

INNOVATE. COLLABORATE. I FARN

2025 PRESIDENT'S REPORT
SHAWNEE STATE UNIVERSITY



At SHAWNEE STATE UNIVERSITY, our strength is rooted in our community and reflects the Appalachian values that are a part of us and those we serve.

These values – self-reliance, resilience, and an unwavering commitment to family and community - define who we are and shape our mission every day.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

LEADING WITH PURPOSE.

SERVING WITH PRIDE.

At Shawnee State, we are fortunate to be guided by a nine-member Board of Trustees, appointed by the Governor of Ohio, who help shape our direction, growth, and service to the region. Together, we stay focused on delivering education that MAKES A DIFFERENCE in the lives of our students and the communities we serve.

Alongside them, the SSU Foundation Board, a dedicated group of community volunteers, supports that mission through philanthropy that helps to expand scholarships, fund programs, and create opportunities. With their partnership, we OPEN **DOORS** for generations of Shawnee State students.

We are proud to present this report in partnership with those who help lead and support our mission every day — trusted voices guiding our direction and dedicated champions making progress possible.

SSU FOUNDATION BOARD

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Debra "Faith" Kuhn STUDENT TRUSTEE



STUDENT TRUSTEE

Shawnee State University grows stronger through the LEADERSHIP and GENEROSITY of those who guide and support its mission.



Troy Gregory



Matthew A. Wisecup

SECRETARY







Lisa Johnson



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GUIDED BY

INNOVATION, COLLABORATION, AND LEARNING

Dear Friends & Colleagues,

When I became President of Shawnee State University, I shared that my focus would center on **INNOVATION**, **COLLABORATION**, and **LEARNING** — three core principles that are now actively redefining Shawnee State's impact across our region and state.

INNOVATION is inspiring us to think differently, launch new programs, invest in applied research, and create unique partnerships, like the one we've developed with Airable Research Lab that is bringing groundbreaking soy-based product development to our new Shawnee Advanced Manufacturing Center. This initiative is expanding possibilities for both students and the regional economy.

COLLABORATION is strengthening every facet of our work, on campus and throughout the community. Partnerships, like those with Adena Health, Southern Ohio Medical Center, and healthcare agencies throughout south central Ohio are providing powerful ways for us to unite to amplify our impact on critical healthcare workforce shortages and issues affecting the health of citizens in our region.

LEARNING is at the heart of it all as we evolve to meet the needs of students at every stage of their education, life, and career. Joint projects with our K-12 partners, like our new SUMS Math Competition, help develop important skills in high school students. Expanded online and hybrid degree options are helping working adults start new careers or up-skill in their existing fields. A new **COMMITMENT TO EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING FOR EVERY SHAWNEE STATE STUDENT** is providing internships, co-ops, clinicals, and real-world work experiences that prepare SSU graduates to thrive.

Together, we are building something truly special here: a place where curiosity sparks creativity, where teamwork fuels transformation, and WHERE LEARNING WORKS – for students, employers, and the entire community. I'm proud of what we've accomplished and energized by what lies ahead. Thank you for being a part of this exciting journey.

With deep appreciation and great anticipation, Paws Up, my friends!



Eric Andrew Braun, JD, EdD President, Shawnee State University

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INNOVATION IN ACTION



SSU NAMED TOP GAME DESIGN PROGRAM IN OHIO AND AMONG THE BEST IN THE WORLD

For the 15th year in a row, we've been recognized by *The Princeton Review* as one of the **TOP UNDERGRADUATE SCHOOLS FOR GAME DESIGN** — earning the #1 spot in Ohio, #2 in the Midwest, and #15 globally.

As Professor Jason Witherell puts it, "This ranking reinforces what we've known all along – world-class talent is being developed right here in southern Ohio."

Our program is led by experienced faculty who bring the latest developments in gaming technology into the classroom, share their own professional experience, and create opportunities for students to connect with leaders in the industry.

GAME ACCELERATOR HELPS DEVELOPERS LAUNCH AND SCALE IN PORTSMOUTH

Our Shawnee XP Game Accelerator program at the Kricker Innovation Hub is helping independent game developers turn ideas into thriving businesses.

We offer mentorship, funding, and industry connections that **EMPOWER CREATORS FROM AROUND THE WORLD** to launch and grow their games and studios right here in Portsmouth.



WORLD-CLASS TALENT IS BEING DEVELOPED RIGHT HERE IN SOUTHERN OHIO.



AIRABLE RESEARCH LAB TURNS SOYBEANS INTO SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS

We're building a **COMMUNITY OF INNOVATION** at Shawnee State where students will help research, test, and develop new soy-based plastics. Through a \$1 million investment, our partners at **AIRABLE RESEARCH LAB**, a business line of the Ohio Soybean Council, are opening their second location inside our Advanced Manufacturing Center, bringing high-impact research directly to campus.

As SSU alumnus and Airable founder Barry McGraw explains, "This partnership is good for Airable. It's good for soybean farmers in Ohio. And, it's good for students at Shawnee State."

Together, we're proving that the future of innovation is powered by partnerships, our alumni, and the talent of SSU students.



Our MBA program, now in its third year, is growing quickly and offering flexible hybrid coursework that blends online and in-person instruction to meet students where they are. We've built the program on the foundations of entrepreneurship, regional development, and leadership and designed it for both working adults and continuing college students.

In Spring 2026, we'll **EXPAND OUR MBA PROGRAM** to include in-person classes at our new instructional location in Chillicothe at Adena Health.

We are creating an ecosystem that supports innovation and its impact on economic growth in our region through grant funding, industry support, and careful planning to make the best use of our campus resources.

JOINING FORCES TO CREATE AN INNOVATION & TECHNOLOGY

ECOSYSTEM THAT IMPACTS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

We were recently awarded a \$500,000 NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION (NSF) ENABLING PARTNERSHIPS TO INCREASE INNOVATION CAPACITY (EPIIC) GRANT to develop the infrastructure, partnerships, and knowledge necessary to foster workforce development and technology commercialization.

With a \$1.5 MILLION DONATION FROM MISSION CONVERSION SERVICES ALLIANCE, AN ATKINSRÉALIS US NUCLEAR, WESTINGHOUSE, AND AMENTUM JOINT VENTURE, we are transforming labs in the new SHAWNEE ADVANCED MANUFACTURING CENTER. When the Center opens in Fall 2026, our students will gain hands-on experience with advanced robotics, plastics, and next-generation manufacturing technology working alongside Airable's research operations.

Thanks to a \$2 MILLION GRANT FROM THE APPALACHIAN REGIONAL COMMISSION, we're equipping the Center with state-of-the-art systems to prepare students for high-demand, high-tech careers across our region.



SUMS COMPETITION ADDS UP TO SCHOLARSHIPS FOR HIGH SCHOOL MATH STUDENTS

This past year, we welcomed more than 100 students from Ohio, Kentucky and West Virginia on campus for our annual SUMS Math Competition. It's one of the ways we encourage and celebrate mathematical talent. Individual and team winners earned scholarships ranging from \$100 to \$2,000.

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COLLABORATION AT WORK



MEETING HEALTHCARE DEMANDS THROUGH PARTNERSHIP WITH ADENA HEALTH

In a powerful new collaboration with Adena Health, we're building a dedicated academic location for our College of Health & Human Services inside Adena's PACCAR Medical Education Center in Chillicothe.

Our shared goal is to grow a sustainable healthcare workforce, improve health outcomes across the region, and give local students greater access to high-demand careers without having to leave their communities.

We're starting with programs in nursing and radiologic technology,

with plans to expand into respiratory therapy, occupational therapy, medical lab technology, and other in-demand fields. It's a partnership built on SHARED VALUES and SHARED RESPONSIBILITY.

Together, we're creating a homegrown talent pipeline of skilled professionals trained where they're needed most. The partnership expands our capacity, removes barriers to access, and opens new doors for students across south central Ohio.

More details are available at partner.shawnee.edu/adena-health

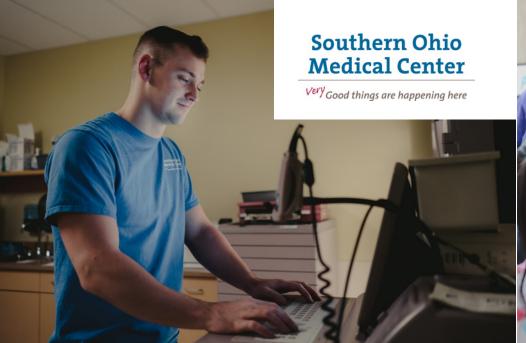


STUDENTS THRIVE THROUGH HANDS-ON APPALACHIAN LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Through our new Appalachian Adventure program, we're helping students build deeper connections to the region with experiential learning in southern Ohio's natural landscapes.

Students kayak the Ohio and Scioto Rivers, hike Shawnee Forest, and take part in conservation efforts, **EXPLORING AND ENGAGING WITH THE RICH ENVIRONMENTAL HERITAGE** of the area. These hands-on experiences root students in the region, strengthen appreciation for local resources, and help shape goals for the future.

By learning here, in the heart of Appalachia, our students discover both a sense of belonging and a sense of purpose.



SIMULATION LAB AT SOUTHERN OHIO MEDICAL CENTER PREPARES NEXT-GEN HEALTHCARE WORKERS

Our partnership with Southern Ohio Medical Center (SOMC) has been a cornerstone of regional healthcare education since the 1970s. Together, we created the SSU-SOMC Simulation Lab, which has long supported both our nursing students and practicing clinical staff.

Now, as part of a renewed alliance, we're working with SOMC to upgrade and expand the Simulation Lab, enhancing its capabilities to serve nurses and a broader range of healthcare professionals. Our goal is to deliver even more IMMERSIVE, HANDS-ON TRAINING that equips the next generation of providers with the skills and confidence to meet today's healthcare demands.



ON-CAMPUS HEALTH, POWERED BY COMPASS COMMUNITY HEALTH

Through our partnership with Compass Community Health, we're EXPANDING ACCESS TO MEDICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES FOR STUDENTS through the Bear Care Health Clinic, right on campus.

Whether students live in residence halls or commute from home, they now have access to essential care, making health and wellness more accessible, convenient, and student-centered than ever.



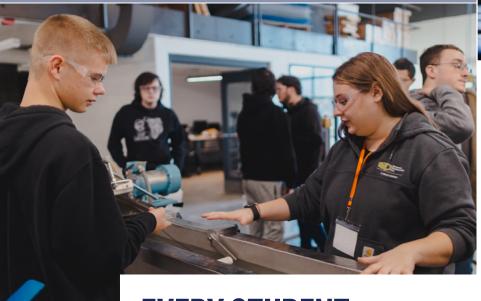
EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES IN DENTAL HYGIENE EDUCATION

We're expanding access to dental care in southern Ohio through new partnerships with dental providers and the creation of a full-service Dental Clinic on our campus.

The clinic will bring new capabilities to our selective dental hygiene program and allow us to QUADRUPLE CAPACITY to meet the region's growing demand for skilled professionals.

Expected to open in late 2026, the clinic will provide students with more hands-on training while expanding affordable care for the community.

LEARNING WITHOUT LIMITS



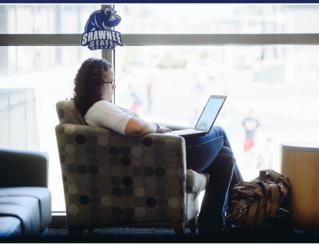
EVERY STUDENT GAINS REAL-WORLD EXPERIENCE BEFORE GRADUATION

At Shawnee State, we prepare every student for a career by making real-world experience a requirement for graduation through our new Office of Personal & Professional Development.

Internships, co-ops, clinicals, and other HANDS-ON OPPORTUNITIES ARE BUILT INTO EVERY DEGREE PROGRAM.

Before earning their diploma, students complete a work-based learning experience that gives them practical skills, professional networks, and confidence in their field.

This approach also strengthens our region. Local businesses and organizations have a direct role in shaping and recruiting the next generation of talent, ensuring growth and opportunity remain rooted in southern Ohio.



DESIGNING SPACES THAT ENHANCE HOW STUDENTS LEARN

We are investing in placemaking on campus by intentionally creating spaces that encourage connection, comfort, and collaboration.

Guided by student feedback, we have introduced inviting new areas across campus. Adirondack chairs brighten sunny spots, study tables have been added in high-traffic areas, and quiet benches provide peaceful corners to relax or reflect.

The work is ongoing. Next steps include reimagining student lounges, upgrading indoor and outdoor gathering spaces, introducing upscale vending options, and creating experiences such as outdoor concerts and art installations that make campus life vibrant and engaging.

Our ultimate goal is to **CREATE A COMMUNITY** where students feel supported, connected, and at home.





NEW BACHELOR OF SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM LAUNCHES FALL 2025

We launched a new Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) program this Fall to help meet the growing demand for social workers across our region.

Developed with input from regional healthcare agencies, nonprofits, and community partners, the program equips graduates with the **PRACTICAL SKILLS EMPLOYERS NEED** while keeping the degree affordable and accessible for students.

The BSW program reflects our commitment to service, to strengthening communities, and to preparing students for meaningful careers in fields that matter most.

SUPPORTING THE MODERN LEARNER WITH FLEXIBILITY AND FOCUS

At Shawnee State, we are RETHINKING WHAT, HOW, AND WHEN WE TEACH to better serve today's learners and tomorrow's workforce.

We are actively reviewing our degree portfolio to ensure programs reflect what students want to study and what employers need most. At the same time, we are expanding how those programs are delivered by offering more online and hybrid courses, along with evening and weekend options that meet students where they are in life, work, and family.

This renewed focus on flexibility and relevance ensures that every student has the opportunity to move forward with confidence. We are making a multi-million dollar investment in our natural science labs by modernizing the spaces where students learn biology, chemistry, anatomy, and more. These labs are essential for students in health science, biology, pre-med, pre-pharmacy, and chemistry, and they are also part of the general education curriculum that nearly every student completes.

THE RENOVATION WILL ADD STATE-OF-THE-ART EQUIPMENT AND HANDS-ON LEARNING SPACES THAT CREATE A MORE DYNAMIC, CAREER-FOCUSED EXPERIENCE FOR ALL LEARNERS.

These upgrades reflect our commitment to preparing students for real-world opportunities, whether they are planning to become healthcare professionals, scientists, or leaders in their communities.

EXPANDING OPPORTUNITY FOR MORE STUDENTS

ATHLETIC EXPANSION STRENGTHENS CAMPUS AND REGIONAL CONNECTIONS

We're making a major move in collegiate athletics - TRANSITIONING TO NCAA DIVISION II AND JOINING THE MOUNTAIN EAST CONFERENCE (MEC) IN 2026. This expansion is a bold step toward strengthening regional ties, enhancing student life, and expanding access to Shawnee State's mission.

Competing in the MEC allows Shawnee State to build stronger connections across West Virginia, Kentucky, and southern Ohio, while increasing visibility throughout the broader Appalachian region. It also provides studentathletes with greater scholarship opportunities, higher-level competition, and more chances to represent Shawnee State on a national stage.

As we grow our athletics programs, we're offering more pathways to student engagement and success, and reinforcing the role of SSU Athletics as a source of community pride, regional impact, and school spirit.



SHAWNEE STATE ATHLETICS AT A GLANCE

Pending NCAA Division II membership acceptance, SSU will begin MEC competition in the 2026-27 academic year.

MEN'S SPORTS

Baseball Basketball Bowling Cross Country Football (no later than 2028)

Golf Soccer

Tennis Swimming Indoor Track & Field

Outdoor Track & Field

CO-ED SPORTS

Cheerleading Esports*

WOMEN'S SPORTS

Basketball Bowling Cross Country Flag Football (2026) Lacrosse (2026) Golf Soccer Softball

Swimming Indoor Track & Field Outdoor Track & Field

Volleyball

Tennis



SHAWNEE STATE UNIVERSITY BEARS

CONCORD UNIVERSITY MOUNTAIN LIONS

DAVIS & ELKINS COLLEGE SENATORS

FAIRMONT STATE UNIVERSITY FALCONS

FROSTBURG STATE UNIVERSITY BOBCATS

GLENVILLE STATE UNIVERSITY PIONEERS

UNIVERSITY OF CHARLESTON GOLDEN EAGLES

WEST VIRGINIA WESLEYAN COLLEGE BOBCATS

WEST VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY YELLOW JACKETS

WEST LIBERTY UNIVERSITY HILLTOPPERS

POINT PARK UNIVERSITY PIONEERS

WHEELING UNIVERSITY CARDINALS

MEC MAP

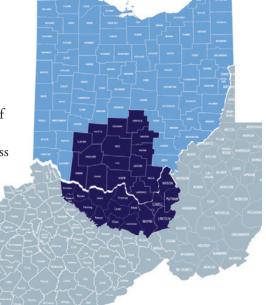
LARGEST CLASS OF STUDENT ATHLETES JOIN SSU IN 2025

We are experiencing historic growth in our athletics programs, and this is just the beginning for us. This fall, we welcomed our largest class of student-athletes, a growth of more than 29%. These students will compete in our last year in the River States Conference of the NAIA as we prepare to transition to the Mountain East Conference of NCAA Division II.

REACHING MORE STUDENTS, RIGHT WHERE THEY ARE

Shawnee State University serves students from across the country – but our community is southern Ohio, northern Kentucky, and West Virginia. More than 80% of our students come from our primary service region, which stretches from Portsmouth north to the outer belt of Columbus and west along the Ohio River to Cincinnati – as well as 15 counties across eastern Kentucky and West Virginia.

We're committed to growing access for students in these communities - and **EXPANDING OUR REACH** through new enrollment strategies that include expanded ONLINE DEGREE OPTIONS and expanded in-person locations.



*Now a part of SSU's nationally-ranked game design programs

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BUILDING FOR ALL GENERATIONS



CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS UNDERWAY

ACADEMIC FACILITIES

Advanced Manufacturing Center Clark Memorial Library Dental Hygiene Clinic Esports Arena at Kricker Innovation Hub Health Science Labs Natural Science Labs

CAMPUS LIFE & STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Alumni Green Turf Campus Wayfinding, Signage, Branding Keyless Entry Project Morris University Center Renovation

ATHLETICS & RECREATION

Labold Park / Football, Softball, Stadium Labold Park / Track, Baseball Labold Park / Recreation Complex Rhodes Athletic Center

FROM BOOMERS TO ALPHAS: BUILDING A CAMPUS FOR EVERY GENERATION

At Shawnee State, we are investing in MAJOR CAMPUS UPGRADES DESIGNED TO SERVE STUDENTS TODAY AND FOR GENERATIONS TO COME. We are creating flexible-use spaces where students can connect in groups or find quiet moments alone.

We're adding and expanding state-of-the-art labs to prepare students for careers in fields that are in high demand, giving them hands-on experience with the tools they will use on the job. We're also making it easier for students and visitors to find their way around campus through a comprehensive wayfinding project that will transform the look of Shawnee State.

Our investment includes expanding athletic facilities to enhance student life and community engagement, and designing new spaces where we can partner with business and industry to give students even more opportunities to learn by doing.

Whether students are beginning college for the first time or returning with new goals, we are creating a campus that meets them where they are and helps them move forward with confidence.

SHAWNEE STATE AND CITY OF PORTSMOUTH SHARE A VISION FOR THE FUTURE

We are working with the City of Portsmouth to RE-IMAGINE THE SPACES WHERE COMMUNITY AND CAMPUS MEET. Thanks to strong City leadership and a spirit of partnership, we're expanding our physical and cultural footprint – FROM DOWNTOWN CORRIDORS TO ATHLETIC FIELDS ON THE EAST END – creating new opportunities for students, families, and neighbors alike.

Last semester, we completed construction on 3rd Street to create a gateway between the city and the university. Backed by City support, this new corridor from Gay Street to Waller Street has transformed this stretch into a direct, commuter-friendly entrance to Shawnee State, making it easier for students, faculty, entrepreneurs, and the community to engage in innovation and collaboration.

On the east end, the City's transfer of Spartan Stadium, Branch Rickey Park, and surrounding fields to Shawnee State is paving the way for collegiate and youth sports.

MUNICIPAL STADIUM

These grounds will soon be home to our growing roster of athletic programs – including softball, baseball, soccer, track & field, and the launch of a football program – bringing fresh energy to the neighborhood and drawing fans from across the region. New multi-purpose recreation fields will also support youth programming in the region.

Together, Shawnee State and the City of Portsmouth are building connection, momentum, and a future built on shared pride and purpose.

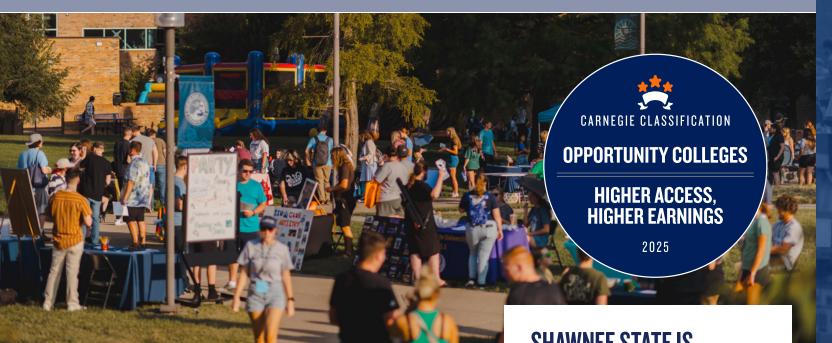
SSU FOOTBALL IS COMING TO LABOLD PARK FALL 2028!

Thanks to our partnership with the City of Portsmouth, historic Spartan Stadium — once home to the NFL's Portsmouth Spartans — will soon welcome Shawnee State University football. Beginning in Fall 2028, the stadium will serve as home field for SSU's newest athletics program.

The addition of football to Shawnee State Athletics will bring new opportunities for student-athletes, energize campus life, and strengthen community ties through a sport that has deep roots in Portsmouth.

Together with our city partners, we are building on history to create an exciting future for Shawnee State and southern Ohio.

A UNIVERSITY WITH PURPOSE. A FUTURE BUILT TOGETHER.



FRESHMEN ENROLLMENT GROWS BY MORE THAN

22%

Shawnee State University is growing and welcoming more students from south central Ohio, northern Kentucky, and West Virginia. More than 80% of our students come from this region, and we are committed to providing opportunity for all in our communities.

This commitment is reflected in our fall enrollment, which INCREASED BY MORE THAN 22% in FRESHMEN, 55% in MILITARY-AFFILIATED STUDENTS, 18% in FIRST-TIME COLLEGE STUDENTS, and 8% in NEW GRADUATE STUDENTS.

We also welcomed our largest class of high school students participating in College Credit Plus, which increased by 21% over the past year. This program allows students to take both high school and college courses at the same time, saving them time and money to complete their degrees and start their careers.

SHAWNEE STATE IS OHIO'S ONLY OPEN ACCESS OPPORTUNITY COLLEGE!

We have been recognized with a new Carnegie Classification as an Opportunity College, a designation that highlights universities making a **MEASURABLE DIFFERENCE** in **ECONOMIC MOBILITY** for their graduates.

Shawnee State is one of only two universities in Ohio to receive this distinction, and we are the only one that is open access and the most affordable. The recognition reflects our unique ability to combine access with strong outcomes, helping students connect with meaningful careers, increase their earnings, and strengthen the vitality of southern Ohio.

This honor affirms what our students and community already know: Shawnee State creates opportunity and opens doors for the future.

FINE. DIGITAL & PERFORMING ARTS

Game & Simulation Arts Graphic Design Fine Arts & Illustration Art Education

C.H. LUTE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

Accounting
Management
Information Systems Mgmt
Marketing
Sport Management

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Adolescent to Young Adult
Primary Education
Primary Intervention
Specialist Blended
Multi-Age Intervention Specialist
Middle Childhood

NATURAL SCIENCES

Biology Chemistry Integrated Science Education

MATHEMATICAL SCIENCES

Actuarial Science Mathematics Math Education

ENGLISH & HUMANITIES

Communications English Language Arts Education

ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY

Computer Aided Design & Manufacturing Technology Computer Engineering Tech Computer Science Game Programming Electromechanical Engineering Technology

Plastics Engineering Technology
Plastics Engineering Technology
Information Security
Po
(Cyber Security)
Ps

ALLIED HEALTH SCIENCES

Dental Hygiene
Exercise Science
Health Sciences
Medical Laboratory Technology
Radiologic Technology
Respiratory Therapy

SCHOOL OF NURSING

LPN-RN
Associate Degree in Nursing
RN-BSN
Bachelor Degree in Nursing
Master of Science in Nursing

REHABILITATION SCIENCES

Occupational Therapy Assistant Occupational Therapy Physical Therapy Assistant Social Work Criminal Justice

PRE-PROFESSIONAL

Law Medicine Optometry Pharmacy Veterinarian

SOCIAL SCIENCES

History Political Science Psychology Sociology Social Studies Education

GRADUATE PROGRAMS

Master of Business Administration Master of Composition/Rhetoric Master of Education Master of Mathematics Master of Occupational Therapy Occupational Therapy Doctorate Master of Science in Nursing

STUDY ABROAD

Chile, China, Germany, Morocco, Spain + More than 30 other countries through International Student Exchange Program





RANKED AMONG BEST COLLEGES by US News & World Report

SHAWNEE STATE JOINS AMAZON PRIME'S THE COLLEGE TOUR

This spring, we welcomed the Amazon Prime Video series *The College Tour* to campus. Hosted by Alex Boylan, the episode features 16 of our students sharing their own experiences and perspectives on what it means to be part of the Shawnee State community.

From academics to campus life, the episode offers an inside look at how our students learn, grow, and prepare for their futures. It is their voices and stories that bring Shawnee State to life — showing the pride, spirit, and opportunity that define what it means to be a Bear.

Watch the episode online now at **SHAWNEE.EDU/COLLEGE-TOUR** or on Amazon Prime beginning November 18!

The College Tour ▶





Every story in this report points to a single truth: at Shawnee State, we believe in **LEARNING THAT WORKS** – for students, for families, and for the region we call home.

