A Unified Ecosystem for Student Mobility and Workforce Readiness

Our next strategic plan, Pathways to Prosperity: Reform 3.0 represents a fundamental shift in how Southwest Tennessee Community College students achieve success. The plan is rooted in a simple but powerful belief: student success and regional prosperity are inseparable. To achieve this, Reform 3.0 intentionally brings together Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and Workforce Development into one fully aligned ecosystem—replacing institutional silos with a single, unified division. This alignment will provide the framework for the college to achieve the dual priorities of Reform 3.0 – to increase bachelor's degree transfers and strengthen workforce credential attainment.

A Triad That Ends Silos and Aligns Culture

Traditionally, colleges operate in separate lanes—one focused on instruction, another on student services, and another on employer engagement. Reform 3.0 merges the three creating a triad where the three divisions no longer work as parallel systems but as interdependent parts of one institutional culture built around mobility, opportunity, and completion. This alignment ensures decision-making, advising, curriculum, and employer engagement all reinforce the same purpose: every student has the opportunity to earn a credential with labor-market value or a strong opportunity to transfer to a bachelor's degree program.

Following the Student Journey: Entry → Completion → Career

The Pathways to Prosperity ecosystem is built around a simple but comprehensive student journey: students enter college, progress along a clearly designed path, and transition into a career or transfer opportunity with meaningful upward mobility. To support this journey, Southwest has initiated four focus areas:

<u>Meta-Major Onboarding & Career Advising</u>

Students begin with a holistic first-year experience that includes:

- soft-skill development
- proactive advising
- program maps connected to career outcomes
- early exposure to internships, transfer options, and labor- market information

Embedded Certificates and Stackable Credentials

Programs designed to earn shorter-term credentials on the way to degrees that are:

- industry-recognized
- stackable
- tied to licensure or employment readiness

Dual Enrollment & Career and Technical Education (CTE) Pathways

To create smoother transitions as well as reduce time and cost to completion, high school students receive earlier exposure to college and career pathways through:

- aligned CTE-to-college programs
- hands-on industry bootcamps
- dual enrollment advising and degree planning

Articulation Agreements & Forward-Looking Completion Programs

To strengthen bachelor's degree transfer readiness, the college is implementing:

- dual enrollment advising and degree planning
- aligned learning outcomes
- a centralized transfer hub
- expanded reverse transfer (rebranded for clarity and appeal)

External Partnerships That Enhance Mobility

Reform 3.0 recognizes that upward mobility is not achieved by the college alone. The ecosystem activates employers, K–12 partners, universities, and regional stakeholders to ensure students have:

- meaningful work-based learning
- mentorship
- upskilling opportunities
- clear job pipelines
- transfer pathways
- community-supported resources

Additionally, throughout the reform process, the college will leverage strong data governance and performance dashboards to ensure transparency, equity, continuous improvement, and measurable accountability as a cornerstone of the Strategic Plan aligned with community impact.

The Outcome

Pathways to Prosperity: Reform 3.0 positions Southwest to deliver credentials with purpose—connecting education to opportunity and driving long-term prosperity for students and Shelby County.

Reform 3.0 Committee Leads

Terika Hughes, Director of Career Training, serves as the Director of Strategic Initiatives
Credential & Workforce Navigation Committee – Leads: Alfreda Brooks-Davis, Manager Workforce Solutions Center; Dr. Derrick Wheatley, Department Head, Business and Legal Studies
Meta-Major Advising & Onboarding Committee – Leads: Jhona Gipson, Director of Advising; Bill Turner, Associate Professor, Communications, Graphic Design and Fine Arts and Curriculum Chair
Dual Enrollment and CTE-Aligned Exposure Committee – Leads: Rosie Britton, Director, Recruitment and K-12 Partnerships; Shelley Trigg, Associate Professor Emergency Medical Technology
Articulation Agreements and Reverse Transfer Committee– Leads: LaToya Chavers, Director of Transfer and Articulation; Katrina Muldrow, Director of Academic Support and Operations
Data, Technology, and Evaluation Committee– Leads: Erica Hughes, AVP, Institutional Research and Effectiveness; Katina Phillips, Deputy CIO