



## Strategic Plan 2017-2021

### STI Mission

The SANS Technology Institute develops leaders to strengthen enterprise and global information security. STI educates managers and engineers in information security practices and techniques, attracts top scholar-practitioners as faculty, and engages both students and faculty in real-world applied research.

### STI Vision

The SANS Technology Institute aspires to be the preeminent graduate institution translating contemporary information security practice and scholarship into effective educational experiences. Our graduates are highly valued because they design state-of-the-art, enterprise-level cyber defenses, champion the adoption of those defenses, and manage their implementation and ongoing operation. In so doing, STI will:

1. Enable private and public sector enterprises of the United States and its allies to preserve social order and protect their economic rights and military capabilities in the face of cyber-attacks;
2. Provide the national defense establishment, critical industries, businesses and government agencies with information security engineers and managers who have the most current and critical knowledge and skills needed to respond effectively to the evolving cyber-attack landscape; and,
3. Perform leading-edge research that continually defines or identifies current best practices and enhances the state of the art in the practice of information security.



**Goal 1: Materially Increase the Number of Graduates Prepared to Lead Cybersecurity Teams, Programs, and Efforts.**

Primary methods to achieving Goal 1:

- Formally review and revise marketing and admissions planning, processes, techniques and standards.
- Invest in the required tools, events, and people, beginning with an admissions portal and expanded marketing and recruiting efforts.
- Expand our current processes of continuous improvement to include the assessment of correlation between admissions standards and student success, and acquire the longitudinal data necessary to determine strategic adjustments to those standards over time.

Considerations of key enablers: In order to achieve Goal 1 and the order-of-magnitude level of growth indicated in the associated benchmark, the following key enablers will be explored and implemented subject to further study:

- Membership in the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (SARA).
- Approval as a non-participating Title IV institution.
- Expansion of state locations to DC or Virginia, to include state approving agency authorization.
- Permanent physical teaching space.

Benchmark: Set the conditions now to achieve, by end of year 2021, at least 200 master's graduates and at least 800 certificate graduates annually who have successfully demonstrated the required learning outcomes and the technical and leadership skills expected of an STI graduate and necessary to fulfill our mission and vision.



## Goal 2: Modify Academic Program Design & Delivery to Maximize Graduates with Leadership Capabilities

### Primary methods to achieving Goal 2:

- Formally define and assess the balance and mix of technical, management, and leadership skills and learning outcomes of our various master's degrees and graduate certificates, as required to meet the full range of contemporary professional needs and as per our mission and vision.
- Review, and validate or revise, the effectiveness of existing and alternative major academic requirements and capstone exercises, to especially include systemic improvements to the Gold Paper requirements, processes, and delivery in order to produce leaders with advanced cognition and awareness.
- Implementation of formal recurring graduate surveys to assess personal and professional outcomes and impact of STI education.

Considerations of key enablers: In order to achieve Goal 2 and in keeping with the ideals of assessment, the following key enablers will be explored and implemented subject to further analysis:

- The implementation of a formal alumni and mentor network as part of a deliberate feedback and advisory effort.
- The creation and maintenance of a research topic list which incorporates input from faculty, government, industry, and leaders in the field of information security in order to ensure that our emerging leaders are focused on proper and relevant topics.
- The creation and implementation of a new graduate certificate(s) attuned to emerging trends and threats where educated and prepared leaders will be increasingly required.

Benchmark: Formal curriculum review, to include degree and certificate program design, delivery methodology, and major requirements, completed during 2018 coincident with re-accreditation self-study and with resulting recommendations to be implemented during 2019 and assessed during 2020 and 2021.



### Goal 3: Align Organizational Design and Processes to Optimize Support of the Student Experience

#### Primary methods to achieving Goal 3:

- Re-design existing databases and facilitate access to academic progress metrics in order to improve the efficiency of academic advising and the quality of staff engagement with students.
- Explore and invest in a student self-service portal.
- Create the platforms necessary for improved student engagement with peers, instructors, alumni, and mentors.
- Assess and improve the methods and requirements associated with obligatory live individual or group academic events in order to ensure sustainability in light of the growth intended in Goal 1.
- Create and sustain a routine student survey program for new, current, and graduated students in order to capture valuable constituent feedback.
- Enhance the frequency and depth of governance interactions, to include formalizing the frequency of the review of board structure and composition.
- Improve the frequency of faculty review.

Considerations of key enablers: In order to achieve Goal 3 and in keeping with the ideals of assessment, the following key enablers will be explored and implemented subject to further analysis:

- Continued inclusion in the ongoing conversation regarding the potential for student communities within the Advanced Cyber Learning Platform.
- The creation of professional developmental pathways to aid in the retention of quality enrollment managers.

Benchmarks: Develop the ability to quickly and accurately measure all metrics associated with the academic progress of any segment of the student population during 2017, and make key elements of that data available to the individual student during 2018. Achieve and maintain a student survey maximum satisfaction rating in excess of 90%.



Goal 4: Remain constantly adaptable to accommodating realized outcomes and recommendation of the 2018 re-accreditation self-study team visit.

Primary methods to achieving Goal 4: TBD during MSCHE re-accreditation self-study by appropriate working groups, and subsequently by continuous assessment practices, and as approved by institutional leadership.

Benchmarks: TBD during MSCHE re-accreditation self-study by appropriate working groups and as approved by institutional leadership.