



Academic  
Quality Improvement  
Program

The Higher Learning Commission NCA

# Strategy for Action Workbook

## Southeast Missouri State University

### A. Southeast Missouri State University's Present

#### 1. Distinctive organizational features

- Service Area
  - Regional 4-year institution with a moderate-selection admissions process.
  - Large service area predominantly composed of 25 counties (an area larger than many of our states), with one-third of the demography below poverty level and with a low overall rate of high-school graduates (range 55% to 95%, median 87%).
  - Offers “community college access at regional campuses,” serving the State within a diverse area that includes the rural Missouri Bootheel and metropolitan St. Louis.
- Student Profile
  - Moderately selected.
    - Either combined percentile score (from adding their high-school percentile rank and the percentile rank attained on the ACT or SAT) that is greater than or equal to 100 points,
    - Or 21 or better on the ACT or an equivalent score on the SAT.
  - High percentage (50%) of first-generation college students.
  - Majority of students (72%) are commuters.
- University Culture
  - Struggles to find a balance between liberal-arts and profession-oriented educations.
  - History of assessment and being data-driven.
  - Strong University Studies (General Education) program.
  - Emphasis on experiential learning.
  - Small class size.

#### 2. Scope of educational offerings

- Southeast offers 21 degrees, ranging from the Associate of Applied Science to a cooperative Ed.D.
  - The Associate of Applied Science (2 programs).
  - Ten bachelors degrees which include a 48 hour general-education component.
    - Bachelor of Arts (BA)(14 majors), Bachelor of General Studies (BGS), Bachelor of Science (BS)( 29 majors), Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (BSBA), Bachelor of Science in Education (BSED),

Bachelor of Family & Consumer Sciences Education (BFCSE), Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA; Art and Performing Arts), Bachelor of Music Education (BME), Bachelor of Music (BM), and Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN).

- Seven masters degrees.
  - Master of Arts (12 areas), Master of Business Administration (8 areas), Master of Music Education, Master of Natural Science (4 areas), Master of Public Administration (2 areas), Master of Science (3 areas), Master of Science in Nursing.
- Two specialist degrees (Educational Administration and Counseling Education).
- A cooperative Ed.D. with the University of Missouri.
- The web is used to support learning in web-assisted, blended, and online courses, and is incorporated into the majority of class sections on campus.
  - The Bachelors of General Studies degree can be completed entirely online, as can a degree in Business and in Industrial Technology.
  - The number of online sections has increased from 110 in the 2001-2002 academic year to 440 in the 2005-2006 academic year. Online enrollments now total 12% of all student credit hours annually. (Table 1)
- Extended and Continuing Education offers certificate programs, courses for professional development and personal growth, and special programs targeted at children.
- In addition to the two Cape Girardeau campuses (including the School of Visual and Performing Arts at the River Campus) with 92 buildings amounting to more than 2.5 million square feet of building space, 59 paved and gravel parking lots, and 254 acres of main campus grounds; Southeast has regional campuses in Kennett (95 miles), Malden (72 miles), and Sikeston (33 miles), a regional education center in Perryville (33 miles), and several off-campus sites throughout the service region.
  - The number of students taking courses at the regional campuses has increased over the last 5 years. (Table 2)

Table 1

Year	Number of Online Courses	Number of Online Sections	Percent of All Sections Offered Online	Percent of Student Credit Hours Taken Online
2001-2002	89	110	2.3%	3.1%
2002-2003	157	221	3.9%	6.4%
2003-2004	245	347	5.8%	9.2%
2004-2005	256	387	5.9%	10.6%
2005-2006	267	440	5.9%	11.6%

Table 2

	Number Of Students				
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
<b>Cape Girardeau Campus: Face-to-Face</b>	7128	7387	7430	7208	7219
<b>Education Centers: Face-to-Face</b>	430	497	491	620	1163
<b>Alternate Access: Face-to-Face</b>	806	665	766	705	638
<b>Online and Interactive Television (ITV)</b>	736	1316	1868	2389	2653

### 3. Students

- Total enrollment has increased by 10% over the last five years.
- Many characteristics of the student body have remained constant over the last five years. (Table 3)
  - For both graduate and undergraduate students: 88% are undergraduates, 61% female, 89% Caucasian, 85% are from Missouri, and 2% are international students.
  - For undergraduate students: 77% are full time, 72% are commuters, 82% are traditional, and the average age is 23; 28% are from the St. Louis area, while 47% come from the 11 counties in the Bootheel.
  - The average ACT score for entering freshmen is 22.2.

Table 3

		2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
<b>Enrollment</b>	<b>Total</b>	9352	9534	9570	9618	10292
	<b>Undergraduate</b>	87%	88%	89%	88%	87%
	<b>Female</b>	62%	61%	60%	61%	62%
	<b>Caucasian</b>	90%	90%	89%	89%	88%
	<b>Instate</b>	85%	85%	85%	85%	86%
	<b>International</b>	3%	2%	2%	2%	2%
<b>Undergraduate</b>	<b>Full time</b>	76%	77%	78%	76%	76%
	<b>Commuter</b>	72%	71%	71%	72%	73%
	<b>Traditional</b>	82%	82%	83%	84%	81%
	<b>Residence – Bootheel<sup>1</sup></b>	46%	46%	46%	46%	49%
	<b>Residence Cape and adjacent counties<sup>2</sup></b>	40%	39%	39%	39%	38%
	<b>Residence – St. Louis Area<sup>3</sup></b>	27%	28%	28%	28%	27%
	<b>Age</b>	23	23	23	23	23
	<b>Mean ACT of Entering Freshmen</b>	22.2	22.3	22.3	22.3	22

<sup>1</sup> Bollinger, Butler, Cape Girardeau, Dunklin, Mississippi, New Madrid, Pemiscot, Ripley, Scott, Stoddard, and Wayne Counties

<sup>2</sup> Bollinger, Cape Girardeau, Scott, Stoddard, and Perry Counties

<sup>3</sup> Franklin, Jefferson, St. Charles, and St. Louis Counties, and St. Louis City

### 4. Collaborative or partnership arrangements

- Service-area community educational outreach, such as our public schools and community colleges, and with our online courses.
- Community business partnerships, such as collaborations with the Chamber of Commerce, the Missouri Research Corporation, the City of Cape Girardeau.
- Community service partnerships—such as providing interns and volunteers for local hospitals, community service agencies—as well as providing and maintaining service agencies, such as the NASA and Godwin Centers, the Show Mobile Health Center, the Southeast Explorer traveling museum, the University Press, three radio stations, and “Public Forum” on TV, among others.

## 5. Faculty and staff

- The faculty is not unionized.
- Full-time faculty or administrators have taught 89% of the credit hours over the past 5 years.
- The characteristics of the faculty have been stable over the last 3 years. (Table 4)
  - 83% are on tenure track and 54% are tenured.
  - 55% are male, 77% are Caucasian, and the average age is 52.
  - On average they have been at Southeast for 13 years.
  - The distribution by rank is not significantly skewed, with 30% holding the rank of professor.
- Teamsters Local Union No. 574 and the International Union of Operating Engineers Local 2 (AFL-CIO) represent appropriate members of the staff. Otherwise the staff are not unionized.
- The number of staff (~680) and the composition (43% male) has remained stable over the last five years.
- The number of Executive/Administrative/ Managerial and Service/Maintenance employees has decreased, but the number of Other Professional and Skilled Crafts individuals has increased.

Table 4

Year	Rank	Number	Years at Southeast	Age	Percent Male	Percent Caucasian	Percent Tenure Track	Tenured	Percent Terminal Degree
<b>2005</b>	<b>All</b>	412	13.8	52.4	55%	79%	85%	55%	82%
	<b>INST</b>	97	6.0	47.7	31%	67%	39%	1%	32%
	<b>VASST</b>	2	2.0	44.5	50%	50%	100%	0%	100%
	<b>ASST</b>	96	9.2	48.8	49%	64%	98%	21%	92%
	<b>ASSOC</b>	97	15.9	54.2	65%	91%	100%	88%	98%
	<b>PROF</b>	120	22.4	57.8	73%	93%	100%	100%	100%
<b>2006</b>	<b>All</b>	402.0	12.9	51.7	55%	78%	84%	54%	80%
	<b>INST</b>	99	5.5	48.5	30%	71%	37%	1%	31%
	<b>ASST</b>	94	8.2	47.2	50%	57%	99%	22%	90%
	<b>ASSOC</b>	88	14.9	53.4	64%	91%	98%	85%	98%
	<b>PROF</b>	121	21.2	56.5	72%	91%	100%	100%	100%
<b>2007</b>	<b>All</b>	412.0	12.0	50.8	54%	75%	81%	54%	77%
	<b>INST</b>	111	4.4	47.1	28%	65%	33%	1%	27%
	<b>ASST</b>	87	7.7	45.6	53%	52%	99%	25%	89%
	<b>ASSOC</b>	86	14.1	52.4	66%	88%	98%	84%	98%
	<b>PROF</b>	128	20.0	56.2	70%	90%	100%	100%	100%

## 6. Three operational environment requirements

- Information Technology: particularly infrastructure.
- Facilities: for example, the physical plant and maintenance of older buildings.
- Accreditation: a commitment to specialized accreditations.

## 7. Three important competitors

- Missouri State University
  - This is one of our main competitors among public institutions.
- William Woods
  - This is one of our main competitors among private institutions.
  - Others include private online universities.
- Murray State University
  - This is one of our main competitors among out-of-state institutions.
  - Southeast Missouri State is geographically located near five other states. We draw students from the five-state area. While out-of-state tuition is a consideration when students make a choice in college, we still see significant competition for students with institutions in neighboring states.
- Important also is competition from the community colleges for high-school graduates. While many students eventually transfer to Southeast, the community colleges are competitors for first-year students.

## 8. Three important opportunities and three critical vulnerabilities

- Opportunities
  - Technology: This includes infrastructure but also refers to teaching and learning. The new SCT Banner administrative database, plans for a wireless campus, and continued growth of the online program are among some of the specific examples of opportunities.
  - Reaching out to the community: Examples include collaboration with K-12 schools, promoting value of education in high schools, and career awareness/modeling in high schools in the region.
  - Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM): Examples include career awareness, strategic awareness, and our new tuition-guarantee program.
- Vulnerabilities
  - Budget constraints.
  - Increasing competition during a time when the market is not expanding.
- Lack of marketing strategy, or identifying a self-image to both internal and external constituencies on which a marketing plan can be based (lack of coherent focus, who are we, what's our self-image).

## B. Southeast Missouri State University's Future

### 1. Three chronic frustrations

- A sense that there is a lack of community, trust, and communication.
- Budget: lack of funding for needed salaries, projects, resources, and equipment.
- Image: negative perceptions from outside higher education that require constant defense of our existence and operations.

**2. Three elements of your shared vision**

- To increase student success including student involvement, retention, and graduation.
- To focus on Quality Improvement processes.
- To maintain and improve our focus on students, such as via small classes and faculty/staff personal attention.

**3. Three most critical Principles of High Performance Organizations**

- Focus.
- People.
- Involvement.

**4. Three to four tentative Action Project ideas; titles (up to 10 words) and descriptions**

<b>Action Project Worksheet</b> Southeast Missouri State University	<i>Challenging</i>	<b>X</b>	<i>Easy</i>
	<i>Complex</i>	<b>X</b>	<i>Simple</i>
	<i>High Payoff</i>	<b>X</b>	<i>Low</i>
<b>Action Project idea # 1</b> Implement the Academic Enhancement Program in Fall 2007			
<b>AQIP Criterion to which this primarily relates:</b> # 1 Helping Students Learn and #3 Understanding Student and Other Stakeholder Needs			
<b>Briefly describe what you would like this project to accomplish.</b> Improve retention and academic success for high risk students who meet Southeast's admission requirements but have a High-School GPA of 2.0-2.49 and an ACT between 18 and 20.			
<b>Where did the idea or stimulus for this project originate?</b> The Student Success Initiative, launched by the President in his address to the University in Fall 2005, identified numerous ideas for improving student success as measured by retention and persistence through retreats, campus-wide open forum, and meetings of the Strategic Enrollment Management Committee. The idea of an academic enhancement program directed at students who meet the University's admissions requirement but are at risk based on analysis of HSGPA and ACT data was among the ideas selected for action by Administrative Council.			
<b>Which specific needs of your students or other external stakeholders would be better met if you accomplished this project? How?</b> Students will experience academic success, graduate, and become productive members of society. Employers in the region will have well-educated employees.			
<b>How would doing this project allow you to better meet your employees' needs? Which, specifically?</b> Increased retention will have a direct impact on budgets and programs. In addition, faculty and staff will gain satisfaction from helping students succeed.			
<b>How would accomplishing this project change or affect your institution's culture?</b> The project would reinforce Southeast's mission of providing access to qualified students and provide an example of the slogan "Experience Southeast, Experience Success".			
<b>What leadership and employee enthusiasm and support is there for doing this project now?</b> As part of the Student Success Initiative, the project has survived a review process lasting a year and has gained the support of many groups (e.g., Administrative Council, Council of Deans, Chairperson's Forum, and the Strategic Enrollment Management Task Force).			

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	<i>High Payoff</i>	<b>X</b>	<i>Low</i>
<b>Action Project idea # 2</b> Defining Indicators of Being the University of First Choice for Students, Faculty, and Staff.			
<b>AQIP Criterion to which this primarily relates:</b> #5 Leading and Communicating, #4 Valuing People, and #8 Planning Continuous Improvement			
<b>Briefly describe what you would like this project to accomplish.</b> This project has will have two major outcomes. First it will provide a vision of quality that will focus future quality-improvement projects. Second the process of engaging in this project will address issues identified with Examiner including “making sure that everyone understands and values the mission, goals, and direction of the institution,” “determining what distinctive strategic initiatives to pursue,” “agreeing on and regularly analyzing a set of measures of our other strategic initiatives,” “communicating the goals of our distinctive strategic initiatives to our internal and external constituencies,” and “making sure that leaders communicate decisions, strategies, and performance objectives throughout the organization.”			
<b>Where did the idea or stimulus for this project originate?</b> The original impetus for this project is two related statements made by President Dobbins in his addresses to the faculty and staff convocation in Fall 2005 and Fall 2006. It has evolved from a convergence of these statements and from questions raised as a result of the statements and issues identified with Examiner.			
<b>Which specific needs of your students or other external stakeholders would be better met if you accomplished this project? How?</b> Completing this project and achieving the goals it will establish will create a better environment for students. There have been many changes at Southeast in recent years, including new campuses, expanded academic offerings, cost-cutting responses to a financial exigency, changing marketing messages, and a popular new mascot. Many think the university is lurching from issue to issue instead of moving in a planned direction, or if there is a plan, few are privy to it. This project has the potential to help us develop a common understanding of who we are and to develop a transparent and shared focus, direction, and vision			
<b>How would doing this project allow you to better meet your employees’ needs? Which, specifically?</b> Completing this project and achieving the goals it will establish will create a better environment for all employees. Practical changes could include salaries closer to national comparisons (CHE/AAUP or CUPA) and a more pleasant environment. Intangibles could include a sense of being heard, of having opportunities for input, and belonging to an organization guided by a shared vision.			
<b>How would accomplishing this project change or affect your institution’s culture?</b> It is anticipated that engaging in this process will initiate a transformation of the University’s culture that will be completed through future action projects engendered by this project. Characteristics of the transformed culture will include improved student, faculty, and staff morale; improved relations between faculty and administrators; and a unifying and inclusive identity and direction.			
<b>What leadership and employee enthusiasm and support is there for doing this project now?</b> The basic intent of this project was among the ideas brought forth in several venues, including the Chairperson’s Forum and Council of Deans. It is supported by the President and executive staff, and was confirmed at campus-wide open forums held on September 27 and October 11, 2006.			



<b>Action Project Worksheet</b> Southeast Missouri State University	<i>Challenging</i>	<b>X</b>	<i>Easy</i>
	<i>Complex</i>	<b>X</b>	<i>Simple</i>
	<i>High Payoff</i>	<b>X</b>	<i>Low</i>
<b>Action Project idea # 3</b> Completing a Successful Inaugural Year for the School of Visual and Performing Arts at the River Campus			
<b>AQIP Criterion to which this primarily relates:</b> #2 Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives			
<b>Briefly describe what you would like this project to accomplish.</b> The project will accomplish the following: enhance university outreach and community involvement, establish our students and faculty in new and expanded facilities, enhance the cultural opportunities and quality performances in our region, and increase majors in the visual and performing arts.			
<b>Where did the idea or stimulus for this project originate?</b> The gift of a historical seminary campus to the University combined with the need for such a facility provided the initial impetus to develop the school.			
<b>Which specific needs of your students or other external stakeholders would be better met if you accomplished this project? How?</b> The school will increase student learning in the visual and performing arts; offer quality cultural events; create better facilities for students, all employees, and community members; and enhance Old Town Cape, our downtown area near the River Campus.			
<b>How would doing this project allow you to better meet your employees' needs? Which, specifically.</b> It will meet employee needs by providing quality cultural events and new facilities for faculty and staff in the visual and performing arts.			
<b>How would accomplishing this project change or affect your institution's culture?</b> Institutional culture will be affected by increasing the visibility and the quality of arts.			
<b>What leadership and employee enthusiasm and support is there for doing this project now?</b> There is strong administrative leadership. Employee support varies across campus			

*Please enter a page break between **each** Action Project Worksheet*

<b>Action Project Worksheet</b> Southeast Missouri State University	<i>Challenging</i>	<b>X</b>	<i>Easy</i>
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	<i>High Payoff</i>	<b>X</b>	<i>Low</i>
<b>Action Project idea # 4</b> Web course and distance learning evaluation.			
<b>AQIP Criterion to which this primarily relates:</b> #1 Helping Students Learn			
<b>Briefly describe what you would like this project to accomplish.</b> Evaluate and ensure consistency of quality in courses offered through distance education including online courses and Interactive Television (ITV) courses. Results of the evaluation will be used to work towards quality and consistency in our online and ITV offerings			
<b>Where did the idea or stimulus for this project originate?</b> The joint Deans and Chairs retreat held in July of 2006. The project is supported by the Center for Scholarship in Teaching and Learning which oversees online course development and delivery, Southeast Online Programs which oversees the online course program, and the School of Extended Learning which oversees ITV courses.			
<b>Which specific needs of your students or other external stakeholders would be better met if you accomplished this project? How?</b> Online and ITV courses are two major pieces of making education accessible to students in our service region. Online now accounts for over 10% of credit hours taken at Southeast every year. Evaluating the distance-education delivery mechanisms will allow us to ensure greater consistency and quality in the offerings which will provide better access and a better experience. Ultimately this should lead to better retention for students accessing education through those delivery methods.			
<b>How would doing this project allow you to better meet your employees' needs? Which, specifically.</b> The project helps to ensure quality of our programs. It should increase retention leading to increased revenue which benefits the campus.			
<b>How would accomplishing this project change or affect your institution's culture?</b> It provides assurance that we are accomplishing our purpose and would lead to quality improvement. It should lead to more general discussion of classroom evaluation, in terms of accountability. Assessment is an important component of the campus culture; this will add to that culture. It also helps us answer the question "How do we define good teaching?"			
<b>What leadership and employee enthusiasm and support is there for doing this project now?</b> Chairs, Deans, and staff in the Center for Scholarship in Teaching and Learning (CSTL), and Southeast Online programs have discussed the need for this during the past year already. There is enthusiasm among those groups and the advisory committees to the CSTL. Evaluation and quality improvement are looked on favorably by many constituencies on campus.			