

**STRATEGIC PLAN:**

# SUFFOLK 2025

 **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**



**SUFFOLK  
UNIVERSITY**  
BOSTON

## **MISSION**

At Suffolk University we are driven by the power of education, inclusion, and engagement to change lives and positively impact communities. Committed to excellence, we provide students with experiential and transformational learning opportunities that begin in the center of Boston, reach across the globe, and lead to extraordinary outcomes for our graduates.

## **VISION**

Suffolk University will be a leader in experiential learning, known nationally and internationally for excellence in providing students access to real-world and global learning opportunities through outstanding academic and co-curricular programs and partnerships that take full advantage of our borderless, urban campuses in Boston and Madrid. We will advance our mission by ensuring that our students gain the core competencies needed to build successful careers in a rapidly changing world. A sharp focus on preparing students and alumni for lifelong career and community success will put Suffolk at the forefront of career education efforts at colleges and universities nationwide.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The experience of being part of the city of Boston works its way into every aspect of a Suffolk education, both inside and outside of the classroom—and our students embrace it. Our location in the heart of the city puts us at the center of a borderless and global community. We bring together a powerful combination of limitless real-world learning opportunities in our downtown location and individual mentoring and connections with faculty and staff. That distinctive approach leads our students on exciting new journeys and prepares our graduates for career and life success.

The Suffolk community shares a mindset of serving others. From our founding in 1906, we have been and remain an institution with a fundamental belief in the power of education to improve lives and positively impact communities, locally and around the world. At a time when accessing education is becoming increasingly difficult for many, we are more committed to that powerful mission than ever before, and to ensuring that students from all backgrounds can access life-changing educational opportunity.

Over the course of the 2018-2019 academic year, members of the Suffolk community came together as part of a strategic planning

process in order to understand in depth our advantages, our challenges and our opportunities. We wanted to uncover those elements of our distinctive identity that will help us better stand out in a crowded higher education marketplace, with more than 60 colleges and universities in greater Boston alone. We considered where we can invest to maximize opportunities for our students and our community, and to ensure ever greater levels of success for the University in the years and decades to come. The result is **Suffolk 2025**, a strategic plan that will guide us in decision-making and focus over the next six years.

At the heart of the plan are three key areas of University-wide focus and commitment: **Integrated Education; Building Community and Partnerships**; and **Enhancing Reputation and Reach**. The plan calls for a number of investments in major new initiatives including:

- A comprehensive and expanded Center for Career Education & Professional Development with a focus on collaborating with academic units on career readiness, working to ensure that Suffolk students and alumni gain the needed competencies for success in a changing world. The Center will connect every part of the University, including our alumni community, to career development resources and opportunities.
- New and stronger domestic and international alumni networks and local and global partnerships that create opportunities for students and graduates and strengthen connections between the University and its growing worldwide alumni network.

## Integrated Education

Suffolk's focus on experience-based learning, career readiness and adaptability prepares students and graduates to thrive in a rapidly evolving and global work world. We are identifying the knowledge, attributes and skills—including the power skills of human interaction—that graduates need to be successful throughout their careers and lives. And we are incorporating that understanding into our curriculum and program development.

**Experiential Learning** is a distinctive feature of a Suffolk education. It is a primary learning and teaching tool here, and it leads our students to discover new career and life pathways. Suffolk students deeply engage in learning through opportunities such as: hands-on research projects; consulting with area businesses and organizations; service-learning and volunteer opportunities across the city; internships at area companies, agencies and non-profits; study and travel abroad, including at our campus in Madrid, Spain; and co-curricular activities in the residence halls, University clubs and student organizations.

**Suffolk 2025** calls for expanding our experientially based educational approach so that from the moment a student begins at Suffolk they are combining theory with practice, and with reflection on that practice, in both our academic and co-curricular programs. This extends across schools, majors and degree levels.

Key initiatives include:

- Creating a faculty-led Center for Experiential Learning that will foster and support course development, co-curricular initiatives, symposia, and faculty research.
- Recruiting faculty who are committed to experiential education.
- Building a foundation of experiential learning from the first semester of a student's program through requirements in the Core Curriculum, internships and co-curricular initiatives.

**Career Readiness** is at the core of the University's mission. Suffolk University will be a leader in preparing students for career success, and in professional development and lifelong learning programs for alumni.

Key initiatives include:

- Develop programming and build a new home in a visible location for a comprehensive Center for Career Education & Professional Development with staff expertise in specific subject areas; the Center will offer a clear path to success for students in all majors and programs as well as for alumni.
- Enhance capabilities in international career advising.
- Create an industry model of employer development and advising that identifies essential career competencies that students need to acquire and works to ensure their incorporation in our programmatic offerings.

## **Building Community And Partnerships**

A major Suffolk University strength is in our community. We are committed to building stronger connections between our students, employees and alumni in an inclusive and increasingly diverse environment. Diversity and inclusion are core values and central to our historic mission, and a greater focus on these will enhance the overall experience of the entire community and make us stronger. And we are focused on expanding opportunities for our students and graduates through new educational, corporate and non-profit partnerships, locally and around the world.

## **Faculty and Staff**

- Increase the number of faculty and staff from historically underrepresented groups.
- Develop opportunities for professional growth and enrichment that help employees fulfill their responsibilities.
- Expand our Doctoral Fellowship program and other programs that build a pipeline of diverse faculty candidates and increase the scholarly engagement of students in the area of cultural competence.

## **Students**

- Increase programming to support students from historically underrepresented groups.
- Explore opportunities to increase financial aid options, especially for students from historically underrepresented groups.
- Evaluate online opportunities focusing on nontraditional students.
- Expand permanent student housing capacity.
- Identify and put in place new performing arts spaces.
- Continue to expand athletics offerings.

## **Alumni**

- Build stronger connections with our alumni community around the world, including through domestic, international, and affinity networks with a focus on engaging alumni across all life stages and developing a culture of philanthropy.
- Create interesting and emotionally engaging content about alumni, the power of philanthropy, and the success of the University.
- Provide interactive capabilities for professional and social networking and information-sharing, and opportunities for affinity groups and regional alumni groups to connect.

## **Partners**

- Develop quarterly events to cultivate and engage key local corporate and foundation stakeholders.
- Develop multifaceted, long-term, and mutually beneficial partnerships with corporations and foundations. Create partnerships with employment leaders in finance, biotech, law, and technology, in collaboration with internal offices, alumni volunteers, and board leadership.

## Enhancing Reputation And Reach

We are focusing on reputation so that the world will know the impact of a Suffolk education on individual students and better underscore our significant contributions to the Boston community and to communities around the world. Enhancing our reputation will support efforts to broaden our reach and make a Suffolk education available to more students, including underserved populations.

Key initiatives include:

- Develop a more deliberate, coordinated, and proactive approach to rankings, working to maximize our position but always in ways that put integrity and data accuracy at the center of all we do; support both University and programmatic rankings efforts with central resources.
- Drive positive impressions of Suffolk through increased and broader outreach to influencers and opinion makers, especially by harnessing the power of our alumni network to spread the word about the power of a Suffolk education.
- Create a central events office that works across the University to maximize impact and promotion.
- Enhance Advancement communications capabilities to support alumni engagement and fundraising goals so that our alumni and friends better understand our mission and our goals, and can help us achieve them.
- Invest in resources needed to better reach and build the University's reputation with prospective students of all schools.
- Increase student recruitment efforts nationwide, with further expansion in the south and southwest.