



# Academic Master Plan

2020

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**NORTHLAND**  
COMMUNITY & TECHNICAL COLLEGE

## **Academic Master Plan 2020: Context and Development**

As stated in Northland Community and Technical College's [Strategic Plan](#), strategic planning at Northland views the plan "as a living document, designed for effectiveness through adaptability and flexibility, and subject to continuous review." This philosophy of strategic planning is adopted for the 2020 Academic Master plan as well. Within the environment at Northland, we must recognize and balance the expectations and needs of our students, our regional business and industry, the Minnesota State College and University system, and our institutional resource base.

Northland must remain adaptive to shifts within this environmental context. To retain this adaptability, the plan is structured as a three-year rolling plan. The intent is to balance adaptability to needs as they arise (e.g., system initiatives requiring attention within a defined timeline) with the need to strategically identify and pursue long-term institutional initiatives (e.g., development of a new academic program).

The Academic Master Plan further needs to work in accordance with other planning efforts at Northland, including especially the Strategic Plan, the Equity and Inclusion Plan, and the Facilities Master Plan. In aligning with these plans, the Academic Master Plan will keep as its central focus and guide the following:

### **Mission**

Northland is an innovative leader in higher education, preparing all learners with work and life skills that advance personal well-being and regional prosperity.

### **Vision**

Northland will be highly valued for providing exceptional education that transforms lives and strengthens the communities we serve.

### **Foundational Goals**

**1. Foster Student Success**

**2. Advance the Development of the College**

### **Institutional Values**

- Meet students where they are at
- Focus on student success
- Provide a high value learning experience
- Work collaboratively and build relationships
- Advance diversity, equity and inclusion
- Promote global competency
- Encourage innovation and creativity
- Pursue quality and continuous improvement
- Meet community and workforce needs
- Practice financial stewardship

As a Minnesota state college, we have the advantage of system level planning that incorporates significant research and development. The strategic direction provided to Northland through Minnesota State is an asset as we strive to meet our mission and vision in serving our students and regional partners. Strategically incorporating this system level work into our regional work and experience is a key element of this Academic Master Plan framework.

## Framework

1. The core of the framework is a rolling plan that prioritizes initiatives on a three-year horizon.
2. The number of initiatives in each year will depend on the size and depth of the specific projects. A range of 2-6 initiatives is typical.
3. An effort to balance initiatives, over time, across the following categories will be made. The categories include:
  - a. Category 1: Program Development
    - i. Examples include: significant change in delivery mode, new program development, academic program work tied directly to attracting students, initiatives affecting efficiency and delivery of several or all academic programs, etc.
    - ii. This does not include typical maintenance program work to stay current with industry and/or program accreditation standards, or similar ongoing work to maintain sound academic programming.
  - b. Category 2: Student Engagement and Success
    - i. Examples include initiatives tied to assessment of student learning, student completion at course, course sequence, and program levels, academic advising, and initiatives tied to engagement of diverse learners within academic settings such as classrooms, laboratories, or field experiences.
    - ii. This does not include typical maintenance of existing processes in areas such as assessment or advising.
  - c. Category 3: Professional Development and Training
    - i. Examples include major initiatives to adjust faculty professional development processes, significant training initiatives at the department or college level, and special efforts to focus on specific development areas at the college level.
    - ii. This does not include ongoing processes with professional development including coordinator work and in-service planning.
4. Process for annual identification of strategic initiatives.
  - a. Identify academic initiatives from relevant Minnesota State strategic planning and/or relevant Minnesota State mandated initiatives.
  - b. Potential Northland initiatives are identified through an annual open meeting held each Spring prior to mid-March. The collection of Northland initiatives through an annual meeting may be augmented by the use of email, MS Teams, or similar electronic means.

- c. Meet annually within the process, prior to mid-March, with students to identify and review initiatives.
  - d. Overlap of initiatives in the following areas are identified:
    - i. Northland's Strategic plan.
    - ii. Northland's Equity and Inclusion Plan.
    - iii. Minnesota State Strategic Initiatives.
    - iv. Northland Facilities Master Plan.
  - e. Categorize initiatives according to the three-part categories outlined above.
5. Ranking and setting of strategic initiatives.
- a. A special meeting of AASC faculty and administrative membership is held in late March with the purpose of identifying the specific initiatives to be pursued in the coming fiscal year, as well as a ranking of initiatives for years two and three within the rolling plan.
    - i. This ranking considers those elements identified above, including balance within the three Categories and system level required initiatives.
    - ii. Inclusion of multiple year initiatives are placed within the rolling plan (i.e., identified as carrying forward over the three-year cycle as appropriate).
    - iii. Potential lead individuals are identified for initiatives, particularly those for the coming fiscal year.
    - iv. Potential budget source(s) are identified for all initiatives, including those in years one, two, and three. Budget availability is aligned with the number of initiatives, as well as NCTC Master Plan, Facilities Plan, and E&I Plan.
  - b. The recommendations from the AASC special meeting are forwarded to the April AASC meeting for final review, revisions, and approval.
6. AASC receives bi-annual updates on progress in November and April.
7. As a new strategic plan, the full framework will be reviewed in year three (Spring, 2024). The framework may be revisited prior to this if there are clear issues in its functionality. Assuming the framework and planning cycle is functioning well at the three-year review, the framework full-review cycle will adjust to a five-year cycle.

### **Initiatives identified over three-year rolling plan (Living Section)**

*This Section of the AMP is tracked within a separate Document in Excel Format. See attachment: "AMP Initiatives..."*

### **Challenges and Accomplishments (Living Section)**

With the initial development of the Academic Master Plan 2020, there are a few potential areas of challenge we wish note for special attention as the plan is implemented.

- The college budget cycle has a February deadline for submission. This timeline does not fit comfortably with the April timeline for finalizing initiatives. With this in mind, those items identified on the Two-Year Horizon should have budget requests submitted in February. This may be a good fit as part of revisiting the Two-Year Horizon initiatives in April and moving them ahead to coming year projects can be informed by budget determinations. The balance and fit of budgeting and planning needs to have special attention paid to it through implementation.

- Assuring the plan itself is integrated into the work of AASC and the work of the college community as a whole is a challenge. There is a history of master plans not remaining integral to the work of the college. While the design of this plan is intended to change this, making this change to the institutional culture will require attentiveness beyond a couple of meetings at AASC.