

Comprehensive Self-Study



WEBER STATE
UNIVERSITY



Prepared for the Northwest Commission
on Colleges and Universities
August 16, 2021

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Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness

Prepared for
The Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities

Weber State University
August 16, 2021

ATTESTATION

Weber State University [attests](#) to its compliance with all NWCCU eligibility requirements.

INSTITUTIONAL OVERVIEW



Welcome! Weber State University (WSU) is a comprehensive public university providing undergraduate and graduate certificates and degrees focused on the educational needs of the more than 620,000 people within a service area centered in Ogden, in northern Utah. WSU began as [Weber Academy](#), founded by community religious leaders in 1889, and served primarily as a high school/normal school until 1923, when it became a junior college. Ownership and management functions of the school were transferred from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints to the state of Utah in 1933. For the next three decades, Weber College served as the public junior college in northern Utah. In 1964, Weber State College awarded its first baccalaureate degrees, in 1979, its first master's degree (Master of Education), and in 2021 its first doctoral degree (Doctor of Nursing Practice). In 1991, the institution's name was changed from Weber State College to Weber State University.

WSU serves both community college and regional university roles (described as its "dual mission") through seven academic colleges with more than fifty academic departments offering more than 225 programs. WSU employs over 1000 full- and part-time instructors, providing education in face-to-face, online asynchronous, virtual synchronous, and hybrid (combinations of the three) classes.

WSU's policies and programs reflect its dual community college and regional university missions. It is an open-enrollment institution with few competitive admission undergraduate programs. WSU annually awards the second largest number of associate's degrees in the state of Utah. The number of certificate programs is growing, most of which allow students to stack the credential to undergraduate or graduate degree programs, creating efficiencies for students that are a hallmark of dual mission institutions. The number of graduate degrees offered is also growing, as are enrollments in the programs. WSU conferred more than 2,600 associate's and approximately the same number of bachelor's degrees in the most recent year, with over 330 master's degrees and 160 certificates.

WSU's student demographics also reflect its open enrollment and dual mission focus. Over 80% of WSU students are employed; 34% are full-time. A total of 52% are Pell-eligible, and 32% are first-generation college students. Almost 27% of students are considered non-traditional in that they have children and/or are married. Finally, a majority of students entering Weber State are placed in Developmental English or Math (or both) or lack placement data. WSU faculty and staff see it as their responsibility to help all students achieve by offering high-quality and personalized educational opportunities.

WSU's engaged learning model includes learning opportunities in undergraduate research, community-based and service learning, internships, capstone courses, and other forms of experiential learning. As a Carnegie Community Engaged institution, WSU students contributed 122,449 hours of service to the community, with 205 instructors teaching 283 community-engaged learning (CEL-designated) classes.

WSU currently serves more than 29,000 students. Students attend classes on two major campuses, with 37% receiving instruction through the institution's dual or concurrent enrollment. About 33% of WSU's total enrollment is in online courses (pre-COVID). The Ogden campus typically serves over 13,400 students each fall (pre-COVID) and the WSU Davis campus, located next to Hill Air Force Base, provides instruction to about 3,500 students. The Ogden campus has on-campus housing for approximately 1,000 students. In addition to its Ogden and Davis campuses, WSU offers courses at small [centers](#) within the region and throughout the country through distance-mediated instruction. The institution has beautiful campuses and invites you to take a [tour](#), virtually or in person, of the Ogden campus.

WSU is immensely proud of its [honors and awards](#), and [achievements](#). A particularly special recognition for the institution is the national listing in [2021](#) (19th) and [2018](#) (63rd) for return on investment. Providing transformative educational experiences to students that offer them new opportunities is the heart of the institution's mission and core themes. We expect this document will provide evidence of the institution's commitment to these guiding principles.

PREFACE

Changes since last Seven-Year Review

Since the Year-Seven Report in the fall of 2014, there have been several changes in senior leadership.

- **March 2017: Dr. Brett Perozzi** was approved as Vice President for Student Affairs after serving as Interim Vice President, replacing Dr. Jan Winniford. Dr. Perozzi had been Associate Vice President for Student Affairs since 2007.
- **December 2018: Dr. Brad L. Mortensen** was named the 13th president of Weber State University. He replaced Interim President Dr. Norm Tarbox (Vice President for Administrative Services), who served in the role for six months after the resignation of President Charles Wight (2013-2018). Dr. Mortensen served as Vice President of University Advancement for 11 years and as Associate Vice President for Support and Government Relations for three years before that.
- **June 2019: Dr. Betsy Mennell** was appointed as Vice President for University Advancement, replacing Dr. Brad Mortensen in that position. Previously she served as Associate Vice President of University Advancement at Regis University and Vice President for Development and Alumni Engagement at Northern Arizona University, and President of the NAU Foundation.
- **October 2019: Dr. Ravi Krovi** was approved as Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs. He replaced Dr. Madonne Miner, who retired after serving in the position since 2015. Dr. Krovi served as Dean of the College of Business Administration at the University of Akron for 10 years. Dr. Krovi had been at the University of Akron as a professor, chair, and dean since 2002.

Also, since the last Year-Seven Report, there were 80 program [additions](#) to the curriculum, including:

- Twenty-six new certificate programs, including five graduate or post-baccalaureate certificates.
- Seventeen new associate's degree programs.
- Twenty-seven new bachelor's degree programs, including new emphases added to existing programs or program emphases becoming stand-alone bachelor's degree programs.
- Nine new master's degree programs, including new emphases added to existing programs or program emphases becoming stand-alone master's degree programs.
- One new doctoral degree program.

Previous Recommendations

Weber State University received no recommendations from the [commission](#) based on the 2014 comprehensive self-study and peer review.

Report Format

Weber State University's comprehensive self-study includes responses to both standards – Standard One (Evaluating Institutional Effectiveness, EIE) and Standard Two (Policies, Regulations, and Financial Review, PRFR). The EIE is included as the first section of the

report, with documentation found in links embedded in the report and [Appendix 1](#), which details the assessment of mission fulfillment metrics. The PRFR is the second section of the report, and an NWCCU PRFR evaluation team reviewed it in spring 2021. The details of that report are included in [Appendix 3](#) and addressed in the [PRFR Update](#), the penultimate section of the EIE.

To address each standard, we describe university processes, provide supporting data, and offer case studies. We included these case studies in the body of the report rather than as a separate appendix (as we did for the data), resulting in a longer document than expected. Although each standard is written to stand alone, we offer links in any given standard to other standards that also cite the relevant processes, data, or case studies as reference. The links to EIE and PRFR responses are designated by the standard (e.g., [1A1](#) – EIE Standard for *institutional mission* or [2.A.1](#) – PRFR Standard for *governance*). In each standard, we also embed links to relevant mission fulfillment metrics and results in Appendix 1. These links to metrics are designated by core theme (Assess, Learning, and Community), objective, and indicator (e.g., [metric 1A1](#) – *Access, responsive programs, enrollments tracks census*). To help navigate through the data in the appendix, we provide a [summary](#) document of each core theme, objective, indicator, and threshold with an accounting of whether or not the threshold was successfully met. Finally, where relevant, we provide links to dashboards that have been made temporarily accessible to the evaluation team. The access to those dashboards will be terminated when the accreditation review process is completed, but links to PDFs of the relevant information in the dashboards will remain active.

The principal authors of the self-study were Drs. Eric Amsel (Associate Provost, ALO) and Gail Niklason (Executive Director, Institutional Effectiveness), with data support from Institutional Research, Institutional Effectiveness, Student Affairs Assessment, and document support from Courtnee Goodwin and Betty Kusnierz. Contributing authors and editorial review came from across the university, including members of President's Council, Provost Council, Student Affairs Management Committee, Enrollment Services, Facilities Management, Faculty Senate Executive, Graduate Council, Staff Advisory Council, Marketing & Communications, Financial Services, Human Resources, Information Technology, WSU Student Association, Library, College deans, chairs and program directors, and faculty and staff in individual units whose work is highlighted. It is an honor to present WSUs comprehensive self-study.

STANDARD 1.A - INSTITUTIONAL MISSION

1. A.1 – MISSION PURPOSE AND COMMITMENT

The institution's mission statement defines its broad educational purposes and its commitment to student learning and achievement.

The university's mission statement was developed between 2009 and 2011, approved by the WSU Board of Trustees (January 2011), and affirmed by the State Board of Regents (May 2011).

Weber State University provides associate, baccalaureate, and master degree programs in liberal arts, sciences, technical and professional fields. Encouraging freedom of expression and valuing diversity, the University provides excellent educational experiences for students through extensive personal contact among faculty, staff, and students in and out of the classroom. Through academic programs, research, artistic expression, public service, and community-based learning, the University serves as an educational, cultural, and economic leader for the region.

The university defined three core themes¹ that are aligned to the mission as described below:

- **Access:** Provide access to responsive academic programs in liberal arts, sciences, technical and professional fields.
 - WSU serves communities with significant socioeconomic and cultural differences. As the educational, cultural, and economic leader for the region, WSU strives to provide meaningful access for prospective students to educational programs that respond to local employment needs.
- **Learning:** Provide an engaging teaching and learning environment that encourages learning and leads to student success.
 - The learning core theme is central to the WSU's mission to provide "excellent educational experiences" and its commitment to support student success.
- **Community:** Support and improve the local community through educational, economic, public service partnerships, and cultural and athletic events.
 - The WSU mission statement highlights the university's role as an "educational, cultural, and economic leader for the region."

Together, the mission statement and core themes are widely shared and have served as the guiding documents for the 2014-2021 accreditation cycle as they did for the abbreviated 2011-2014 cycle. The university has reaffirmed² these guiding documents that play a foundational role in each EIE standard. The documents coordinate continuous improvement efforts in student learning, achievement, and support ([1.B.1](#)), drive mission fulfillment ([1.B.2](#)), direct planning and budgeting ([1.B.3](#)), and steer institutional response to emerging issues ([1.B.4](#)). The documents also set strong expectations about the quality and outcomes of students' educational experiences ([1.C.1-9](#)) and the commitment to the

¹ Details of each Core Theme (title, description, objectives, indicators, and rationales) are in [Appendix 1](#)

² The documents were affirmed in 2015 when the Year 1 self-study document was submitted and again in 2018.

success of *all* students ([1.D.1-4](#)). Finally, the guiding documents were scrutinized as part of a broader strategic planning [process](#) during the 2020-2021 academic year ([1.B.3](#)). The Mission Statement was streamlined, emphasizing equity, student achievement and learning experiences, and community. The institution reaffirmed the core themes during the process, again directing the institution to provide access to all students, a quality learning environment, and community stewardship. The institution's response to this standard is one of many demonstrating its compliance with NWCCU's [eligibility requirements](#) 1 (Operational Status), 2 (Operational Focus and Independence), 3 (Authority), and 6 (Student Achievement).

STANDARD 1.B – IMPROVING INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

1. B.1 – ONGOING AND SYSTEMATIC EVALUATION

The institution demonstrates a continuous process to assess institutional effectiveness, including student learning and achievement and support services. The institution uses an ongoing and systematic evaluation and planning process to inform and refine its effectiveness, assign resources, and improve student learning and achievement.

Assessing, planning, and resourcing for continuous improvement occurs at the university, division, and unit levels. These processes are *embedded* (units are assessed within divisions) and distributed (divisions perform their own assessments). The processes are coordinated by aligning directly or indirectly (through divisional missions) with the university's mission and core themes and metrics used to assess them (see [1.B.2](#)). To highlight these processes, we provide examples from different organizational levels that address improvements in student learning, achievement, and support services.

Unit Level: The program reviews of two units in Student Affairs and Academic Affairs exemplify the continuous improvement processes. All Student and Academic Affairs units undergo regular program reviews to address their effectiveness, align with division goals ([SA](#) and [AA](#)), and identify sources of improvement. The Student Affairs [Office of Assessment and Research](#) manages [program reviews](#)³ and the yearly program [updates](#). Resources needed to address challenges or limitations are allocated through the Student Affairs Management Council (SAMC), composed of Student Affairs leadership. [Documented](#) program reviews, including self-studies, review team responses (including internal and external representatives), and action plans, date back to 2010.

[Academic Support Centers and Programs](#) (ASCP) is an area in Student Affairs ([org chart](#)) that oversees various offices and programs ([2.G.1](#)), including [tutoring](#)⁴ and [supplemental](#)

³ Due to personnel changes the Cycle 3 of SA program review was put on hold and remains on hold as a result of the pandemic. It is expected that Cycle 3 will be implemented shortly.

⁴ Tutoring is available for developmental and general education courses. The program is certified by the National Association for Developmental Education (NADE), and peer tutors are certified through the College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA).

[instruction](#)⁵ (SI). These units address services supporting student learning and achievement, particularly in the first year. The two programs were reviewed in 2011 and again in 2017. The *Student Learning Outcome* standard of the [2011](#) and [2017](#) *tutoring* self-studies demonstrates the powerful effect on student learning and achievement that multiple tutoring experiences can have, as measured by passing rates in gateway math and English classes (2011: Appendix J; 2017: Appendix D). However, as noted in the tutoring documents, there are decreases in unduplicated student use of tutoring resources (2011: Appendix I, 2017: pg. 38) due, in part, to changes in the Developmental Math program curricula⁶. A similar pattern of student learning and achievement emerged in the [2011](#) and [2017](#) *SI* self-studies (2011: Appendix J; 2017: Appendix G). In this case, the unduplicated headcount of students increased slightly for a short period (see 2011, p. 31) but decreased after that (see 2017, p. 32). The most challenging aspects of the tutoring and SI programs are their voluntary status and implied deficit focus, which may discourage student use. Reviewers echoed these sentiments in suggesting ways to encourage student use of the resources that the programs attempted to implement, see *Recommendations and Actions* documents for tutoring ([2011](#); [2017](#)) and SI ([2011](#); [2017](#)).

Since 2018, ASCP has re-allocated funding to collaborate with Academic Affairs in experimenting with other peer support formats that evidence⁷ suggests better impacts student learning and achievement. With [Structured Learning Assistance](#) (SLA), peer tutors are embedded in classes ([research page](#)), and ensure that students who need additional support attend out-of-class group collaborative review sessions. The SLA option is being used extensively in the new corequisite [MATH 1035 class](#). Another innovation from ASCP is [Learning Assistants](#) (LAs), who are embedded peers who function as tutors, SIs, mentors, and role models for students in gateway courses. They partner with faculty to offer students opportunities to engage in class-based, high-impact learning experiences and out-of-class collaborative learning and review sessions. Learning Assistants are a crucial part of the [FAST Start](#) pilot program for first-year students. Preliminary evidence of improved completion rates in classes with SLAs and LAs is encouraging, reflecting ASCP's use of assessment data to innovate and improve student learning and achievement.

Academic Affairs assures mission alignment and continuous improvement in student learning and achievement through connected assessments: yearly [strategic plan report](#), [biennial assessment report](#), and [program review](#). The Utah Board of Higher Education mandates program review in policy ([R411](#)), and, like the other reports, the process is

⁵ Supplemental Instruction (SI) offers opportunities for students to work interactively as directed by a student team leader who attends class and has successfully completed the course. SI student leaders work in collaboration with the course professor and the SI Coordinator.

⁶ An Emporium-based Developmental Math curriculum was dismantled in favor of traditional classes.

⁷ See the following as examples:

- Koch, A. K., & Gardner, J. N. (2017). Transforming the “real first-year experience”: The case for and approaches to improving gateway courses. *The First Year of College: Research, Theory, and Practice on Improving the Student Experience and Increasing Retention*, 126-154.
- Tucker, K., Sharp, G., Qingmin, S., Scinta, T., & Thanki, S. (2020). Fostering historically underserved students' success: An embedded peer support model that merges non-cognitive principles with proven academic support practices. *The Review of Higher Education*, 43(3), 861-885.

managed by the [Office of Institutional Effectiveness](#). For program review ([1.C.1](#)), departments produce a self-study that is a) evaluated by an outside review team, b) commented on by the department faculty and dean, c) assessed by Faculty Senate and the Provost, and d) reviewed by Trustees and the Commissioner's Office. The program review results in recommendations and a timeframe for the subsequent review. Often, recommendations become part of the yearly strategic plan report that the Provost and the deans used to allocate resources (e.g., faculty lines) ([1.B.3](#)).

The College of Science's [Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry](#) was reviewed in [2012](#) and [2019](#). In 2012, the Department of Chemistry offered two [options](#) for majors, with Option 1 leading to an [ACS certification](#). Option 2 provided foundation courses for pre-medical professional students (e.g., pre-medical, pre-dental, pre-pharmacy) but was not ACS certified. The *Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment* standard of the 2012 review showed inconsistent student achievement of program learning outcomes. Using the SLO assessment protocol described in the mission fulfillment assessment (metric [IID1](#)), the *achievement rate* was 86%. The Review Team's [report](#) recommended curricular and pedagogical changes, notably creating an ACS-certified Biochemistry program, which the [department](#) members and [dean](#) embraced and the Provost recommended. The result was at least 15 course and program proposals submitted to the University Curriculum Committee directly or indirectly related to the recommendations, including the ACS-certified Biochemistry program [proposal](#), citing the need to align it to ACS standards. The 2019 program self-study touted the new major, with an assessment of program learning outcomes demonstrating a higher achievement rate (91%) than the 2012 review, which is perhaps related to strengthening the new Biochemistry major. The Evaluation Team [report](#) recognized the success of the new major but identified new challenges with lower-division courses and their assessments. Aware of the challenges, the department prioritized a new faculty line in its strategic plan report. The dean's [response](#) (p. 2) notes the position was secured through the division's collaborative funding allocation process ([1.B.3](#)).

Division Level: Each fall, the [University Planning Council](#) (UPC) meets to discuss [goals](#) offered by each division's vice president. University policy ([PPM 1-9](#)) describes the committee as advisory to the President on all strategic matters ([2.A.4](#)). Members include those in central administration, administrators from each University division, faculty from each college, and representatives from other University constituencies (Faculty Senate, the WSU Student Association, Staff Advisory Committee, Alumni, and the Board of Trustees). Division goals are aligned with the university's mission and core themes and typically focus on charges for specific units. New initiatives also emerge, reflecting divisional priorities and resourced by divisional or university budgeting processes ([1.B.3](#)) to improve student learning, achievement, and support services.

Since [2015](#), the vice president of Student Affairs has prioritized a divisional goal of enhancing mentoring, particularly for underserved students. This initiative was aligned to the Learning Core Theme. The retention rate for Latino/Hispanic 2014 student cohort, our largest underserved student population, was 47.9% which was 6.4% lower than the White

student retention rate (metric [IIA2](#), [Figure IIA2b](#)). Mentoring programs⁸ are a critical initiative to promote student learning and achievement, especially among underserved students. The division funded and hired a Mentor Coordinator⁹ in the [Office of Access & Diversity](#) to manage the new division-wide [peer mentor program](#) to address the needs of historically underserved students ([report](#)). The program has trained and certified¹⁰ mentors who have worked with 340 (majority underserved) students since 2015. Initial assessment in 2017-2018 proved successful with 96.7% outcome achievement rates among a small sample of students. Although it is difficult to know the precise impact of the program given other initiatives, the 2014 retention rate difference between Latino/Hispanic and White students was cut in half to 2.4% in 2019 ([1.D.4](#)). Creating the coordinator position and expanding mentoring support for underserved students provides an additional example of institutional responsiveness to mission fulfillment data.

In [2016](#), the Provost presented to UPC a goal to support students through [Starfish](#), an enterprise student success software platform. At the time, the university IPEDS retention rate was at a low point (metric [IIA1](#)), as was the percentage of first-year students achieving first-semester threshold GPA (metric [IIE 1](#), [Figure IIE1a](#)). Improving these outcomes motivated the purchase, which Academic Affairs budgets and manages out of the [Student Success Center](#) (SSC). Starfish provides students with coordinated support by faculty completing regular progress surveys of their students and raising flags to express kudos or specific concerns ([Starfish Flier](#)). SSC advisors process these flags by referring flagged students to relevant services and offices in Academic Affairs (e.g., college advisors) and Student Affairs (e.g., tutoring, mentoring, Women's Center, and Writing Center).

University Level: To promote Starfish and other student success initiatives, the Divisions of Academic and Student Affairs collaborate in the university's [Student Success Steering Committee](#) (SSSC). The committee's mission is to cultivate successful students who pursue their higher education goals, graduate, and succeed in their next steps beyond Weber State. The SSSC plans, coordinates, and resources¹¹ initiatives emerging from the Strategic Enrollment Plan and the recent Strategic Plan ([1.B.3](#)). The implementation of initiatives is the work of SSSC subcommittees, notably the [Retention](#) sub-committee, whose goal is to spur modest annual increases in student retention by coordinating key initiatives like Starfish across campus. The sub-committee working closely with the SSC and all constituencies (faculty, college advisors, etc.) has successfully grown the use of Starfish. There was an increase in progress surveys completed across each course level and a corresponding increase in flags raised offering kudos and concerns, with more referrals to students to services or offices and higher persistence and retention rates ([Starfish Flier](#)). Outcomes show that flagged students persist and are retained at rates higher than the WSU

⁸ Kuh, G. D., Kinzie, J. L., Buckley, J. A., Bridges, B. K., & Hayek, J. C. (2006). *What matters to student success: A review of the literature* (Vol. 8). Washington, DC: National Postsecondary Education Cooperative.

⁹ The coordinator manages student mentors in various programs: Center for Multicultural Excellence, Davis Student Services, Athletics, Disability Services, Nontraditional Student Center, College Access and First Year Transitions, GEAR UP. Most programs offer one on one mentoring and some group mentoring

¹⁰ The certification requires 15 hours of training with seven required topics, 50 hours of mentoring and a 3.0 GPA.

¹¹ The SSSC may provide one-time funding for projects, but typically initiative resourcing goes through a divisional VP through the normal budgeting process (EIE 1.B.3)

overall persistence and retention rate. Isolating individual causes of mission fulfillment outcome improvements is difficult, but Starfish seems to have impacted two indicators motivating its purchase:

- The percentage of students with threshold first semester GPAs (2.2 or higher) has increased from 64% to 71% between Fall 2015 and Fall 2020 (metric [IIE1](#))
- The IPEDS cohort retention rate increased from 60% to 66% between Fall 2015 and Fall 2019 ([IIA1](#))

The institution engages in embedded and distributed continuous improvement processes that are coordinated by alignment to mission fulfillment. The coordination encourages a collaborative process in addressing identified ongoing mission fulfillment challenges as exemplified with accounts at the unit (ASCP and Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry), division (Mentoring), and university (Starfish) levels. The coordination within and across divisions in improving student learning, achievement, and services is a hallmark of WSU's approach to continuous improvement. Although we highlight these cases to exemplify institutional processes for continuous improvement, the EIE is replete with similar efforts. The institution's response to this standard is one of many demonstrating its compliance with NWCCU's [eligibility requirements](#) 4 (Institutional Effectiveness), 5 (Student Learning), 6 (Student Achievement), and 19 (Financial Resources and Planning)

1. B.2 – MEANINGFUL GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND INDICATORS

The institution sets and articulates meaningful goals, objectives, and indicators of its goals to define mission fulfillment and to improve its effectiveness in the context of and in comparison with regional and national peer institutions.

As described in [1.B.1](#), mission fulfillment objectives and metrics coordinate continuous improvement efforts of units, divisions, and the university to address various challenges. Many of these challenges were identified because the university defines mission fulfillment using a broad and robust set of core theme objectives, indicators, and thresholds. The objectives and metrics were laid out in the [Year 1](#) accreditation self-study and assessed for the [Mid-Cycle](#). Five features of the objectives, indicators, and thresholds highlight the institution's commitment to deeply and meaningfully assess mission fulfillment:

- A *comprehensive* set of 14 objectives and 28 indicators and thresholds are used to define mission fulfillment. The expansion from the previous accreditation cycle resulted in six Learning and Community Core Theme objectives and two Access objectives.
- Objectives are *inclusive* and focus on disaggregating data by addressing “cohorts of interest,” reflecting the institutional commitment to ensuring key objectives apply to *all* students, not just the “average” or “typical” ones.
- Thresholds are *rigorous* by having aspirational expectations for student learning outcomes and targeting sources of long-standing challenge to the institution (e.g., focusing on lower-division student success).

-
- Indicators are *holistic* by using qualitative and quantitative analyses of students' learning and experiences, providing converging evidence of whether academic programs offer meaningful learning opportunities to students.
 - Thresholds are *dynamic and comparative* by assessing institutional outcomes over time and in comparison to peer institutions (including regional and national peers).

Mission Fulfillment Assessment: [Appendix 1](#) provides definitions of and rationale for each core theme objective, indicator, and threshold, along with a detailed analysis of each threshold. A [summary](#) of the results is available, with highlights of selected analyses of indicators and thresholds presented below.

Longitudinal Indicators and Thresholds: Each indicator was examined longitudinally by comparison to Mid-Cycle results, demonstrating stable achievements of most thresholds. A few indicators continue to pose challenges, including first semester GPA (metric [IIE1](#)), retention (metric [IIA1](#)), and completion (metric [IIF1](#)). These challenges have driven continuous improvements ([1.B.1](#)) and strategic planning ([1.B.3](#), [1.B.4](#)) efforts. Thresholds expressed longitudinally were achieved in the following areas, although the pandemic, and related events, did not always permit meaningful comparisons of the most recent data.

- Enrollment headcount (metric [IA1](#))
- Educator and pre-college student enrollments in programs (metric [IIIA1](#) - [2](#))
- Community involvement and outreach (metric [IIIB1](#), [2](#))
- Faculty citation, although not publication, rates (metric [IIIC1](#))
- Select community partnerships and student community engagement (metric [IIIE1](#) - [2](#))
- Business and professional support to promote economic development (metric [IIIF1](#)- [2](#))

Analysis of other mission fulfillment thresholds¹² additionally explored longitudinal patterns, finding:

- Increase in ethnic student enrollment rates over time (metric [IB1](#))
- Increase in overall IPEDS retention rate (metric [IIA1](#))
- Decrease in the gap between Latino/Hispanic and White students' retention rates (metric [IIA2](#))
- Increase in students with first-semester GPAs above the 2.2 threshold (metric [IIE1](#))
- Greater satisfaction with student support services over time (metric [IIF3](#))

Regional and National Comparisons: The university compared its performance on three indicators to [peer institutions](#) designated by the Utah Board of Higher Education. The same peer institutions were used in the previous accreditation cycle and incorporated in the Year 1 report. However, these peers have become less adequate for comparison purposes as most of them have restricted enrollments, with some becoming Carnegie classified as Doctoral institutions ([Comparison Chart](#)). We continued to use the designated peer institutions to provide consistent analysis. However, we also compared the institution to a new set of 13 peer institutions, all of which have Carnegie classification as master's degree-

¹² These thresholds were not expressed longitudinally, but the follow-up analyses examined patterns of change over time.

granting, are open-enrollment, and are non-minority serving. This set of peer institutions remains *ad hoc* as they have not yet been submitted to the Commissioner's Office for approval. To provide additional context, we also compare the institution to the other two regional peers, which are the other Utah “dual-mission”¹³ universities, with students of similar backgrounds.

- Weber State's tuition compared favorably (within \$324) with regional in-state peer institutions. It met expectations for being below the average of designated peer institutions and the *ad hoc* set of peer open-enrollment institutions (metric [IA2](#)).
- The institution's retention rates were above the two regional peer institutions and no different from the average of the *ad hoc* peer open-enrollment peer institutions. However, WSU failed to meet expectations by having a retention rate below the average of the designated peer institutions (metric [IIA1](#)).
- The institution's graduation rates were above the average of the *ad hoc* peer open-enrollment institutions and between the rates of our in-state regional peers. However, the graduation rate failed to meet expectations by being below the average of the designated peer group (metric [IIE1](#)).

In other peer comparisons, Weber State University continually outperformed a national sample in the Noel-Levitz survey of student satisfaction with student support services (Learning [IIF3](#)). Similarly, more seniors reported a least one engaged learning experience (HIPs) in the NSSE survey than seniors at similar Carnegie-designated institutions (metric [IIB1](#))

Mission Fulfillment and Dissemination: Mission fulfillment was defined in the Mid-Cycle as 80% of all thresholds met or substantially met (a preponderance of the threshold having been met). As presented in the [summary](#), the institution met or substantially met 25 of the 28 thresholds, with one threshold being partially met¹⁴ for an 87.5% (24.5/28) mission fulfillment achievement rate. As noted above, the three metrics regularly below the threshold include first semester GPA, retention rate, and completion rate.

The mission fulfillment results are presented regularly to the University Planning Council ([1.B.3](#), and [1.B.4](#)), raised and addressed in the Student Success Steering Committee ([1.B.3](#), [1.B.4](#)), and other forums, including the [Higher Education Academy](#). Institutional concerns about enrollment, retention, and completion resulted in identifying them as Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that are reported campus-wide through the KPI dashboard in the Report Gallery ([1.D.2](#)). Such data are widely discussed and inform planning and budgeting at the institutional, divisional, and unit levels, documented more completely in [1.B.3](#) and [1.B.4](#).

¹³ [Utah Valley University](#) and [Dixie State University](#).

¹⁴ The partially met metric was [IIID1](#), where one part of the metric was met, but the other was not.

1. B.3 – PLANNING PROCESS

The institution provides evidence that its planning process is inclusive and offers opportunities for comment by appropriate constituencies, allocates necessary resources, and leads to improvement of institutional effectiveness.

This section reviews common structures and processes that ensure planning and budgeting are broad-based and coordinated to improve institutional effectiveness. In addition, the section outlines how University strategic directions are identified, implemented, and resourced.

The university planning and budgeting process is depicted in a [model](#), which is further discussed in [2.A.4](#) as part of the decision-making process at the university. Like other institutional effectiveness processes, the model highlights that planning and budgeting align with mission and core themes to ensure coordination. The model also emphasizes that planning and budgeting processes are embedded in the institution's organizational structure to respond to changing needs and goals and the broader socio-political context that influences all aspects of higher education. Finally, the model highlights three planning and budgeting processes: *assessing*, *evaluating*, and *implementing*.

- The [University Planning Council](#) (UPC) is central to the *assessing* function in the model. It comprises a cross-section of University faculty, staff, students, administration, alumni, and trustees (see [list and affiliations](#)). The Council advises the president on strategic issues and, in that role, monitors and discusses mission fulfillment and related strategic achievements and challenges ([PPM 1-9](#)). The spring "metrics meeting" involves the council reviewing mission fulfillment and other relevant data prepared by the university research offices¹⁵. The UPC is also the body to whom divisional VPs present yearly goals ([1.B.1](#)), typically in September, and who engage in yearly environmental scans ([1.B.4](#)), typically in December.
- [President's Council](#) (PC) addresses the model's *evaluating* function, which, in this context, involves reviewing, prioritizing, and budgeting initiatives to keep the university aligned to mission and core themes. PC comprises five divisional VPs, the AVP for Diversity & Chief Diversity Officer, and other invitees ([2.A.4](#)) and is also advisory to the president ([PPM 1-9](#)). PC receives input on strategic matters from UPC and comments on all policy proposals by campus constituencies ([2.A.4](#)), which provides coordination and transparency to the process. In addition, PC serves as the gatekeeper for proposals that Utah State statute ([Utah Code 53B-16-101](#)) and Utah Board of Higher Education Policy (See Policy [R220](#) 4.5.2.1) requires [WSU Board of Trustees'](#) approval, including institutional strategic plans (4.5.3), which are discussed below.
- Divisional units are responsible for *implementing* planned initiatives that PC and divisional VPs prioritize and budget. As noted above and documented in [1.B.1](#), units are also responsible for assessing their effectiveness through yearly updates and program reviews. The data are relevant to divisional VPs as they address planning and budgeting

¹⁵The collection and reporting of data are the responsibility of divisional offices, including the [Office of Institutional Effectiveness](#), [Office of Institutional Research](#), [Student Affairs Assessment](#), and University Advancement. The University Data and Assessment Committee is the coordinating committee.

and prepare their yearly goal reports to UPC. These divisional processes are discussed further below.

Strategic Planning

As part of a responsibility to review institutional capabilities, capacities, and priorities, the president has initiated strategic planning in consultation with PC and the Board of Trustees, with input from UPC and other constituencies. Over the past five years, the president approved a Strategic Enrollment Plan and Institutional Strategic Plan process.

Strategic Enrollment Plan

Strategic Enrollment planning has taken place for years but began in earnest in Fall 2016 to ensure the university remains well-positioned in enrolling and retaining students. Key administrators worked with consultants to address a broad set of initial [goals and initiatives](#) that were presented to various constituencies, including UPC. In response, PC allocated funds to support the efforts, including customer relationship management (CRM) software to manage the enrollment funnel, initiatives directed to international recruitment ([1.C.1](#)), and hiring a retention advisor in each college.

By 2018, the [work](#) on the SEP was handed off to the [Student Success Steering Committee](#) (SSSC), which, as described in [1.B.1](#), plans, coordinates, and resources student success initiatives. SEP initiatives fit easily into the [scope](#) of the SSSC, which embraces a mission and guiding principle of student success, focusing on cultivating ways for students to thrive and reach their potential. For example, as noted in [1.B.1](#), Starfish was the basis for several retention initiatives in the SEP and managed by the [Student Success Center](#) and the SSSC [Retention](#) subcommittee. Similarly, the [Recruitment/Enrollment](#) subcommittee remains focused on initiatives that better support the transition from a prospect to an enrolled student. One example of this work was redesigning [new student orientation](#) to be mandatory, having virtual and in-person components ([1.D.1](#)), based on evidence that comprehensive orientation has on student success¹⁶.

Institutional Strategic Plan

A university-wide [Strategic Planning](#) process was initiated in March 2020 (yes, during the pandemic!) to review and update our "guiding documents" (mission, vision, core themes, and values), set prioritized goals (with metrics and strategies), address identified challenges, and support unique strengths of the university. An expanded [UPC](#) (to be more inclusive) coordinated the strategic planning process, but it remains a university-wide endeavor. There have been focus groups and regular Town Hall meetings to solicit comments and surveys to elicit feedback from all university constituencies on various aspects of the strategic plan.

The final [strategic plan](#) with revised guiding documents, including the mission, vision, and values statements, was approved by Trustees and the Utah Board of Higher Education. The revised guiding documents emphasize *equity* (see [equity framework](#)), embracing all

¹⁶ Hollins Jr, T. N. (2009). Examining the impact of a comprehensive approach to student orientation. *Inquiry*, 14(1), 15-27.

students' access and success, *transformative educational experiences*, supporting students' learning and achievement, and *stewardship* of the regional community, recognizing the institution's unique role to the community. The institution affirmed its continuing commitment to the Core Themes of Learning, Access, and Community, which did not change. The plan includes enrollment growth assumptions to increase the overall number of students, degree-seeking students, and minority students, the latter indexed by becoming an Emerging Hispanic-Serving Institution. Additionally, strategic planning identified five goals that emerged from evidence of mission fulfillment achievements and challenges and extensive discussion with constituencies ([SWOT analysis](#)). These goals are associated with desired outcomes and strategies, more extensively discussed in [1.B.4](#).

Strategic planning is now in the implementation phase, where units, divisions, and university-level resources are being marshaled to execute strategies and realize desired outcomes. One implementation strategy will involve creating college-based Student Success Teams, which address the goals and strategies that individual colleges are in a position to address.

Divisional Planning and Budgeting

In addition to the university mission and strategic initiatives, planning and budgeting in divisions align with divisional missions and strategic initiatives ([1.B.1](#)). For example, within Academic Affairs, deans working with the provost agreed on several strategic [initiatives](#) that have informed budgeting and other actions (e.g., hiring) through the strategic plan report process (described below). In addition, deans, working with their faculty and staff, have created college strategic plans that address their unique goals in the context of the university and divisional goals. These [documents](#) are a basis for resource allocations within each college.

In addition, regular [meetings](#) of the Deans' Council ([PPM 1-9](#)), comprised of the provost, provost team, divisional VPs, and Faculty Senate chair, are opportunities for planning, aligning, and budgeting strategic initiatives. For example, discussions have addressed coordinating the roles and efforts of college advisors (including retention advisors) for students majoring in a college department, with the Student Success Center advisors who manage new student orientation, Starfish, and advise those majoring in General Studies. A University Academic Advising Council ([UAAC](#)) was created to address these coordination efforts with regular training on various topics, including Starfish ([2.G.6](#), and [PRFR update](#)).

All academic units in Academic Affairs prepare yearly [strategic plan reports](#) (SPR), which update their strategic initiatives informed in part by program review ([1.B.1](#), [1.C.1](#), [1.C.7](#), [1.C.9](#)) and biennial assessment reports ([1C.1](#), [1.C.7](#)). In these reports, units align with the university, division, and college mission and strategic initiatives and review their strategic success and challenges. They are encouraged to request resources to further their strategic goals. The provost makes the decision to fund proposals with input from college deans. The funding comes from salaries for faculty who leave or retire and state performance funding. Each unit completing an SPR receives feedback on their proposal(s). In 2020, the funding program allowed the department of Chemistry and Biochemistry to hire a new faculty, based on its program review ([1.B.1](#)) and [SPR](#) request. The department of [Social](#)

[Work](#) is another example of an academic unit funded for a strategic priority articulated in their [SPR](#). The new Master of Social Work (MSW) program was approved, but new hires were needed to be on track for a Fall 2021 preliminary accreditation and program launch. The college prioritized the lines, and the provost funded them with the support of the other deans.

Unit planning and budgeting in Student Affairs begin with allocating resources to units by the vice president of Student Affairs in consultation with the Student Affairs Management Council (SAMC). The allocations may include funding for strategic initiatives based on units' year-end reports and program reviews. For example, Career Services' end-of-year reports from [2017-2018](#) and [2018-2019](#) highlighted its strategic goal to increase internship opportunities for students because of its high-impact value. As a result, Student Affairs was able to fund a new assistant director of internships (ADI) in 2018 to develop policies and procedures and promote internships for all students. The new ADI created a class for on-campus internships, titled [R.E.A.L. Projects](#), modeled after the BYU Program (whose director offered strategic advice), that is proving to be innovative and effective.

1. B.4 – ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING AND GOVERNANCE

The institution monitors its internal and external environments to identify current and emerging patterns, trends, and expectations. Through its governance system it considers such findings to assess its strategic position, define its future direction, and review and revise, as necessary, its mission, planning, intended outcomes of its programs and services, and indicators of achievement of its goals.

The institution's internal and external environments are monitored through environmental scans, mission fulfillment data, strategic planning, unit reports and reviews, and surveys of constituencies. Much of this information is reviewed and discussed by the University Planning Council, which is advisory to the president ([1.B.3](#)) and includes representatives of staff, faculty, students, alumni, trustees, and others who share in institutional governance ([2.A.4](#)). The data are also discussed at divisional unit meetings in Academic Affairs (e.g., Deans' Council and provost meetings with chairs) and Student Affairs (director's meetings and various [committees](#)).

Environmental Scan

University Planning Council ([1.B.3](#), [2.A.4](#)) holds a yearly meeting specifically for an environmental scan, which has included an open forum with the university president and an invited facilitator to help UPC identify and prioritize areas of concern. In a January 2020 [presentation](#), state senator and WSU's past president, Dr. Ann Millner, addressed [Senate Bill 111](#) (passed March 2020) that combines Utah's public colleges and universities with Technical Colleges ([2.A.1](#)). Sen. Millner noted the opportunity to collaborate with the two technical colleges in our catchment area to achieve regional workforce goals. The opportunity motivated hiring a new assistant vice president of regional partnerships ([Org Chart](#)) to manage the institution's partnerships with regional educational, military, industrial, and business institutions. The AVP secured state funding to create an enhanced articulation partnership program with the two technical colleges.

Mission Fulfillment

Mission fulfillment data also provides information about the internal and external environments that have led to various actions. Institution-wide attention to retention and completion challenges (metric [IIA1](#) and [IIE1](#)) is evident in the work of the [Student Success Steering Committee](#) with its mission to support student success and subcommittee structure that encourages participation from across the university. For example, the [Engagement](#) sub-committee promotes access to [high-impact educational experiences](#) (HIEEs), shown to promote student persistence and completion.¹⁷ The committee also developed a [taxonomy](#) for faculty and staff to review such experiences in their class or co-curricular activity. The committee's [work](#) is expanding the use of HIEEs in [colleges](#) and student affairs programs.¹⁸

Evidence of the challenges experienced by students placed in Developmental English and Math (metric [IIA 2](#), [IIC 1](#), and [IIE 2](#)) remains a topic of institutional attention and action. The challenges of this group of students, over-represented by low-income, ethnic minority, and first-generation students, are being addressed by multiple new initiatives from Student Affairs offices of [Access and Diversity](#) and [Academic Support Programs and Centers](#) ([1.B.1](#)). Also, the [Transition and Opportunities](#) SSSC subcommittee has [concentrated](#) on promoting and coordinating the new programs and courses for first-year students with developmental placement ([website](#)). These include the development of new corequisite courses in Math and English, [Wildcat Scholars](#) (a program for students placed in Developmental English and Math), and [FAST Start](#) (a program for first-time students in gateway courses) ([1.C.7](#), [1.D.4](#)).

Mission fulfillment data also address external environments by including metrics focusing on the community core theme. The institution's [history](#) suggests that working *in* and *for* the community is key to the success of both. The institution supports faculty, staff, and students engaging in community service and outreach efforts through the [Center for Community Engaged Learning](#) (metric [IIIE1 - 2](#)), which earned Weber State the [designation](#) of a community-engaged campus. Furthermore, the institution supports multiple forms of community development by bringing the community to campus for cultural events (metric [IIIA1](#), [IIB1](#)) and offering academic resources to the community (metric [IIIA 2](#), [IIB 2](#)). In a major expansion of this community-development work, the institution convened the Ogden Civic Action Network ([OgdenCAN](#)) to support Ogden's east-central neighborhood. The Community Core Theme metrics also include the institution's contribution to economic and workforce development (metric [IIIF1 - 2](#)) and students' next-step occupational and academic success (metric [IIIC1 - 2](#)). The metrics reflect the attention given to the regional economy, which is closely monitored by a team of WSU administrators¹⁹ (with contributions from deans and faculty) who offer a range of economic development [resources](#) to address emerging challenges. Although Utah's economy is

¹⁷ HIEE course enrollment [resulted](#) in higher first-time student persistence, retention, and completion rates.

¹⁸For example, HIEEs internships ([Career Services](#)), community engaged learning ([Center for Community Engaged Learning](#)), international experiences ([Study Abroad Program](#)), Peer Mentor ([Peer Mentoring Programs](#)), leadership experience ([Student Involvement and Leadership](#)), and supplemental instructors ([Supplemental Instruction Program](#))

¹⁹ Including AVP of Regional Partnerships, AVP of High Impact Programs and Faculty Development, Director of Economic Development, Director of the Office of Sponsored Projects and Technology Commercialization, Director of Small Business Development Center, Deans (notably in EAST and Business), and faculty from many colleges.

strong compared to other states, Northern Utah remains challenged by [workforce development](#) and [entrepreneurship](#) issues that have been a focus of the economic development team.

The thresholds for these community metrics were all met but recognized as inadequate in capturing the depth of the university's role as the "educational, cultural and economic leader for the region." The 2020-21 strategic planning process provided an opportunity to better conceptualize the institution's role in the community and identify more complete and meaningful outcomes (see below)

Strategic Planning

As described in [1.B.3](#), the strategic planning [process](#) has been a source of evidence of the internal and external environments and actions to improve its strategic position and metrics to assess fulfillment. Through the strategic planning [SWOT](#) analysis, which involved inputs from various constituencies, new [goals](#) and [strategic initiatives](#) were developed to direct the institution in carrying out its revised mission. The commitment to the community is now better reflected in a new [Anchor Mission](#) goal, providing *community stewardship* in supporting such outcomes as culture, social, environmental, workforce, and economic development. Strategic planning also expanded the university's commitment to high-impact educational experiences by articulating [Personal Connection and Academic Excellence](#) goals. Strategic planning goals for [Retention and Completion](#) targeted the importance of aligning meaningful retention and completion initiatives, emphasizing the institution being *student-ready* and outcomes associated with supporting student success across their academic careers. The community's image of Weber State prompted a strategic goal for [Marketing and Branding](#) to assess and improve Weber State University's value proposition. Finally, the commitment to the [Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion](#) goal is reflected in initiatives to reduce equity gaps in student achievement and learning. As these strategic initiatives align with (indeed, better articulate) the Access, Learning, and Community Core Themes, we anticipate that the strategic outcomes for each goal will replace many of the current mission fulfillment metrics to guide the next accreditation cycle.

Unit Yearly Reports and Program Reviews

Other sources of actionable information about our internal and external environment come from unit-level yearly reports and program reviews ([1.B.1](#), [1.C.4](#), [1.C.7](#)). As noted earlier ([1.B.3](#)), unit supervisors (deans or executive directors) and VPs use these reports and reviews to make strategic alignments and resource allocations. Additionally, all colleges have advisory committees that provide insight from external sources about the quality of programs, community (e.g., workforce, cultural, and economic) needs, and other sources of information. For example, advisory committee members of the M.Ed. program were instrumental in helping to design the new [Graduate Certificate in Education Leadership](#) ([1.C.9](#) metric [IIIA1](#)). Local school administrators who serve on the advisory committee reviewed the educational leadership program and assisted in developing syllabi for new courses. As one dean expressed it, "everything we do has either been proposed by or supported by our advisory boards," which was affirmed by another dean, who cited the advisory boards as enhancing the school's "strategic agility."

Surveys

As part of its internal and external environmental scans, the institution regularly surveys constituencies to better understand and respond to their perspectives and needs. The UCLA-based Higher Education Research Institution ([HERI](#)) Faculty Survey is administered every three years, with the last data from 2019-2020 ([results](#)). Staff members are regularly assessed by a satisfaction survey most recently distributed in 2020 ([results](#)). Finally, students are surveyed using the Ruffalo Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory ([SSI](#)), distributed every two years, with the last being collected in 2020 ([results](#)). These three key constituencies generally report being satisfied, although concerns about salary and stress²⁰ among faculty and staff were noted, as were security and safety²¹ issues among students. These data are shared widely with relevant constituencies, and most are available on dashboards in the Report Gallery ([1.D.2](#)).

These constituencies were also regularly surveyed during the pandemic, including assessments of overall satisfaction and specific information about remote working conditions and course delivery preferences, among other questions. The information was used to develop remote work guiding principles, course delivery definitions and formats responsive to student needs, new guidelines for tenure and promotion, and other initiatives and responses documented in the Public Relations and Financial Review (PRFR) sections discussing the university's pandemic response ([2.A.4](#), [2.E.3](#), [2.F.4](#), [2.I](#)).

Finally, community members in and out of our catchment areas are also regularly surveyed by [Marketing & Communications](#), with the results contributing to the environmental scan. The focus is on participants' general awareness of and perceptions about Weber State and its in-state higher education competitors. The [results](#) were last compiled in 2017 and shared with President's Council, university marketing directors, and Deans' Council. Improvements were identified in the community's understanding of the institution's strengths, a sense that resonated in the Strategic Planning SWOT analysis, resulting in the [marketing and branding](#) focus area.

STANDARD 1.C – STUDENT LEARNING

1. C.1 – DEGREES CONSISTENT WITH MISSION

The institution offers programs with appropriate content and rigor that are consistent with its mission, culminate in achievement of clearly identified student learning outcomes that lead to collegiate-level degrees, certificates, or credentials and include designators consistent with program content in recognized fields of study.

Weber State University's Mission and Core Themes direct it to provide an engaging teaching and learning environment that promotes student success in programs of study responsive to regional employment needs ([1.A.1](#)). Faculty, staff, and administrators collaborate to ensure that the institution offers programs of appropriate content and rigor, aligned to disciplinary standards, and subject to a meaningful process of continuous

²⁰ For faculty, the stress was related to research and promotion (slide 29). Staff denied that they are seldom stressed.

²¹ The safety and security (SS) questions include one about parking, which is a perennial challenge at the institution.

improvement. This section of the EIE highlights and illustrates these collaborations and processes that ensure program quality and student learning.

Program Review and Disciplinary Alignments

The academic curriculum is the purview of the faculty and is managed by the [faculty senate](#). The catalog ([website](#), [pdf](#))²² is the official designation of program requirements, which specifies entrance and graduation requirements, curriculum, links to [Graduation MAPs](#) (Major Academic Plans), and, beginning in 2022-2023, program learning outcomes (presently on the Institutional Effectiveness [website](#)) ([2.G.2](#)). The Utah Board of Higher Education policies govern credit ([R401](#)), course numbering ([R470](#)), and cyclical review ([R411](#)) requirements for approving new and reviewing existing academic programs. Such processes ensure the relevance and applicability of academic program requirements, including its curriculum and student learning outcomes, to existing disciplines. The program approval and review processes are outlined below to highlight the close monitoring of program/discipline alignments.

Disciplinary Alignment and New Program Review: The approval of new academic programs is governed by institutional policy ([2.A.4](#)) that requires reviews by department, college curriculum committees, [University Curriculum Committee](#), and [Faculty Senate](#). These reviews address all aspects of the proposal, including the curriculum and learning outcomes. Before final approval of proposed programs by the Board of Trustees, the program is further evaluated by President's Council ([1.B.3](#), [2.A.1](#), [2.A.4](#)) and then by a system-wide peer review, which provides an additional level of scrutiny of all program requirements. For example, system-wide peer reviewers noted the alignment between bachelor-degree proposals in [Computational Statistics and Data Science](#) and [Public Health](#) with national standards for undergraduate curricula recommended by the [American Statistical Society](#) and the [Council on Education for Public Health](#). All peer-review comments and responses are shared with the Board of Trustees, which decides on all "in-mission" program proposals.

Disciplinary Alignment and Existing Program Review: All existing academic programs are reviewed through an [academic assessment](#) process. The process includes both a formative *biennial assessment* of student learning outcomes in Gen Ed ([1.C.6](#)) and major courses and a summative *program review*. [Institutional Effectiveness](#) (IE) manages both these processes. IE provides a [template](#) for and [feedback](#) on biennial assessment reports that they review for evidence offered and actions taken to support continuous improvement. Completed reports are available on the Institutional Effectiveness [website](#). The summative program review is directed by statewide policy ([R411](#)) and is an 18-month [process](#) that requires a program [self-study](#) addressing eight standards, including Curriculum and Student Learning Outcome Assessment.

- For the Curriculum standard, a curriculum map is required that identifies the courses where a program-level assessment of student learning outcomes occurs. Departments are also encouraged to discuss curricular planning and review, alignment of curriculum to program mission, and resource allocation for the curriculum.

²² The links in the EIE are to the 2021-2022 catalog while the links in the PRFR are to the 2020-2021 catalog.

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- For the Student Learning Outcome Assessment standard, a summary of the biennial report data is expected, or an assessment matrix that lays out previous biennial report data. Again, departments are encouraged to discuss the plans for and impact of any revisions.

The self-study drives the rest of the review process, which involves a site visit and evaluation by external and internal program reviewers. Departments are encouraged to select external reviewers from aspirational programs, following best [practices](#). Next, the program review team completes a report, responses to which are elicited from the program faculty and dean. Finally, these documents are given to a faculty team²³ for a final review in a meeting with the Provost, who makes final recommendations and sets the timeframe for the next program review based on the discussions. Finally, the review process is summarized and shared with the Board of Trustees and the Commissioner's Office.

The relevance and applicability of academic programs to disciplines are often identified in how departments align with program accreditation agencies. Thirty-three [programs](#) with specialized program accreditation are regularly reviewed for the alignment of program curriculum with disciplinary standards. But even programs that are not accredited are evaluated for curricula alignment with disciplinary standards during the program review process. A few examples illustrate how the program review process assures disciplinary relevance and application.

- In their 2015-2016 [self-study](#), The [Department of Psychological Science](#) identified four [student learning outcomes](#) based on the American Psychological Association guidelines²⁴ for the undergraduate curriculum. The [reviewers](#) noted the alignment to the disciplinary standards in the Mission, Curriculum, and Learning Assessments standards. They further noted and gave an example of how student learning outcome data were a basis for curriculum revision (pg. 2). The review team's proposal to add "cultural understanding" was addressed in the department's [response](#), supported by the [dean](#). The proposal was to include cultural and diversity issues across the psychology curriculum. In addition, they created (as of 2015) a new required breadth area in the curriculum, which requires majors to complete one designated Diversity course ([Department Handbook](#)).
- The [Department of Microbiology](#)'s 2018-2019 [self-study](#) noted its curriculum aligns closely with the American Society for Microbiology curriculum [guidelines](#). It further describes the new program emphases tailored to student interests. The review team [report](#) recognized the curriculum as thoughtful and purposeful but identified inefficiencies. For example, there were concerns about delays as students complete associate's degree coursework, which may not serve as correct prerequisites for upper-division Microbiology coursework. They noted the proposed [Associate of Science in Biology](#) degree, which was subsequently approved, alleviates this problem as there would be a common lower-division pathway into Microbiology, Zoology, Botany, and

²³ The faculty senate executive committee serves as the faculty team for undergraduate programs and graduate council for graduate programs (see [1.C.9](#))

²⁴ American Psychological Association (2007). *Guidelines for the undergraduate psychology major*. American Psychological Association (2013). *Guidelines for the undergraduate psychology major (version 2.0)*.

Biochemistry. Course assessments were seen as extensive but perhaps not used effectively to close the loop in student learning. The [department](#) and [dean](#) affirmed these observations, and the Provost recommended a focus on closing the loop, which has become an "action item" in the department's strategic plan.

Course Sequencing and Student Learning

Academic programs are more than just a collection of courses. Instead, they are meaningfully organized around missions, aligned to learning outcomes, and sequenced to foster learning. All academic programs intentionally sequence courses based on promoting increasing rigorous learning outcomes. At a minimum, this sequencing is required by the university ([Curriculum Policy and Procedure Manual, CPPM Section 6, Course Numbering and Attributes](#)) and the Utah Board of Higher Education ([R470](#)) policy for course numbering. The policy provides guidelines distinguishing precollege or preparatory (0001-0999), lower (1000-2000), upper-division (3000-4000), advanced upper-division (5000-5999), and graduate (6000-higher) courses. Each level is further defined by academic content and learning outcomes for courses in that numerical range. For example, 1000-level courses are defined by outcomes typical of first-year courses, including:

- Display an introductory understanding of disciplinary content;
- Demonstrate a beginning ability to present, interpret, and evaluate data in order to develop arguments and make sound judgments;
- Develop a beginning ability to evaluate problem-solving approaches within the context of the course's subject matter.

The characterization of 1000-level courses defines General Education and introductory survey courses. Beyond setting expectations for student learning and assessments, these policies support the ease of course transfer ([R470](#)) and consistent awarding of prior-learning credits (e.g., AP, ACT, SAT, credit, [R472](#)) across the system. To further facilitate these goals, all departments regularly participate in system-wide Majors Meetings sponsored by the [Office of the Commissioner](#) of Utah System of Higher Education. These meetings address course sequencing by identifying common lower-division requirements and distinguishing lower- and upper-division courses in majors across the system.

Furthermore, most curriculum grids, requested of all academic departments and programs where applicable, identify courses in which each program learning outcome is initially introduced, emphasized, mastered, and comprehensively assessed. Programs have described the sequences tailored to the unique features of their programs and outcomes. The sequencing demonstrates opportunities for students to demonstrate (and document) increasing rigorous levels of understanding, reflecting their growing mastery. Both the learning outcomes and the curriculum grids for academic programs are available on the Institutional Effectiveness [website](#).

Program [Graduation MAPs](#) provide a semester-by-semester plan for enrolling in courses needed to earn degrees. Specifically, the maps help students navigate programs by specifying sequenced course information. The maps account for course numbering and prerequisite course structure to ensure students are on track to graduate with the required

credits in 2 (associate's degree) or 4 (bachelor's degree) years. Many programs' Graduation MAPs include capstone requirements, identified as high-impact practices²⁵ because they offer a culminating academic experience. Capstones take various forms across programs, including internships, senior seminars, thesis/research projects, practicum, field trips, portfolio analyses, and other courses and experiences. For example, the [Department of Psychological Science](#) has a one-credit common capstone course for all students and multiple additional capstone options for students to choose from, as described in the [Department Handbook](#). Finally, courses are designated [high-impact educational experiences](#) ([1.B.4](#)) to further support students' meaningful learning opportunities in their major and general education. These course designations currently include:

- [Community-Engaged Learning](#) (CEL): Students engage in meaningful community engagement connected to their specific course's academic objectives.
- [Course-Based Research](#) (CRE) Students engage in significant research, scholarly, or creative works experience as a major component of this course.
- [Internship](#) (INT): Students will spend the bulk of their time engaging with industry professionals in experiential learning.
- [Sustainability](#) (SUS): Students will concentrate on sustainability, including its social, economic, and environmental dimensions, or examine an issue or topic using sustainability as a lens.

Students characterized their experiences in academic programs as meaningful (metrics [IIB2](#), [IIC2](#), and [IID2](#)), reflecting positively on the programs' quality. The quality is sustained by program approval and review processes that assure alignment of programs with disciplinary standards and thoughtfully designed and implemented course sequences that lead to meaningful learning.

1. C.2 – DEGREES BREADTH, DEPTH, AND SEQUENCING

The institution awards credit, degrees, certificates, or credentials for programs that are based upon student learning and learning outcomes that offer an appropriate breadth, depth, sequencing, and synthesis of learning.

Student learning outcomes are the structure around which certificate and degree credentials are built. Credentials have defined and published program outcomes that are available on the Institutional Effectiveness [website](#).²⁶ The site is being updated to more clearly specify the student learning outcomes by degrees and certificates, which will be added to the 2022-2023 University Catalog published next spring.

Credentials and Student Learning Outcomes

There is an institutional requirement that all syllabi for all courses include course learning outcomes ([PPM 4.9a](#)). These outcomes provide a basis for student learning outcomes assessment for each course in all programs of study. Notably, the assessment process

²⁵ Kuh, G., O'Donnell, K., & Schneider, C. G. (2017). HIPs at ten. *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning*, 49(5), 8-16.

²⁶ This is a continuous process of revision and update. Some programs are in the process of aligning and may have incomplete information on the website at this time.

evaluates student achievement of the outcomes (metric [IIC1](#), [IID1](#)) and the learning outcomes themselves. The section begins by addressing the latter process.

Reviewing Program Outcomes: The process for an institutional and system-wide curriculum review of new program proposals described in [1.C.1](#) applies to student learning outcomes and assessment protocols. The Utah Board of Higher Education policy ([R401](#)) requires that new program proposals specify program-level learning outcomes and plans to assess those outcomes. These proposals are then reviewed internally and system-wide, which has been helpful to promote discussion and review of learning outcomes, illustrated below.

- The interdisciplinary Associate of Art/Science in [Workplace Communication and Writing](#) degree involved a collaboration between Communication and English faculty to infuse [program-level outcomes](#) with workplace-related skills. The unique outcomes were recognized during peer review for "anticipating the kinds of skills, awareness, and dispositions students would need to be competitive in the marketplace."

The Utah Board of Higher Education policy requires cyclical program review ([R411](#)) also includes a standard addressing learning outcomes. Again, the process encourages discussion and review of learning outcomes, for which we again offer an example.

- The [Theatre program's self-study \(p. 5\)](#) explains that it revised its student learning outcomes by reducing the number of outcomes and improving the alignment to the program-level [mission](#). They note that the previous outcomes were too tied to individual [degree](#) programs. These outcomes drive the juried performance [assessment](#) protocol used by the program. The protocol offers an authentic evaluation of student learning outcomes in a consistent, transparent, and effective manner tailored to students' programs of study. The [dean](#) and [review team](#) report applauded the new learning outcomes, although requested a clearer understanding of the courses aligned to each degree program.

The Theatre programs' attention to the alignment of student learning outcomes to program mission and goals has been emphasized by Institutional Effectiveness as a best practice for all programs. This reflects IE's evolving understanding of and messaging to departments and programs over the past 10 years. Ten years ago, IE encouraged compliance to course-level assessment, reflected in the 2014 mission fulfillment metric that focused on the percentage of programs submitting course evaluations. More recently, the messaging has encouraged departments and programs to focus on continuous improvement by reflecting on and coordinating program missions, curricula, student outcomes, and assessment practices²⁷. Departments and programs are encouraged to assess courses relative to program learning outcomes that reflect their mission and are in line with their curriculum.

- The coordination of course assessments with program mission and learning outcomes has been a goal of the Gen Ed [revitalization](#) process over the past six years ([1.C.6](#)). Gen Ed program outcomes are defined by the Utah Board of Higher Education policy ([R470](#)) and based on LEAP [Essential Learning Outcomes](#). Until the revitalization process,

²⁷ Metzler, E. T., & Kurz, L. (2018, November). *Assessment 2.0: An organic supplement to standard assessment procedure*. (Occasional Paper 36). Urbana, IL: University of Illinois and Indiana University, National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA).

course assessments were based exclusively on specific Core and Breadth [area learning outcomes](#) (ALOs). As documented in [1.C.6](#), a new General Education [mission](#), program-level [general education learning outcomes](#) (GELOs), and assessment protocols address both ALOs and GELOs. Also, new internal review processes for existing and new Gen Ed courses are in place to ensure relevant area and program outcomes are assessed.

As noted in [1.C.1](#), there is a regular and ongoing biennial [assessment](#) of student achievement of learning outcomes both in academic programs and General Education that Institutional Effectiveness manages. Each department and program sets its assessment indicators and thresholds for student achievement. To get an institutional-wide picture of student learning outcomes, Mission Fulfillment metrics were created that provide an overview of student achievement of learning outcomes. These metrics apply to courses in all General Education areas (metric [IIC1](#)) and degree programs (metric [IID 1](#)). The achievement threshold was aspirational and involved computing an overall student learning outcome *achievement rate*, recognizing the range of ways student learning outcomes are assessed and reported. Students achieved the thresholds for both General Education²⁸ courses (N=123) and degree programs²⁹ (N = 66). These results provide evidence of the institutional commitment to assessing student learning outcomes and student achievement of them.

Learning Outcomes, Courses Sequencing, and Credential Pathways

As discussed in [1.C.1](#), the institution's academic programs intentionally sequence courses to foster learning based on increasingly rigorous learning outcomes. Having learning outcomes inform course sequencing further supports the depth and breadth of student learning. As noted earlier, departments and programs create curriculum grids for most academic programs to identify the courses where each learning outcome is first introduced, emphasized, mastered, and assessed. These grids reflect the unique conceptualization by departments and programs of how students develop mastery of program outcomes. For example, as noted above, the Theatre program describes student learning in their [curriculum grid](#) as a process in which knowledge, skills, experiences, and abilities being introduced, emphasized, utilized, and demonstrated yearly in juried performances.

[Graduation MAPs](#) further identify course sequences that are based on course numbering and prerequisite structures. Course numbers may change periodically through discussion at Majors' Meetings ([1.C.1](#)) due to system-wide agreements specifying lower-division program requirements. Similarly, prerequisites periodically change in response to learning outcomes or other sequencing concerns. For example, [CHF 2600](#) (Early Childhood Education) had only a Gen Ed foundational CHF 1500 (Lifespan Development) course as a prerequisite. However, in 2016 the department added more in-depth CHF 2500 (Development of the Child) as a pre- or corequisite. They justified this change by a desire to better prepare students for the sequence of [Early Childhood](#) and [Early Childhood Education](#) programs classes as reflected in the Graduation MAP. Together, the Graduation MAPs and

²⁸ 80% of students earn 70% of area learning outcomes (ALOs).

²⁹ 90% associates, bachelor, and graduate students will achieve 80% of program learning outcomes.

curriculum grids provide course sequencing within programs to ensure student mastery of program learning outcomes by their exposure to the increasing rigor of those outcomes.

Another way that learning outcomes support the depth and breadth of student learning is through flexible academic pathways composed of stackable credentials. As a dual mission institution³⁰, Weber State offers degrees and certificates that can build on each other to create flexible pathways for students that fit with their backgrounds and interests. Two examples of recently created stackable credentials are highlighted to illustrate how they create flexible academic pathways.

- The life-science programs in the College of Science recently developed an [Associate of Science in Biology](#) that provides a student interested in a life science field with critical foundational skills and exposure to the life-science disciplines. There is great flexibility afforded to graduates of the [AS in Biology](#) degree. They are better prepared for the rigors of upper-division work and can make an informed decision about which degree path to follow. Alternatively, graduates use the degree as a credential for a job. This deliberate sequencing of broad-based lower-division courses to support the more rigorous upper-division coursework is becoming more common at the university.
- The [Computer Science](#) (CS) program has developed a different set of stackable credentials that build upon each other as students move through the sequences. For example, first-year or [dual enrolled](#) students can earn a [Certificate of Proficiency in Programming Essentials](#) by completing the first four courses in the CS curriculum. Completing additional lower-division CS courses and other support courses allows students to receive an [AAS in Computer Science](#). Students with the certificate or AAS degree are credentialed for a job. They are also ready to continue with the General Education and upper-division courses needed to complete the [Bachelor of Science in Computer Science](#). Students may choose to focus on the technical programming skills first that are the outcome of the certificate program. Only later will they complete the entire General Education program, providing a different pathway through the curriculum than completing general education before completing major requirements.

The institution's approach to assessment assures that all courses are aligned to and assessed by program outcomes. Such an approach provides a basis for robust assessment practices, intentional and rigorous course sequencing, and flexible and stackable pathways that create breadth and depth of learning.

1. C.3 – LEARNING OUTCOMES

The institution identifies and publishes expected program and degree learning outcomes for all degrees, certificates, and credentials. Information on expected student learning outcomes for all courses is provided to enrolled students.

Communicating learning outcomes to students occurs systematically and through multiple channels, which are reviewed below:

³⁰ Carruth, B. K. (2019). Expanding educational opportunities: Utah's "Dual-Mission" model. *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning*, 51(2), 8-13.

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- [Majors pages](#), designed and maintained by the university's Marketing and Communications team, provide current and potential students with information about all majors on campus through an interactive website. The website allows new and potential students a chance to explore their interests and learn what degrees and programs best support those interests. Program-specific pages provide students with relevant information about what they will experience in that major, highlights of the particular program, and information about the major "beyond the classroom." Student stories are included to help their peers see the potential the program provides. Detailed information is linked from the page so students can see course requirements and suggested course sequences. The [Political Science](#) page, for example, links to details about seven various credentials that can be earned from the Political Science program. Finally, students see a high-level overview of what they will learn at WSU in the program, suggestions for post-graduation careers, and career and salary outlook. This information is beneficial for students exploring less well-known degrees like the new [Outdoor Recreation Administration](#) degree. The interactive website can drive students to programs of which they may not be aware.
 - Detailed program learning outcomes are defined by the program faculty and published on the [Institutional Effectiveness](#) website. This site has been expanded to include learning outcomes for every credential offered at WSU as they become available. In addition, departments review the posted outcomes in the biennial assessment report at least every two years and take a deep dive into the program outcomes when writing the program review self-study ([1.C.1](#)). Finally, program outcomes for each credential include credential-level program outcomes in the catalog, beginning with the 2022-2023 University Catalog. This feature will further increase the visibility of program outcomes to both internal and external audiences of Weber State University.
 - The institution has a policy regarding required elements of every course syllabus ([PPM 3-9a](#)). All course syllabi must include the student learning outcomes addressed by the particular course. Instructors are directed to prepare and distribute a syllabus to students enrolled in the course during the first week of class, place a copy on file with the department chair, retain a copy of the syllabus for at least a year. This requirement is made easier by the institutional learning management system, Canvas, which disseminates and stores course syllabi. Students have access to the syllabus while enrolled in the course, where it can be easily accessed and referenced as needed.
 - The Canvas learning management system also provides faculty with a means of associating program outcomes to specific assessments in Canvas. The ability to align program outcomes to assignments using the Canvas rubric tool reinforces the alignment of program outcomes to actual student work. Program outcomes can also be aligned to quizzes and allow students to see their level of outcome mastery through the program. The [Medical Laboratory Sciences](#) program is piloting outcomes with quizzing to allow students to self-monitor their mastery attainment. Students are expected to retake tests until they reach 80%, which is the acceptable threshold identified by the program faculty. The process frees faculty to spend more time supporting students instead of tracking student progress.

The institution's responses to this and the previous two standards, among others, demonstrate its compliance with NWCCU's [eligibility requirement](#) 5 (Student Learning).

1. C.4 – ADMISSIONS AND GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

The institution's admission and completion or graduation requirements are clearly defined, widely published, and easily accessible to students and the public.

Weber State University provides clear and accessible information about admission and graduation requirements. Most of the requirements and their communication are based on state and institutional policies. Institutional policies are systematically reviewed and updated through the Faculty Senate and its relevant [committees](#) (2.A.4). Of particular relevance to admissions and graduation are the following Faculty Senate standing subcommittees: Admissions, Standards, and Student Affairs Committee (ASSA), General Education Improvement and Assessment Committee (GEIAC), University Curriculum Committee (UCC). Proposed policy updates are shared widely with all constituencies (2.A.4).

Admission

Admission requirements are managed by the [Office of Admissions](#) and follow [Utah Board of Higher Education](#) (R461) and Weber State University (PPM 6-2) policies. The Admissions website provides customized information on admission requirements for [new in-state first-year students](#), [new out-of-state first-year students](#), [international students](#), [transfer students](#), [distance learning students](#), [concurrent enrollment students](#), [early college students](#), [graduate students](#), [returning students](#), and [non-degree seeking](#) students, as well as for [parents](#) and [high school counselors](#) (1.D.1). This customization by student type allows applicants to focus only on their requirements, simplifying the process. For example, international students receive detailed information on their unique requirements, and transfer students learn that they do not have to submit high school transcripts if they have at least 30 credits of college coursework.

Application requirements are kept simple and accessible in line with the university's open-enrollment mission. Applicants submit an electronic application, an application fee, and proof of high school completion or equivalent (e.g., high school or GED transcripts). Standardized test scores such as the ACT or SAT are welcome but not required. Applicants can upload most materials directly into the online application, and a personalized, real-time application checklist tracks applicants' progress toward acceptance.

Once their checklist is complete, applicants can submit applications and receive confirmation of receipt. In addition, prospective students can [make an appointment](#) with an Admissions counselor for personalized assistance at any point in the process. Prospective students also receive individualized attention during [Purple Carpet](#) events, when they can visit the campus, learn about the admissions process, and ask questions of recruiting staff and student ambassadors (1.D.1). These events are also customized by student role to ensure that prospective students receive the best information for their situation.

Once admitted, students receive an admissions letter and tailored communications from the Office of Admissions on the next steps. The [What's Next](#) website focuses on three key milestones to help admitted students navigate the transition from admission to the first semester. The website provides clear instructions on these milestones: Creating an account

in the student portal, applying for financial aid, and attending New Student Orientation. Providing streamlined information at targeted points in the admission process ensures that students have manageable steps to enter the institution.

Graduation

Graduation requirements are managed by the Office of the Registrar and follow [Utah Board of Higher Education \(R470\)](#) and Weber State University ([PPM 4-1](#), [4-2](#)) policies. In addition, graduation requirements are published annually in the [University Catalog](#), available on the university website and student portal.

Program requirements are sorted by both [major/minor](#) and [degree types](#) for easy navigation. Institutional requirements (e.g., minimum GPA, total credits, upper-division, and residency ([PPM 4-1](#)), are outlined in the [Degree Requirements](#). The [General Education Requirements](#) section explains core and breadth requirements, with an easy-to-read [printable PDF](#) option. The General Education [website](#) also features a [Student Information](#) page and brief [video](#), “What’s the Value of General Education,” that addresses student questions in accessible language.

Students can also find their graduation requirements in more tailored support resources. [Graduation MAPs \(1.C.1, 1.C.2\)](#) outline requirements semester by semester to support timely completion and help students understand course sequencing. Graduation MAPs are available for each program of study and active catalog year. Many programs provide MAPs with a range of starting points depending on students’ math and English placement (e.g., Associate of General Studies MAPs for [Math 0950/English 0955 placement](#) and [Math 1010/English 1010 placement](#)). These MAPs outline by semester all recommended courses, non-course requirements (e.g., required GPA), and milestones (e.g., when to meet with advisors and apply for graduation). Graduation MAPs are accessible from the student portal, catalog, and program websites.

Students also receive personalized information about their degree requirements in the university’s degree evaluation software, Ellucian Degreeworks, branded here as CatTracks. This web-based, mobile-compatible tool provides students constant access to a live, detailed degree evaluation for each declared degree or institutional certificate. Degree evaluations present institutional, general education, and program requirements in an itemized list that checks off in real-time as students register for and complete coursework. Clear symbols and formatting ensure that students understand their requirements. Academic advisors use CatTracks to review students’ requirements in each advising appointment, and students are encouraged to use CatTracks between appointments to follow their progress.

Students learn to use CatTracks in [New Student Orientation \(1.D.4\)](#), advising appointments, and [UNIV 1105 Foundations of College Success](#), which incoming students are recommended to take. Training and video tutorials are provided on the university’s [CatTracks](#) website, which features [Student Resources](#), [Help](#), and [Frequently Asked Questions](#) pages with concise explanations of requirements and terminology. Students who change programs of study are encouraged to work with an advisor to understand how their

new program and catalog year will affect graduation requirements. Students can use the “What If” analysis function in CatTracks to see how their current credits fit into other programs or catalog years. Advisors use this tool to counsel students on the impact of program changes. CatTracks also integrates seamlessly with the university’s homegrown graduation software application, which automates graduation processing by using degree evaluations to assess completion and confer degrees. With this integration, students can be confident that their degrees are awarded consistently and efficiently.

The institution’s response to this standard is one of several demonstrating its compliance with NWCCU’s [eligibility requirement](#) 17 (Admissions)

1. C.5 – SYSTEMS OF ASSESSMENT

The institution engages in an effective system of assessment to evaluate the quality of learning in its programs. The institution recognizes the central role of faculty to establish curricula, assess student learning, and improve instructional programs.

As highlighted throughout this section, Weber State University's mission and core themes direct it to provide an engaging teaching and learning environment that promotes student success in programs of study responsive to regional employment needs. Faculty, staff, and administrators collaborate to ensure the quality of student learning in programs based on a long tradition of faculty oversight of curriculum and commitment to student learning and success. As documented below, policies and practices affirm that faculty play a central role in evaluating *teaching*, including instructors' pedagogical practices and *learning*, including establishing curriculum, assessing student learning outcomes, and engaging in continuous improvement. Feedback from peers, students, administrators, and employers forms the backbone of the evaluation and continuous improvement processes.

Peer Evaluation of Teaching

Although considered an input, teaching effectiveness is relevant to assessing student learning, as pedagogical choices influence student engagement and learning.³¹

Assessment of Teaching

This assessment of teaching effectiveness is the purview of the faculty and is managed at the department and college levels. Clearly articulated in policy ([PPM 8-11](#), also see [2.F.4](#)), tenure and promotion [guidelines](#) require (among other things) peer evaluation (see below). In addition, tenure and promotion require student evaluations of teaching, evidence of continuing effort to improve instruction, and the use of valid, reliable assessment methods. Colleges are given considerable autonomy in the design of their tenure documents, reflected in subtle differences between each [college's process](#) (go to “T” on the alphabetized page and click on Tenure Documents). In addition, institutional support is provided through the university's [Teaching and Learning Forum](#) (TLF), where opportunities for professional development and support for all faculty — tenured, tenure-track, non-tenure-track, and adjuncts — are provided. Contract (non-tenure track) teaching

³¹ Hyun, J., Ediger, R., & Lee, D. (2017). Students' satisfaction on their learning process in active learning and traditional classrooms. *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, 29(1), 108-118.

staff are regularly reviewed on the same criteria in their first year of employment and again every three years, depending on the length of their appointment ([2.F.4](#))

Peer Review

Peer review is the mainstay of all college tenure processes. These processes include formative feedback from classroom observation and careful peer review of teaching portfolios, including evidence of improvement in teaching and research. Additional opportunities for peer review are provided by the TLF and include consultations with and observations by trained peers

Online Course Reviews

Instructional designers from the WSU Online team provide in-depth consultations with faculty to review courses delivered through Canvas, the learning management system. The reviews are based on accepted best practices of online course design and provide faculty with feedback and suggestions for improvement. The designers promote the process of backward design, popularized by Wiggins and McTighe³², with its focus on learning outcomes as drivers of course design and learning experiences. Faculty gain insight about assessment that can support evaluation and improvement. Greater exposure to these ideas occurred as faculty received additional training when courses were redesigned for online delivery during the pandemic ([2.F.4](#)).

Student Evaluation

Course Evaluations

Students complete course evaluations for all their classes each semester. In 2019, the Faculty Senate created an Evaluation Task Force to address the use and efficacy of student evaluations. Based on faculty survey data, the task force addressed biased and inconsistent use of evaluations, including their use to compare faculty. Based on best practices, the task force proposed a [new instrument](#) designed to limit bias and eliminate the presentation of data comparing faculty to other faculty. After piloting the new instrument for two semesters, the Faculty Senate approved the proposals and put them in place campus-wide in the summer of 2021. Preliminary results suggest faculty find the results of the evaluations more supportive of meaningful reflection on teaching improvement.

Graduate Survey

A robust survey of graduating students at the associate, baccalaureate, and graduate levels is administered at the end of each fall and spring semester ([1.D.2](#)). The average response rate is about 55% to 60% of graduating students, although it was notably depressed during the pandemic. Carefully crafted questions target students' experiences in their programs, with program faculty able to retrieve results to help them better understand their students' experiences. Open-ended prompts about valuable learning experiences or frustrations encountered along with information about each student's intended next step academically and/or professionally provide departments with relevant feedback. As part of the institutional mission fulfillment assessment, student responses to select open-ended

³² Wiggins G., & McTighe, J. (2005) *Understanding by Design*. Alexandria, VA, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2nd ed.

graduation survey questions evaluated their experience of meaningful learning in their bachelor's degree program (metric [IID2](#)) and General Education (metric [IIC2](#)).

Peer Evaluation of Curriculum and Faculty Engagement in Assessment

Faculty play a central role in evaluating curriculum and assessing student learning outcomes as part of the process of continuous improvement in

Creating Programs

New academic programs generally begin from faculty in a given department, generally in discussion with the dean and the Provost's Office. The support for and funding of such programs may be requested through the Academic Affairs Strategic Planning Report process as documented in [1.B.3](#), as exemplified by the funds to establish the [Master of Social Work](#). As noted in [1.C.1](#) and [1.C.2](#), there is a thorough peer assessment of curriculum and student learning outcomes through the internal and the system-wide curriculum approval process.

Summative Assessment Processes

The Program Review process outlined in [1.C.1](#) involves the engagement of faculty throughout the process. Faculty write their departmental or program self-study as a collaborative effort, with reviews conducted by external and internal faculty reviewers. The penultimate review for all program reviews is a presentation to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee (FSEC),³³ whose role is to promote accountability across the division of Academic Affairs. FSEC members read all materials from the review³⁴ and discuss the outcomes with the department chair and dean. Recommendations from the FSEC range from concurrence with the faculty response regarding the site visit recommendations to requests for periodic updates on issues, or in the case of programs undergoing significant change, the possibility of a follow-up review sooner than usual. In recent years there has been a significant shift from a "gotcha" approach to a collegial, supportive approach to continuous improvement through the program review process.

Formative Assessment Processes

While the review cycle just referenced occurs every five to seven years, an essential component of the assessment cycle is the ongoing collection, analysis, and reflection on student learning data. Department and programs prepare assessment plans published on the Institutional Effectiveness [website](#) and are asked to report their findings on a biennial basis ([template](#)), which are also reported on the website ([1.C.1](#)). These biennial assessment reports are formative, with [feedback](#) offered on the assessment practices and outcomes. Engaging faculty in reflecting and providing formative feedback has been a focus of several groups tasked with assessment and curriculum oversight.

- Members of the Faculty Senate standing General Education Improvement and Assessment Committee ([GEIAC](#)) review biennial assessment data of student achievement of Gen Ed area learning outcomes (ALOs) ([1.C.6](#)). ALOs are tied to specific skills or contents targeted by the Gen Ed class (e.g., Composition, Quantitatively

³³ Graduate programs are reviewed by the Graduate Council ([1.C.9](#))

³⁴ The documents include the self-study, the site visit report, the faculty response and the dean's response

Literacy, Creative Arts, etc.). Pairs of committee members identify strengths of the assessment processes and make suggestions for improvement using a [rubric](#) developed by the committee.

- Signature assignment artifacts, required in all Gen Ed courses, are also assessed by faculty teams for evidence program-level or Gen Ed Learning Outcomes (GELOs) ([1.C.6](#)). Again, student performance is assessed according to rubrics and shared with instructors.
- Efforts are underway for faculty to review major course- and program-level student learning outcomes, which are also reported in biennial assessment reports. Presently, Institutional Effectiveness performs the review, but a proposal is for faculty liaisons from each college to review the major course- and program-learning outcomes as part of a Faculty Senate Assessment Committee charged with supporting assessment practices at the program level.

Examples of faculty-led assessment processes within departments further illustrate the widespread engagement of faculty in assessment and continuous improvement:

- As noted, the [Theatre](#) program faculty conducts juried reviews of all students each semester, including an additional baseline assessment of first-year students ([1.C.3](#)). Overall results are calculated, and faculty assess whether students at each level are meeting program expectations and identify student support strategies if they are not. If jury scores are low across the board for particular outcomes, curricular changes are initiated. Such was the case for rendering skills, which resulted in adding drawing assignments in Design/Tech classes and a seminar on drawing/model making for the theatre. Similarly, after evaluating the materials students were using in Juries, we added a class on Musical Theatre Repertoire to increase their "books" of audition materials with more diverse, appropriate materials.
- The [Department of Visual Arts](#) has recently implemented a holistic assessment of each student's work in each class after using a less adequate assessment process. Using a Canvas rubric aligned to the program-level outcomes identified for each class, the faculty evaluate the students' attainment of mastery against the expected mastery given the course level (student mastery in a 4000-level course is a higher level than student mastery in a lower-level course). This assessment process, designed by the faculty, was piloted last year and fully implemented this fall term.
- The faculty in [Criminal Justice](#) developed an end-of-program assessment that bachelor's degree students must pass to graduate. Students who do not pass all sections are provided with targeted remediation and guidance/tutoring until they are successful. The exam data are further used to identify and address weaknesses in the curriculum.
- Faculty members in the [School of Nursing](#) conduct end-of-semester course reviews using student performance and feedback from course evaluations. All faculty teaching the course are included in the review, and they work together to identify needed changes for the course.
- The [School of Computing](#) follows a consistent assessment process aligned with ABET. Courses are reviewed by teams of three — the department chair, the faculty

teaching a course, and other faculty in the department. Successes and challenges are discussed, concerns are identified and documented, and plans are determined and ultimately implemented. The following year, the team reconvenes to analyze new data and determine whether the implemented plan had the intended impact. For example, based on reports of variation in student background and speed at which students pick up and apply CS concepts, the new [CS FLEX](#) course option was piloted in 2019. Although conforming to semester constraints, students can progress through the same classes faster than other students to earn the bachelor's degree sooner. The program was discussed at the Computer Science most recent program review. It was [recommended](#) by the faculty and the Provost, with the request to monitor student success in the program.

Industry and Employer Assessment

Program and college-level external advisory groups provide another means of assessing student learning and outcomes, particularly addressing workplace readiness. For example, many programs encourage students to participate in internships while other programs require extensive clinical work outside of the classroom. Feedback from clinical preceptors and internship supervisors is reviewed for insight into student preparation and their ability to apply academic concepts to real-world situations. When these preceptors and internship mentors are also part of the program's advisory group, faculty can keep a pulse on the currency of their programs relative to industry needs and demands.

The institution regularly evaluates instructors' teaching effectiveness and department and program assessment data. The formative biennial assessment and summative program review processes ensure student assessment data and plans are evaluated and programs continuously improved. Institutional-wide faculty committees play a central role in the formative Gen Ed and summative Program assessment of students' learning outcomes in a collaborative process between faculty, staff, and administrators. The feedback from formative and summative evaluations is a basis for curricular revisions and other instructional improvements. Resources for such changes, including new academic lines and other supports, are available to departments and programs through the SPR process ([1.B.3](#)). The institution's response to this standard is one of many demonstrating its compliance with NWCCU's [eligibility requirements](#) 5 (Student Learning), 12 (Faculty), and 13 (Educational Programs)

1. C.6 – PRACTICES OF ASSESSMENT

Consistent with its mission, the institution establishes and assesses, across all associate and bachelor level programs or within a General Education curriculum, institutional learning outcomes and/or core competencies. Examples of such learning outcomes and competencies include, but are not limited to, effective communication skills, global awareness, cultural sensitivity, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis and logical thinking, problem solving, and/or information literacy.

Weber State University's General Education program ([website](#), [catalog](#)) is managed and assessed by a collaboration of faculty, staff, and administrators ([Gen Ed oversight](#)). The Utah Board of Higher Education (UBHE), through policy [R470](#), articulates goals for the General Education program (2.4.1) and definitions of the Core and Breadth Gen Ed areas (3.2 and

3.3). Informed by UBHE policy, the learning outcomes in these areas (or [Area Learning Outcomes](#), ALOs) are established, reviewed, and revised by Area Committees, composed of faculty representatives from each department teaching in the areas, as documented in the Curriculum Policies and Procedures Manual ([CPPM 1.3](#)). In addition, Area Committees review new Gen Ed proposals for alignment to the ALOs. Gen Ed course instructors assess student achievement of ALOs for their classes. Faculty Senate standing [committees](#), including the General Education Improvement and Assessment Committee ([GEIAC](#)) and the University Curriculum Committee (UCC), oversee the assessment process. GEIAC members also serve as Area Committee Chairs, reaching out to members as needed. ALO assessment data³⁵ are [summarized](#) yearly and presented to the Faculty Senate by the GEIAC chair. Assessment of program-level [General Education Learning Outcomes](#) (GELOs) is managed by the Director of General Education and coordinated by the Gen Ed Council. The council comprises the GEIAC chair, the Director of Gen Ed, an Associate Provost, and the Executive Director of [Institutional Effectiveness](#), who manages [academic assessment](#).

This organization emerged through the Gen Ed [revitalization](#) process³⁶ that involved a university-wide review of all aspects and outcomes of the program over three years (2016-2019). Faculty Senate approved program-level GELOs and two key features of all Gen Ed classes: [Big Questions](#) (BQ) and [Signature Assignments](#) (SA). The GELOs align with the UBHE Gen Ed policy, with both based on AAC&U LEAP [Essential Learning Outcomes](#).

In the revitalized General Education program, the four program-level GELOs are assessed in different ways. [GELO 1](#) (Content Knowledge) is assessed at the course level for student achievement of ALOs. Before 2019, this was the only General Education assessment performed and involved formative review with feedback from the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and summative Gen Ed "renewal" process performed by the University Curriculum Committee. The data from the renewal process was *quantitatively* analyzed (metric [IIC1](#)) as a mission fulfillment metric. The analysis shows that the rate of student achievement of learning outcomes was above the threshold: 80% of students achieving 70% of the outcomes. A *qualitative* analysis of associate's degree graduates responding to open-ended questions about the value of Gen Ed outcomes (metric [IIC2](#)) provides additional support of the program's impact on student learning.

Since 2019, student achievement of ALOs (GELO 1) continued to be reviewed for each Gen Ed class but now through a formative biennial assessment process ([1.C.1](#), [1.C.5](#)). This change offered departments two years to implement and assess the impact of planned initiatives and the opportunity to receive peer feedback from GEIAC faculty to support continuous improvement. The impact of the assessment process is illustrated by two

³⁵ This review includes [WSU courses](#) which are interdisciplinary Gen Ed classes that cross multiple breadth and core areas.

³⁶ The VP of Academic Affairs [prioritized](#) General Education [revitalization](#) in 2016 as part of a multifaceted student success initiative.

departments, which improved how they assess student ALOs³⁷ and implemented changes to improve student achievement of the ALOs.

- The History Department's 2018 renewal [report](#) for HIST 1700 identified limits of assessing [American Institutions Area learning outcomes](#) by student performance on the US citizenship test. They planned to seek alternative measures to assess student learning. Their 2020 biennial assessment [report](#) noted that new measures were used and demonstrated a student achievement rate of 74% (p. 39), with plans (pp. 42-43) to roll out BQs and SAs in all sections of AI courses. Although the improved assessment protocol and outcomes are welcomed, the GEIAC faculty [response](#) offered suggestions for a more streamlined process and the need for a deeper dive into the student outcome data. The History Department's exploration of measures of meaningful ALOs for Gen Ed is notable given their long-standing concerns about the value of assessment. In the meantime, the Department has made strides in designing new AI classes to engage first-year and underserved students.³⁸ They created [three new alternative AI courses](#): The Black Experience (HIST 1600), The Latinx Experience (HIST 1610), and The LGBTQ Experience (HIST 1620). They also contribute a section of HIST 1700 to the [FAST Start](#) program, which is being piloted for first-year students ([1.C.7](#), [1.D.4](#))
- The English Department's 2018 renewal [report](#) for ENGL 2010 also identified concerns assessing the seven [COMP](#) learning outcomes. A group of program faculty assessed students' final "persuasive argument" assignment. Pairs of faculty reviewed each artifact for each COMP outcome. The overall achievement rate of COMP ALOs was 69%, slightly below the Department's threshold of 70%, but there were multiple outcomes substantially below that threshold. The Department noted that the quality of the assessments could improve by conducting a norming session to assure that reviewers shared the same understanding of the COMP outcomes. The 2020 biennial assessment [report](#) for ENGL 2010 details a new norming process (pp. 12), finding higher ALO student achievement rates (78%). One outcome remained a challenge for students: The proper use of APA and MLA style, which was going to be addressed by a new faculty training. The GEIAC faculty [response](#) acknowledged the strengths of the assessments but requested additional information about the faculty training. The Department has continued to innovate by creating a new class ([ENGL 2015](#)) combining ENGL 2010 and Information Literacy class (LIBS 1704), which may address students' understanding of the value of formatting and citing research sources. The Department also made strides to engage first-year and underserved students by creating new corequisite COMP ([ENGL 1005](#)) classes ([1.C.7](#), [1.D.4](#))

[GELOs 2 - 4](#) (Intellectual Tools, Personal and Social Responsibility, and Integrated and Applied Knowledge) are assessed through signature assignments (SAs), required in each Gen Ed class since 2019. SAs encourage students to integrate and apply course content knowledge to a significant issue bearing on self or others by using select intellectual tools, thereby exercising GELOs 2-4 ([examples](#)). Research shows that such skills develop if

³⁷ As explained in metric [IIC1](#), these classes enroll many first-year students who did not complete these classes through concurrent or dual enrollment.

³⁸ This was part of the History Department's strategic plan and consistent with the Academic Affairs EDI [statement](#).

practiced, suggesting that SAs serve as an assessment and intervention.³⁹ After each semester, a faculty team assesses a sample of SAs for evidence of students' achievement of the GELO 2-4. The Director of General Education, working with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, and supported by the Provost's Office, oversees multiple faculty pairs in coding the student artifacts using [VALUE](#)-based and related [rubrics](#).⁴⁰ Over the past three years, teams have assessed SAs from 1,500 students enrolled in core and breadth area courses and WSU courses. The faculty teaching each reviewed class (and their Chair) receives [feedback](#) on their students' performance with suggestions to strengthen the SA to exercise targeted skills. As a result, the overall quality of the SAs has improved: More SAs are now codable, and the average student GELO achievement score has risen from 62% in Fall 2019 (when SAs were first required) to 81% in Fall 2020.

The results of SA assessments are updated regularly on the Gen Ed [website](#) and reported in year-end [reports](#) to Faculty Senate. Notable findings from the most recent [assessment](#) are that the coding is reliable, and scores are correlated with students' class and general academic performance. Overall, GELO achievement scores among students just **beginning** (66%) and **completing** (76%) Gen Ed coursework have significantly improved, independent of students' enrollment status. There were no gaps between Caucasian and Hispanic/Latino students' GELO *achievement*, despite the equity gaps in first-year students' *completion* of gateway Gen Ed courses ([1.D.2](#)). Finally, we are collecting the data to run a robust longitudinal study exploring changes in individual student SA performance. The longitudinal analysis will be a critical assessment of the assumptions of the role of SAs as an "intervention" to promote growth in students' Gen Ed program-related skills.

Taken together, General Education is a broad-based program that is assessed for ALOs at the individual course level and GELOs at the program level. There is evidence of continuous improvement at both levels and a process for closing the loop in student learning. The revitalized Gen Ed program is still rolling out and being continually reviewed and adjusted in response to feedback from students, faculty, chairs, and deans. The institution's response to this standard is one of many demonstrating its compliance with NWCCU's [eligibility requirement](#) 5 (Student Learning) and 13 (Educational Programs)

1. C.7 – CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING

The institution uses the results of its assessment efforts to inform academic and learning-support planning and practices to continuously improve student learning outcomes.

Weber State faculty, staff, and administrators have a history of being responsive and innovative when student achievement does not meet expectations. Hallway conversations,

³⁹ Keating, D. P. (1996). Habits of mind for a learning society: Educating for human development. In D. R. Olson & N. Torrance (Eds.), *Handbook of education and human development: New models of learning, teaching, and schooling* (pp. 461-481). Oxford: Blackwell.

⁴⁰ Each signature assignment selected for review is preliminarily assessed for the GELOs addressed (by DGE or IE). An assessment document is then prepared for the teams of faculty to review. As part of the assessment of each SA, faculty pair reliability is assessed. As noted above, feedback is offered from the DGE to the faculty about students' performance with suggestions for improvement. An [example](#) of this process, which includes the signature assignment, coding document, and feedback letter, is included for HIST 1740 (AI): Economic History of the US.

department-level discussions, analyses of formative assessment reports, recommendations from summative program reviews, and university-wide task forces⁴¹ drive continuous improvement in student learning and success. Examples of program-level evaluation leading to proposed new or revisions of existing courses, curriculum, or credentials (certificates or degrees) are included throughout the EIE ([1.B.1](#), [1.C.1](#), [1.C.2](#), [1.C.4](#), [1.C.5](#), [1.C.6](#), [1.C.7](#), [1.C.9](#)). This section presents additional accounts of how student learning outcome data were acted upon to support continuous improvement. Also addressed are how assessment data have resulted in new collaborations between academic programs and student support services to improve student learning and success.

Improving Academic Programs

- [Medical Laboratory Sciences](#) (MLS) is a selective admissions program in the College of Health Professions with a strong [record](#) of student success. Faculty use multiple variables to measure the strength of a candidate's application, including a GPA cutoff of 2.5 and maintain a rigorous standard of 80% on each exam (see grading policy in the [student handbook](#)). In addition, students must pass the American Society for Clinical Pathology [Board of Certification](#) (BOC) exam upon completion of their degree to practice in the field. Research from program faculty determined that students' entering GPA is the best predictor of success on the BOC⁴². Analysis of the incoming GPA of the program's students revealed a lower likelihood of success on the BOC for online students with less than a 2.7 incoming GPA. After carefully reviewing those results, the faculty decided to raise the admission criteria to a minimum GPA of 2.7.
- Many programs in the [College of Engineering, Applied Science and Technology](#) (EAST) require students to complete one or more Calculus courses offered by the Math Department. Course data revealed that Computer Science and Engineering students did not perform as well as Math and Science students in the calculus classes. The success rates for EAST students prompted a meeting between EAST and MATH faculty. The shortage of instructional time to explore contextual and concrete examples in the traditional calculus class was identified as a possible barrier to completion for the EAST students who could benefit from a more applied approach. As a result, several sections of a 5-credit CALC 1210 were piloted for EAST students, which included an increased focus on engineering applications and additional tutoring support. Preliminary data showed that students in the 5-credit classes completed at a higher rate (72%) than those in the traditional 4-credit class (61%).
- Students who come to WSU under-prepared have traditionally been placed in Developmental Math or English courses (or both). While some students remediate readily and move into mainstream classes, other students struggle in these classes. Mission fulfillment data indicated that students with placements in Developmental Math and English struggle in the first semester (metric [IIE1](#)) and tend to have lower

⁴¹ The university-wide [Qualitative Literacy](#) task force was created in 2017 and the [Composition](#) task force in 2021.

⁴²The data were collected by department faculty (JT) as part of the program reaccreditation, described in the 2019 program [self-study](#), and then [presented](#) professionally (Thomas, J. & Alexander, J. T. (2020). *Predictors of success on the MLT and MLS board of certification exam*. Poster presented at the Virtual Clinical Laboratory Educators Conference, February 2021 (CLEC 2021).

retention (metric [IIA2](#)) and graduation (metric [IIF2](#)) rates than other student cohorts ([1.D.2](#)). Following national best practices,⁴³ new corequisite courses from the Departments of Mathematics ([MATH 1035, pathway](#)) and English ([ENGL 1005, pathway](#)) were approved after being piloted through the Wildcat Scholars program (see below). These courses reflect the collaboration of faculty teams representing the developmental programs working with the Math (Quantitative Literacy) and English (Composition) faculty to assess the data and create the courses. The courses allow students to complete the Composition and Math requirements more quickly, cheaply, and at a higher rate than other similarly placed students. These options contributed to the improved retention rate of Dev-Dev paced students ([1.D.4](#)).

Each of these changes highlights the work of faculty teams who collaborate within and across programs and departments. Additionally, the program review process ([1.B.1](#), [1.B.3](#), [1.C.1](#), [1.C.2](#)) involves cross-disciplinary faculty teams⁴⁴ making recommendations to the Provost.

Learning Support Services

[Learning support services](#) play a critical role in student learning and success, with evidence of continuous improvements illustrated for Tutoring / SI and Mentoring ([1.B.1](#)). New collaborations between student services and academic programs focus on first-year student learning and success. Over the past several years, the institution has been [monitoring](#)⁴⁵ DFWI rates in general education and other gateway classes ([1.C.6](#), [1.D.3](#)), revealing that WSU faces the same challenges in course completion rates as others [regionally](#) (sides 38-50) and nationally⁴⁶. The results also point to the non-completion of gateway classes negatively impacting students' first-semester academic success (metric [IIE1](#)) and their subsequent retention rate (metric [IIA2](#)). Highlighted below are several of these new initiatives that exemplify this collaboration between support services and academic programs in addressing these challenges.

- The Starfish ([1.B.1](#)) initiative involves a partnership between faculty and student support services ([PRFR Update](#)). Starfish flags that faculty raise are responded to by advisors, who then refer students to specific student support services. This process is further informed by [learning outcomes](#) for advisors' work with first-year students.
- The [Engagement](#) subcommittee of the SSSC ([1.B.4](#), [1.C.1](#)) has focused on students having High Impact Educational Experiences (HIEE) experiences in the first 60 credits, ideally in the first year. Lending support to the initiative, data show that having such experiences [resulted](#) in higher persistence, retention, and completion rates for first-

⁴³ Complete College America. *No Room for Doubt: Moving Corequisite Support from Idea to Imperative* (2021). completecollege.org/noroomfordoubt

⁴⁴ For undergraduate program review the cross-disciplinary team is Faculty Senate. For graduate program review, it is Graduate Council.

⁴⁵ The presentation of these data was the WSU contribution to the 2020 statewide General Education conference on disaggregated gateway completion data.

⁴⁶ Koch, A. K., & Gardner, J. N. (2017). Transforming the 'real' first-year experience: The case for and approaches to improving gateway courses." In R. Feldman (Ed.), *The first year of college: Research, theory, and practice on improving the student experience and increasing retention* (pp. 126–154). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

time students. There are plans to expand offering such experiences in more classes, with a [taxonomy](#) to support faculty's reflection on HIEEs use in their classes.

- Weber State has long offered a [First-Year Experience](#) class (UNIV 1105), managed by the [Student Success Center](#), and supports students' transition to college. The course has been popular and shown to support student [retention](#). Recent innovations have involved partnering with academic programs to offer learning communities in which students also enrolled in [Developmental Math](#), [Honors](#), and [Outdoor and Community Recreation Education](#) classes. The program has also collaborated with specific colleges (Colleges of Arts & Humanities, EAST, and Education) or other student groups (athletes and students in housing) to offer more targeted FYE courses addressing students' specific needs or backgrounds.
- The [Wildcat Scholars](#) program is a collaboration between Academic and Student Affairs, funded by a 2018 Department of Education SIP [grant](#). The program invites students placed in Developmental Math and Developmental English to join a learning community for their first year. Students are supported to complete corequisite Math and English classes and other classes that include community engagement and other high-impact educational experiences that promote their engagement and success. The retention rate of the 184 Wildcat Scholars from recent cohorts is 53% which is higher than other Dev-Dev placed students (metric [IIA2](#)) and on par with overall student retention.
- The DFWI rates of first-time students ([1.C.6](#)) in gateway Gen Ed courses prompted the development of the [FAST Start](#) program, a collaboration between Academic and Student Affairs managed by the SSSC sub-committee on [Transitions and Opportunities](#). The program offers first-year students specially designed courses that include embedded [student learning assistants](#), who support students' engaging course material, learning about university resources, and developing connections ([1.B.1](#)). FAST Start is a pilot program, but preliminary data show a higher course completion rate for FAST Start than other students in other sections of the same courses.

These initiatives bring together faculty and student support staff to address the well-documented challenges faced by first-year students. A first-year council also has been recently established with responsibilities for these and other first-year programs and classes. The council will coordinate the development of a coordinated, sustainable, and scalable program for all incoming first-time students to support their academic success, effective pathways to prepare for and complete gateway classes, and opportunities to feel socially connected. A new [website](#) provides students, advisors, and others information about programs and classes for first-year students.

1. C.8 – TRANSFER CREDIT AND CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING

Transfer credit and credit for prior learning is accepted according to clearly defined, widely published, and easily accessible policies that provide adequate safeguards to ensure academic quality. In accepting transfer credit, the receiving institution ensures that such credit accepted is appropriate for its programs and comparable in nature, content, academic rigor, and quality.

Weber State has well-established processes for prior learning assessment and transfer articulation which follow [Utah Board of Higher Education](#) ([R470](#) and [R472](#)) and Weber State University ([PPM 4-21a](#)) policies and are shared widely with all constituencies. Both

processes are managed centrally through the [Office of the Registrar](#) but require faculty to approve such credit, ensuring only academically appropriate credits are accepted.

Transfer Credit

The Registrar's Office oversees the transfer articulation process based on approvals from academic departments and programs. Each department or program assigns primary and secondary "articulators" to review transfer credit and determine the appropriate articulations. A custom software streamlines the transfer articulation workflow, which occurs year-round as students submit transfer credit to the institution. The software interface allows faculty to review the transfer credit and course descriptions⁴⁷ from each transfer institution's catalogs. The software provides reminder notifications if articulations are not completed promptly,⁴⁸ with most completed within one to two days, ensuring an efficient result for students. Once designated faculty determine the course equivalents, these articulations are stored in the student information system and reused for future students who bring the same transfer credit, ensuring efficiency and consistency. The software also allows articulators to reroute course evaluations to other departments if deemed appropriate and send questions and comments to the Registrar's Office to support accuracy and compliance with university policies. The Registrar's Office annually verifies and updates the list of designated articulators to maintain uninterrupted workflows, even during summers. Potential transfer students can learn about the credit transfer process from the Transfer [website](#), where they can submit [equivalency review requests](#), look up equivalencies from the WSU [Transfer Guide](#), or explore Military course transfer [opportunities](#). Matriculated transfer students are provided with resources and next steps from Admissions, transfer recruiters, advisors, and New Student Orientation. Finally, the Utah Board of Higher Education ([2.A.1](#)) policy ([R470](#)) mandates the transfer of all courses and the transfer of General Education program requirements within the system. Students may also petition for the transfer of a General Education attribute for a course completed at an institution outside the system, even if it did not transfer as a specific WSU class ([General Education Attribute Transfer Petition Process](#)).

Prior Learning Credit

Awarding prior learning credit (PLC) is also a centralized process with department faculty input. Credit by exam may be awarded via standard exams⁴⁹ or special examinations administered by an academic department upon request. Credit by petition may be awarded for experiential learning, military training, police academy training, foreign language proficiency, and credit from non-regionally accredited institutions.

⁴⁷Course descriptions are entered by the Office of the Registrar using the Transfer Evaluation System (TES) from CollegeSource.

⁴⁸Primary articulators have three days to complete the articulation process before receiving a reminder email. If the primary articulator has not completed the review on the fourth, fifth, and/or sixth day, the software application notifies the secondary articulator to complete the review process. If the review still has not been completed by the sixth day, the software application notifies the college dean.

⁴⁹These exams include ACT or SAT, Advanced Placement (AP), College Level Examination Program (CLEP), Defense Activity for Nontraditional Education Support (DANTES/DSST), and International Baccalaureate (IB).

All opportunities for prior learning credit are listed on a dedicated [website](#), supporting potential and current students to determine the best path to earning their credentials. The landing page also serves as an essential resource for academic and faculty advisors who help students toward degree completion. The page provides details and relevant application forms for all prior learning options, with links to individual resource pages for each option. The landing page is easily accessible via the topical keyword index or search bar found on every university website.

For credit based on *standardized exams*, the Utah Board of Higher Education Policy ([R472.9.3](#)) ensures consistency across system institutions through a system-wide alignment process at yearly Majors Meetings. All standardized exam equivalencies are stored in the student information system and displayed on the university's Prior Learning [website](#) by test type. The process for students to receive *special examination credit* usually begins with academic advisement to determine any appropriate prior learning opportunities. Students passing the exam submit the required [documentation](#) to the Office of Admissions, which posts the credit to the student record. Finally, for *credit by petition*, students apply for credit to their academic program along with any required supporting documentation. There are exceptions for military credit that involves submitting the Joint Services Transcript (JST) or Department of Defense Form 214 (DD214) Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty directly to the Registrar's Office. All other petition credit types are first reviewed and approved by the academic department, then sent to the Office of the Registrar, which posts the credit to the student record. Students may apply for prior learning credit at any time in the academic year as the review process is ongoing⁵⁰.

1. C.9 – GRADUATE PROGRAMS

The institution's graduate programs are consistent with its mission, are in keeping with the expectations of its respective disciplines and professions, and are described through nomenclature that is appropriate to the levels of graduate and professional degrees offered. The graduate programs differ from undergraduate programs by requiring, among other things, greater: depth of study; demands on student intellectual or creative capacities; knowledge of the literature of the field; and ongoing student engagement in research, scholarship, creative expression, and/or relevant professional practice.

Graduate programs are a meaningful part of Weber State University's mission to provide "associate, baccalaureate and master's degree programs" in liberal arts, sciences, technical and professional fields. Each program also embraces its mission responsibility to offer "excellent educational experiences." The programs are subject to State ([R401](#)) and WSU ([PPM 11-1](#)) policies and managed through the [Graduate Council](#), which comprises relevant administrators and a representative of each of the 18 graduate programs⁵¹, with at least one in each college. A total of 911 graduate students were enrolled in 2020-2021 (3% of all enrollments), a notable increase from the 637 enrollments in 2015-2016 (2% of all enrollments). The growth resulted from eight new programs being added during this period, including the [Doctor of Nursing Practice](#), and expanding emphasis in two programs.

⁵⁰ Before prior learning credit may be posted, students must pay a small recording fee to the Cashier's Office to cover administrative costs as outlined in policy ([PPM 6-17](#)).

⁵¹ Only 17 programs are actively enrolling and graduating students -- Physicians Assistants program is still gearing up.

In this section, the process of graduate program assessment is presented, as is their relation to undergraduate programs.

Review of Graduate Program Requirements

New and ongoing graduate programs undergo similar review processes as undergraduate programs ([1.C.1](#))

New graduate program approval: A proposed program is reviewed and approved by the department, college, graduate council, university curriculum committee, and faculty senate. Proposals are reviewed for various features, including curriculum, financial viability, student and market demand, learning outcomes, advising assessment protocols, and other student support resources. Before final approval by the Board of Trustees, the program is further evaluated by President's Council ([1.B.3](#), [2.A.2](#), [2.A.4](#)) and then by a system-wide peer review ([R411](#)), which provides another level of scrutiny on all requirements and addresses curricular structure and process. For example, the new master's in Physician Assistant Studies program was challenged in peer-review for concerns about clinical placements and heavy didactic requirements in the first year. The response noted that the program accommodated the accreditation requirements and national best practices for the program. The peer-review comments and responses are shared with the Board of Trustees, who decide on all "in mission" graduate programs. The DNP required an additional step of gaining approval by the Utah Board of Higher Education for a degree program "out of mission" for the institution's role in the system ([R312](#)).

Ongoing graduate program review: Graduate programs perform the same [academic assessment](#) as undergraduate programs ([1.C.1](#), [1.C.5](#), and [1.C.7](#)), including formative biennial assessments and summative program reviews. In a survey of all 18 graduate programs, they each noted the alignment with disciplinary bodies, including professional associations and accreditation agencies, is central in monitoring and revising their curriculum. They also based curriculum evaluation and change on student data (from student assessment and feedback) and occupation information (feedback from employers and/or program advisory boards). Together these processes ensure oversight of program quality and commitment to continuous improvement.

As noted in [1.C.1](#), summative program review is an 18-month process that requires a program self-study, evaluation by external and internal reviewers, responses by the program and dean, and a final review by the Graduate Council with recommendations to the Provost. Analysis of student learning outcomes reported in Appendix 1 (metric [IID1](#)) showed an 89.6% achievement of graduate program learning outcomes, which is not significantly different than the threshold. Survey data further affirm that students value their graduate program experience (metric [IID2](#)). Two programs to illustrate the review process and its impact on quality and improvement.

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- The [Master of Professional Communication](#) (MPC) was first reviewed in 2015. Based on the Curriculum Map in the [self-study](#) (p.10), students achieved 90%⁵² of program-level outcomes in courses identified where comprehensive assessment occurred (metric [IID1](#)). The 2019 [self-study](#) found that students achieved 79.2% of the learning outcomes using the same curriculum map (p. 3) for the assessment, but with almost all students identified as “adequate” or satisfactory. The department offered a detailed analysis of the assessment data and planned changes to address some identified shortcomings. The peer-review [comments](#) suggested ways to strengthen assessment and highlight critical thinking and cultural competence outcomes of various courses. The department faculty embraced these and other suggestions in their [response](#), which the Provost [supported](#). As a result, multiple curricular revisions were approved. For example, the variable topics [MPC 6500](#) class now highlights diversity, and a [program change](#) created multiple research methods courses, requiring one.
 - In their 2014 [self-study](#), the [Master of Education](#) program proposed to create an “Institutional Graduate Certificate” for all students admitted to what was, at the time, the licensure track. This proposal was made in response to low graduation rates in the master’s program because these students only needed the licensure courses. The courses were offered through a mix of the Teacher Education Department and the Department of Online and Continuing Education. This licensure track became the [Graduate Certificate in Teaching](#). The proposal was supported by the [program review](#) team and the [Graduate Council](#) and embraced by the [department](#). The 2018 program [self-study](#) discussed the further expanded program offerings⁵³, adding new emphases in Higher Education Leadership, Educational Leadership, and Family Life Educator to the already existing M.Ed in Curriculum and Learning. The program design retains a core set of classes across all emphases. In their analysis, the [program review](#) team highlighted that the department recognized the challenges of offering four emphases and offered suggestions about strengthening mission, curriculum, assessment, and partnerships. The [faculty](#) and [dean](#) accepted most suggestions, with several emphasized by the [Provost](#) in his response.

Relation of graduate to undergraduate programs

Graduate programs typically have entry and completion requirements that chart how foundational knowledge and skills expected of undergraduate students are transformed and professionalized by students' experience in the graduate programs. When surveyed, the graduate programs described the process differently but with common themes of building on foundational knowledge and skills to support students' professional work in the field. We share examples of the narratives offered by three programs housed in different colleges to highlight this diversity and commonality.

- Enrollment in the [Master of Computer Science](#) program requires students to have an undergraduate CS degree or complete leveling courses. The graduate courses are more

⁵² The threshold used by MPC was a very stringent 75% of the student earning 87% of the learning outcomes. The 87% reflected a “strong” or outstanding performance. In contrast an “adequate” performance was considered satisfactory but was not considered in calculating the overall achievement rate. Averaged across the outcomes and assessments, 90% of the student achieved the “strong” threshold.

⁵³ The expansion addressed decreasing enrollments in the Curriculum and Instruction program and the increasing demand from surrounding school districts and university community.

rigorous and go into more depth than their undergraduate counterparts and build students' background and abilities to complete either an academic-based thesis or an industry-based project option (see [requirement](#)).

- The [Master of Health Administration](#) program is distinctly different from the undergraduate program the department also offers. The students tended to be working professionals, which is a preferred requirement for admission. The graduate faculty have industry experience at an executive level. Although some course topics are similar to the undergraduate program, the rigor and depth of study are more intense through robust case studies, simulation, advanced group work, and increased interaction with industry professionals. The final Internship/ Capstone Project ([MHA 6500](#)) is much more rigorous, with a final product that could be implemented in the organization. To demonstrate increases in students' depth of knowledge and growth of skills, course-, team-, and internship-based competencies are assessed and added to a folio (Portfolium) that students create and manage.
- The [Master of Business Administration](#) students must have a business undergraduate degree or completed foundational business courses. The MBA courses are both more in-depth and applied for students to better understand and meaningfully apply the material. Nearly all MBA courses require a comprehensive exam or project to ensure satisfactory student progress in their conceptual and applied knowledge and skills. The capstone course, [MBA 6180, Strategic Management](#), also requires that students complete a business management simulation project.

These examples highlight how graduate programs focus on students' acquisition of graduate-level knowledge and skills and professional socialization to meaningfully apply the knowledge and skills they acquire. This is accomplished by courses preparing students for an academic or professional capstone project, whether an academic or industry research project, internship, or simulation. The institution's response to this and the previous standards are among others demonstrating its compliance with NWCCU's [eligibility requirements](#) 5 (Student Learning) and 13 (Educational Programs)

STANDARD 1. D – STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

1. D.1 – RECRUITMENT AND ORIENTATION

Consistent with its mission, the institution recruits and admits students with the potential to benefit from its educational programs. It orients students to ensure they understand the requirements related to their programs of study and receive timely, useful, and accurate information and advice about relevant academic requirements, including graduation and transfer policies.

Weber State University is committed to its *Access* core theme in providing meaningful opportunities for prospective students to enroll in educational programs that are responsive to community needs ([1.A.1](#)). The institution aspires to go beyond merely offering opportunities for access by supporting students' success at the institution and beyond. This commitment is revealed throughout this section of the EIE, beginning here, with the first relationships the institution forges with students during recruitment and orientation.

Recruitment

As an open-enrollment institution, Weber State University's recruitment strategies focus on the broad goal of providing meaningful access and opportunity to a diverse group of students ([1.C.4](#)). Recruitment efforts target potential first-year students in high school [dual-credit](#) and [community education](#) courses (conveniently offered at the [Community Education Center](#)). Efforts also address potential students seeking [transfer pathways](#) and [graduate offerings](#). The [Office of Admissions](#) tailors to and embraces the wide array of potential future students, leading to differentiated recruiting strategies which require close collaborations with other institutional units.

- High school students completing WSU credit through Concurrent Enrollment and/or Early College are encouraged to matriculate through [active advising](#) in their course selection, so they are making progress towards a WSU certificate or degree program.
- New, out-of-state, first-year, and transfer student recruitment is a focus of the Strategic Enrollment Plan ([1.B.3](#)). New recruitment funnels, strategies, and target markets replaced historic pipelines and approaches and now receive significant attention from the Office of Admissions and [admissions counselors](#). The work has also involved a deepening partnership with the Registrar's Office overseeing an efficient credit [transfer](#) process ([1.C.7](#)).
- A focus on recruiting under-served populations involves coordinating with the Office of [Access and Diversity](#), which supports and advises special populations (metric [IIIA2](#)), including undocumented and DACA youth. Other Access and Diversity programs that focus on recruiting include [FAFSA assistance](#), [Summer Bridge courses](#), youth conferences ([MYC](#) and [LIA](#)), and educational outreach ([State GEAR UP](#), [TRIO Talent Search](#), [TRIO Upward Bound](#), and others) ([1.D.4](#)).
- A plan for expanded international student recruitment involves collaborating with the [International Student and Scholar Center](#) to implement specific recruitment [strategies](#).

Despite differentiated strategies involving partnerships with different offices, the fundamental recruitment message to potential students remains that the institution supports their success. This "service-model" approach leverages institutional strengths such as offering [low debt](#), [personalized educational interactions](#), a beautiful [location](#), and commitment to [student success](#). In addition, the approach seeks to connect students to a rich range of institutional [resources](#) and do so as soon as possible. An overarching recruitment philosophy was developed further during the Strategic Enrollment Plan (SEP) process ([1.B.3](#)). The SEP helped articulate an integrated, information-based, ongoing planning process that identifies, prioritizes, implements, evaluates, and adjusts enrollment [strategies](#). These strategies a) further the realization of the institutional mission, b) build on the institution's competitive advantage, c) contribute to institutional fiscal viability, d) enhance the institution's ability to attract and retain students, and e) embody the process of continuous improvement.

The pandemic heavily impacted traditional recruiting strategies such as high school visits and college fairs, and international options. While those activities will begin to ramp up again as the pandemic subsides, new, virtual strategies and innovative social media usage will likely continue. The recent opening of the [Welcome Center](#) will provide new

opportunities to engage students and their families as they tour and learn more about Weber State.

Orientation

[New student orientation](#) (NSO) is expected of all first-year, undergraduate degree- or certificate-seeking students and, beginning 2022, will be mandatory. Managed by the [Student Success Center](#) (SSC), NSO marks many matriculated students' first experience at the institution and first connection to the college of their major. NSO is offered in a hybrid format with five online modules⁵⁴ that must be completed and an optional, in-person "[Weber Welcome](#)" that students are strongly encouraged to attend. Students can complete the online modules from their home, a library, or in one of the on-campus computing labs.

The SSC NSO team regularly updates modules, informed by multiple campus units, to ensure first-time students are aware of critical processes, resources, and expectations to succeed as a new college student. These modules are also tailored to students' unique backgrounds and needs. There are variants or tracks of NSO modules specifically for Early College students, Concurrent Enrollment students, transfer students, and international students. For example, as dual enrolled and non-degree seeking, Concurrent Enrollment students need to know about a narrower set of topics, so there is only one module⁵⁵ to complete and no Weber Welcome. In contrast, international students participate in a three-part orientation. First, they complete the same online modules that all new students complete. The second part is a mandatory face-to-face orientation when the [International Student & Scholar Center](#) goes over the regulations related to the students' specific visa requirements and how they maintain their status. Finally, the students participate in a joint Weber Welcome with the domestic students, allowing them to connect with peers and learn more about Weber State. For ongoing support and mentoring, international students are highly encouraged to meet with their advisors as soon as possible after the first orientation to map their studies to fit within the limited time they are given on their visas. In addition, exchange students are required to sign up for [UNIV 1106](#) to help with cultural integration. At orientation, students are paired with "buddies," which connects a domestic student with an international student for the first semester, providing them with a go-to person to help them acclimate not only to WSU but to the community and Utah.

The online modules include assessments, which NSO staff regularly review to determine if the desired orientation outcomes are being met. For example, when asked if they were registered for classes, 40% of students responded that they were not clear about the classes for which they should register. As a result, programming was added to the NSO online modules that embed additional questions as students review the academic content.

⁵⁴ Through the online orientation [modules](#), students become familiar with the programs and majors available at WSU and learn how to register for classes and make payments on their student accounts (tuition, fees, etc.). They also learn about the many campus resources available as they become acquainted with important policies and information about how to stay safe on campus. The fifth module is to be completed after the Weber Welcome event.

⁵⁵ Topics include [Concurrent Enrollment Edge Scholarship](#), Wildcard, Certificate of Completion in General Education, eWeber account, Wildcat Mail, CatTracks, catalog, math and English Placement, ALEKS, Accuplacer, Academic Advising, GPA, Gen Eds, Early College, Degrees and Majors, Registration, and Testing Center.

Students are prompted to answer questions such as "Enter the math class you place into" immediately after the content about how students determine their math placement and the course options available to them. The NSO staff will continue to review assessment results and adjust the NSO programming as needed.

After the module, students and their academic advisors are emailed a list of classes in which students intend to register. The advisor selected for the student is from the college in which the student declared a major.⁵⁶ The student will likely continue their work with that advisor as long as they remain in that major. They may also be assigned a faculty advisor in the department of their major.

Orientation promotes students' transition to college by highlighting academic opportunities, available resources, and even ways to succeed. They leave orientation having connected with an advisor in the college of their major to review first-semester schedules. Students continue to be advised by the college or SSC advisors. The recruitment and orientation process reflects the institution's commitment to student success in recognizing the coordination needed between accepting, orienting, advising, and enrolling students. The institution's response to this standard is one of many demonstrating its compliance with NWCCU's [eligibility requirement](#) 17 (Admissions)

1. D.2 – DISAGGREGATED INDICATORS OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Consistent with its mission and in the context of, and in comparison, with regional and national peer institutions, the institution establishes and shares widely a set of indicators for student achievement including, but not limited to, persistence, completion, retention, and post-graduation success. Such indicators of student achievement should be disaggregated by race, ethnicity, age, gender, socioeconomic status, first generation college student, and any other institutionally meaningful categories that may help promote student achievement and close barriers to academic excellence and success (equity gaps).

The institution is vigilant in monitoring student achievement because of its mission to provide "excellent educational experiences" and the Learning core theme that "encourages learning and leads to student success" ([1.A.1](#)). The monitoring of the indicators of student achievement is an institution-wide effort, with data analyst teams across divisions collaborating and coordinating with college and university-wide student success committees ([1.B.3](#)). As documented below, student achievement data are distributed widely to campus and meaningfully contextualized by comparison over time and with peers and disaggregated by institutional "cohorts of interest."

Indicators of Student Achievement

One week before the beginning of the fall semester in 2019, President Brad Mortensen rolled out the new Key Performance Indicators ([KPI dashboard](#), [PDF](#)) to the campus, focusing on enrollment, retention/persistence, and completion metrics. Improvement in these metrics is a campus objective tied closely to mission fulfillment ([1.B.2](#)), the Strategic Enrollment Plan, and the new Strategic Plan ([1.B.3](#)), among other student success goals. The interactive Tableau dashboard is accessible to campus through the Report Gallery or

⁵⁶ Weber State has a distributed advising system in which students have advisors in the college of their major, unless they are General Studies majors and then they are advised by the advisors in the SSC ([2.G.6](#) and [PRFR Update](#)).

RG ([IPEG](#)), a one-stop digital resource containing 29 Argos reports and Tableau dashboards ([1.D.3](#)). The [KPI dashboard](#) allows critical data points to be 'at the fingertips' of every campus decision-maker. Each KPI is displayed with a five-year trend line, compared to the previous year, and disaggregated by institutionally relevant groups. The dashboard also allows approved retention advisors ([1.B.3](#), [PRFR Update](#)) and others to track and contact individual students who stopped out without a degree or certificate by downloading their contact information.

Identifying KPIs and sharing them in a dashboard was a significant step in the institution's student success efforts. Other Tableau dashboards in the RG allow campus constituencies to track in even more detail student [persistence and success](#) ([PDF](#)), [majors and graduation](#) ([PDF](#)), [graduation survey](#) ([PDF](#)), and [next-step success](#) ([PDF](#)), among other aspects of student achievement. Data from each dashboard are tied to Mission Fulfillment assessment and regularly reported to the University Planning Council and other constituencies ([1.B.2](#)).

Peer Comparisons of Key Student Achievement Indicators

Peer comparisons of student achievement indicators of retention and completion rates (as well as enrollment and tuition, among others) are regularly assessed through mission fulfillment and described in [1.B.2](#) and [Appendix 1](#). Viewing the data compared to national institutions provides needed context for interpreting the data by providing the institution with a picture of relative performance. For example, WSU's official IPEDs⁵⁷ retention rates have shown a steady increase over the past six years, from 60.1% in 2014 to 66.1% in 2019 (students retained in 2020). Although the institution's overall percent improvement is the highest of the group for the time frame, it is in the lower half of the designated peer group in overall retention rate (metric [IIA1](#)). The designated peer group is a set of [peer institutions](#) designated by the Commissioner's Office in 2004. Over time, the set of peer institutions has become misaligned in institutional selectivity, mission, and degrees granted (see [comparison chart](#)), which motivated a search for new peer institutions ([1.B.2](#)). Although the institution continues to vet the new ad-hoc set of peer institutions (so it is labeled as ad-hoc), WSU fares much better, landing about average in graduation and retention rates. The institution additionally compares itself to the two in-state regional peer institutions with similar missions ([Dixie State University](#), [Utah Valley University](#)). Again, the institution fares well in such comparisons ([1.B.2](#)). Even so, the bottom line for the institution of these comparisons is to strive to improve indicators of student achievement, as evidenced by the retention and completion goals and strategies adopted in the new [strategic plan](#) ([1.B.4](#)).

As part of WSU's vigilance in monitoring student achievement, students are regularly invited to participate in recognized national surveys that provide peer comparisons of engagement and satisfaction. In alternating years, first-year and senior students are invited to complete the National Survey of Student Engagement ([NSSE](#)) (metric [IIC1](#)) and the Ruffalo Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory ([SSI](#)) (metric [IIF3](#)). Results of both

⁵⁷ Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, which is based on the retention and graduation of first-time full-time bachelor-seeking cohorts of students. The WSU overall retention rate for all students in the same time period is 53.7% in 2014 to 26.4 in 2019 (a 2.7% increase) which can be found on the [KPI dashboard](#) ([PDF](#)).

surveys are shared broadly through institutional dashboards in the RG, with data from peer comparisons included in mission fulfillment presentations.

Post-graduation Success

Paramount to the WSU commitment to the mission and the Learning core theme is preparing all students for "next-step success." A robust graduate survey, administered to all students completing an associate, bachelor's, or master's degree, solicits student input on their academic experiences (metrics [IIB2](#), [IID2](#), [IIE2](#)). In addition, students share information about their post-graduation plans for continued or future education and current or anticipated jobs. These results are presented in the Report Gallery on the Graduate Survey [dashboard](#) ([PDF](#)) that can be filtered or college student demographics. The [Next-Step Success dashboard](#) ([PDF](#)) presents summary data of student post-graduation employment and education. WSU graduating student information is provided to the Department of Workforce Services to determine whether they have a record of earnings in the state.⁵⁸ Those salaries are averaged at the aggregate and displayed for one and five years post-graduation. Similarly, students who indicate an intention to pursue additional education are matched by the National Student Clearinghouse, which returns the number of students enrolled in continuing educational pursuits. Two mission fulfillment metrics also address the same data for students who complete the graduate survey and indicate their intention to seek employment or additional education after graduation (metrics [IIIC1](#) and [IIIC2](#)).

Disaggregating Data

Most student achievement dashboards allow users to select tabs or filters to disaggregate by some combination of traditional student demographics (race/ethnicity, gender, age, and degree category), institutional affiliation (major, college, student status), and "cohorts of interest." The cohorts are institutionally meaningful groups of students who may be "at-risk" for retention and completion. The cohorts of interest include underprepared, first-generation, ethnic minority, and Pell-eligible students, among other categories ([1.B.2](#)).

Dashboards with filters or tabs permitting disaggregation may include a unique "cohort of interest." The predictive analytics work of university analysts revealed that students who placed into both developmental math and Developmental English ("Dev-Dev placed") were at higher risk than other students (metric [IIA2](#), [IIF2](#)). This was a 'Eureka!' moment for the institution as it challenged the common belief that math was the primary stumbling point for students with developmental placement. Dev-Dev placed students were notable for having lower retention (metric [IIA2](#)) and completion (metric [IIF2](#)) rates than other "cohorts of interest." These students' challenges were further revealed in analyses of students' first-semester GPA (metric [IIE1](#)). Furthermore, as noted in Appendix 1 (metric [IIA2](#)), Dev-Dev placed students are overrepresented by ethnic minority, first-generation, and Pell-eligible students, raising equity concerns about the institution's responses to these students.

⁵⁸ Graduates who work as federal employees or are self-employed are not captured by the Utah Department of Workforce Services data.

Disaggregating data further clarified the challenges faced by ethnic minority students in Gen Ed gateway courses. As part of a Utah system-wide effort, WSU joined other institutions in exploring disaggregated student completion rates of gateway classes at the yearly General Education conference hosted by the Utah Board of Higher Education, General Education Task Force. Over the past several years, the conference examined national and statewide disaggregated data of the differential impact such courses have on student achievement. The WSU [contribution](#) reviewed institutional evidence showing WSU faces the same challenges as other schools nationally and regionally in closing completion gaps in these courses. Notably, there were no such gaps in student achievement of program-level general education learning outcomes (GELOs) ([1.C.6](#)).

The institution has plans ([1.B.3](#) and [1.B.4](#)) and actions ([1.D.3](#) and [1.D.4](#)) to address these issues and better support all students' achievement. The WSU strategic plan, with its grounding in an [equity framework](#), will support identifying and closing equity gaps in student achievement. This work will be made easier by WSU's participation in the [Postsecondary Data Partnership](#) (PDP) with the National Student Clearinghouse and sponsored, as well, by NWCCU. This participation will widen our lens on equity issues by better identifying equity gaps in student achievement, benchmarking them against other institutions, and determining how well the institution is closing them. By the time of the NWCCU visit, the data should be available for sharing with the committee.

1. D.3 – DISAGGREGATED INDICATORS FOR BENCHMARKING AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

The institution's disaggregated indicators of student achievement should be widely published and available on the institution's website. Such disaggregated indicators should be aligned with meaningful, institutionally identified indicators benchmarked against indicators for peer institutions at the regional and national levels and be used for continuous improvement to inform planning, decision making, and allocation of resources.

All the student achievement dashboards reported in the previous section are housed in the Report Gallery (RG) ([IPEG](#)). As noted, this homegrown application provides the campus with a one-stop digital resource containing 29 Argos reports and Tableau dashboards. The RG was designed to provide easy access to the most popular reports and visualizations used by stakeholders – from administrative assistants to senior administration. But more than that, ensuring that stakeholders know how and where to access and regularly use standard data is critical in creating a data-informed institution, a goal of the university Data and Analytics Committee⁵⁹ that manages the Report Gallery. Coded into the application are search functions and a subscription feature that allows end-users to receive periodic dashboard updates. Furthermore, the soon-to-be-implemented communication plan will notify targeted constituencies at designated times about relevant data to make time-sensitive decisions (e.g., opening up new sections during registration), perform actions (e.g., reaching out to stopped-out students before registration), and write reports (e.g., departmental self-study for program review).

⁵⁹ The university Data and Analytics Committee is composed by analysts and administrators from [data centers](#) in each division across the university. UDAC's mission is to identify and distribute relevant data, offer support and training to promote the value of data-based decision-making across campus.

Distributing Disaggregated Student Achievement Data

Internal: The RG is for campus use and includes all relevant student achievement dashboards and reports to keep the campus informed and coordinated in their student success efforts. These dashboards share common navigational features, including opportunities to disaggregate data, which has been a hallmark of the interactive dashboards since their inception. These dashboards include the following:

- [Key Performance Indicators](#): The Persistence/Retention ([PDF](#)) and Completion ([PDF](#)) tabs allow for five-year tracking of five cohorts: Dev-Dev placed, Hispanic, First-Generation, IPEDS, and Non-Resident students.
- [Persistence and Success](#): The Persistence Comparison tab ([PDF](#)) allows following student cohorts from a fall entry to graduation disaggregated by various student demographic and background variables. Other tabs also allow similar analyses.
- [Majors and Graduation](#): The Demographic tabs include filters to disaggregate student major and graduation data ([PDF](#)) by gender, ethnicity, age, year, and first-generation status, among other variables and combinations. The dashboard also allows drilling down to the specific majors.
- [Graduation survey](#): The Demographics tab ([PDF](#)) allows filtering results by age, gender, and ethnicity.
- [Next-step success](#): The Demographics tab ([PDF](#)) allows filtering of subsequent employment and education of graduating students by age, gender, and ethnicity.
- [National Survey of Student Engagement](#): Offers a Demographics tab to characterize the sample and filters ([PDF](#)) to explore engagement and HIPs planned or completed by gender, ethnicity, age, year, and first-generation status. The dashboard is also available publicly.
- [Student Satisfaction Inventory](#): The Demographics tab characterizes the sample and filters ([PDF](#)) to explore satisfaction and importance of gender, ethnicity, age, year, and first-generation status. The dashboard is also available publicly.

Other dashboards provide disaggregated data for [undergraduate](#) ([PDF](#)) and [graduate](#) ([PDF](#)) programs, which is helpful to colleges, departments, and programs preparing Program Reviews and Strategic Plan Analysis ([1.B.3](#), [1.C.1](#), [1.C.5](#), [1.C.9](#)). Additionally, Starfish data provides college advisors with details of student backgrounds and academic performance to provide tailored support ([1.B.1](#), [1.B.3](#), [PRFR Update](#)).

As noted in [1.D.2](#), many of these dashboards were designed based on mission fulfillment results, specifically the predictive analytics on university cohorts of interest in student retention and six-year graduation rates ([1.B.2](#), see metrics [IIA2](#), [IIE1](#), [IIF2](#)). The results showed that Dev-Dev placed students face hurdles as early as the first semester in completing classes, being retained, and completing degrees. Many of the dashboards provide opportunities to disaggregate this cohort. As documented in the [KPI dashboard](#) and metric [IIA2](#), there have been improvements in retention rates and closing equity gaps. However, it is too early to know whether the efforts will impact these students' completion rates, which continue to show flat or downward trends for the cohorts who enrolled before these initiatives were instituted.

EIE [1.D.2](#) noted that the university has become part of the National Student Clearinghouse PDP project and will provide additional disaggregated completion data at the course level, benchmarked to PDP peers. These data will give additional insight to academic and student support units to better target student needs to close equity gaps, which is part of the broad equity framework of the adopted [strategic plan](#).

Public: Disaggregated student achievement data are available to the public as well. The [public data page](#) includes the following disaggregated data:

- [Fast Facts](#):
 - The student characteristics tab includes enrollment rates disaggregated by ethnicity.
 - The graduation and retention tab reports graduation rates by year disaggregated by gender, ethnicity, and financial aid.
- [Institutional Profile](#): The student demographics tab provides third-week census data by year, disaggregated by gender, ethnicity, and age (among other variables).
- [National Survey of Student Engagement](#): Offers a Demographics tab to characterize the sample and filters to explore engagement and HIPs planned or completed by gender, ethnicity, age, year, and first-generation status.
- [Student Satisfaction Inventory](#): The Demographics tab characterizes the sample and filters to explore satisfaction and importance of gender, ethnicity, age, year, and first-generation status.

The wide availability of disaggregated student achievement data is part of a broader university data strategy to make as much data available to constituencies so long as security, privacy, and anonymity requirements are protected.

Comparative Equity Gap Analysis

Institutional Effectiveness completed a [report](#) based on IPEDS graduation data, disaggregated by gender and ethnicity, to compare equity gaps by our regional, designated, and ad-hoc peer institutions.⁶⁰ The analysis was based on data from the past five years. Below is a summary of that analysis.

- *Gender*: WSU has an average 12% gap in graduation rates by gender, with a higher proportion of women (39%) than men (27%) graduating in six years. WSU's male and female graduation rate is similar to other open-enrollment regional and ad-hoc peer institutions. However, WSU's average 12% gender equity gap is higher than the average gap of regional (7.67%), ad-hoc (7.71%), and designated (8.71%) peer institution groups.
- *Ethnicity*: WSU had an average 14.4% equity gap between the six-year graduation rate of White (36.2%) and Hispanic/Latino (21.8%) students. WSU's graduation rate of Hispanic/Latino and White students is similar to other open-enrollment regional (30%, 19%) and ad-hoc (34%, 24%) peer institutions. But again, WSU's average 14% equity gap by ethnicity is higher than the average gap of regional (11.72%), ad-hoc (10.26%), and designated (10.47%) peer groups.

⁶⁰ See [1.B.2](#) and [1.D.2](#) for details of these peer groups.

The data were shared with the Assistant Vice President for Diversity and Chief Diversity Officer, who co-chairs the Equity initiative of the Strategic Plan (1.B.3). The report was posted on the Diversity Office's Transparency and Reporting [page](#). These data will inform the CDO office's work with faculty, administrators, and staff to promote the strategic planning [equity framework](#) that promotes closing equity gaps. As the strategic plan is implemented, the equity gaps identified by these data, and the forthcoming PDP data (1.D.2), will be addressed by equity audits performed by each unit. Closing equity gaps is also a priority for deans of all colleges and all units in Academic Affairs as part of the divisional EDI [statement](#) and strategic plan (1.B.3). Again, the expected benchmarked PDP data will provide even greater insight into the nature of the equity gaps and the need to close them.

The university's commitment to its core themes, focusing on meaningful student access and success, has resulted in well-developed processes for identifying, collecting, and publishing indicators of student achievement, disaggregated by traditional and university-specific cohorts. The data are contextualized with comparison to regional and national peers. Multiple student success efforts across campus use these results to inform their planning efforts (1.B.3), resource allocations, and interventions (1.B.1, 1.B.3, 1.B.4, 1.D.4) in support of continuous improvement. The institution's response to this standard is one of many demonstrating its compliance with NWCCU's [eligibility requirements](#) 6 (Student Achievement), 21 (Disclosure), and 22 (Relationship with NWCCU)

1. D.4 – INFORMING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIES AND ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES

The institution's processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing indicators of student achievement are transparent and are used to inform and implement strategies and allocate resources to mitigate perceived gaps in achievement and equity.

Collecting, analyzing, and widely distributing disaggregated student achievement data reflects the commitment to the university Mission and core themes to provide "meaningful access" and "excellent educational experiences" (1.A.1). The institution's commitment to *acting* on the data to ensure student achievement and equity also addresses the third Core Theme of the Mission: *Community*. To be an "educational, cultural, and economic leader for the region," the institution embraces inclusive excellence by improving achievement for *all* students and closing equity gaps. This section highlights the use of disaggregated data for planning, prioritizing, and resourcing initiatives to improve student achievement and close equity gaps. The results of existing, developing, and future initiatives specifically around improving retention rate and closing retention gaps are presented. The focus is on *retention* because existing impact data are available, but the work also applies to improving achievement and closing equity gaps in *completion* as well.

Results for Existing and Developing Initiatives addressing Disaggregated Data

The analysis of institutional "cohorts of interest" (metrics [IIA2](#), [IIE1](#), [IIF2](#)) suggests that as part of its goal to improve first-semester GPA, retention rates, and completion rates, the institution needs to address its equity gaps in student achievement. There have been new

and developing initiatives to address these gaps, which are demonstrating some initial successes. To exemplify the institution's ongoing equity work, examples of initiatives that appear to have closed identified equity gaps are described below, along with emerging initiatives designed to continue to target those gaps. However, caution is exercised in ascribing causality of the direct impact of any one initiative on outcomes.

Increase in Dev-Dev Placed Student Retention: Dev-Dev placed student retention rate increased by 5.9% (41.4% - 47.3%) from 2014-2019 (metric [IIA2](#)). As previously noted, this group is overrepresented by ethnic minority, first-generation, and low-income students, raising equity concerns over placement policies and the efficacy of the developmental curriculum for these students.⁶¹ The improved retention of these students contrasts with a 2.7% increase (53.7% - 56.4%) in the retention of all students. New initiatives impacting overall retention rate also likely impacted Dev-Dev placed students' retention.

- The Starfish program's academic early alert function has been shown to [impact](#) students' retention. These alerts are raised by faculty and resolved by academic advisors who direct students to resources to address academic concerns ([1.B.1](#) and [1.B.3](#)). In addition, the planned rollout of the *Starfish intake survey* (to connect first-time students to needed programs and resources) and *Starfish analytics*, including retention scores (to provide additional advisor support in scheduling first-year students), will further target improvement in all students' retention rates.
- The new college retention advisors reach out personally to students majoring in their college who remain unenrolled during registration periods. This personal attention likely increased all students' retention ([1.B.3](#), [PRFR update](#))
- Colleges, departments, and other units have first-year initiatives, including required advising in some departments, college-specific first-year classes (Health Professions, International Students), and use of college-peer mentors to work with new minority student majors (Education) ([1.B.3](#)).
- Departments and faculty have embraced the new pilot [FAST Start](#) program to support first-year students ([1.C.7](#)). Faculty work together to redesign their gateway courses in English, math, history, psychology, life sciences, health, and communication and take advantage of an assigned embedded Learning Assistant to promote student engagement. Preliminary results show improved course completion rates in the FAST Start classes.
- New [First Year Experience](#) classes (UNIV 1105) are targeting majors in specific colleges (Colleges of Arts & Humanities, EAST, and Education) and other student groups (athletes and students in housing). In addition, FYE classes are being offered as part of learning communities in which students also enroll in Honors or outdoor recreation classes. These innovations will likely have the same [impact](#) as traditional FYE class enrollment in promoting higher student retention rates (which is higher than the overall rate for all students).

⁶¹ Analyses suggested that the retention increases were realized by all Dev-Dev placed students, including ethnic minorities, first-generation, and Pell-eligible Dev-Dev students.

Additionally, there have been several targeted initiatives to improve the Dev-Dev placed students' retention.

- Both the Developmental English and Developmental Math programs changed placement rules, excluding Dev-Dev placement of students who lack placement data,⁶² reducing the number of Dev-Dev students. Both departments also adopted student success strategies in the developmental curriculum, including a focus on growth mindset in Developmental Math classes and a more culturally appropriate curriculum and pedagogy in Developmental English. In addition, many of the instructors teaching in both programs attend an Inclusive Excellence training hosted by the Wildcat Scholars program (see below).
- New corequisite courses ([1.C.7](#)) from the Departments of Mathematics ([MATH 1035, math pathway](#)) and English ([ENGL 1005, English pathway](#)) allow students to complete the composition and math requirement more quickly and cheaply, following national best practices.⁶³ Preliminary results replicate the national data.
- The [Wildcat Scholars](#) program ([1.B.4, 1.C.7](#)) began as a state-funded Student Success Steering Committee ([1.B.3, 1.B.4](#)) initiative in 2016 but is now federally funded and co-managed by Academic and Student Affairs. It provides Dev-Dev placed students with a learning community, access to corequisite math and English courses, embedded academic supports ([1.B.1](#)), and community-engaged and other high-impact educational experiences opportunities ([1.B.3](#)). Other features include intrusive advising, a textbook library, and inclusive excellence training for faculty teaching in the program. The 2019 and 2020 (N = 184) cohorts' retention rate was 53%, close to the overall retention for all students.

Increase in Hispanic/Latino Student Retention: Hispanic/Latino student retention rate increased by 6.2% (47.9% - 54.1%) from 2014-2019 (metric [IIA2](#)). This contrasts with a 2.2% increase (54.3% - 56.5%) in the retention of White students during the same period, diminishing the equity gap. As before, many of the new initiatives impacting the retention rates at the institution described above likely also impacted Hispanic/Latino students' retention, including those targeting Dev-Dev placed students. There have been several initiatives to address the Hispanic/Latino students' retention designed to make WSU more welcoming and create a sense of belonging for Hispanic/Latino and all underserved students.

- At the college and department levels, new justice and equity committees (Education, Social Science), equity audits (Library), and strategic planning (Education, Business) focus on minority students. These initiatives align with the academic affairs EDI [statement](#). College-based initiatives to engage minority students have occurred through student organizations (e.g., [MAS](#)), outreach to high schools (Business and Economics), and other intentional approaches to recruiting minorities and supporting them in programs (Health Professions, BIS, EAST).

⁶² This decreased the number of students identified as Dev-Dev from 29% of all fall first-year students in 2014 to 19% in 2019. This action did not have had a direct impact on retention rates as there is now an increase to 11% of first-year students who are unplaced. But the action recognizes concerns about such a placement.

⁶³ Complete College America. *No Room for Doubt: Moving Corequisite Support from Idea to Imperative* (2021). completecollege.org/noroomfordoubt

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- The Office of Access and Diversity has spearheaded several new initiatives, including a growing [Peer Mentoring](#) program (1.B.1) and an expanding [Center for Multicultural Excellence](#), which offers a range of services and functions as a student community center. In addition, the new Advocates for FAFSA [program](#) works with graduating high school students to navigate the FAFSA process, and [Diversity & Inclusive Programs](#) raises issues of equity and inclusion on campus through presentations and discussions. The Community Engagement [program](#) is designed to support minority students and their families. The Access & Diversity office also offers support and resources for [DACA students](#).

Increase in the first-semester GPA: Metric [IIE1](#) documents an 8.4% increase in students earning a first semester GPA above the 2.2 threshold. As students who miss the threshold are overrepresented by Dev-Dev placed and Hispanic students, this improvement is considered a product of all the work described above.

Planning and Resourcing Initiatives based on Disaggregated Data:

This section of the EIE concludes by highlighting the continued institutional planning and emerging initiatives that address improving student achievement and closing equity gaps. Much of the identification of new initiatives or strategies has occurred through [strategic planning](#). It also continues to occur through the [Student Success Steering Committee](#) and its university-wide sub-committees ([1.B.3](#), [1.B.4](#)). Divisional planning is resourcing these initiatives, and specific units are implementing them, often in new collaborative ways ([1.B.1](#), [1.C.7](#), [1.D.1](#)). The initiatives associated with the plans also are finding homes in the college strategic plans, department strategic planning reports, and yearly unit reports as they are implemented ([1.B.1](#), [1.B.3](#), [1.B.4](#)). In addition, deans have been working with the Provost to create and resource new College Student Success teams that will additionally implement strategic plan goals in colleges and departments.

An [equity framework](#) serves as a preamble to the strategic plan. It commits the institution to critically examine disaggregated data and address inequities by focusing on the institutional structures, policies, practices, norms, and values contributing to the inequities. The plan also articulates two overarching and interconnected strategic outcomes: growing enrollments and becoming an Emerging Hispanic-Serving Institution. Disaggregated data are critical for the institution to recognize the need to be more responsive to the needs of *all* students and achieve the outcomes of strategic goals and strategies.

WSU RESPONSE TO PRFR RECOMMENDATIONS

Policies, Regulations, and Financial Review Update

The institution appreciates the work of the NWCCU PRFR Evaluation Committee in reviewing and providing feedback on Weber State University's responses to NWCCU Standard 2. There were many suggestions in the feedback that the institution has taken note. More formally, the Committee made the following recommendation.

- Recommendation 1: Spring 2021 Policies, Regulations, and Financial Review - The following standards are areas substantially in compliance but where improvement is needed. (2020 Standard(s) 2.D.1;2.G.5;2.G.6)

An update that describes the institutional actions addressing each standard is offered below.

2.D.1 INSTITUTIONAL INTEGRITY, COMMUNICATIONS

The institution represents itself clearly, accurately, and consistently through its announcements, statements, and publications. It communicates its academic intentions, programs, and services to students and to the public and demonstrates that its academic programs can be completed in a timely fashion. It regularly reviews its publications to ensure accuracy and integrity in all representations about its mission, programs, and services.

PRFR Evaluation Team: “Needs improvement.”

The institution provided evidence of protocols and procedures to ensure that public communications, including the website and catalog, are accurate and professional. We noted, however, that the institution's policies and procedures (PPM 7-1 to 7-11) has not been recently updated and does not reflect a modern communications enterprise. Moreover, while Weber State University surely has a robust communications plan for keeping its campus and community constituencies engaged and informed, this was not clear from the documentation that it provided. We would have liked to know how WSU is using communications to inform the campus community and other stakeholders.

Weber State University Response

The university acknowledges that several of the policies under [PPM 7-1 to 7-11](#) need to be updated to reflect modern communication enterprise. The executive director for Marketing and Communications, the director of Public Relations, and the University's Legal Counsel, have reviewed these policies and sorted them into three categories: need revision, delete, and current/accurate. This group is now moving forward with updates for the policies that fall under the first two categories. These policy changes will follow the process outlined in [2.A.4](#), which involves approval by the President's Council and the Board of Trustees after a review by various constituencies.

An outline of the various communications channels used by WSU to inform stakeholders resides in both crisis communications plans developed by [Public Safety](#) and in materials

regularly distributed by Public Relations. [Marketing & Communications](#) has pulled these resources together and packaged them as a resource [page](#) on their website.

Finally, although not a specific reference to [2.D.1](#), the PRFR Review Committee urged greater transparency in financial reporting in their final summary comment:

We recommend improvement in just two primary areas. First, we request that the institution more clearly document how it keeps stakeholders and the public informed and engaged via a variety of communication channels. This is likely occurring today but wasn't evident from the submission. On a related note, we recommend the institution be more publicly transparent with its financial reports, beyond the admirable work it appears to do already to keep its Board of Trustees and various subcommittees informed. Greater transparency seems likely only to build public confidence in the institution's financial stability. Second, we recommend that the institution more comprehensively address how it ensures that its advising program has the highest-possible impact on students.

The comment is appreciated and understood to address a broader institutional discussion about financial transparency rather than an issue to be tackled specifically by Marketing & Communications or Financial Services. As part of the transparency issue, regular fiscal discussions occur between the faculty senate standing committee on [Salary, Benefits, Budget and Fiscal Planning](#) (SBBFP) and senior administration (President, Provost, and, as needed, VP of Administrative Services). The responsibilities of SBBFC are to study, evaluate and make recommendations on faculty salaries, benefits, budgets, and financial planning.

Discussion on ways to be more financially transparent to internal and external constituencies is planned for President's Council. In the meantime, to highlight financial reports, the university has made them more easily and widely available by adding a link on the A-Z index on the WSU [home page](#) to the Financial Reports [page](#). The page was always available on the Accounting Services [website](#) but required multiple clicks to access. The institution is proud of its fiscal management and, as the reviewers note, sharing such information is in everyone's best interest.

[2.G.5](#) – STUDENT REPAYMENT OBLIGATIONS AND DEFAULT RATES

Students receiving financial assistance are informed of any repayment obligations. The institution regularly monitors its student loan programs and publicizes the institution's loan default rate on its website.

PRFR Evaluation Team: “Needs improvement.”

WSU student loan recipients are required to complete entry and exit counseling, which includes a discussion of repayment obligations. The institution attests that it regularly monitors its student loan programs. While the institution provided to us its loan default rate, we were unable to identify a location where this is published on its website, even after reviewing the “public disclosures” page.

Weber State University Response

The institution now reports its [cohort default rate](#) (with a link to the Federal Student Aid, Official Cohort Default Rates for Schools page) on the university's [public disclosures](#) page.

2.G.6 – ACADEMIC ADVISEMENT

The institution designs, maintains, and evaluates a systematic and effective program of academic advisement to support student development and success. Personnel responsible for advising students are knowledgeable of the curriculum, program and graduation requirements, and are adequately prepared to successfully fulfill their responsibilities. Advising requirements and responsibilities of advisors are defined, published, and made available to students.

PRFR Evaluation Team: “Needs improvement.”

While WSU's decision to take a decentralized approach to advising may be appropriate, we wished to see more details about how the University ensures high quality, high impact advising practices. From the information available in the report and online, it appeared that advisors may not have had recent (2020-21) training opportunities. The Starfish program could be an important tool for timely and effective interventions to support student success, but it wasn't clear how the system is being used. How often are red flags raised? Who responds, and how quickly? We encourage the institution to provide more information about how it uses cross-training or other strategies to provide consistent and timely interventions to support students. Finally, we recommend that the institution address how they are using disaggregated student data or other information to drive their approach to improving advising services.

Weber State University Response

We appreciate the request for details about how the university ensures high-quality, high-impact advising practices. We provide such details and address the broader issues raised by the institution's approach to advising. Best practices in the literature have seen an evolution of advising approaches from very centralized in the 1980s-2000s to more decentralized from 2000s-2020. The University has adopted what was described as a decentralized but coordinated model, particularly for the first year, which captures elements of both approaches. The model has decentralized college advisors supporting students majoring in the college and advisors in the [Student Success Center](#) (SSC) who, in addition to providing prescriptive and holistic advisement of General Studies majors, manage the centralized advising technologies, notably New Student Orientation and Starfish. The value of the distributed but coordinated model for first-year students can be seen in new student orientation ([1.D.1](#)). It is managed centrally by the SSC but involves a critical handoff to college advisors to support first-year students creating their first-semester schedules.

In addition, more full-time professional college "retention advisors" ([1.B.3](#)) have been hired. The result has been a growing full-time professional advisor *community* to realize the distributed but coordinated model. This community is regularly trained. For example, between January 2020 and April 2021, ten 90 minutes *Advisor Information Series* presentations were held addressing different topics pertinent to the entire academic advising community. Multiple topics were presented such as Developmental Math, Options

for First-Year Students, General Education, Retention Initiatives, Enrollment Services Panel, college presentation on interdisciplinary work, etc. The presentations were held in person, moved to Zoom during COVID-19, and recorded for easy access on the Canvas Advisor Training course. Also, between January 2020 and April 2021, monthly [UAAC \(1.B.3\)](#) meetings were held (except August and December, months typically very busy for advisors). Each two-hour meeting included timely updates on policy, programs, and resources. Usually, there is a guest speaker for a 10-30 minute presentation on information critical to advisor success.

Questions posed by the PRFR Evaluation Team addressed the implementation of Starfish, specifically *how often are red flags raised? Who responds, and how quickly?* Starfish implementation is a point of close collaboration between faculty and the advisor community, working centrally through the SSC and de-centrally in a college ([1.C.7](#)). Starfish is discussed in various EIE standards ([1.B.1](#), [1.B.3](#), [1.C.7](#), [1.D.3](#), [1.D.4](#)). Details about the kinds of flags raised, who raises them, who responds, and the context or conditions of the process are described below:

- **Progress Surveys** (Faculty raised / Specialized and retention advisors outreach). The Progress Surveys are active from week 4-6 of each semester for faculty to complete in all classes except concurrent enrollment. Outreach to students about those flags occurs at week 5-6 of the semester by advisors from students' primary program of study.
- **Manual Tracking Items** (Faculty raised / Specialized and retention advisors outreach). Tracking Items are raised by faculty with follow-up from advisors from students' primary program of study.
- **Campaigns** (System raised / Students respond). Campaigns are informational alerts to students, including directing them to complete New Student Orientation, encouraging their continued enrollment past the third-week melt, and inviting them to meet with advisors to create success plans based on their backgrounds and goals. There is no specific advisor outreach because these are informational campaigns.
- **Retention Campaigns** (System raised / Specialized and retention advisors outreach). These campaigns may involve advisor-initiate outreach to students to promote semester-to-semester persistence or the new first-year student intake survey.

Additional questions were posed about the strategies to *provide consistent and timely interventions to support students*.

- The forms of flagging (faculty vs. system-raised) are examples of the ways Starfish offers multiple strategies to support students.
- The new intake survey mentioned above is given to first-year students and provides an opportunity to anticipate student needs and direct them to appropriate resources even before starting classes.
- The planned rollout of Starfish retention scores will provide additional advisor information to promote student course selection in the first year and beyond.
- The Provost's Office has funded eight retention advisors ([1.B.3](#)), one for each academic college and the SSC, who perform student outreach and other functions ([1.D.2](#), [1.D.4](#)) above and beyond traditional advising sessions.

-
- Retention advisors meet monthly with the executive director of the Student Success Center to ensure the common use of best practices in each college. These meetings consist of developing and implementing retention and completion initiatives, training on continuing initiatives, and networking with partners across campus who assist with various initiatives.
 - An interactive Starfish [dashboard](#) (PDF) in the Report Gallery ([1.D.2](#)) documents flags raised, and interventions offered to assess the responsiveness and impact of Starfish and opportunities to improve its implementation ([summary](#)).
 - In addition to UAAC meetings and Advisor Information Series sessions, the SSC provides optional university-level training for new college advisors to broaden their skills.

Finally, the Committee posed questions about using *disaggregated student data or other information to drive their approach to improving advising services*. The availability of disaggregated data is becoming ubiquitous across campus and will continue to expand as benchmarked, disaggregated PDP data become available to faculty and staff ([1.D.2](#), [1.D.3](#)). Additionally, these data have impacted advisors' approach to supporting students.

- Many of the advising training sessions address initiatives based on disaggregated data, including corequisite English and Math courses, Wildcat Scholars program, and FAST-Start classes, among others ([1.C.7](#), [1.D.4](#)). The advising community has always been responsive to and supportive of these initiatives to promote student success.
- Among the UAAC [committees](#), the [assessment](#) committee is looking to assess its newly developed learning outcomes for advising first-year students. The results will be disaggregated and examined for issues of equity.

There are continuing discussions among the provost, deans, enrollment management leadership, and others about the advising model adopted by Weber State. The discussions address the potential of mandatory advising of first-year students, like the mandatory requirement of new student orientation ([1.D.1](#)). However, there are also concerns about how best to scale a mandatory program while minimizing the number of potentially disruptive student handoffs it may entail, from recruitment and admissions to new student orientation, first-year advising, and ultimately to advisement in the major.

EVIDENCE OF INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS CONCLUSION

The year-seven comprehensive self-study and NWCCU peer review is occurring as Weber State University is in a period of transition, gearing up for a new strategic plan and addressing the changing role of higher education in an emerging post-pandemic world. But there is institutional continuity in these changing times. The strategic plan, titled *Amplified: A 5-year Plan for Growth*, includes new goals, strategies, outcomes, and guiding documents that better support the long-held and much valued institutional core themes, which have not changed. The core themes continue to obligate the institution to provide students with meaningful access to responsive academic programs, offer an engaged teaching and learning environment, and serve as an educational, cultural, and economic leader of the community. The better articulation of the core themes by the strategic plan is perhaps expressed best by the new vision the institution now adopts for itself:

Weber State University will be a leader in transforming lives by meeting all students where they are, challenging and guiding them to achieve their goals academically and in life.

The self-study provided an opportunity to candidly reflect on accomplishments, identify challenges, layout plans, and actions to continue improving for all our constituencies. As the opening standard ([1.A.1](#)) promises and the rest of the self-study documents, the institution's mission and core themes drive efforts at assessing, planning, and continuously improving. They also set expectations about the quality and outcomes of educational experiences and academic success for *all* students. The mission, core themes, and mission fulfillment data were often cited in response to various standards. This tie back to guiding documents reflects the general alignment of the institution's assessment of itself with the high expectations of the NWCCU standards. For example, because it monitors "cohorts of interest" in enrollment, retention, and completion as part of mission fulfillment, the institution was aware of and began to ameliorate challenges faced by some student groups. How the institution has responded to these, and other challenges also reflects the institutional commitment to comprehensive planning and budgeting processes, both centrally and within divisions and units, in response to challenges.

As it is supposed to do, the self-study helped the institution see itself more clearly. The self-study process created opportunities to highlight the good work of faculty and staff in programs and units across the university in fulfilling its mission and living up to the NWCCU standards. Equally importantly, in the self-study process, the institution identified areas that need improvement and highlighted the planning processes that have already begun and will continue to take place to address them. Weber State looks forward to the site visit and the chance to better tell its story. Ultimately, the value of the process is peer review, and the institution is eager to receive feedback to help it move forward to become the institution it aspires to be.

Policies, Regulations, and Financial Review

Prepared for
The Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities

Weber State University
Submitted March 15, 2021

MISSION FULFILLMENT

The institution provides a one-page executive summary, which describes the institution's framework for its ongoing accreditation efforts. This might include evidence of institutional effectiveness, Core Themes, or other appropriate mechanisms for measuring fulfillment of its mission.

Weber State University's (WSU) Mission Fulfillment metrics are derived from the [University Mission and Core Themes](#). The metrics were outlined in the 2015 [Year 1 Report](#), analyzed for the [2017 Mid-Cycle Report](#), and will be further addressed in the Year 7 Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness (EIE) report.

Core Themes

Access: WSU serves communities with significant socioeconomic and cultural differences. As the "educational, cultural, and economic leader for the region," WSU strives to provide meaningful access for prospective students to educational programs that respond to local employment needs.

- Two core theme objectives and three metrics address the University's enrollment growth, affordability, and enrollment patterns of "cohorts of interest."

Learning: The learning core theme is central to the WSU's mission to provide "excellent educational experiences" and its commitment to support student success.

- The six learning core theme objectives and 13 metrics address students' educational experiences. Three objectives and six metrics address student lower-division success, retention, and completion, analyzed by "cohorts of interest." Two objectives and four metrics focus on students' attainment of learning outcomes and meaningful learning experiences in the major and Gen Ed. One objective and three metrics explore students' engaged learning and satisfaction with support services.

Community: The WSU mission statement highlights the University's role as an educational, cultural, and economic leader for the region.

- The six objectives and 12 metrics in the Community core theme assess the University's active contribution to regional learning endeavors (three objectives, six metrics), the community's social and cultural life (one objective, two metrics), the region's economic development (one objective, three metrics), and contribution to the academic community (one objective, one metric)

Assessing and Reporting Mission Fulfillment

The threshold for mission fulfillment was pegged at 80% of the metrics or above, substantially meeting or exceeding expectations.

- For the Midcycle report, we met 86% of the metrics. Based on the reviewers' [recommendations](#), we continue to explore more optimal ways to assess metrics and direct more attention to graduate programs and ways to present initiatives.
- Mission fulfillment metrics are regularly monitored, with key performance indicators distributed widely and presented annually to the University Planning Council.
- The University Planning Council is now in the process of strategic planning, which involves revising mission fulfillment metrics for the next accreditation cycle.

ATTESTATION

Weber State [attests](#) to its compliance with all NWCCU eligibility requirements.

STANDARD 2.A – GOVERNANCE

2. A.1 – GOVERNANCE

The Institution demonstrates an effective governance structure, with a board(s) or other governing body(ies) composed predominantly of members with no contractual, employment relationship, or personal financial interest with the Institution. Such members shall also possess clearly defined authority, roles, and responsibilities. Institutions that are part of a complex system with multiple boards, a centralized board, or related entities shall have, with respect to such boards, written and clearly defined contractual authority, roles, and responsibilities for all entities. In addition, authority and responsibility between the system and the Institution is clearly delineated in a written contract, described on its website and in its public documents, and provides the NWCCU accredited Institution with sufficient autonomy to fulfill its mission.

Weber State University functions in a governance system described in [Utah State statute](#), [Utah Board of Higher Education](#), and [institutional policies](#). These statutes and policies define the authority, responsibilities, and relationships between the two governing bodies responsible for overseeing WSU: the Utah Board of Higher Education (UBHE) and the WSU Board of Trustees (Trustees).

Utah Board of Higher Education

As of June 1, 2020, UBHE combined the Utah System of Higher Education ([USHE](#)) and the [Utah System of Technical Colleges](#) (UTECH) and now has jurisdiction over the eight public colleges and universities (two community colleges, four comprehensive institutions, and two research universities) and the eight technical colleges (two of which are in the WSU service area). Figure 2.A.1 presents the Organizational Chart for UBHE.

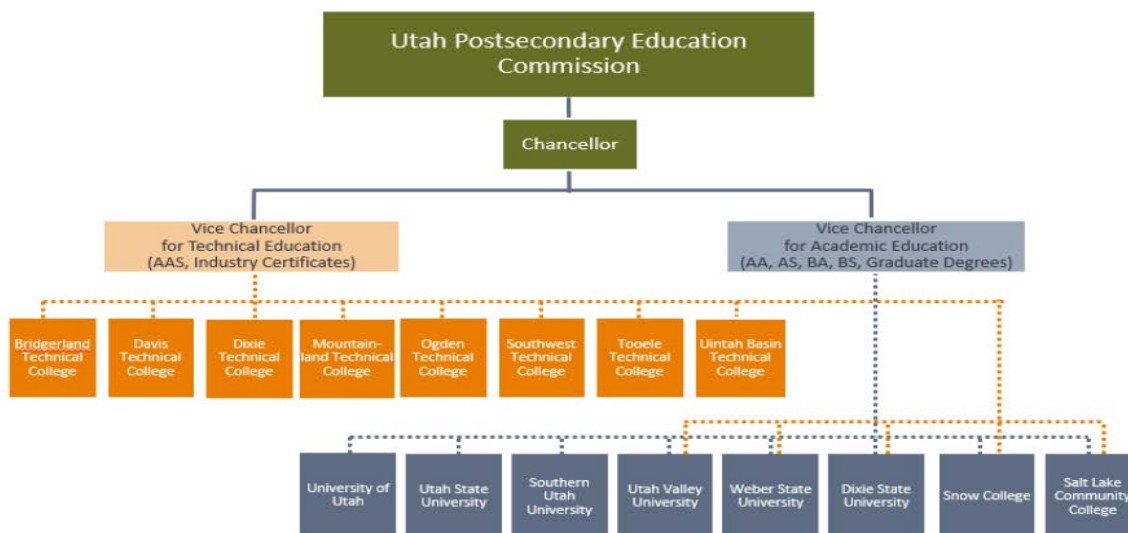


FIGURE 2.A.1: Organizational Chart for the Utah Board of Higher Education

Utah Code ([Title 53B, State System of Higher Education](#), section [53B-1-402](#)) defines specific responsibilities of UBHE as the following:

- Establish and promote a state-level vision and goals for higher education that emphasize system priorities.
- Establish policies and practices that advance the vision and goals.
- Establish metrics to demonstrate and monitor institutional performance.
- Collect and analyze data, including economic data, demographic data, and data related to the metrics.
- Coordinate data collection across institutions.
- Establish, approve, and oversee each institution's mission and role.
- Assess an institution's performance in accomplishing its mission and role.
- Participate in the establishment and review of programs of instruction.
- Perform duties related to an institution of higher education president.
- Create and implement a strategic financial plan for higher education.
- Create a seamless articulated education system for Utah students that responds to changing demographics and workforce.
- Coordinate with the public education system.
- Delegate to an institution Board of Trustees duties related to institutional governance.
- Delegate to an institution of higher education president management of the institution of higher education.
- Maximize efficiency throughout the Utah system of higher education by identifying and establishing shared administrative services.
- Develop strategies for providing higher education, including career and technical education, in rural areas.
- Manage and facilitate a process for initiating, prioritizing, and implementing education reform initiatives.
- Provide ongoing quality review of institutions.

[Dr. Dave R. Woolstenhulme](#) serves as the Commissioner of UBHE and functions as the board's chief executive officer. The Commissioner is responsible for implementing what remains defined as [USHE policies](#) governing degree-granting UBHE institutions' operation. [Dr. Julie Hartley](#) serves as the Vice-chancellor of Academic Education, with responsibilities for institutions offering academic degrees (associate's, bachelor's, master's, and doctoral).

Board of Trustees

The [WSU Board of Trustees](#) (BoT) consists of 10 people, eight appointed by the governor. The final two are the WSU Alumni Association president and the president of the WSU Student Association. The [Utah code](#) delegates and vests powers to institutional boards of trustees (see sections 101-106). The authority, roles, and responsibilities of the WSU BoT are further defined in WSU's Policy and Procedure Manual (see section [PPM 1-2](#) and [PPM 1-3](#)) and include a prohibition against conflicts of interests ([PPM 3-36a](#)). The Board of Trustees holds a yearly retreat (typically in August) during which they review institutional and board policies/procedures (see [schedule](#) and [minutes](#)).

2. A.2– LEADERSHIP

The Institution has an effective system of leadership, staffed by qualified administrators, with appropriate levels of authority, responsibility, and accountability who are charged with planning, organizing, and managing the Institution and assessing its achievements and effectiveness.

WSU’s organizational structure has five divisions led by vice presidents:

- Academic Affairs
 - Dr. Ravi Krovi – Profile and CV
- Administrative Services
 - Dr. Norm Tarbox – Profile and CV
- Information Technology
 - Dr. Bret Ellis – Profile and CV
- Student Affairs
 - Dr. Brett Perozzi – Profile and CV
- University Advancement
 - Dr. Betsy Mennell – Profile and CV

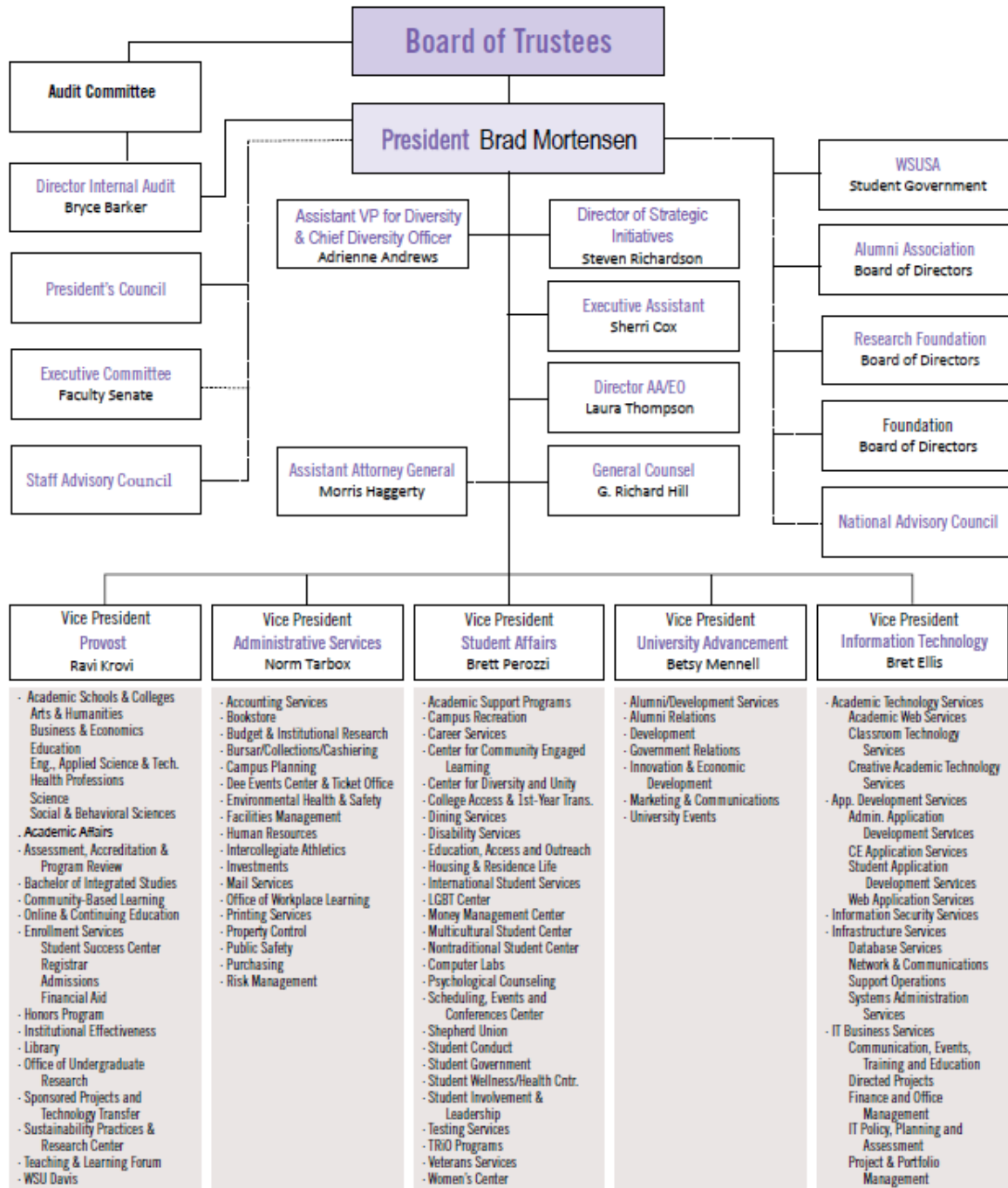
President Mortensen appoints Vice Presidents with the assistance of a screening committee and subject to approval by the Board of Trustees. The hiring process ensures that position qualifications are identified, including the necessary educational and work experience and ethical conduct to fulfill the role effectively. Job descriptions are posted on the Human Resources website. All hiring decisions are governed by the Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity policy and reviewed by the University’s AA/EO Office. The Vice Presidents serve at the will of the President ([PPM 1-5a](#)) and are periodically reviewed ([PPM 3-62](#)). The Vice Presidents serve on the President’s Council (PC), which is an advisory body to the President ([PPM 1-9](#)). PC provides two-way communication among all five divisions and other internal consultative or constituent groups who are invited to the meeting. Over the past several years, the President has invited the Assistant Vice President of Diversity and Chief Diversity Officer, Chair of the Faculty Senate, and Chair of the Staff Advisory Council (SAC) to be President Council committee participants.



WEBER STATE UNIVERSITY

Office of the President

Organizational Chart



Jan 2020

Figure 2.A.2: WSU Organization Chart

2. A.3 – CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The Institution employs an appropriately qualified chief executive officer with full-time responsibility to the Institution. The chief executive may serve as an ex officio member of the governing board(s) but may not serve as its chair.

The State Board of Regents appointed Dr. Brad Mortensen ([Profile](#) and [CV](#)) as Weber State University's thirteenth president in December 2018. He previously served as the WSU's Institution's Vice President for University Advancement for eleven years. He has full-time responsibility to the University and does not serve as a member of the Weber State University Board of Trustees.

2. A.4 – INSTITUTIONAL DECISION-MAKING STRUCTURES

The Institution's decision-making structures and processes, which are documented and publicly available, must include provisions for the consideration of the views of faculty, staff, administrators, and students on matters in which each has a direct and reasonable interest.

Decision-making at Weber State is a distributed process with common structures governed by policies and practices that ensures collaboration and transparency.

Common Structures

Most significant decisions made by the Institution require final approval by the [WSU Board of Trustees](#) (BoT), which is given such powers by the [Utah code](#) (particularly sections 53B-2-102 to 106), UBHE Policy [R220](#), and WSU's Policy and Procedure Manual ([PPM 1-2](#)). The Board of Trustees has five standing committees (Executive, Personnel and Academic Policy, Business, Audit, and Honorary Degree & Commencement Speaker) and other *ad hoc* committees that assist the board in complying with their responsibilities. Committees are advisory only, with final action taken by the Board. The exception is the Executive Committee, who may act on behalf of the Board between regular meetings of the Board only on routine matters or non-routine matters under emergency circumstances. The BoT provides the final approval of new academic program proposals that fall within WSU's institutional mission (see [Utah Code 53B-16-101](#) and [53B-16-102](#) (sections 3 - 5)). Similarly, they review and approve institutional policy recommendations (UBHE Policy [R220](#), section 4.4.2), institutional audits, reports on financial performance, and selective budgets (section 4.5.2), and institutional strategic and master plans, including academic program planning (4.5.3). As noted in 2.A.1, the Trustees include the presidents of the WSU [Student](#) and [Alumni](#) associations as voting members, who additionally provide updates to the Trustees about these key constituencies and represent their voices in all deliberations.

Based on UBHE Policy ([R220](#), section 4.4.1), President Mortensen must bring proposals to the Trustees. The President's Council reviews these proposals in its advisory role. To ensure that the President brings policy proposals to Trustees that have been thoroughly vetted in a collaborative and transparent process, University policy ([PPM 1-20](#)) requires a review of policies by campus constituencies. The policy was approved by Trustees in 2020, and the review process is depicted in Figure 2.A.4.

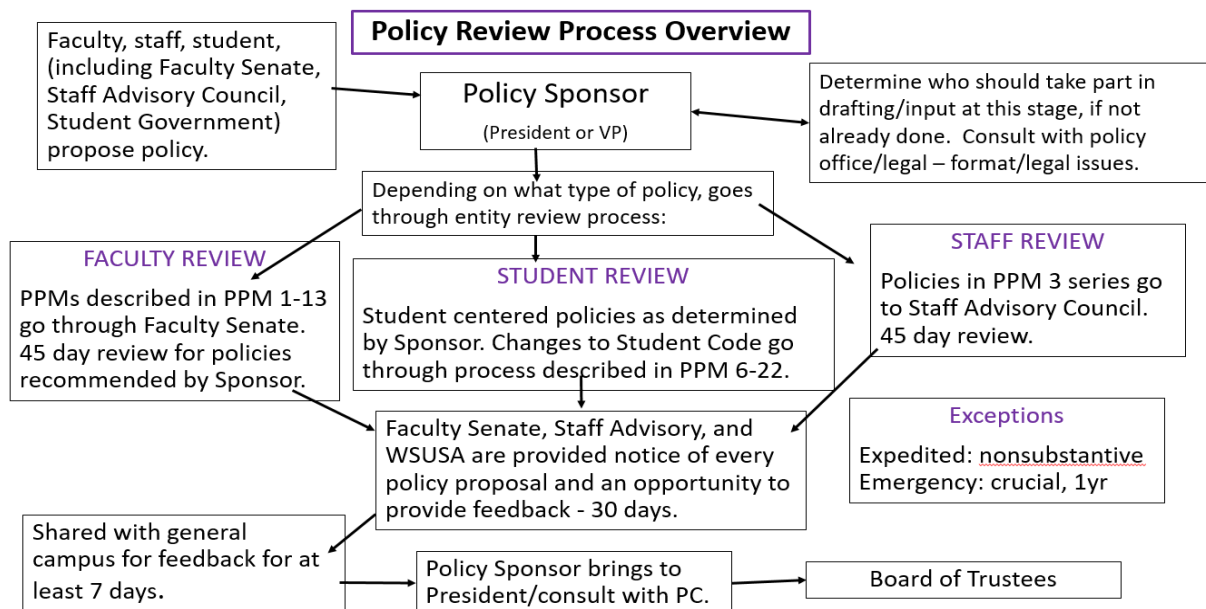


Figure 2.A.4: Depiction of the review process in PPM 1-20.

Distributed Processes

Policy proposals may come to the President's Council after being initiated by different University groups, each having a tradition of involvement in institutional governance.

Faculty Involvement

- WSU faculty have a long and successful history of involvement with WSU governance, primarily through the Faculty Senate. The Faculty Senate consists of 39 elected members of the general faculty ([PPM 1-13](#)) who serve three-year terms and a maximum of two consecutive terms. One-year terms are held by four students who have voting rights. Non-voting Senate membership includes the President, Provost, and 11 other administrators (including deans and other key administrators). The Faculty Senate chair is voted on yearly by Senators and is an ex-officio member of many governance committees, including the Deans' Council and the Alumni Board. The Bylaws of Faculty Senate are documented in [PPM 1-13](#), and other policies delineate its role as the voice of faculty and advisory to the president ([PPM 1-12](#)), in University Planning ([PPM 1-14](#)), and the selection of administrative representatives on standing committee ([PPM 1-15](#)). In addition to Faculty Senate committees, faculty sit on administrative standing committees (including Diversity and Student Success Steering Committees) that provide opportunities for the University's faculty to participate in institutional governance ([PPM 1-10](#)).

Staff Involvement

- The Staff Advisory Council ([SAC](#)) is engaged in University governance and decision-making and represents staff's interests to the University administration, the Board of Trustees, and the University community. SAC is constituted by [bylaws](#), which combined the Exempt Staff Advisory Committee (ESAC) and Non-exempt Staff Advisory Committee (NESAC). A majority vote elects the Executive Board (Chair,

Vice-Chair, and Recorder). The SAC Board comprises fifteen elected members from the University's divisions, plus a non-voting Vice President and a non-voting liaison from Human Resources. As noted, SAC representatives are guests on the Board of Trustees and can provide input through the President's Council.

Student Involvement

- The [Weber State University Student Association](#) (WSUSA) has been established to provide for the general welfare of the students at Weber State University through principles of self-governance and shared governance. The structure of WSUSA is designed to provide representative leadership; therefore, WSUSA officers shall promote the opinions and the interests of the student body as their voice and trusted representatives. WSUSA is intended to provide student participation in academic, administrative, and extracurricular decision-making at WSU. WSUSA, along with the WSU Administration, ensures efficient and prudent use of student fees and oversees the student fee allocation process, which is to be approved by the WSU Board of Trustees and the Utah State Board of Regents. WSUSA shall provide quality opportunities for academic and extracurricular experiences as well as promote student involvement in university clubs, organizations, events, and activities. WSUSA officers shall perform with effectiveness any powers and/or responsibilities bestowed upon them by Administration, the Board of Trustees, or the Board of Regents. WSUSA shall also promote WSU in the community and establish relationships with the community for the betterment of the University and the benefit of the students.

Alumni Involvement

- The [bylaws](#) of the Weber State University Alumni Association (WSUAA) are governed by an Executive Committee and Board of Directors. The University President appoints the majority of the Board of Directors, and that board elects the remaining directors. The Executive Committee includes the President, Vice-President or Past President, Secretary and chairs or co-chairs from four committees; Finance/Resources, Community Relations, Student Relations, and Golf and Events. As noted, the President of the WSUAA serves as a member of the WSU Board of Trustees. WSUAA activities also support WSU students and recognize faculty members and staff. They also serve as an advisory committee to the President. The University President also invites alumni and friends of the University to serve on the [National Advisory Council](#) (NAC). The NAC meets regularly with the President and others in President's Council to provide:
 - guidance on strategic issues
 - an independent sounding board
 - feedback from the community
 - assistance in identifying opportunities for the University in key communities

University Decision-Making

The distributed processes and common structures can be seen in various University decisions, including creating and revising the University's policies, institutional planning and budgeting, and approving the curriculum.

Policy Proposals

Proposals to create or revise University [policies and procedures](#) may be initiated by different constituent groups, notably faculty, staff, and student organizations. However, they may also originate in other University divisions (e.g., Information Technology or Student Affairs), offices (e.g., Legal), or other campus bodies.

- Proposals to change academic-related policies and procedures may originate with standing committees of the Faculty Senate. Indeed, any change to the Policy and Procedure Manual bearing on academic issues must be vetted by the Faculty Senate regardless of its source. This arrangement has been in place for more than 40 years and has helped create an atmosphere of cooperation and a sense of shared governance for furthering the University's values. The process is now formalized in [PPM 1-20](#).
- Policy changes may originate from students through WSUSA. For example, students make recommendations to the President's Council on allocating student fees through the [Student Fee Recommendation Committee](#). The Board of Trustees then reviews and approves the recommendation. As an example of student-initiated policy changes, two student senators serving on Faculty Senate presented the body with a Student Senate resolution "to incorporate a component into the graduation requirements which would address the issues pertaining to human diversity." A year later, the University implemented a proposal requiring bachelor's or associate's degree (except AAS degree) candidates to complete at minimum a 3-credit diversity course.
- Staff can also have a hand in decision-making on University policies and procedures through SAC. For example, SAC recently proposed new policies for [overload compensation](#) (for staff who teach) and [staff parental leave](#) to align it with faculty parental leave. These proposals were reviewed by the President's Council, and subsequently approved by the Board of Trustees.

Curriculum Proposals

Curriculum proposals are the unique purview of the faculty and are managed through the [Faculty Senate](#). Among the standing committees of the Faculty Senate ([PPM 1-13](#), Faculty Senate Constitution, and Bylaws Sections B-V) are those that vet new curriculum proposals.

- Procedures for proposing new academic programs or making other curricular changes are documented in the [Curriculum Policies and Procedure Manual](#). The President's Council and Board of Trustees review and approve new certificates, minors, emphases, and degree programs within the University mission that the Faculty Senate recommends. Decisions to discontinue or change programs' names are also faculty-proposed and -reviewed and then approved by Presidents Council and Trustees ([PPM 1-14a](#)).

Planning and Budgeting

Planning and budgeting decisions also have common structures and a distributed process, depicted in our budgeting and planning [model](#). The model highlights that planning and budgeting proposals are:

1. Assessed for alignment to mission fulfillment metrics and strategic initiatives.
 2. Evaluated to ensure strategic initiatives and adjustments realize mission outcomes are funded appropriately.
 3. Implemented by the units within divisions in ways that realize the plan within budgetary constraints.
- Budgetary allocations to divisions are made yearly by the President after being reviewed by the President's Council. In turn, divisions create yearly goals that emerge from divisional discussions among the Vice Presidents and their staff/faculty. The divisional goals are presented yearly, typically in September, to the [University Planning Council](#) (UPC) described in [PPM 1-9](#). UPC is an advisory committee that typically includes members of the President's Office, President's Council, the provost's office, the administrators from each University division, faculty from each college, and representatives from other University constituencies (Faculty Senate, WSUSA, SAC, Alumni, and Board of Trustees).
 - UPC also receives a yearly update (typically in April) on the achievement of metrics based on mission fulfillment and, when available, strategic initiatives. The "Metrics Meeting" focuses on how Weber State is faring in achieving its goals, with members providing feedback and recommendations. UPC also meets in January for an "Environmental Scan," where the discussion centers on the University's broad challenges and opportunities. These meetings often include speakers to facilitate the discussion. For example, in January 2019, Utah Senator (and Past President of WSU) [Dr. Ann Millner](#) presented plans for the changing organization of higher education in Utah and its implications for Weber State.
 - As part of its responsibility to review capabilities and capacities, identify strategic priorities, and fund those priorities, the President initiates strategic planning processes in consultation with the President's Council. Two such initiatives have occurred recently.
 - In Fall 2016, a Strategic Enrollment planning process was initiated to set goals and allocate resources to ensure the University remains well-positioned in enrolling and retaining students. This [work](#) is being implemented by the [Student Success Steering Committee](#), which is a collaboration of Academic Affairs and Student Affairs and includes members of each division and the leadership of the Faculty Senate's Student Engagement, Retention, and Transition (SERT) committee.
 - A University-wide [Strategic Planning](#) process has been initiated to review and update our "guiding documents" (Mission, Vision, Core Themes, and Values) and set prioritized goals, with metrics and strategies, to address identified challenges. The strategic planning process is coordinated through UPC and has been a University-wide endeavor. There have been regular Town Hall meetings to solicit comments and surveys to elicit feedback from

all University constituencies. The process is ongoing, with a late spring 2021 anticipated completion date.

COVID-19 and Decision-Making

We highlight throughout the document how (and how well) the institution addressed the unique circumstances presented by COVID-19. The university takes pride in the quality of collaboration between faculty, staff, students, and administration in shared governance. This collaboration was on full display during the pandemic in the forms of required emergency decision-making.

- Weber State University's COVID-19 Task Force came into existence in early [March 2020](#) as the University, Utah, and the United States began to anticipate the potential spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19) in North America.
- The 29-member task force, led by the Public Safety Director, [Dane LeBlanc](#), included representatives from all University divisions and remained in close contact with external agencies and departments to ensure the University adhered to appropriate regional and state protocols. Regular [Town Hall](#) meetings for faculty and staff, and for students, along with frequent updates to the [Coronavirus website](#), keep the campus community apprised (see COVID-19 Response in section 2.F.4).
- Soon after the move to remote learning in mid-March, 2020, the University created multiple ad-hoc committees composed of faculty, staff, and students to address issues such as revising class schedules, updating grading and other policies, and supporting online teaching and learning. These committees' work was coordinated through the Provost's Office, Deans' Council, and President's Council.
- The President's Council addressed CARES funds (see 2.E.3) to guide the distribution of resources to all students affected by the pandemic and instructors who were redesigning face-to-face classes.
- During the Fall 2020 semester, there was a normalization of decision-making processes to manage pandemic challenges. For example, the Faculty Senate followed up on grading, course evaluation, tenure/promotion, and related policies to accommodate pandemic concerns which were [altered](#) in Spring 2020 on an emergency basis. University policy itself ([PPM 1-20](#)) now includes Interim Emergency Approval Process for such exceptional circumstances.
- Human Resources, working with SAC, developed [policies and practices](#) for remote work during the pandemic.
- There was an enormous learning curve in emergency management over the course of the pandemic. Still, due to the collaborative efforts, the Weber State enrollments, persistence, and retention rates have remained mostly flat, with some metrics actually demonstrating moderate growth.

STANDARD 2. B – ACADEMIC FREEDOM

2. B.1 – ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND INDEPENDENCE

Within the context of its mission and values, the Institution adheres to the principles of academic freedom and independence that protect its constituencies from inappropriate internal and external influences, pressures, and harassment.

The Utah Board of Higher Education (UBHE) Policy ([R481](#)) affirms the Utah system's commitment to academic freedom, which applies to both faculty and students and includes associated responsibilities.

Academic freedom is fundamental for the protection of the rights of the teacher in teaching and of the student to freedom in learning. It carries with it duties correlative with rights.

UBHE further directs institutions to articulate policies applying academic freedom to teaching, research, and public life. Weber State University's commitment to principles of academic freedom is explicitly referenced in its [Mission Statement](#):

Encouraging freedom of expression and valuing diversity, the University provides excellent educational experiences for students through extensive personal contact among faculty, staff, and students in and out of the classroom.

The principles of academic freedom apply to all faculty, administrative staff, and students, as expressed in University policy ([PPM 9-1](#)) which outlines the general principles in the section devoted to the topic:

Academic freedom in the pursuit and dissemination of knowledge through all media shall be maintained at Weber State University. Such freedom shall be recognized as a right of all members of the faculty, whether of tenure or non-tenure status, of all administrative officers and of all students.

Procedures to protect academic freedom and policies to recognize correlative duties or responsibilities are further described in the University Policy and Procedures Manual (PPM). For faculty, the policies and responsibilities associated with academic freedom are expressed in [PPM 9-1 to PPM 9-8](#). The protection of faculty academic freedom is outlined in [PPM 9-9 to PPM 9-17](#), which ensures faculty are afforded all due process to protect their rights.

Similarly, for students, [PPM 6-22](#) (which is the student code, Section VI. A) defines academic freedom as "the free flow of ideas, the right to speak, and the right to hear." PPM 6-22 IV B.8 adds policy on student responsibilities to protect academic freedom by identifying forms of violation.

Deliberate interference with academic freedom and freedom of speech, including not only instructional activities, but also interference with performances, exhibits, displays, dissemination of information, demonstrations, or the freedom of any speaker invited by any segment of the University community to express views.

PPM 6-22 sections VIII and IX are policies addressing how violations of the student code, including academic freedom violations, are adjudicated. The process for complaining and adjudicating student code violations is further outlined on WSU's Complaint [website](#).

The specific protections from harassment of all WSU constituencies are outlined in [PPM 3-32](#), which addresses Harassment and Sexual Misconduct. Section 1 specifies how WSU is careful to protect freedom of expression, as allowed by law, even though such expression may be unpleasant or even hateful.

In order to protect free speech and academic freedom of faculty, students, and other members of the University community, this policy shall not apply to expression that is protected from regulation by the U.S. Constitution, the Utah Constitution or falls within traditional boundaries of academic freedom set forth in PPM 9-1. This includes, but is not limited to, faculty members' good faith selection of subject matter and methodology, the content of academic discussions, and protected expression in publications and public forums.

The policy continues and specifies cases where freedom of speech becomes harassment and a violation of University policies and sanctionable by procedures appropriate for the individual's status in the University.

This exemption shall not apply to harmful or offensive personal attacks substantially based on a person's protected classifications that violate this policy. The University retains the right to apply restrictions consistent with the Constitution and principles of forum analysis to regulate under this policy.

2. B.2 – ACTIVE PROMOTION OF ACADEMIC FREEDOM

Within the context of its mission and values, the Institution defines and actively promotes an environment that supports independent thought in the pursuit and dissemination of knowledge. It affirms the freedom of faculty, staff, administrators, and students to share their scholarship and reasoned conclusions with others. While the Institution and individuals within the Institution may hold to a particular personal, social, or religious philosophy, its constituencies are intellectually free to test and examine all knowledge and theories, thought, reason, and perspectives of truth. Individuals within the Institution allow others the freedom to do the same.

WSU fosters an environment respecting independent thought in the pursuit and dissemination of knowledge. As noted above (2.B.1), WSU recognizes the entire academic community—all faculty (tenured and non-tenured), administrative officers, and students—as being entitled to these rights. The section of the University's policy manual on Academic Freedom, Rights, Responsibilities, and Due Process ([PPM 9-1](#)) includes a formal statement on academic freedom that says:

Weber State University seeks to provide and sustain an environment conducive to sharing, extending, and critically examining knowledge and values and to furthering the search for wisdom.

The statement is modeled upon the American Association of University Professors (AAUP, 1940) articulation of principles of academic freedom and tenure (<https://www.aaup.org/file/1940%20Statement.pdf>) that has guided the Institution for decades.

STANDARD 2.C – POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

2. C.1 – TRANSFER OF CREDIT POLICIES

The Institution's transfer-of-credit policy maintains the integrity of its programs and facilitates the efficient mobility of students desirous of the completion of their educational credits, credentials, or degrees in furtherance of their academic goals.

The University develops, publishes widely, and follows an effective and clearly stated transfer-of-credit policy ([PPM 4-21a](#)) that maintains the integrity of its programs while facilitating efficient mobility of students between institutions in completing their educational programs.

Weber State University follows the policies of the Utah Board of Higher Education ([R401](#)) in determining standards, awarding credit, and approving programs. The grading system and standards for academic progress are described in the [catalog](#) (pp. 57-59, 72-73) and the [Records](#) and [Financial Aid](#) websites. Transcripts provide clear and accurate information and distinguish between developmental and college-level courses. Non-credit classes are not included on the transcript.

Transfer credit is accepted from accredited institutions using AACRAO Standards and other appropriate guidelines. Credit is also granted on a case-by-case review by academic departments for advanced placement (AP), international baccalaureate (IB), concurrent enrollment, military credit, international institutional credit, and from non-accredited institutions. This process is guided by the Utah Board of Higher Education policy governing Prior Learning Assessment ([R472](#)) and [managed](#) by the Registrar's Office.

A robust [online transfer articulation tool](#) is available to students showing specific articulation of credit from transfer institutions to WSU and vice versa. The tool is very useful in acknowledging the mobility of students while facilitating their graduation. WSU also supports the State's [transfer guide](#) efforts and routinely updates data to ensure accuracy throughout the transfer function.

2. C.2 – STUDENTS RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Institution's policies and procedures related to student rights and responsibilities should include, but not be limited to, provisions related to academic honesty, conduct, appeals, grievances, and accommodations for persons with disabilities.

Student Rights and Responsibilities

- Students have multiple resources to consult concerning their rights and responsibilities. These resources are outlined in the Student Code of Conduct ([PPM 6-22](#)) along with procedures for hearings, freedom of expression details, and other pertinent information for students. This information, including due process procedures, is also available for students on the complaint [website](#), the [Dean of Students office](#), and the [WSU Catalog](#) (pp.10, 90).

Grievance Processes

- Often students with a grievance will turn to the Dean of Students' [website](#), where they can learn about their rights, responsibilities, and due process guarantees (the [Student Code](#)), resolution options (the [complaint website](#)), and student conduct issues ([webpage](#)). Grievance processes have a common structure involving an initial review at the local level and then, if necessary, a level 2 review by trained judge(s). This common structure varies by the nature of the infraction or jurisdiction of the complaint, notably for Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct to address Title IX requirements (see 2.D.2). It is made clear to students that the Student Code and complaint website governs all proceedings involving student grievances or misconduct. Students are provided information on additional forums for resolving complaints should they not be resolved through standard processes.

Services for Students with Disabilities

- [Disability Services](#) serves to ensure an equal educational opportunity for all individuals with disabilities. Disability Services provides access to all University functions, activities, and programs. This department provides specialized services, technology, and advisement to meet the specific needs of each qualified disabled student. In recent years, Disability services has added additional positions, such as a sign-language interpreter, based on the expanding population of students with disabilities and current legal issues. During the pandemic, the office has worked with students with temporary medical conditions or other specific issues to determine their need for accommodations.

2. C.3 – ADMISSION AND PLACEMENT POLICIES, PROGRAM CONTINUATION/TERMINATION, APPEAL AND READMISSION

The Institution's academic and administrative policies and procedures should include admission and placement policies that guide the enrollment of students in courses and programs through an evaluation of prerequisite knowledge, skills, and abilities to ensure a reasonable probability of student success at a level commensurate with the Institution's expectations. Such policies should also include a policy regarding continuation in and termination from its educational programs, including its appeal and re-admission policy.

Restrictive Programs

WSU is an open-enrollment institution welcoming all students who have graduated from high school or earned a GED, and admission details can be found in the [University Catalog](#) (pages 64-69). Some programs, however, are “restricted” and require an additional acceptance process into the major beyond admission to the University.

- Upon successful completion of required prerequisites, students may apply for formal acceptance into an academic program, which may include a competitive selection process. More detailed information is available in the catalog under the Acceptance Requirements listed for each program and program websites. For example, see the acceptance requirements to the popular Nursing RN-BSN program in the [catalog](#) or program [website](#). Students are encouraged to contact the academic department responsible for the program in which they are interested for more information about specific acceptance and/or prerequisite requirements.

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- Other programs such as concurrent enrollment and early college are also selective and are explained in the [catalog](#) (pp. 68-69) and [website](#).

Assessment and Placement

- The University has a mandatory [assessment and placement policy](#) that requires incoming students to complete the ACT, SAT, or other appropriate placement instruments to ensure proper course placement in mathematics and English classes, thus contributing to student success in subsequent semesters. Opportunities exist for students to change placements through [ALEKS](#) (for Math) and [Accuplacer](#) (English).

Good Academic Standing

- University policy ([PPM 4-17](#)) outlines the requirements for students to remain in good academic standing and the consequences of being placed on warning, probation, and suspension. The policy also covers continuation, termination, appeals, readmission, and disqualification from academic programs (also see the University [Catalog](#) pp. 60-61 and [PPM 6-22](#) VIII C.2).

2. C.4 – SECURE RETENTION OF STUDENT RECORDS

The Institution's policies and procedures regarding the secure retention of student records must include provisions related to confidentiality, release, and the reliable backup and retrievability of such records.

WSU remains vigilant in securing students' records.

Confidentiality and Release

- WSU has adopted and publishes policies for the retention (Student Records Policy, [PPM 4-19a](#)), confidentiality, and release of student records ([FERPA](#)).

Backup and Retrievability

- The Institution's planning includes [emergency preparedness](#) and contingency planning for continuity and recovery of operations should catastrophic events significantly interrupt normal institutional operations. The Administrative Services and Information Technologies Divisions have specific planning responsibilities for emergency preparedness and contingency planning for the financial, physical, and technological infrastructure of the University.
- Administrative Services has published [Emergency Response Policy](#) that includes procedures for a wide range of natural and man-made incidents. The Information Technology division has an established disaster recovery site in Richfield, UT, providing real-time system redundancy and a backup storage site. These backups, a copy of which is also maintained on Amazon Web Services, are kept for 14 days.

Security

- IT Security training is provided to all new employees upon commencement of their employment relationship, and additional training is provided for supervisors on an

annual basis. Biennial Penetration Testing is conducted by an external entity to validate existing security measures and identify areas of improvement. The Information Security Task Force (ISTF), composed of faculty and staff from various departments across the organization, monitors and directs Weber State's Security efforts. This emphasis on safeguarding information is based on Information Security ([PPM 10-1](#)) and Acceptable Use ([PPM 10-2](#)) policies, both of which are regularly reviewed and updated as necessary.

STANDARD 2.D – INSTITUTIONAL INTEGRITY

2. D.1 – INSTITUTIONAL INTEGRITY, COMMUNICATIONS

The Institution represents itself clearly, accurately, and consistently through its announcements, statements, and publications. It communicates its academic intentions, programs, and services to students and to the public and demonstrates that its academic programs can be completed in a timely fashion. It regularly reviews its publications to ensure accuracy and integrity in all representations about its mission, programs, and services.

The University has established a public communications policy ([PPM 7-1 to 7-11](#)) that ensures accuracy and integrity in public communications. Accurate information regarding programs and services is published on the [WSU Webpage](#) and the [University Catalog](#). [Best practices](#) for managing webpages have been established, and guidelines [for writing on the web](#) as well as [web accessibility](#) have been developed. Information on retention, graduation rates, and other information of interest to the public is maintained by Institutional Research and is published on [the Higher Education Amendment Disclosure](#) page.

The content placed in the University Catalog is updated on an annual basis. All curriculum changes are proposed in Curriculog, which is a cloud-based, automated curriculum development and management system for course and program proposals. Forms in Curriculog have a workflow for approvals that embodies the institutional Curriculum Policy ([PPM 4-2](#)). All other changes to the catalog are considered "editorial." There is also a specialized form in Curriculog to submit these editorial changes. Editorial submissions are due the last day of February every year prior to catalog publication in April.

Also, following [best practices](#), web page content, especially [major pages](#), undergo an annual review by chairs or program directors to ensure content remains accurate.

2. D.2 – ETHICS, COMPLAINTS, AND GRIEVANCES

The institution advocates, subscribes to, and exemplifies high ethical standards in its management and operations, including in its dealings with the public, NWCCU, and external organizations, including the fair and equitable treatment of students, faculty, administrators, staff, and other stakeholders and constituencies. The Institution ensures that complaints and grievances are addressed in a fair, equitable, and timely manner.

The University is committed to embracing mission-related roles and responsibilities with integrity and following high ethical standards. Our dealings with the external organizations – from regional and program accreditors to federal, state, and local governmental agencies and community organizations – have always been approached as partnerships, working

together towards common outcomes that strengthen both parties. This commitment is reflected in the University's [Community Core Theme](#).

Regional and Program Accreditors

- The University's collaboration with [regional](#) (NWCCU) and [program](#) accreditors goes beyond mere reporting obligations, to finding ways to collaborate with the commissions. The [Associate Provost](#) for Academic Programs and Assessment serves as the ALO for NWCCU and works with the [Office of Institutional Effectiveness](#) and [Institutional Research](#) to ensure compliance to substantive change, year-end, and other regional reporting. Key reporting elements (e.g., new programs, etc.) are monitored in Curriculog and can only be entered into the catalog if NWCCU approval has been affirmed. University faculty and staff partner with NWCCU and other commissions in several ways, including serving in leadership roles, peer-evaluators, and fellows to further the mission and goals of the regional and program commissions.

Local and Region Community

- The University embraces its role "as an educational, cultural and economic leader for the region," as expressed in the [Mission Statement](#). One example is the University's partnership with local Ogden City offices to create a [town-gown coalition](#), which has been [recognized](#) nationally. That coalition has expanded and deepened to now include the Ogden Civic Action Network ([OgdenCAN](#)). The University facilitates partnerships with local government and anchor institutions (school districts, hospitals) to promote the health, education, and housing of residents of the vibrant communities in the East Central Neighborhood of Ogden, Utah. The institutional partnerships with the local and regional community are also seen in Weber State's work on economic development. The [Office of Economic Development](#) offers services and resources to strengthen regional public/private partnerships, facilitate networking and offer specific, timely support for economic initiatives.

Internal Stakeholders

- The fair and equitable treatment of internal stakeholders is paramount in our guiding statements, policies, and procedures. The University's [mission and values](#) statements make explicit the embrace of fair and equitable treatment, fully understanding of its meaning for diversity, equity, and inclusion that it entails. The mission affirms the importance of freedom of expression and the value of diversity on ethical grounds because it is the right thing to do. These ethical concerns are embodied in policies, including a strong emphasis on shared governance (2.A.4, [PPM 1-20](#)) and commitment to promoting the free exchange of ideas and respect for individual differences (2.B.2, [PPM 9-1](#)). High standards and ethical treatment extend to the maintenance of high fiscal integrity (2.E.1, [PPM 5-10](#)). Further, in a general statement of policy, we affirm that the University is dedicated to creating an environment free from harassment and other forms of discrimination (see [PPM 3-32](#)).

Federal Regulations

The University takes seriously its responsibility to comply with federal regulations to protect students' privacy and rights and the care of research animals.

- The Records Office maintains student records in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (also see 2.G.7). FERPA affords students the right to inspect and review their educational records, the right to seek to have the records amended, and the right to have some control over the disclosure of information from their records. FERPA details, including student rights, are available on the Registrar's [website](#).
- A government records officer processes [requests](#) for accessing information through the Government Records Access and Management Act (GRAMA).
- Two oversight committees are in place to ensure that Weber State complies with federal regulations that protect the rights of individuals or selected categories of animals that are the focus of WSU-sponsored research: the [Institutional Review Board for Human Subjects](#) and the [Animal Care and Use Committee](#). Both of these committees are chaired by faculty and have substantial faculty involvement when making decisions.

As a reflection of these and other commitments to fair and equitable treatment, the University faculty and staff have expressed their satisfaction in various assessments, including *The Chronicle of Higher Education's* "Great Colleges to Work For" (see [award](#)).

Grievances

Perhaps nothing expresses the institutional commitment to fair and equitable treatment more than our approach in openly soliciting and systematically addressing all grievances and complaints. There are a variety of mechanisms for faculty, staff, students, and community members to complain and file grievances. Policies encourage faculty, staff, and students to resolve complaints or grievances informally with the relevant parties and to file formal complaints and grievances when such informal resolutions are unsatisfactory. The notable exception is a complaint or grievance addressing discrimination and harassment, which has a separate reporting and adjudication process. The process for reviewing complaints of Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct (including Title IX) is documented in [PPM 3-32](#) and on the [complaint website](#).

Red Flag Reporting (Anyone): On Weber State University's [home page](#), opening the [Contact Us](#) link displays a page with "Report an Ethical Concern" and "Ethics and Compliance Hotline" links that lead to the [Ethics and Compliance Hotline](#) page. The hotline provides access to WSU's Red Flag reporting [website](#). The website is operated by the [Red Flag Reporting](#) system, which is independently managed. Any complaint received by the system is processed by Red Flag and then delivered to Weber State University. Internal and external constituencies taking advantage of the service can identify a level of confidentiality. Red Flag reports are sent to the Director of Internal Audit at Weber State University, who investigates flags raised related to financial misconduct or reports flags related to other student, faculty, or staff misconduct to the

relevant VP. The Director of Internal Audit also reports the status of each red flag complaint to the Trustees' Audit Committee.

Staff Employee Grievance Process: University non-faculty staff have grievance processes that are detailed in the University policies covering staff grievances ([PPM 3-31](#)) and due process ([PPM 3-3-31a](#)). The process addresses staff complaints and grievances concerning interpretation or application of personnel policies or practices, working conditions, employee-supervisor relationships, termination or non-retention, or other personnel matters. Excluded are discrimination, and harassment claims addressed through the [AA/EO Office](#) for all University constituencies. Policy encourages an informal resolution of all grievances and complaints. A staff member may file a formal written complaint if the issue cannot be resolved informally. The formal complaint process has time-limited steps spelled out in the policy to ensure it is addressed fairly and in a timely manner. In addition, there are policies to protect staff due process in cases of student complaints about them.

Faculty Grievance Process: There is an extensive set of policies addressing faculty rights, responsibilities, and due process protections ([PPM 9-9](#)). University policies covering faculty grievances include PPM 9-9 to 9-14. Policy encourages faculty with grievances or complaints to address them locally ([PPM 9-11](#)). They may do so through the [Ombuds](#) or by addressing the concern directly to a responsible administrator. The Ombuds office functions independently and represents neither the University administration nor any individual. Rather, the office offers informal problem solving and conflict management for all full- and part-time Weber State Faculty.

The formal adjudication of complaints or grievances is documented in policy, with faculty afforded all due process protections ([PPM 9-9 to 9-15](#)). The adjudicating body is the Faculty Board of Review, a standing Faculty Senate committee constituted by the Faculty Senate. Again, the formal complaint process for faculty has time-defined steps spelled out in policy to ensure they are addressed fairly and in a timely manner.

Student Grievance Process: The University policy covering student grievances is outlined in the student code ([PPM 6-22](#)). The document describes students' rights and responsibilities, and processes for their complaints or grievances. The [Student Code Procedural Committee](#) oversees the informal and formal review of student complaints according to principles of consistency, efficiency, fairness, and alignment with applicable law. Details of the process documented on the Student Complaint [website](#) encourage students with complaints to resolve them informally with the appropriate decision-maker. Students may file formal complaints if their complaints or grievances are not resolved at the informal level. The website includes the steps and timeframes for student complaints or grievances in different justifications (e.g., Administrative, Academic, Behavioral, etc.). The *de-novo* formal review process is adjudicated by trained judge(s) in hearing committees appropriately constituted to the due process requirements associated with the complaint or grievance jurisdiction.

2. D.3 – CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICIES

The Institution adheres to clearly defined policies that prohibit conflicts of interest on the part of members of the governing board(s), administration, faculty, and staff.

The Utah State Board of Regents, Weber State University Board of Trustees, and all university employees are bound by the [Utah Public Officers and Employees Ethics Act](#) which addresses several important aspects of employment, including disclosing or using private information, using one's position to secure privileges, and when it is prohibited to accept a gift or require or offer a donation. In addition, several policies define and describe how to manage conflicts of interest for employees ([PPM 3-36](#)) and the university's Board of Trustees members ([PPM 3-36a](#)). Other policies limit employees' other employment ([PPM 3-54](#)) and consensual relations ([PPM 3-32a](#)).

STANDARD 2.E – FINANCIAL RESOURCES

2. E.1 – AUDITING AND REPORTING FOR FINANCIAL STABILITY

The Institution utilizes relevant audit processes and regular reporting to demonstrate financial stability, including sufficient cash flow and reserves to achieve and fulfill its mission.

University Policy addressing business affairs ([PPM 5-1](#)) outlines that the President is responsible for oversight and management of the financial resources of the University. The policy also outlines that the Vice President for Administrative Services shall assist the President in the discharge of this responsibility. The Vice President for Administrative Services (2.A.2), through the organizational structure of the Division of Administrative Services, provides leadership for operational financial management.

- Financial management responsibilities are centralized when practical. In those instances where responsibilities have been delegated to other executive officers, central coordination exists. Within Administrative Services, financial responsibilities are coordinated through the Senior Associate Vice President for Financial Services/Chief Financial Officer.
- Sound financial practices are further realized through an organizational plan that distributes line responsibilities to all areas on the campus. Each vice president or equivalent supervisor is empowered to authorize budgets, expenditures, and budget transfers within his or her respective area or division and is responsible to ensure adherence to institutional financial policies.

Board of Trustees

Following University ([PPM 5.1](#)) and UBHE ([R220](#)) policies, financial information is presented to the Board of Trustees for review, input, and approval. The University administration observes a "full-disclosure" approach to the Board of Trustees, which involves presenting a range of financial information. The significant financial issues presented to Trustee for review and approval include:

- Education & General (E&G) budget
- Capital budgets
- Bond issuances
- Updates on Athletic Department activities

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- Internal Audit reports
 - Changes in applicable policies and procedures
 - Updates regarding the state legislative process
 - Mandated financial reports forwarded to the Utah Board of Higher Education

Board of Trustees and Business Committee

- Monthly financial reports are reviewed with the Business Committee (a standing committee of the Board of Trustees, see 2.A.4) and summarized to the full Board of Trustees with assistance from the Vice President for Administrative Services and the President. The reports provide a comprehensive perspective of all accounts. The status of the legislatively allocated E&G budget is presented, along with spending patterns for all other institutional accounts. On a monthly basis, the Trustees are provided with a summary of the Institution's investment portfolio with a more comprehensive presentation on a quarterly basis to the Board of Trustees for review and approval.
- On a quarterly basis, capital-related budgets and the status of capital projects are presented to the Board of Trustees for review and approval.

Board of Trustees Audit Committee:

- WSU adheres to the Utah Board of Higher Education Policy [R565](#) on audit committees. This policy establishes a Board of Trustee Audit Committee (see 2.A.4). The policy outlines audit functions and audit responsibilities of the committee. University Policy ([PPM 5-10c](#)) establishes our audit committee and outlines the reporting process. The audit committee consists of at least four and not more than six members, at least three of whom must be members of the Board of Trustees. The committee meets at least three times a year and performs numerous functions, including:
 - Review and close all internal audits
 - Review all Board of Higher Education required audits
 - Interact with external auditors
 - Approve annual audit schedule with the advice of the president
 - Assess the internal control environment
 - Assess anonymous complaints received through the Red Flag reporting system
 - Assess compliance with applicable laws

External Financial Audits

- The Office of the State Auditor conducts or contracts WSU's annual financial audit, which covers all aspects of operations, including the Weber State University Foundation and Weber State University Research Foundation. The audit is conducted in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards. The University's fiscal year ends on June 30.
- Preliminary fieldwork is generally conducted during May, with final fieldwork being completed in September. Preliminary financial statements are presented to the auditors in August. After receiving the formal audit opinion, final statements are

printed in November and provided to the administration and Board of Trustees in January.

In conjunction with its financial audit, the Office of the State Auditor also conducts the Single Audit of Federal Financial Assistance. This audit is conducted in accordance with the requirements of the U.S. Office of Management and Budget Circular A-133, Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations. Given the size of WSU's federal financial aid, specific audit work is generally performed on these programs. The Office of the State Auditor also annually conducts the NCAA athletic audit.

Internal Audit Department

- WSU's [Internal Audit Department](#) is based on University policy ([PPM 5-10a](#)) to serve as an integral component of the University's financial and management control system. The department is staffed with experienced and qualified auditors who maintain long-term and annual internal audit schedules that are approved by the Board of Trustees. Financial examinations, internal control reviews, compliance audits, and procedural reviews comprise the majority of activities in the department. All internal audit report recommendations include departmental responses. A six-month compliance report is conducted to ensure that all recommendations have been implemented in an acceptable manner.

Results of External Financial Audits

- We have received "unqualified audit opinions" from our independent financial auditors over the past three decades. As part of the financial audit, they prepare a management letter outlining any recommendations. For more than 15 years, there have been no financial audit or NCAA audit management recommendations, or proposed financial adjustments. There have only been a minimal number of recommendations in the Single Audit of Federal Financial Assistance, all of which can be classified as minor in nature. The positive results of these audits provide a level of assurance to our administration and governing boards that management and accounting controls are operating effectively.

Administrative Response to External & Internal Audit Recommendations:

- As a matter of procedure, all institutional responses to audit recommendations (both external and internal) are centrally coordinated in the Accounting Services Office. After coordination with the targeted institutional office and development of an appropriate institutional response, they are shared with the Vice President for Administrative Services for final review. University responses are then submitted to the auditor for inclusion in the audit report. Procedures also include an auditor presentation of all recommendations to the Board of Trustees Audit Committee, President, supervising vice president (or equivalent), and other financial management leaders.

Evaluation and Enhancement of Institutional Internal Control Systems:

- Appropriate internal controls that are in place are well established and subject to review, both internally and externally. The institution has established budgetary oversight controls, controls for general and specific expenditures, and controls for cash receipting and revenue processing.

2. E.2 – FINANCIAL PLANNING FOR HEALTH AND LONG-TERM STABILITY

Financial planning includes meaningful opportunities for participation by stakeholders and ensures appropriate available funds, realistic development of financial resources, and comprehensive risk management to ensure short-term financial health and long-term financial stability and sustainability.

Weber State University has well-established financial planning that is aligned with institutional mission and core themes and is responsive to state initiatives. In addition, three fiscal cultural values guide the financial planning process that achieve these goals:

- “Financial conservatism” is a dominant characteristic that has proven its value through national economic downturns, including the economic challenges created by the recent COVID-19 pandemic.
- “Institutional compliance” has instilled the value of following established laws, regulations, policies, and procedures. This characteristic has protected the University from major lawsuits and significant audit non-compliance issues with federal and state laws, regulations, and guidelines.
- “Shared Governance,” which is embedded in all financial management processes, ensures participation across the University with full disclosure to all stakeholders with an emphasis on our Board of Trustees.

State Accountability in Financial Planning

- While the University enjoys adequate autonomy in establishing realistic objectives, the responsibility and accountability to the citizens of the State of Utah are well recognized. This requires close and effective work with the State of Utah Governor’s Office and the Utah State Legislature with regard to financial planning and budgeting. The Vice President for University Advancement has the primary responsibility for establishing and maintaining relationships with state elected officials. Significant involvement is also provided by the President, other executive officers of the University, and Board of Trustee members in managing the legislative process. Being a state-supported institution, WSU must be responsive to limitations of state resources and to statewide initiatives.

University Responsibilities in Financial Planning

- Long-term financial planning reflects the university mission, core themes, and long-term planning. It is informed by enrollment analysis and projections performed at the institution, the Utah System of Higher Education, and the Governor’s Office of Management and Budget. Given the characteristics and timing of projected enrollments, financial planning is strategically designed to accommodate projected trends. Both operational needs and capital requirements are examined.

Institutional Financial Stability – Short-Term Viability and Long-Term Sustainability

Information on the following topics is provided as evidence that the institution's financial planning and monitoring procedures have been effective at placing the University on a solid fiscal foundation in the short term and into the future.

1. Stability of E&G funding base
2. Emphasis on private fundraising
3. Maintenance of adequate institutional reserves and budget surpluses for contingencies
4. Appropriate risk management
5. Conservative use of long-term debt
6. Limited transfers/borrowings between funds
7. Effective treasury management
8. Fiscally responsible athletic department
9. Continued monitoring of institutional financial performance

Stability of E&G Funding Base: The Institution continues to benefit from a stable funding base provided by state tax monies and tuition collections. Historically, the Utah legislature has allocated proportionately more tax funding for higher education than comparable states.

Emphasis on Private Fundraising: The Offices of Development and Advancement Services in the Division of [University Advancement](#) are responsible for coordinating fundraising activities and for receiving and acknowledging all private gifts of cash, real property, securities, and in-kind items. The roles, responsibilities, and actions of these offices are guided by the institutional policies on the solicitation of private gifts ([PPM 2-1](#)) and the authorization to accept gifts ([PPM 2-2](#)).

Maintenance of Adequate Institutional Reserves and Budget Surpluses for Contingencies: Consistent with University Reserve Fund policy ([PPM 5-9](#)), we have established reasonable financial reserves over the past 10 years. During this period, the institution averaged \$6 million in operating carry-forward in the E&G budget, including at the departmental and central administrative levels. Reserves have been established for academic facilities, student scholarships, and student scholarly activities and increasingly for auxiliary and service enterprises over the past ten years.

Appropriate Risk Management to Ensure Short-term Solvency: State of Utah funding allows for drawdowns of appropriated tax funds. This, coupled with tuition collections and closely managed drawdowns of federal funding (e.g., Pell awards, Direct Student Loans, grants, contracts), provides adequate working capital for operations. From a cash management perspective, the University maintains an operating reserve that equates to at least one month of working capital of total state-appropriated funding. As short-term needs are identified, debt financing is generally avoided.

Conservative Use of Long-Term Debt: Utah Board of Higher Education ([R588](#)) delegates debt policy to the Board of Trustees, allowing institutions to establish their own debt policies on any non-state supported activity. Weber State is very fiscally conservative

regarding issuance of long-term debt. From an independent financial evaluation perspective, we have always serviced our debt obligations fully and on schedule. Bond obligations are further secured with “pledged revenues.” The financial results of the student facilities system (which includes designated auxiliaries) have consistently contributed to the 125% bond coverage requirement outlined in our bond covenants. Weber State’s overall financial condition, including the conservative use of debt as well as meeting all past debt requirements, is reflected in our recent 2019 series of bonds that were issued a Standard & Poor’s AA Bond Rating.

Limited Transfers/Borrowings Between Funds: Transfers between funds are made within the established guidelines of the University, Utah Board of Higher Education, and the State of Utah. Given our conservative management objectives, Weber State is always focused on preserving funding to finance institutional priorities with strategic transfers (including academic facility projects, student scholarships, and student scholarly activities). All transfers are subject to review in the annual external financial audit as well as through periodic internal audits. Inter-fund borrowing is generally avoided, although there have been approved projects over the past 10 years. These loans have been paid off in accord with internal loan arrangements. A strategic example is an ongoing \$5,000,000 line of credit that has been extended to the Facilities Management Department to finance a comprehensive [Energy Savings Investment Plan](#). Each year an evaluation is made of documented utility savings, which are transferred to pay off energy-saving project expenditures. This program has been in effect for more than a decade and has resulted in the University receiving local, regional, and national recognition for this innovation.

Effective Cash Management: The financial leadership team in Administrative Services, in partnership with the University Investment Committee ([PPM 5-14](#)), is responsible for cash management and endowment investments. These areas are managed and governed by the Utah Board of Higher Education policies and procedures ([Policy R-541 Management and Reporting of Institutional Investments](#)), our Board of Trustees’ approved investment policy (Policy 5-14), and the State of Utah Money Management Act. These investment policies provide general and specific provisions in the management of funds.

Fiscally Responsible Athletic Department: For more than a decade, the Athletic Department has operated in a fiscally responsible manner. Through a shared financial management structure that includes the Athletic Department and Financial Services, contingency funds have been established, and a balanced or surplus budget has been achieved every year. NCAA audits over the past five years have not identified any management letter recommendations. The Internal Audit Department also conducts annual audits of the Athletic Department to ensure that financial/compliance controls are operating effectively.

Institutional Analysis: Administrative Services periodically performs internal financial analyses. One includes an annual [Composite Financial Index](#) for internal management purposes that is shared with the Board of Trustees. We examine “Primary Reserve,”

“Net Operating Revenues,” “Financial Viability,” “Return on Net Assets,” and a “Composite Financial Index.” Our composite index for the last five years suggests “moderate to superior financial strength.” Another analysis is based on IPEDS data comparing WSU and 156 peer institutions across the nation (Master’s Colleges and Large Public 4-Year Universities). In the most recent analysis (2017-2018), WSU ranked in the higher percentiles on some key financial categories. Regarding research expenditures, the lower ranking is reflective of WSU’s recognition as a teaching institution.

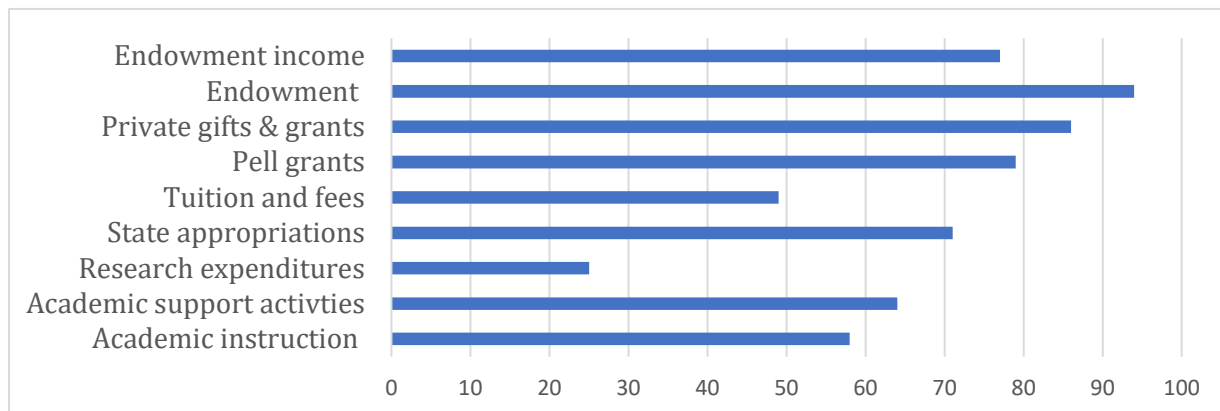


Figure 2.E.2: Percentile rankings of WSU on multiple financial metrics.

2. E.3 – FINANCIAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Financial resources are managed transparently and in accordance with policies approved by the Institution’s governing board(s) in accordance with its governance structure and applicable state and federal laws.

The University engages a transparent management approach with the Board of Trustees. The University observes both legal- and policy-required responsibilities while extending its perspective to share with the Board of Trustees important issues that may arise in the normal course of performing management fiduciary responsibilities. The following areas are examples of the deployment of this comprehensive and transparent management approach.

Transparency in Financial Reporting

As noted in 2.E.1, Weber State adopts a full-disclosure approach in sharing financial information with Trustees for review, input, and approval. Monthly financial reports, including the E&G budget and a summary of the investment portfolio are reviewed with the Board’s Business Committee (a standing committee of the Board of Trustees) and summarized to the full Board of Trustees. On a quarterly basis, capital-related budgets and the status of capital projects are presented to the Board of Trustees for review and approval.

Transparency in Cash Management and Investments

As noted in 2.E.2, the financial leadership team in Administrative Services, in partnership with the University Investment Committee, is responsible for cash management and

endowment investments. The Investment Committee has broad representation that includes the Vice President for Administrative Services (Chair), representative of the Business Committee of the Board of Trustees, the University President, the Vice President for University Relations, the Associate Vice President for Financial Services, one community member appointed by the University President, and one representative from the University Foundation Board of Directors. Additional members may be appointed by the President to provide additional investment expertise. The Public Treasurer and Internal Audit Director serve as ex-officio members of the committee. This very active committee meets at least three times a year and reviews current economic conditions and current strategies. Based upon this broad-based input, the committee formulates future strategies.

Financial Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on the University

COVID stressed all aspects of University functioning, but, as we noted in 2.A.4, the institution demonstrated decision-making that was collaborative, effective, and transparent. A similar story played out in financial resource management. The March 16, 2020 shut down of most on-campus operations caused a significant financial impact on many areas of the Institution.

- As noted in [2.A.4](#), the University formed a COVID-19 Task Force in early March, composed of individuals representing key areas within the University, including a member of the senior financial management team. Virtual meetings were held daily during the first few weeks after the emergency was declared. At least weekly meetings were held after the initial crisis was declared to review current conditions and concerns and implement measures to address those matters.
- The non-General Fund operations that depend on revenue streams from sources other than State appropriations experienced the greatest financial impact due to the pandemic. Notably, Student Housing, Wildcat Stores, Intercollegiate Athletics, Browning Center for the Performing Arts, and Wildcat Design and Print experienced the greatest financial impact during the last quarter of the Fiscal year 2020. We projected these operating units, with the addition of the Dee Events Center and Parking Services, to experience an even greater financial impact for Fiscal Year 2021.
- The University utilized existing institutional reserves, and where possible CARES funding, to mitigate the financial impact for the Fiscal Year 2020 (see Table 2.E.3).

	Awarded	Spent (FY20)	To Be Spent
Fiscal Year 2019-2020	\$12,301,947	\$2,106,552	\$10,195,395
Fiscal Year 2020-2021	\$9,290,382		\$9,290,382
Total	\$21,592,329	\$2,106,552	\$19,485,777

Table 2.E.3: Status of CARES Funding received by the Institution (12/15/2020)

- We expect to utilize the same strategies for the Fiscal Year 2021. We are confident that our past financial conservatism management practices will help us to navigate the continued uncertainties of the pandemic and return those areas most impacted to their pre-pandemic levels of financial stability.

STANDARD 2.F – HUMAN RESOURCES

2. F.1 – CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT, PROCEDURES FOR EVALUATION, RETENTION, PROMOTION, AND TERMINATION

Faculty, staff, and administrators are apprised of their conditions of employment, work assignments, rights and responsibilities, and criteria and procedures for evaluation, retention, promotion, and termination.

All new University employees are given an orientation and instruction on their conditions of employment, work assignments, and rights and responsibilities as reflected in the [University Policy and Procedures Manual](#) and the [Employee Handbook](#).

Upon hiring, employees are notified of their rights to respectful [workplace conditions](#) and expectations. All employees are notified that they have [freedom from discrimination](#) and the opportunity to improve performance before sanctions are imposed unless actions are egregious ([PPM 3-33](#); [PPM 9](#)). Faculty are made aware of [rights](#) specific to them. Exempt and non-exempt staff are made aware of their six-month probationary period ([PPM 3-8](#) and [PPM 3-33](#)). Expectations included are as follows:

- [Work hours, Overtime Pay, Comp Time](#)
- [Public Safety](#)
- [Drug and Alcohol Awareness](#)
- [Discrimination and Harassment](#)
- [Conflicts of Interest](#)
- [Consensual Relations](#)
- [Acceptable Use Policy for Computing and Network Resources](#)

Office hours and working schedules are designated by supervisors ([PPM 3-2a](#)). Job descriptions are provided for every benefits-eligible staff position on campus in People Admin, found in the [WSU portal](#). Employees are expected to participate in required new employee training facilitated by the Human Resources Department. They are also expected to participate in other job-specific training as identified by their supervisors. Other [required trainings](#) can be found on our [website](#).

Evaluation

Staff are evaluated at least annually ([PPM 3-62](#)), and faculty are evaluated for tenure and post-tenure review ([PPM 8-11](#)), or if non-tenure-track formally after the first year and continuously every three years ([PPM 8-7](#)).

- The current evaluation process for staff utilizes the online [Performance Review and Enrichment Program](#) (PREP) found in People Admin. Staff members receive an overview of PREP during employee orientation.
- Full evaluations for faculty are made in the third and sixth years for tenure and promotion. After tenure is granted, faculty are evaluated every five years. This policy was revised early in 2021 to expand recognition of creative efforts in the tenure review and ranking process.
- The University strives to provide (1) continuous employment through effective planning and proper selection of faculty and staff employees ([PPM 3-5](#)) and (2) rich

benefits (e.g., [insurance benefits](#), [fringe benefits](#), [tuition benefits](#), [retirement benefits](#)).

- WSU also strives to provide (1) respect for the dignity of each employee and encouragement of interpersonal cooperation and support; (2) concern for the needs and career development of employees; (3) information about changes at the university and, whenever possible, advance notice of changes that would affect his/her job; (4) clear and accepted channels for the consideration of suggestions, grievances or complaints; and (5) maximum job security, which fair treatment and good planning can provide ([PPM 3-15](#)).

Promotion

- Job openings are posted weekly on the WSU website at <https://jobs.weber.edu/> for employees interested in promotions or transfers. Career ladders have been established in some areas, for example, Information Technology, Career Services, and Continuing Education, to provide natural progression opportunities.
- Promotion and tenure guidelines--including expectations for teaching, scholarship, service, and artistic creation--are noted in the faculty appointment policies ([PPM 8](#)). Additional information specific to colleges for tenure and post-tenure review can be found at the following link: <https://www.weber.edu/academicaffairs/forms-guidelines.html>

Termination

- Terminations that occur through voluntary or involuntary actions are handled so as to achieve the least adverse effect upon the employee and the University ([PPM 3-10](#)).
- Faculty members have due process in proceedings involving the potential of disciplinary action. These processes are noted in policy ([PPM 9](#)). Faculty terminations occur on a limited basis for financial exigency or medical incapacity, as noted in [PPM 9-16](#). Additional information can also be found in [PPM 8-10](#).

2. F.2 – OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROFESSIONAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

The institution provides faculty, staff, and administrators with appropriate opportunities and support for professional growth and development.

Training expectations are outlined in [PPM 3-69](#). New, salaried employees have [five mandatory trainings](#) they are expected to complete. New faculty have additional training provided through the [New Faculty Academy](#), which, prior to the pandemic, was conducted in a retreat in late summer.

Faculty

- There are three major ways that faculty receive funding for professional development. One is through their academic department or college, which has dedicated funds for attendance at conferences and other professional development opportunities. Faculty may also submit a proposal for sabbatical leave ([PPM 3-25](#)) *“for purposes of study, research or other pursuit, the objectives of which are the*

professional improvement and advancement of faculty members as well as an increase in their usefulness to the institution.”

- In addition, policy provides the Committee on Research, Scholarship and Professional Growth ([PPM 1-13](#), Article B-5, Section 4.8), which “*recommend[s] policies on research, scholarship, teaching loads, instructional and faculty development, and faculty productivity. It shall facilitate faculty in obtaining grants, travel funds, physical facilities, etc., to pursue research and scholarly activities. As the [website](#) for this committee explains, “All contract, salaried faculty are encouraged to submit proposals to the RSPG Committee... Adjunct faculty and professional staff may be included within proposals that are submitted by contract, salaried faculty.”*

Adjunct Faculty

- Adjunct faculty have an annual [Spring Retreat](#) along with other [resources](#) focused on the issues of adjunct faculty. Adjunct faculty may apply for research grants through the [Hemingway Foundation](#) and may partner with contract faculty on other [grant opportunities](#).

Staff and Administrators

- Exempt staff and administrators have access to funding in their administrative unit that is set aside for professional development, including attendance at professional conferences. Exempt and non-exempt staff may also apply for professional development funds through the [staff development grant program](#).

All Employees

- All faculty, staff, administrators, and other employees have access to a series of [online and in-person presentations](#) offered through the Office of Workplace Learning, as well as opportunities to participate in ongoing brown bag lectures, book groups, and professional learning groups sponsored by the [Teaching and Learning Forum](#). Additional training offerings are facilitated by various campus departments. These training opportunities can be found by faculty and staff by logging into their employee portals and clicking on the Training Tracker application. Finally, the institution provides additional training through a subscription to LinkedIn Learning.

2. F.3 – SUFFICIENT STAFFING

Consistent with its mission, programs, and services, the institution employs faculty, staff, and administrators sufficient in role, number, and qualifications to achieve its organizational responsibilities, educational objectives, establish and oversee academic policies, and ensure the integrity and continuity of its academic programs.

WSU employs a sufficient number of qualified personnel to maintain its support and operations functions.

Sufficiency of Faculty, Staff, and Administration

- The administrative structure of the University can be seen in the [overall organizational chart](#) and a detailed chart specific to [Academic Affairs](#), [Student](#)

[Affairs, Information Technology, Administrative Services](#), and [University Advancement](#)

- The institution currently has 984.33 full-time and part-time staff. It also has 721 full-time and part-time faculty. The ratio of staff to faculty is 1.37 and is compared below to WSU's [peer institutions](#) (Table 2.F.1). Notably, it is the only school in the peer group that increased the size of the faculty while reducing the size of the staff since the previous review in 2014.

Unit ID	Institution Name	Faculty	Staff	Staff/Faculty Ratio
156620	Eastern Kentucky University	771.67	1320.33	1.71
157447	Northern Kentucky University	708.00	843.67	1.19
211644	Clarion University of Pennsylvania	230.67	394.67	1.71
206695	Youngstown State University	596.33	713.00	1.20
169910	Ferris State University	590.67	836.00	1.42
160038	NW State University of Louisiana	390.33	484.00	1.24
230737	Utah Valley University	1043.67	1677.33	1.61
230782	Weber State University	721.00	984.33	1.37
142115	Boise State University	1015.33	1745.33	1.72
102553	University of Alaska Anchorage	672.00	1176.67	1.75
136172	University of North Florida	617.33	1239.00	2.00
Note: Part-time faculty/staff are divided by three and added to the full-time faculty/staff to calculate these numbers.				

Table: 2F.1: Staff to Faculty Ratios

Recruitment, Hiring, and Advancement

- Numerous policies are in place to govern the institution's recruitment, hiring, and advancement procedures: [PPM 3-5, Hiring of Salaried Personnel](#); [PPM 3-5a, Employment of Persons with Criminal Records](#); [PPM 3-6, Employment of Relatives](#); [PPM 3-7, Health Requirements](#); [PPM 3-8, Probationary Period](#); [PPM 3-14, Hourly Employment](#); and [WSU Policy Manual Section 8, Faculty Appointment](#). The policies ensure an objective, systematic approach for employing qualified employees. Criteria and qualifications for the selection of personnel are included in these PPMs. Responsibilities for faculty and staff are noted in [PPM 3-2 Employee Definitions](#).
- Each vacancy announcement contains a job description outlining the duties, responsibilities, and reporting line of the position.

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- For faculty positions, the duties are determined by the hiring manager, typically a dean, and are consistent with academic program needs. The Dean conducts the final review for accuracy before the position is posted. The qualifications are consistent with the policies and procedures relating to the Appointment, Review, Promotion, and Tenure PPM.
 - For staff positions, the duties and qualifications advertised in the vacancy announcement come directly from a position description with hiring manager review.
 - The use of the Applicant Rating System in the WSU Portal helps to ensure that neutral, legitimate criteria, aligned with individual job descriptions, are developed and utilized in the hiring process.

2. F.4 – REGULAR EVALUATION OF FACULTY, STAFF, AND ADMINISTRATORS

Faculty, staff, and administrators are evaluated regularly and systematically in alignment with institutional mission and goals, educational objectives, and policies and procedures. Evaluations are based on written criteria that are published, easily accessible, and clearly communicated. Evaluations are applied equitably, fairly, and consistently in relation to responsibilities and duties. Personnel are assessed for effectiveness and are provided feedback and encouragement for improvement.

As set forth in policy [PPM 3-62](#), it is the University's practice to evaluate all personnel regularly.

Administrator Evaluation

- The evaluation of administrators includes (1) performance reviews of work duties and responsibilities, which are regular, low-profile reviews of incumbent administrators for essentially "formative" purposes and (2) reappointment reviews occurring near or at the end of a stated term and bearing directly on the question of continuation in office.
- Some administrators, such as the Provost, have additional evaluations noted in policy ([PPM 1-5c](#)). Vice presidents follow a similar process, although this is not specifically noted in the PPM. The Provost conducts periodic evaluations of academic deans that include an interim review during the second year of appointment and a formal reappointment evaluation by the end of the term of service ([PPM 1-17](#)).

Staff Evaluation

- Staff personnel are evaluated at least annually. The current process being used for staff personnel is the online Performance Review and Enrichment Program (PREP). Using job descriptions as benchmarks, the staff is evaluated on five Core Performance Factors: Job Knowledge, Quality, Self-Management, Customer Service, and Community and Teamwork. Any employee who supervises other staff has a sixth factor: leadership. Supervisors may select one or more job-specific factors on which to evaluate the performance of specific work duties and responsibilities as well. There can and should be variations in the factor(s) selected, based on differences in job responsibilities and work duties. Staff members receive an overview of the PREP during employee orientation.

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- Supervisors are provided a 6-hour training session which teaches them about the PREP process, the importance of using the job description for evaluating the performance of work duties and responsibilities, the value of regular, honest feedback, and the importance of ensuring the PREP is applied equitably, fairly, and consistently. Information on how to utilize the PREP system, as well as a rubric for the three rating categories (does not meet expectations, meets expectations, and exceeds expectations), can be found on the [PREP website](#).

Faculty Evaluation

Tenure Review: During the tenure process, there are review procedures to evaluate and record the progress of probationary faculty members toward promotion and tenure ([PPM 8-11](#)). Full evaluations are completed during the third and sixth probationary years. Tenure is managed at the college/school level, and each area has their own tenure documents, although each college/school use the same [autobiographical template](#) for faculty to prepare their documentation.

- [Tenure Document for College of Engineering, Applied Science & Technology](#)
- [Tenure Document for Telitha E. Lindquist College of Arts & Humanities](#)
- [Tenure Document for John B. Goddard School of Business & Economics](#)
- [Tenure Document for Jerry & Vickie Moyes College of Education](#)
- [Tenure Document for Dr. Ezekiel R. Dumke College of Health Professions](#)
- [Tenure Document for College of Science](#)
- [Tenure Document for College of Social & Behavioral Sciences](#)
- [Tenure Document for the Library](#)

Post Tenure Review: After tenure is granted, faculty are evaluated every five years, or more often at the discretion of the department chair or dean or at the request of the faculty member ([PPM 8-11](#)). Each College tenure document specifies procedures to administer a review of the work of each tenured faculty member in a manner and frequency consistent with institutional and professional accreditation standards. The criteria for such review include multiple indices, and is discipline- and role-specific, as appropriate, to evaluate:

1. Teaching, through student, collegial, and administrative assessment.
2. The quality of scholarly and creative performance and/or research productivity.
3. Service to the profession, school, and community.

A full description of the review process for tenured and non-tenured faculty can be found in policy addressing the Evaluation of Faculty Members. ([PPM 8-11](#))

Contract Faculty: Weber State University hires a range of contract (non-tenure track) teaching staff, including Instructors ([PPM 8-6](#)), Adjuncts (see [PPM 3.2.D.1](#)), and Affiliates ([PPM 3.2.E.1-3](#)). By policy ([PPM 8-7](#)), contract faculty are reviewed in their first year of employment and again every three years, depending on the length of their appointment.

COVID-19 Response: HR Accommodations, Communications, and Professional Development

On [March 15, 2020](#), an email from the President to University faculty and staff encouraged them to work from home if they were able to do so. Shortly after that, all employees were told to work from home unless it was absolutely essential that they come to campus. HR worked collaboratively with faculty and staff to be accommodating, flexible, and communicative. The University continued to provide professional development opportunities and acquired new tools to facilitate this process.

Accommodating: All HR decisions were made with safety, flexibility, and compassion as the priority.

- Faculty were directed to teach all classes remotely in spring and summer 2020, although some face-to-face classes returned in fall 2020 and spring 2021.
- If staff members were unable to work remotely, they were still paid during spring and summer 2020, with more staff returning to campus in fall 2020 and spring 2021.
- Hourly workers were paid in spring and summer 2020 even if they were unable to work remotely. This minimized the financial impact on their livelihoods.
- Essential employees in targeted departments (e.g., Facilities Management) rotated weeks when employees needed to be in the office.
- Weber State continued to pay all employees their full salaries or wages despite provisions that only a portion of wages could be compensated by the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA). In early fall, we offered a voluntary separation incentive program to curtail the financial impact of COVID-19 on the institution while preventing involuntary separations. Because of these decisions, we were able to avoid furloughs and mass layoffs.

Communicating: From the beginning of the pandemic, [communication](#) with faculty, staff, and students was both frequent and transparent.

- Faculty and staff were extensively surveyed so their opinions could be used in decision-making. They served on the COVID-19 Task Force that advised the President and on ad-hoc planning Task Forces that planned the fall 2020 partial return to campus.
- The President and key administrators held [virtual town hall](#) meetings weekly and monthly to communicate decisions and facilitate question-and-answer sessions to address any employee concerns. These are still ongoing.
- Employee and student check-in surveys were sent monthly, informing needs assessments and decision-making.
- Throughout the pandemic, support groups were offered to manage remote work, supervise remote employees, support students, promote relaxation and meditation, and provide social support for faculty/staff.
- Opportunities for symptomatic and non-symptomatic COVID-19 testing were made available to the campus community beginning in December 2020, with testing resources provided by the state and operations conducted by faculty, staff, and student volunteers.

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- In collaboration with the local health department, WSU began administering vaccines in January 2021 again with faculty and staff volunteers.

Professional Development: Moving all classes to online and virtual formats as a response to COVID-19 in March of 2020 created an opportunity to provide faculty, including adjuncts (many of whom are staff), with numerous professional development opportunities.

- An ad-hoc task force was assembled in March 2020 to create a [website](#) supporting instructors in the quick transition to online and virtual formats.
- Supported by CARES Act funding, the task force offered instructors stipends for professional development opportunities, including digital teaching/learning courses and experiential learning grant programs for virtual and online formats.
- The task force also created technology-enhanced training and production spaces for digital teaching.

STANDARD 2.G – STUDENT SUPPORT RESOURCES

2. G.1 – EFFECTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS AND STUDENT SUPPORT

Consistent with the nature of its educational programs and methods of delivery, and with a particular focus on equity and closure of equity gaps in achievement, the institution creates and maintains effective learning environments with appropriate programs and services to support student learning and success.

Academic Support Centers and Programs

[Academic Support Centers and Programs \(ASCP\)](#) comprises departments and services that promote students' academic success and life-skills development by providing [tutoring](#), [testing](#), [technology](#), and [academic peer coaching](#) initiatives. Through collaborations within the University and the implementation of best practices, ASCP delivers effective learning support for all student populations. ASCP includes programs tailored for the needs of targeted populations as a way to close equity gaps. These programs include the [Nontraditional Student Center](#), [Student Support Services](#), [Student Support Services-STEM](#), and [Veterans Upward Bound](#). Additionally, ASCP collaborates with Academic Affairs in a Department of Education SIP Grant designed to support underserved students in a program titled [Wildcat Scholars](#).

Access and Diversity

- The Office of [Access and Diversity \(A&D\)](#) directly supports institutional core themes through precollege outreach programs, transition-to-college support, community partnerships, University-wide programming, student leadership development, and retention efforts to create an inclusive and welcoming co-curricular environment for all students with particular emphasis on historically underrepresented populations. Its mission is to increase higher education access, persistence, and graduation rates for traditionally underrepresented students. A&D includes federally funded programs such as [TRIO Talent Search](#), [TRIO Upward Bound](#), [State GEAR UP](#), and Ogden School District GEAR UP grant programs.

Other Areas

- Other strategic areas include [College Access and First-Year Transition](#), FAFSA Advocates (a program that provides precollege support as well as FAFSA assistance to high school students), [Diversity and Inclusive Programs](#), [the Center for Multicultural Excellence](#), [the LGBT Resource Center](#), [Peer Mentor Program](#), [the Women's Center](#), and [Community Engagement](#). These areas directly support our institutional core themes of access, learning, and community through intentional recruitment and retention efforts such as transition support, mentoring, and advising.

Academic Help, Focused Support, and Wellness

- These offices and their services in support of all students are presented in an accessible way, with students directed to websites for [academic help](#), [focused support](#), and [wellness](#).

2. G.2 – CATALOG WITH CURRENT AND ACCURATE INFORMATION

The institution publishes in a catalog, or provides in a manner available to students and other stakeholders, current and accurate information that includes: institutional mission; admission requirements and procedures; grading policy; information on academic programs and courses, including degree and program completion requirements, expected learning outcomes, required course sequences, and projected timelines to completion based on normal student progress and the frequency of course offerings; names, titles, degrees held, and conferring institutions for administrators and full-time faculty; rules and regulations for conduct, rights, and responsibilities; tuition, fees, and other program costs; refund policies and procedures for students who withdraw from enrollment; opportunities and requirements for financial aid; and the academic calendar.

WSU Catalog and/or webpages ensure access to the following critical information:

- Institutional mission and core themes ([website, catalog p. 7](#))
- Entrance requirements and procedures ([website, catalog, pp. 64-68](#))
- Grading policy ([website, catalog, pp 57-59](#))
- Information on academic programs and courses ([website, catalog, searchable by program](#))
 - Degree program completion (Program [Graduation MAPs](#))
 - Expected learning outcomes ([major pages](#))
 - Required course sequences (Program [Graduation MAPs](#))
 - Projected timeline based on normal student progress (Program [Graduation Maps](#))
 - Frequency of offering ([catalog search for each course](#), Program [Graduation MAPs](#))
- Program Learning Outcomes ([program review, major pages](#))
 - The major pages provide accessible descriptions of outcomes for students. The Program Review page provides the more formal program outcomes, curriculum grids, and assessments. The page is being updated to include all associate's degrees and certificates offered by departments.
- Names, titles, degrees held, and conferring institutions for administrators and full-time faculty ([website, catalog, pp. 11-33](#))
- Rules, regulations for conduct, rights, and responsibilities ([website, catalog, p. 10](#))

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- Tuition, fees, and other program costs ([website](#), [catalog, pp 78-81](#))
 - Refund policies and procedures for students who withdraw from enrollment ([Bursar's Office](#), [catalog pp. 81](#))
 - Opportunities and requirements for financial aid ([website](#), [catalog, pp. 71-74](#))
 - Academic calendar ([website](#))

2. G.3 – PUBLICATIONS AND WRITTEN MATERIAL

Publications and other written materials that describe educational programs include accurate information on national and/or state legal eligibility requirements for licensure or entry into an occupation or profession for which education and training are offered. Descriptions of unique requirements for employment and advancement in the occupation or profession shall be included in such materials.

Each WSU program that leads to licensure or that has unique requirements for employment is clearly described in appropriate programs' webpages. These links lead to websites of such programs: [Nursing](#), [Emergency Care and Rescue](#), and [Respiratory Therapy](#). Furthermore, students may access more information about state authorization of licensure programs on the [WSU State Authorization](#) website. Additionally, information about program accreditation can be found in the [institution catalog](#) and [major pages](#) websites.

Major pages have been created for each degree and include information about potential jobs. Here are examples from WSU's more popular majors:

- [Computer Science](#)
- [Nursing](#)
- [Communication](#)
- [Business Administration](#)
- [Zoology](#)
- [Psychology](#)
- [Family Studies](#)

2. G.4 – FINANCIAL AID

The institution provides an effective and accountable program of financial aid consistent with its mission, student needs, and institutional resources. Information regarding the categories of financial assistance (such as scholarships, grants, and loans) is published and made available to prospective and enrolled students.

The [Financial Aid and Scholarship Office](#) assists students in financing their education through a variety of federal, state, and institutional loans, as well as grants, scholarships, tuition waivers, and work programs. Staff members work directly with students, parents, and secondary school personnel in explaining programs, answering questions, and providing general assistance. Accountability for financial aid and scholarship funds is accomplished through regular internal, state, and federal audits.

Financial aid in the form of grants, loans, and scholarships is communicated to students in [recruitment marketing](#) which is linked from [admissions](#) publications, other published brochures, during [new student orientation](#), and on the WSU Financial Aid & Scholarships

Office [website](#). Every year, WSU provides more than \$63 million in federal financial assistance and more than \$26.5 million in institutional scholarship funding to students. The most recent data (AY 2018) indicates that 63% of WSU's students receive some form of federal financial aid, and 26% benefit from institutional scholarships and state-approved tuition waivers.

The Student Code ([PPM 6-22](#)) affirms students' right to access to financial aid for eligible students (III B 5 and 6) and to file complaints about any decision (VIII C 2b). Students are provided information about loan repayment obligations, which are available on the Financial Aid Disclosure [webpage](#). Entrance and exit counseling for financial aid is accomplished through a [website](#) recently consolidated by the U.S. Department of Education.

Each form of student financial aid is separately monitored—including everything listed on the [Financial Aid website](#)—annual reports are prepared to facilitate federal, state, and University review of all financial aid processes. On occasion, Access and Diversity staff, as well as the Money Management Center – both in Student Affairs – assist students with FAFSA-related questions and submissions.

2. G.5 – STUDENT REPAYMENT OBLIGATIONS AND DEFAULT RATES

Students receiving financial assistance are informed of any repayment obligations. The institution regularly monitors its student loan programs and publicizes the institution's loan default rate on its website.

Institutional loan default rates and student loan programs are regularly monitored. The [default rate](#) was 6.6% for 2016 and 5.9% for 2017 (which are the most recent reports available). Student loan recipients are required to complete both [entrance and exit counseling](#) where a discussion takes place regarding repayment obligations.

The [Loan Servicing Department](#) conducts orientation, counseling, exit interviews, loan billing, and collections relating to the Federal Perkins Student loan program, short-term institutional loans, and Pell Grant over-awards and tuition repayment.

2. G.6 – ACADEMIC ADVISEMENT

The institution designs, maintains, and evaluates a systematic and effective program of academic advisement to support student development and success. Personnel responsible for advising students are knowledgeable of the curriculum, program and graduation requirements, and are adequately prepared to successfully fulfill their responsibilities. Advising requirements and responsibilities of advisors are defined, published, and made available to students.

Academic advisement for students occurs within each of the seven colleges and the Student Success Center. The University has a largely decentralized academic advising process, while the coordination of part of the program related to technology is centralized. The coordination of information between these entities occurs through the [University Academic Advising Council](#) (UAAC), in which all professional academic advisors are asked to participate. Through UAAC, first-year advising learning outcomes, training, and professional development for advisors is maintained, and best practices are discussed and implemented.

Upon admission, a student is declared into a program of study (e.g., major, minor) that determines the location of their academic advisor. Depending on the college, a student may have a professional staff academic advisor and/or a faculty advisor. Each of seven colleges and the Student Success Center also has a retention advisor. These are academic advisors who are specifically focused on supporting the University enrollment, retention, and completion initiatives.

The [Student Success Center](#) is an integral part of enrollment management and provides centralized administration of technology tools and programs utilized by advisors across campus, including the [Early Alert Program](#) and the [Bounce Back Program](#).

2. G.7 – IDENTITY VERIFICATION FOR DISTANCE STUDENTS

The institution maintains an effective identity verification process for students enrolled in distance education courses and programs to establish that the student enrolled in such a course or program is the same person whose achievements are evaluated and credentialed. The institution ensures that the identity verification process for distance education students protects student privacy and that students are informed, in writing at the time of enrollment, of current and projected charges associated with the identity verification process.

Identity verification of all students enrolled in credit-bearing classes is performed by the Admissions Office. Standard secure protocols for students submitting social security numbers, birth dates, high school transcripts, college transcripts, and test scores are in place for all applicants. After being admitted, students receive a unique W# that is then used by the student for all subsequent interactions with the University.

Authentication to online systems is through a student's Wildcat username/ password. Passwords must pass a minimum-security standard and must be at least 16 characters in length. Students are prompted to change passwords only if a password has potentially or actually been compromised. Students are educated about the importance of password security. Students completing secure assessments for online courses are required to present picture ID through either the physical testing centers or the online testing proctoring system. The identities of students in fully online programs that include clinical and practicum work are verified on-premises. These programs also have strong ethics codes, which include swift action for any violation.

WSU protects student privacy by [enforcing FERPA regulations](#) and providing training for college employees on a regular basis and individual offices/departments upon request. The University releases directory information only and provides students with the ability to opt-out if they do not want their information released. Students are notified on an annual basis of their FERPA rights. Currently, there are no costs passed on to students relating to identity verification.

STANDARD 2.H – LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES

Consistent with its mission, the institution employs qualified personnel and provides access to library and information resources with a level of currency, depth, and breadth sufficient to support and sustain the institution's mission, programs, and services.

Library Mission and Strategic Plan

Stewart Library's [mission](#) is aligned with Weber State University's strategic plan and supports the core themes of learning, access, and community:

- In 2018, the library adopted a new [strategic framework and plan](#) to enact our vision and mission. The four goal areas in the plan are:
 - Empower learners and foster independent, critical thinking through high-impact and personalized educational experiences.
 - Promote equitable access to higher education and community learning opportunities.
 - Contribute to the well-being and strength of the campus and local communities in which we are embedded.
 - Maintain an effective and sustainable organization as the foundation of all our work.

Library Planning and Assessment

The library's planning body is the Library Council, whose membership includes the dean, all department heads, the coordinators for reference services, resource sharing, and the Davis Campus, and a staff representative.

- This group decides upon major budget and policy decisions and assesses progress and necessary changes to initiatives and operations to meet the library's strategic goals.
- Each year, strategic actions are reviewed, and progress is assessed through both qualitative and quantitative measures. The assessment data includes circulation and gate count statistics, collection usage statistics, service usage statistics, website analytics, and feedback from faculty, staff, and students via surveys, focus groups, and advisory committees (the Faculty Library Advisory Committee, a new Library Student Advisory Committee, and the Board of the Friends of the Library).
- Recent feedback from the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Index suggests that library satisfaction is steadily improving.

	2014		2016		2018		2020	
	Important	Satisfied	Important	Satisfied	Important	Satisfied	Important	Satisfied
Library Staff are helpful and approachable	5.72	5.76	5.83	5.69	5.87	5.92	6.01	6.01
Library Resources and services are adequate	6.04	5.88	6.18	5.82	6.20	6.07	6.31	6.15

Table 2.H.1a: Noel-Levitz survey of student satisfaction and importance (1 to 7, not satisfied/important to very satisfied/important).

- Open-ended comments suggest students want more quiet study space and greater access to group study rooms. The library is currently exploring plans to add three group study rooms to address these concerns.
- The Library Council uses all of this data and feedback to determine next steps or modifications to its strategic action plan. The Library Council is currently developing a new assessment plan to articulate clear outcomes-based measures and qualitative data that will help in better assessing and improving library services, facilities, and collections. The library has kept a range of statistics on building and service usage but never analyzed them to identify needs for improvement. The new assessment plan will help to focus data gathering on actionable areas and improve the regular patron feedback process used to make changes and improvements. For example, instead of counting the number of research help transactions, it has been proposed to collect qualitative data on the types of questions asked. This information can help improve the library website so that patrons can find information more easily on their own.
- Planning for collection development is overseen by the Head of Collections and the Collection Management team, which is composed of all faculty subject librarians, the Resource Sharing and Course Materials Coordinator, and the Head of Technical Services. This team reviews usage statistics and feedback from WSU faculty and staff to determine which resources should be renewed, as well as any changes to budget allocations for journals, books and media, and unique materials. The Collection Management Team is currently drafting a new collection development philosophy and policy to better address strategic goals around access and equity, particularly in the area of course materials and Open Educational Resources.

Personnel

The library employs approximately 30 FTE staff, 10 faculty, and 23 FTE student assistants.

- Library faculty all hold a Master of Library Science, the terminal degree for professional librarians, and maintain the same standards for promotion and tenure as faculty campus-wide. A faculty librarian is assigned to each college. They serve as the primary liaison between the college and the library for collection management and teaching, learning, and curricular issues. In 2019, the library was able to fill a longstanding opening for the Engineering, Applied Sciences, and Technology Librarian, guaranteeing that each college has a dedicated librarian.

Operations and Resources

Since 2017, the library has engaged in a [long-term reorganization](#) with the goal of modernizing operations and dedicating resources to its strategic goals.

- Collection management and electronic resources management has been consolidated into one unit (it had been spread across units previously, leading to communication breakdowns).

-
- A new Head of Collections was assigned from the library faculty to dedicate more attention to new and more sustainable collection models.
 - A new position, Head of Technical Services, was created to provide leadership for acquisitions, discovery, and electronic resources management. There was also a reorganization of the Circulation, Resource Sharing, Media, and Davis Campus (a branch library) departments to clarify roles and responsibilities, streamline operations, and dedicate more resources to affordable course materials initiatives.
 - Student employment has been greatly expanded. This was done in order to better utilize the expertise of staff members by shifting some basic public service duties to student employees and advance student success through meaningful campus employment. A highlight of these efforts was the hiring of four peer research assistants who help patrons with basic research questions and strategies. This program builds on the advantages of peer learning while also allowing faculty subject librarians more time for in-depth research consultations.

Planning and Assessment

As noted above, the Collection Management Team uses feedback from campus faculty, via consultation with college subject librarians and the Faculty Library Advisory Committee, usage statistics, and other benchmarks such as program accreditation requirements, to determine annual collection priorities and budgets, as well as any major acquisitions or cancellations.

- The team also engages in regular weeding of the print collection to assess damaged items and ensure that outdated materials are removed and replaced with current resources.
- While the library is in the process of updating the collection development policy, the principles in the [current policy](#) remain true. As a teaching-intensive university with some master's degree programs, the library aims to support local curricula and collect at an [Instructional Level](#) while also supporting faculty research with Inter-Library Loan and other rapid document delivery.

Collection Expenditures and Holdings

The library's local holdings and subscriptions are supplemented by approximately \$1.1 million in state-funded consortial electronic resource subscriptions through the [Utah Academic Library Consortium](#) (UALC).

- The library also receives an additional \$176,000 allocation to its institutional collection budget through the consortium. The consortial purchases and supplemental funding provide an essential enhancement to the collection budget. When compared with WSU's [peer institutions](#), collection expenditures per FTE have moved from below to above the median with the addition of the UALC expenditures.

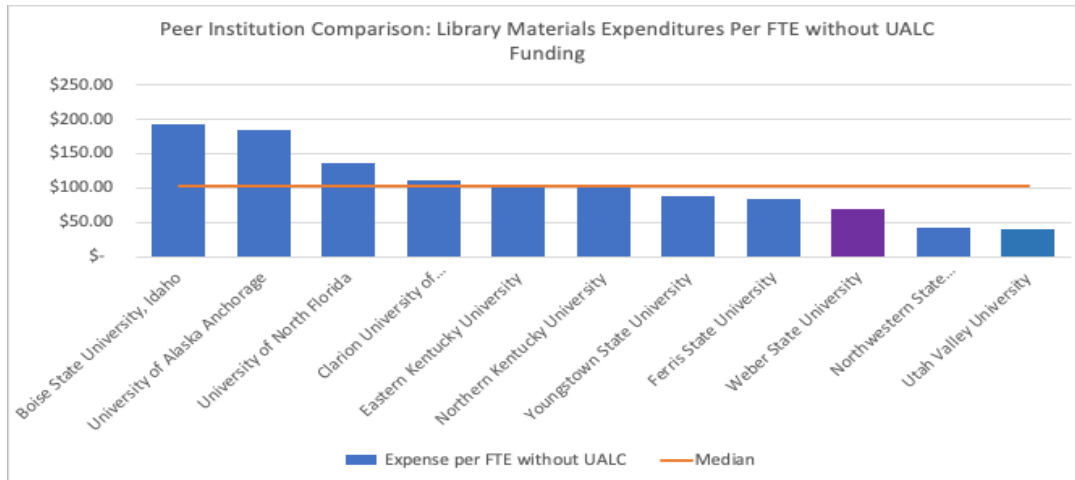


Figure 2.H.1a: Peer institutional comparison without UALC funding

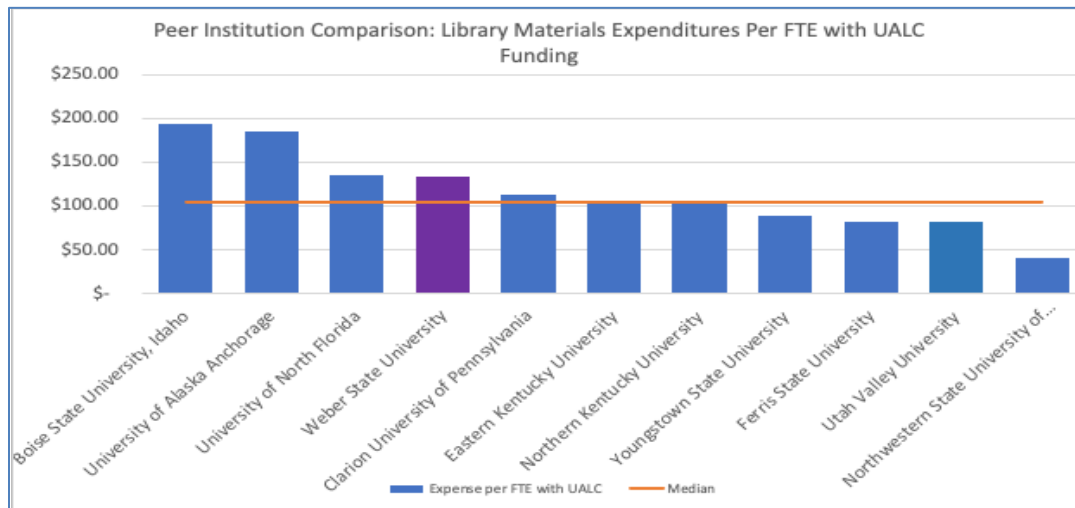


Figure 2.H.1b: Peer institutional comparison without UALC funding

- At the end of the 2019 fiscal year, an inventory of library holdings included:

Physical Books	349,882
Electronic Books	422,094
Databases	259
Electronic Journal (subscription titles)	181,330
Print Journals (subscription titles)	13,102
Streaming Media	355,627
Physical Media	37,805

Table 1.H.1b: Inventory of Library Holdings

Policies/Procedures Related to the Use of Library and Information Resources

The library has established policies that govern the [use of library facilities](#), [public computer workstations](#), and [circulation of materials](#).

- The library provides services and privileges for [community patrons](#), including borrowing privileges and access to public workstations. Effective summer term, 2019, the library stopped charging fines for overdue materials, with the exception of equipment, interlibrary loans, and course reserves, and instituted automatic renewals. This was a direct response to patron feedback and the need to promote equitable access to library resources.
- The library is currently planning an equity audit to update all library policies and procedures and ensure that they are equitable and just. The library contracted with an outside consultant who is an expert in anti-racist policy and practice in libraries to facilitate this work, to begin in April 2021.

Teaching and Learning

Stewart Library supports WSU's teaching and learning mission in numerous ways, but primarily through the teaching activities of the Teaching and Information Services Department (TIS). The following overview of the program is adapted from a recent program review [self-study report](#) submitted in January 2021.

- The TIS Department promotes student learning of information literacy skills and practices, an essential component of academic success and lifelong learning. This is done through formal instruction as part of the WSU curriculum, general and subject-specific library instruction sessions for WSU faculty and staff, and through personalized consultations. The main focus of the department aligns directly with WSU's Learning Core Theme by empowering learners and fostering independent, critical thinking through high-impact and personalized educational experiences. Classes and instructional sessions within TIS teach students how to engage with research materials in a way that is relevant to their academic needs. The department supports students by providing the foundation upon which scholarly communication is built and strives to create lifelong learners with a strong desire to seek out knowledge.
- All faculty librarians play an active role in partnering with faculty to ensure that library and information resources are integrated into the learning process. At the policy level, Information Literacy is a [General Education requirement](#) and falls under the oversight of the [General Education Improvement and Assessment Committee](#) (GEIAC). GEIAC and the Faculty Senate approve any changes to learning outcomes and regularly review assessments ([self-study, pp. 12-22](#)) of library courses (LIBS 1704, LIBS 1504, and several discipline-specific offerings) that meet the Information Literacy requirements. The library has one faculty representative on GEIAC.
- Faculty librarians also partner with faculty less formally, through their regular liaison work. They teach individual sessions for non-library courses on research tools and skills specific to each discipline, work with faculty to promote individual student research consultations in their courses, and conduct outreach to students

and faculty so that they are aware of the latest information resources and issues in their fields. Increasingly, librarians are playing an active role in helping faculty identify, adopt, and create more affordable course materials, often integrating library-licensed resources into course packs and links in Canvas, the University's Learning Management System.

Assessment and Improvement Plans

The department also underwent a formal [program review](#) in spring and fall 2020. The feedback converges with the department's own self-assessment and strategic priorities, feedback from the Dean of the Library and Provost, student evaluations, and learning assessments.

Facilities

A major, \$20 million renovation of the Ogden library building was completed in August 2017. The renovation achieved the following:

- Increased quiet study and collaborative workspace for students, including seven new group study rooms and 347 additional seats.
- Upgraded the windows and skylights to allow more daylight into the building.
- Opened up spaces to provide clearer wayfinding.
- Added compact shelving and more remote storage for future growth of the collection.
- Added a new, more accessible elevator going to all floors.
- Added a new Testing Center.
- Updated the existing restrooms and added a new all-gender restroom.
- Replaced the ceilings, carpeting, and the outdated, inefficient mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems.

Davis Campus: The Davis Campus library provides a full range of services, including research help, a small browsable collection, and daily courier service to deliver materials from the Ogden campus library. As part of the reorganization plan, the Library hired a new Davis Campus Coordinator to improve outreach and the integration of library services and resources with the growing number of WSU academic programs being offered on campus.

Ogden Campus: The Ogden campus library is open 97 hours during a typical week in the academic semester. The Davis campus library is open 40 hours during a typical week. The Ogden Campus library recorded 326,848 visits in FY 2019 and 265,431 in FY 2020, which reflected the closure of the library because of COVID-19 between March 17 and July 1, 2020.

STANDARD 2.I – PHYSICAL AND TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE

Consistent with its mission, the institution creates and maintains physical facilities that are accessible, safe, secure, and sufficient in quantity and quality to ensure healthful learning and working environments that support and sustain the institution's mission, academic programs, and services.

Physical Infrastructure

The University's mission and goals of providing high-quality instructional programs and public service are supported with physical facilities and equipment that are designed, maintained, and operated to provide a safe, clean, and comfortable environment conducive to higher learning. To that end the University maintains the following physical facilities:

Campuses and Centers: WSU has two main campuses and four other off-campus instructional centers.

- *WSU Ogden campus* consists of 400 total acres with 65 major buildings totaling approximately 3.0 million square feet. The campus is pedestrian-oriented, with academic buildings located in the interior of the campus and major vehicular traffic, parking, and service functions around the perimeter. As a result, relatively short walking distances separate the academic buildings, adding to the convenience of class scheduling. For an Ogden campus map, see this [link](#).
- *WSU Davis campus*, approximately 10 miles south of WSU Ogden, consists of 106 acres with six buildings (328,500 sq. ft.). This includes a brand new 50,000 square foot Computer & Automotive Engineering building. For a Davis Campus Map, see this [link](#).
- *Off-campus Instructional Centers.* WSU owns or leases additional instructional facilities. The University leases the WSU West Center in Roy (7,556 square feet, approximately 14 miles southwest of WSU Ogden); WSU Station Park (10,000 square feet, approximately 15 miles south of WSU Ogden); WSU Community Education Center (12, 476 square feet, 2 miles northwest of the Ogden Campus); and WSU Downtown (18,000 square feet, just 3.5 miles west of WSU Ogden).

Parking: Parking Services develops and maintains a safe and economical parking system that continuously adapts to the changing needs of the University's community.

- Although convenient parking at WSU Ogden has been a challenge, a free campus shuttle bus system allows students to park at the Dee Events Center, approximately one mile south of the campus. This service has allowed considerable growth in enrollment without introducing significant numbers of additional vehicles to the center of campus. The shuttle bus system delivers students to nearly the center of the Ogden campus academic area.
- In collaboration with Utah Transit Authority (UTA), WSU began an Ed Pass program in 2003, enabling students, faculty, and staff to ride transit authority busses and light rail for free. WSU is also working with UTA to construct a Bus Rapid Transit system from the local commuter rail station in downtown Ogden up to and through the main campus. This WSU Ogden Campus section of the new system will be complete by August 2022, and the full route will be complete in 2023. These efforts will ease the parking and congestion problems on the Ogden campus. UTA currently runs a regular route between WSU Ogden and WSU

Davis, and the University has a contract with Lyft for subsidized rides for students and faculty between the campuses.

Access: The University is committed to providing appropriate access to physical facilities for students, faculty, staff, and visitors.

- WSU Ogden has been designed with a peripheral road system and peripheral parking lots. In general, vehicle traffic is restricted from the central campus area, which is pedestrian-oriented. WSU Davis is similarly master-planned to keep vehicle and pedestrian traffic separate with parking and vehicle traffic on the outside of the built-up area.
- WSU Ogden is built on the side of a mountain. Adequate access for the physically challenged has been a priority. The use of ramps, sloping sidewalks, and building elevators make central campus movement available to everyone. [Disabilities Services](#) has direct responsibility for assisting individuals with disabilities. This department works closely with the Facilities Management department to ensure all new and remodeled physical facilities projects meet all applicable codes and the needs of special constituencies.
- Accessibility has been expanded to include access for those with disabilities to information and academic programs. This includes analysis and adjustments to how program content is delivered, digital media is offered, events are hosted, and so forth to those with disabilities such as those visually or aurally impaired.

Health and Safety: Each campus building is annually inspected by a representative of the Environmental Health and Safety department and the University Fire Marshall to identify and correct occupational and fire safety concerns.

- Inspections are also conducted for each campus building to identify hazardous materials and assess storage and management practices. All campus buildings and utility tunnels have been surveyed for asbestos-containing materials, and the results have been cataloged. Asbestos-containing materials and other hazards are removed as resources allow.
- Environmental Health and Safety office ensures the proper use, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials and assures compliance with state and federal regulations. They publish the process and policies for reporting, handling, and disposal of all hazardous material on their [website](#) (see [pdf](#)). Hazardous and toxic materials are identified by certified professional staff and stored in segregated and approved storage facilities before disposal by licensed contractors.
- The university has shown continuous improvement in campus safety and security, as evidenced in annual student satisfaction survey data. In response to the biennial Ruffalo Noel-Levitz Student Survey prompt “the campus is safe and secure for all students,” WSU students have rated the campus above a six on a 7-point scale in the past five survey administrations.
- WSU has more than 800 surveillance cameras that are centrally monitored and allow for a higher level of security. Ninety percent of all WSU facilities have a centrally controlled electronic access system as well. This allows for the

monitoring of propped doors, forced entry, an audit trail, and the ability to lock campus down at a moment's notice.

Master Planning: The University undertakes a major master planning effort every 10 to 15 years. That plan is then updated regularly as needed. In 2015, WSU undertook an extensive physical facility planning effort that culminated in the publication of the [2016 WSU Master Plan](#).

- The plan provides a framework for planning and development of additional growth as academic, and University programs grow and develop requirements for additional facilities and/or infrastructure. The current master plan included the Ogden Campus, Davis Campus, and a future West Campus on a 10-acre parcel that the university acquired to replace the leased West Center. This plan, though a few years old, is still viable and has been supplemented with focused supporting plans, such as the Master Transportation Plan, the Climate Action Plan, the Landscape Master Plan, the East Hillside Master Plan, and the Campus Frontage Master Plan (currently in development).

Physical Facilities Development and Improvement: Like all other state institutions of higher learning in Utah, the University classifies projects for facilities construction, renovation, or improvement under two programs -- capital development (over \$3.5 million) and capital improvement (under \$3.5 million). Each year, WSU follows the state-outlined process to identify capital development and capital improvement projects.

- For capital development projects, the University submits proposals through the State Board of Regents, the State Building Board, and the state legislature for approval.
- For capital improvement projects, the University submits proposals through the [Utah State Division of Facilities Construction and Management](#) (DFCM) to the State Building Board for approval. These projects are then validated with the DFCM facility condition assessment program that is conducted approximately every five years. Each deficiency is described and prioritized in terms of urgency of need, life safety, impact, and cost. This information is aggregated and evaluated for all campus facilities to establish an operations and maintenance capital investment program for the next five or more years. Each year, the university's development and improvement projects compete with similar projects submitted by state agencies and other higher education institutions.
- The University identifies both capital improvement and capital development projects using data from the Asset Management Program that Facilities Management has developed and utilizes to track the condition, anticipated life, and replacement costs for all physical assets. Data is also collected concerning program growth, space utilization, similar program space, market demands, and strategic goals of the University. This data is reviewed and updated continuously in order to ensure that limited resources and limited access to state funding is used in the most effective and responsible manner possible.

Classrooms, Laboratory, and Support Facilities: Classrooms, laboratory space, and support facilities on each campus are designed based on assessments from user departments and DFCM [guidelines](#).

- The University continues to focus resources to renovate all classrooms to be “smart” classrooms with full multi-media presentation capability. Along with upgrading the current classrooms, plans for all future classrooms include provisions for a full suite of classroom technologies that facilitate enriched delivery of classroom materials. The University also has campus-wide wireless internet connectivity for both the WSU Ogden and WSU Davis campuses. Several open-access computer labs have also been established on each campus.

Maintenance and Repair: Maintenance and repair requests are managed through a computerized maintenance management system (CMMS).

- This system allows receipt of work requests either verbally or electronically. The work requirement is entered into the CMMS system and electronically transmitted to the appropriate shop for execution. When the craftspeople have completed work, information relating to costs, time, and status is automatically recorded in the CMMS and available for reporting and analysis. Since the inception of CMMS in 2002, the backlog of maintenance and repair items has been substantially reduced. The system enables shop managers to maintain better visibility into the work assigned and the current status of those requirements. The department also uses a computerized control system, the Johnson Control Metasys Building Automation system, to control and monitor the HVAC systems.
- Operation and maintenance at the WSU Davis campus is fully coordinated with the maintenance functions based at WSU Ogden. All WSU Davis work is logged into the same CMMS system, and a dedicated team of technicians performs maintenance with supplemental support from the main work force at WSU Ogden.
- Working in cooperation with the DFCM, a comprehensive facilities condition analysis and comprehensive asset management program for all major WSU Ogden buildings and infrastructure is continuously updated and maintained. These serve as valuable tools in formulating requests for capital improvement and capital development funding from the legislature.

Energy Management: Weber State University has a very robust energy management program that tracks the consumption of energy at each facility and highlights manpower and funding of equipment or facilities that fall outside the overall goals.

- These data are publicized through an online [dashboard](#) to help drive campus user behavior. This program partners with the asset management program and drives the prioritization for capital renewal and replacement. The program also helps to guide the construction standards ([PPM 5-45](#)) by which all new buildings are erected.

Utilization: The University also conducts an annual utilization analysis to ensure that the spaces on campus are being used effectively and for their best purpose.

- The Space Planning Committee reviews the utilization analysis and makes recommendations to the President about reassigning, renovating, or modifying the course schedule to more effectively use the space on campus. The Utah Board of Higher Education has identified utilization goals for all institutions. WSU's utilization numbers are submitted and compared to those of other [schools](#). WSU's development project funding has recently been tied to how effectively the University utilizes its current space.

Equipment Control: Property Control, a department within the administrative services division, has the direct responsibility for inventory and audit of all institutional equipment.

- University Policy defines the scope and policy for accountability of assets ([PPM 5-28](#)). All items purchased or otherwise acquired are evaluated for life expectancy and acquisition value. When required by policy, equipment is tagged with an inventory number, placed on a master list, and audited on an annual basis.

II. Technological Infrastructure

The University's primary information technology support resource is the IT Division's staff.

Administrative Organization of IT: The IT division organization is composed of seventy-four (74) highly skilled professional staff organized in 5 areas of focus (see [Organization Chart](#))

- [Application Development Services](#)
- [Academic Technology Services](#)
- [Infrastructure Services](#)
- [IT Business Services \(ITBS\)](#)
- [Information Security Services](#)

Utilization of IT Resources and Services: General Computing labs for students include 315 computers (215 desktops and 100 laptops for student checkouts) spread across ten (10) different locations. Colleges also maintain several specialized computing labs in areas throughout Weber's multiple campuses.

- The IT Division also maintains a [virtual lab](#) presence. The virtual lab allows students and employees to simulate many of the same desktop applications that are available in the computer labs from their personal devices. The Virtual Lab currently offers access to thirty (30) software applications, with plans to grow the number significantly. Careful consideration has been made to ensure proper licensure of software made available through Weber's Virtual Lab.

Instructional Technologies: All academic courses are supported in the Canvas learning management system. Fully online, hybrid, virtual, and (traditionally) fully face-to-face courses are able to leverage the academic tools within Canvas to deliver content, engage students, and manage assignments. The faculty have also had access to a robust, home-grown assessment system, ChiTester, to deliver both formative and secure tests. Distance

students were previously proctored through an extensive system of approved independent proctors; however, that system has been replaced with Proctorio, an online proctoring tool that utilizes AI to monitor students as they complete assessments. Having these systems in place, with many of the faculty previously trained to incorporate them, supported the institution's move to mostly online and virtual during the pandemic.

Campus Technology Coordinators: The IT Division collaborates with Campus Technology Coordinators (CTCs), twenty-three (23) full-time support individuals across campus, and the University IT Council (UITC), which is comprised of external strategic IT partners.

- The CTCs meet monthly, and the UITC meets quarterly to discuss the latest technology issues, coordinate communications on new software and product rollouts, and identify/collaborate on common technology goals. Colleges and programs are responsible for acquiring information technology resources with assistance provided by the IT Division. The IT Division works closely with CTC and UITC members with common goals and support in mind.

Computer Support: Computing support is provided through a combination of mechanisms. Full-time support staff work in a distributed model to support faculty, staff, and students reporting through the Central IT Division and the seven (7) academic colleges.

- Additional support is also provided through undergraduate hourly student employees who work closely with the full-time staff and as part of the IT Service Desk. Support is offered in-person, over the phone, virtually through video conferencing tools, by email, and other chat tools. IT support tickets are generally tracked through the University incident tracking system. Classroom problem resolution is handled by on-call full-time staff who can respond within minutes.

Assessment of Resources and Services: One of the University's most essential assessment efforts is conducted as part of the ongoing IT Strategic Planning process.

- WSU is currently going through a process to create a new University Strategic Plan (see 2.A.4). The IT Division will be updating its Strategic plan to better align with the University's Core Themes and to establish the most critical initiatives where technology could play a vital role in the base infrastructure and computing as well as the academic technology needs for the campus.
- IT Portfolio Chairs, IT Liaisons, and student government leaders collectively identify the most critical projects and initiatives to the University. Needs identified by this group are vetted, prioritized, and managed by the appropriate IT Portfolio groups. The current eight (8) IT Portfolios include Web & Digital Management, Enrollment Services, Academic, Student Affairs, Administrative, Data Governance, Online & Continuing Education, and IT Infrastructure. Once the service or product is ready for delivery, the ownership and support are passed to the appropriate IT technical personnel or college technical professionals.
- The continued focus on implementing the [Information Technology Infrastructure Library](#) (ITIL) best practices across the IT Division has helped it to speak one common language of IT service management. IT staff strives to assure high levels and quality of service while continually working to improve the technical base and

accountability management. It has exhibited success in maintaining healthy systems and discontinuing obsolete technologies and services to closely match the changing needs of the campus community.

Computer Replacement Plan: Weber State University IT functions through a distributed model. [Campus Technology Coordinators \(CTCs\)](#) (representing all areas of the University) meet monthly to discuss important issues and projects so that all members with IT roles have a voice.

- Divisions and colleges create their own technology replacement plans as they each fund and replace computers and other technology in different ways. The College of Social and Behavioral Sciences has started this process with a [draft policy](#).
- The campus maintains a computing standard, managed by central IT and Purchasing. The replacement plans are approved by each College and/or Division and updated as needed.

COVID-19: Physical and Technology Infrastructure

COVID-19 challenged the staff and administration working to manage Weber State's physical and technology infrastructure. They responded with great flexibility and collaboration to ensure the continuity of essential functions.

Physical Infrastructure: Unprecedented collaborative, behind-the-scenes work went into getting the campus ready for students and faculty to return to the campus and keep the campus open.

- As essential employees, WSU's Facilities Management team stayed busy even during the shutdown, sanitizing in-use classrooms, deep cleaning campus buildings, and keeping up with landscaping and construction needs. But they were also crucial to figuring out how in-person classes and activities could take place safely during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Some of the pre-fall semester work included installing Plexiglas shields and signage in buildings; providing hand sanitizer and masks for classrooms; measuring and configuring classrooms to adhere to 6-foot social distancing protocols; and maximizing the in-and-out airflow to buildings to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
- Once students, faculty, staff, and administration began to return, Facilities Management staff increased their level of cleaning and sanitization in all common areas, restrooms, and high touchpoints such as light switches and doorknobs.

Technical Infrastructure: The IT Division teams have collaborated with other areas on campus to transition from face-to-face to virtual (synchronous) and online (asynchronous) delivery of classes as seamlessly as possible.

- The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funding given to the Utah Education and Telehealth Network (UETN) offered much-needed funding for education. The funding has been instrumental to Weber State in providing students with the tools necessary to meet course requirements during the pandemic.

-
- The Service Desk has a large pool of people staffing it (15 hourly employees and eight full-time employees) who operated 24x7. The pandemic posed a challenge in providing the same level of service. A plan transitioned most employees to softphones and virtual support. Training got the team ready to support more requests related to Zoom, Canvas, webcams, and other remote business essentials. An increase in the number of remote support tool licenses allowed the troubleshooting of devices that could no longer be handled in person.
 - CARES technology funding supported live streaming of dance classes and performances. The microphones, cameras, and additional audio/visual equipment purchased have been instrumental in WSU's dance studios and theaters.
 - Access to enhanced technology sponsored by IT-supported collaborations with CATS (Creative Academic Technology Solutions) and the Department of Communications Digital Media Program, offering creative and informative interdisciplinary research opportunities for faculty and students.
 - IT secured resources for students moving to online classes. The addition of 78 laptops and 25 Wi-Fi Hotspots have allowed the [Stewart Library](#) to meet students' technology needs to support remote coursework.
 - In addition, IT staff drove to LA to pick up needed electronic microphones for remote learning just in time for the fall semester. This dedication to serving the needs of faculty and students made [news](#) all over the state.

MOVING FORWARD

Moving Forward – The institution must provide its reflections on any additional efforts or initiatives it plans on undertaking as it prepares for the Year Seven Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness Report

Weber State decided early on to embrace the new NWCCU 2020 accreditation standards for the University's Year 7 accreditation self-study. The University's mission fulfillment metrics (see the Mission Fulfillment statement) adopted in [2014](#) for the 2014-2021 accreditation cycle have already moved the University to focus on issues highlighted in the revised standards. Recent University initiative further addresses those issues.

- Mission fulfillment metrics already assess student learning outcomes (new 1.C Standards) for Undergraduate, General Education, and Graduate Programs. These metrics include students' attainment of learning outcomes and qualitative analysis of their experiences in their programs of study, including their high-impact experiences. The new standards have further advanced and extended the University's student assessment protocol.
- Mission fulfillment metrics also measure student achievement data and disaggregate those data by "cohorts of interests" (new 1.D Standards). These cohorts include underserved students (ethnic minority and low income) whose success has been the basis for several new University initiatives. The University is also joining the National Student Clearinghouse Postsecondary Data Project to better assess and benchmark University disaggregated data as part of the institution's commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion.
- Mission fulfillment metrics inform institutional effectiveness (new 1.B Standards) with key performance indicators regularly updated and assessable through a campus-wide Report Gallery, a centrally located and easily navigated collection of Tableau dashboards. The data inform university planning through the University Planning Council, a campus-wide advisory committee with faculty, administration, staff, alumni, and community representation. Data also inform divisional planning, which is also reviewed by UPC, and College and Departmental planning, all of which must align with Core Themes.

Finally, perhaps unlike any other year seven self-evaluation report in the university's history, this one comes at a time of deep reflection by the campus community on its direction and operations.

- As documented in the PRFR, basic institutional functions — from teaching and learning (2.F.4), decision-making (2.A.4), delivering services (2.F.4), managing finances (2.E.3), and dealing with infrastructure (2.I.1) — had to operate on an emergency basis due to the pandemic. Our pandemic response has been successful, with key student metrics remaining flat and some even demonstrating moderate growth. The campus community has been engaging in discussions about opportunities to change traditional ways of functioning to better leverage new innovations that will positively impact students.
- At the same time, documented in the PRFR (2.A.3), the University is engaged in a strategic planning process that involves reviewing our guiding documents and

identifying strategic goals, desired outcomes, and strategies. The process is ongoing but has already affirmed the Core Themes, which will accommodate the new desired outcomes as mission fulfillment metrics. The goals, outcomes, and strategies support the University's ongoing efforts to improve retention and completion rates, promote equity outcomes, support the community, and expand high-impact and personalized educational experiences.

- The reorganization of the Utah Board of Higher Education (see 2.A.1 and 2.A.4), which combined the state degree-granting institutions and technical colleges, offers new opportunities to create degree pathways and promote higher degree completion rates. Weber State is uniquely positioned for this work, having two technical colleges ([Ogden-Weber](#) and [Davis](#) Technical Colleges) within our service area, which has triggered ongoing discussions with regional partners.

Although all the work addressing these issues has been ongoing, the pandemic, strategic plan, and state-wide reorganization have brought this work to the fore. The year seven EIE report will document the work in greater detail, outlining what has been done, is being done, and what will be done in the future to address the broad areas of student access and success (achievement and learning outcomes), community partnerships, and the social and economic development of the region.

Supported by the mission fulfillment metrics and with ongoing reflection triggered by our engaging in strategic planning and adapting to environmental forces, we are excited to present to NWCCU our continued work to fulfill our vision for Weber State University.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: MISSION FULFILLMENT METRICS

CORE THEME I: ACCESS

IA: ACCESS Objective A. WEBER STATE UNIVERSITY WILL OFFER PROGRAMS THAT ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY

WSU offers associate, baccalaureate, and master degree programs in liberal arts, sciences, technical, and professional fields that are responsive to community needs by growing in concert with the institution's catchment area and being affordable.

RESPONSIVE DEGREES Indicator 1: Enrollment will track the census in the three-county catchment area as measured by fall semester, 3rd-week headcount data.

RESPONSIVE DEGREES Rationale for Indicator 1: Institutional growth should reflect population growth in the three primary counties served by WSU: Weber, Davis, and Morgan. As the county populations increase, there is an expectation that enrollment will increase concomitantly at WSU.

RESPONSIVE DEGREES Threshold for Indicator 1: Enrollment increases parallel increases in the three-county census estimates.

RESPONSIVE DEGREES Rationale for Threshold Indicator 1: This new threshold for this accreditation cycle assesses university responsiveness to continue to attract students in the catchment area, which continues to grow.

RESPONSIVE DEGREES Analysis of Threshold 1: Census data from each of the three counties of the catchment area were summed for each year. The year-over-year percent change in population was computed from 2014-2020 (see Figure IA1). The summed year-over-year change in population was an increase of 11.45%. A similar computation was performed on the WSU fall third-week total headcount from the same time period. The summed year-over-year change in headcount was an increase of 16.57%. Although census growth was more stable over time than enrollment growth, both values were positive, which **meets** the threshold that enrollment increases *parallel* increases in three-county census estimates. This replicates the data presented in the Mid-Cycle report.

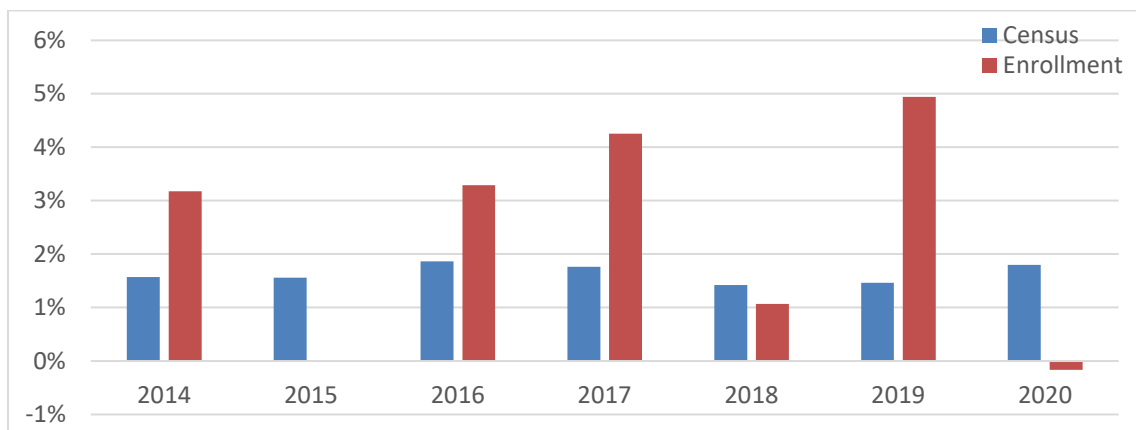


Figure IA1: Percentage year-over-year change in catchment census population and WSU enrollment (2014-2020)

RESPONSIVE DEGREES Indicator 2: Full-year tuition and fees for full-time undergraduate students will continue to be reasonable.

RESPONSIVE DEGREES Rationale for Indicator 2: Even if the degrees and programs offered by WSU were responsive to local needs, students would be unlikely to pursue those degrees if the University does not continue to be an affordable choice.

RESPONSIVE DEGREES Threshold for Indicator 2: WSU tuition will be below the mean of peer institutions.

RESPONSIVE DEGREES Rationale for Threshold Indicator 2: This threshold was used to assess this indicator and objective in previous assessments of mission fulfillment. The institution remains committed to keeping costs low to assure access to students.

RESPONSIVE DEGREES Analysis of Threshold 2: According to 2020 IPEDS data, WSU charged \$5,986 annual tuition for full-time undergraduate students. The tuition places WSU higher than but compares favorably with the two other "dual mission" universities in Utah, including Utah Valley University (\$5,820) and Dixie State University (\$5,496). WSU's tuition is substantially below the average tuition (\$7,172, $sd = \$1,008.79$, $Z = -1.20$) of a cohort of 12 other "ad-hoc" open-enrollment institutions that are Carnegie designated as master's degree-granting.

The seven-year trend of tuition shows an increase over time (see Figure IA2) that is on par with the increases in the designated peer institutions. WSU's tuition is below the average of the designated peer institutions for 2020 ($M = \$8,465$). Averaged over the past seven years, WSU's tuition ($M = \$5,511$) was among the lowest of all the peers and substantially lower than the mean tuition ($M = \$7,889$, $sd = \$1,929$) by 1.23 standard deviations. As WSU tuition was the second-lowest and substantially below the mean of the designated peer institutions this past year and averaged over the past seven years, WSU **meets** the threshold and replicates data presented in the Mid-Cycle. The peer comparison of the WSU tuition rate is further discussed in [1.B.2](#).

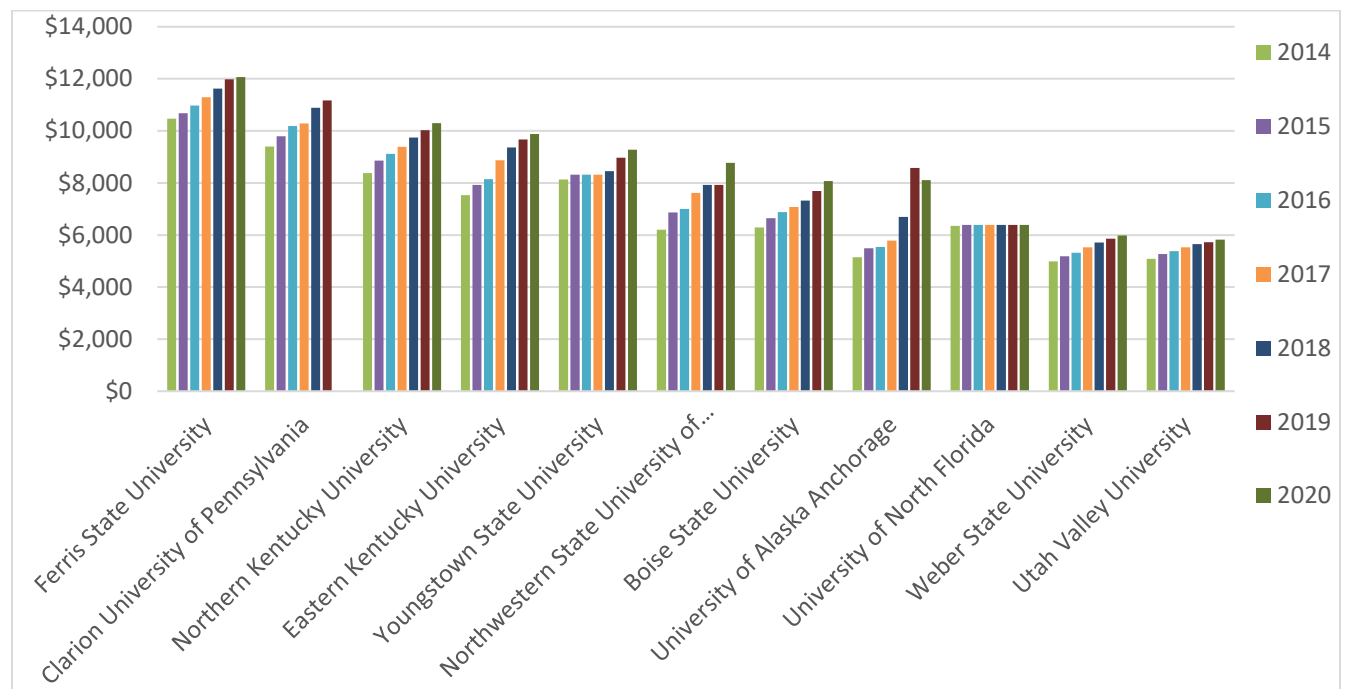


Figure IA2: Tuition costs over the past seven years at peer institutions

SUMMARY ACCESS Objective A

Theme	Objective	Indicator	Threshold	Mission Fulfillment
ACCESS	Weber State will offer programs that address the needs of the community	1. Enrollment will track the census in the three-county catchment area as measured by fall semester, third-week headcount data	Enrollment increases parallel increases in the three-county census estimates	Meets Expectations
		2. Full-year tuition and fees for full-time, undergraduate students will continue to be reasonable	WSU tuition will be below the mean of designed peer institutions	Meets Expectations

IB: ACCESS Objective B. WEBER STATE WILL SERVE COHORTS OF INTEREST IN THE COMMUNITY

WSU effectively serves the needs of cohorts of interest in the community, including underserved and other student groups. The institution remains attentive to these students' success with indicators that assess whether WSU offers access for all students.

RESPONSIVENESS TO COHORTS OF INTEREST Indicator 1: Participation rates for "cohorts of interest" will be measured with fall semester, 3rd-week headcount data, broken down by demographic.

RESPONSIVENESS TO COHORTS OF INTEREST Rationale for Indicator 1: The selection of the cohorts was based on national data, institutional analyses of student success, and discussion in the University Planning Council. The cohorts include students from various backgrounds whose enrollment is a specific institutional concern and include the following:

- **Ethnic Minority** – Students self-identified as Hispanic, Native American, African American, or Pacific Islander
- **Underprepared** – ACT Composite < 19 or HS GPA < 2.0
- **Well Prepared** – AP credit or CLEP credit or IB credit
- **Dev-Dev Placed** – Any student placed into BOTH Developmental Math and Developmental English
- **Low Income** – Students identified on FAFSA as low income

RESPONSIVE TO COHORTS OF INTEREST Threshold for Indicator 1: Rates of WSU enrollment for "cohorts of interest" will be at least 80% of the average rate of enrollment of other students.

RESPONSIVE TO COHORTS OF INTEREST: Rationale for Threshold Indicator 1: This threshold is new to this accreditation cycle and is aspirational, with the 80% threshold reflecting the 4/5ths rule used by EEOC offices⁶⁴ to test for adverse impact.

RESPONSIVE TO "COHORTS OF INTEREST" Analysis of Indicator 1: A combination of quantitative and qualitative analyses was used to assess the threshold for this indicator. A logistic regression explored the average rate of enrollment at fall third week of 37,834 individuals who applied as first-time students to WSU for fall semester 2015 to 2020. The students were coded as belonging to none or one or more cohorts, each of which was treated as an independent variable in the regression predicting the background of students who enrolled. The overall enrollment rate was 40.5% (N=15,333) of all

⁶⁴ *Federal Register*, Vol. 44 (43) (March 2, 1979) https://www.eeoc.gov/policy/docs/qanda_clarify_procedures.html

students who applied. However, the average enrollment rate for students identified as belonging to at least one cohort of interest (*Cohort* students) was 45.1%. This rate is higher than the 34.8% enrollment rate for those who belonged to no cohort of interest (*Control* students), placing the enrollment rate for the cohorts above the rate for the control students.

Exploring the regression more closely, Underprepared ($b = 0.22$, OR = 1.24), Low-Income ($b = 0.39$, OR = 1.48), and Well-Prepared ($b = 1.89$, OR = 6.02) students were more likely to enroll. Ethnic Minorities ($b = -0.08$, OR = 0.92) were 8% less likely to enroll (see graph IB2a).

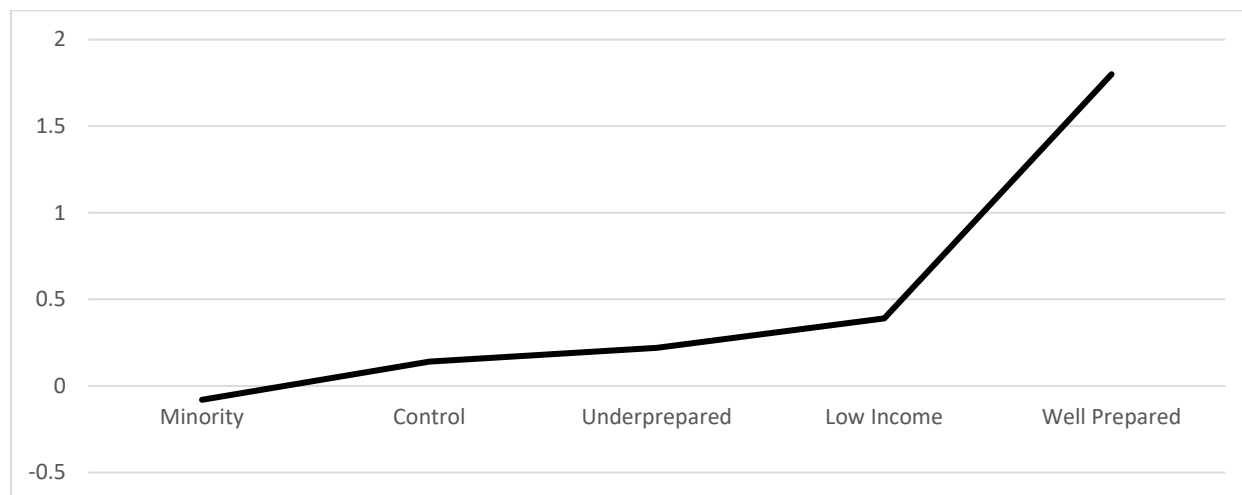


Figure IB2a: Regression beta weights for accepted students assigned to a "cohort of interest" or control group who are more (positive) or less (negative) likely to enroll compared to others not in that group.

The ethnic minority enrollment rate has been tracked over the past several years since it was first identified as an issue in the Mid-Cycle report. At the time, Hispanic student enrollment at the institution, who are the largest subgroup of the category, increased from 8.7% to 9.6% of WSU degree-seeking students. The overall enrollment of Hispanic students rose despite the increase in the rate of these students being accepted but not enrolling. We tracked the college participation of Hispanic applicants' who were accepted but not enrolled at WSU by submitting their information to the National Clearinghouse. A parallel procedure was performed with self-identified white students. It turned out, 61% of Hispanic students eventually enrolled at WSU or other universities, which was similar to the eventual enrollment rate of white students (65%) who did not initially enroll at WSU.

Since 2016, there has been continued enrollment growth of self-identified Hispanic students representing 11.3% of the degree-seeking students in 2019-2020. This increase in enrollment is reflected by the rise in the odds ratio of accepted Minority students enrolling compared to Control students (see Figure IB1b) over the past several years. Specifically, since 2018 the likelihood of an accepted Minority student enrolling was no different from the Control students' enrollment rate. The data are encouraging as the University is seeking to improve the college participation of minority students ([1.B.3](#), [1.D.4](#)).

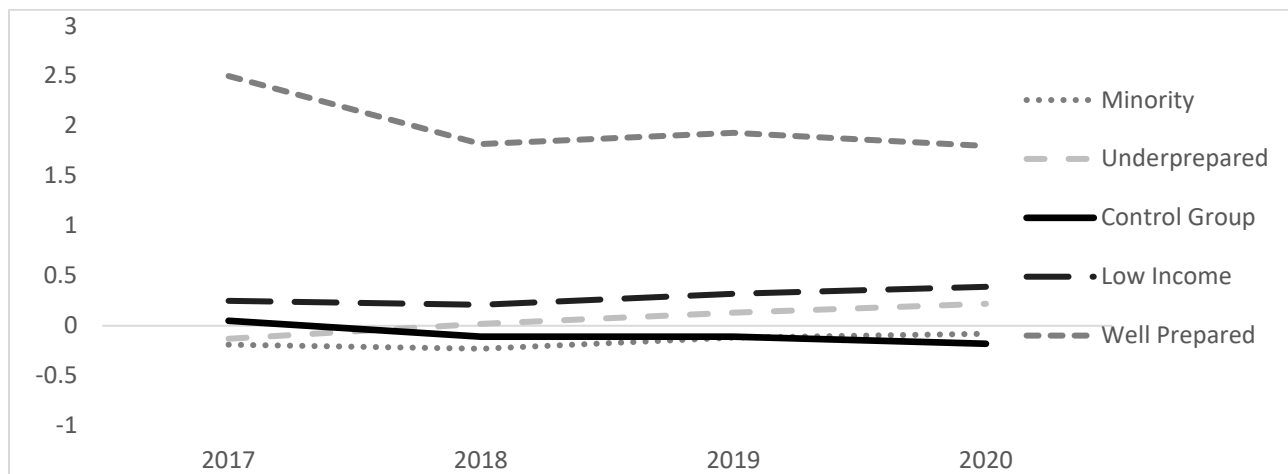


Figure IB1b: Regression beta weights over time for accepted students assigned to a "cohort of interest" or control group who are more (positive) or less (negative) likely to be retained compared to others not in that group.

In summary, the analysis of Objective IB1 was more detailed and specific than the threshold required, which was whether cohorts of interest enroll at 80% of the average rate of enrollment of other students. For the comparison group, we used the average retention rate of control students whose academic performance is not the focus of specific institutional attention as it is for the cohorts of interest. The overall enrollment rate of cohorts was higher than the rate of the control students. For these reasons, we consider this threshold as having been **met**, replicating the data from the Mid-Cycle.

SUMMARY ACCESS Objective B

Theme	Objective	Indicator	Threshold	Mission Fulfillment
ACCESS	Weber State will serve cohorts of interest in the community	Participation rates for "cohorts of interest" will be measured with fall semester, 3rd-week headcount data, broken down by demographic	Rates of WSU enrollment for "cohorts of interest" will be at least 80% of the average rate of enrollment of other students	Meets Expectations

CORE THEME II: LEARNING

IIA: LEARNING *Objective A. STUDENTS WHO ENROLL WILL BE RETAINED*

WSU embraces its status as an open-enrollment and dual mission⁶⁵ institution serving as both a community college and university for the region, despite often inconsistent student enrollments patterns due to the students' background. Nonetheless, student learning requires students to be retained and, as reflected by the indicators, the institution is committed to high retention rates for all student

STUDENTS RETAINED Indicator 1: Official, first-time, and full-time retention rates.

⁶⁵ Carruth, B. K. (2019). Expanding educational opportunities: Utah's "Dual-Mission" model. *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning*, 51(2), 8-13.

STUDENTS RETAINED Rationale for Indicator 1: Unlike many of WSU's designated peers, WSU is open-enrollment and serves a population of students committed to serving religious missions and adopting adult social roles (marriage and parenthood) at a young age. The result is a pattern of enrollment that may include stepping out and then returning to University. Nonetheless, the University tracks the freshman-to-sophomore retention to ensure that the first-time student population is well served.

STUDENTS RETAINED Threshold for Indicator 1: WSU's first-year retention rate will place it in the upper half of designed peer institutions.

STUDENTS RETAINED Rationale for Threshold Indicator 1: This threshold was used in previous accreditation cycles and provides a key institutional indicator of student success.

STUDENTS RETAINED Analysis of Indicator 1: The one-year retention rate of the first-time, full-time bachelor-seeking (IPEDS) student cohort who began in 2019 at Weber State University was 66%. This rate is slightly higher than the 2018 cohort's retention of 65% and continues an upward trend since 2014 (Figure IIA1a). The 66% retention places WSU higher than the two other "dual mission" universities in Utah, including Utah Valley University (65%) and Dixie State University (57%). The 66% retention rate is also at the average (66%) of a cohort of 12 other open-enrollment institutions that are Carnegie designated as masters-granting ([1.B.2](#)).

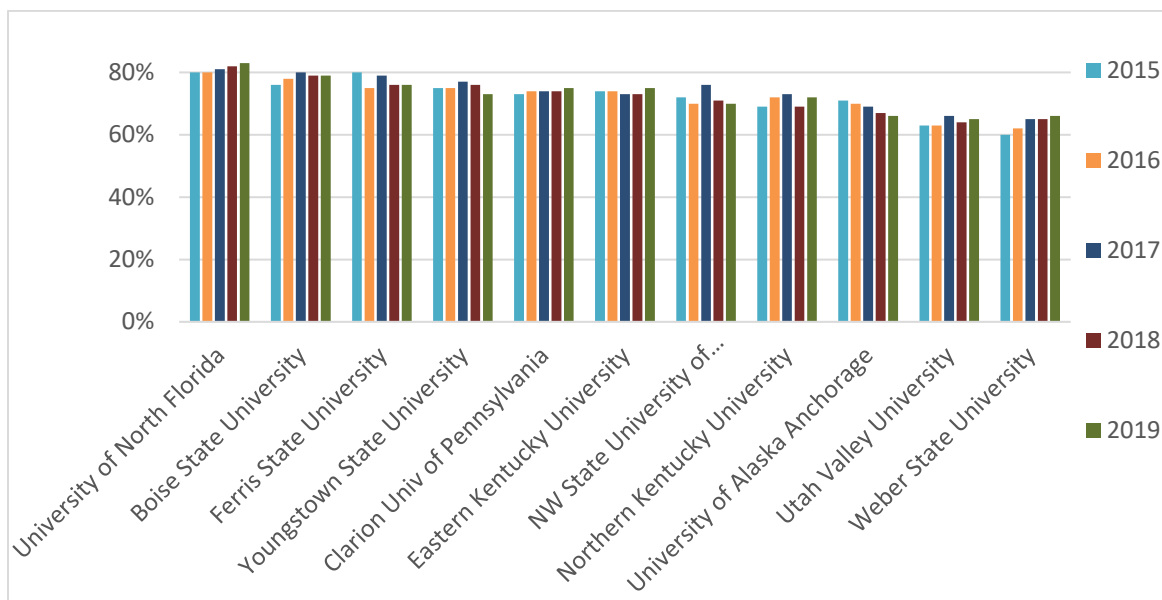


Figure IIA1a: First-time, full-time bachelor-seeking student retention for WSU and peer institutions cohort 2014-2019.

Nonetheless, WSU is in the bottom half of the state-designated peer institutions and has been each of the past six years. WSU's average retention rate from 2014-2019 ($M = 62.2\%$) is below the average retention rate for all peer institutions ($M = 72.18\%$, $sd = 5.08\%$) by 1.73 standard deviations (Figure IIA1b). Despite the steady increase in retention and positive comparison to regional and other national peer institutions, WSU is **below** the threshold expectation of being in the upper half of our designed peer institutions. The peer comparison of the WSU retention rate is further discussed in [1.B.2](#). Improving student retention rates remains an institutional priority ([1.B.3](#)), particularly for students who are most at risk of not being retained (see the next indicator).

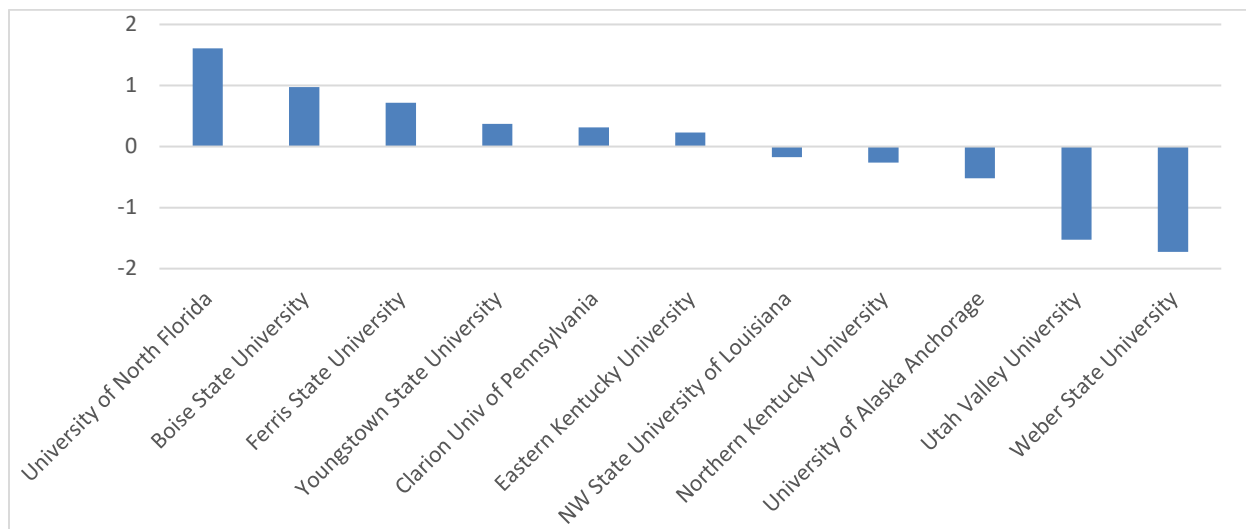


Figure IIA1b: Z scores on averaged retention rates ($M = 72.18\%$, $sd = 5.80\%$) by peer institution

STUDENTS RETAINED Indicator 2: First-year retention rates of "cohorts of interest."

STUDENTS RETAINED Rationale for Indicator 2: WSU effectively serves the needs of cohorts of interest in the community, including underserved and other student groups. The institution remains attentive to the retention of all students it serves. The same cohorts are used in all cohorts of interest assessments and include the following:

- **Ethnic Minority** – Students self-identified as Hispanic, Native American, African American, or Pacific Islander
- **Underprepared** – ACT Composite < 19 or HS GPA < 2.0
- **Well Prepared** – AP credit or CLEP credit or IB credit
- **Dev-Dev Placed** – Any student placed into BOTH Developmental Math and Developmental English
- **Low Income** – Students identified on FAFSA as low income

STUDENTS RETAINED Threshold for Indicator 2: First-year retention rates of "cohorts of interest" will be at least 80% of the average retention rate of other students.

STUDENTS RETAINED Rationale for Threshold Indicator 2: This threshold is aspirational, with the 80% threshold reflecting the 4/5ths rule used by EEOC offices (footnote 64) to test for adverse impact.

STUDENTS RETAINED Analysis of Indicator 2: Again, a combination of quantitative and qualitative analyses was used to assess this indicator's threshold. A logistic regression explored the retention of 24,018 first-time, full-time students to WSU from AY 2013 to 2019. The regression explored whether targeted cohorts were retained at lower rates than students who belong to no cohorts. Each student was coded as belonging to none or one or more cohorts (59.2% of the sample) and treated each cohort as an independent variable predicting the percentage of students retained. The retention rate for students identified as belonging to at least one cohort of interest was 53.6%, which was only slightly lower than control students ($M = 56.7\%$). The cohort retention rate is within the 80% threshold of the control group's retention rate.

The regression revealed that some of our cohorts are more likely to be retained compared, including Well-Prepared ($b = 0.31$, $OR = 1.37$) and Underprepared ($b = 0.14$, $OR = 1.15$) students. In contrast, Low-

Income ($b = -0.21$, $OR = 0.81$) and Developmental ($b = -0.59$, $OR = 0.55$) students were less likely to be retained (Figure IIA2). The variables are additive, meaning that their combination further decreases the odds of students being retained. The new data largely replicates the data cohort presented in the Mid-Cycle.

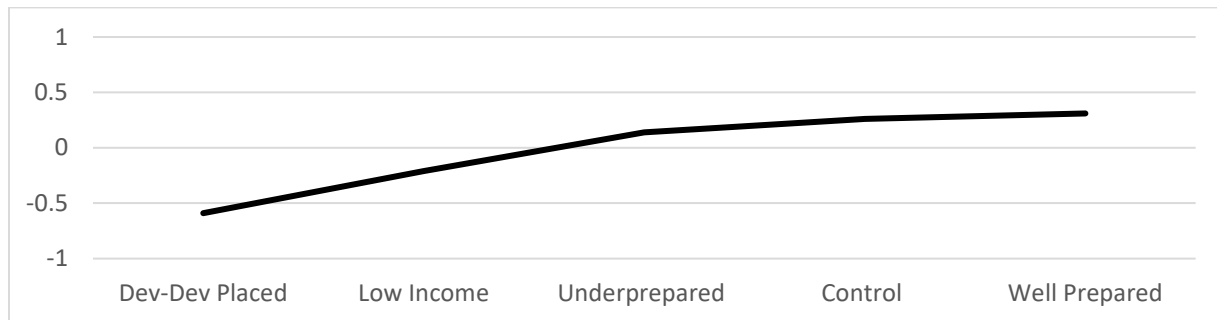


Figure IIA2a: Regression beta weights for students assigned to a "cohort of interest" or control group who are more (positive) or less (negative) likely to be retained compared to others not in that group.

The Dev-Dev placed students have a retention rate of 44.9%, which is the lowest of any cohort. Additionally, those placed as Dev-Dev are overrepresented by minority (69%), first-generation (61%), and low-income (60%) students, which raises further equity concerns over placement policies and the efficacy of developmental curriculum for these students. Although ethnicity itself did not show a significant odds ratio for placement, deeper analysis of Hispanic / Latino students (our largest underserved student group) showed an overall 4.4% lower retention rate than white students from 2012-2019. It is notable that the retention rates have subsequently increased for both groups (represented by the R^2) and that the equity gap between them is decreasing (Figure IIA2b). Since first identifying the retention concerns of Dev-Dev placed students in the Mid-Cycle, the university has reviewed policies, initiated research, marshaled resources, and designed interventions to promote their success which are documented throughout the EIE but specifically in [1.C.7](#), [1.D.2](#), [1.D.3](#), and [1.D.4](#).

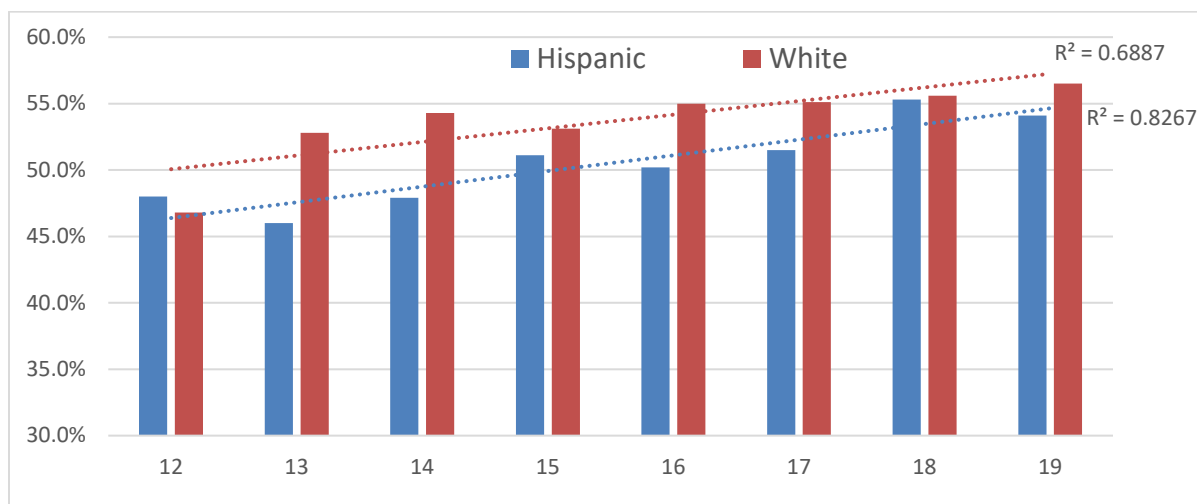


Figure IIA2b: Fall to fall retention rate for White and Hispanic students based on fall cohorts from 2012-2019.

In summary, the overall retention rate of students who belong to one cohort is above the 80% threshold of those students who belong to no cohort, which **meets** expectations and replicates the data reported in the

Mid-Cycle. Nonetheless, addressing the needs of students who are Dev-Dev placed continues to be a university concern.

SUMMARY LEARNING *Objective A*

Theme	Objective	Indicator	Threshold	Mission Fulfillment
LEARNING	Students who enroll will be retained	1. Official, first-time, full-time retention rates	WSU's first-year retention rate will place it in the upper half of designated peer institutions	Below Expectations
		2. First-year retention rates of "cohorts of interest."	First-year retention rates of "cohorts of interest" will be at least 80% of the average retention rate of other students.	Meets Expectations

IIB: LEARNING *Objective B*. STUDENTS WILL PARTICIPATE IN ENGAGED LEARNING EXPERIENCES

The University offers engaged learning opportunities that research has demonstrated are central to student success.⁶⁶ The indicators of this objective address whether students participate in engaged learning experiences and judge the experience as meaningful.

ENGAGED LEARNING Indicator 1: The percentage of students participating in engaged learning experiences.

Rationale for Indicator 1: In addition to the National data, WSU⁶⁷ research suggests a positive correlation between students' involvement in engaged learning experiences (i.e., "high impact practices") and their persistence and academic performance.

ENGAGED LEARNING Threshold for Indicator 1: More than two-thirds of WSU seniors will have one of five identified engaged learning experiences: Community Service, Internship, Capstone Experience, Undergraduate Research, or Study Abroad.

ENGAGED LEARNING Rationale for Threshold Indicator 1: This threshold has been used previously to assess objectives and indicators addressing student engagement and reflects the institution's commitment to high-impact practices.

ENGAGED LEARNING Analysis of Indicator 1: Indicators of student engaged learning experiences were examined over time. Senior participation or planned participation in most of the targeted engaged learning activities was taken from NSSE responses which included a slightly different set of engaged learning activities than those listed and include the following:

- **Service-Learning:** About how many of your courses at this institution have included a community-based project
- **Learning Community:** Participate in a learning community or some other formal program where groups of students take two or more classes together
- **Research with Faculty:** Work with a faculty member on a research project

⁶⁶ Kuh, G. D., Kinzie, J., Schuh, J. H., & Whitt, E. J. (2011). *Student success in college: Creating conditions that matter*. John Wiley & Sons.

⁶⁷ Internal data affirms national data showing higher persistence and retention rates for students who have early high impact educational experiences at WSU.

- **Internship or Field Experience:** Participate in an internship, co-op, field experience, student teaching, or clinical placement
- **Study Abroad:** Participate in a study abroad program
- **Culminating Senior Experience:** Complete a culminating senior experience (capstone course, senior project or thesis, comprehensive exam, portfolio, etc.)

For the most part, the threshold list and the NSSE list of engaged activities align well. The learning community activity is not on the threshold list but is included in the NSSE assessment. We decided to include it in the assessment of students engaged learning activities as it provides a similar intentionally designed academic experience and outcomes as other engaged activities,⁶⁸ although it is generally not an experience that Weber State offers.

The NSSE was completed by 5,212 seniors in 2015 (N=3,663, 45% no-response rate), 2017 (N=968, 13% no-response rate), and 2019 (N=581, 13% no response rate). The no-response rate is the percentage of participants in each sample who did not answer questions about their engaged learning experiences. Despite the inconsistent no-response rate, the overall sample size remains large at 3,357. NSSE reports that WSU had a 2% higher rate of seniors having at least one engaged learning experience than similar Carnegie classified schools in 2019. This difference is small but has a significant effect size and represents a change from 2017, where WSU was no different than their Carnegie peers.

Figure IIB1 below presents the percentage of seniors reporting engaged learning activities over time identified by the NSSE survey.⁶⁹ Overall, 78% of the seniors who responded report at least one engaged learning activity, which meets the threshold of at least 66%. The University's commitment to ensuring students' engaged learning experiences throughout the curriculum is documented in [1.B.3](#) as part of ongoing student success initiatives and strategic planning and mentioned throughout the standards addressing student learning outcomes and student achievement.

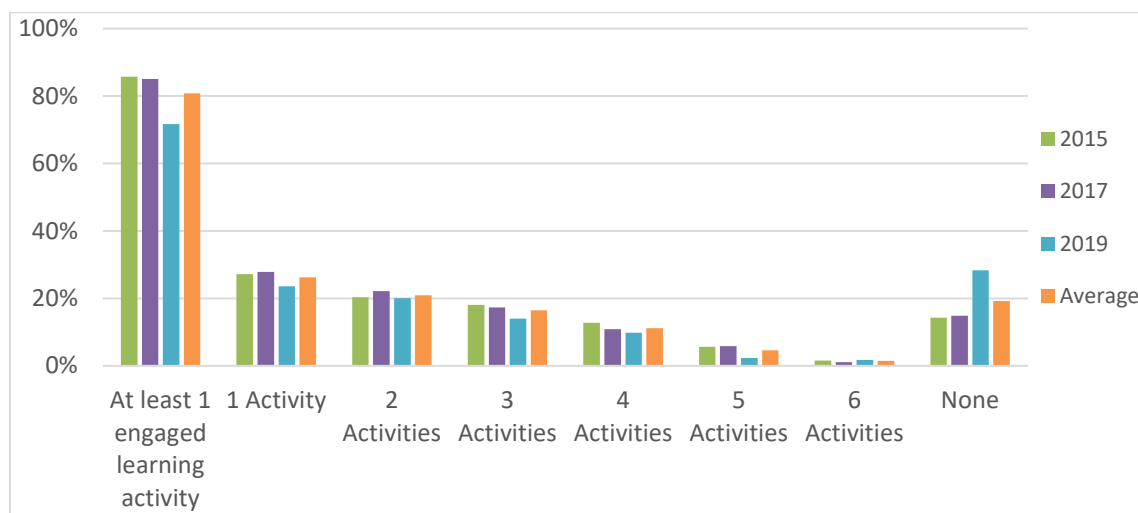


Figure IIB1: Percentage of seniors reporting participating or planning to participate in six NSSE engaged learning activities

⁶⁸ Zhao, C. M., & Kuh, G. D. (2004). Adding value: Learning communities and student engagement. *Research in Higher Education*, 45, 115-138. DOI: 10.1177/0091552112473145

⁶⁹ NSSE reports a lower rate of students having no engaged learning experience in 2019 than reported here. We think that that discrepancy is due to NSSE algorithm for removing non-responders (perhaps as percentage of no responses) where we included everyone responding to any question about engaged experiences.

ENGAGED LEARNING Indicator 2: Qualitative themes from the graduate survey about meaningful learning experiences.

ENGAGED LEARNING Rationale for Indicator 2: The qualitative analysis of the voices of graduating students allows WSU to assess the meaningfulness of their engaged learning experiences.

ENGAGED LEARNING Threshold for Indicator 2: At least 70% of graduating bachelor-degree students will identify engagement as a "meaningful" learning experience at WSU, which will be noted through qualitative theme identification from open response questions.

ENGAGED LEARNING Rationale for Threshold Indicator 2: The indicator is new for this accreditation cycle, and the threshold is aspirational. We assumed that a majority of graduating seniors would recognize and value the meaningfulness of what they learned rather than merely celebrating having completed their studies.

ENGAGED LEARNING Analysis of Indicator 2: The qualitative collection of student voices about the meaningfulness of their learning experiences occurred by assessing two open-ended questions posed on the graduation survey. The survey was completed by approximately 682 graduates earning a bachelor's degree in Spring 2020. The open-ended questions on the "Graduating Student Survey" included *What was your most meaningful experience at WSU* and *Two things you learned at WSU that you will use in the future*.

The open-ended questions allow for analyzing whether the students recognized and valued their academic engagements required to complete their degree as distinct from more general thoughts and feelings associated with overcoming challenges and achieving goals (particularly during the pandemic). That is, at a time when students are celebrating their completed degree despite new and unexpected challenges, we examined whether they spontaneously mention the value of what they learned, reflecting their acquisition of accessible and usable knowledge and skills.⁷⁰

We coded responses as indicating an *engaged learning experience* if a student articulated a process or product of their academic activities that go above and beyond merely completing a course or graduating with a degree. The responses of 502 bachelor's degree students who completed at least one question were coded.

The following were coded as *engaged learning* responses:

- *The most meaningful experience was volunteering....I started volunteering at Cottages of Hope because that was a location one of my professors recommended for my CHF 2990B class.*
- *The most meaningful learning experience was my Capstone project and involvement in Undergraduate research.*
- *My most meaningful learning experience was definitively my study abroad in Venice. I was able to experience art from all over the world at the Venice Biennale.*
- *The most meaningful learning experiences were all of the clinical laboratory hours I spent working at the facility that I am already employed at. It helped me learn the material and helped me become familiar with the lab that I work in.*
- *[Learning] therapeutic interviewing skills*
- *I learned how to become a better manager in regards to dealing with co-workers that have different personalities.*

⁷⁰ Mayer, R. E. (2002). Rote versus meaningful learning. *Theory into Practice*, 41(4), 226-232.

The following were coded as *non-engaged learning responses* (while we recognize them as valuable insights):

- *Being able to finish my degree and be able to finally finish*
- *Getting an education*
- *Making life long friends*
- *I can still get A's after age 50*
- *I'm a tough cookie*
- *Hard work will get you there*

Interrater reliability based on responses of 36 students was 97%. A total of 79% of the 313 graduating bachelor's degree students who responded to at least open-ended question had one response coded as meaningful learning. This rate is above the 70% threshold, so it **meets** expectations. The finding also replicates the analysis perform in 2016 for the Mid-Cycle in which 76% of graduating bachelor's degree students' responses referred to engaged learning. We also examined responses of 52 graduating graduate students, 94% of whose responses were coded as having a meaningful learning experience.

SUMMARY LEARNING *Objective B*

Theme	Objective	Indicator	Threshold	Mission Fulfillment
LEARNING	Students will participate in engaged learning experiences	1. Percentage of students participating in engaged learning experiences	More than two-thirds of WSU seniors will have one of five identified engaged learning experiences: community service, internship, capstone experience, undergraduate research, or study abroad	Meets Expectations
		2. Qualitative themes from a graduate survey about learning and meaningful learning experiences	At least 70% of students will identify engagement as a "meaningful" learning experience at WSU, which will be noted through qualitative theme identification from open response questions	Meets Expectations

IIC: LEARNING *Objective C*. STUDENTS WILL ACHIEVE GENERAL EDUCATION LEARNING OUTCOMES

General education is widely recognized as critical for preparing students for their academic programs, professional careers, and civic/personal lives⁷¹. The two indicators of this objective assess students' achievement of general education learning outcomes (GELOs) and meaningful learning experience in the program.

GENERAL EDUCATION *Indicator 1*: The results of general education learning outcome assessment.

Rationale for Indicator 1: WSU is committed to educating students in foundational skills and knowledge that will allow them to succeed in their programs of study and their professional and

⁷¹ Hanstedt, P. (2012). *General education essentials: A Guide for college faculty*. John Wiley & Sons.

personal lives. Direct assessment of student learning in their general education classes is a key way the University gauges the success of this program.

GENERAL EDUCATION Threshold for Indicator 1: Data aggregated at the core and breadth levels indicate that 80% of students taking Gen Ed courses are achieving outcomes at a level of 70% or higher.

GENERAL EDUCATION: Rationale for Threshold Indicator 1: This indicator is new and the threshold is aspirational, reflecting the goal of a majority of students who complete general education courses achieving outcomes.

GENERAL EDUCATION Analysis of Indicator 1: To analyze this indicator, we examine course data submitted for general education renewal. The Gen Ed Course Renewal policy was passed in 2014 and requires that each general education core and breadth course be evaluated every seven years for evidence of learning outcomes for the designated Gen Ed [area](#). Starting in fall 2016 and continuing over the subsequent three years, departments teaching general education courses were asked to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the University Curriculum Committee that each class was assessed for student achievement of area learning outcomes (ALOs). Departments were required to provide two semesters' worth of data, analyze the results, and include a plan for improving student achievement of area goals if the data warrant. A total of 123 courses were analyzed.⁷² Departments not submitting or lacking sufficient data for renewal were placed on probation and asked for a plan for when those data would be submitted. A total of 24 courses were in this category and not included in the analysis, although most later submitted data.

Departments define and set thresholds for student learning outcomes for all course and program assessments in the general education renewal process. As a result, the threshold of this indicator (80% of the students achieving a score of 70% or higher) requires aggregating across a range of departmental assessment procedures, thresholds, and reporting styles. The mission fulfillment threshold itself was set recognizing the commitment to flexible assessment protocols. For example, the 70% standard represents a compromise across the General Education program. Core courses have a passing grade of C (73%) and generally require a higher standard than breadth courses, which has a passing grade of D- (60%)

Similarly, the designation of 80% as the proportion of students achieving the standard of 70% represents a compromise across Gen Ed areas and academic disciplines. Again, departments were free to set their thresholds and may have been influenced by the perceived academic challenge for the students enrolled in the course. Core Gen Ed courses tend to be taken by first-time students, many of whom are challenged by the demands of college and so may have lower expectations of achievement rates than some Breadth courses.

The flexibility departments have in setting SLO thresholds in Gen Ed courses further complicated how to systematically compute and assess the mission fulfillment metric. In averaging over various forms, standards, and reporting of assessment data, we computed an *achievement rate*⁷³ for each Gen Ed class, then averaged over Gen Ed area and, from that, computed an overall average.

⁷² Some classes were submitted twice for review of student achievement of different learning outcomes.

⁷³ The analysis required averaging over student performance for each measure used to assess each outcome for each Gen Ed course. Often times this meant averaging over data presented as percentage of students achieving a threshold (e.g., 82% of students achieved the threshold of 70%) and the overall student performance expressed as a percentage (e.g., student average on a test was 80%). It is worth noting that that an 80% average on a measure is consistent with 80% of the students having a score above 70%, assuming a normal distribution and a *sd* of about 12 (one-tail $z = 0.84$ representing approximately 80% of scores). Because of the procedure of averaging over the ways of reporting student performance, we designate the resulting statistic as the *achievement rate*, which reflects an overall success rate in meeting the threshold. Consistent with the goal of the analysis of Gen Ed student learning outcomes, we set

The average achievement rate for the renewed Breadth and Core courses was 81.34%. Given that the achievement rate was higher than 80%, we consider the threshold to have been **met**, replicating the Mid-Cycle findings.

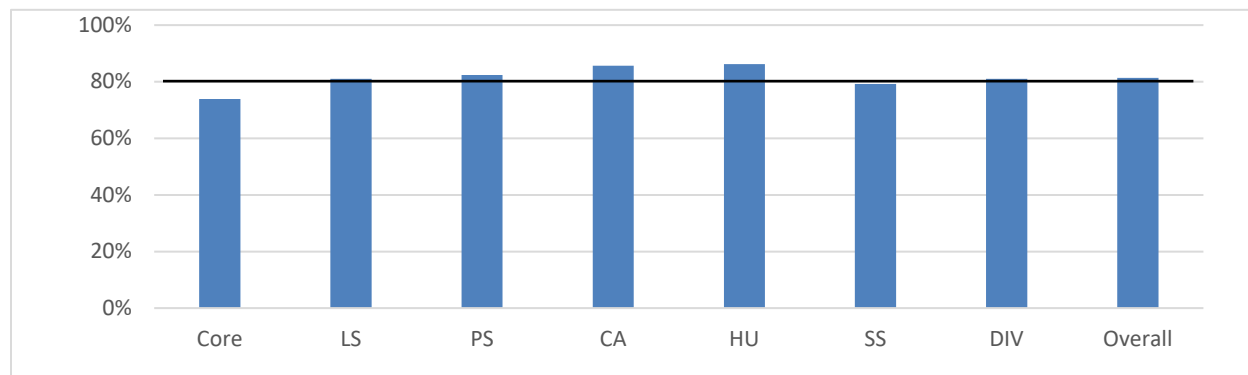


Figure IIC1: Average Achievement Rate for Renewed General Education Breadth Areas and the Core Courses and Overall.

We note that the Core Gen Ed courses, which include American Institutions (AI), Quantitative Literacy (QL), Information Literacy (IL), and Composition (COMP), were below the 80% achievement standard. Core Gen Ed courses bear the brunt of helping first-year students, many of whom are first-generation, understand college expectations, perhaps reflecting students in these classes' lower course completion and achievement rates. This is particularly true for the COMP (ENG 2010) and AI (HIST 1700) courses among the most popular first-year students in their first or second semester. Furthermore, these classes are among the most popular High School Concurrent Enrollment classes. Concurrent Enrollment class registration has increased dramatically for HIST 1700, ENGL 2010, MATH 1030/1050, in the past five years, with each course enrolling about 1500 students in 2019-2020. Students who could not or did not know to enroll in these courses as high school students enroll in them as matriculated, degree-seeking first-time students, changing the background of the student population in these courses.

A deeper dive into the Core Gen Ed course achievement rates shows HIST 1700 (AI) and ENG 2010 (COMP) having lower rates than Quantitative Literacy and Information Literacy classes. Not only were achievements below the threshold in these classes (69% and 59% respectively), but the first-time freshmen in these classes also had a 13% (ENG 2010) to 19% (HIST 1700) lower completion rate than other students in the same class. Similarly, Hispanic students also had a 4.5% (ENG 2010) and 17.7% (HIST 1700) lower completion rates than whites.

These data on first-time underserved students' completion are not limited to these Gen Ed classes and are discussed extensively in [1.D.2](#). More generally, closing the loop specifically on Gen Ed HIST 1700 and ENGL 1010 classes are further documented in [1.C.6](#). Finally, university initiatives designed to support first-time student success in gateway classes are addressed in several EIE standards ([1.B.3](#), [1.B.4](#), and [1.D.4](#)).

GENERAL EDUCATION Indicator 2: Qualitative data gathered at graduation from focus groups.

Rationale for Indicator 2: Student opinions about the meaningfulness of their general education classes provides additional evidence of the program's impact on student learning and success in achieving the program's mission.

80% as the threshold for the achievement rate. That is, the overall achievement rate means students averaged at or above 80% on assessments or that at least 80% of them were above the threshold for the class. In either case, such outcomes are at or above the threshold of 80% students achieving 70% of the outcomes.

GENERAL EDUCATION Threshold for Indicator 2: At least 70% of students will identify meaningful learning outcomes in the Core or Breadth Gen Ed courses, which will be noted through qualitative theme identification gathered from focus groups of graduating students.

GENERAL EDUCATION Rationale for Threshold Indicator 2: The threshold is aspirational and based on the assumption that a majority of students will recognize and value the broad-based and transferable skills associated with general education learning outcomes.

GENERAL EDUCATION Analysis of Indicator 2: Students' qualitative expression of the meaningfulness of their general education occurred in two ways. A series of focus groups examined the meaningfulness of students' general education classes was presented in the [Mid-Cycle](#) report. However, at that time, it was recognized that the focus groups could not be designed to assess the threshold for this indicator. We repeated here what was done for the Mid-Cycle to assess the threshold systematically: the two open-ended questions posed on the Graduating Students survey were assessed. For the present analysis, the 478 graduates earning an associate's degree (AS, AA, AAS, and others) who completed the survey in the spring of 2020 were examined. The analysis focused on students earning an AA or AS students as only these students completed all General Education requirements, which is about 66% of their 60 credit hour program.

A total of 136 graduating Associate's of Arts and Associate's of Science degree students responded to one of the following questions: *What was your most meaningful experience at WSU* and *Two things you learned at WSU that you will use in the future*. Student responses were coded according to whether they referred to general education classes or general education student learning outcomes⁷⁴ as distinct from other experiences associated with attending and graduating college with an associate degree. For example, the following responses were coded as a meaningful learning experience in general education:

- *How to work in a team*
- *My zoology 2200 (Human Physiology LS) course was my most meaningful because it really introduced me to what college is like versus high school. It was more challenging and engaging because of how hard it is, and the lecture, lab, and SI all taught me many things.*
- *I learned how to become a great leader and be more open-minded when learning.*
- *How to communicate with peers*
- *Group projects*
- *Lab experiences*
- *The class about climate change (GEOG 1500 PS). It really got me thinking.*
- *Problem-solving skills*
- *One of the most meaningful learning experiences was in COMM 2110 (HU). [My professor] helped the class see the world from a different perspective. It really opened my eyes to how I communicate with others and how I see the world.*
- *How to delegate my time*
- *Information from MATH 1030 (QL)*

⁷⁴ We coded responses as indicating *meaningful learning* in general education which were tied to to [LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes](#) which have been adopted by the Utah State as policy. Specifically, we coded as meaningful those responses emphasizing LEAP *Intellectual and Practical Skills*, *Personal and Social Responsibility*, and *Integrative and Applied Learning* outcomes, de-emphasizing specific content (Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World) unless a specific Gen Ed course was identified. We also included WICHE [Passport](#) outcomes as WSU offers the Passport to student completing their Gen Ed courses with no grade below a C. Finally we coded “soft skills” (e.g., time management) as meaningful learning in Gen Ed as they are aligned with liberal education and embedded in LEAP and Passport outcomes (see AACU President Carol Geary Schneider’s [comments](#))

- *My favorite learning experience came from my human development class (CHF 1500, SS/DV). My professor made the class very interactive and engaging, which helped me learn so many new and important things.*

These responses contrasted to those that addressed outcomes not specifically connected to general education classes or AACU LEAP- or Passport-related outcomes. For example, the following were not coded as meaningful learning in general education. Of course, these are important outcomes for students and legitimate expressions of the meaningfulness and value of their education. However, they are not specific to general education.

- *Learning to become proactive and asking for help*
- *Being confident*
- *To be cautious of the associations I have*
- *Always attend classes even if I'm sick*
- *Got better at not procrastinating.*
- *How to get involved*
- *I made a lot of friends in the gym.*
- *Making connections with people*
- *How to work hard.*

Interrater reliability was 93% based on 13% of the coded responses. Across questions, 73% of associate's degree students made at least one response identifying meaningful learning outcomes in the core or breadth Gen Ed areas, **meeting** the threshold of 70% students. The finding replicates the analysis performed for the Mid-Cycle. The importance of a meaningful General Education program is discussed in [1.C.6](#).

SUMMARY LEARNING Objective C

Theme	Objective	Indicator	Threshold	Mission Fulfillment
LEARNING	Students will achieve general education learning outcomes	1. Results of general education learning outcome assessment	Data aggregated at the core and breadth levels indicate that 80% of students taking Gen Ed courses are achieving outcomes at a level of 70% or higher	Meets Expectations
		2. Qualitative data gathered at graduation from focus groups	At least 70% of students will identify meaningful learning outcomes in the core or breadth areas, which will be noted through qualitative theme identification gathered from focus groups of graduating students	Meets Expectations

IID: LEARNING Objective D. STUDENTS WILL ACHIEVE PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

To ensure quality education, indicators for this outcome address students' meaningful learning experience in their programs of study and achievement of program learning outcomes.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES Indicator 1: Results of program-level learning outcome assessments.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES Rationale for Indicator 1: Direct assessment of students' learning as part of their program instruction allows the University to evaluate how effectively its programs prepare students for careers or additional education.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES Threshold for Indicator 1: Data aggregated at the program level indicate 90% of graduating seniors are achieving program-level outcomes at 80% or higher.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES Rationale for Threshold Indicator 1: The indicator is new to this accreditation cycle, and the threshold is aspirational, reflecting the goal that a majority of students who complete bachelor's and master's degrees achieve program outcomes.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES Analysis of Indicator 1: For this analysis, we focused on academic programs that had undergone summative program review between 2015-2020. USHE Regent's [R411](#) policy requires academic units, typically departments, to submit a program review every five to seven years, if not sooner. The procedure for program review ([1.C.1](#)) is a three-semester, 18-month process that has three steps:

- A self-study based on nine standards (including Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment)
- A review by external faculty experts in the discipline and (typically) internal faculty (from the same and a different college), with responses by the department faculty and Dean
- Faculty Senate Executive Committee and members of the Provost's Office make recommendations to the department and dean based on evaluating the self-study and responses. The review and recommendations are further evaluated and approved by President's Council and Trustees before being submitted to the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education.

The threshold analysis was based on data from the *Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment* standard of completed program reviews. To meet the standard, departments were free to submit summaries of their biennial course assessments.⁷⁵ However, over the past several years, departments have been asked to address program-level outcomes for all the certificate and associate's, bachelor's, and master's degree programs they offer. We examine data that were reviewed as part of the regular program review process. The analysis included 42 bachelor-level, 19 graduate-level (including a graduate certificate), and five associate-level programs. Other programs that had been review but not included in this analysis were those which do not offer a degree or certificate (e.g., Developmental Math, Honors, Library), did not provide sufficient data for analyses, or had been previously analyzed.

Departments are given the flexibility to decide on measures to assess student learning outcomes, including course assignments, exams and quizzes, standardized/national/field tests, juried performances, portfolios, capstone projects, surveys/questionnaires/interviews, and supervisor assessments, to name a few. Departments also set thresholds for their program and course assessments. As a result, the threshold of this indicator (90% of graduating seniors are achieving program-level outcomes at 80% or higher) requires aggregating assessments across different thresholds and ways of reporting them. The 80% standard reflects a compromise across programs, just as the 70% standard for general education. Some departments had thresholds in program outcomes ranging from 75% - 90%. The 90% value is higher than

⁷⁵ To review departments that submitted course outcomes, we followed the curriculum grid to identify the relevant courses that are aligned with demonstration of program outcomes. Moreover, we generally focused on program outcomes that were aligned to courses or course content, than those related to next-step success, student satisfaction, or other measures. The only exception were accredited programs who were required to address elements as part of their re-accreditation process.

the proportion of students used by most programs required to meet the threshold, often set at 80%. However, student performance typically exceeds that level.

A single achievement rate⁷⁶ was computed to average over assessment forms and formats in a meaningful way. The threshold was set at 90% or above. The analyzed program-level outcomes had an overall average *achievement rate* of 90.7%. Student achievement rates for the bachelor's ($M = 90.3\%$, $sd = 6.5\%$), graduate- (89.6% , $sd = 7.6\%$) and associates/certificates (programs 95% , $sd = 4.5\%$) were 90%, above or no different than the 90%, **meeting** the threshold and replicating the data presented in the Mid-Cycle.

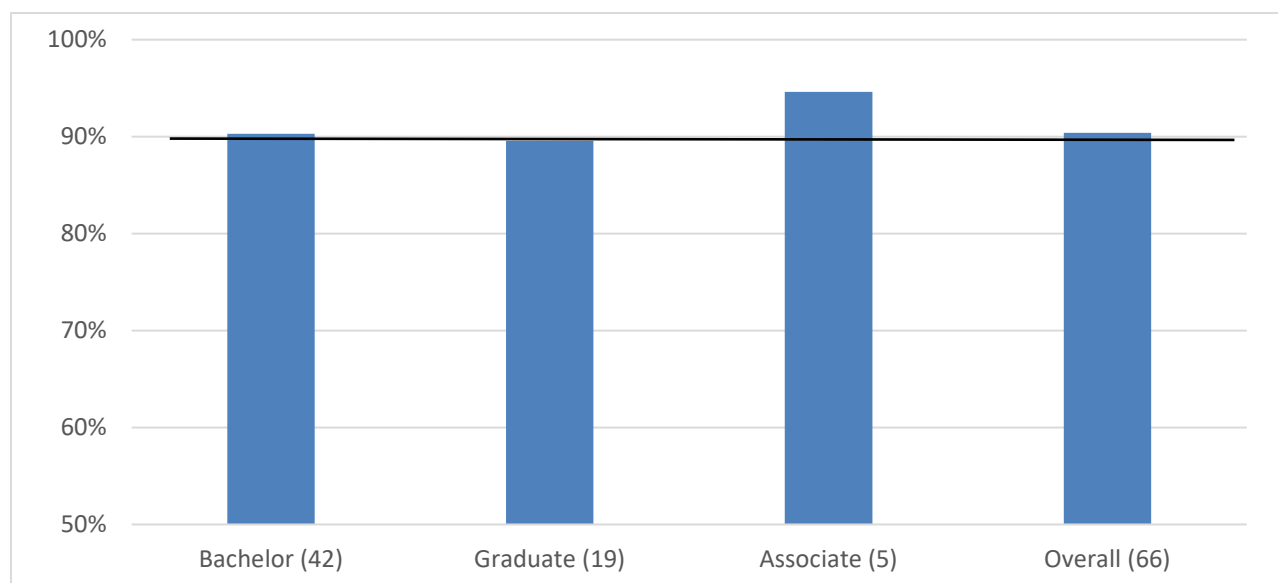


FIGURE IID1: Average Achievement Rate for Bachelor, Graduate, and Associate Programs and Overall.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES Indicator 2: Qualitative data gathered at graduation from focus groups

Rationale for Indicator 2: Graduating bachelor's and master's degree students' responses to open-ended questions will allow WSU to qualitatively assess their learning experiences in their program of study.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES Threshold for Indicator 2: At least 70% of students will discuss meaningful learning outcomes achieved in their program of study, which will be gathered through exit interviews, graduating student surveys, or other qualitative instruments.

⁷⁶ Like the general education analysis, this analysis averaged over student performance for each measure used to assess each program-level outcome. Often times, this meant averaging over data presented as percentage of students achieving the threshold (e.g., 82% of students achieved the threshold of 80%) and the overall student performance transform as a percentage (student average on a measure was 94%). Then the overall course average was computed and aggregated averages across outcomes in the program and then across programs. Because of averaging over percentage of students and overall student performance, we again designate the resulting statistic as the **achievement rate** (see footnote 5). Consistent with the goal of the analysis of program student learning outcomes, we set 90% as the threshold for the achievement rate. That is, the overall achievement rate means students *averaged* at or above 90% on assessments or that at least 90% of them were *above the threshold* for the class. In either case, such outcomes are at or above the threshold of 90% students achieving 80% of the outcomes.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES Rationale for Threshold Indicator 2: The threshold is new, aspirational, and based on the assumption that a majority of students come to recognize and value what is learned in their program of study.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES Analysis of Indicator 2: As noted previously and discussed in the Mid-Cycle report, a focus group format was not ideal for collecting qualitative data on students' meaningful learning experiences in programs. To systematically assess the threshold, we examined responses to two open-ended questions posed on the survey completed by approximately 682 students earning a bachelor's degree in spring of 2020 and 114 students earning graduate degrees. These were the same open-ended questions used in previous analyses: *What was your most meaningful experience at WSU* and *Two things you learned at WSU that you will use in the future*. A total of 314 bachelor's and 39 master's graduates gave at least one response to the questions.

The meaningfulness of students' program-level learning was assessed by whether they referenced academic experiences in program classes or their acquisition of program outcomes as distinct from other meaningful experiences associated with attending and graduating college. For example, the following responses were coded as a meaningful learning experience in programs of study:

- *My interactions with the teachers in the chemistry department, they all seemed to take a special interest in me*
- *Software Engineering II class*
- *Creating a sound/projection design for the DPA's plays and musicals and seeing the creation upon completion*
- *Having professors that knew who I was and were actively engaged in my education*
- *Working with the other special education teacher candidates and professors. Everyone was so supportive, and I learned a lot from everyone.*
- *Applied knowledge of MLS*
- *Technical writing*
- *Everything from the Social Work program will be applicable*
- *Management skills*
- *How to do and present research*
- *The most meaningful experience was volunteering. I love that there were CEL classes in my major! I started volunteering at Cottages of Hope because that was a location one of my professors recommended for my CHF 2990B class. Five years later, I am still volunteering there and have developed a support system there.*

In contrast, responses were not coded as *meaningful learning in the program* that referenced experiences not specifically related to program classes or outcomes. For example, the following were not coded as meaningful learning in their programs:

- *Being involved in student government has been one of the most meaningful experiences at WSU because it allowed me to meet professionals within the institution and in the community*
- *Participation in Beta Alpha Psi*
- *The ability to work and attend school with a flexible schedule*
- *Playing on the women's soccer team*
- *Always apply yourself to the best of your ability*

Interrater reliability based on the responses of 36 students responses was 92%. A total of 74% of the bachelor's and 85% of the Master's graduates made at least one response identifying meaningful learning in their program, which **meets** the threshold of 70% and replicates the data presented in the Mid-Cycle. The meaningfulness of the graduate- and bachelor-level programs are further discussed in [1.C.1.](#) and [1.C.9.](#)

SUMMARY LEARNING Objective D

Theme	Objective	Indicator	Threshold	Mission Fulfillment
LEARNING	Students will achieve program learning outcomes	1. Results of program-level learning outcome assessments	Data aggregated at the program level indicate 90% of graduating seniors are achieving program-level outcomes at 80% or higher	Meets Expectations
		2. Qualitative data gathered at graduation from focus groups	At least 70% of students will discuss meaningful learning outcomes achieved in their program of study, which will be gathered through exit interviews, graduating student surveys, or other qualitative instruments	Meets Expectations

IIE: LEARNING Objective E: LOWER-DIVISION STUDENTS WILL ACHIEVE SUCCESS

Students enter WSU with varying backgrounds and abilities. To ensure that the institution is responsive to these students' needs and aspirations, we use indicators of student academic performance and success early in their academic careers.

LOWER-DIVISION SUCCESS Indicator 1: Average first-semester GPA.

Rationale for Indicator 1: National data and institutional data point to first semester GPA correlating well with retention and completion. The threshold of a first semester GPA of 80% of students achieving a first semester GPA of 2.2 or higher represents a recognition that students may struggle during the first semester and may need various forms of support.

LOWER-DIVISION SUCCESS Threshold 1: 80% of first-time students will achieve a first-semester GPA of 2.2 or above.

LOWER-DIVISION SUCCESS Rationale for Threshold 1: The indicator is new to this accreditation cycle, and the 80% threshold is aspirational, ensuring the institution's attention to first-year students' academic engagement.

LOWER-DIVISION SUCCESS Analysis of Indicator 1: First-time students' Fall GPAs were collected from 2014-2020⁷⁷ (see Figure IIE1a). Overall, 65% of students had GPAs at 2.2 or above, which is **below** the threshold of 80%. The results generally replicate the data reported in the Mid-Cycle. However, we note that the percentage of students achieving the threshold has increased from 62% in 2014 to 71% in 2020, reflecting the University initiatives addressing first-year students ([1.B.3](#), [1.C.7](#), [1.D.4](#)).

⁷⁷ These GPA analysis excludes grades from college credit-bearing classes students enrolled through concurrent enrollment prior to matriculating to WSU.

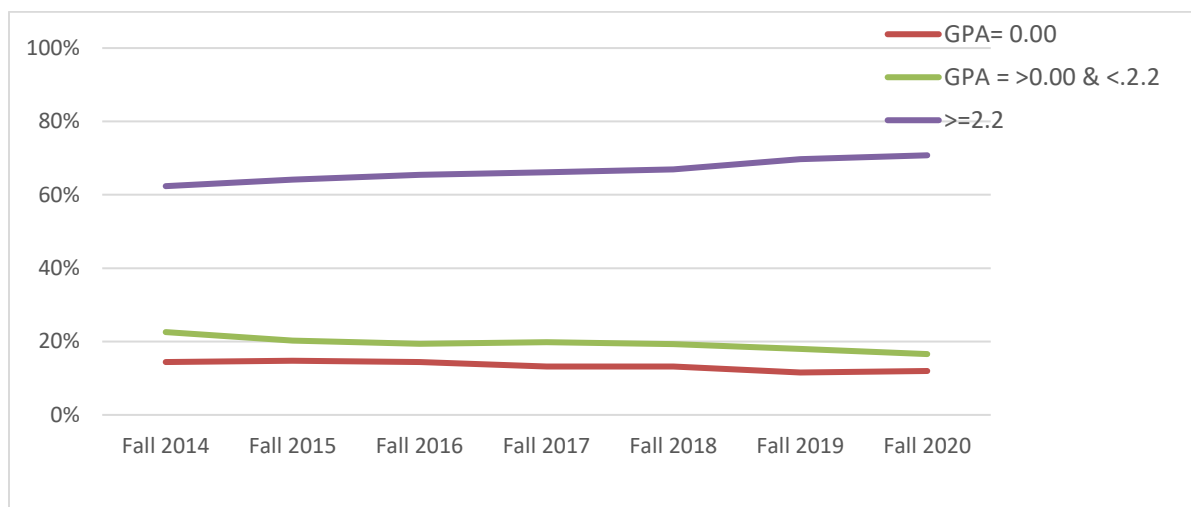


Figure IIE1a: Percentage of First-year Students Earning a First Semester GPA Greater than or Equal to 2.2, 0.00, and Between 0.1 and 1.19

A detailed analysis of students earning 0.00 in 2016 revealed that a majority (70%) of them failed (E) or did not officially withdraw (UW) from at least one of their courses, leaving a failing grade on their transcript. We repeated the previous analysis by examining the enrollments and grades of 405 (12%) of the 3,376 first-year Fall 2020 students who earned a 0.00 GPA. The analysis replicated 2016 data, with 71% (288/405) of students earning a 0.0 because of failing (E) or not completing (UW) at least one credit-bearing course in which they were enrolled.

Further analyses exploring Fall 2020 first-year students show that students earning 0.00 had a substantially lower fall-to-spring persistence rate (27%) than students earning a GPA between 0.1 to 2.19 (60.7%), with an overall persistence rate of 75.4% for all students. A disaggregation of the data by ethnicity shows that between Fall 2016 and Fall 2021, there were higher rates of Hispanic and other underserved ethnic minorities than white students with GPAs of 0.00 and 0.01 to 1.19. These rates were disproportionately higher than their representation among first-year students

Additionally, most students earning a GPA less than 2.2 were developmentally placed (0.00 = 59% and 0.01 to 2.19 = 53%), despite them representing only 41% of the fall first-year student cohort. Finally, among developmentally placed students earning a GPA of 0.00, most were placed in Developmental Math and English (50%). Similarly, among developmentally placed students earning a GPA between 0.01 and 2.19, a plurality of them (46%) were placed in Developmental Math and English (Figure IIE1b).

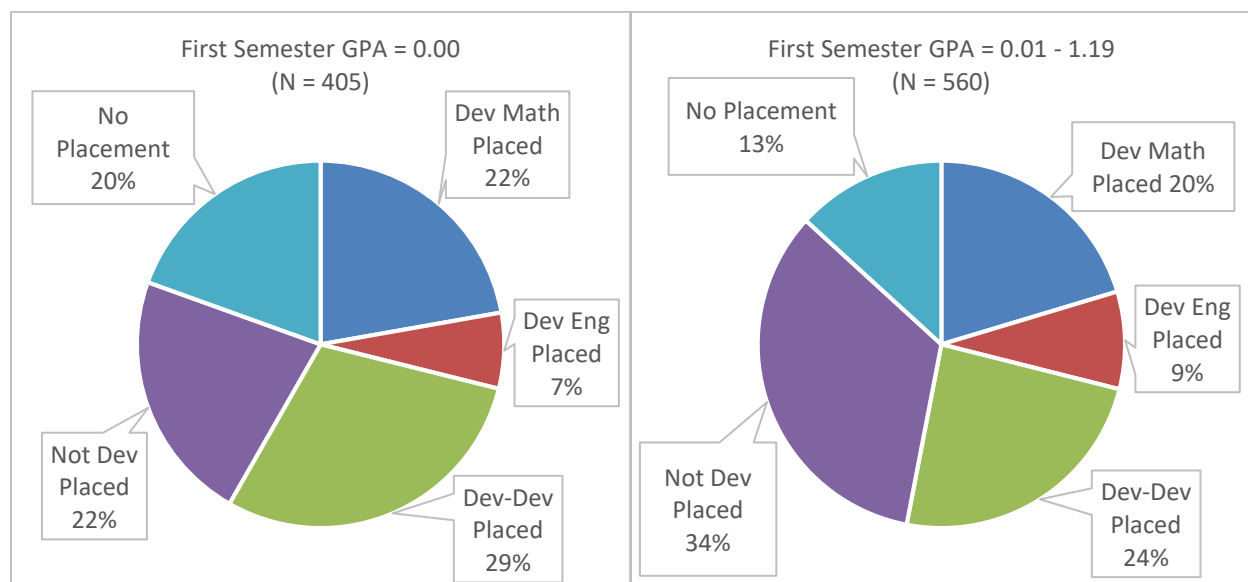


Figure IIE1b: Percentages of students by placements earning fall first-semester GPA of 0.00 or between .01 and 2.19

Despite the improvements in the percentage of first-year students earning a GPA of 2.2 or above over the past seven years, there remain institutional concerns about the approximately 29% of students who fail to do so. Continuing attention is being given to all students to support their first-semester academic success and encourage persistence and retention. Particular attention focuses on ethnic minority students placed in developmental math and English and those with no placements,⁷⁸ who are over-represented among those failing to meet the GPA threshold (metric [IIA2](#), also Standards [1.B.3](#), [1.C.7](#), [1.D.3](#), [1.D.4](#)).

LOWER-DIVISION SUCCESS Indicator 2: Number of course repeats.

Rationale for Indicator 2: Repeating core courses is frustrating for students and has an inverse relationship with the likelihood of academic success.

LOWER-DIVISION SUCCESS Threshold for Indicator 2: At least 70% of students will repeat Core General Education courses an average of two or fewer times. Among the core courses in general education are those which satisfy quantitative literacy (QL), Composition (COMP), American Institutions (AI), and Information Literacy (IL). These are often considered gateway classes with high non-completion rates that may require students to repeat the course.

LOWER-DIVISION SUCCESS Rationale for Threshold Indicator 2: This new indicator and aspirational threshold addresses the concern that students fail to complete Gen Ed gateway classes in a timely manner due to being required to repeat the class.

LOWER-DIVISION SUCCESS Analysis of Indicator 2: This threshold was analyzed using a retrospective analysis of course repeats of Core General Education classes by students who graduated in AY 2018 or AY 2019. These courses include those fulfilling the American Institution (HIST 1700, POLS

⁷⁸ Not placed students lack ACT or other data necessary for placement in either math or English and represent about 12% of first time students in fall 2020. For the analysis, students were coded as Not Placed only if they were not placed in math or English, and the other placement was not developmental. Up to 2017, students without placement data were assigned the lowest placement level, but now they are encouraged to take placement tests.

1100, and ECON 1740), Composition (ENGL 2010), Quantitative Literacy (MATH 1030, 1040, 1050, 1080), and Information Literacy⁷⁹ (LIBS 1704, LIBS 2604, LIBS 2704, LIBS 2804, LIBS 2904, and LIBS 1504) requirement. A large majority of students had no course repeats in Gen Ed Core classes (Figure IIE2a), **meeting expectations**, and replicating the data presented in the Mid-Cycle and further discussed in [1.C.6](#). However, these data do not speak to whether students who fail to complete core Gen Ed gateway courses may not persist.

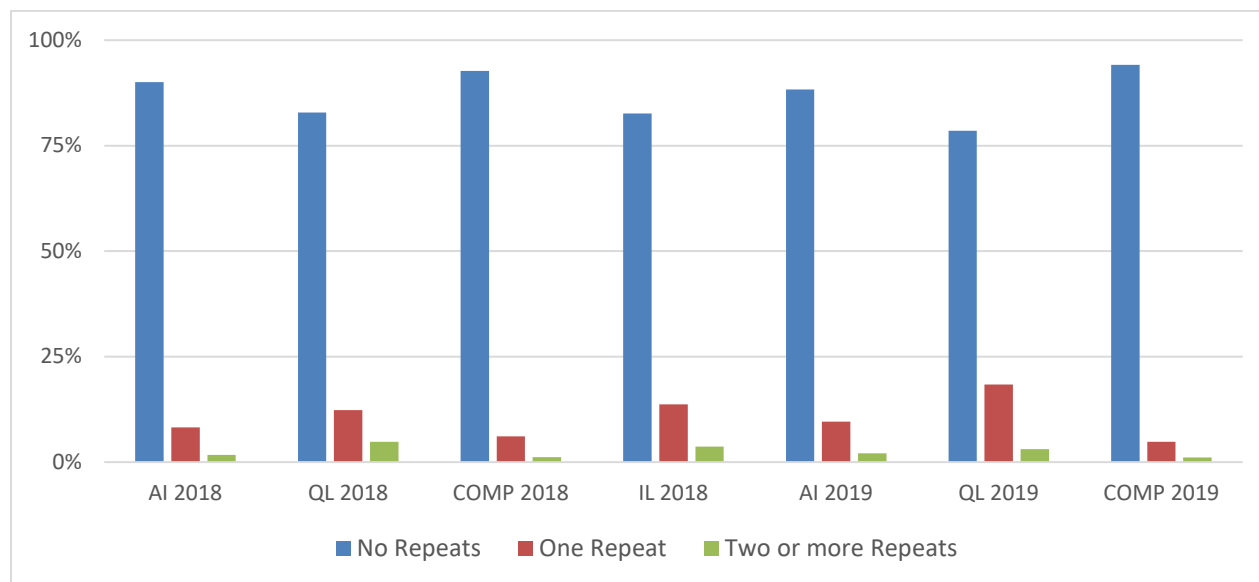


Figure IIE2a: Percentage of graduated students in AY 2018 and 2019 who repeated once or two or more Core General Education courses by course

SUMMARY LEARNING Objective E

Theme	Objective	Indicator	Threshold	Mission Fulfillment
LEARNING	Lower-division students will achieve success	1. Average first-semester GPA	80% of first-time students will achieve a first-semester GPA of 2.2 or above	Below Expectations
		2. Number of core course repeats	At least 70% of students will repeat core courses an average of two or fewer times	Meets Expectations

IIF. LEARNING Objective F: STUDENTS WILL COMPLETE DEGREES

Degree completion brings economic benefits to the student and the state. The indicators address the six-year graduation rate for bachelor's degree completion, the completion rate for "cohorts of interest," and students' attitudes towards services that support their success.

STUDENTS PROGRESS IN THEIR PROGRAMS Indicator 1: Students will complete degrees as measured with six-year graduation rates.

⁷⁹ See the Information Literacy [page](#) for a description of these courses.

STUDENTS PROGRESS IN THEIR PROGRAMS The rationale for Indicator 1: This indicator was used in past accreditation reports and remains a key institutional metric.

STUDENTS PROGRESS IN THEIR PROGRAMS Threshold for Indicator 1: WSU's six-year graduation rates will place it in the upper half of designated peer institutions.

STUDENTS PROGRESS IN THEIR PROGRAMS Rationale for Threshold Indicator 1: WSU's student population differs from most of its peer institutions since it is open-enrollment and has a very high percentage of married and/or working students. Consequently, being above the midpoint of peer institutions for our six-year graduation rate represents a significant challenge. However, we believe that it is a realistic goal.

STUDENTS PROGRESS IN THEIR PROGRAMS Analysis of Indicator 1: The WSU 2019 six-year graduation rate reported to IPEDS for the 2013 first-time, full-time, bachelor-seeking student cohort is 34%, which is an increase from 31% for the 2018 graduation rate of the 2012 cohort. The 34% graduation rate is slightly higher than Utah Valley University (32%) and below Dixie State University (36%), the two "dual mission" universities in Utah. The rate is also slightly above the average (33%) of the *ad-hoc* open-enrollment institutions that are Carnegie designated as masters-granting (32%). The peer comparison of the WSU completion rate is further discussed in [1.B.2](#).

Nonetheless, WSU places in the lower half of designated peer institutions over the past six years (Figure IIF1a). The WSU six-year graduation rate averaged 34.3%, placing it below the average for all the peer institutions ($M = 41.08\%$, $sd = 9.58$) by .7 of a standard deviation point (Figure IIF1b). The result is **below** threshold expectations and replicates the data in the Mid-Cycle. Improving student graduation rates remains an institutional priority ([1.B.4](#)), particularly for students who are most at risk of not completing (see the following indicator of this objective).

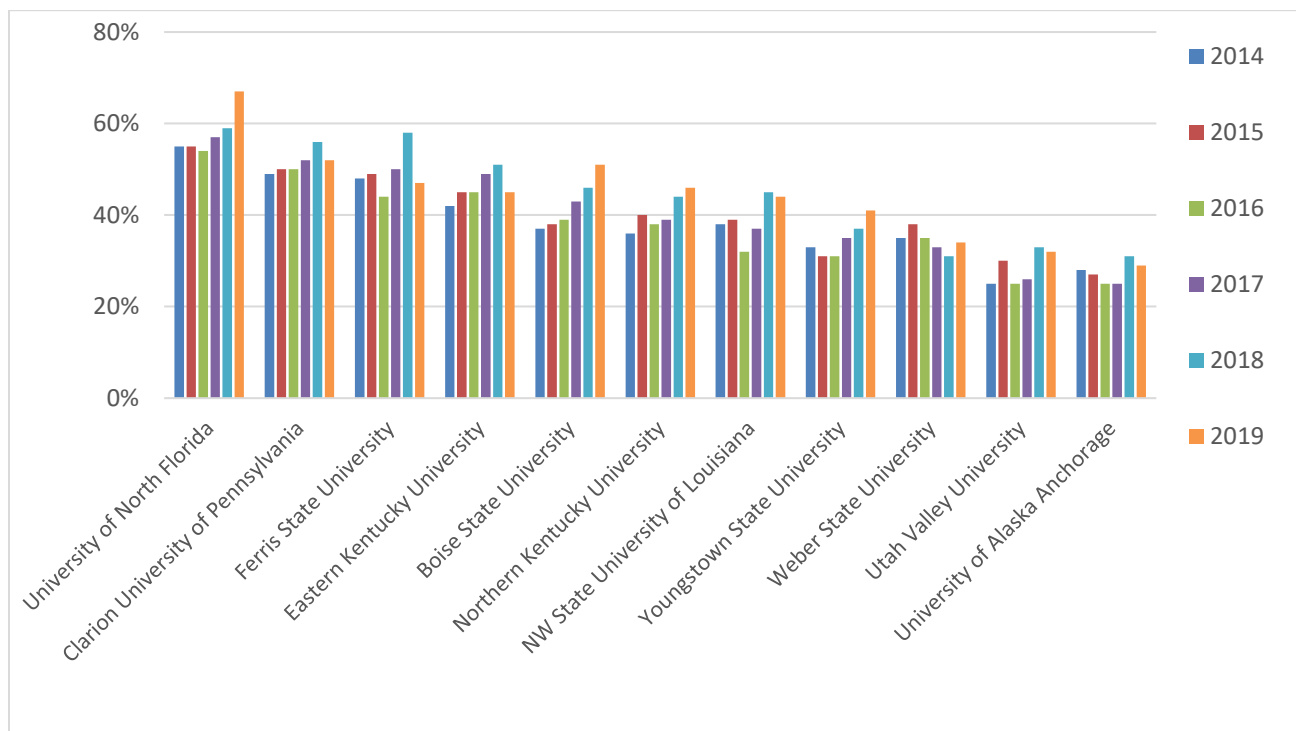


Figure IIF1a: Graduation rates for the past six years by peer institutions

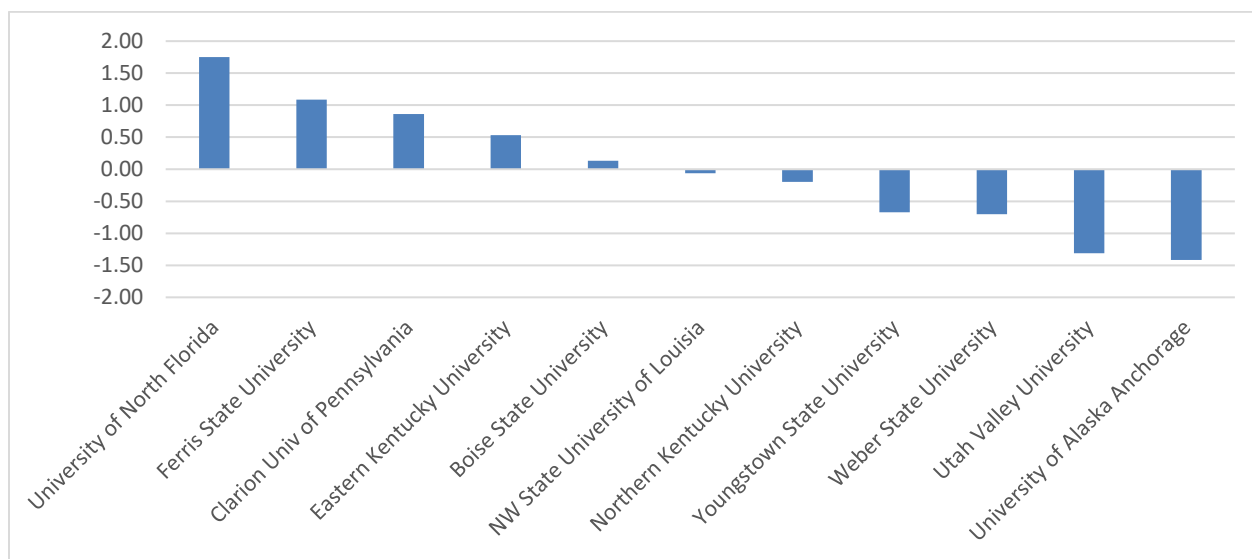


Figure IIF1b: Z scores on averaged six-year graduation rates $M = 41.08$, $sd = 9.58$)

STUDENTS PROGRESS IN THEIR PROGRAMS Indicator 2: Students will complete degrees measured by the six-year graduation rates of all students and student cohorts of interest.

STUDENTS PROGRESS IN THEIR PROGRAMS Rationale for Indicator 2: WSU effectively serves the needs of cohorts of interest in the community, including underserved and other student groups. The institution remains attentive to the completion rates of all students it serves. The same cohorts are used in all cohorts of interest assessments and include the following:

- **Ethnic Minority** – Students self-identified as Hispanic, Native American, African American, or Pacific Islander
- **Underprepared** – ACT Composite < 19 or HS GPA < 2.0
- **Well Prepared** – AP credit or CLEP credit or IB credit
- **Dev-Dev Placed** – Any student placed into BOTH Developmental Math and Developmental English
- **Low Income** – Students identified on FAFSA as low income

STUDENTS PROGRESS IN THEIR PROGRAMS Threshold for Indicator 2: Six-year graduation rate of cohorts of interest will be at least 80% of the average rate of other students.

STUDENTS PROGRESS IN THEIR PROGRAMS Rationale for Threshold Indicator 2: This indicator is new to this accreditation cycle, and the threshold is aspirational, with the 80% threshold reflecting the 4/5ths rule used by EEOC offices (footnote 64) to test for adverse impact.

STUDENTS PROGRESS IN THEIR PROGRAMS Analysis of Indicator 2: Quantitative and qualitative analyses were used to assess the threshold for this indicator. A logistic regression explored the six-year graduation of 17,086 first-time, full-time students to WSU from fall 2008-2013 who earned a credential (certificate, associate's, or bachelor's degree) by Spring 2020. The regression explored whether the targeted cohorts graduated with a credential at lower rates than the rate of all other students. We coded each student as belonging to none or one or more cohorts and treated each cohort as an independent variable predicting the percentage of students who graduated. The graduation rate for all students was 39.3% and was 43.9% for those who belong to no cohort (Control), representing 31.5% of the sample. Students identified as belonging to at least one cohort of interest (Cohort) was 37.1%, and they were

68.5% of the sample. The Cohort graduation rate was within 80% of both the overall and Control graduation rates, indicating that the institution **meets** the threshold.

The regression revealed that Well Prepared ($b = 1.25$, $OR = 3.50$) students had a higher graduation as did Low Income students ($b = 0.21$, $OR = 1.23$) compared to others in those cohorts. However, graduation rates of Dev-Dev placed ($b = -2.21$, $OR = 0.11$), Under Prepared ($b = -0.21$, $OR = 0.81$), and Minority ($b = -0.13$, $OR = 0.88$) students had lower graduation rates than others in the cohorts (Figure IIF2). These variables are additive suggesting that the student placed in combination of cohorts would have lower odds ratio for graduating.

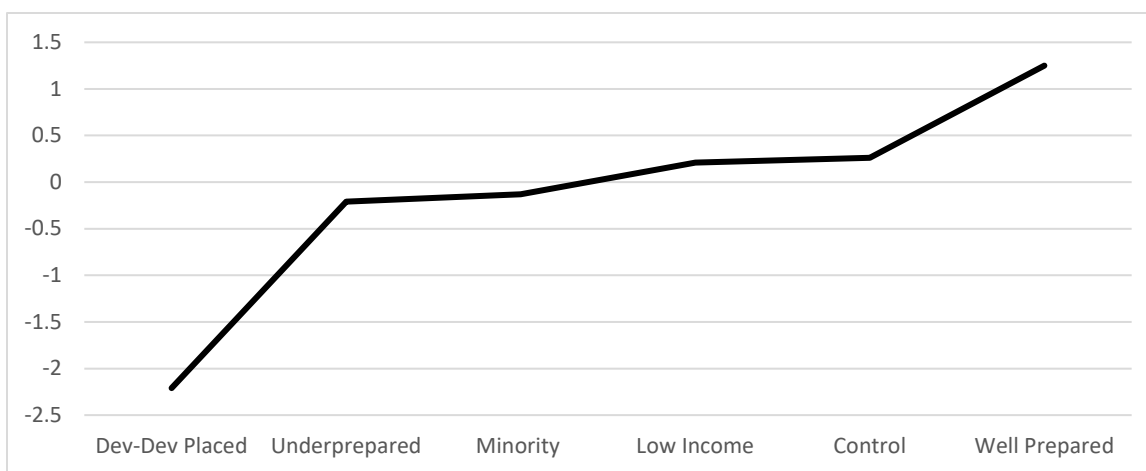


Figure IIF2: Regression beta weights for students assigned to a "cohort of interest" or control group who are more (positive) or less (negative) likely to graduate with any credential compared to others not in that group.

It was not a surprise to find that the same Dev-Dev placed cohort, who were identified as less likely to be retained ([IIA2](#)), was also least likely to earn a credential. Only 7% of Developmental students earned a credential, which is lower than reported in the Mid-Cycle in 2016. Effectively retaining and graduating all students is a priority for the institution ([1.B.3](#), [1.B.4](#)), with strategic initiatives developed and implemented to do so discussed throughout the EIE, but notably in [1.B.3](#), [1.C.7](#), [1.D.4](#))

STUDENTS PROGRESS IN THEIR PROGRAMS Indicator 3: Measures gleaned from NSSE, Noel-Levitz, and aggregated university surveys about student satisfaction with support services.

STUDENTS PROGRESS IN THEIR PROGRAMS The rationale for Indicator 3: The institution recognizes the importance of the student support services necessary to ensure student success in completing their degrees. Student use of those services depends heavily on them holding positive attitudes towards such services. This indicator addresses those attitudes.

STUDENTS PROGRESS IN THEIR PROGRAMS Threshold for Indicator 3: Student ratings on satisfaction with support services will average above "satisfied" on university surveys.

STUDENTS PROGRESS IN THEIR PROGRAMS Rationale for Threshold Indicator 3: The indicator and threshold have been used in previous assessments of mission fulfillment. Satisfaction with student services would support student success in completing their degrees.

STUDENTS PROGRESS IN THEIR PROGRAMS Analysis of Indicator 3: Ratings of satisfaction with student services are tracked by a subset of Noel-Levitz Survey questions addressing Campus Support Services (CSS). The survey is regularly distributed every two years from 2014 to 2020 to a random

sample of students. The four data points collected over the past seven years reveal an average score on the satisfied side of the 7-point scale ($M = 5.54$), where 7 is the highest rating of very satisfied, 1 is very unsatisfied, and 4 is neutral.

Table IIF3 presents the CSS data average for WSU and other four-year public institutions, showing a linear pattern of increase over time in student satisfaction scores that are higher than comparison institutions ($M = 5.34$). The increase over time in averaged satisfaction rating and an overall average above the threshold affirms that the institution **meets** expectations. Further discussion of student support services (advising, tutoring, mentoring, and other such services) are highlighted in EIE [1.B.1](#), [1.C.7](#), and [1.D.4](#).

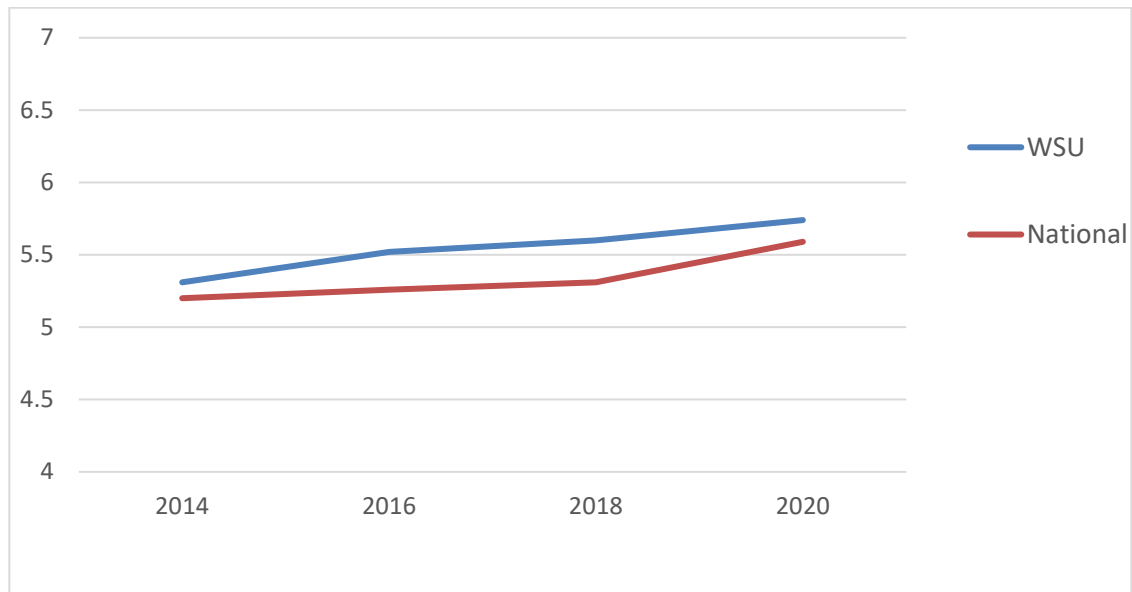


Figure IIF3: Average Score on The Noel-Levitz CSS Questions By WSU Students Compared To Those In 4-Year Public Institutions Over the Past Six Years.

SUMMARY LEARNING *Objective F*

Theme	Objective	Indicator	Threshold	Mission Fulfillment
LEARNING	Students will complete degrees	1. Students will complete degrees as measured with six-year graduation rates	WSU's six-year graduation rates will place it in the upper half of designed peer institutions	Below Expectations
		2. Students will complete degrees as measured with six-year graduation rates of all students and student cohorts of interest	Six-year grad rates of cohorts of interest will be at least 80% of the average rate for all students	Meets Expectations
		3. Measures gleaned from NSSE, Noel-Levitz, and aggregated university surveys about student satisfaction with support services	Student ratings on satisfaction with support services will average above "satisfied" on university surveys	Meets Expectations

CORE THEME III: COMMUNITY

PANDEMIC NOTICE: Many university functions were disrupted by the pandemic and the subsequent decision to virtually deliver all academic classes, student services, and other institutional functions. The move to virtual functioning severely affected many mission fulfillment metrics of the Community Core Theme. These metrics address a) students and faculty having community experiences and engagements and b) community members having university-sponsored academic and cultural experiences and engagements. Although we report data collected during the pandemic AY 20 (2019-2020) and AY 21 (2020-2021) for each Community Core Theme objective, we compute thresholds, particularly longitudinal thresholds, excluding data collected during the pandemic to assess the threshold under "normal conditions."

IIIA: COMMUNITY Objective A. WEBER STATE UNIVERSITY WILL CONTRIBUTE TO THE K-12 EDUCATION IN THE COMMUNITY

This objective addresses how the institution contributes to pre-K through grade 12 education in the region that goes beyond the direct preparation of teachers at the bachelor's degree level and instead focuses on in-service training. The two indicators measuring this objective explore ways WSU takes on its responsibility to influence the community by offering educational opportunities.

EDUCATION Indicator 1: Local educators will enroll in advanced degrees and continuing education programs.

EDUCATION The rationale for Indicator 1: Among the ways that WSU contributes to pre-K through 12 education is by collaborating with the local public education community and providing needed and high-quality continuing education to teachers and administrators.

EDUCATION Threshold for Indicator 1: The five-year rolling average of educator enrollments will show a positive trend.

EDUCATION Rationale for Threshold Indicator 1: The threshold has been used previously to assess the same indicator and objective, reflecting the commitment to and expectation of an expanding relationship between local educators and WSU.

EDUCATION Analysis of Indicator 1: The indicator was assessed by examining local educators' training in the WSU in-service program, delivered by the University's Division of Online & Continuing Education (DOCE). The program offered professional development courses for teachers for re-licensure and endorsements to existing licenses. This program continued to run in full until 2016 when the WSU Master of Education program decided to create certificate programs for students (notably in-service teachers) seeking a teaching license. The certificates were necessary to support students to achieve new state requirements and designed to stack into the M.Ed. program, which provides teachers with even more training opportunities ([1.C.9](#)).

The delivery of these graduate certificates fits within the scope of the indicator of "advanced degrees and continuing education programs." As a result, to test the threshold given the changes in program delivery, we examined enrollment patterns in each program. However, the enrollment data from the programs are not comparable as the DOCE program counts enrollments in individual courses. In contrast, the certificate counts enrollments in a specific program (e.g., Graduate Certificate in Secondary Teaching, which is 25 credit hours and nine courses).

To compare growth in the programs, two sets of Z-scores are presented in Table IIIA1. For the enrollments in the DOCE courses, the five-year rolling averages were calculated for each of the past 10 years. An overall average enrollment was computed ($M = 1,717.5$, $sd = 195.6$), then each year's five-year

rolling average was then transformed into Z-scores. A parallel method was computed for student enrollments in new graduate certificates offered by the M.Ed. Program. The five-year rolling averages over the past six years were computed along with an overall average enrollment ($M = 31.9$, $sd = 28.8$). Each year's 5-year rolling average was again transformed into Z-scores.

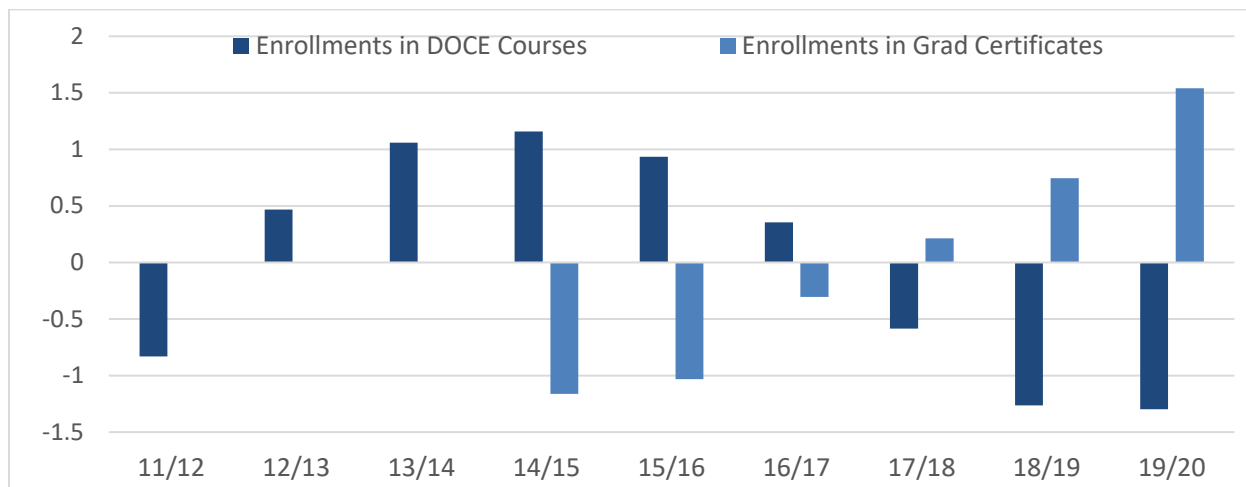


Figure IIIA1: Z scores of five-year moving averages for local educators' enrollments in-service courses and in Graduate Teaching Certificates.

The graph depicts the inflection point in 2017-2018 when there was an enrollment decline in CE delivered courses and an enrollment increase in M.Ed. Certificate programs. While the CE-delivered endorsement courses, particularly in reading and ESL, are expected to continue, the courses leading to teaching licenses are expected to end with students moved to the M.Ed. Graduate Certificate and even graduate degree programs.

By offering graduate certificates, the Masters of Education program was responding to State licensure issues and created new opportunities for in-service teachers to additional advanced degrees as the indicator references. Indeed, M.Ed. enrollments have seen a 53% increase from 2014 ($N = 134$) to 2020 ($N = 205$), perhaps reflecting the new pathway from a graduate certificate to an advanced degree. The data documents the University's commitment to and expectation of an expanding relationship with local educators. For these reasons, we consider the indicator as having been met. The graduate Teacher Ed program is further discussed in EIE [1.C.9](#).

EDUCATION Indicator 2: WSU will provide precollege support through targeted support for "cohorts of interest."

The rationale for Indicator 2: WSU contributes to pre-K through 12 by assisting in the preparation of precollege students. Current programs (and the measures used for this objective) focus on the preparation of targeted populations, which have been traditionally underrepresented in higher education.

EDUCATION Threshold for Indicator 2: The five-year rolling average of participation in precollege programs will show a positive trend.

EDUCATION Rationale for Threshold Indicator 2: The threshold has been used previously to assess the same indicator and objective and again reflects the institution's commitment to and expectation of an expanding relationship between local educators and WSU.

EDUCATION Analysis of Indicator 2: The indicator focuses on student participation in college preparation programs managed by the Office of Access and Diversity that involve partnerships with local school systems. These programs include [TRIO \(Talent Search\)](#)⁸⁰, Student to Student (now called [Advocates for FASFA](#), [State GEAR UP](#), and [Upward Bound](#)). The five-year rolling averages were computed per year, with the overall average participation in college preparation programs over the past 11 years of 1,933 participants ($sd = 379$). A trend analysis from AY2011 to AY2019, reflecting years of non-disruption by the pandemic, was positive (Figure IIIA2), **meeting expectations** of the threshold. The EIE includes additional discussion of the Office of Access and Diversity's initiatives in promoting underserved students' college participation ([1.D.1](#)) and retention ([1.D.4](#)).

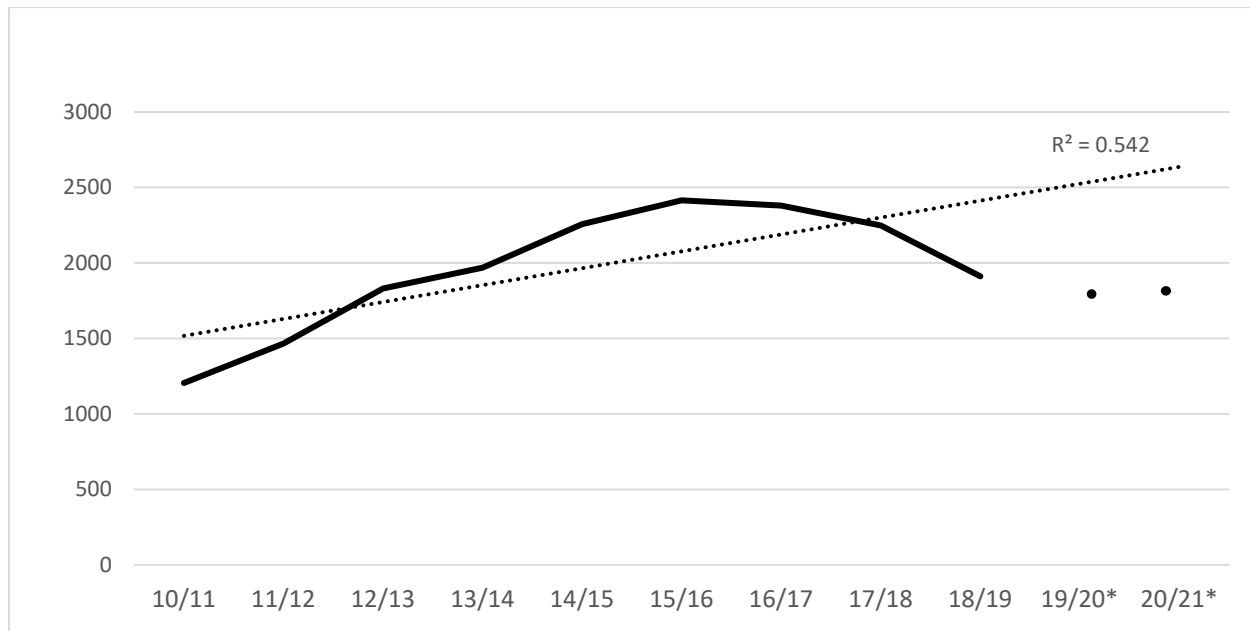


Figure IIIA2: Five-year moving averages for participants enrolled in WSU college preparation programs (* are pandemic affected data).

SUMMARY COMMUNITY Objective A

Theme	Objective	Indicator	Threshold	Mission Fulfillment
COMMUNITY	Weber State University will contribute to the K-12 education in the community	1. Local educators will enroll in advanced degree and continuing education programs	The five-year rolling average of educator enrollments will show a positive trend	Meets Expectations
		2. WSU will provide precollege support through targeted support for "cohorts of interest."	The five-year rolling average of participation in precollege programs will show a positive trend	Meets Expectations

IIIB: COMMUNITY Objective B. THE COMMUNITY WILL PARTICIPATE IN A WIDE ARRAY OF WSU SPONSORED CULTURAL PROGRAMS

⁸⁰ The Department of Education did not renew funding for WSU's TRIO Talent Search program.

The two indicators that measure this objective address how Weber State University contributes to the richness of the regional culture. The two indicators highlight the opportunities for the community to attend events at Weber State and the ways in which Weber State goes into the community to offer opportunities where people live.

CULTURE Indicator 1: The community will participate in a diverse offering of WSU events.

Rationale for Indicator 1: Weber State contributes to the richness of the regional culture by providing a wide variety of events to which the public is invited. Continuing strong attendance at educational, cultural, entertainment, and sporting events reflect WSU's contribution to the regional culture.

CULTURE Indicator 1: The community rates of participation in diverse cultural offerings sponsored by WSU.

CULTURE Threshold for Indicator 1: The average annual rate of community participation in theatrical, musical, scientific, athletic, and civic events will mirror population growth in our catchment area.

CULTURE Rationale for Threshold Indicator 1: This is a new indicator for this accreditation cycle and is an aspirational threshold. The threshold replaces ticket sales above 150,000 in favor of one that is more responsive to population changes in the catchment area.

CULTURE Analysis of Indicator 1: The ticket sales from athletic (basketball, football, and volleyball) and cultural (theatrical, dance, and musical) events were collected from AY 2013-2021. We excluded from calculations data from academic years 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 due to the pandemic. The average ticket sales across the seven years are 182,284, which is well above the past threshold and reflects an increase since the last report of the indicator in the Mid-Cycle (see Figure IIIB1a).

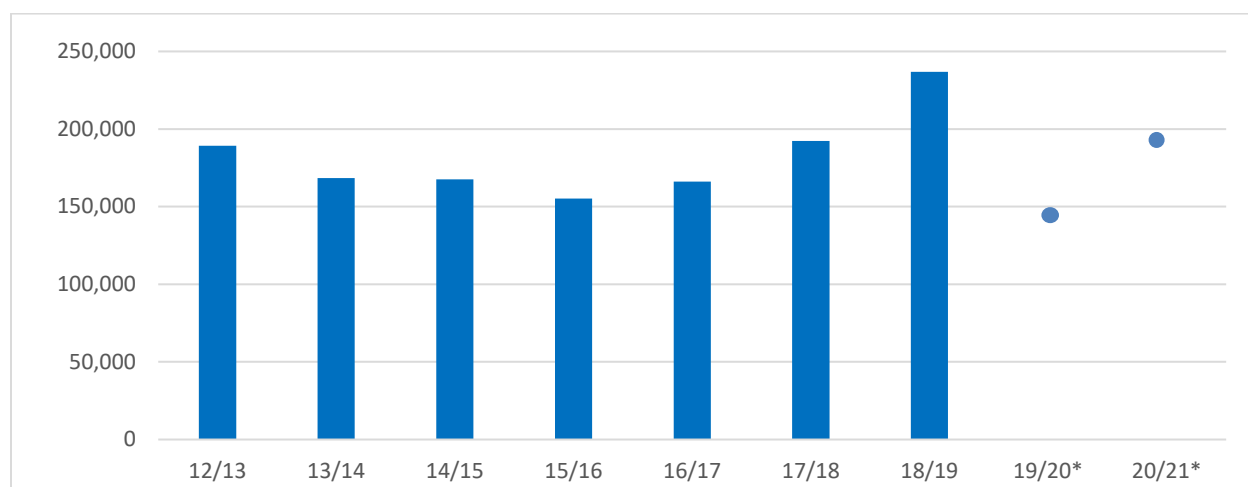


Figure IIIB1a: Total ticket sales for athletic and cultural events by academic year

The threshold is tied to the changes in the population in the catchment area, which showed steady year-over-year growth and a summed overall growth rate of 9.64%. Ticket sales showed a more volatile pattern, with a dramatic increase in the past several years. The increase is primarily due to WSU having more major cultural events on campus and the success of the athletic teams. The summed year-over-year change of ticket sales is 27.14%, which mirrors the census data, **meeting expectations** based on each showing overall growth over time. This represents a change in the threshold result from the Mid-cycle.

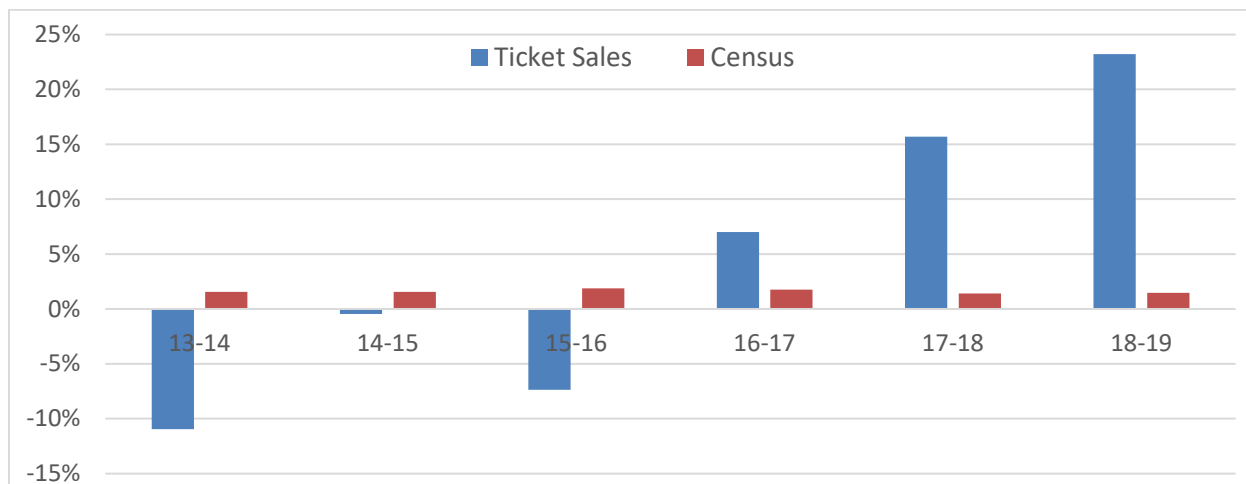


Figure IIIB1b: Average year-over-year changes in ticket sales and population growth

EDUCATION Indicator 2: Educational opportunities will be brought to the community.

Rationale for Indicator 2: Not all members of the community—children, in particular—can come to the campus. Weber State reaches out to these groups with educational opportunities by meeting the community members where they are.

EDUCATION Threshold for Indicator 2: Participation in Arts in the Park, Science in the Park, and other community-based programs will mirror population growth in our catchment area.

EDUCATION Rationale for Threshold Indicator 2: This is a new indicator for this accreditation cycle, and the threshold is aspirational, affirming that the institution supports programs being brought to a growing community.

EDUCATION Analysis of Indicator 2: The analysis remained focused on the two unique [Arts](#) and [Science](#) in the Park as the only community-based programs of many that directly bring programming to children in an accessible way (see [story](#)). The estimated number of participants served by each program was collected based on supplies used by each program. Together the programs have engaged an estimated 87,586 participants since 2013 (Figure IIIB2a). The summer of AY19 was pre-pandemic, so the data were included in the analysis. Although the summer of 2020 was not. The pandemic negatively impacted the Arts program in the Summer of 2020, but innovative [programming](#) helped expand the Science in the Parks participation.

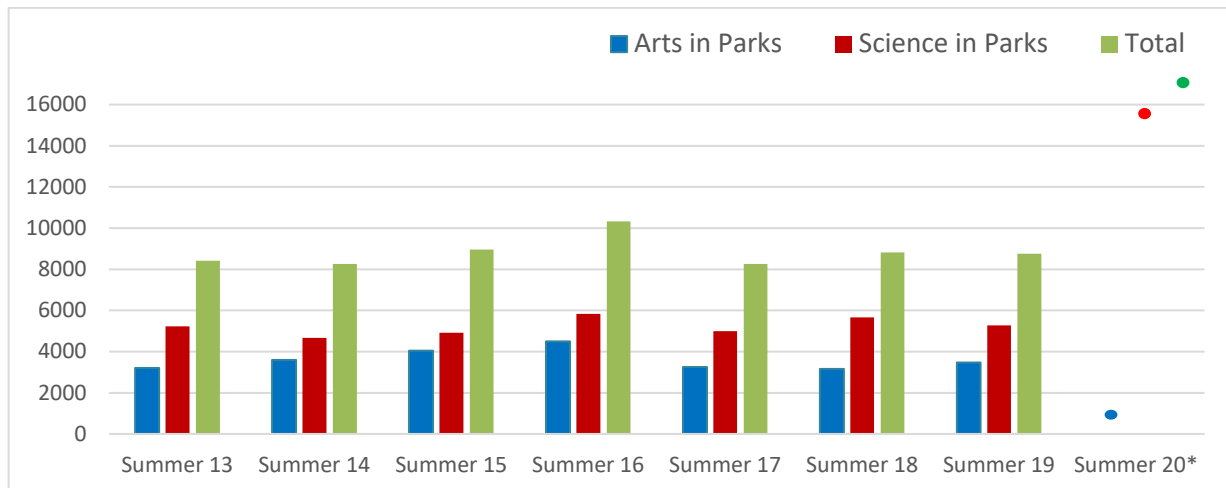


Figure IIIB2a: Participation in Arts and Science in the Park programs (* pandemic affected year)

The threshold is tied to the growth of the population in the catchment area. The census data reveals steady year-over-year changes over time (Figure IIIB2b), resulting in a summed 9.64% increase from 2014-2019. Year-over-year participation rates in the two programs show less consistent growth, with a notable drop in summer 2017 from the previous summer but a rise in the following summer. The summed 7.80% increase in year-over-year participation mirrors the census data, **meeting expectations** based on each showing overall growth over time.

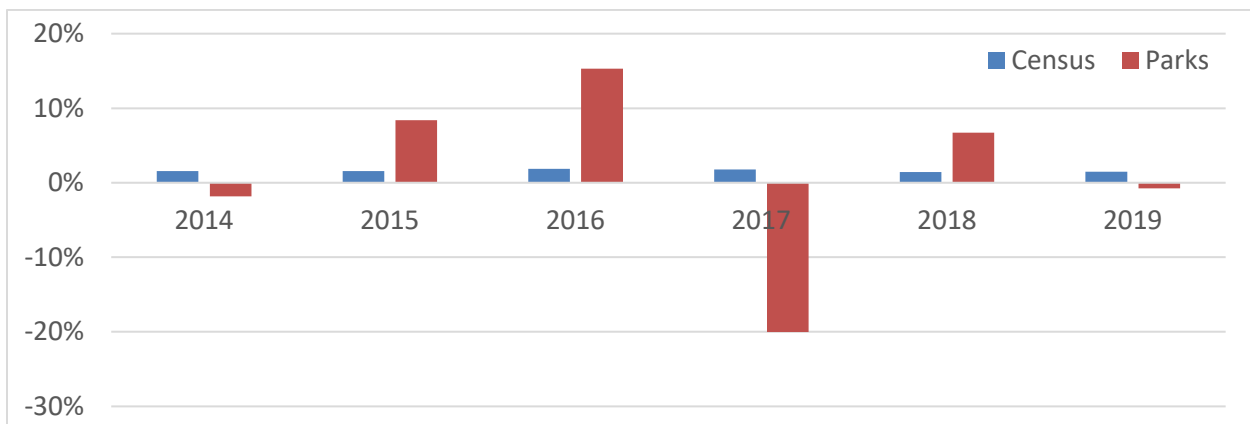


Figure IIIB2b: Year-over-year growth in census population in the catchment area and parks program participants

SUMMARY COMMUNITY Objective B

Theme	Objective	Indicator	Threshold	Mission Fulfillment
COMMUNITY	The community will participate in a wide array of WSU sponsored	The community rates of participation in diverse cultural offerings sponsored by WSU	The average annual rate of community participation in theatrical, musical, scientific, athletic, and civic events will mirror population growth in our catchment area	Meets Expectations

	cultural programs	Education opportunities continue to be brought to the community	Participation in Arts in the Park, Science in the Park, and other community-based programs will mirror population growth in our catchment area	Meets Expectations
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IIIC. COMMUNITY *Objective C*: STUDENTS WILL ENGAGE WITH THE COMMUNITY AND BECOME PRODUCTIVE MEMBERS OF SOCIETY

STUDENTS ENGAGE COMMUNITY Indicator 1: Graduates seeking jobs will be employed as measured with graduation data and verified by the Utah Department of Workforce Services.

STUDENTS ENGAGE COMMUNITY Rationale for Indicator 1: One of the most important impacts that WSU has on the community is providing a well-trained workforce.

STUDENTS ENGAGE COMMUNITY Threshold for Indicator 1: Ninety percent of students who want to pursue work after graduation will be successful in doing so.

STUDENTS ENGAGE COMMUNITY Rationale for Threshold Indicator 1: The indicator is new for this accreditation cycle, and the threshold is aspirational in expecting the next-step professional success of Weber State University graduates.

STUDENTS ENGAGE COMMUNITY Analysis of Indicator 1: The data assessing this indicator are based on graduating associate's and bachelor's degree students who self-identify on the Graduation Survey (1.C.5, 1.D.2) as seeking post-graduation employment. The names of job-seeking graduates were submitted to the [Utah Department of Workforce Services](#) (DWS) to identify those who are employed. However, DWS data has limitations, as they do not identify those employed outside the state, work for the federal government, or are self-employed. These limitations are relevant in assessing this threshold as two federal government agencies are the top employers in the three-county catchment area. The agencies are the Department of the Air Force ([Hill AFB](#), see the Davis County [website](#)) and the Internal Revenue Service (see the Ogden Business [website](#), listed under the Office of the Inspector General). Similarly, it is estimated that approximately 7.7% of the workforce are self-employed in Weber County, 8.0% in Davis Country, and 11.5% in Morgan County⁸¹.

A total of 11,536 graduates per year from 2014-2019 self-identified as seeking employment after graduation, with roughly a third receiving an associate's degree and two-thirds a bachelor's degree. The names of graduates were submitted to DWS, and students' success in finding jobs was recorded in any subsequent quarter after graduation. For the 2014 cohort of graduates, this was 26 quarters and six quarters for the 2019 cohort. The percentage of job-seeking associate's and bachelor's degree graduates (and the combined percentage) that DWS could identify as being employed in any quarter after graduation is presented in Figure IIIC1.

⁸¹ The most accurate source for self-employment rates is the Census Bureau which is broken down by Utah County. Reported rates combine those who are self-employed in incorporated and unincorporated business: <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?t=Class%20of%20Worker&g=0400000US49.49.050000&tid=ACST5Y2019.S2406>.

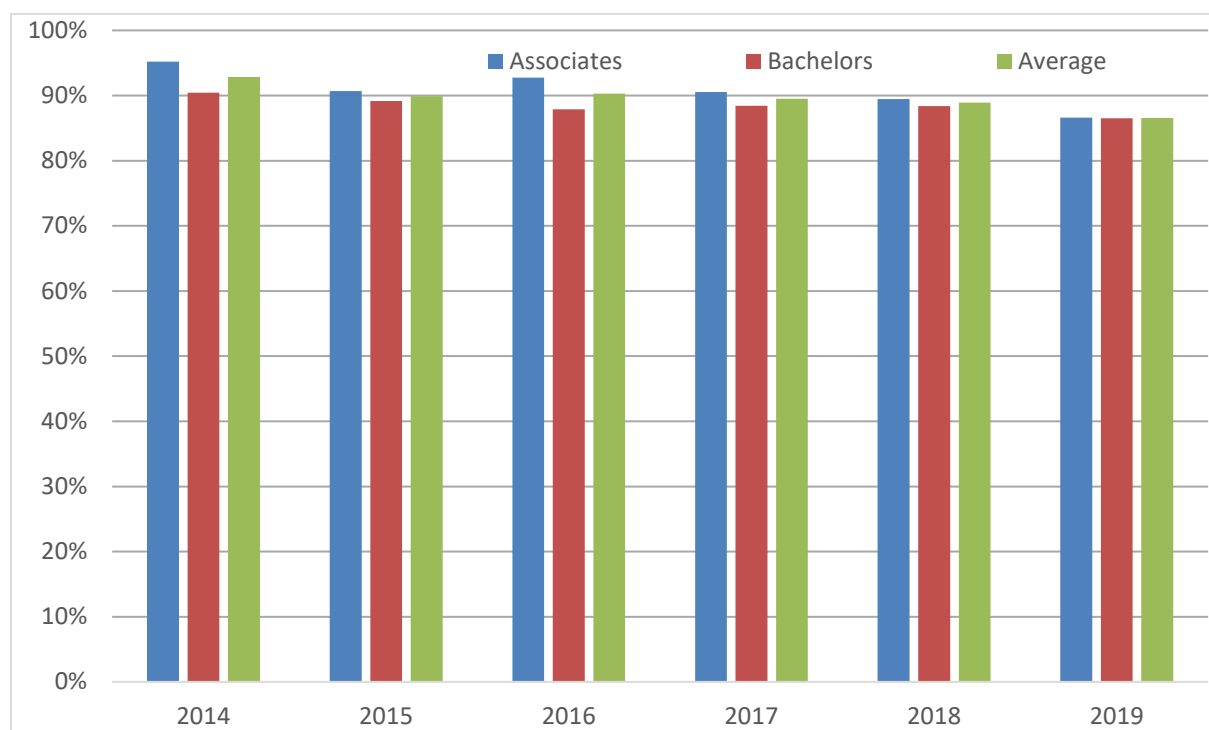


Figure IIIC1: Percentage of students seeking a job identified by DWS as employed in any quarter since graduation.

Across cohorts, DWS identified 90.9% of job-seeking associate's and 88.5% of job-seeking bachelor's degree graduates as being employed. The different rates of the degree students may highlight the limits of the DWS verification process rather than the actual employment rate. That is, DWS may have missed more bachelor's than associate's degree graduates' employment, as they are more likely to move out of state for jobs⁸² or be self-⁸³ or federally⁸⁴-employed. Overall, the DWS-confirmed employment rate from 2014-2019 was 89.1%, with a standard deviation of 1.7%. The relatively small standard deviation suggests that most job-seeking graduates find jobs relatively quickly after graduation. Based on these data, we consider this threshold **met**. Despite the DWS-confirmed employment underestimating actual employment, the confirmed employment rate was not statistically different from the 90% threshold, $t(6) = 1.3, ns$. The results closely replicate the same analysis performed for the Mid-Cycle report. Student next-step occupational success is further discussed in [1.D.2](#).

STUDENTS ENGAGE IN THE COMMUNITY Indicator 2: Graduates seeking additional education will be enrolled as measured with graduation data and verified by the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC).

STUDENTS ENGAGE IN THE COMMUNITY Rationale for Indicator 2: Students who pursue more advanced degrees often return to better serve the community as citizens and professionals. Also, many make significant contributions that serve the larger community.

⁸² See Pascarella, E. T., & Terenzini, P. T. (2005). *How college affects students* (Vol. 2). K. A. Feldman (Ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass for the effect of education on social mobility.

⁸³ See [US Bureau of Labor Statistics](#) for self-employment rate and degree background.

⁸⁴ A bachelor's degree positions students for a GS5 or higher job, an associate's degree start at a lower level.

STUDENTS ENGAGE IN THE COMMUNITY Threshold for Indicator 2: Eighty percent of students who want to pursue additional education after graduation will be successful in doing so.

STUDENTS ENGAGE COMMUNITY Rationale for Threshold Indicator 2: The indicator is new to this accreditation cycle, and the threshold is aspirational in expecting the next-step academic success of Weber State University graduates.

STUDENTS ENGAGE IN THE COMMUNITY Analysis of Indicator 2: The data assessing this indicator are based on graduating students who self-identify on the "Graduating Student Survey" as seeking additional education. The names of graduates seeking additional education were submitted to the NSC to identify those who are enrolled in higher education.

A total of 6,625 graduates in 2014-2020 self-identified as seeking additional education after graduation, with two-thirds being associate's degree graduates and one-third bachelor's degree graduates. The names of graduates were submitted to NSC, and those enrolling in additional education were recorded in any subsequent year after graduation. The percentage of associate's and bachelor's degree students and the overall percentage identified by NSC as being enrolled in Higher Education in any year after graduation is presented in Figure IIIC2.

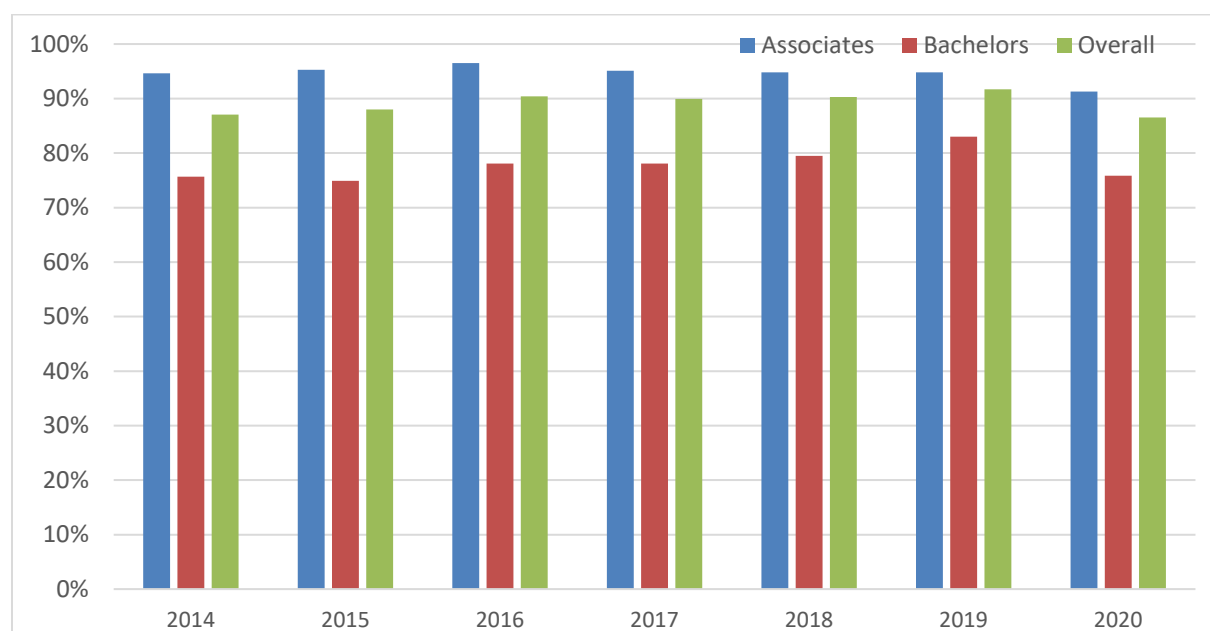


Figure IIIC2: Percentage of students seeking additional education identified by NSC as enrolled at any time since graduation.

Across cohorts, NSC identified 93% of associate's and 77.9% of bachelor's degree graduates seeking additional education as being enrolled in higher education. Although we did not assess the educational programs to which graduates applied, it seems likely that associate's degree graduates sought additional schooling to earn a bachelor's degree. Bachelor's degree graduates were seeking a graduate or professional degrees. The degree programs sought may explain the difference between acceptance rates as graduate/professional programs are often more competitive than bachelor degree programs. Overall, the NSC-confirmed enrollment rate from 2014-2020 was 89%, with a standard deviation of 1.9%. We consider this threshold met based on these data because the rate is higher than the 80% threshold. The findings replicate closely the data presented in the Mid-Cycle report. Student next-step academic success is further discussed in [1.D.2](#) and [1.D.3](#).

SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY OBJECTIVE C

Theme	Objective	Indicator	Threshold	Mission Fulfillment
COMMUNITY	Students will engage with the community and become productive members of society	Graduates seeking jobs will be employed as measured with graduation data and verified by the Utah Department of Workforce Services	90% of students who want to pursue work after graduation will be successful in doing so	Meets Expectations
		Graduates seeking additional education will be enrolled as measured with graduation data and verified by the National Student Clearinghouse	80% of students who want to pursue additional education after graduation will be successful in doing so	Meets Expectations

IIID: COMMUNITY *Objective D*. FACULTY WILL CONTRIBUTE TO THEIR PROFESSIONS

FACULTY SERVE PROFESSIONS Indicator 1: Number of faculty publications/citations, presentations.

FACULTY SERVE PROFESSIONS Rationale for Indicator 1: WSU faculty are productive scholars and active performers who engage in scholarly or artist work that benefits their professional community.

FACULTY SERVE PROFESSIONS Threshold for Indicator 1: The number of faculty publications and citations will trend upward over a five-year rolling average.

FACULTY SERVE PROFESSIONS Rationale for Threshold Indicator 1: The indicator is new to this accreditation cycle, and the threshold is aspirational. Faculty continuing to engage in scholarship is an asset to their disciplines, the institution, and students.

FACULTY SERVE PROFESSIONS Analysis of Indicator 1: To assess this threshold, we encouraged faculty members to create Google Scholar pages and post them to the web. Both publication and citation data are available from these pages, and the Google Scholar algorithm provides a consistent standard over time and across disciplines to identify scholarly productivity and impact. Over the past decade, the Provost's Office also incentivized faculty to create Google Scholars pages in 2011, 2015, and 2019, offering a small stipend to encourage participation. Of those who created Google Scholar pages, we included in the analysis only those data from individuals with a full-time faculty appointment in a WSU department.

We compiled citation and publication data for each year from 2012 and 2020⁸⁵ from 250 faculty members representing each college. We estimate that the 250 faculty participants are perhaps 40% of the full-time faculty. However, it is only an estimate as we did not remove any faculty's data even if they left or retired from the university (to retain their contribution as part of the analysis). From 2012 to 2020, these faculty

⁸⁵ Publications from early 2021 were included in 2020, reflecting the potential that the pandemic slowed the publication process.

averaged 268 publications and 14,097 citations per year, or 1.07 publications and 56.4 citations per faculty per year.

Five-year rolling averages were computed to assess the threshold, which were transformed into Z-scores and graphed over time with the associated R^2 value (see Graph IIID). The Z-score transformed rolling averages show a positive linear trend over time for the citation data. However, the trend line was negative, although not significantly so, for publications. Perhaps the replacement of well-published senior faculty by younger faculty who are just beginning their scholarly activity can account for the linear growth of citations but the flat rate of publications. The data only **partially meets expectations** (scored as 0.5) because of the upward trend for citations but the flat trend for publications.

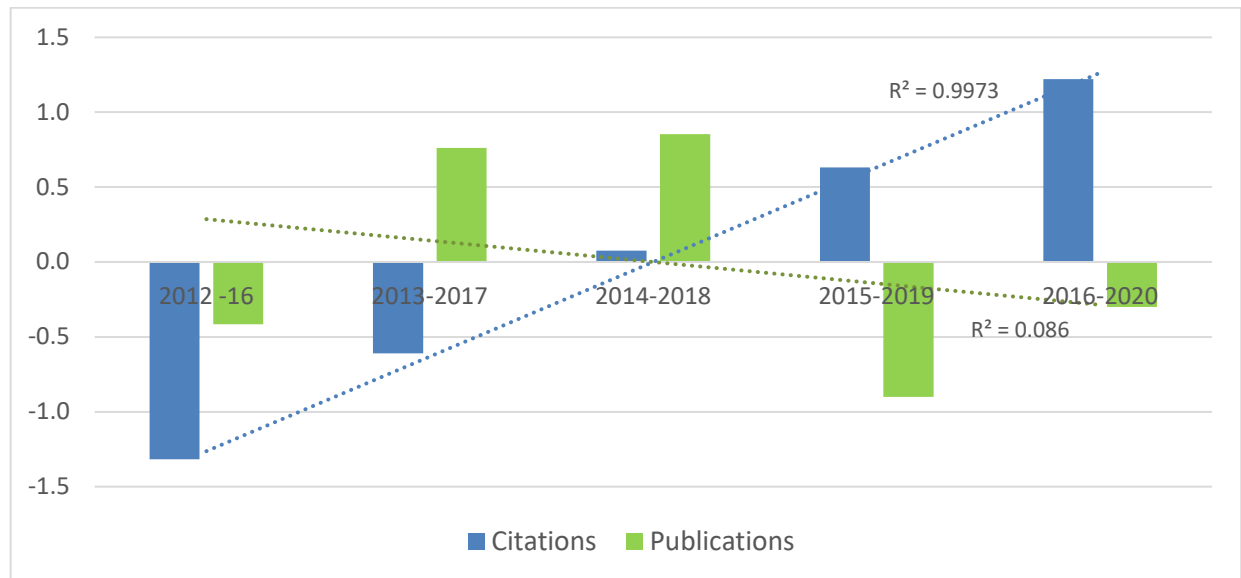


Figure IIID: Z scores for 5-year rolling averages of citations and publications of faculty (M Citations = 14,517.36, sd = 1108.42; M Publications = 271.40, sd = 6.69). Note: The linear regression is presented with the associated R^2 value.

SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY OBJECTIVE D

Theme	Objective	Indicator	Threshold	Mission Fulfillment
COMMUNITY	Faculty will contribute to their professions	Number of faculty publications/citations, presentations	The number of faculty publications and citations will trend upward over a five-year rolling average	Partially Meets Expectations

III.E: COMMUNITY Objective E. FACULTY, STAFF, AND STUDENTS WILL SUPPORT THE COMMUNITY THROUGH SERVICE AND OUTREACH EFFORTS

Weber State University is committed to promoting the community service of its students, faculty, and staff. The value of community service is embedded in the WSU mission statement, highlighting *public service and community-based learning* as a basis for Weber State functioning as an educational, cultural, and economic leader. The *Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching* recognized WSU's commitment to community service and community-based learning with the [Community Engaged](#)

[Institution](#) classification. The two indicators for this objective address the growth in the service and community-based learning components of the mission statement.

FACULTY, STAFF, AND STUDENTS SERVE IN THE COMMUNITY Indicator 1: Faculty, staff, and students support the community through service and outreach efforts, often in conjunction with community partners.

FACULTY, STAFF, AND STUDENTS SERVE IN THE COMMUNITY Rationale for Indicator 1: Community service is incorporated in the teaching and service mission of the university to the community. The number of community partnerships gives a sense of the scope of the student opportunities in the community. These partnership agreements are arranged by the Center for Community Engaged Learning ([CCEL](#)). When community organizations register as partners, they can access various resources and successfully recruit volunteers and other services (see CCEL's [partnership page](#)). Similarly, the volunteers know that the organization offers a safe environment to volunteer with a mission and aims aligned with CCEL standards.

FACULTY, STAFF, AND STUDENTS SERVE IN THE COMMUNITY Threshold for Indicator 1: The number of formal community partnerships will continue to grow at a rate at least equal to local population growth

FACULTY, STAFF, AND STUDENTS SERVE IN THE COMMUNITY Rationale for Threshold Indicator 1: The threshold is new and reflects the institutional commitment to growing opportunities for community service with community partners who are equally committed to service.

FACULTY, STAFF, AND STUDENTS SERVE IN THE COMMUNITY Analysis of Indicator 1: The number of partnerships AY2012 was 97, rising to 129 in AY 2014 and remaining fairly high through AY 2016. The number of partnerships returned to initial levels in AY 2018 (103) and AY 2019 (91). The partnership numbers from AY2020 and 2021 were removed as pandemic influenced. There is a negative year-over-year change of -10%. However, since AY 2014, CCEL differentiated levels of partnerships to reflect the depth of engagement and cooperation organizations have with the university.

- The entry-level partnership (**Club Partners**) is designed for community partners to test the waters of working WSU student volunteers. Partners have opportunities to inform WSU students of service and event opportunities at their organization and an invitation to events to recruit trained volunteers or work-study students, among of kinds of involvements with the university.
- The next level partnership (**Wildcat Partners**) reflects a greater engagement between the community partner and the university. The additional services include more opportunities to recruit trained student volunteers and work-study students, access to Americ-Corps volunteers, and access to more volunteer resources.
- The most engaged and meaningful collaboration between the institution and community partners (**Purple Pride Partners**) includes all the other opportunities and a potential position for Ameri-Corps students in the organization, involvement in community service symposium work with service-learning leadership.

The year-over-year decrease in the overall number of partnerships was limited to Club-level partners, which showed a summed change of -71.95% from AY2016 - AY2020 (Figure IIIE1). Some of the decrease was due to partners who are no longer Club-level becoming more engaged by signing on as Wildcat- or Purple Pride-level partners. Notably, the two more engaged partnerships each showed growth, with Wildcat Partners having an 8.77% year-over-year summed increase from AY 2016-AY 2020 and Purple Pride Partners having a 5.00% increase. Together the year-over-year summed growth for the two more engaged levels of partners combined was 9.89%. This rate exceeds the census-based population

growth in the catchment area for 2016-2020 of 8.31%. We treat the threshold **as substantially met** because more engaged partnerships exceeded census growth, but there was a decrease in the less engaged partnerships. These findings do not replicate Mid-Cycle data, which showed the overall growth of partnerships exceeding the census.

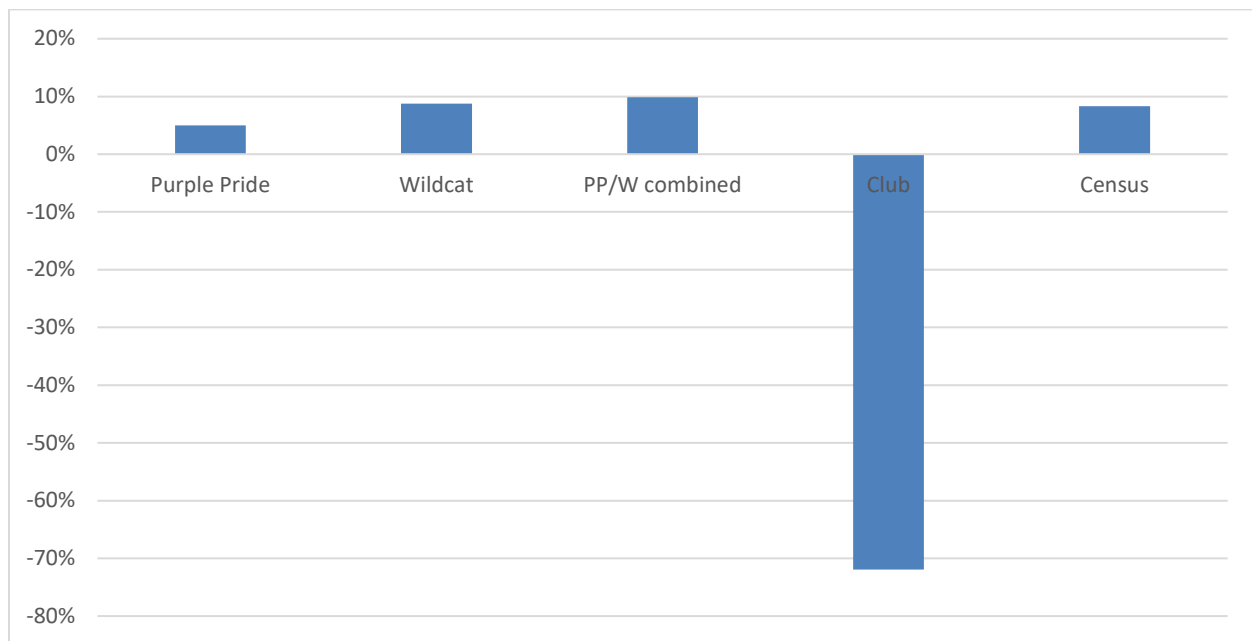


Figure IIIE1: Summed Year-Over-Year Percent Change in Census Estimates of the Population from AY 2016 to AY 2020) in the Catchment Area and the Levels of Community Partners, including the Combined Purple Pride and Wildcat (PP/W) level.

FACULTY, STAFF, AND STUDENTS SERVE IN THE COMMUNITY Indicator 2: The number of hours contributed annually in community service by students.

FACULTY, STAFF, AND STUDENTS SERVE IN THE COMMUNITY Rationale for Indicator 2: The ethic of service to the community is deeply entrenched in the university, and the number of hours contributed each year indicates the magnitude of the effort.

FACULTY, STAFF, AND STUDENTS SERVE IN THE COMMUNITY Threshold for Indicator 2: The number of hours of service contributed by students will continue to average eight or more hours per year.

FACULTY, STAFF, AND STUDENTS SERVE IN THE COMMUNITY Rationale for Threshold Indicator 2: The threshold is new to this cycle and reflects institutional recognition of the value of community service as part of students' educational experience.

FACULTY, STAFF, AND STUDENTS SERVE IN THE COMMUNITY Analysis of Indicator 2: Students engaged in community service typically electronically report their time on-site, so the total number of students contributing hours to community service and the total number of hours they contribute can be monitored and analyzed.

To assess the threshold for the indicator, we examined the hours of community service produced per contributing student. Table IIIE2 presents data for each of the past ten years and the number of contributing students. The overall mean hours of community service per community-engaged WSU student was 24.96 hours for the pre-pandemic years. The average contributed time **meets expectations** by

being above eight hours. However, the number of contributing students continues to decline. This replicates the data reported in the Mid-Cycle.

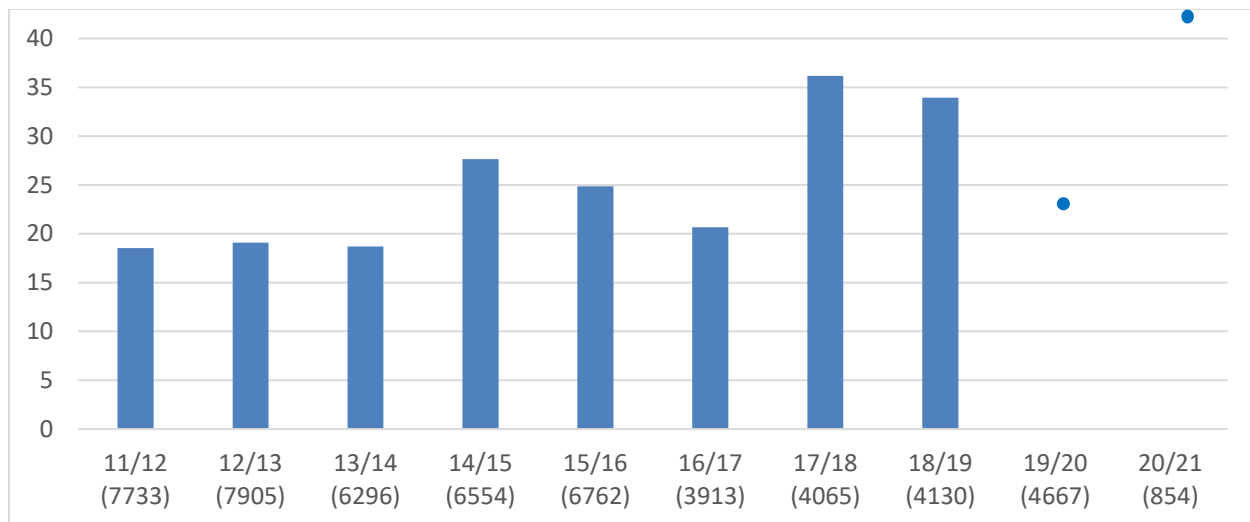


Table IIIE2: Average hours of community service per contributing student (number of students in brackets) by academic year ($M = 24.96$), with the pandemic years of 19/20 and 20/21 noted as such

SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY OBJECTIVE E

Theme	Objective	Indicator	Threshold	Mission Fulfillment
COMMUNITY	Faculty, staff, and students will support the community through service and outreach efforts	The number of formal community partnerships	The number of formal community partnerships will continue to grow at a rate at least equal to local population growth	Substantially Meets Expectations
		The number of hours contributed annually in community service by students	The number of hours of service contributed by students will continue to average eight or more hours per year	Meets Expectations

IIIF: COMMUNITY Objective F. WEBER STATE UNIVERSITY CONTRIBUTES TO THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE REGION

Weber State University is committed to fulfilling its mission as an “*economic leader for the region*.” The indicators address two critical ways the institution realizes its objective: Providing classes and services relevant to regional economic development and training students with needed skills.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT Indicator 1: WSU facilitates economic development in the region through professional development and technical support.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT Rationale for Indicator 1: The University is a reservoir of expert business and technological knowledge and problem-solving skills that are offered to the community directly through non-degree, non-credit classes and Continuing Education opportunities.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT *Threshold 1 for Indicator 1*: Headcount participation in non-credit offerings will equal approximately 10% of the institutional headcount.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT *Rationale for Threshold 1 Indicator 1*: The threshold was used previously to assess this objective and indicator and indicates that institutional resources are available to the community.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT *Analysis of Threshold 1 Indicator 1*: To assess this threshold, we examined the number of non-credit students enrolled in classes related to a) auto emission/testing, b) education, c) Hill Air Force Base training, d) Police Academy, e) professional development, f) conferences, and g) health professions. Over the past seven years, enrollments in these non-credit classes have fluctuated (Figure IIIF1a). The enrollments averaged 10.77% of the total WSU headcount (including current enrollments of high school students, undergraduate students, and graduate students), which **meets** expectations and replicates the data in the Mid-Cycle. See [1.B.4](#) for further discussion of the institution's commitment to regional economic development.

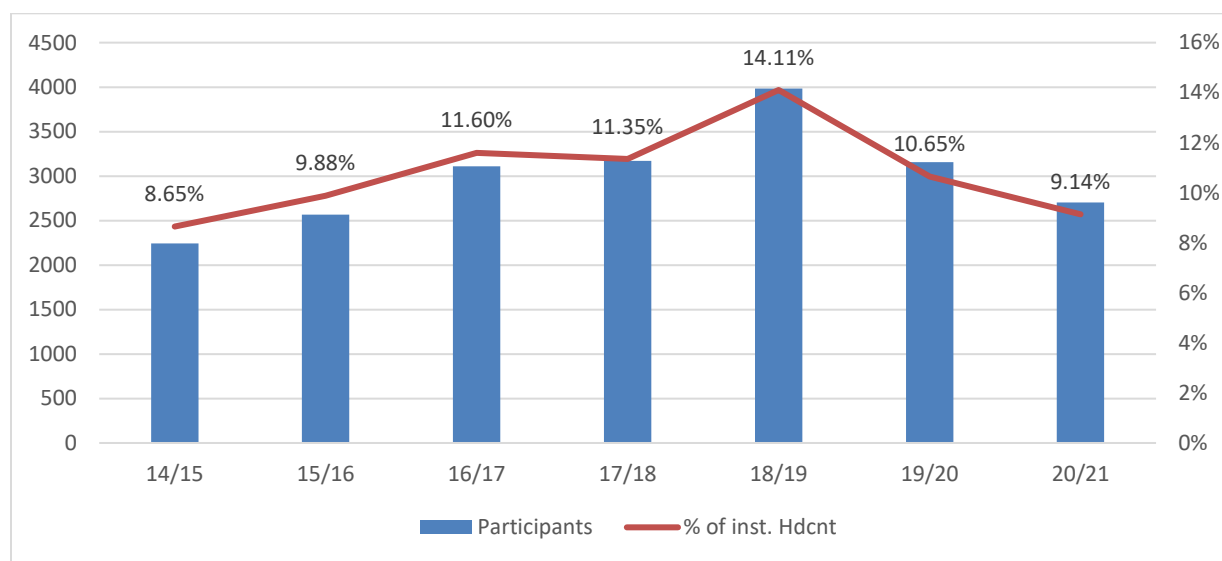


Figure IIIF1a: Enrollment in non-credit professional development courses and its percentage of institutional headcount.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT *Threshold 2 for Indicator 1*: Five-year moving average of businesses assisted by the [Small Business Development Center](#) (SBDC)⁸⁶ will show a positive trend.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT *Rationale for Threshold 2 Indicator 1*: The threshold was used previously to assess this objective and indicator. The threshold affirms the institution's commitment to supporting small businesses in the local area.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT *Analysis of Threshold 2 Indicator 1*: Records of the clients served by the SBDC date back to AY 2007. The yearly totals were first summed, and then five-year moving averages were computed and graphed (Figure IIIF1b) for all years except for 2019-20 and 2020-21, which are graphed separately (without moving averages). Leadership changes resulted in the SBDC having severely restricted capacity from December to April in AY 2020. The pandemic resulted in operating

⁸⁶ The center is funded and maintained by WSU's Department of Online and Continuing Education and functions as an autonomous office that is part of the statewide network of university-affiliated SBDCs.

virtually for three months of AY 2020 and throughout AY 2021⁸⁷. These data points were also removed from the trend analysis that was used to test the threshold. The trend was positive, **meeting expectations** and replicating data presented in the Mid-Cycle. See [1.B.4](#) for further discussion of the SBDC and the institution's commitment to regional economic development.

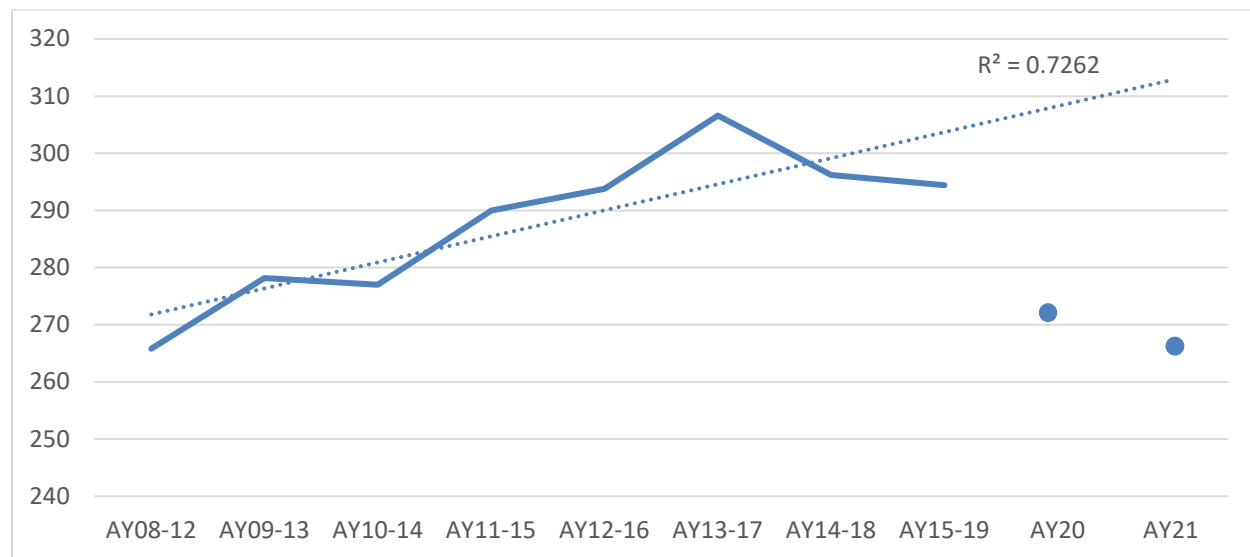


Figure IIIF1b: Five-year rolling average by year of the number of clients seeking services from the SBDC 2012-1019, with pandemic year.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT Indicator 2: WSU contributes to economic development by providing graduates prepared to fill state identified, high-need occupations.

Rationale for Indicator 2: As part of its responsibility to the community and its economic development, the institution is responsible for offering education programs for students to complete and fill jobs needed in the community.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT Threshold for Indicator 2: A significant percentage of graduates will be in majors that prepare students to fill state-identified⁸⁸ high-need occupations.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT Rationale for Threshold Indicator 2: The threshold was used previously to assess this objective and indicator. The threshold affirms the institutional resources are directed to the training of students in high-need occupations.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT Analysis of Threshold 2 Indicator 2: The CIP codes of graduates whose majors align with state-designated high need occupations were identified for the past six years. The CIP Codes were defined by the Office of the Commissioner using the Utah Department of Work Force Services as being closely related to 4 and 5 Star jobs for Utah. The percentage of graduates identified with

⁸⁷ The leadership change also resulted in a reorganization in the resources and philosophy of the center. Clients are directed to the extensive and shared online resources offered by the network of SBDCs, minimizing the need for large center-sponsored classes, lowering client counts. However, this resulted greater resources being made available for one-on-one consulting opportunities, which has grown substantially over the past year.

⁸⁸ Institutional Research identified each of the degree [programs](#) across the university identified by the Office of the Commissioner as high-need

targeted CIP codes was above 50% each year, and the five-year average was 63.8%, which **meets** expectations (see Figure IIIF2).

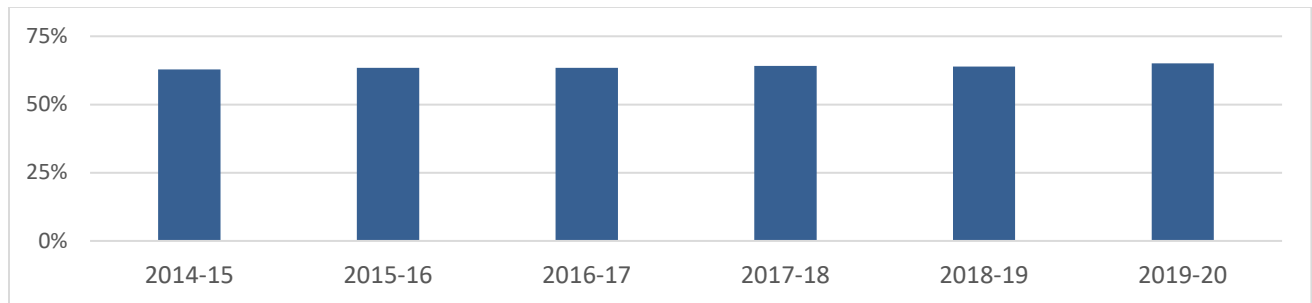


Figure IIIF2: Percentage of graduates from programs with state-designated high need occupations CIP codes.

SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY OBJECTIVE F: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Theme	Objective	Indicator	Threshold	Mission Fulfillment
COMMUNITY	Weber State will contribute to the economic development of the region	WSU facilitates economic development in the region through professional development and technical support	Headcount participation in noncredit offerings will equal approximately 10% of institutional headcount	Meets Expectations
			Five-year moving average of businesses assisted by the Small Business Development Center will show a positive trend	Meets Expectations
		WSU contributes to economic development by providing graduates prepared to fill state identified, high-need occupations	A significant percentage of graduates will be in majors that prepare students to fill state identified high-need occupations	Meets Expectations

APPENDIX 2: STANDARD 2 CHECKLIST

ELEMENT	SPECIFIC ASSOCIATED STANDARD	REQUIRED ITEM (If present, note in check box)	LINKS OR NOTES, PAGES, COMMENTS, OR CONCERNS
GOVERNANCE	2.A.1 Board	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Institutional governance policies & procedures	WSU Policies & Procedures (PPM)
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> System governance policies/procedures (if applicable)	Utah Code – Title 53b: State System of Higher Education
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Multiple board governing policies/procedures	USHE Policies Page
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Board’s calendar for reviewing institutional and board policies/procedures	Yearly August Trustee’s retreat schedule and minutes .
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> By-laws and Articles of Incorporation referencing governance structure	Board of Higher Education Bylaws (R120)
	2.A.2 Leadership	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Leadership organizational chart	Office of the President
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Curriculum vitae of executive leadership	Link to Vitae
	2.A.3 CEO/President	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Curriculum vitae of President/CEO	Brad Mortensen, CV
	2.A.4 Decision-making	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Institutional governance policies & procedures (see 2.A.1)	Policy on Policies PPM 1-20
			Policy on Administrative Bodies PPM 1-9 Comprehensive & Integrated Planning and Budgeting
ACADEMIC FREEDOM	2.B.1 and 2.B.2 Academic Freedom	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Academic freedom policies and procedures	Academic Freedom, Rights, Responsibilities, and Due Process
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES	2.C.1 Transfer of credit	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transfer of credit policies/procedures	Transferring Courses & Credits Transfer Guide
	2.C.2 Students’ rights, responsibilities	Documentation of students’ rights and responsibilities policies and procedures, which include: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Academic honesty <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Appeals, grievances <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accommodations for persons with disabilities	Student Code PPM 6-22 Student Petition, Complaints, & Grievances website Disability Services • Services & Accommodations

	2.C.3 Admissions; placement; academic standing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policies and procedures for recruiting, admitting, and placing students	Placement Page Admissions Policies Enrollment Services and Information
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policies/procedures related to continuation and termination from educational programs including appeal process and readmission policies/procedures	Academic Appeals Student Code PPM 6-22
	2.C.4 Student records	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policies/procedures regarding secure retention of student records, i.e., back-up, confidentiality, release, protection from cybersecurity issues or other emergencies	FERPA Emergency Backup - Richfield Confidentiality Blocks Information Security and Standards Protecting Sensitive Information

Institutional Integrity	2.D.1 Truthful representation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policies/procedures for reviewing published materials (print or websites) that assures institutional integrity	Public Relations & Publications Website Best Practices
	2.D.2 Ethics and complaints	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policies/procedures for reviewing internal and external complaints and grievances	Student complaint website Staff Employee Grievances Reporting Ethical Concerns Ethics Reporting
	2.D.3 Conflicts of Interest	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policies/procedures prohibiting conflict of interests among employees and board members	Employee Employee Relations Board of Trustees

Financial Resources	2.E.1 Audits, oversight	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policies/procedures that articulate the oversight and management of financial resources	University Policy 5-1 Business Affairs
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Latest external financial audit including management letter	2020 Annual Financial Report (letter on pages 8, 9)
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cash flow balance sheets	2020 Annual Financial Report (pages 26, 27)

	2.E.2 Planning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Planning/procedures for planning and monitoring of operating and capital budgets, reserves, investments, fundraising, cash management, debt management, transfers and borrowing between funds	Reserve Fund Gifts from Private Resources Investment of Public Funds
	2.E.3 Management	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Description of internal financial controls	Internal Audit
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Board approved financial policies, state financial policies, or system financial policies	Board of Trustees Audit Committee

Human Resources	2.F.1 Employee information	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Human resource policies/procedures	Personnel Policies
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policies/procedures related to teaching, scholarship, service, and artistic creation	Faculty Rights & Responsibilities Tenure Documents (go to T)
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policies/procedures for apprising employees of working conditions, rights and responsibilities, evaluation, retention, promotion, and termination	Appointment, Promotion, and Dismissal of Faculty
	2.F.2 Professional development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Employee professional development policies/procedures	Education and Training of Personnel
	2.F.3 Sufficiency	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Documentation about engagement and responsibilities specified for faculty and staff, as appropriate	Faculty Responsibilities to Self and Profession Faculty Responsibilities to Students Faculty Responsibilities to Institution Faculty Responsibilities to the Community Respectful Work Conditions Standards of Conduct

		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Personnel hiring policy/procedures	Hiring of Salaried Personnel
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Academic organizational chart	Academic Affairs Org Chart
	2.F.4 Evaluation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Administrator/staff/faculty evaluation policies/procedures	Evaluation of Personnel Evaluation of Faculty Members Performance Review Enhancement Program (PREP) Evaluation of non-exempt staff


Student Support Resources	2.G.1 Effective learning and support environment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Listing of program and services supporting student learning needs	Learning Support – Student Affairs Focused Support – Student Affairs Wellness – Student Affairs
	2.G.2 Publication of information	Catalog (and/or other publications) that provide information regarding: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Institutional mission <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Admission requirements <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grading policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information on academic programs and courses, including degree and program completion requirements, expected learning outcomes, required course sequences, and projected timelines to completion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Names, titles, degrees held, and conferring institutions for administrators and full-time faculty <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rules and regulations for conduct, rights, and responsibilities <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tuition, fees, and other program costs <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Refund policies and procedures for student who withdraw from enrollment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Opportunities and requirements for financial aid <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The academic calendar (See 2.C.2)	Mission Admission requirements & procedures Grading Policies Majors Graduation Maps (timelines) Learning outcomes (Dept Results) General Education Outcomes Administration and Faculty Student Code AY21 Tuition and Fees Table Costs and Deadlines Refund Calculation Financial Aid Current Academic Calendar Multi-year Calendars

	2.G.3 Licensure; employment requirements	<p>Samples of publications and other written materials that describe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☑ Accurate information on national and/or state legal eligibility requirements for licensure or entry into an occupation or profession for which education and training are offered. ☑ Descriptions of unique requirements for employment and advancement in the occupation or profession shall be included in such materials. 	Dental Hygiene Teacher Education Secondary Education Emergency Healthcare Social Work
	2.G.4 Financial Aid	☑ Published financial aid policies/procedures including information about categories of financial assistance. (Please note specific pages or areas)	Website - Financial Aid Catalog – Financial Aid
		☑ Information to students regarding repayment obligations	Catalog - Bursar Website - Bursar
		☑ Policies/procedures for monitoring student loan programs	<p>The institution closely monitors student loan programs and default rates</p> Cohort Default Rate History List
	2.G.6 Advising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☑ Description of advising program, staffing, and advising publications. ☑ Systematic evaluation of advising ☑ Professional development policies/procedures for advisors 	Catalog - Advising Website - Advising Concurrent Enrollment Advising Systematic Evaluation
	2.G.7 Identify verification (distance ed)	☑ Policies/procedures for ensuring identity verification for students enrolling in distance education courses	Identification for Testing

Library and Information Resources	2.H.1 Library and information resources	☑ Procedures for assessing adequacy of library collections	Collection Management Policy
		☑ Library planning committee and procedures for planning and collection development	Library Student Advisory Comm.

Physical and Technology Infrastructure			Journal Collection Policy
			Reference Collection Policy
		☒ Library instruction plan; policies/procedures related to the use of library and information resources	Information Literacy Requirement Library Instruction Program
		☒ Library staffing information; policies/procedures that explains the faculty/library partnership for assuring library and information resources are integrated into the learning process.	Staffing
	2.I.1	Facilities master plan, including ☒ Equipment replacement policies/procedures ☒ Procedures for assessing sufficiency of physical facilities	Master Plan
		☒ Policies and procedures for ensuring accessible, safe, and secure facilities	Annual Security/Fire Report and Safety Plan Environmental Health and Safety Safety, Response, and Reporting Policy (Clery)
		☒ Policies/procedures for the use, storage, and disposal of hazardous waste	Hazardous Materials
		☒ Technology master plan and planning processes	IT Planning Processes
		☒ Technology/equipment update and replacement plan	Computer Replacement Sample College Technology Replacement Plan

APPENDIX 3: NWCCU RESPONSE TO STANDARD 2

Standard 2: Governance, Resources, and Capacity <div>  <p><i>The institution articulates its commitment to a structure of governance that is inclusive in its planning and decision-making. Through its planning, operational activities, and allocation of resources, the institution demonstrates a commitment to student learning and achievement in an environment respectful of meaningful discourse.</i></p> </div>		
Criteria for Review (1)	Evidence (2)	Team Verification (3)
2.A.1 The institution demonstrates an effective governance structure, with a board(s) or other governing body(ies) composed predominantly of members with no contractual, employment relationship, or personal financial interest with the institution. Such members shall also possess clearly defined authority, roles, and responsibilities. Institutions that are part of a complex system with multiple boards, a centralized board, or related entities shall have, with respect to such boards, written and clearly defined contractual authority, roles, and responsibilities for all entities. In addition, authority and responsibility between the system and the institution is clearly delineated in a written contract, described on its website and in its public documents, and provides the NWCCU accredited institution with sufficient autonomy to fulfill its mission.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Institutional governance policies and procedures <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> System governance policies and procedures <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Multiple board governing policies and procedures (if applicable) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Board's calendar for reviewing institutional and board policies and procedures <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation referencing governance structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Compliant <input type="checkbox"/> Needs improvement <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Onsite Evaluation Required within the EIE year seven visit
RATIONALE: This is our team's rationale for rating this institution as we did. Documentation provided by the institution, including Utah Code, Utah Board of Higher Education policies, and WSU Board of Trustees policies and materials, satisfied the standard. Ideally, the institution would publish a single document explains and clarifies the relationship between the WSU Board of Trustees and the Utah Board of Higher		
2.A.2 The institution has an effective system of leadership, staffed by qualified administrators, with appropriate levels of authority, responsibility, and accountability who are charged with planning, organizing, and managing the institution and assessing its achievements and effectiveness.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Leadership organizational chart <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Curriculum vitae of executive leadership	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Compliant <input type="checkbox"/> Needs improvement <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Onsite Evaluation Required within the EIE year seven visit
RATIONALE: This is our team's rationale for rating this institution as we did. The institution has a clear and conventional organizational structure. CVs reflected appropriate levels of experience amongst executive leadership. Suggestion: the institution's governance chart indicates that the President reports to the Weber State Board of Trustees. It would be helpful to include the system board (UBHE) in the organizational governance chart and to reflect the President's direct reporting relationship to it		
2.A.3 The institution employs an appropriately qualified chief executive officer with full-time responsibility to the institution. The chief executive may serve as an <i>ex officio</i> member of the governing board(s) but may not serve as its chair.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Curriculum vitae of President/CEO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Compliant <input type="checkbox"/> Needs improvement <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Onsite Evaluation Required within the EIE year seven visit
RATIONALE: This is our team's rationale for rating this institution as we did. WSU President Brad Mortensen's CV indicates that he is an appropriately qualified CEO. The institution attests that his service fulfills other elements of this standard.		

<p>2.A.4 The institution's decision-making structures and processes, which are documented and publicly available, must include provisions for the consideration of the views of faculty, staff, administrators, and students on matters in which each has a direct and reasonable interest.</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Institutional governance policies & procedures (see 2.A.1)</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Compliant <input type="checkbox"/> Needs improvement <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Onsite Evaluation Required within the EIE year seven visit</p>
<p>RATIONALE: This is our team's rationale for rating this institution as we did.</p> <p>The institution provided extensive, public documentation of its decision-making structures and processes, including Utah Code, UBHE Policy, and WSU's Policy and Procedure Manual PPM). The PPM details requirements for faculty, staff, administrator, and student involvement in decision. A flow chart, also supplied, was also useful in showing how institutional policies require staff, faculty, students, and alumni to be involved in policy development.</p>		
<p>2.B.1 Within the context of its mission and values, the institution adheres to the principles of academic freedom and independence that protect its constituencies from inappropriate internal and external influences, pressures, and harassment.</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Academic freedom policies and procedures</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Compliant <input type="checkbox"/> Needs improvement <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Onsite Evaluation Required within the EIE year seven visit</p>
<p>RATIONALE: This is our team's rationale for rating this institution as we did.</p> <p>UBHE and WSU policies articulate the institution's strong commitment to protecting academic freedom. We particularly appreciated that WSU policies protect student freedoms, as well as faculty freedoms, in the context of their responsibilities.</p>		
<p>2.B.2 Within the context of its mission and values, the institution defines and actively promotes an environment that supports independent thought in the pursuit and dissemination of knowledge. It affirms the freedom of faculty, staff, administrators, and students to share their scholarship and reasoned conclusions with others. While the institution and individuals within the institution may hold to a particular personal, social, or religious philosophy, its constituencies are intellectually free to test and examine all knowledge and theories, thought, reason, and perspectives of truth. Individuals within the institution allow others the freedom to do the same.</p>		<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Compliant <input type="checkbox"/> Needs improvement <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Onsite Evaluation Required within the EIE year seven visit</p>
<p>RATIONALE: This is our team's rationale for rating this institution as we did.</p> <p>The institution meets this standard primarily through reference to WSU policies endorsing the principle of academic freedom and establishing this right for its entire academic community (similar to 2.B.1). In the context of this particular standard, we would have appreciated learning more about how, in practice, the university "actively promotes" an environment that supports independent thought.</p>		
<p>2.C.1 The institution's transfer-of-credit policy maintains the integrity of its programs and facilitates the efficient mobility of students desirous of the completion of their educational credits, credentials, or degrees in furtherance of their academic goals.</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transfer of credit policies procedures</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Compliant <input type="checkbox"/> Needs improvement <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Onsite Evaluation Required within the EIE year seven visit</p>
<p>RATIONALE: This is our team's rationale for rating this institution as we did.</p> <p>Together, UBHE and WSU policies provide a very strong assurance of credit transferability for students, especially between Utah public institutions, while maintaining the integrity of programs. The simplicity and clarity of WSU's transfer policies, abetted by WSU's online transfer navigation tool for students, seem likely to result in comparatively seamless transfer experiences for most WSU students.</p>		

<p>2.C.2 The institution's policies and procedures related to student rights and responsibilities should include, but not be limited to, provisions related to academic honesty, conduct, appeals, grievances, and accommodations for persons with disabilities.</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Documentation of students' rights and responsibilities policies and procedures, which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Academic honesty <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Appeals, grievances <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accommodations for persons with disabilities <p>(Student handbook or Catalog; links to webpages – please note specific pages or areas)</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Compliant</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Needs improvement</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Additional Onsite Evaluation Required within the EIE year seven visit</p>
<p>RATIONALE: This is our team's rationale for rating this institution as we did.</p> <p>WSU's Student Code of Conduct, contained within its Policies and Procedures Manual, provides an extensive description of student rights and responsibilities, including provisions related to each element required by the standard. The Code establishes the grievance process, which is also clearly explained on multiple websites. We found WSU's clear and multi-layered grievance process especially commendable.</p>		
<p>2.C.3 The institution's academic and administrative policies and procedures should include admission and placement policies that guide the enrollment of students in courses and programs through an evaluation of prerequisite knowledge, skills, and abilities to ensure a reasonable probability of student success at a level commensurate with the institution's expectations. Such policies should also include a policy regarding continuation in and termination from its educational programs, including its appeal and re-admission policy.</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policies and procedures for recruiting, admitting, and placing students (If Catalog, please note specific pages.)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policies/procedures related to continuation and termination from educational programs including appeal process and readmission policies/procedures (If Catalog, please note specific pages.)</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Compliant</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Needs improvement</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Additional Onsite Evaluation Required within the EIE year seven visit</p>
<p>RATIONALE: This is our team's rationale for rating this institution as we did.</p> <p>WSU's admission standards, including special requirements for certain programs, are clearly described in the university catalog. The institution's website describes its approach to course placement (math and English) and provides user-friendly tools to assist students in understanding this process. The Policy and Procedures Manual and catalog explain policies associated with continuation, termination, appeals, re-admission, and academic disqualification.</p>		
<p>2.C.4 The institution's policies and procedures regarding the secure retention of student records must include provisions related to confidentiality, release, and the reliable backup and retrievability of such records.</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policies/procedures regarding secure retention of student records, i.e., back-up, confidentiality, release, protection from cybersecurity issues or other emergencies</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Compliant</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Needs improvement</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Additional Onsite Evaluation Required within the EIE year seven visit</p>
<p>RATIONALE: This is our team's rationale for rating this institution as we did.</p> <p>The institution provided policies and procedures that appropriately address retention, confidentiality, and release of student records. Additional policies also provide evidence that the institution has taken care to prepare for possible records disruption, whether the result of natural or man-made causes. We would recommend further consideration of whether a 14-day system backup period is sufficient, given current and anticipated security risks.</p>		
<p>2.D.1 The institution represents itself clearly, accurately, and consistently through its announcements, statements, and publications. It communicates its academic intentions, programs, and services to students and to the public and demonstrates that its academic programs can be completed in a timely fashion. It regularly reviews its publications to ensure accuracy and integrity in all representations about its mission, programs, and services.</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policies/procedures/ for reviewing published materials (print or websites) that assures institutional integrity</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Compliant</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Needs improvement</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Additional Onsite Evaluation Required within the EIE year seven visit</p>
<p>RATIONALE: This is our team's rationale for rating this institution as we did.</p> <p>The institution provided evidence of protocols and procedures to ensure that public communications, including the website and catalog, are accurate and professional. We noted, however, that the institution's policies and procedures (PPM 7-1 to 7-11) has not been recently updated and does not reflect a modern communications enterprise. Moreover, while Weber State University surely has a robust communications plan for keeping its campus and community constituencies engaged and informed, this was not clear from the documentation that it provided. We would have liked to know how WSU is using communications to inform the campus community and other stakeholders.</p>		

<p>2.D.2 The institution advocates, subscribes to, and exemplifies high ethical standards in its management and operations, including in its dealings with the public, NWCCU, and external organizations, including the fair and equitable treatment of students, faculty, administrators, staff, and other stakeholders and constituencies. The institution ensures that complaints and grievances are addressed in a fair, equitable, and timely manner.</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policies/procedures for reviewing internal and external complaints and grievances</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Compliant <input type="checkbox"/> Needs improvement <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Onsite Evaluation Required within the EIE year seven visit</p>
<p>RATIONALE: This is our team's rationale for rating this institution as we did.</p> <p>The institution cited varied, numerous, and relevant examples of its commitment to maintaining high ethical standards. Its report specifically addresses its relationship with accreditors, the local community, and internal stakeholders. Appropriately, it refers back to WSU policies that set a high expectation for ethical behavior and provide multiple avenues for grievances. We were impressed by WSU's use of an independently-managed "Red Flag Reporting" system for receiving and resolving complaints, and that this tool was prominent within the WSU website.</p>		
<p>2.D.3 The institution adheres to clearly defined policies that prohibit conflicts of interest on the part of members of the governing board(s), administration, faculty, and staff.</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policies/procedures prohibiting conflict of interests among employees and board members</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Compliant <input type="checkbox"/> Needs improvement <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Onsite Evaluation Required within the EIE year seven visit</p>
<p>RATIONALE: This is our team's rationale for rating this institution as we did.</p> <p>The institution provided documentation for meeting the standard, including Utah Code and several WSU policies.</p>		
<p>2.E.1 The institution utilizes relevant audit processes and regular reporting to demonstrate financial stability, including sufficient cash flow and reserves to achieve and fulfill its mission.</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policies/procedures that articulate the oversight and management of financial resources <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Latest external financial audit including management letter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cash flow balance sheets <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audited financial statements <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tuition and fees, educational, and auxiliary revenue for undergraduate and graduate enrollments <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Significant contracts/grants <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Endowment and giving reports <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Investment revenue</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Compliant <input type="checkbox"/> Needs improvement <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Onsite Evaluation Required within the EIE year seven visit</p>
<p>RATIONALE: This is our team's rationale for rating this institution as we did.</p> <p>According to its submission, the institution engages in thorough and appropriate presentation of financial information to its Board of Trustees and its Business subcommittee. Moreover, it receives annual, independent financial audits, as well as internal audits, that must be shared, by policy, with the Audits Committee of the Board. WSU's Annual Report (provided in conjunction with the institution's response to 2.E.2) contained the additional evidence of meeting this standard, including for the sufficiency of cash flows and reserves.</p>		
<p>2.E.2 Financial planning includes meaningful opportunities for participation by stakeholders and ensures appropriate available funds, realistic development of financial resources, and comprehensive risk management to ensure short term financial health and long-term financial stability and sustainability.</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policies / procedures for planning and monitoring of operating and capital budgets, reserves, investments, fundraising, cash management, debt management, transfers and borrowing between funds</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Compliant <input type="checkbox"/> Needs improvement <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Onsite Evaluation Required within the EIE year seven visit</p>
<p>RATIONALE: This is our team's rationale for rating this institution as we did.</p> <p>In its submission, the institution describes the detailed way in which it engages its Board of Trustees and state officials in financial oversight and planning. Moreover, it provided compelling illustrations of its success at placing the institution on a sound financial footing, both for the short and long-term. Reserve balances, cash flows, financial ratios, stable state appropriations, and conservative approaches to borrowing establish that the institution appear to be fiscally stable. We note, however, that the institution did not supply evidence documenting widespread engagement with financial planning from all stakeholders (including faculty, staff, and students). One opportunity would be for the institution to publish online the financial documents it routinely provides to its Board of Trustees.</p>		

<p>2.E.3 Financial resources are managed transparently in accordance with policies approved by the institution's governing board(s), governance structure(s), and applicable state and federal laws.</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Description of internal financial controls</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Board approved financial policies, state financial policies, or system financial policies</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Compliant</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Needs improvement</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Additional Onsite Evaluation Required within the EIE year seven visit</p>
<p>RATIONALE: This is our team's rationale for rating this institution as we did.</p> <p>Drawing primarily on WSU financial policies referenced in connection with 2.E.1 and 2.E.2, the institution provided documentation for meeting the standard.</p>		
<p>2.F.1 Faculty, staff, and administrators are apprised of their conditions of employment, work assignments, rights and responsibilities, and criteria and procedures for evaluation, retention, promotion, and termination.</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Human resource policies / procedures</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policies/procedures related to teaching, scholarship, service, and artistic creation</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policies/procedures for apprising employees of working conditions, rights and responsibilities, evaluation, retention, promotion, and termination</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Compliant</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Needs improvement</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Additional Onsite Evaluation Required within the EIE year seven visit</p>
<p>RATIONALE: This is our team's rationale for rating this institution as we did.</p> <p>The institution's Policies and Procedures Manual (PPM) and its Employee Handbook address all of the required elements of this standard.</p>		
<p>2.F.2 The institution provides faculty, staff, and administrators with appropriate opportunities and support for professional growth and development.</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Employee professional development policies/procedures</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Compliant</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Needs improvement</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Additional Onsite Evaluation Required within the EIE year seven visit</p>
<p>RATIONALE: This is our team's rationale for rating this institution as we did.</p> <p>The institution provided abundant evidence of policies and practices that meet this standard, including an academy for new faculty, an annual retreat for adjunct faculty, grant funds for staff professional development, and other resources.</p>		
<p>2.F.3 Consistent with its mission, programs, and services, the institution employs faculty, staff, and administrators sufficient in role, number, and qualifications to achieve its organizational responsibilities, educational objectives, establish and oversee academic policies, and ensure the integrity and continuity of its academic programs.</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Documentation about engagement and responsibilities specified for faculty and staff, as appropriate</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Personnel hiring policy/procedures</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Academic organizational chart</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Administrator/staff /faculty evaluation policies/procedures</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Compliant</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Needs improvement</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Additional Onsite Evaluation Required within the EIE year seven visit</p>
<p>RATIONALE: This is our team's rationale for rating this institution as we did.</p> <p>The institution's policies (especially section 3) describe an objective and systematic approach to employing qualified individuals for WSU positions. The institution's organizational charts are logical and conventional. While it is difficult here to assess the sufficiency of WSU's staffing levels, we observed no obvious defects. In comparison its peer institutions, WSU notes that it has a relatively low staff-to-faculty ratio. We would have been interested also to assess faculty-to-student and staff-to-student ratios, especially relative to peers.</p>		
<p>2.F.4 Faculty, staff, and administrators are evaluated regularly and systematically in alignment with institutional mission and goals, educational objectives, and policies and procedures. Evaluations are based on written criteria that are published, easily accessible, and clearly communicated. Evaluations are applied equitably, fairly, and consistently in relation to responsibilities and duties. Personnel are assessed for effectiveness and are provided feedback and encouragement for improvement.</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Listing of programs and services supporting student learning needs</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Compliant</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Needs improvement</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Additional Onsite Evaluation Required within the EIE year seven visit</p>

<p>RATIONALE: This is our team's rationale for rating this institution as we did.</p> <p>WSU submitted institutional policies that require regular and systematic evaluation of all personnel. These appear to be meaningful processes; for example, we noted that reappointment of administrators depends on reviews that occur near the end of their stated terms.</p> <p>The institution should include within this section information about presidential evaluation (presumably the responsibility of the Utah State Board of Higher Education).</p>		
<p>2.G.1 Consistent with the nature of its educational programs and methods of delivery, and with a particular focus on equity and closure of equity gaps in achievement, the institution creates and maintains effective learning environments with appropriate programs and services to support student learning and success.</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Listing of programs and services supporting student learning needs</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Compliant <input type="checkbox"/> Needs improvement <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Onsite Evaluation Required within the EIE year seven visit</p>
<p>RATIONALE: This is our team's rationale for rating this institution as we did.</p> <p>The institution described its academic support centers and programs, access and diversity initiatives, and other strategies for closing equity gaps and maintaining effective learning environments. While it is difficult within this standard to assess the effectiveness of these activities, they seemed appropriate for WSU's size and demographics.</p>		
<p>2.G.2 The institution publishes in a catalog, or provides in a manner available to students and other stakeholders, current and accurate information that includes: institutional mission; admission requirements and procedures; grading policy; information on academic programs and courses, including degree and program completion requirements, expected learning outcomes, required course sequences, and projected timelines to completion based on normal student progress and the frequency of course offerings; names, titles, degrees held, and conferring institutions for administrators and full-time faculty; rules and regulations for conduct, rights, and responsibilities; tuition, fees, and other program costs; refund policies and procedures for students who withdraw from enrollment; opportunities and requirements for financial aid; and the academic calendar.</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Catalog (and/or other publications) that provides information regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Institutional mission <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Admission requirements and procedures <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grading policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information on academic programs and courses, including degree and program completion requirements, expected learning outcomes, required course sequences, and projected timelines to completion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Names, titles, degrees held, and conferring institutions for administrators and full-time faculty <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rules and regulations for conduct, rights, and responsibilities; <input type="checkbox"/> Tuition, fees, and other program costs <input type="checkbox"/> Refund policies and procedures for students who withdraw from enrollment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Opportunities and requirements for financial aid <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The academic calendar (See 2.C.2) <p>(Student handbook or Catalog; links to webpages – please note specific pages or areas)</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Compliant <input type="checkbox"/> Needs improvement <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Onsite Evaluation Required within the EIE year seven visit</p>
<p>RATIONALE: This is our team's rationale for rating this institution as we did.</p> <p>The institution clearly demonstrated how all of the information required by this standard is available to the public via either its catalog or website.</p>		
<p>2.G.3 Publications and other written materials that describe educational programs include accurate information on national and/or state legal eligibility requirements for licensure or entry into an occupation or profession for which education and training are offered. Descriptions of unique requirements for employment and advancement in the occupation or profession shall be included in such materials.</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Samples of publications and other written materials that describe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accurate information on national and/or state legal eligibility requirements for licensure or entry into an occupation or profession for which education and training are offered. 	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Compliant <input type="checkbox"/> Needs improvement <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Onsite Evaluation Required within the EIE year seven visit</p>

	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Descriptions of unique requirements for employment and advancement in the occupation or profession shall be included in such materials.	
RATIONALE: This is our team's rationale for rating this institution as we did. The institution describes licensure and/or other employment-related requirements on the webpages for each relevant degree program. We also appreciated how WSU clearly presents employment-related information for many of its most popular majors.		
2.G.4 The institution provides an effective and accountable program of financial aid consistent with its mission, student needs, and institutional resources. Information regarding the categories of financial assistance (such as scholarships, grants, and loans) is published and made available to prospective and enrolled students.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Published financial aid policies/procedures including information about categories of financial assistance (Student handbook or Catalog; links to webpages – please note specific pages or areas) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information to students regarding repayment obligations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policies / procedures for monitoring student loan programs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Compliant <input type="checkbox"/> Needs improvement <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Onsite Evaluation Required within the EIE year seven visit
RATIONALE: This is our team's rationale for rating this institution as we did. The institution provided clear documentation for meeting this standard, primarily through its Financial Aid website.		
2.G.5 Students receiving financial assistance are informed of any repayment obligations. The institution regularly monitors its student loan programs and publicizes the institution's loan default rate on its website.		<input type="checkbox"/> Compliant <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Needs improvement <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Onsite Evaluation Required within the EIE year seven visit
RATIONALE: This is our team's rationale for rating this institution as we did. WSU student loan recipients are required to complete entry and exit counseling, which includes a discussion of repayment obligations. The institution attests that it regularly monitors its student loan programs. While the institution provided to us its loan default rate, we were unable to identify a location where this is published on its website, even after reviewing the "public disclosures" page.		
2.G.6 The institution designs, maintains, and evaluates a systematic and effective program of academic advisement to support student development and success. Personnel responsible for advising students are knowledgeable of the curriculum, program and graduation requirements, and are adequately prepared to successfully fulfill their responsibilities. Advising requirements and responsibilities of advisors are defined, published, and made available to students.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Description of advising program, staffing, and advising publications (Student handbook or Catalog; links to webpages – please note specific pages or areas) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Systematic evaluation of advising <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Professional development policies / procedures for advisors	<input type="checkbox"/> Compliant <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Needs improvement <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Onsite Evaluation Required within the EIE year seven visit
RATIONALE: This is our team's rationale for rating this institution as we did. While WSU's decision to take a decentralized approach to advising may be appropriate, we wished to see more details about how the University ensures high quality, high impact advising practices. From the information available in the report and online, it appeared that advisors may not have had recent (2020-21) training opportunities. The Starfish program could be an important tool for timely and effective interventions to support student success, but it wasn't clear how the system is being used. How often are red flags raised? Who responds, and how quickly? We encourage the institution to provide more information about how it uses cross-training or other strategies to provide consistent and timely interventions to support students. Finally, we recommend that the institution address how they using disaggregated student data or other information to drive their approach to improving advising services.		
2.G.7 The institution maintains an effective identity verification process for students enrolled in distance education courses and programs to establish that the student enrolled in such a course or program is the same person whose achievements are evaluated and credentialed. The institution ensures that the identity verification process for distance education students protects student privacy and that students are informed, in writing at the time of enrollment, of current and projected charges associated with the identity verification process.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policies/procedures for ensuring identity verification for students enrolling in distance education courses	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Compliant <input type="checkbox"/> Needs improvement <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Onsite Evaluation Required within the EIE year seven visit

<p>RATIONALE: This is our team's rationale for rating this institution as we did.</p> <p>The institution provided basic evidence of its approach to identify verification starting at the point of admission. Student accounts are password-protected and online students must also present picture ID. We would have liked to hear about additional steps, including multi-factor authentication, that the institution may employ in order to protect against identity fraud.</p>		
<p>2.H.1 Consistent with its mission, the institution employs qualified personnel and provides access to library and information resources with a level of currency, depth, and breadth sufficient to support and sustain the institution's mission, programs, and services.</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Procedures for assessing adequacy of library collections</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Library planning committee and procedures for planning and collection development</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Library instruction plan; policies/procedures related to the use of library and information resources</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Library staffing information; policies/procedures that explains faculty/library partnership for assuring library and information resources are integrated into the learning process</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Compliant</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Needs improvement</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Additional Onsite Evaluation Required within the EIE year seven visit</p>
<p>RATIONALE: This is our team's rationale for rating this institution as we did.</p> <p>The institution provided ample and varied evidence for meeting this standard.</p>		
<p>2.I.1 Consistent with its mission, the institution creates and maintains physical facilities and technology infrastructure that are accessible, safe, secure, and sufficient in quantity and quality to ensure healthful learning and working environments that support and sustain the institution's mission, academic programs, and services.</p>	<p>Facilities master plan, including</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Equipment replacement policies/procedures</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Procedures for assessing sufficiency of physical facilities</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policies and procedures for ensuring accessible, safe, and secure facilities</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policies/procedures for the use, storage, and disposal of hazardous waste</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Technology master plan and planning processes</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Compliant</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Needs improvement</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Additional Onsite Evaluation Required within the EIE year seven visit</p>
<p>RATIONALE: This is our team's rationale for rating this institution as we did.</p> <p>The institution's comprehensive approach to planning for and managing its facilities, including technology, satisfies this standard.</p>		
<p>Concluding Comments:</p> <p>Overall, Weber State University's PRFR report was impressive. For nearly every standard, the institution has provided documents that reflect the University's mature, strong, and stable position. The institution's policies and regulations are complete, coherent, and, for the most part, well-maintained, and its financial conditions reflect its conservative approach to resource management.</p> <p>We recommend improvement in just two primary areas. First, we request that the institution more clearly document how it keeps stakeholders and the public informed and engaged via a variety of communication channels. This is likely occurring today, but wasn't evident from the submission. On a related note, we recommend the institution be more publicly transparent with its financial reports, beyond the admirable work it appears to do already to keep its Board of Trustees and various subcommittees informed. Greater transparency seems likely only to build public confidence in the institution's financial stability. Second, we recommend that the institution more comprehensively address how it ensures that its advising program has the highest-possible impact on students.</p> <p>Finally, we note the standard 2.G.5 expectation that the institution publish its loan default rate on its website.</p>		