

**2018 - 2023 DIVERSITY, EQUITY,  
AND INCLUSION STRATEGIC PLAN**

**SOCIAL MOBILITY AND  
OPPORTUNITY AGENDA**

Southern  
New Hampshire  
University



  
**Southern New Hampshire University**  
*We do know that the Word of Creation, by the authority vested in  
it under the laws of the State of New Hampshire and upon  
recommendation of the faculty here being confered upon*  
**Sierra Ingram**  
*In recognition of fulfillment of the requirements for that degree with  
all the Rights, Honors and Privileges pertaining thereto.  
State of New Hampshire, New Hampshire the first day of March, two thousand and eighteen.*  
  
  
Chancellor of the Board of Trustees

Southern New Hampshire University

# Establishing a Shared Language

In introducing our plan, we believe it is essential to identify and share a common vernacular while addressing key aspects of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). We share the following terms and definitions for reference throughout this plan.

**Academic Efficacy:** Degree to which learners achieve articulated competencies or academic outcomes.

**Access:** The ways in which institutions and policies ensure that all people, regardless of demographic, geographic, or socioeconomic background, have equal and equitable opportunities to lead full and healthy lives, with a full array of choices.

**Agency/Agent Group:** Members of dominant social groups by birth or acquisition who knowingly or unknowingly exploit and benefit from unfair advantage over members of target groups; refers to the thoughts and actions taken by people that express their individual power in social context.

**Ally:** Someone who makes the commitment and effort to recognize their social advantage (based on gender, class, race, sexual identity, etc.) and work in solidarity with oppressed groups in the struggle for justice.

**Cognitive Diversity:** Differences in perspective or information processing styles, not predicted by factors such as gender, ethnicity, or age.

**Culture:** A social system of meaning and custom that is developed by a group of people to assure its adaptation and survival, distinguished by a set of unspoken rules that shape values, beliefs, habits, patterns of thinking, behaviors, and styles of communication.

**DEI:** Diversity, equity, and inclusion.

**Demographic:** The statistical characteristics of human populations (such as age or income).

**Diversity:** Individual and group differences and similarities that can be visible or invisible and occur in cognitive and demographic manifestations, including socioeconomic class, race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, physical and cognitive ability, religion, language, national origin, family type, generation, and more.

**DREAMers/DACA Recipients:** Participants in Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), a federal program that protects eligible applicants from deportation and gives them work authorization for a renewal period of two years if they were brought to the U.S. as children and attended school in the U.S.

**The DREAM Act:** Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act (“DREAM Act”), a federal legislative proposal for a multi-phase process for qualifying alien minors in the U.S. that would grant conditional residency.

**Equity:** Fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all and the elimination of barriers that prevent the full participation of some groups. It is an acknowledgment that historically underserved and underrepresented populations deserve fairness and justice to remedy systemic conditions that limit their opportunity and access.

**Ethnicity:** A socially constructed grouping of people who share a common cultural heritage derived from values, behavioral patterns, language, political and economic interests, history, geographical base, and ancestry. Examples include: Haitian, African American (Black); Chinese, Korean (Asian); Cherokee, Navajo (Native American); Cuban, Mexican (Latino); Irish, Swedish (White European).

**Gender Expression:** External appearance of one’s gender identity, usually expressed through behavior, clothing, haircut, or voice—which may or may not conform to socially defined behaviors—and are typically associated with being either masculine or feminine.

**Gender Identity:** One’s innermost concept of self as male, female, a blend of both, or neither—how individuals perceive themselves and what they call themselves, sometimes different from their sex assigned at birth.

**Inclusion:** Active, intentional, and ongoing engagement with and agency of diverse people and communities with the goal of deepening a culture of belonging, empowerment, and welcome, as well as policies, programs, and practices that mitigate against exclusion and inspire work for a common mission and vision.

**Intersectionality:** A lens through which to view social issues and see where power and oppression intersect, providing a more holistic view of how individuals are impacted.

**Learners:** Holistic term used to refer to both students and individuals participating in dual-enrollment and coursework only, and future participants.

**LGBTQIA:** Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual.

**Marginalized:** Excluded, ignored, or relegated to the outer edge of a group/society/community.

**Opportunity index:** Composite measure at the state and country levels of economic, educational, and civic factors that foster opportunity.

**Oppression:** Systemic devaluing, undermining, marginalizing, and disadvantaging of certain social identities in contrast to the advantaged norm, either intentionally or unintentionally.

**Power:** Access to resources that enhance one’s chances of getting what one needs in order to lead a safe, comfortable, and productive life.

**Privilege:** Unearned social power accorded by the formal and informal institutions of society to all members of a dominant group.

**Race:** Race is a socially constructed concept that places individuals into categories based on appearances that are ascribed with cultural characteristics.

**Scarcity Index:** Measurement of availability of resources impacting mindset.

**Sexual Orientation:** An inherent or immutable enduring emotional, romantic, or sexual attraction to other people.

**Social Justice:** Concept in which equity or justice is achieved in every aspect of society rather than in only some aspects or for some people and affords individuals and groups fair treatment.

**Social Mobility:** Movement through a system of social hierarchy or stratification by leveraging opportunity.

**Socioeconomic Status:** The social standing or class of an individual or group, often measured as a combination of education, income, and occupation.

**Student:** An individual participating in a highly regulated pathway likely leading to an undergraduate or graduate degree.

**Target Group:** Members of a social identity group that is disenfranchised and exploited in a variety of ways, including being subject to containment, having restricted movement and choices, being treated as expendable and replaceable, and lacking individual identities apart from the group.

**Transgender:** An umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or expression is different from cultural expectations based on the sex they were assigned at birth.

**Wealth:** An abundance of valuable material possessions or resources.



# Our Commitment to Social Mobility and Opportunity Agenda

In June 2018, the Board of Trustees and I tasked the President's Office of Diversity and Inclusion with developing a full extension to the 2018-2023 SNHU Strategic Plan to address our need to be more diverse and inclusive.

We gave ourselves the following challenge:

***To fulfill our mission of transforming lives and creating a better and more just world, SNHU must strengthen our intercultural competency to better serve our learners, employees, and the communities in which we work. As the university serves an ever more diverse population, we must become more diverse, equitable, and inclusive, developing the culture, knowledge, and skills to be a high performing organization.***

This challenge will require that we better understand ourselves— as individuals, as employees, and as an organization—in order to better understand and serve our richly diverse learner population. From the first impression to the first point of contact, through successful program completion and beyond, our learners will depend upon us to support their growth and success, which means recognizing them as individuals with all the value and talent they bring, as well as the hurdles they confront and baggage they carry.

Access is not enough. Our commitment to learner success requires that we strive for equitable outcomes and just experiences for all our learners, meeting them where they are as individuals. The work of unlocking talent for a better and more just world is work that acknowledges past and present inequities in higher education, while reaching for a future when disparities between socially stratified groups are non-existent. It is the work of educating learners not only for gainful employment but also for upward social mobility—for themselves and for the generations that follow them.

**This is not charity work. The research is unequivocal: Diverse organizations are higher performing organizations.**

This work will be good for our learners, and it will be good for SNHU as an organization. Diversity, equity, and inclusion are positive organizational traits that together power better outcomes for everyone. In both corporate and academic realms, they enhance learning, critical thinking, and performance. We are following the practices of the most enlightened organizations, creating new positions and programming, becoming a better organization while better serving those too often left behind or poorly served. There is urgency in this work. We can't afford to squander the talent that lies untapped—often suppressed—in communities of color, among the poor, and within those whose humanity and potential are often ignored, dismissed, or actively repressed. This is exciting work and also necessary work, as we cannot realize our goal of serving hundreds of thousands of learners—more and more of them learners of color as America becomes more diverse and we reach into its far corners—unless we are ourselves a more diverse and inclusive university, skilled in serving every learner we enroll in the ways they need us to. In the pages that follow, we outline our commitment.



# VISION: DEI at SNHU by 2023

SNHU will demonstrate a decisive, measurable commitment to DEI work that manifests itself in every corner of the institution.

With governance and accountability measures in place, such a commitment will result in the kind of organizational transformation that is required to change the lives of our learners. We envision that by 2023, we will have achieved the following high-level outcomes:

- A radical connection of talent to opportunity as we skillfully manage the gifts and needs and goals of each diverse learner and employee
- Amplified academic efficacy, employee performance intercultural competency, and learner success
- Expansion of the university's local, national, and global impact on social justice
- Influence on upward mobility for populations who disproportionately represent the lowest socioeconomic strata of society
- Technology that enhances access and equity through an expansive learning ecosystem
- Innovative diversity, equity, and inclusion work that is symbolized and centered at SNHU

By accomplishing the goals and objectives set out in this DEI plan, SNHU will become a global leader in preparing our learners and employees to cultivate equity and justice while demonstrating the skills and competencies required to thrive in an increasingly diverse society. The DEI plan welcomes differences of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, age, and more, while maximizing inclusion and success for our most underserved and underrepresented employees and learners.

To realize this vision, individuals at every level of the organization must be able to see themselves as relevant and central to the DEI effort, take the lead from their uniquely diverse vantage and passion points, and achieve transformation of equity, access, and excellence together.





# DEI STRATEGIC PLAN

2018-2023 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan: Social Mobility and Opportunity Agenda serves as the DEI extension to Southern New Hampshire University's 2018-2023 Strategic Plan: Unlocking Talent and Opportunity. This plan highlights our commitment to DEI across the university as central to our mission of transforming lives by expanding access to education. Here, we explore the state of DEI to enable us to identify goals and strategic objectives that will enable us to move closer to our vision of making the world a better and more just place through our work, one learner at a time, for employers and the broader community.

This work is both timely and based on our university's mission: **SNHU transforms the lives of learners. Our success is defined by our learners' success. By relentlessly challenging the status quo and providing the best support in higher education, SNHU expands access to education by creating high-quality, affordable, and innovative pathways to meet the unique needs of each and every learner.**

# Catalyst for Change and Improvement

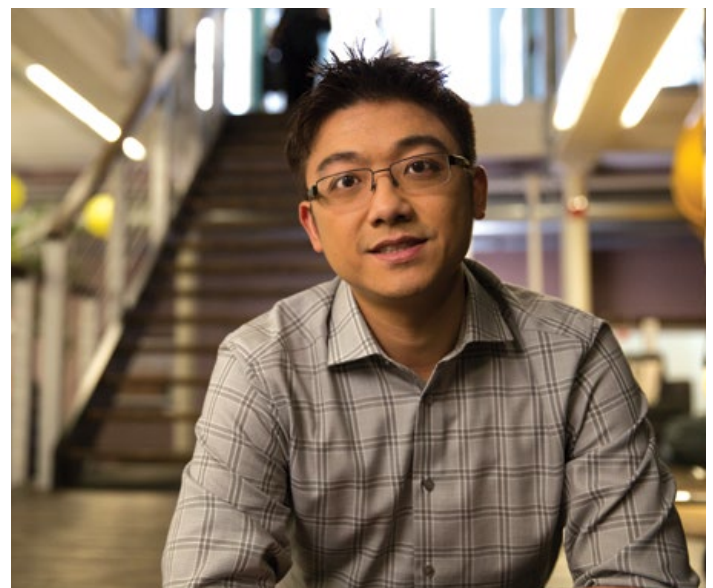
Across New England, the U.S., and the broader global population, there are social, technological, economic, environmental, and political barriers that present challenges for individuals to pursue life-changing educational pathways. The United Nations identifies education as essential for encouraging a sustainable lifestyle, reducing crime, improving public health, reducing working poverty, and sustaining and expanding access to high-skill occupations. Increasing access to education for underrepresented learners as well as strengthening equity literacy for well-represented learners and employees will have rippling positive impacts on communities worldwide.

Within the U.S., there is a clear divide in college attainment based upon ethnicity. African Americans and Hispanics lag behind Whites in college degree attainment, income, and wealth. However, by 2032, a majority of the working class will be composed of African Americans and Hispanics, and by 2043, these groups will collectively outnumber Whites. Both the nation and SNHU face a very real shortage of skilled workers because of the college attainment gap between races. This trend has critical implications for our nation's infrastructure because college degree attainment results in higher earnings and tax revenue, better health outcomes, greater degrees of civic engagement, and lower rates of unemployment, poverty, student loan default, and dependency on government programs. Just halving the difference in attainment between White learners and other ethnic groups would make the United States one of the five most educated countries in the world, reverse this trend, and strengthen our economy.

## Our future is inextricably linked to the future of promising individuals

Higher education institutions must work harder to reduce the academic, social, and financial barriers to access and completion in order to welcome and support historically underserved learners to the finish line. This requires re-imagining traditional marketing, enrollment, teaching, and advising practices to power learning and success in an intentional, inclusive, and culturally aware manner. Our future is inextricably linked to the future of promising individuals who could excel if we eliminated or reduced the systemic financial, social, and academic barriers to a college degree. As long as college attainment gaps persist, we will continue to fall short of the promise of our own national ethos—personal agency, financial security, and upward social mobility: the American Dream.

### OUR TIME TO ACT AT SNHU IS NOW.



# The Social Mobility and Opportunity Agenda Framework

SNHU aims to deliver reimagined, life-transforming academic programs to learners on a global scale with an emphasis on bringing higher education to those for whom higher education continues to be out of reach. Our five strategic commitments represent our dedication to transforming lives by championing the pursuit of a postsecondary credential—arguably the most critical gateway to upward social mobility.

Our DEI goals serve as a critical bridge between our learners' success and the fulfillment of our commitments. Without fostering equity and access, learning for equity and academic efficacy, and a culture of belonging and agency, we as an institution will falter and not be able to move forward with our commitments to our learners. Concurrently, the attainment of our DEI goals is rooted in distinct diversity, equity, and inclusion objectives. **As such, we have mapped our DEI goals and objectives to the University's 2018-2023 strategic commitments to serve as a measurable for gauging our success.**

## LEARNER SUCCESS



## 5 Strategic Commitments

1. Deliver a broad portfolio of high-demand credentials leading to meaningful work and purposeful lives
2. Provide the best and most personalized learner support in higher education
3. Attract, develop, empower, and retain world class talent to deliver on our mission
4. Deploy transformational technology to support next-generation learning on a global scale
5. Create the capacity and foundation on which to build the 2030 learning ecosystem

## 3 DEI Goals

1. Cultivate equity, access, and just experiences
2. Foster a culture of belonging and agency
3. Advance learning and development for equity and academic efficacy



# Introducing our DEI Goals

This DEI plan defines our principles, goals, and objectives that will drive our capacity to fulfill our five strategic commitments. At the same time, it identifies ways in which SNHU can be a gamechanger for groups who have faced systemic barriers to higher education for generations such as African American, Hispanic, Native American, and the poor and working class. Legally segregated school systems, costly rates of attendance, and inflexible academic delivery models have effectively impeded large numbers of individuals from attending higher education institutions over time. Today, there is evidence that this legacy of institutionalized sorting persists, continuing to marginalize the poor and working class and disproportionately impacting people of color, who experience higher unemployment, poverty, and incarceration rates and lower rates of upward social mobility.

**In order to achieve our five strategic commitments, we must also attain these three foundational goals:**

## 1. Cultivate equity, access, and just experience

Identify and remove barriers to access, success, and wellbeing for all, especially underrepresented and systemically marginalized learners and employees.

## 2. Foster a culture of belonging and agency

Create and sustain a climate in which learners and employees feel a sense of belonging, value, and agency.

## 3. Advance learning and development for equity and academic efficacy

Create inclusive learning environments through which to deliver curricular and programmatic offerings that expose learners and employees to a rich diversity of ideas, skills, and teaching practices.







# ALIGNING DEI GOALS AND STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS

The DEI Goals outlined here serve as the bedrock for the five strategic commitments that frame the University's 2018-2023 Strategic Plan: Unlocking Talent and Opportunity. Our five strategic commitments are:

- 1. Deliver a broad portfolio of high-demand credentials leading to meaningful work and purposeful lives**
- 2. Provide the best and most personalized learner support in higher education**
- 3. Attract, develop, empower, and retain world class talent to deliver on our mission**
- 4. Deploy transformational technology to support next-generation learning on a global scale**
- 5. Create the capacity and foundation on which to build the 2030 learning ecosystem**

A 51-person project team, including student advisory groups and a broad range of university stakeholders, considered these five strategic commitments and identified three interrelated DEI goals to be achieved with each one. Specific DEI objectives pertaining to each foundational DEI goal and commitment are identified as the pathway to our 2023 vision. **Our three DEI goals are:**

- 1. Cultivate equity, access, and just experiences**
- 2. Foster a culture of belonging and agency**
- 3. Advance learning and development for equity and academic efficacy**

# STRATEGIC COMMITMENT 1

## Deliver a broad portfolio of high-demand credentials leading to meaningful work and purposeful lives

**SNHU will increase the number of programs, the array of credentials, and the pathways to completion we offer to a wider range of learners, with targeted outreach to learners who have had few, if any, pathways for entry to higher education.**

To meet this first commitment we will ensure that our programs are relevant and timely, accessible at every stage, and responsive to the needs of our learners so that they can develop the skills and knowledge they need to complete their program and compete in a diverse, interconnected world. We will strive for programmatic efficacy by cultivating cultural competence, inclusive scholarship, research, curriculum development, and teaching practices, as well as by advancing learning for equity and fairness through trainings and co-curricular events.

The power of SNHU rests in our ability to attract, recruit, and retain underrepresented learners, invest in their untapped potential, and harvest the innovation, creativity, and excellence that comes from fresh and unexpected pools of talent. Systemic barriers include:

**Academic Readiness.** A learner's academic preparation in high school is one of the strongest predictors of college degree attainment. Increasing the academic preparedness of learners before they attend college holds significant promise for improving postsecondary educational attainment in the United States. Efforts targeted toward groups of learners who have historically arrived at college less prepared have the potential to narrow the troubling disparities in educational attainment that persist along lines of race and class.

**Financial Constraints.** The increasing cost of education has outpaced other goods and services with tuition rising 197 percent and the cost of textbooks up 207 percent over the last 20 years. The cost of higher education has actually outpaced the cost of health care since 1982. State governments are disinvesting from higher education, passing additional costs onto learners. Learners are then forced to make hard decisions about how to pay for both higher education and critical goods and services. With African American and Hispanic learners disproportionately represented in the lower economic class, and at the same time making up a growing population in the U.S., institutions must address this trend as their prospective learner pool grows more diverse and less financially able.



**The following objectives will enable us to meet this commitment and our DEI goals.**

### DIVERSITY OBJECTIVE

**Identify barriers to access for underrepresented learners and establish a recruitment strategy to eliminate such barriers and set measurable goals for increased access over time**

### EQUITY OBJECTIVE

**Align and assess efforts across units to identify opportunities to maximize participation of targeted populations in our programs**

### INCLUSION OBJECTIVE

**Assess curriculum and program, establish strategy to modify and innovate, and ensure inclusion of diverse perspectives, counter-narratives, and teaching practices**



## STRATEGIC COMMITMENT 2

### Provide the best and most personalized learner support in higher education

**We will offer the most inclusive, personalized learning and support experience possible to each SNHU learner, no matter our scale. Learners will have a curated learning pathway and support. We will work hard to understand our learners and what they need.**

The focus on learner success and personalization exhibited by our faculty and staff as they support our learners through completion sets SNHU apart from peer institutions.

To meet this second commitment and continue to offer the most inclusive and personalized support possible, we will ensure that our faculty and staff are well equipped and understand that one learner may need and welcome an approach that is different from another's, and also be aware of and sensitive to learners' unique lived experiences. This kind of sensitivity and awareness will amplify a sense of inclusion and belonging and result in comparable success outcomes for all, regardless of social identity or class. We must also comprehensively assess the extent to which our learners feel a sense of belonging and agency and identify effective ways to advance inclusive culture, just experiences, and equitable outcomes. Systemic barriers include:

**Psychological Factors.** Higher education researchers and policy experts have recently become interested in how psychological factors such as learner mindsets and motives are associated with improving college completion. Approaches that incorporate psychological factors, such as encouraging growth mindsets, connecting learning to real-world aspirations, and using intuitive modules that help activate learners' motivation and sense of belonging, can improve learner success in higher

education. Being intentional about our own learning for equity is a critical action step SNHU faculty and staff can take to deliver programs that tailor initiatives, policies, and practices to meet learners where they are in their college careers academically, financially, and socially, do so with cultural mindfulness that moves learners forward.

**Institutional Factors.** Metrics used to assess the effectiveness of our program delivery include, but are not limited to, climate and engagement indicators, retention and persistence rates, academic achievement, and financial debt load. Current metrics reveal that our program delivery is less effective for our underrepresented learners than for others. For example, retention/persistence rates for American Indian and African American learners are lower than those of other learner populations, both on campus and online, and there are similar gaps in matriculation, academic achievement, and financial debt load measures. Using such data to set measurable goals for equity while identifying new, innovative metrics to track transformation will increase our capacity to reach our 2023 vision.

**The following objectives will enable us to meet this commitment and our DEI goals.**

#### DIVERSITY OBJECTIVE

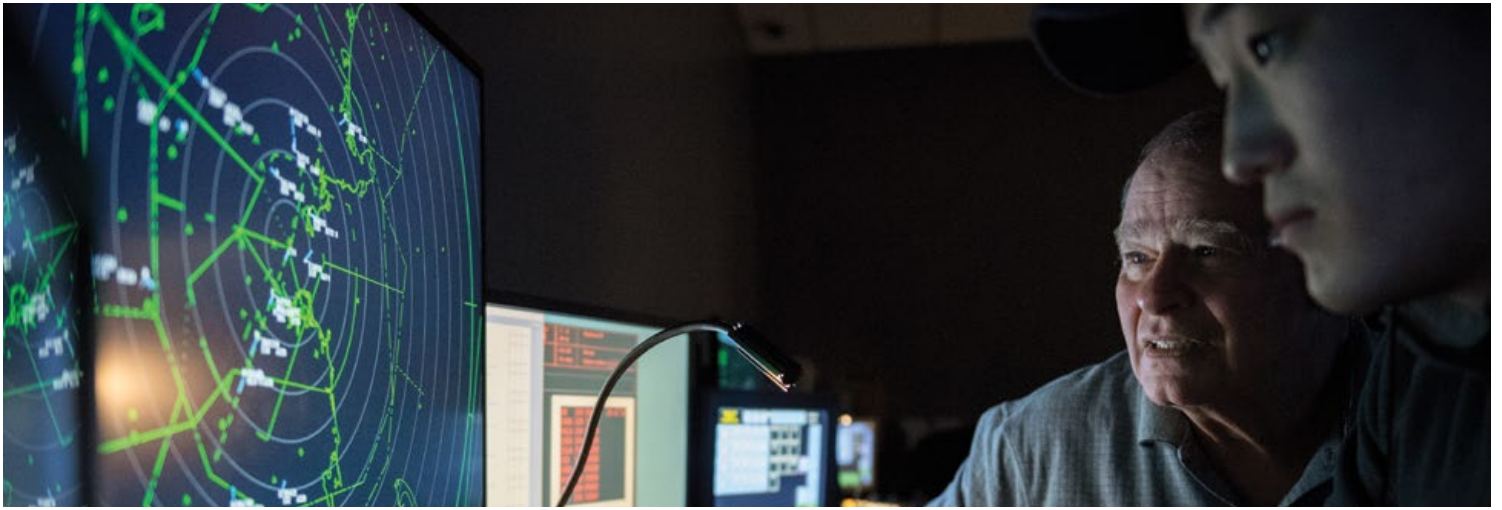
**Identify and eliminate barriers to success for underrepresented learners and establish retention and persistence strategies that set measurable goals for success and completion**

#### EQUITY OBJECTIVE

**Improve equity literacy for employees and apply user experience design to provide a more personalized support structure for our learners**

#### INCLUSION OBJECTIVE

**Conduct ongoing climate research to assess and promote a culture of agency and belonging for all**



## STRATEGIC COMMITMENT 3

### Attract, develop, empower, and retain world class talent to deliver on our mission

**We will be an employer of choice for a diverse national and global workforce. Our employees will be passionate about our mission and reinforce our culture of welcome and belonging. They will thrive in an inclusive, learner-focused organization in which human difference is valued and continuous development and innovation are a near constant.**

The success of our DEI strategic plan is dependent upon the will and dedication of our people. Our faculty and staff will need to drive robust interdepartmental collaboration and alignment of governance, accountability, communication, and execution efforts. Individuals at every level of the organization must be able to see themselves as relevant to and at the center of the DEI effort, take the lead from their uniquely diverse vantage and passion points, and achieve transformation of equity, access, and excellence together.

To meet this commitment, we will comprehensively assess the extent to which our employees feel a sense of belonging and agency and identify the infrastructure needed to best support systems that will advance inclusive workplace culture. The power of our performance rests in our ability to attract, recruit, empower, and retain underrepresented faculty and staff in order to mine their untapped potential and invest in their possibility. By broadening our talent pool, we will be able to better harvest creativity, promote excellence, and drive innovation. We will develop and nurture a culture that promotes excellence and equity, champions fairness and builds community, repairs harm and drives high performance. Systemic barriers include:

**Geographic Distribution.** We seek to have our world class talent reflect the diversity of our learners. However, our main

operations are in a region which has historically had fewer diverse populations. We will need to be creative in how we both recruit and assemble a global workforce as a result. Racial diversity impacts learners, due to the fact that mentors and teachers of color enhance success outcomes for all learners, regardless of racial background. Moreover, we must pay attention to opportunities for retention, growth, and development of underrepresented employees.

**Implicit Bias.** We acknowledge that throughout our hiring process, we may unintentionally exert our own biases upon the reviewing of applications, interviewing of candidates, and hiring of finalists. This counteracts our DEI objectives to diversify our teams to better reflect the diversity of the learners we serve. To address this, we seek to reduce implicit bias in our hiring process through the exploration of artificial intelligence and other automated tools that can be used to review initial applications and produce the most broadly diverse pool of candidates to meet face-to-face.

**The following objectives will enable us to meet this commitment and our DEI goals.**

#### DIVERSITY OBJECTIVE

**Identify barriers to access for underrepresented employees and set measurable goals to attract a workforce that reflects the dynamic diversity of our society**

#### EQUITY OBJECTIVE

**Establish a retention strategy that identifies barriers to success for underrepresented employees and set measurable goals for developing, retaining, and advancing their professional growth**

#### INCLUSION OBJECTIVE

**Foster intentional culture building by establishing a DEI learning and development strategy for faculty and staff**

# STRATEGIC COMMITMENT 4

## Deploy transformational technology to support next generation learning on a global scale

**Our enterprise solutions will increase access and create end-to-end digital processes that provide powerful data analytics, consumer-grade experience for learners, and the ability to serve a global population of learners. Emerging technologies will transform the learning experience and learner success services we provide, while closing equity gaps by lowering costs and expanding access.**

Since technology infuses everything we do, advancing DEI goals and initiatives depends heavily on our ability to collect, analyze, and store data to effectively track progress, report measurable outcomes, and make data-informed decisions. Technology also impacts our ability to increase the efficacy of our work by leveraging new and emerging technologies for optimal learner and employee success.

To meet this commitment, we will continue to improve the speed, efficiency, and interoperability of our systems, but also remain alert to the need for increased access for rural and remote learners and employees. We will build the capacity to add or adjust inclusive, future-proofed features such as preferred name fields and related spectrum demographic markers. We will strengthen the technology literacy for our non-digital natives so that they can maximize the learning ecosystem. Systemic barriers include:

**Geographic Constraints.** We may have an increasing number of learners and employees who live in places with limitations on travel or access to technology. In imagining how we will deploy technology to support learning on a global scale, we consider barriers such as internet deserts in industrialized countries, lack of resources in refugee camps, and restrictions on freedom of movement in war-torn regions.

**Economic Inequality.** Access to continuously changing technology devices and software will be even more essential for future learners. There continues to be a divide between those who can access modern technology and those who either cannot or who are unable to afford compliant technology. We will need to determine a process for evening the playing field so that economic barriers to technology do not impede prospective learners from pursuing a credential.



**The following objectives will enable us to meet this commitment and our DEI goals.**

### DIVERSITY OBJECTIVE

**Utilize technology to reduce bias and attract, empower, and retain underrepresented learner and workforce populations**

### EQUITY OBJECTIVE

**average new and emerging technologies to bolster technology literacy and increase engagement, support, and access for learners and employees**

### INCLUSION OBJECTIVE

**Enhance data systems to establish a strategy for capturing, tracking, analyzing, and reporting DEI metrics**

# STRATEGIC COMMITMENT 5

## Create the capacity and foundation on which to build the 2030 learning ecosystem

**We will continue to challenge the higher education status quo and its systemic inequities as we work to serve the learner of 2030.**

SNHU is vastly different from what we were almost a century ago. Our current learner population extends well beyond the 18- to 24-year-old demographic to include any individual seeking to earn a degree or credential to increase employment options, intellectual growth, and overall well-being. We are focusing on preparing for the learner of 2030. Narrowing our scope to the next 10-15 years out enables us to envision a future for which the technology that will be transformative already exists, but is not evenly distributed. This enables us to identify and explore the dynamics that are driving change so we can build out strategies to prepare for the learner of 2030.

To meet this commitment, we must acknowledge that the future learning population will be even more diverse, based on existing and unprecedented metrics as well as on our own reimagining of what a learner is. We will have to address system inequities through higher education in order to address our DEI goals and corresponding objectives. Systemic barriers include:

**Spectrum Demographics.** Our future enrollment will include individuals who are displaced, incarcerated, unemployed, undocumented, or part of the 95 million adults who are currently underserved by existing higher education institutions. In addition, we will serve individuals who are not defined by traditional market lines as we experience the emergence of spectrum demographics. Our learners will identify, create, and understand new communities while changing how industries such as higher education function. These groups experience their own unique challenges and barriers to education which we must be prepared to address and alleviate to provide life-changing educational experiences with the best and most personalized learner support.

**Future Skills.** In order to remain relevant in the world of 2030, from a demographic perspective and beyond, we must continually iterate upon our own skillsets. The competencies required to be successful in our field today will change dramatically over the next decade and we must commit to a philosophy of continuous improvement to keep pace, ensure relevance, and serve our learners.



**The following objectives will enable us to meet this commitment and our DEI goals.**

### DIVERSITY OBJECTIVE

**Prepare to serve the Class of 2030 and their unique identities by studying signals, drivers, and trends that exist today**

### EQUITY OBJECTIVE

**Prototype new learning experiences that will better meet the needs of our future learners**

### INCLUSION OBJECTIVE

**Through policy, program, and practice, help current and prospective learners, staff, and faculty see themselves as part of the SNHU 2030 ecosystem**

# DEI Project Team and Stakeholders

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*Bureau of Labor Statistics*  
*Center for American Progress*  
*National Center for Education Statistics*  
*National Science Academy*  
*Opportunity Insights*  
*Pew Research Center*  
*Postsecondary National Policy Institute*  
*Southern New Hampshire University*  
*Third Way Institute*  
*U.S. Census Bureau*  
*U.S. Department of Education*  
*Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education*





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