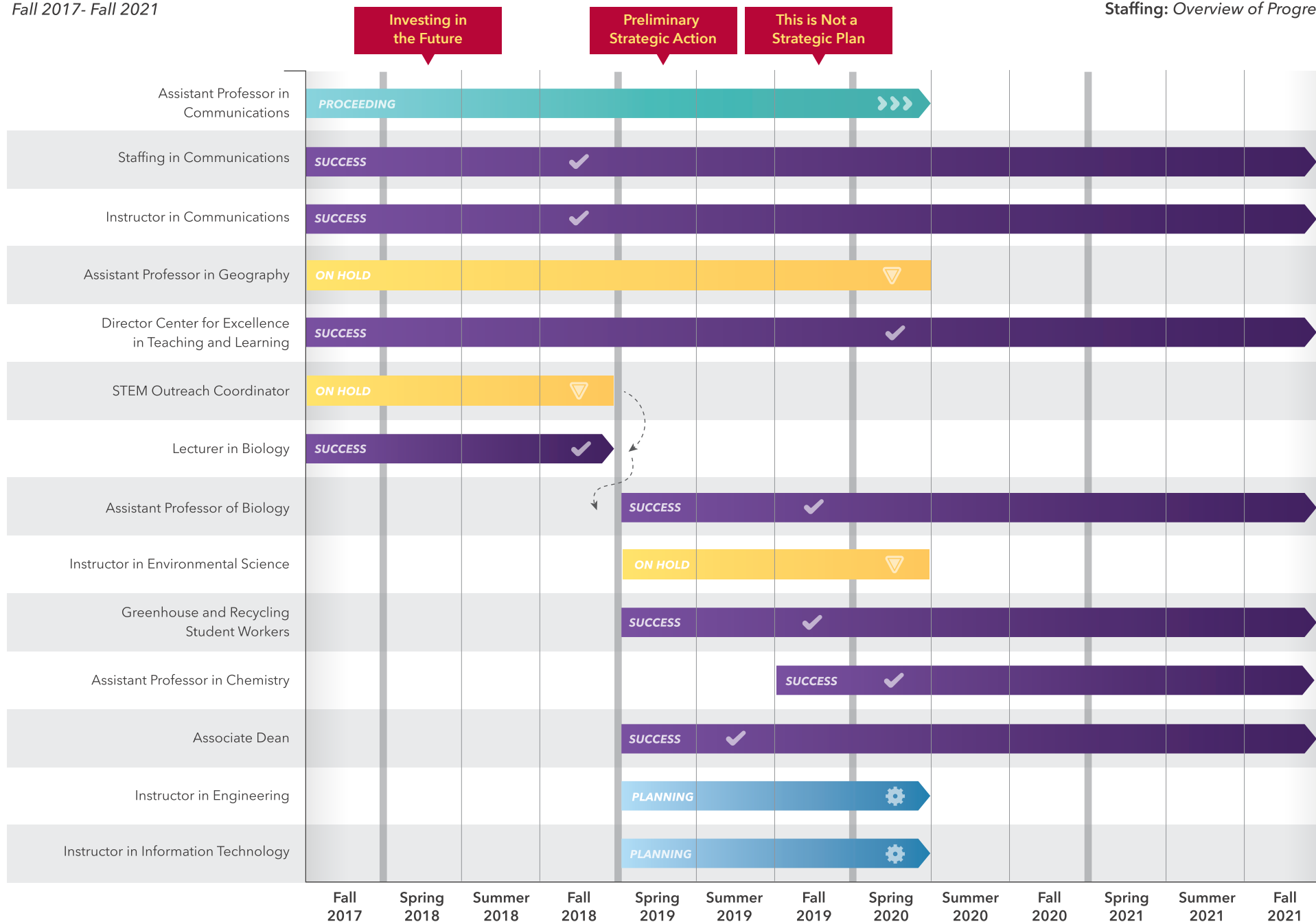
### ADMINISTRATION AND ASSESSMENT

- Supervise Strategic Doing process in alignment with the College and University mission, vision, and values, including regular reporting to the College and other constituencies.  
*Begin fall 2019: Dean, Associate Dean, Core Committee*
- Streamline processing and storage of college paperwork and documents.  
*Begin fall 2019: Dean, Associate Dean, Chairs*
- Implement learning outcomes and processes for assessment and review of programs and general education.  
*AY 2019-2020: Dean, Associate Dean, Chairs*
- Establish College of Arts and Sciences Distinguished Faculty Award.  
*AY 2019-2020: Dean, Associate Dean, Chairs*
- Strengthen alumni and donor relationships in partnership with the NSU Foundation.  
*Begin fall 2019: Dean, Associate Dean, Chairs*

# STRATEGIC ACTIONS

Fall 2017- Fall 2021

College of Arts and Sciences  
Staffing: Overview of Progress



PLANNING ⚙️

PROCEEDING >>>

SUCCESS ✓

ON HOLD ▽

# STRATEGIC ACTIONS

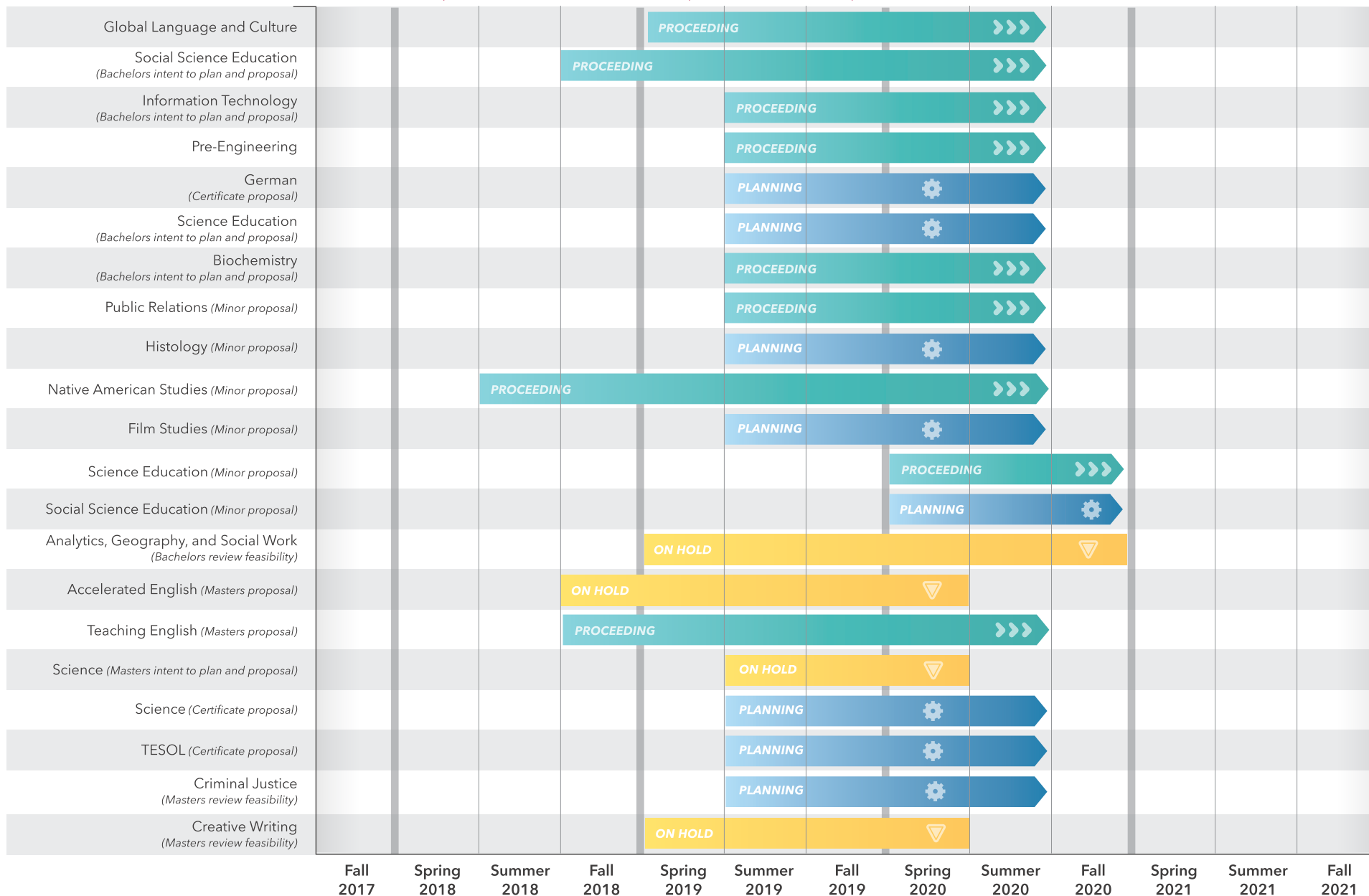
Fall 2017- Fall 2021

College of Arts and Sciences  
Curriculum: Overview of Progress

Investing in the Future  
Spring 2018

Preliminary Strategic Action  
Spring 2019

This is Not a Strategic Plan  
Fall 2019



PLANNING



PROCEEDING



SUCCESS



ON HOLD



# STRATEGIC ACTIONS

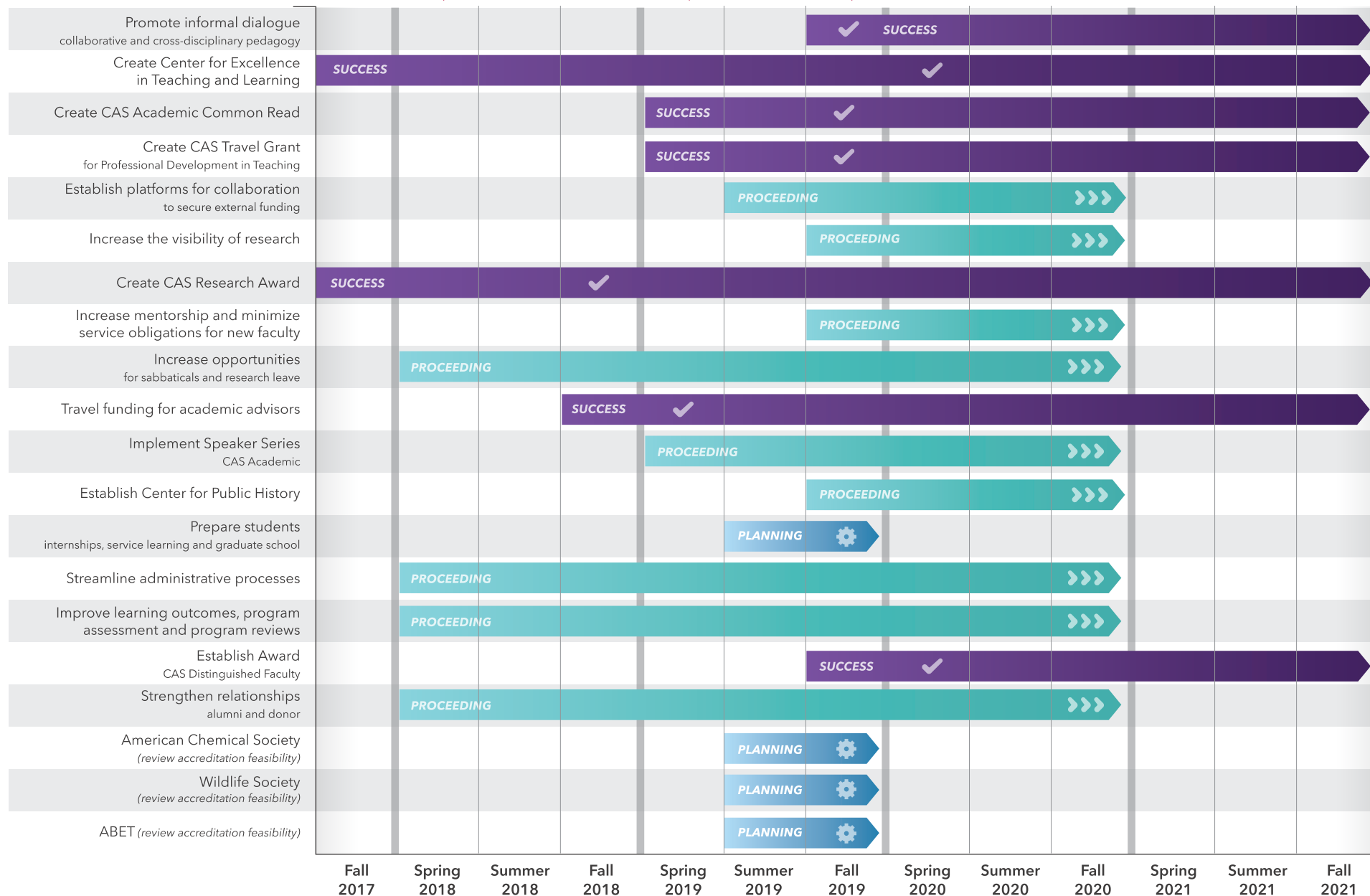
Fall 2017- Fall 2021

College of Arts and Sciences  
Professional Development: Overview of Progress

Investing in the Future  
Spring 2018

Preliminary Strategic Action  
Spring 2019

This is Not a Strategic Plan  
Fall 2019



PLANNING ⚙️

PROCEEDING »»»

SUCCESS ✓

ON HOLD ⚠️

# **This is Not a Strategic Plan: Because this College Gets Stuff Done**

***College of Arts and Sciences, Northern State University***

## **Timeline September 2019 – September 2021**

Northern milestones; **CAS milestones.**

August 2010 – *Strategic Plan Northern State University* published in consultation with Sumpton & Wyland.

January 2013 – *Enrollment Blueprint for Action: Mobilizing for Enrollment Stabilization and Growth at Northern State University* published in consultation with New Campus Dynamics.

**December 2013 – College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) completed Institutional Assessment Document, 2008-2013.**

October 2014 – SDBOR approves *Strategic Plan 2014-2020*.

Fall 2015 – *Mission Forward* strategic plan published in consultation with Sumpton & Wyland, expires summer 2020.

October 2017 – Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) charter approved by President and Senior Cabinet.

**January 2018 – CAS submits *Investing for the Future: Strategic Priorities in the College of Arts and Sciences* to President and Provost.**

February 2018 – SPC formed by President and Senior Cabinet. Regular SPC meetings begin.

August 2018 – Mission Forward Progress Report 2018 completed by SPC.

December 2018 – SPC begins reviewing model of Strategic Doing.

**January 2019 – CAS discusses formalizing process for strategic planning and adopts new framework for Strategic Doing. Interim Associate Dean position established to facilitate strategic planning and implementation.**

**February 2019 – Dean and Chairs hold mini-workshop on strategic planning and draft preliminary working document of Strategic Doing initiatives, including committee structure and initial timeline for implementation.**

February 2019 – Core Committee and Subcommittees formed, regular meetings begin.

February-March 2019 – Core Committee solicits input from faculty, staff, students and community partners through focus groups, surveys and other means.

March 2019 – SPC and Extended Cabinet participate in Strategic Doing Workshop facilitated by external consultant Dr. Sona Andrews.

April 2019 – CAS adopts new mission, vision and values statement, Core Committee and Subcommittees assume responsibility for developing and implementing initiatives on teaching, research, engagement and innovation (the latter becomes administration and assessment).

April-June 2019 – SPC conducts campus and community survey soliciting feedback on current mission, purpose, vision and values statement.

May 2019 – Strategic Doing model approved by President and Senior Cabinet based on SPC recommendation.

July 2019 – Associate Dean position continued on permanent basis with responsibility for strategic planning and implementation.

July 2019 – SPC conducts workshop to draft new mission, vision and values statement based on survey feedback.

August 2019 – Mission Forward Progress Report 2019 completed by SPC.

August 2019 – New mission, vision and values statement approved by President and Senior Cabinet based on SPC recommendation.

August 2019 – SPC conducts campus forums to present new mission, vision and values statement and solicit additional feedback.

September 2019 – CAS adopts *This Is Not a Strategic Plan: Because this College Gets Stuff Done* as a two-year blueprint for strategic planning and implementation. Core Committee, Subcommittees, Departments and other groups continue working on corresponding initiatives.

Fall 2019 – SPC develops framework for strategic implementation consisting of Pillars Teams focused on initiatives promoting excellence in learning, experience, partnerships and leadership, as well as a communications team. SPC renamed Strategic Action Team (SAT) to reflect new approach and coordinate overall strategic action initiatives.

November 2019 – Working blueprint titled *Campus of Distinction: A Framework for Strategic Action* approved by President and Senior Cabinet based on SAT recommendation.

December 2019 – President delivers progress report to SD Board of Regents.

January 2020 – CAS progress report on *This Is Not a Strategic Plan*.

January 2020 – Pillar Teams formed.

February 2020 – SAT and Senior Leadership present new framework to campus forum, report progress and solicit feedback.

Spring 2020 – Pillar Teams develop characteristics, pathway projects and metrics by April 2020.

Fall 2020 – SAT and Pillar Teams begin implementation begins.

UNLEASH *your* POTENTIAL  
— JOIN THE **PACK** —

**ARTS AND SCIENCES** | **NSU**

**Two-Year Blueprint for Strategic Action**

Sept. 2019 – Sept. 2021

[northern.edu](http://northern.edu)