



Master Academic Plan 2021-2025

Purpose

The Riverland Community College Master Academic Plan (MAP) is a document to guide and plan future academic decisions to ensure that the reputation and academic offerings of the college meet the needs of future students, employers, and the Minnesota State (MinnState) system. The MAP integrates with existing MinnState system and college-wide strategic plans and guides all other college plans, including master facility, technology, finance, strategic enrollment and retention management (SERM), and department plans.

The MAP:

- provides a blueprint for academic planning
- guides strategic initiatives for academic improvement
- provides a framework for resource allocation, including grants
- provides a guide for new program development
- guides facility and technology planning
- provides five-year goals, with strategies and action steps that will be refined, measured, and adapted annually to ensure it is a living, flexible plan that responds to the needs of our students, businesses, and communities
- establishes priorities for faculty and staff development

Process

This MAP was developed by reviewing student success data and a comprehensive needs assessment of regional workforce and demographic data. It builds off of the Riverland 2020-2025 Strategic Vision plan, past performance results, student demographics, program review and advisory committee recommendations, labor market research, as well as other colleges' plans. This plan aligned with Minnesota State system direction and legislative initiatives. The new MAP builds off of the Program pillar of the college's strategic vision, and aligns with the Equity & Inclusion, Technology, Facilities, and Strategic Enrollment & Retention plans.

Related Plans that influenced or connect to the MAP:

[Reimagining Minnesota State-June 2019 Report](#)

This report highlights the changes in our world, and the changes that higher education must consider making to serve our students well. Innovative instructional approaches and high impact practices in the classroom and in partnership with our business and communities will be vital to our future success at Riverland.

[Equity 2030: Minnesota State's Equity & Inclusion Strategic Plan](#)

By 2030, Minnesota State will eliminate the educational equity gaps at every Minnesota State college and university.

To enhance access and increase student success, Riverland must:

1. Increase student retention, persistence, and graduation.
2. Increase the percent of Minnesotans age 25 to 44 who have attained a postsecondary certificate or degree to 70 percent across all populations (Minnesota's Educational Attainment Goal 2025).
3. Increase market share of high school graduates and the transfer rate from our two-year colleges to our universities.
4. Increase the number of post-traditional (adult) learners.

Riverland's Strategic Vision: 2020-2025

Key Performance Indicators:

1. Program: Completion Rate of 62% by FY2025.
2. People: 100% of employees participating in internal and external activities that demonstrate Riverland values.
3. Outreach: 10% annual increase in number of business partnerships from a current baseline of 400.
4. Resources: 35% of total revenue by the end of FY2025. CFI of 2.5 or higher every year.
5. Enrollment: FYE of 2250 by FY2025.

Vision

We will offer the best opportunity for every enrolled student to attain academic and career goals in an ever-changing world.

Mission

To transform lives through excellence in service, education, and career training.

Values

Cultivating student growth through service, collaboration, innovation, and respect.

Heart

We are dedicated to our employees, our students, and our region.

Participation

The Riverland Community College MAP has been developed with input from faculty members from all divisions across the college, faculty from all academic programs, staff from all divisions of student affairs, four deans, and the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs. Plan development began fall of 2019, during the formation of the new Riverland Strategic Vision Plan for 2020-2025. Ideas for goals, metrics, and strategic priorities were discussed and drafted during the 2020 and 2021 Faculty Development Days, to ensure that all faculty had the ability to weigh in on priorities that would increase student success. Student Focus Groups were

conducted and student success data was reviewed to enable students to provide feedback and the plan to truly be student-centered. After the plan was drafted, the President’s Cabinet, Dean’s Council, Student Affairs Leadership Team, Academic Affairs & Standards Council, Riverland Council, Faculty Shared Governance, the Faculty Support Center team, the Online Education Taskforce and the Riverland Foundation Board reviewed, Student Senate, revised, and approved it during the spring of 2021.

The MAP used the following questions to guide in the development of the plan:

1. In terms of academic programming and support, where are we now?
 - a. What are the needs of the students currently enrolling?
 - b. What is the state of our current academic programs, services, and facilities?
 - c. What do we want our students to learn and take with them when they graduate?
 - d. How do we achieve or maintain “best in class” status?
2. What goals do we want to accomplish in the next 4-5 years?
 - a. What additional programs will add value to our communities and support/expand industry?
 - b. What type of delivery formats will best serve the students and programs?
3. What will be our competitive advantage in the future?
 - a. Where should the college focus recruitment efforts?
 - b. How can we continue to appeal to students, and what additional ways are there to attract new students?
 - c. How can we best serve our existing students?

The Plan

The Riverland Master Academic Plan is designed around the four goal areas of work defined in the Program Pillar of the Riverland Strategic Vision 2020-2025 Plan.

Goal Area 1: Quality Student Services

Goal 1: Riverland will deliver student services that close equity gaps.

Strategy 1: Increase retention and completion through holistic advising and guided learning pathways:

Initiatives/Action Steps

- a) Focus on high impact practices by using the tools like student satisfaction surveys and the Customer Relations Management software to measure what works and doesn't work with groups of students.
- b) Advising and student support services are culturally relevant and responsive.
- c) Holistic advising is integrated into first-year student learning communities, FYE courses, and/or Career & Technical Ed program cohorts.
- d) Advising is provided by designated faculty/staff with sustained proactive outreach and involvement.
- e) Recognize milestone achievements.
- f) Develop engagement strategies for part-time students and summers.
- g) Enhance the early alert process to facilitate interventions for students who show signs of academic or social trouble.
- h) Require advising when students veer off a selected pathway.

Strategy 2: Provide comprehensive student support to all students as needed to help them reach their academic and career goals:

Initiatives/ Action Steps

- a) Comprehensive on-campus and/or online orientation is provided, including interactive sessions on how to navigate systems and processes, including financial aid, emergency financial resources, academic support, student engagement opportunities, and basic needs resources available to students.
- b) Transactional information is provided online in a guided format and offered to students for completion prior to arrival on campus.
- c) Provide effective first-year experience class or content to all students to get them off to a great start.
- d) Utilize multiple measures of placement and academic support services to ensure students are set up for success if developmental education is needed.
- e) Assist students with access to basic needs support in: health/wellness, food, housing, transportation, childcare, and emergency financial assistance.
- f) Address the increasing mental health needs of students by expanding access to mental health services.

- g) Build a pro-active Academic Support Services department with high-impact practices in tutoring, accessibility, and technology support services.
- h) Create social belonging interventions to engage students in student learning communities, co-curricular activities, athletics, student organizations, service-learning, and work-based learning.

Goal Area 2: Quality Teaching

Goal 2: Riverland will enhance instructional effectiveness that leads to increased student success.

Strategy 3: Expand faculty use and skills of effective instructional technology.

Initiatives/Action Steps

- a) Deploy the CRM tool, with faculty and staff utilizing it to keep students on their path.
- b) Embrace technology changes to ensure students have the most up-to-date skills and experiences in their respective fields.
- c) Construct additional tech-rich active learning spaces (insuring rooms are set up to use Zoom); which are conducive to developing teamwork and problem-solving skills.
- d) Ensure all faculty have technology skills to perform their work at a high level (i.e., Microsoft Office, D2L Brightspace, Outlook, Zoom, Teams, and program/course specific software or technology).
- e) Encourage and support faculty to utilize low-cost textbook options for students.

Strategy 4: Support teaching excellence through a Faculty Support Center and professional development which focuses on high-impact, equity-minded practices.

Initiatives/Action Steps

- a) Onboard, orientate and support new faculty at Riverland to ensure success.
- b) Create professional learning communities (Teaching & Learning Circles) of faculty to develop and enhance Equity-Minded teaching practices.
- c) Provide direct support to faculty who design new courses, new programs or re-design existing curriculum.
- d) Provide effective support to help faculty to develop inclusive respectful learning environments, use effective classroom management, conflict resolution, and motivational pedagogy in every class.
- e) Improve and expand the methods and resources Academic Deans use to assess and support the growth and development of our faculty.
- f) Support faculty with strong course, program assessment, and prior learning assessment.

Goal Area 3: Quality Partnerships

Goal 3: Riverland will develop, maintain and engage business, community, and K-12 partnerships in ways that enhance student access to career training and experience.

Strategy 5: Develop a Career & Community Connections program to increase regional career placements for students and solve workforce solutions to business partners.

Initiatives/Action Steps

- a) Utilize and strengthen program advisory committees to review program outcomes, ensuring academic programs are current and meeting industry expectations.
- b) Leverage assistance from community partners for recruiting new students.
- c) Increase work-based learning opportunities for students during their academic program.
- d) Provide preferred interviewing opportunities to students and employers partners.
- e) Expand customized training and continuing education offerings to meet the ongoing demands in the marketplace.
- f) Stay connected to and supportive of alumni.

Strategy 6: Strengthen K-12 partnerships to provide smooth transitions for secondary and ABE students to Riverland.

Initiatives/Action Steps

- a) Achieve and maintain NACEP accreditation for concurrent enrollment program.
- b) Improve smooth transitions for students who need developmental education by partnering with ABE for co-teaching, supplemental instruction and program navigation support to students.
- c) Ensure that students have a smooth transition to college who are enrolled in the Austin Assurance Scholarship Program.
- d) Develop/expand concurrent enrollment and PSEO by contract course offerings with partner K-12 districts to meet their student/faculty needs.
- e) Increase the number of College Now students (PSEO and Concurrent Enrollment students) who choose Riverland upon high school graduation.

Goal Area 4: Quality Curriculum and Program Offerings

Goal 4: Riverland will ensure that the curricular portfolio, schedules, delivery methods, supplemental instruction and technology meet the educational, economic, and workforce needs of the region.

Strategy 7: Increase academic momentum and appropriate credit intensity through curricular design and course scheduling.

Initiatives/Action Steps

- a) Implement Program/Course Schedules that increase retention and completion rates for different student groups including evening/weekends, 8 week mini-mester courses, Flex-Pace programs, increased summer classes, and high school friendly times for PSEO students.
- b) Programs are mapped “with the ends in mind” and are linked explicitly to careers or further guided learning pathways.
- c) Credit for Prior Learning is promoted and utilized to accelerate a student’s time to degree.
- d) Program pathways are coherent, with course content and student learning outcomes clearly aligned.
- e) Program pathways are aligned with statewide transfer pathways or 2+2 program articulations wherever possible.
- f) Default course sequences are clearly articulated, and courses are consistently scheduled and offered in alignment with those sequences and student needs.
- g) Milestone courses are clearly articulated and used to track student progression through the program.

Strategy 8: Design, revise and deliver curriculum which eliminates equity gaps.

Initiatives/Action Steps

- a) Curricula reflects diverse perspectives across the field, and includes the contributions and work of scholars and/or practitioners of color or native origin and other underrepresented voices.
- b) Curricula and instruction are culturally relevant and responsive.
- c) Program requirements (e.g., “program admission” requirements, required or directed general education courses, minimum grade requirements, etc.), are based upon data, and do not create unintended or unnecessary barriers to completion.
- d) Discipline-appropriate curricular strategies for active, collaborative, applied, and experiential learning experiences are designed throughout the pathway.
- e) Discipline-appropriate co-curricular learning opportunities are designed throughout the pathway.
- f) Assessment processes and documentation of student learning outcomes accruing to the program level are clearly articulated, executed, and used to improve instruction and student learning.

Strategy 9: Develop and deliver new programming which responds to student and business needs.

Initiatives/Action Steps

- a) Create non-credit and credit pathways which respond to business needs for workforce solutions.
- b) Develop a Math, Science, and Communications Academy to create opportunities for underrepresented students to excel in high-wage, high-growth career pathways.
- c) Develop a Bridges to Careers program in partnership with Adult Basic Education and business partners to develop smooth transitions for students with developmental educational needs.
- d) Add more spring starts for CTE programs to accommodate unemployed adults or high school graduates that take a gap semester.
- e) Explore new opportunities through a “think tank” approach and invest in innovative ideas.

Progress

A MAP Dashboard will be developed and reviewed annually to monitor the progress on the goals identified in this MAP. Revisions may be needed to action steps or initiatives throughout the duration of this plan based upon the data collected, economic conditions, or student needs.

Metrics/Data points used to measure success:

Enrollment Rates (by age, race, Pell-eligible, first-generation, part-time, full-time)

Persistence Rates (spring to fall, fall to fall)

Full-time Completion Rates (by program/award)

Part-time Completion Rates (by program/award)

Instructional Cost Study Report

Program Fact Sheets (Enrollment, Completion, Cost, Placement)

Academic Program Reviews

Credit Sold Reports

Career Placement Rates: Graduation Follow-up Survey Results

Number of Engaged Business Partners (those who hire our interns and graduates, and those who serve on advisory committees)

Number of Transfer Pathways, 2+2 Articulation Agreements and Student Transfer Rates

Customized Training/Continuing Education Headcount, Net Revenue, and Customer Satisfaction Surveys

PSEO and Concurrent Enrollment Students Who Convert to Degree-Seeking Riverland Students after High School Graduation

Course Pass Rates in Gateway Courses

The Hormel Foundation Austin Assurance Scholarship Program Success Rates and Students Served

Bridges to Careers Program Success Rates, Partners, and Students Served

Science, Math & Communications Academy Success Rates, Partners, and Students Served

Agriculture & Food Science Program Success Rates, Partners, and Students Served

College Now Program (Concurrent Enrollment/PSEO by Contract) Success Rates, Partner Districts, and Students Served

Student Satisfaction Rates on CESSE and Course Surveys

Number of Faculty Involved Served by Faculty Support Center and the MinnState NED

Number of Faculty Engaged in Equity-Minded/Cultural Competency Professional Development

Number of Faculty Engaged in Quality Instructional Design/Re-Design, Pedagogy, and Technology Professional Development

Number of Evening/Weekend/Summer Courses Offered

Number of Programs Offered Specifically for Adult Learners

Number of Credit for Prior Learning Requests/Assessments Completed

Number of Students Engaged in Co-Curriculars, Learning Communities, Athletics, Service-Learning, etc.

Number of Students Being Served in Academic Support Services: Tutoring, Accessibility, TRIO, Food Pantries, Mental Health, etc.

Assessment of Learning Outcome Results at the Classroom, Program and College Level

Online Course Enrollment and Pass Rates

Hybrid Course Enrollment and Pass Rates

Face-To-Face Course Enrollment and Pass Rates

First Year Experience Course (CCLS) Enrollment and Pass Rates

Licensure/Certification Pass Rates

Employer Surveys