

CASE STUDY: University (HBCU) Strategic Plan

ELIZABETH CITY STATE UNIVERSITY

Situation

Elizabeth City State University (ECSU) is one of the nation’s Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) and a constituent institution of The University of North Carolina System. The University serves northeastern North Carolina to provide an affordable, high-quality education, with a personalized environment. ECSU was in need of a strategic plan that captured the unique value proposition of the University, while also creating buy-in across campus and within the community.

Solution

The Hill Group conducted a robust market research brief to understand the University’s current market position, relative to the higher education landscape in North Carolina, the multi-state region, and nation. The consultants facilitated over 30 focus groups that engaged hundreds of stakeholders, including students, alumni, faculty, staff, and community members. The Hill Group’s facilitated strategic planning process helped to define the University’s purpose and vision for the future. The University’s five-year strategic plan positioned the University for long-term sustainability and aligned with the University of North Carolina System strategic plan. The strategic plan provided a blueprint for investments and growth, outlined by six strategic priorities. The plan provides a clear path for the University to build on its mission as a comprehensive public University by ensuring access to excellent student-centered, experiential learning through practical education, applied research, and public and private partnerships.

CLIENT

ELIZABETH CITY STATE UNIVERSITY

INDUSTRY

HIGHER EDUCATION

PROJECT

STRATEGIC PLANNING

MARKET RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Institution	Percent Admitted
Appalachian State University	70%
East Carolina University	79%
Elizabeth City State University	60%
Fayetteville State University	68%
North Carolina A&T State University	62%
North Carolina Central University	83%
North Carolina State University	51%
UNC Asheville	80%
UNC Chapel Hill	24%
UNC Charlotte	66%
UNC Greensboro	78%
UNC Pembroke	81%
UNC School of the Arts	67%
UNC Wilmington	33%
Western Carolina University	39%
Winston-Salem State University	67%

ECSU MISSION, Goals, Objectives, and Action Items

Mission
Elizabeth City State University, a comprehensive public university, ensures access to excellent student-centered, experiential learning. Through practical education, applied research, and public and private partnerships, we prepare a diverse student body for personal and professional success to positively impact the region, state, and nation.

Vision
Elizabeth City State University will be a premier public institution and a leading partner for economic, social, and environmental progress. We will be a destination institution that develops leaders who will make a positive difference now and in the future.

Values

- **Accountability** – Administration, faculty, staff, and students will be responsible and transparent in their actions
- **Commitment** – Dedication to our students, community, and advancing the university will be our priority
- **Excellence** – Unparalleled teaching, learning, and service to the university and community will be our measure for success
- **Collaboration** – Teamwork and partnerships with our stakeholders will be utilized to achieve common goals
- **Inclusion** – Diverse viewpoints, experiences, and backgrounds will be respected and welcomed

Goals

1. **Academic Excellence** – Provide high-quality academic programs steeped in experiential learning that fully utilize our strengths as a university and enhance our region
2. **Student Experience** – Create transformative experiences for our students that support academic outcomes and build Viking spirit
3. **Sustainable Growth** – Maximize our potential through improved enrollment processes and investment in recruitment, retention, and completion efforts
4. **Institutional Advancement** – Promote and progress the institution through the engagement of our students, alumni, and other stakeholders
5. **Operational Excellence** – Ensure sound and efficient university operations and enhance our customer service quality and delivery
6. **Regional Development** – Secure our position as a catalyst in regional economic, social, and environmental development and facilitate collaboration with industry and government to improve our region

THE HILL GROUP

Results

- Selected to join North Carolina’s Statewide Economic Development Collaborative
- Received funding for regional workforce training programs
- Received grant funding for some of its industry-related programs (including cybersecurity, aviation, and health and technology)
- Named one of the most influential HBCU’s in the US

Behind the Scenes

The Hill Group engaged University and community stakeholders in strategic interviews, focus groups, and university and community surveys and conducted over 30 SWOT analysis meetings with academic programs, administrative departments, community groups, alumni, and students. Our team facilitated the development of new vision, mission, and values statements for ECSU and directed the strategic planning committee in identifying six major priorities comprising of 29 strategic goals over a 5-year time horizon.

About The Hill Group, Inc.

Founded in 1953, The Hill Group, Inc. is a premier provider of management counsel, specializing in strategy, execution, and measurement. Our team of consultants has deep experience across several industries, enabling our team to draw on best practices from a variety of sectors to help our clients grow, innovate, and achieve maximum potential.

Strategy – *Envisioning an organization’s future, capitalizing on its opportunities, identifying strategic priorities, and implementing positive change.*

- Strategy Development
- Decision Support and Analysis
- Strategic Planning and Management
- Business Planning and Feasibility Assessments
- Mergers, Acquisitions, and Strategic Alliance Planning
- Market Research and Analysis

Execution – *Ensuring that an organization is efficiently and effectively utilizing its resources to its full potential.*

- Process Improvement and Innovation
- Business Model Development and Resource Allocation
- Financial Assessment and Management
- Turnaround, Business Transformation, and Change Management
- Governance Assessment and Development

Measurement – *Increasing an organization’s performance through measurement and continuous improvement.*

- Measurement
- Business Analytics and Intelligence
- Economic Impact Assessment
- Employee Opinion, 360-Degree Feedback, and Service Quality Surveys
- Industry Benchmarking Surveys

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