



Institutional Transformation

July 2020 kickoff



What is Institutional Transformation?

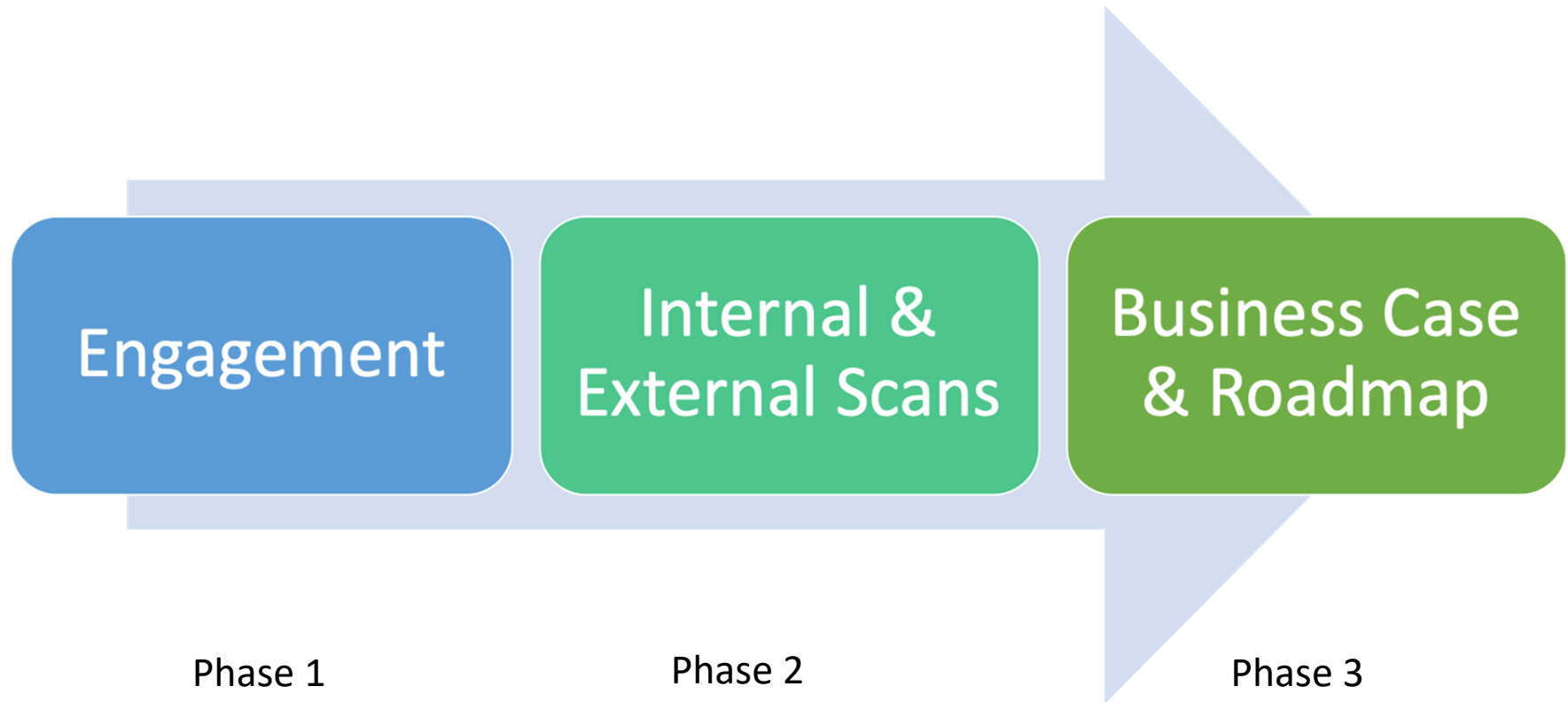
**Northwest
College...**

**Leveraging its unique
capabilities and
reimagining its offerings...**

**To position itself as an attractive option
in the student marketplace and grow
toward financial self-sufficiency.**

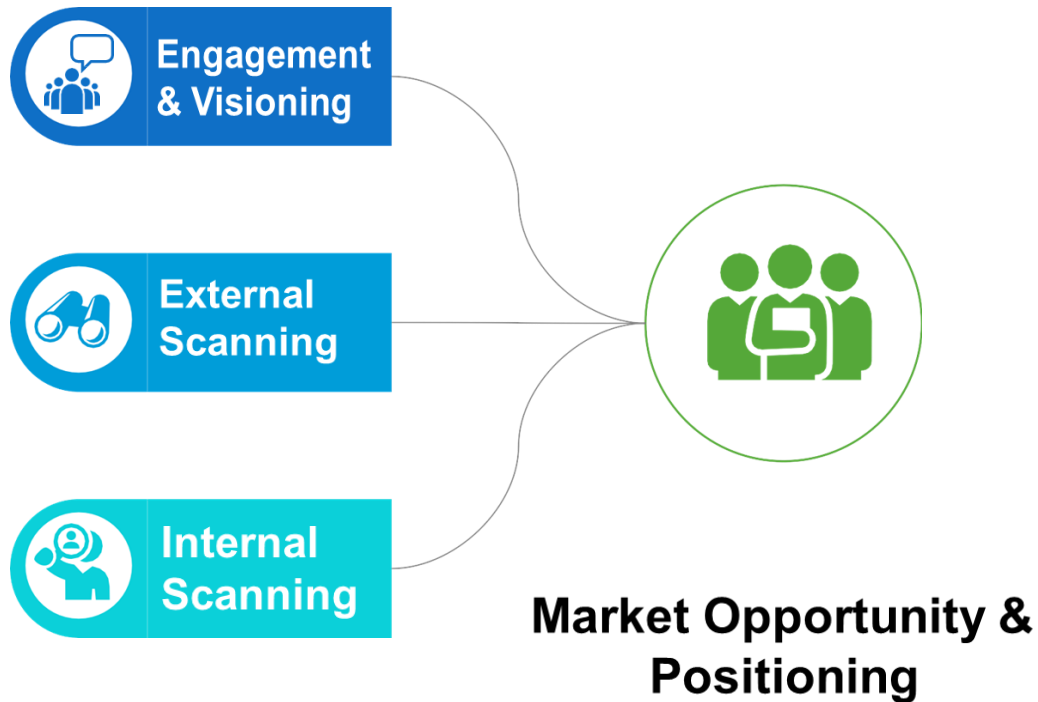


The Path to Transformation



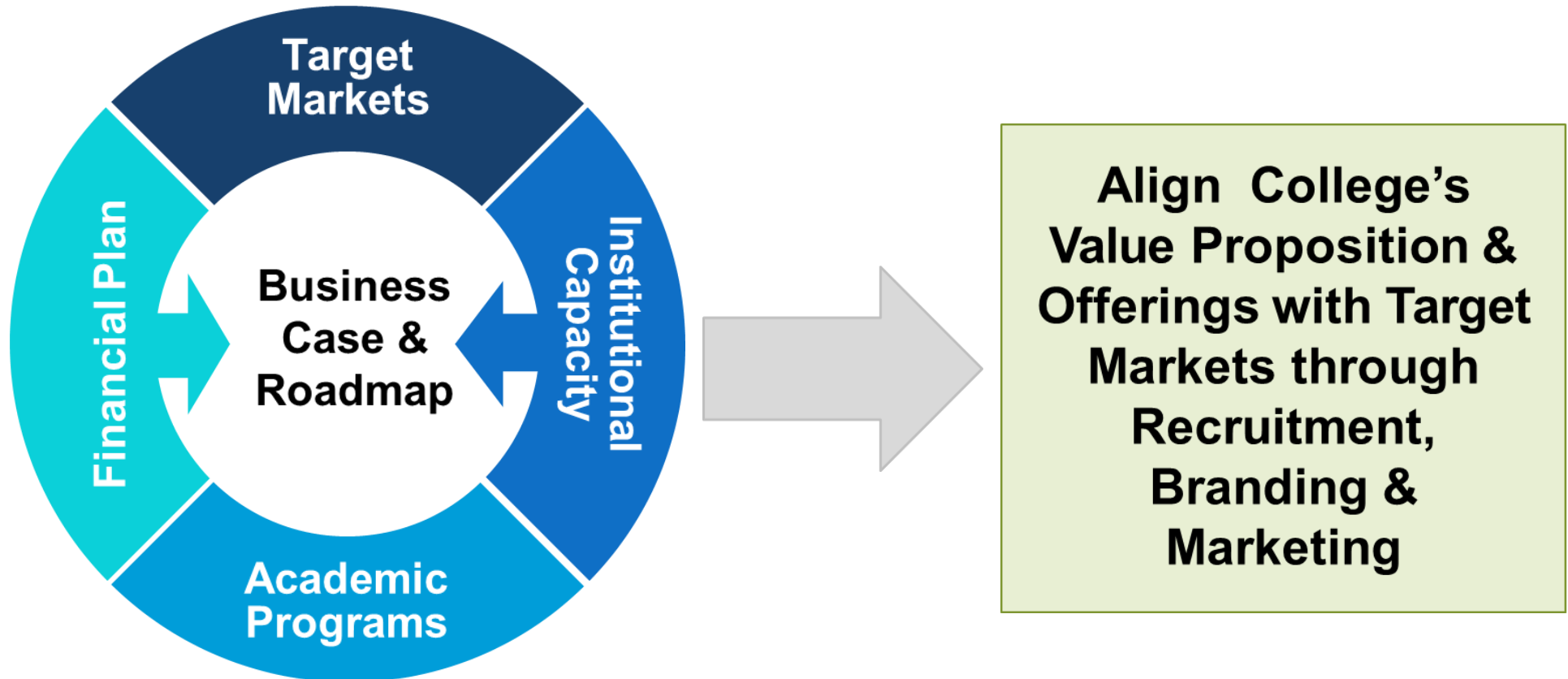
Phase 1 & 2

Identifies Market Opportunities



The collective visioning and scanning phases will clarify what NWC's market opportunities are and how to position NWC in the external market.

Phase 3 Builds Collaborative Roadmap for Market Positioning



Phase 1: Engagement & Visioning

**Gathering ideas and hear feedback about ways
the College can reposition itself**

- SWOT Survey
- Focus group sessions
- Future Summit
- Working sessions
- Development of 3-4 core idea models for the College

July 2020 – December 2020



Phase 1:
SWOT
Survey
July 2020





Survey Participants

Faculty and Staff Survey

(n = 71)

- Faculty (33)
- Staff (33)
- Administrator (2)
- No response (2)

Community Survey

(n = 61)

- Trustee/Trustee Emerita (6)
- Alumni (11)
- Retiree (7)
- Foundation Board (9)
- Community Member/Leader (13)
- Business Partner/Owner (2)
- Elected Official (3)

Strengths

Faculty and Staff Unique Perspectives

- International students and programs (e.g., diversity of student body, presence of diverse cultural backgrounds and traditions)

Shared Perspectives

- Student-centric culture of the institution
- Quality of academic programs and teaching
- Personalized attention (e.g., small class sizes, mentoring opportunities, field studies)
- Caring and committed staff and faculty
- Geographic location of college and proximity to Yellowstone National Park
- Affordability

Community Unique Perspectives

- Variety of academic program offerings
- Community support of the college

Weaknesses

Faculty and Staff Unique Perspectives

- Reticence to change
- Workload and prioritization of workloads with recent budget cuts
- Reliance on transfer programs
- Feeling connected to the community and having the community feel ownership of the College

Shared Perspectives

- Budget & Funding
- Facilities
- Shared governance and shared decision-making

Community Unique Perspectives

- Recruiting new students
- Alignment of academic programs to industry, business, and community needs

Opportunities

Faculty and Staff Unique Perspectives

- Increasing recruitment and expanding programming for international students

Shared Perspectives

- Creating new academic programs
- Centering academic programming, revenue generation, and applied learning opportunities that are connected to the Yellowstone National Park ecosystem
- Increasing applied learning and hands-on training opportunities for students
- Workforce and middle skill programming (e.g., hospitality, tourism, culinary, drafting)
- Partnerships with businesses, community non-profits, and other programs (e.g., Native American reservations, Heart Mountain, geological/ecological partnerships)

Community Unique Perspectives

- Creation of certificate and micro-credential programs

Threats

Faculty and Staff Unique Perspectives

- Higher education governance and public policy development
- Economic conditions and impact on student recruitment (e.g., income and ability to afford education)

Shared Perspectives

- Public funding of higher education in the state of Wyoming
- Decline of natural resource production in Wyoming and tax revenue
- Demographic shifts with an aging population and a decline in the population of high school students in the Northwest College service area
- Impact of COVID-19 on enrollment
- Prevalence of higher education online providers as well as non-accredited education and training providers (Coursera, EdX)

Community Unique Perspectives

- No unique perspectives



Community Perspectives Pride in Northwest College

- The vision and the commitment of the Powell community, later joined by the rest of Park County, to stand up a college carry it forward for 75 years.
- It has been a long standing fighter for providing good education to the students of the Big Horn Basin. We need to expand that and still keep in mind this is our little gold mine and we need to keep it shining and producing. And I love the idea of holding proud to the name of NWC.
- I am most proud when I hear of students who transfer to other colleges who feel they are better prepared and educated than students who started at a four year college.
- This little college has educated so many distinguished citizens for the state of Wyoming and beyond.
- I'm proud that I went from NWC to a big city college and graduated at the top of my class. I'm proud that my little Wyoming college gave me what I needed to compete in the big leagues.



Faculty and Staff Perspectives Pride in Northwest College

- The students make me the most proud. So many of them come to college daunted and disinterested in school, or feeling like they must endure it as a type of torture in order to get the degree they need. So many of these students graduate and transfer not only with their degree, but with a new and lifelong appreciation and enjoyment of learning.
- The ways that the College blends tradition with innovation in a way that makes sense to our local situation. For example, the Buffalo Feast.
- I am proud to have attended Northwest and to now work here. I am also proud to be a part of a college that is helping students become a productive part of society. Some of the students that come to Northwest experience a lot of firsts in life here. First time away from home, first time in college, their first job, their first time making life long friends. I feel proud to be able to help students navigate all of these firsts in life.
- Despite growing up roughly 20 miles from the college, I knew very little about NWC before working here. In a short time, though, it became clear to me that everyone shares a common goal of helping students. Saying you're student centered and actually being student centered are two different things—NWC truly lives up to its mission.



Community Perspectives Northwest College's Legacy

- Historically our legacy has been as a premier transfer institution that also offered selected vocational opportunities. I hope that is the legacy that will be carried forward.
- A strong, student centered faculty offering a quality education, whether in the transfer programs or vocational certificates.
- Blending the "four year experience" with a "two year program," giving students the best of both worlds
- I hope the legacy of a small-town college with big town quality will continue. The David beating Goliath by playing the game our way.



Faculty and Staff Perspectives Northwest College's Legacy

- That we are small enough to adapt quickly to educational needs while still providing personal attention to our students with unique programming that doesn't compete with our region.
- I want this school to be known as a jewel of the West, for serving a diversity of students from various ages, geographic backgrounds, family status, ethnicities, political and social perspectives, economic backgrounds, and majors and career paths. . . . It's not a perfect melting pot, but it's such an incredible and rare environment.
- This is a place that many alumni hold dear and deeply in their hearts because of their memories and experiences of Northwest College. The phenomena stretches back decades. The way some of our alums talk about Northwest College in a way they don't talk about the other schools they attended, even big universities, the way they value the support they received and the friends they made. It's pretty exceptional for a community college of any size, let alone a relatively small college in such a rural place. It's extraordinary.
- Student-centered everything!
- Quality education in a unique setting

Phase 1:
Focus Groups
-Aug/Sept 2020
-(5 sessions)



Themes from Focus Groups

- **Experiential learning/real-world & immersion experiences**
 - Field research, internships, relying on the Yellowstone ecosystem to offer experiential opportunities that only the College can offer. “Creating a Yellowstone experience for every student.”
 - Summer immersion programs and academic/co-curricular camps for students
- **Partnerships**
 - Creating K-12 and college/university partnerships (e.g., 2+2 programs) that can help increase enrollment of students
 - Partnerships with businesses and industry:
 - that have heavy telecommuting workforces that allow students to live in region and work remotely elsewhere;
 - that can provide local experiential learning opportunities to students; or
 - that offer pathways for adult learners/employees to upskill and achieve credentials that support career advancement and changes.
- **Workforce Responsive Programming**
 - Greater reliance on work-ready skills in the future than ever before. Flexible and differentiated types of credentialing will be key (micro-credentials). Clear pathways that can create stackable credentials.
 - Interdisciplinary academic programs that can be used to address economic, social, and/or workforce needs (e.g., sustainability, renewable energy, etc.).
 - Use of technology (virtual reality and artificial intelligence) on campus to offer workforce-ready experiences that support digital and technical skills.

Themes from Focus Groups (cont)

- **Flexible Delivery of Academic Programs**
 - Block scheduling (e.g., one course at a time over a semester) and creating alternative scheduling paths to degrees.
 - Distance and online learning. Provide online opportunities for students through fully online programs and hybrid courses. Build low-residency academic programs that allow students to take online courses elsewhere, but come to Northwest College for short 1-2 week experiences/on-site learning.
- **Renaming and Rebranding the College**
 - Need for enhanced recognition of the College to enhance enrollment and revenue to the College. “Nationally and internationally, not everyone may know where Wyoming is, but everyone knows where Yellowstone is.”
 - Capitalizing on Northwest’s unique location and surroundings went hand-in-hand with possible renaming or rebranding of the College.
 - Significant feedback was offered to pair the renaming or rebranding of the College with expansion of academic program innovation, partnerships, or applied-learning experiences.

Phase 1:
Future of NWC
Community Summit
September 2020



Summit Presentations

- Enrollment Opportunities for Adult, Minority, and International Students
 - *Colleen Falkenstern, Research Analyst*
 - *Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education*
- Leveraging Wyoming's Natural Beauty and Surroundings for Institutional Differentiation
 - *Dr. Jim Owston, Associate Provost, Professor of Mass Communication*
 - *Alderson Broaddus University*
- Centering Academic Innovation as a Source of Competitive Advantage
 - *Edward DesPlas, Executive Vice President*
 - *San Juan College*
- Power of Partnerships: Aligning K-12, Industry, Colleges and Community for Long-Term Success
 - *Dr. Gary Daynes, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs*
 - *Barton College*



Future Summit Impact Statements

- Renaming and Rebranding the College – 44 votes
- Academic Programs and Delivery Redesign – 31 votes
- Workforce and Community Partnerships – 31 votes
- Experiential/Applied/Hands-On Learning – 26 votes
- Marketing/Visibility/Awareness/Community Engagement – 17 votes
- Miscellaneous Themed Votes – 7 votes



Phase 1:
Advisory Committee
Core Idea Workshop
October 2020



A row of seven balloons is shown against a light blue background. The first two balloons on the left are white, followed by a single red balloon that is significantly higher than the others. To the right of the red balloon are four more white balloons. All balloons have thin black strings extending downwards. The red balloon is the focal point, symbolizing a unique or standout idea.

Core Idea

The **unique** and **inherent truth** about an institution that differentiates it in ways that are meaningful and persuasive to your target audience.



Core Idea continued

Mission

Why do we exist?

Vision

Where do we want to be?

Core Idea

What can we leverage that is special and unique?

The Core Idea continued

- The core idea describes the institution in a way that makes it very clear how the institution differs from its competitors.
- There are four parts:
 - The target user—who you're serving and where they are. You may have different segments as well as part of your options.
 - The pressing need—which of their needs do you meet? What are the problems that this group might be facing?
 - A solution or offering—a high-level experience that helps that population meet their specific needs.
 - Unique resources and assets--things that you can build off to create the right experience or solution.

Core Idea Statement example

Target User: Traditional-aged students who live out-of-state and have a strong interest in outdoor adventure activities

Problem/Need: Cannot afford a traditional, four-year education; does not have access to outdoor/adventure experiences in their home state/locale

Solution/Offering: Provide a curriculum and co-curriculum rooted in outdoor experiential learning opportunities paired with partnerships at 4-year institutions who emphasize experiential learning and field research in the Yellowstone ecosystem for potential transfer

Unique Assets: Yellowstone ecosystem, liberal arts emphasis, historic strength as a transfer institution, cost as a two-year institution



Core Idea Statements generated

- Thirteen Core ideas generated around target audiences & need
 1. Inquisitive Students/ small school experience
 2. Students / desire to expand skills in all stages of life
 3. Students / Outdoor adventure and Greater Yellowstone Experience
 4. Students of all ages /Career- ready credentials/hands on
 5. Students of all ages – Career- ready credentials/working opps
 6. Out-of-State students – Outdoor adventure
 7. Traditional aged students- Ecologically conscous and STEM interest
 8. Working individual – upgrade skills/block scheduling
 9. Students – life long learning upgrade skills
 10. Out of state Student -Block experiences Yellowstone/adventure
 11. Students in low paying positions – increase skills/earning
 12. Small business oweners – upgrade skills
 13. Retired/Older out of state student – personal fulfillment/block schedule

Phase 2: External & Internal Scanning

Scan the external & internal environment to test core idea options and ways to position NWC

- Prospective and current student surveys
- Community and alumni surveys
- Interviews and focus groups
- External and internal data analysis
- Check-in meetings with administrators, staff, and faculty on information gathered and collected

Jan. 2021 – May. 2021



Core Idea Model Options Northwest College



Destination Model

Provide a distinctive learning experience for those seeking to enjoy, work and live in the Yellowstone ecosystem.



Workforce Hub Model

Serve as an engine and agenda-setter for regional talent development and growth through strategic alliances and coalitions.



Pathways Model

Provide a flexible and engaging education pathway accessible at every stage of life.



Distinctive Program Model

Serve as a source of authority and reputation leader in targeted programs or learning practices.

DESTINATION MODEL

Focal Point: Provide a distinctive learning experience for those seeking to enjoy, work, and live in the Yellowstone ecosystem



Possible Enrollment Markets

- **Segmentation/Market Positioning:** Niche markets with specific interests
- **Potential Audiences & Goals:**
 - High school, college, and medical school students taking a gap year
 - Out-of-state outdoor adventurers (traditional students, etc.)
 - Travel learners (retirees and hobby learners)
 - International students



Program & Curricular Framework

- **Impact on Program Development:** Limited to new programs, targeted existing programs, and some course redesign
- **Curricular Focus:** Emphasis on integrating destination themes, immersion, and experiential learning into curriculum
- **Credential Scaffolding:** Degrees, certificates, & experiences (no credential sought)
- **Delivery Modes:** Campus, off-site destinations, online/blended learning, low-residency online programs



Key Advantages to Leverage

- **Tangibles**
 - Distance from Yellowstone & other natural features
 - Excess residential capacity
 - Presence of cultural, tourism, & hospitality partners
- **Intangibles**
 - Existing faculty experience
 - Existing student programming centered on the Yellowstone experience

PATHWAYS MODEL

Focal Point: Provide a flexible, engaging education pathway accessible at every stage of life



Possible Enrollment Markets

- **Segmentation/Market Positioning:**
Broad market positioning to traditional and adult students
- **Potential Goals & Audiences:**
 - Workers who are considering changing their career
 - Workers who are considering upgrading their pay or performance
 - Prospective students with limited access to physical campuses
 - Prospective/current remote workers



Program & Curricular Framework

- **Impact on Program Development:**
Universal, but limited redesign
- **Program Development:** Unbundling content into shorter iterations and flexible sequencing of gen. ed. & discipline specific courses
- **Curricular Focus:** Emphasis on iterative development
- **Delivery Modes:** Blended/online learning
- **Credentialing Scaffold:** Vertical and horizontal stackable credentials; micro-credentials and smaller learning units than credit hours



Key Advantages to Leverage

- **Tangibles**
 - NWC online enrollment growth
 - NC-SARA approval for out-of-state distance learning
 - Career counseling staff and strength in student success
 - Low tuition pricing & ability to create flexible payment options
- **Intangibles**
 - Strong network of successful & committed alumni volunteers
 - Strong focus on student life, success, & belonging

WORKFORCE HUB MODEL

Focal Point: Serve as an engine and agenda-setter for regional talent development and growth



Possible Enrollment Markets

- **Segmentation/Market Positioning:** Broad market positioning to traditional and adult students
- **Potential Goals:**
 - Accelerate ability to earn a living/family-sustaining wage
 - Employers and small businesses with upskilling and training needs
 - Job training and unemployment centers



Program & Curricular Framework

- **Impact on Program Development:** Limited to new programs & existing programs with modest redesign; new/expanded entrepreneurship and/or workforce centers & services
- **Curricular Focus:** Emphasis on skill accumulation and verification
- **Credential Scaffolding:** Stackable credentials (vertical/horizontal); pathways from non-credit to credit degree offerings
- **Delivery Modes:** Online, satellite, business/organization training sites



Key Advantages to Leverage

- **Tangibles**
 - Increase in workforce certificates/credentials
 - Expanded non-credit, online offerings at NWC's CTL
 - Existing satellite locations
 - Guided pathway program mapping
- **Intangibles**
 - Community support for strong workforce partnerships
 - WY's workforce & educational attainment policies

DISTINCTIVE PROGRAM MODEL

Focal Point: To be a source of authority & reputation leader in targeted programs or learning practices



Possible Enrollment Markets

- **Segmentation/Market Positioning:** Broad market for traditional students and niche markets (based on design of distinctive program)
- **Potential Audiences & Goals:**
 - Niche markets seeking specialized academic degree (specialized academic program)
 - Academically undecided students (gen. ed. redesign)
 - Prospects seeking strong residential programs (traditional & international students)



Program & Curricular Framework

- **Impact on Program Development:** Either universal redesign in general ed curriculum or limited impact on new/existing target programs
- **Curricular Focus:** General ed course redesign, niche specialization in academic program, or interdisciplinary program for hybrid careers
- **Credential Scaffolding:** Degrees, certificates
- **Delivery Modes:** Campus-based, blended/hybrid online learning,



Key Advantages to Leverage

- **Tangibles**
 - Reputation for strong transfer programs and student success (e.g., peer mentoring, FYE, co-requisite remediation)
 - Existing programs with unique characteristics
 - Teaching & Learning Center
- **Intangibles**
 - Strategic commitment to program innovation
 - Faculty experience in curricular & program redesign

Phase 3: Transformational Plan

Assemble collective learning into an actionable and implementable roadmap

- Action plan for transformation
- Risk assessment for transformation plan and mitigation strategies
- Schedule and timeline for action plans
- Investment and resource allocation strategy
- Marketing and recruiting approach
- Recommended academic programs/delivery models to target

Sep. 2021 – Dec. 2021



Phase 3:

Here we go

