



Southern Utah University

MID-CYCLE REPORT

Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities

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Institutional Overview

Southern Utah University is a publicly-funded, comprehensive, regional, masters-level university located in Cedar City, Utah. From humble beginnings in 1897 as a Branch Normal School, Southern Utah University has grown into a thriving university that proudly celebrated its 125th year in 2022. The University is an accredited member in good standing of the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) and has been continuously accredited by NWCCU since 1933.

A snapshot of Southern Utah University during Fall 2023 includes the following highlights:

- Student enrollment of 15,033 (headcount, measured at the third-week census) compared with an enrollment of 12,582 students in Fall 2020 third week;
- First-year retention rates as reported to IPEDS have remained steady for first-time, full-time, bachelor's degree-seeking students (2020 = 72%, 2021 = 73%, and 2022 = 71%);
- The 150% graduation rate for bachelor's degree seeking students as reported to IPEDS has improved slightly (2015 = 46%, 2016 = 55%, and 2017 = 58%);
- Degrees awarded by year has increased steadily (2020-21 = 3,586, 2021-2022 = 4,449, and 2022-2023 = 4,679);
- Since the 2018-2019 academic year, undergraduate resident tuition has remained the same at \$6,006 per year, along with approximately \$764 in student fees per year;
- Through a combination of tuition revenue and state appropriations, SUU's operating budget (Education & General or E&G funds) has grown steadily (FY21 = \$100m, FY22 = \$114m, FY23 = \$126m);
- Finally, the University continues to maintain its strategic partnership with Southwest Technical College ([link](#)) and regularly engages the community by offering a wide range of events, professional development opportunities, educational outreach initiatives, and workforce development programming ([link](#)).

Also during the time since the April 2021 NWCCU Year-Seven Comprehensive Review, the University has experienced several key leadership changes, it has engaged in meaningful institutional planning efforts, and it has embarked on several key initiatives related to accreditation, assessment, and student achievement. These are discussed briefly in what follows.

NWCCU Accreditation Update

During the 2020-2021 academic year, SUU prepared self-study reports for both Standard 1 (Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness - EIE) and Standard 2 (Policies, Regulations, & Financial Review - PRFR) and submitted both to NWCCU in February 2021. After completing the Year-Seven Comprehensive Review and virtual visit in April 2021, SUU was poised to begin a new seven-year accreditation cycle.

The following commendations and recommendations were included in NWCCU's July 2021 letter of notification following the self-study and virtual campus visit. A copy of the [NWCCU July 2021](#) letter is posted to SUU's accreditation website (<https://www.suu.edu/accreditation>).

The July 2021 letter from NWCCU includes the following **commendations** for Southern Utah University:

1. The institutional culture of caring and meaningful connection, as reflected in its laser focus on students and commitment to work/life balance for its employees. The institution's commitment to students and employees was especially evident in the flexibility and support provided during the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. Its visionary and effective approach to providing an affordable and accessible education. The efforts to keep tuition flat, to develop the 3-year degree and expanded summer offerings, and to grow online programs strategically are all extraordinary.
3. The remarkable success in strengthening retention and graduation efforts and outcomes in the overall student population. The ACES and LEADS peer mentors, DFW analyses, curricular and advising enhancements, increased financial aid resources, and support provided through student services have produced outstanding results.
4. The transparent and inclusive nature of its budgeting and strategic planning processes, and for strongly tying resource allocation to the strategic plan within a data-informed context that allows for innovation.
5. The transparent sharing and analyses of data, especially with academic units to inform efforts to improve student achievement. The Unit Effectiveness Plans are great examples of disseminating data with unit leaders and asking them to use that data to drive unit efforts to enhance student achievement.

The July 2021 letter from NWCCU includes the following **recommendations** for Southern Utah University:

- **Recommendation 1:** Spring 2021 Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness - Use the strong foundation of equity gaps data to develop more targeted and intentional strategies and interventions to mitigate gaps for specific student sub-groups. (2020 Standard(s) 1.D.4)
- **Recommendation 2:** Spring 2021 Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness - Develop systematic and sustainable evaluation and planning processes to refine the effectiveness of student support services, and to evaluate appropriate resources for student support services. (2020 Standard(s) 1.B.1;2.G.1)
- **Recommendation 3:** Spring 2021 Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness - Continue to refine its practices for analyzing general education student learning assessment data, and using these analyses to inform general education curricular revisions and learning support practices. (2020 Standard(s) 1.C.6;1.C.7)

Progress reports for these three Recommendations are included as Addendums to this April 2024 Mid-Cycle Report.

Section 1. Mission Fulfillment

Like most institutions of higher education, Southern Utah University has approached the topic of “mission fulfillment” by developing, implementing, and reporting on an institutional Strategic Plan. SUU’s current institutional [Strategic Plan](#) includes a Mission Statement and a Vision Statement, as well as other key components, such as values and strategic priorities (Standards 1.A and 1.B).

During the period of time between SUU’s Year-Seven Comprehensive Review and the preparation of this Mid-Cycle Report (April 2021 and Fall 2023), the University has embarked on a significant effort to revise its Strategic Plan and engage in other important institutional planning efforts. During that same period of time, the University experienced several key leadership changes. What follows is a brief account of these efforts and these changes.

1.1 Strategic Planning & Leadership Changes

Southern Utah University’s prior strategic plan (2015–2022) represented an important step forward for the University in terms of mission fulfillment and institutional effectiveness. Importantly, SUU’s prior strategic plan included a “scorecard” of key performance indicators (KPIs) which presented updated metrics linked to Core Themes, Strategies, and Goals. This prior strategic plan and this scorecard were critical to SUU’s accreditation review in Spring 2021 (<https://www.suu.edu/accreditation>).

Because SUU’s prior strategic plan was set to expire in 2022, under the leadership of President Scott L Wyatt and Provost Jon Anderson, a new strategic planning process started in November 2020 with the anticipation that the new plan would be approved by SUU’s Board of Trustees (BOT) in December 2021. This confluence represented an opportunity to synchronize both cycles (NWCCU accreditation and strategic planning).

Throughout the strategic planning process and into Summer 2021, the draft strategic plan was shaped by three dimensions: first, systematic input from campus was solicited; second, SUU’s values and priorities were identified and incorporated; and third, alignment with external factors was ensured (NWCCU Standards, the Utah System of Higher Education [USHE], and the Utah Legislature’s performance-based funding parameters). This aligns with NWCCU Standard 1.B.2 and 1.B.3. Other aspects of the draft strategic plan include a set of institutional statements, identification of unique strengths and weaknesses, core values, actions, and tactics. (For reference, a draft [2021 Strategic Plan](#) [dated 27 AUG 2021] is included in the [Resources](#) folder.)

However, on June 14, 2021, President Wyatt announced his intention to resign as President of SUU and accept a new position in the Commissioner’s Office of the Utah System of Higher Education (USHE). Then, on July 16, 2021, the Utah Board of Higher Education (UBHE) announced that Ms. Mindy Benson (then serving as Vice President of Alumni and Community Relations at SUU) would be SUU’s interim President.

In August 2021, Interim President Benson met with her Cabinet to discuss the current status of the draft strategic plan (which was approximately 85-90% complete). In consultation with SUU's Board of Trustees, the President's Cabinet decided to "press pause" on the strategic planning effort to allow the new President to be involved in the planning process.

During the 2021–2022 academic year, a search for SUU's new President was conducted by the Utah Board of Higher Education and culminated on July 15, 2022, when Ms. Mindy Benson was appointed as SUU's 17th President. During President Benson's formal inauguration address on September 23, 2022, she identified eight priorities for her Presidency at SUU.

It is important to note that President Benson's priorities emerged from her deep and long-standing commitment to both SUU and the surrounding community. As a life-long Cedar City resident and someone who literally grew up on the SUU campus, President Benson has spent much of her working career at SUU in a variety of roles. For example, prior to her appointment as President, Benson served SUU as Vice President of Community and Alumni Relations for eight years. Additional information about President Benson can be found here: <https://www.suu.edu/president/about.html>.

In short, based on her extensive experience serving SUU and the surrounding community, and widespread support of her candidacy by the campus, President Benson presented these priorities as a reminder of what the University has always valued and as a call to action. Based on a leadership philosophy she adopted from her long-time SUU mentor, [Sterling R. Church](#), President Benson believes deeply that "People support that which they help create," the President identified these priorities as an invitation for all SUU employees to use their unique knowledge, skills, and position to more fully achieve these values.

President Benson's inaugural address prompted slight adjustment to the draft strategic plan. During the 2022–2023 academic year, the previous draft strategic plan was revised to reflect President Benson's priorities and resulted in the draft 2022 strategic plan. Below is a summary of President Benson's priorities as they appeared in that draft:

The Three Ps: People, Purpose, and Place

- (1) We will be People-Centric: Our people are our highest priority.
- (2) We will be Purpose-Driven: We are here to change lives.
- (3) We will be Place-Empowered: Our campus is a place where everyone belongs.

The Five Opportunities

- (1) Increase Access and Affordability
- (2) Cultivate a Culture of Caring
- (3) Enrich the Academic Experience
- (4) Enhance Student Success
- (5) Expand Alumni and Community Engagement

A copy of the draft [2022 Strategic Plan](#) is included in the [Resources](#) folder.

1.2 Official Strategic Plan - Approved by BOT in December 2023

In Fall 2023, President Benson and her Cabinet engaged in a final revision effort of SUU's new Strategic Plan. Based largely on the 2022 draft version, this review process included significant engagement between President Benson, the Board of Trustees, and the Cabinet. Building on the effective work of the strategic planning committee, a final draft was revised and metrics were attached to each of the Five Opportunities, now called "Strategic Priorities" (Standard 1.B.4).

Once the Board of Trustees, particularly the Chair and Vice Chair, was aligned with President Benson on the updated version of the strategic plan that integrated the work of the committee with the President's inaugural address, the plan was again vetted through campus. This vetting was primarily led by Cabinet members and members of the newly formed [President's Leadership Council](#) (PLC) which includes a large group of people representing all administrative areas of campus, as well as all elements of the shared governance system (Faculty Senate, Staff Association, and the Student Association) (Standard 1.B.3). Once that vetting and feedback process was complete, the final version of the strategic plan was presented to the Board of Trustees on December 8, 2023, and was adopted in a unanimous vote.

A copy of the official [Strategic Plan](#) (Connecting People, Purpose, and Place, 2024–2030) is included in the [Resources](#) folder along with a [supplemental document](#) explaining the terminology used in the approved Strategic Plan. As of January 2024, SUU's new institutional Strategic Plan is now displayed on its website (<https://www.suu.edu/strategicplan>) and includes a full-color [print version](#).

With a new Strategic Plan approved in December 2023, steps are now being taken to develop a process by which to report on the metrics associated with each of the five strategic priorities. Specifically, a series of data dashboards that will assemble the Strategic Plan's metrics (benchmarks and goals) so that an annual institutional report can be generated. That effort will continue throughout Spring 2024 and is aligned with performance based funding metrics identified by the Utah Legislature.

1.3 Other Institutional Planning Efforts

During President Benson's inauguration in September 2022, in addition to identifying her strategic priorities (which have informed the 2023 Strategic Plan, discussed above), she announced the formation of three university-wide committees: Culture, Facilities, and Enrollment. Each committee is co-chaired by a Vice President. These three university-wide committees are intended to support the university's overall mission and new Strategic Plan.

[a] Culture Committee

The Culture Committee was first established by President Benson during her Fall Opening Meeting on August 25, 2022, with the charge to develop ways to reinforce and amplify SUU's culture of caring for both its employees and students, with a special emphasis on sustaining a sense of belonging.

Ms. Donna Law and Ms. Daneka Souberbielle, committee co-chairs, put out an open call to interested members of the SUU campus community to serve on the committee, ensuring that all areas of campus were represented. A 33-member committee began meeting in October 2022 and discussed ways to define a culture of caring. The committee decided that the most appropriate way to establish a definition was to utilize an inductive approach, framed in goals outlined by President Benson in her inauguration speech. In February 2023, the committee sent out a campus-wide survey, collected 952 responses (from SUU’s approximately 1300 employees), coded the data, and established themes around which SUU could establish a framework for improving culture and a climate survey to assess it. Those themes include Acknowledgement, Community, Resources, Effective Leadership, Compensation, and Meaningful Work and Learning.

Due to university reorganization (including the job reassignments of Ms. Daneka Souberbielle and the loss of Ms. Donna Law as an employee); the influence of state legislation around Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI); and the finalization of the institution’s new Strategic Plan, the timing and the trajectory of the Culture Committee have been substantially affected. For example, the Community Climate Survey has been put on hold, but other employee engagement efforts by the President’s Office, the Center for Teaching Innovation, the Staff Association, and the Faculty Senate have increased. The Culture Committee is working to plan Phase 2 of its efforts for Fall 2024.

[b] Facilities Committee

In response to President Benson’s inauguration in September 2022, Mr. Tiger Funk and Dr. Bill Heyborne co-chaired a Facilities Committee to address facilities needs across campus. Part of this charge is to provide a campus master plan that communicates the vision and expectations of campus leadership for the addition or significant modification of buildings and other facilities at SUU. The Division of Campus Operations is responsible for implementing and caring for all physical facilities on the Southern Utah University campus.

In February 2023, a campus master planning committee was convened to refresh the campus master plan. This body included representation from student leadership, academics, staff, administration, and community members. The services of MHTN Architects were secured to provide consultation for the project. The committee agreed to adopt what is being referred to as a “living” model for the master plan (sometimes called an “evergreen” plan), which allows for annual reviews and updates to occur that respond to the evolving needs of academics, athletics, students, campus support, and other significant mission-critical entities at SUU.

The new campus master plan framework was completed in December 2023 and is in the process of being submitted to the President’s Cabinet and the Board of Trustees for approval. This approval is expected in Spring 2024.

Once approved, this new “living” model of SUU’s master plan will include an “input portal” that allows any employee to submit campus development ideas. The input portal will include a series of questions intended to gather information about the proposed idea and Facilities Management will provide an initial analysis (including cost estimates and feasibility evaluations). Based on

this initial analysis and the priorities of the campus master plan, campus development ideas will be prepared for consideration by departmental and/or institutional leadership.

[c] Enrollment Committee

The Enrollment Committee embarked on a Strategic Enrollment Planning (SEP) process and efforts began to take shape in November 2022 when Vice President Stuart Jones asked Associate Provost James Sage to serve as co-chair of the SEP effort. Like SUU’s revised Strategic Plan, the SEP process is an expression of President Benson’s priorities for the institution.

An SEP “kick-off” event occurred in February 2023 ([agenda](#)) and included the formation of five sub-committees, including: Undergraduate Face-to-Face, International, Graduate & Online, Concurrent / Continuing Education, and Retention. At the kick-off event, President Benson supplied the following “charge” for the SEP process: “Set reasonable, sustainable, balanced, data-informed, and defined enrollment goals.”

In the months following the kick-off event, the SEP effort followed a structured process outlined by Ruffalo Noel-Levitz (RNL) and an RNL consultant who was selected by SUU. Support documents are included in the [Resources](#) folder in the [Strategic Enrollment Planning subfolder](#). Below are the key dates and activities related to the SEP process at SUU during 2023–2024:

Table 1.3: Key Dates for Strategic Enrollment Planning (SEP)

Date	SEP Event / Topic / Activity
February 14	SEP Co-Chair Meeting: Welcome & Overview
February 17	SEP Kick-Off Event
March 13-14	RNL Visit 1: Overview of SEP Process
April 17-18	RNL Visit 2: Desired Future State & Strategy Ideation
May 22-23	RNL Visit 3: Identification of Select Strategies
June 20-21	RNL Visit 4: Prioritize Strategies
June–October	Sub-Committees work on developing Business Plans
October 23-24	RNL Visit 5: Review Business Plans
October–November	Sub-Committees work on developing Presentations
December 11	Practice Presentations for January
January 19	Presentation of Business Plans (a.k.a. “Shark Tank”)

After the “Shark Tank” presentations ([schedule](#)), the President’s Cabinet will decide which Business Plans to fund and Sub-Committees will begin implementation. The SEP process will conclude by creating a final written report and also developing a “Strategic Enrollment Management” (SEM) process to ensure enrollment efforts are monitored and supported moving forward.

1.4 Leadership Changes

The following sections provide a brief overview of some of the leadership changes at the University. These are relevant to include in this Mid-Cycle Report because they provide additional institutional context to understand the progress SUU has made since April 2021. Despite these leadership changes, SUU has maintained its current, day-to-day operations and also made important improvements with respect to institutional planning (Standard 2.A).

[a] Cabinet Changes

Mr. Marvin Dodge, Vice President for Finance and Administration, resigned in May 2023 to take a new position working for the Governor's Office. After a careful screening process, in August 2023, President Benson identified Dr. Mary Pearson (formerly the Dean of the School of Business) to begin in her new role as the Vice President of Finance and Administration.

Also beginning in August 2023, President Benson appointed Mr. Tiger Funk to serve as the Vice President of Operations, leading the newly formed Division of Campus Operations. This new division includes the following units: Facilities Management, SUU Police, Enterprise Risk Management, Emergency Management, Compliance, Parking, and Fleet Services.

Finally, Ms. Daneka Souberbielle (formerly serving as Associate Provost, discussed below) was appointed by President Benson to serve as SUU's new Vice President for Community Outreach & Engagement.

[b] Provost's Office Changes

In December 2021, Associate Provost Dr. Johnny MacLean was selected as the new Provost at the University of Montana Western (in Dillon, MT). His appointment in Montana began on January 3, 2022. After a brief search process, former Faculty Senate President Dr. Bill Heyborne was identified as Dr. MacLean's replacement and joined Dr. James Sage and Ms. Daneka Souberbielle as an Associate Provost in Spring 2022.

In the middle of Spring 2023, Associate Provost Daneka Souberbielle was asked by newly appointed President Benson to serve on the President's Cabinet and take on the role of Vice President for Community Outreach & Engagement (mentioned above). At the same time, after a national search, Associate Provost Bill Heyborne was selected to be the new Dean of the College of Natural Sciences at SUU, starting in July 2023.

During Summer 2023, a search for two new Assistant Provosts was initiated to replace Ms. Souberbielle and Dr. Heyborne. As a result of that screening process, beginning in August 2023, Dr. Camille Thomas and Dr. Jake Johnson joined the Provost's Office in their new roles as Assistant Provosts.

Between April 2021 (NWCCU's Year-Seven Comprehensive Review) and Fall 2023, a total of four new Deans have been appointed after robust, national searches. This represents a significant change in the leadership within each of the seven academic colleges/schools at SUU. At present,

two national Dean searches are being conducted (School of Business and College of Performing and Visual Arts) and will result in the appointment of two new Deans in Summer 2024.

[c] Division of Student Affairs Changes

In Summer 2022, Dr. Eric Kirby (Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs for Completion and Student Success) resigned his position to begin serving as a Tenure-Track faculty member in SUU's School of Business. In response to Dr. Kirby's departure, Vice President Jared Tippetts restructured his leadership team and identified six new Executive Directors who were all promoted from Director positions within the division.

During Summer 2023, one Executive Director left SUU and another was selected to take on additional duties serving as Vice President Tippetts' Chief of Staff. This resulted in minor adjustments to reporting lines within the division. Together with the Dean of Students, Executive Assistant, and Budget Analyst, these five Executive Directors contribute to the [Student Affairs Leadership Team](#).

[d] Division of Community Outreach & Engagement Changes

In January 2024, Ms. Donna Law (Assistant Vice President of Community Outreach & Engagement) joined the Governor's Office as the Interim Executive Director of the Utah Department of Cultural and Community Engagement. A brief search for Ms. Law's replacement resulted in the hiring of Ms. Becki Bronson, Assistant Vice President for Community & Government Relations.

Section 2. Student Achievement

Southern Utah University (SUU) tracks several key indicators of student achievement, consistent with its prior strategic plan and in accordance with its new Strategic Plan. These student indicators of student achievement include graduation rates, retention rates, degrees awarded, post-graduation success, and summer participation rates. Each indicator of student achievement is discussed below (Standards 1.B.4 and 1.D.2).

2.1 Graduation Rates

SUU evaluates student achievement using a time-and-a-half (150%) graduation rate for entering all degree-seeking, full-time students. The following table displays official SUU graduation rates as reported to IPEDS by reporting year.

Table 2.1 Time-And-A-Half (150%) Graduation Rates by Cohort (All Degree-Seeking Students)

150% Graduation Rates	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
All Degree-Seeking Students	49%	47%	49%	50%	46%	55%	58%

SUU’s new Strategic Plan identifies a goal for 150% completion rates for all degree-seeking students of 60% by the year 2030.

2.2 Retention Rates

In addition to tracking graduation rates, SUU also evaluates student achievement by using first-year retention rates for first-time, full-time, bachelor’s degree-seeking students. Below is a table displaying official SUU retention rates as reported to IPEDS by reporting year.

Table 2.2 First-Year Retention Rates (First-Time, Full-Time, Bachelor’s Degree-Seeking)

First-Year Retention Rates (First-Time, Full-Time)	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
FT, FT, Bachelor’s Degree-Seeking Students	71%	73%	74%	72%	73%	71%

SUU’s new Strategic Plan identifies a goal for first-year retention rates of 74% by the year 2030.

2.3 Degrees Awarded

SUU tracks a third indicator of student achievement based on the total number of degrees awarded for a given academic year (July 1 thru June 30). This metric includes select certificates (Certificates of Achievement and Certificates of Completion). In general, steady progress has been made to ensure students are achieving their educational goals. In addition to this [complete data dashboard for degrees and certificates awarded](#), the table below depicts the total number of degrees and certificates awarded for the last six academic years.

Table 2.3 Total Number of Degrees Awarded by Academic Year

Degrees Awarded	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Total # of Degrees Awarded	2,342	2,782	3,240	3,586	4,449	4,679

This steady (and somewhat significant) increase in degrees and certificates awarded is a result of SUU’s growing enrollment, steady retention rates, and increasing graduation rates. Overall, this indicates that students are supported in various aspects leading to their success.

SUU’s new Strategic Plan identifies a goal for degrees and certificates awarded of 5,000 by the year 2030.

2.4 Post-Graduation Success

Finally, SUU has tracked post-graduation success by administering an electronic “graduate questionnaire” to all students graduating in a given year (July 1–June 30). The purpose of the questionnaire is to gather information from each graduating student regarding their plans following graduation (e.g., employment, graduate school, military, church service, volunteerism, etc.), their purpose for earning a degree, their involvement in internships, and their contact information.

With a typical response rate between about 90% and 95% for students earning a bachelor’s degree, SUU is able to track post-graduation plans over time. Detailed summary information is available from the official data dashboards across a variety of post-graduation plans (e.g., attending graduate school, military, church service, etc.).

When it comes to students who specifically seek employment after graduation, SUU calculates an “employment rate” by dividing the number of students who obtained employment by the total number of students who obtained employment and those who are seeking employment.

In addition to the [complete data dashboard for post-graduation success](#), below is a table depicting the employment rate by year for students earning a bachelor’s degree.

Table 2.4 Post-Graduation: Employment Rates for Students Earning a Bachelor’s Degree

Post-Graduation Success	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Employment Rate - Bachelor’s Degree	71.5%	74.0%	78.5%	89.1%	84.2%	83.1%

SUU’s new Strategic Plan identifies a goal for an employment rate of 85% by the year 2030.

When taken together, graduation rates, retention rates, degrees awarded, and post-graduation success (employment rate) provide important insights into the University’s ability to recruit, retain, and graduate students, which is central to SUU’s overall mission. Steady or increasing trends across these different indicators of student achievement provide evidence that SUU is able to fulfill its mission and to support student success.

2.5 Summer Participation Rates

Perhaps somewhat unique to SUU is a focus on developing and maintaining a robust and well-utilized Summer semester. In alignment with SUU’s “3-Year Degree” initiative beginning in Summer 2020 (which is supported by an ongoing \$3.8m state appropriation), SUU has made it a priority to ensure Summer semester is utilized by students in support of their educational goals. So, the University also evaluates student achievement by tracking these enrollment trends.

While originally framed as a “3-Year Degree” initiative (using two Summer semesters to accelerate time to degree completion), the main indicators of success are *undergraduate student participation rates* in Summer semester, including the number of students enrolling in courses, the average number of credits completed, and the total number of credits earned. The University also tracks overall Summer semester student enrollment according to whether the student is primarily “on-campus” or “off-campus” (and includes undergraduate students, graduate students, and continuing education students). This enables the University to meet student needs and offer courses in the modality desired by students during Summer semester.

To support these desired indicators of success, the University adjusted its academic calendar to encourage students to use Summer as a third full semester. Likewise, the University has allowed students to use their scholarships during Summer semester (effectively shifting scholarship practices from an award of “four years” to an award of “eight semesters” so that students have the option to use their scholarships during Summer semester as long as they are enrolled in at least 12 credits). Finally, faculty compensation for Summer instruction was increased significantly (using the new funding) to incentivize faculty participation. Below is a table depicting undergraduate student participation rates in Summer semester.

Table 2.5a Undergraduate Student Participation in Summer Semester

Undergraduate Summer Participation	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Summer Enrollment (EOT Headcount)	1,808	1,822	1,974	2,717	3,599	4,080	4,068
Total Credits Earned	9,648	11,978	11,910	20,543	25,943	28,134	27,832
Average # of Credits Earned per Student	5.34	6.57	6.03	7.56	7.21	6.9	6.84
Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)	749.5	811.5	923.9	1,677.1	2,069.7	2,232.8	2,232.9
Budget-Related FTE	679.3	738.2	889.2	1,596.1	1,770.9	1,832.7	1,868.2

Summer 2020 was the first semester of this initiative to increase summer participation rates. Despite the emergence of COVID-19 at that same time, Summer 2020 enrollments increased significantly. Summer 2021 and Summer 2022 participation rates increased slightly. Then, in Summer 2023, a slight decline occurred (in headcount, credits earned, and average number of credits) while FTE and budget-related FTE remained about the same. This plateau in participation rates could suggest that the University has potentially reached a saturation point with respect to serving the needs of students based on their level of interest in Summer semester participation. Future summer semesters will have to show though, if this is indeed the case. (See the [complete data dashboard for Summer enrollment](#).)

SUU also tracks total student enrollment for summer semesters including undergraduate, graduate, concurrent enrollment, and continuing education students, who are grouped into “on-campus” and “off-campus” students. Off-campus students include concurrent enrollment and continuing education students and those students who are limited to only taking online classes by virtue of the program in which they are enrolled, assuming that these students generally do not have to be on the SUU campus to pursue their education. All other students are grouped as on-campus students assuming they are generally at least partially on the SUU campus to pursue their education.

Table 2.5b Total Student Enrollment by Campus Type (On-Campus, Off-Campus)

Total Enrollment: ALL Students - Summer	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
On-Campus	2,234	2,352	2,533	2,591	2,622	2,723	2,682
Off-Campus	1,910	2,079	1,645	2,552	3,999	4,352	5,092
Total Enrollment (EOT Headcount)	4,144	4,431	4,178	5,143	6,621	7,075	7,774

While on-campus student enrollment has remained steady, off-campus enrollment has increased significantly mostly due to an increase of students in online programs. This suggests that the increased number of students who take advantage of Summer semester are primarily accessing SUU’s course offerings by enrolling in online courses (which enables them to pursue other plans over the Summer that are geographically distant from campus, such as employment or participation in internships).

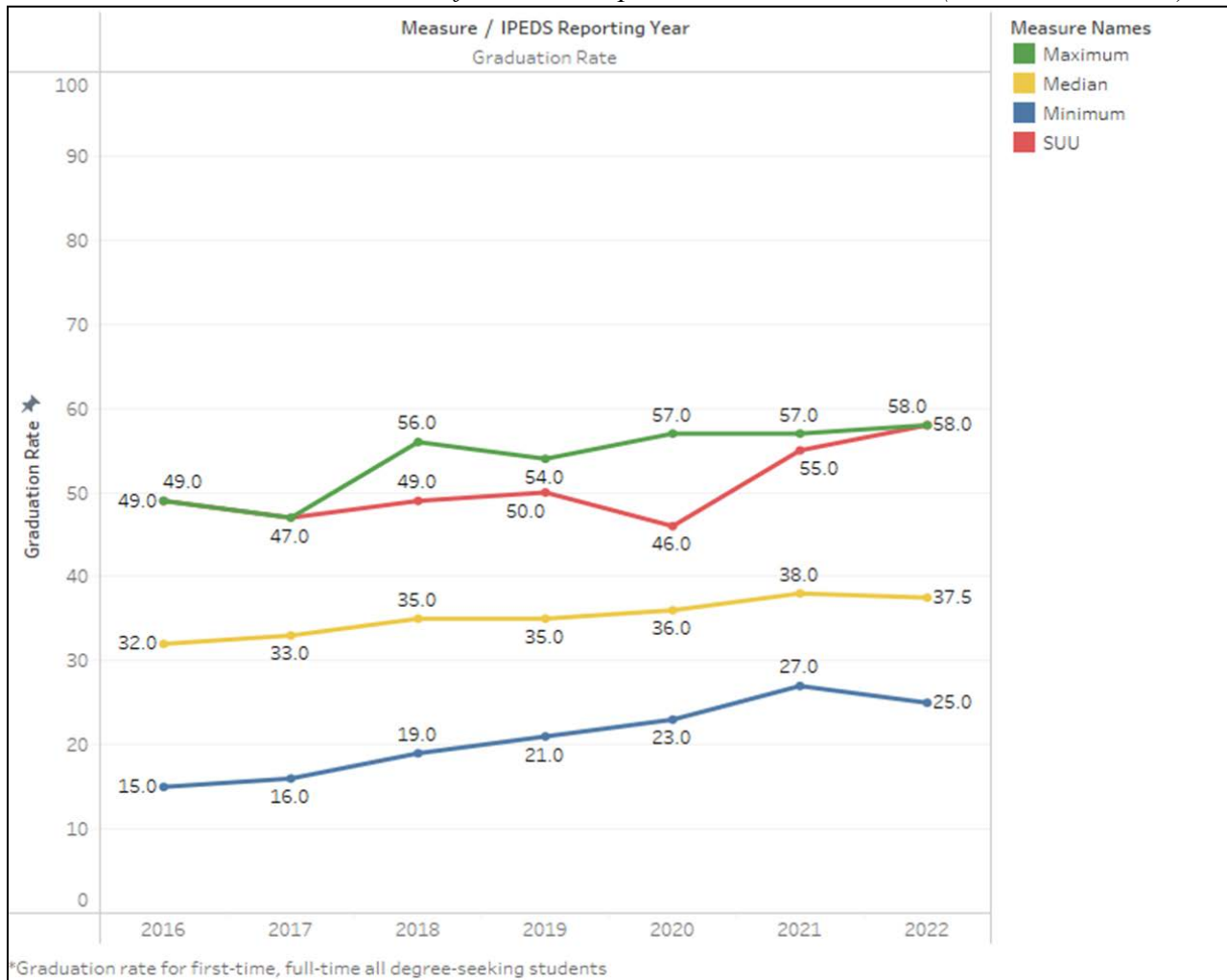
Overall, the increase in Summer semester enrollment indicates that SUU has been successful in terms of offering a robust set of course offerings to support students in achieving their educational goals.

2.6 Peer Institutions

For several years, SUU has maintained a [list of 19 peer institutions](#). These are all public, regional institutions that are located in the Intermountain West and whose primary degree focus is on bachelor’s degrees or above. With a focus on 150% graduation rates and first-year retention rates, the following IPEDS comparison data has been assembled in relation to SUU’s list of peer institutions (Standard 1.D.2).

Below is the 150% graduation rate for SUU as compared to these peer institutions by IPEDS reporting year. This comparison displays the maximum graduation rate, the median graduation rate, and the minimum graduation rate for peer institutions compared to SUU’s graduation rate.

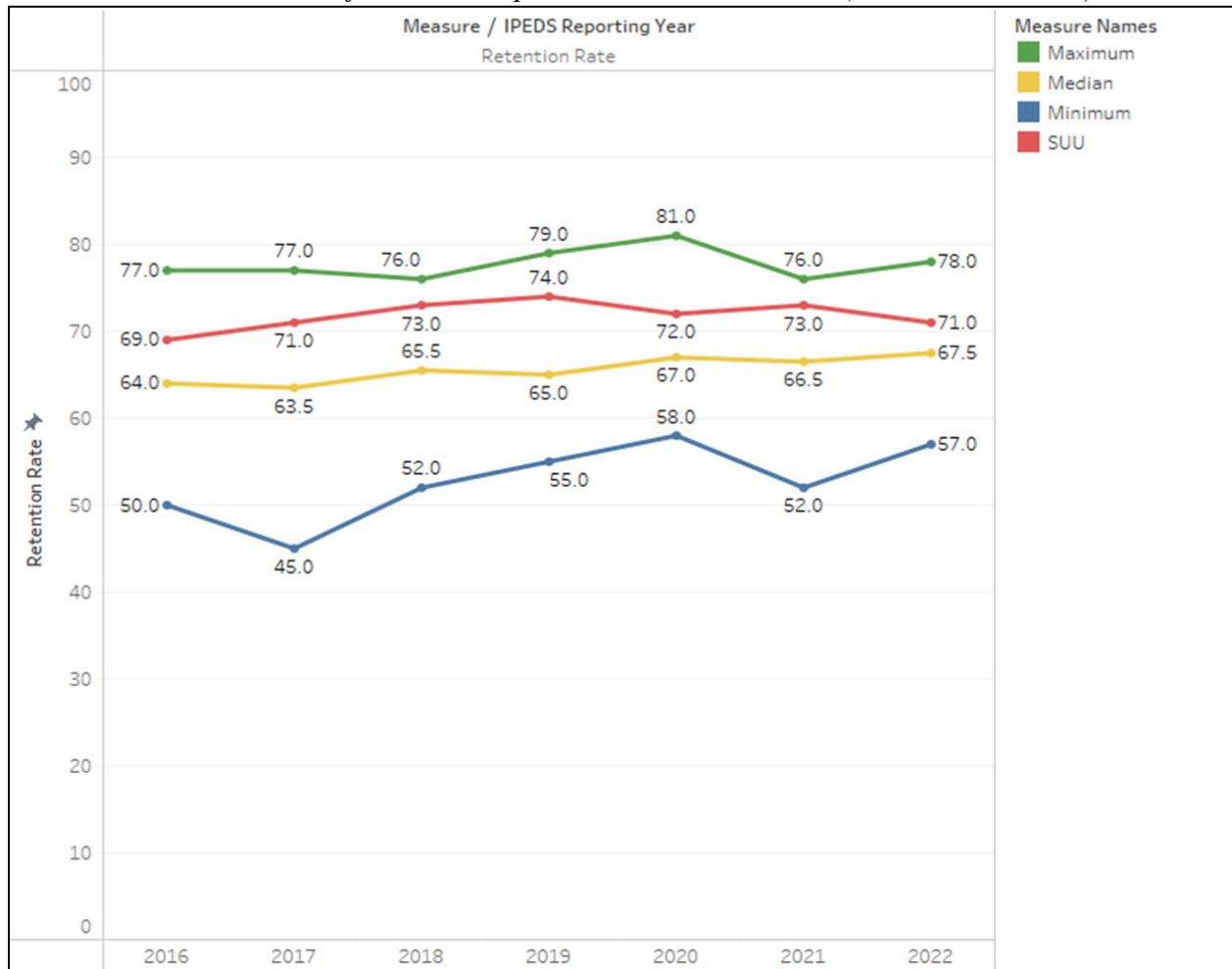
Chart 2.6a: 150% Graduation Rates for SUU compared to Peer Institutions (Max, Median, Min)



SUU has assembled a [full data set for comparative graduation rates](#) with these peer institutions.

Below is the first-year retention rate for SUU as compared to these peer institutions by IPEDS reporting year. This comparison displays the maximum retention rate, the median retention rate, and the minimum retention rate for peer institutions compared to SUU’s retention rate.

Chart 2.6b: Retention Rate for SUU compared to Peer Institutions (Max, Median, Min)



SUU has assembled a [full data set for comparative retention rates](#) with these peer institutions.

Now that SUU has a new Strategic Plan, moving forward this list of peer institutions will be revisited and updated as needed (and will include new “national” peer institutions located outside the Intermountain West).

2.7 Equity Gaps

As described in the progress report for Recommendation 1, SUU has embarked on systematic efforts to ensure data is available to better understand where equity gaps may exist and build capacity to take meaningful action to reduce or eliminate barriers to student success, thereby closing equity gaps.

The University is able to track and display disaggregated student success data (Standard 1.D.3). For example, the table below shows first-year retention rates for all first-time, full-time, bachelor’s degree-seeking students compared to several disaggregated student subpopulations:

First Generation Students, Hispanic Students, students living in University Housing, Female Students, and Male Students.

Table 2.7 Comparison of Retention Rates (All SUU Students vs. Five Student Sub-Populations)

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
All SUU Students						
# of Students	1,414	1,596	1,451	1,677	1,974	1,648
Retention Rate	73.3%	74.3%	72.8%	73.9%	71.4%	73.6%
First Generation Students						
# of Students	397	285	397	337	362	308
Retention Rate	75.3%	76.1%	74.1%	68.2%	67.7%	72.1%
Hispanic Students						
# of Students	113	111	116	137	110	142
Retention Rate	72.6%	73.0%	71.6%	69.3%	73.6%	74.6%
University Housing						
# of Students	351	522	528	573	617	552
Retention Rate	76.6%	79.3%	77.1%	75.9%	74.1%	73.4%
Female						
# of Students	852	995	931	1,022	1,320	1,055
Retention Rate	74.5%	74.8%	72.9%	73.4%	71.7%	73.0%
Male						
# of Students	562	601	520	655	654	593
Retention Rate	71.5%	73.5%	72.5%	74.8%	70.8%	74.7%

In comparison to retention rates for all SUU students in a given cohort year, a simple color-coding of the cells can highlight retention rates that are either higher than the whole student population (green) or lower than the whole student population (red). (Note: these retention rates are based on live data dashboards maintained by the Office of Institutional Research & Assessment; in contrast to the fixed university-wide official IPEDS figures reported each year, these data are “live” and are updated as new exclusions are discovered.)

However, against the backdrop of the University’s decentralized approach to addressing equity gaps, and in light of the University's goal of using disaggregated data to take meaningful action at the local level (colleges, departments, units), this type of institution-wide data comparative data is not the primary focus.

Instead, SUU’s efforts related to equity gaps included the development of a diversity data dashboard by the Office of Institutional Research & Assessment. This diversity dashboard was designed specifically to provide academic Deans, Department Chairs, and faculty with insights leading to data-informed decisions.

The diversity dashboard includes four broad categories: Enrollment, Retention, Graduation Rate, and Academic Performance. These correspond to different “tabs” at the top of the dashboard.

Within each category, the user can explore different institutional variables, including Term, Student Level, College/Department, and Major. In terms of student demographic data, this diversity dashboard allows the user to explore a variety of student subpopulations (First Generation, Marital Status, Age, Gender, Race/Ethnicity, International, etc.).

This diversity dashboard allows users to disaggregate student demographic data (by term, college, and program) and display comparative data across the institution. The dashboard even allows the user to select two demographic attributes at the same time. This data dashboard was designed to support the decentralized approach to identifying differential rates of student achievement and to take action to close equity gaps. When a specific student subpopulation is investigated, the diversity dashboard provides benchmarking against the university as a whole, the college/school, and the department (Standard 1.D.4).

A more detailed discussion of equity gaps and the use of the diversity dashboard is included in the progress report for Recommendation 1.

Section 3. Programmatic Assessment

This section includes two main parts: Academic Program Assessment (i.e., assessment that takes place within SUU’s various “Majors”) and General Education Assessment. During the period of time between April 2021 and December 2023, SUU has engaged in efforts to update and refine assessment processes and reporting systems. At the end of this section, several examples are included to illustrate the use of program assessment information to improve student success.

3.1 Academic Program Assessment

For more than a decade, Southern Utah University (SUU) has used a cloud-based software platform called “TracDat” to collect assessment data for academic programs. At this point, the actual software program has changed names (“Nuventive Improve”), but it is still referred to as “TracDat” on campus.

One drawback of using this (or any) specialized software platform for assessment reporting is that access is restricted (requires ongoing administration to provide user access) and that the interface is rather unintuitive (i.e., a bit “clunky”). When these limitations are combined with leadership changes that inevitably occur within each academic department, the use of TracDat was inconsistent across campus.

In a document shared with academic leaders throughout the Division of Academic Affairs, Dr. James Sage (Associate Provost) and Dr. Christian Reiner (Executive Director of Institutional Research & Assessment) outlined a new, simplified approach to both assessment reporting and strategic plan reporting (see [A Simplified Approach to Assessment & Strategic Plan Reporting](#)). Part One of this document addresses Assessment Reporting for academic programs, including challenges associated with using TracDat and the benefits of streamlining the assessment reporting process (Standard 1.C.5).

(Note: Part Two of this document addresses a streamlined annual reporting approach to the new Strategic Plan which focuses on the 3 Ps [People, Purpose, Place] and the 5 Opportunities identified by President Benson. Copies of those annual reports on the new Strategic Plan are included in the [Resources](#) folder, in the [UEPs - Academic Affairs - 2023](#) subfolder.)

Recognizing the limitations of TracDat and exploring alternative options with the Associate Deans from each college/school, Dr. Sage and Dr. Reiner developed a parallel assessment reporting system using familiar digital tools readily available to campus (Google Docs and Google Sheets).

Identifying broad components of academic program assessment (program learning outcomes, curriculum maps, assessment approach, results, plans for improvement), a simplified template was developed and a series of Google Sheets were created for each academic program (or each “group” of academic programs that shared similar learning outcomes, such as Biology and Biology Education). In this sense, these Google Sheets replicated the same data fields that

existed in TracDat, but in an interface that was far more accessible and more familiar than TracDat.

Likewise, wherever existing information was already available (i.e., SUU’s Catalog where program learning outcomes are stored, in alignment with Standard 1.C.3), that information was pre-populated into these Google Sheets. As a result, during this first year of implementation, Department Chairs and faculty who are engaged in assessment reporting only need to enter three types of information: a curriculum map, a description of their assessment approach, and assessment results (which include goals and plans for improvement). In subsequent years, only the assessment results portion needs to be added (though a check of the curriculum map and assessment approach is encouraged just to make sure those remain current).

To support the transition to this new assessment reporting approach, Sage and Reiner designed and delivered a series of training sessions in Fall 2023 ([schedule of events](#); [outline of topics](#)). Likewise, one-on-one meetings were also scheduled to assist those who needed additional support and guidance.

Throughout Fall 2023, academic programs started populating these Google Sheets with assessment information. This [resource document](#) includes a series of screenshots that illustrate the new Google Sheet layout used for academic program assessment reporting. Screenshots are taken from real examples of assessment reports across a variety of academic programs at SUU.

An important note about academic program assessment reporting: for those programs with [specialized \(disciplinary\) accreditation](#), the University has allowed accreditation reports and assessment efforts to be used in lieu of this new assessment reporting approach. Because the demands of specialized accreditation are unique, varied, and rigorous, this substitution is justified. As a result, programs with specialized accreditation can provide their accreditation reports and updated assessment information in the format required by their individual accrediting body.

Moving forward, Sage and Reiner will continue to support and guide academic program assessment efforts using this new interface. Each summer, a new “worksheet” will be added to the existing Google Sheets to support updated assessment reporting. For example, in summer 2024, a new “2023-24” worksheet will be added to collect assessment information assembled for the 2023-2024 academic year.

3.2 General Education Assessment

At Southern Utah University (SUU), the General Education Committee ([GEC](#)) is responsible for providing oversight of the General Education (GE) program requirements, including courses, assessment, and professional development. SUU’s GE program requirements are established by the Utah System of Higher Education (USHE), specifically policy R470.

The GE program at SUU is managed primarily in two ways by the GEC: through a systematic curriculum review process and through an assessment approach (Standard 1.C.6). Distinct

curriculum and assessment workgroups provide guidance and leadership to ensure the GE program is effective.

[a] GEC Curriculum Workgroup

The GEC’s curriculum workgroup is responsible for two main tasks: routine annual reviews of existing GE courses and review of course proposals seeking to add or remove GE designation. In both cases, the curriculum workgroup ensures there is alignment between the designated GE course and the learning outcomes defined by R470 for that GE category. By following a set schedule (see below), the curriculum workgroup reviews all GE courses on a three-year cycle.

Table 3.2a: GE Curriculum Review Cycle

Semester	GE Category Reviewed
Fall 2021	Social & Behavioral Sciences
Spring 2022	Fine Arts
Fall 2022	Written Communication, American Institutions, Quantitative Literacy, Info Literacy
Spring 2023	Humanities
Fall 2023	Life Sciences & Fine Arts
Spring 2024	Physical Sciences
Fall 2024	Social & Behavioral Sciences (<i>cycle restart</i>)

When reviewing a GE course, the curriculum workgroup requests from the department the following information: (i) a copy of the course syllabus and (ii) a response to a brief series of survey questions. For example, these questions include the following: *Does this course continue to meet the learning outcomes for this GE category? Does the syllabus list the official GE learning outcomes? Does this course have any prerequisites? Does this course also serve as a major requirement?* These questions help the GEC curriculum workgroup evaluate the overall alignment of the course with GE learning outcomes. These questions also remind departments of the expectations associated with offering courses that carry a GE designation.

Based on a review of course syllabi and survey responses, the curriculum workgroup provides feedback to departments (including recommended changes or revisions) and produces a final report. Copies of these final reports are included in the [Resources](#) folder. For example, here are the reports for [Fall 2021 - Social and Behavioral Sciences](#) and for [Spring 2022 - Fine Arts](#).

This GE curriculum review process has helped to ensure alignment between the learning outcomes defined in policy R470 and the specific GE courses offered at SUU. It also helps to reinforce the idea that GE courses should be focused on meeting the needs of students who are completing GE requirements (compared to meeting the needs of students entering into a major or program of study). This is an important management process for the GE program as a whole.

On occasion, this GE curriculum review process will lead to the suggested removal of a GE designation from a course (which is no longer addressing GE learning outcomes) or to

recommended revisions of a course to ensure alignment with GE learning outcomes. Likewise, when new courses are proposed (seeking GE designation), the curriculum workgroup provides a careful review and recommendation to the GEC as a whole (either supporting the proposal, suggesting revisions in order to receive support, or denial of the proposal).

[b] GEC Assessment Workgroup

In 2014, SUU adopted [15 Essential Learning Outcomes \(or ELOs\)](#) based on those published by the American Association of Colleges & Universities (AAC&U) as part of AAC&U’s LEAP States initiative. SUU’s General Education Committee (GEC) assigned two of these 15 ELOs to each GE category ([depicted in this mapping of ELOs to GE categories](#)) and required instructors to report assessment information for their GE courses. GE instructors were then required to report assessment results for these two assigned ELOs through the University’s learning management system (Canvas).

This was a type of “Coverage Model” to ensure each of the 15 ELOs was “covered” by different GE categories. This Coverage Model was used from 2014–2018. In response to challenges associated with this Coverage Model, during the 2018–2019 academic year, the GEC transitioned to a New Model which allowed GE instructors to select any two ELOs to assess (see [summary of New Model](#)).

Removing assigned ELOs allowed greater flexibility and autonomy for GE instructors; as such, the intention was to ensure assessment information was more meaningful and authentic. This New Model has been used from 2019–2022. Below is a table depicting the shifts in GE assessment approaches.

Table 3.2b: Brief History of GE Assessment Approach

Year	GE Assessment Approach
2014 – 2018	Coverage Model: Report on 2 Assigned ELOs
2018 – 2019	Transition: Communication & Training
2019 – 2022	New Model: Report on 2 Self-Selected ELOs
2022 – 2024	Transition: Study, Evaluation, & New Assessment Pilot
2024 – forward	New Strategy: Self-Reports on “Naming” & “Framing” GE Learning Outcomes

[c] GE Assessment Methods

Based on feedback received in April 2021 from NWCCU external evaluators, the GEC was urged to rethink the use of the 15 ELOs. Most LEAP institutions (across the country and in the State of Utah) have discontinued use of the 15 ELOs and instead identified a smaller number of outcomes to use in their approach to GE assessment.

At the same time, the GEC was aware of shortcomings associated with the New Model which allowed faculty to select any two of the ELOs to assess. Among these challenges was the fact that SUU’s GE program requirements already included a set of GE learning outcomes that were

established by USHE policy R470. So, SUU's GE program was attempting to simultaneously adhere to the learning outcomes in USHE policy R470 (for the purposes of curriculum review) and also adhere to the 15 institutional ELOs (for the purposes of assessment). This was both confusing and unnecessary.

Thus, during the 2021–2022 and 2022–2023 academic years, the GEC engaged in careful deliberation about GE learning outcomes and GE assessment. During these semesters, the GEC conducted several small “pilot” programs to explore a new approach to GE assessment. What has emerged is a New Strategy for GE assessment that relies on self-reports from faculty and students regarding the GE learning outcomes included in USHE policy R470.

This New Strategy for GE assessment no longer relies on the 15 ELOs; instead, the focus is on a single set of GE learning outcomes for each GE requirement as they appear in USHE policy R470 and in SUU's current [Catalog](#). This New Strategy includes gathering instructor feedback regarding the degree to which those intended GE learning outcomes were addressed. Likewise, this new approach allows GE instructors to “name” and “frame” these GE learning outcomes within the context of their course so that students are more aware of how learning activities are connected with these intended learning outcomes. Finally, this New Strategy gathers student feedback on the extent to which they made advances with respect to the GE learning outcomes.

This New Strategy for GE assessment is also explicitly modeled on a continuous improvement approach, and instructors have access to information that can be used to make immediate and meaningful changes to course design, assessment methods, and pedagogical techniques. Likewise, the GEC can identify trends and take action (reviewing courses, offering professional development, etc.). Prior approaches to GE assessment did not include this ability to close the loop regarding improvements to the GE program itself (which prompted NWCCU's Recommendation 3).

Removing the 15 ELOs from GE assessment and relying solely on the GE learning outcomes from R470 aligns with NWCCU's Standard 1.C.6 which states that institutions are required to establish and assess *either* (a) a set of GE learning outcomes *or* (b) a set of institutional outcomes. Thus, by establishing and assessing just the policy R470 GE learning outcomes, this allows SUU to continue to comply with NWCCU requirements by focusing on GE learning outcomes.

Moving forward, the R470 GE learning outcomes will serve as the common set of learning outcomes for all of SUU's undergraduate degree programs (because all associate and bachelor degrees require the full GE program). Of course, individual associate or bachelor degree programs can identify additional learning outcomes that go beyond the GE learning outcomes (for example, those learning outcomes that are aligned specifically with their disciplines).

A comprehensive pilot of this New Strategy is occurring in Spring 2024 ([link to GE Assessment Pilot document](#)). Then, beginning in Fall 2024, all of SUU's GE courses will be required to participate in this New Strategy for GE assessment.

3.3 Examples of Programmatic Assessment and Continuous Improvement

Below are three examples of programmatic assessment and continuous improvement (Standard 1.C.7). The first two examples come from undergraduate academic programs without specialized accreditation (Psychology and Physical Education). The third example comes from Student Affairs and includes a brief discussion of three different units.

Example 1: Department of Psychology (includes: Psychology major *and* Psychology-Human Services emphasis)

Resources related to Psychology’s assessment report:

- [Psychology - Curriculum Map](#)
- [Psychology - Assessment Approach](#)
- [Psychology - Assessment Results 2022-23](#)

The Department of Psychology supports one undergraduate major in Psychology (including an emphasis in Human Services) as well as a professional Doctorate in Psychology (Psy.D.). This example is focused on the undergraduate Psychology major and emphasis. Because the program learning outcomes are so similar, the Department has grouped their assessment report together into a single Google Sheet for both the major in Psychology and the Human Services emphasis.

Using the new reporting process launched in Fall 2023, the Department successfully incorporated their existing [curriculum map](#) and overall [assessment approach](#) to the new reporting framework. The Department also provided [assessment results](#) for the prior academic year (2022-2023) for specific program learning outcomes for the Psychology major and the Human Services emphasis.

The Department’s overall assessment report is complete and demonstrates that the new approach using Google Sheets provides a framework that allows departments to use their existing assessment information. For each program learning outcome, the Department identified an appropriate assessment method (either a survey or an exam/quiz), desired targets for student achievement, and a schedule (cycle) for assessment. The Department also provided a summary of the assessment results in a clear and straightforward manner.

For example, with respect to their third program learning outcome (Knowledge Base in Psychology), they reported that students averaged a score of 89.7% on the content exam used for assessment. One improvement would be to include the number of students involved in that assessment method. That suggestion has been shared with the Department of Psychology for future assessment efforts (along with other broad suggestions, such as simplifying their curriculum map and reconsidering the schedule of assessment so that each learning outcome is not assessed each year).

Finally, the Department included a thoughtful reflection on their current assessment approach and developed some plans for improvement. Note: because plans for improvement could involve multiple program learning outcomes, the improvement plans column spans across all learning outcomes (rows). This enables a department to develop plans that involve multiple program

learning outcomes at the same time. For this example, the Department of Psychology reported a suspected gap in reporting by students (i.e., students actually engaged in various forms of communication, but they did not report engaging in those activities). The Department has a plan to address this suspected gap in reporting and will monitor student responses moving forward.

Example 2: Department of Kinesiology and Outdoor Recreation (includes: Physical Education major *and* PE-Teaching emphasis and PE-Coaching emphasis)

Resources related to Physical Education’s assessment report:

- [Physical Education - Curriculum Map](#)
- [Physical Education - Assessment Approach](#)
- [Physical Education - Assessment Results 2022-23](#)

The Department of Kinesiology and Outdoor Recreation supports several undergraduate majors and two graduate programs. For the purpose of this example, the undergraduate Physical Education major will be presented, which includes an emphasis in Teaching and an emphasis in Coaching. Because the program learning outcomes are so similar for these two emphases, the Department has grouped their assessment report together into a single Google Sheet.

Using the new reporting process launched in Fall 2023, the Department successfully migrated their existing [curriculum map](#) and overall [assessment approach](#) to the new reporting framework. The Department also provided [assessment results](#) for the prior academic year (2022–2023) for specific program learning outcomes in the Physical Education major. The Department’s overall assessment report is complete and demonstrates that the new approach using Google Sheets provides a framework that allows departments to use their existing assessment information.

For each program learning outcome, the Department identified an appropriate assessment method to measure student learning. For some learning outcomes, the Department identified multiple measures. The Department also identified desired targets for student achievement as well as a schedule (cycle) for assessment.

The Department also provided a summary of the assessment results in a clear and straightforward manner. In this example, the Department has also identified the total number of students included in each assessment effort. For example, with respect to the learning outcome related to becoming an effective professional in the field, the Department reported that “93% of PE 3090 students in AY 22-23 passed the adaptive teaching field experience with a score above 80% (n=14 students, mean=90%),” which will be used as a model for assessment reporting for other departments.

Finally, the Department included a thoughtful reflection on their current assessment approach and developed some plans for improvement. The Department reported that the targets were exceeded, therefore no significant changes appear to be warranted. However, the plans for improvement section notes that the Department Chair is new in their role and so they identified the need to ensure the Department’s faculty are fully engaged in the assessment process and that they possess the information they need to contribute to the Department’s assessment efforts.

Example 3: Program Assessment Examples from Student Affairs (includes: Academic Advising, Career Center, and Tutoring Center)

- [Link to combined Assessment Reports for: Academic Advising, Career Center, and Tutoring Center.](#)

As a third example, SUU has identified a slightly different approach to illustrate assessment and student achievement. For this third example, a few brief insights from the Division of Student Affairs will be summarized below (with a more extended discussion included in the progress report for Recommendation 2).

These insights are intended to show that SUU is engaged in a systematic approach to assessment and student achievement that extends beyond the Division of Academic Affairs and Academic Program Assessment (illustrated by the first two examples, above).

For this third example, three Student Affairs units have been selected, including (i) Academic Advising, (ii) the Career Center, and (iii) the Tutoring Center. Each of these units has completed an updated Unit Effectiveness Plan (UEP) and each has formulated an Assessment Report. (Details provided in Recommendation 2.)

(a) Academic Advising

Academic Advising was inspired by two research reports which concluded that empowering students in the academic planning process resulted in a greater percentage of students persisting. Therefore, the unit has prioritized the development of a robust and comprehensive academic plan and involving the student in the process. This corresponds to their Student Learning Outcome #2: Students will understand and (in conjunction with advisor) develop an academic plan that identifies 1) appropriate majors/minors to meet their goals, 2) classes that will meet degree requirements, and 3) a “map” for completing all necessary academic requirements.

The leadership team in Academic Advising created a rubric to determine students’ level of academic plan proficiency and involvement (5 levels: novice, beginning, developing, accomplished, and advanced) with detailed descriptors of each level. Advisors used the rubric to rate their advisees during a two-week sample period, dividing students into a matrix of four groups: declared and exploratory majors, and students with either freshmen and sophomore academic class standing.

A baseline measure was then established for each of the four groups and Academic Advising has set goals of increasing the percentage of students who score at the desired level on the rubric. As one example, 61% of the sample of declared sophomore students were at the “accomplished” level or above and the goal is to reach 70% or greater. The advising leadership team plans to increase personalized outreach and focus appointments on discussing student goals and cooperative plan development, with less emphasis on course scheduling. Gathering of this data has helped Academic Advising adjust their approach to providing academic advising. Based on these results, the advising leadership team can establish new priorities and offer additional

training as needed. A follow-up study will be conducted in an effort to continue measuring effectiveness of academic advising and make improvements.

(b) Career Center

The Career Center has the responsibility to track the university outcome of “successful post-graduate placement.” They also contribute to this goal through their Service Area Outcome #1: Provide high-quality services and programming that contributes to the overall success of post-graduate placement.

The Career Center tracks this metric through the graduate questionnaire where students report on their successful placement into a job or graduate school up to six months after graduation. The Center also tracks their own efforts toward this goal, counting students they served in preparation for internships and graduate school, job search skills, resume and cover letter writing, and more. They also assess the quality of their services through a post-appointment survey that students complete.

There was a slight decline in post-graduate placement in the 2021–22 academic year with 87% of all graduates in that year obtaining placement within six months of graduating. This was somewhat of a surprise since the overall trend prior to that had been increasing and the year prior the overall rate was 90%.

The Career Center responded by spending additional time and resources on services that benefited students later in their academic career (resume and cover letter writing, job search skills, etc.) and placed less focus on services that mostly benefit students earlier in their academic career (career assessments). They also tracked the quality of their services through a post-appointment survey. Results were strong with 97% of students rating services as excellent and 98% reporting that they felt “well-prepared to create a resume/interview/search for a job/etc.” after meeting with a career coach. Subsequently, the post-graduate placement rate in the 2022–23 academic year increased to 89% overall.

In today’s world where the value of higher education is questioned, having a strong post-graduation placement into a career or graduate school is critical. The Career Center will continue to place emphasis on providing high-quality services to help students meet this goal.

(c) Tutoring Center

The Tutoring Center provides peer tutoring assistance for student learners in high-enrollment General Education courses, most prominently in STEM disciplines such as Mathematics, Chemistry, Biology, Physics, and Engineering. Helping learners in these fields requires that tutors themselves possess the knowledge, skills, and abilities to support learners. Because of this, the Tutoring Center has included a focus on knowledge acquisition for tutors, especially in historically difficult courses. In short: learners are more likely to succeed if their tutor has the knowledge and skills needed to support their learning and earn passing grades in their courses. This corresponds to the following Student Learning Outcome #1: Students will demonstrate understanding of coursework concepts by achieving a C or better in tutored courses.

Using an Argos grade report, Tutoring Center staff compare the grades of tutored students to students in the same class who were not tutored. Comparisons show that 87% to 95% of tutored students were passing their courses with a C or better (depending on the course). However, it concerned the Tutoring Center staff that only 80% of tutored students in MATH 1040 (Statistics) were passing with a C or better. As the most requested course in the Tutoring Center, this lower pass rate was concerning because it was notably lower than other courses.

Comments on the fall feedback survey pointed to the fact that tutors had been exposed to one pedagogical strategy that their own instructor had used, but that three pedagogical strategies (calculator, Excel, StatCrunch) were actually being used across the variety of faculty who teach the Statistics class each semester. Tutors were also frustrated by this challenge.

In response, tutors were embedded into the sections of faculty who were using pedagogical methods unfamiliar to the tutor. These tutors were tasked with holding review sessions for other tutors and all Statistics tutors were invited to attend the Peer-Assisted Learning groups of the embedded tutors.

As a result of this effort (increasing tutor knowledge based on data collected), the pass rate of tutored students in Statistics increased from 80% in Fall 2022 to 90% in Spring 2023. Interestingly, participation in Statistics tutoring also increased by 3% from Fall 2022 to Spring 2023, and showed a 6% increase from the previous Spring semester. In past semesters, there had been a decrease in requests for Statistics tutoring from fall to spring. These data-informed interventions were determined to be successful and will be kept in place as staffing allows.

Section 4. Moving Forward

What follows are some examples of “next steps” that have emerged as a result of preparing this Mid-Cycle Report and the progress reports on the three Recommendations. This process of self-reflection has revealed significant accomplishments since April 2021. At the same time, it has also revealed the work that still needs to be completed in support of SUU’s students, faculty, staff, and community. What follows is a brief summary of those “next steps” as SUU moves forward toward its next Year-Seven Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness review, scheduled for Spring 2028.

4.1 Mission Fulfillment

With the approval of SUU’s new Strategic Plan in December 2023, a comprehensive “scorecard” will be developed using the metrics (benchmarks and goals) for each strategic priority. Several metrics still need to be formalized and corresponding dashboards created. An annual report template will also be developed so that mission fulfillment and Strategic Plan goals can be tracked each year. Finally, the list of peer institutions will be revisited and updated as needed.

In terms of institutional planning, the three campus-wide committees (Culture Committee, Facilities Committee, and Enrollment Committee) will continue to work on efforts to ensure the University is able to fulfill its mission.

4.2 Student Achievement

Indicators of student achievement will continue to be made available to campus through various data dashboards. These will be monitored regularly. In fact, many of these same indicators are included in the new Strategic Plan. Other indicators, such as summer participation rates, will be reviewed carefully and adjustments to the Summer semester course schedule will be made as needed.

Regarding equity gaps and other issues discussed in the progress report for Recommendation 1: the University has made significant strides in the areas of capacity-building and data availability. Moving forward, the University will use these foundational elements to develop targeted interventions to reduce barriers and close equity gaps. The University will continue to explore ways to gather information about the needs of campus (through a survey or other methods) and this information will be used to inform campus-wide changes, initiatives, and programming.

4.3 Programmatic Assessment

The new, simplified approach to reporting academic program assessment will continue to be supported to ensure each program has a complete assessment plan and is conducting routine assessments of student learning and reporting the results of such efforts. A focus on continuous improvement will ensure that assessment efforts lead to meaningful changes that improve student learning and student success.

The General Education Committee (GEC) will continue with implementation of its new GE assessment approach. This includes explaining the new GE assessment approach and clarifying who will have access to assessment results. This will also include offering a range of professional development opportunities for faculty teaching GE courses (to help ensure a focus on GE learning outcomes and how to use assessment results to improve instruction). Finally, the GEC will update its curriculum review process and remain engaged in state-wide discussions of policy R470 and related policies (such as transfer of GE credits).

Within the Division of Student Affairs and the student support services discussed in the progress report for Recommendation 2, several “next steps” have been identified, including further development of Assessment Reports, aligning UEPs to the new Strategic Plan, using disaggregated data to develop targeted interventions, scheduling a “data summit” to share approaches, and formulating an “accountability scorecard” for units within Student Affairs.

Section 5. Addendums

SUU has prepared three addendums for Recommendations resulting from the University's April 2021 Year-Seven Comprehensive Review and corresponding to those outlined in the [June 2021 letter from NWCCU](#). Each addendum includes a written progress report on steps taken and accomplishments for each Recommendation.

Final reports on these Recommendations will be prepared and submitted with SUU's Year-Seven Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness (EIE) scheduled for Spring 2028.

ADDENDUM 1

Recommendation 1 - Equity Gaps and Targeted Interventions

Text from [2021 letter from NWCCU](#):

Recommendation 1: Spring 2021 Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness — Use the strong foundation of equity gaps data to develop more targeted and intentional strategies and interventions to mitigate gaps for specific student sub-groups. (2020 Standard(s) 1.D.4)

The goal of closing equity gaps (or attainment gaps) is a priority for SUU and this recommendation from NWCCU has prompted the University to engage in these topics in meaningful ways. What follows is a progress report on Recommendation 1. Beyond supplying this progress report in connection with SUU’s Mid-Cycle Review (Spring 2024), the University will continue to work on systematic ways to address equity/attainment gaps and will include a final report on Recommendation 1 in connection with its Year-Seven Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness (EIE), scheduled for Spring 2028.

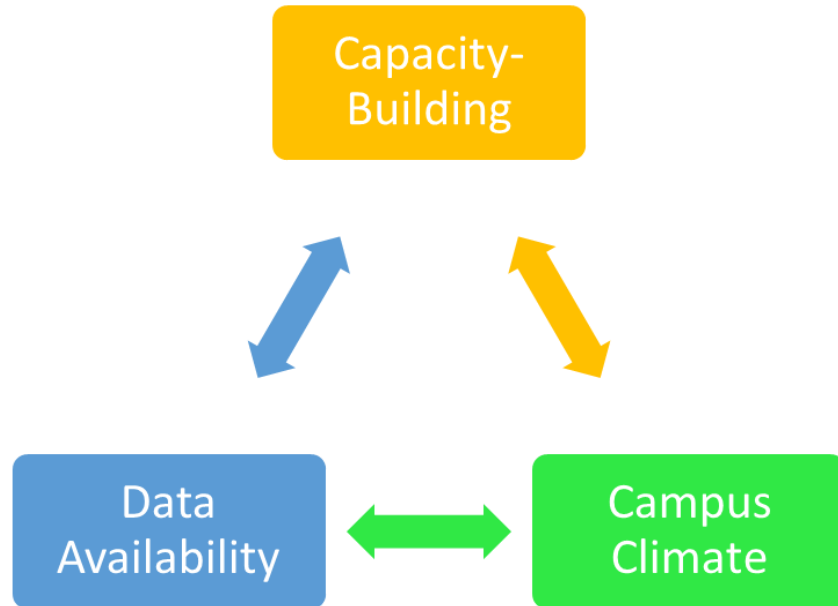
Introduction & Background:

In March 2021, the Office of the Provost established the Attainment Gaps Committee (AGC) to assist in the onboarding of a new Chief Diversity Officer (CDO) and to springboard the creation of data-driven initiatives to reduce equity gaps among different student populations. With broad representation across the University, the AGC collected and synthesized a wide range of available disaggregated student data and conducted a campus SWOT analysis based on the National Association of System Heads (NASH) [Equity Action Framework](#).

Those findings were then used to draft a Strategic Roadmap for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). This DEI Strategic Roadmap was being developed in parallel to a new strategic plan. However, in Summer 2021, SUU’s President (Scott Wyatt) resigned his position and started working for the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education of Utah. Interim President Mindy Benson was appointed. Both the strategic plan and the draft DEI Strategic Roadmap document were placed on hold until a new, permanent President was identified.

Considering SUU’s institutional structure, culture, expertise, and staffing resources, the CDO and AGC decided to enhance SUU’s decentralized model for equity work by equipping and supporting responsible areas to improve and implement divisional, college, or departmental efforts. The foundational components of this decentralized approach are based on three components: (1) capacity-building, (2) data availability, and (3) campus climate.

Below is a sample diagram depicting these three components of SUU’s approach to addressing equity gaps (attainment gaps) and related efforts:



In what follows, a brief description of each component is provided along with planning efforts, contributors, and key achievements.

(1) Capacity-Building

SUU views capacity-building as efforts to improve knowledge, skills, abilities, and infrastructure to address, reduce, and ultimately eliminate equity gaps among different student populations. In order to build capacity across campus generally, and in each of our academic units specifically, the following initiatives were undertaken:

Establishment of the University Equity & Inclusion Committee and EDI Council

In response to the [SWOT analysis in Fall 2021](#) conducted by the Office of Equity & Inclusion and the Attainment Gaps Committee (AGC), two campus-wide bodies were formed to create infrastructure for a decentralized approach that would empower each academic unit to create targeted initiatives while simultaneously establishing a unified approach throughout the University.

The first body, the *University Equity & Inclusion (E&I) Committee*, consists of representatives from each division and holds the charge of establishing a strategic direction for cross-campus equity efforts. The Equity & Inclusion Committee has scheduled meetings every two weeks since December 2021. Current representation includes

- Daneka Souberbelle, Chief Diversity Officer, VP of Community Outreach & Engagement
- Brandon Wright, Assistant VP of Enrollment Management
- Chase Krohn, Center for Teaching Innovation
- Kevin Price, Assistant Vice President of Human Resources

- Matt McKenzie, Executive Director of Center for Teaching Innovation
- Brienne Kramer, Faculty Member and former Faculty Senate Representative
- Andrea Donovan, Counselor, Counseling & Psychological Services
- Ashleigh Zimmerman, Executive Director of Engagement and Belonging
- Christian Reiner, Executive Director of Institutional Research & Assessment
- Danielle Sheather, Faculty Member, College of Performing and Visual Arts
- Heather Garcia, Director of Student Involvement and Leadership
- Jake Johnson, former EOC Director and current Assistant Provost
- Landry Igiraneza, Manager of Center of Diversity and Inclusion
- Nikki Koontz, Assistant Vice President of Marketing Communication
- Ariana Marroquin, Student Representative, Vice President of DEI
- Eric Kirby, Faculty Member, School of Business

In addition to serving as the planning committee for the Summit on Belonging (described below), the members of the Equity & Inclusion Committee have successfully initiated, shepherded, and completed many initiatives in relation to capacity-building. The E&I Committee has also abandoned some efforts due to a lack of resources or institutional readiness. See the [E&I Committee's Roadmap](#) for an inventory of efforts, initiatives, and status.

The second body, the *Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Council* was established in 2022 to unite *existing* diversity committees (at the college, departmental, and program levels) to form a community of practice in order to share best practices and to benefit from resources and leadership training for their work within their specific areas. One representative from each college (and some departmental DEI committees) were meeting monthly during the 2022–2023 academic year. Colleges and departments represented on the EDI Council are:

- School of Business
- College of Health Sciences
- College of Natural Sciences
- College of Education and Human Development
- College of Humanities and Social Sciences
- Department of Theatre, Dance, and Arts Administration
- Center for Teaching Innovation
- Department of Aviation Sciences
- SUU Athletics
- SUU's Master of Public Administration Program

Due to the CDO's role change in August 2023 to the position of Vice President of Community Outreach & Engagement, the EDI Council has not met as a large group since the CDO's role change. However, individual DEI committees within colleges, departments, and programs have continued to meet on their own.

Summit on Belonging (Fall 2022 & Spring 2024)

The inaugural [Summit on Belonging](#) was a two-day professional development event for SUU faculty, employees, and graduate students held in October 2022. The SUU Equity & Inclusion Committee served as the planning body for the Summit on Belonging and enacted a “Knowledge-Skills-Attitude” approach, focusing its first efforts on building awareness of barriers to equity and basic skills to address those barriers. Three hundred fifty-two (352) participants registered for the event, resulting in over 600 hours of [professional development](#) on a variety of topics aimed at understanding how and why creating an inclusive learning environment is important to student success.

The second Summit on Belonging was planned for March 2024 with a theme of *Principles of Community*. However, due to emerging issues in Utah’s 2024 Legislative Session related to equity, diversity, and inclusion, the second Summit on Belonging has been postponed.

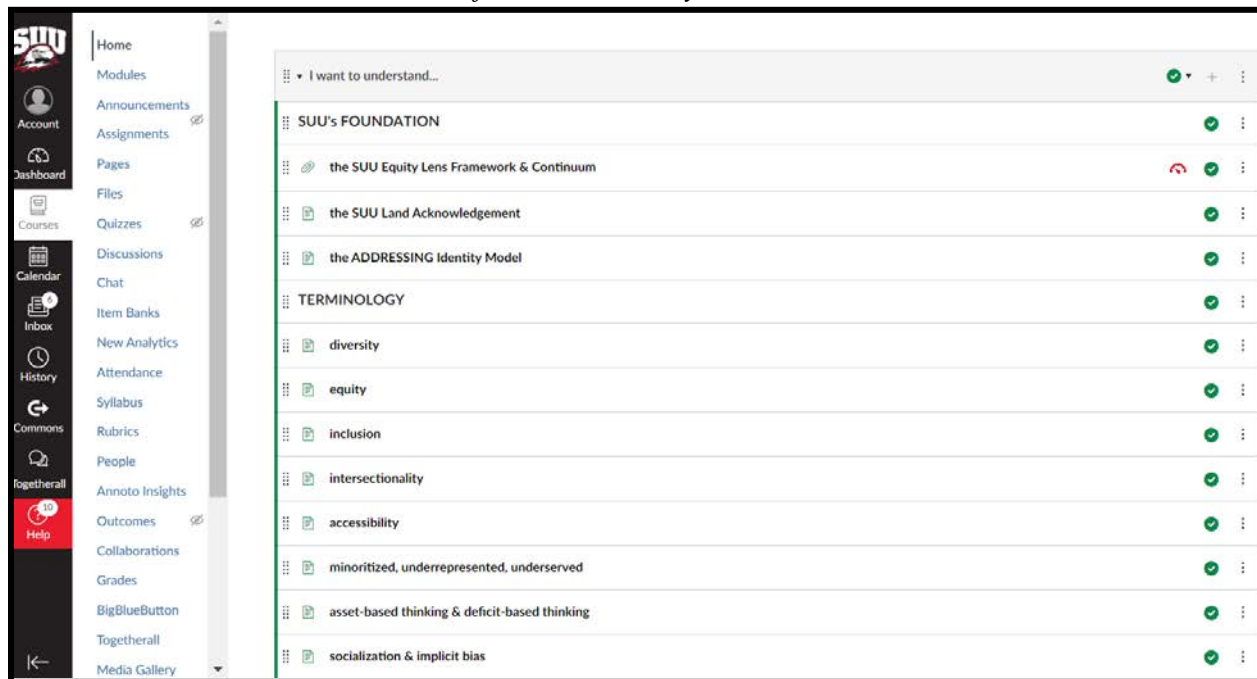
Learning & Development Belonging Fellow (Bri Kramer, Education)

In Fall 2023, the Chief Diversity Officer hired Dr. Brienne Kramer, Associate Professor, Teacher Education as a part-time [faculty fellow](#) to design and implement various learning opportunities and resources. This Belonging Fellow for Learning and Development works with Psy.D. doctoral students to build a virtual library of resources and professional development opportunities to support individuals in self-paced learning. The virtual library is organized to reflect progressive development of critical consciousness along four categories:

- I want to understand... (Foundational Knowledge)
- How do I... (Self-Reflection and Skill Development)
- I am ready to... (Leadership Development)
- I need more... (Additional Resources)

Below is a screenshot of the virtual library of resources as it appears in the University’s learning management system (Canvas).

Screenshot #1: Canvas Course Shell for EDIB Library



The completion date for the EDIB Library is planned for April 2024, with its official launch in August 2024.

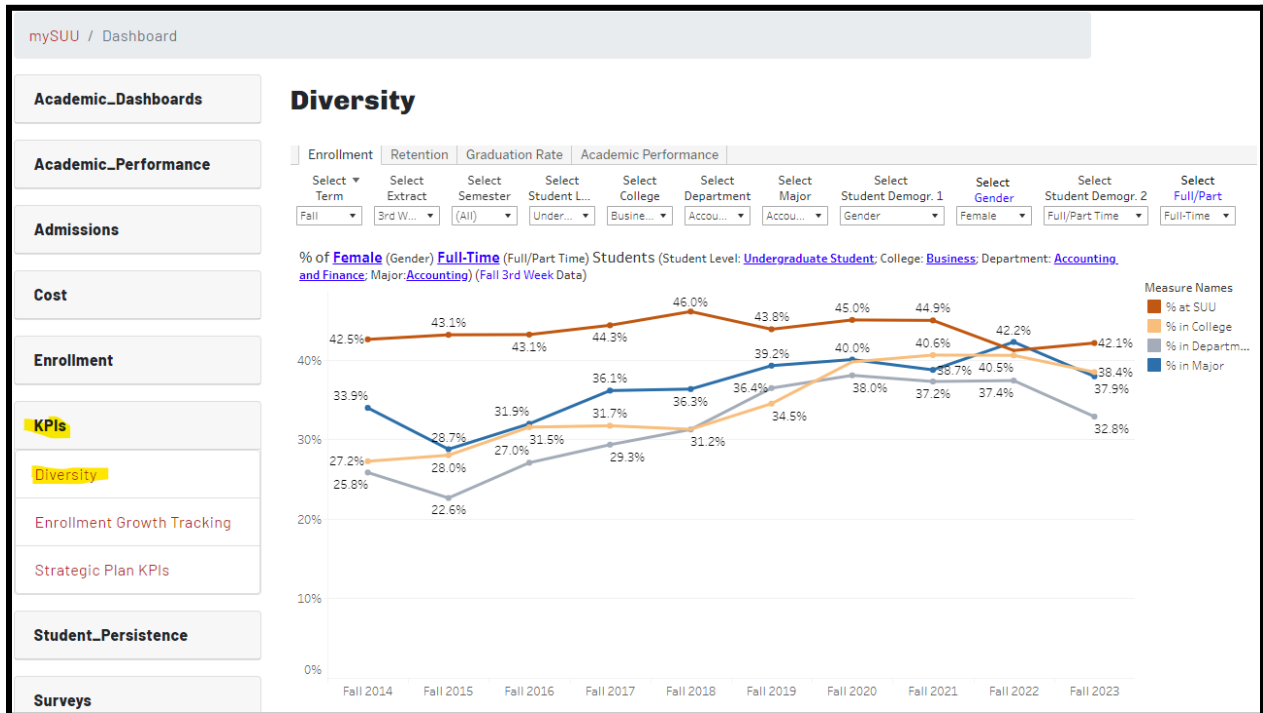
(2) Data Availability

Data Dashboards

The 2021 SWOT analysis conducted by the Attainment Gaps Committee (AGC) highlighted a need for usable disaggregated student data and improvement in its usability by campus leaders. With the support of Dr. Christian Reiner, Executive Director, Institution Research & Assessment, a dedicated diversity data dashboard was created to specifically help Deans and Department Chairs make informed decisions about student success measures in their academic units.

What follows are some sample screenshots from this new diversity data dashboard and a brief explanation of its functionality.

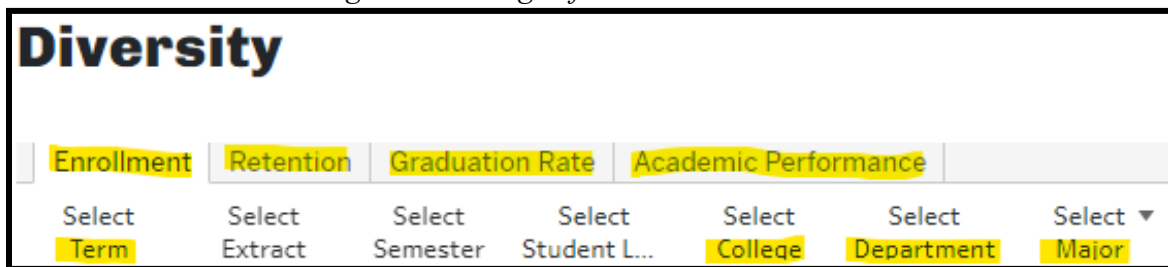
Screenshot #2: Diversity Data Dashboard



The diversity dashboard includes four (4) broad categories: Enrollment, Retention, Graduation Rate, and Academic Performance. These correspond to different “tabs” at the top of the dashboard.

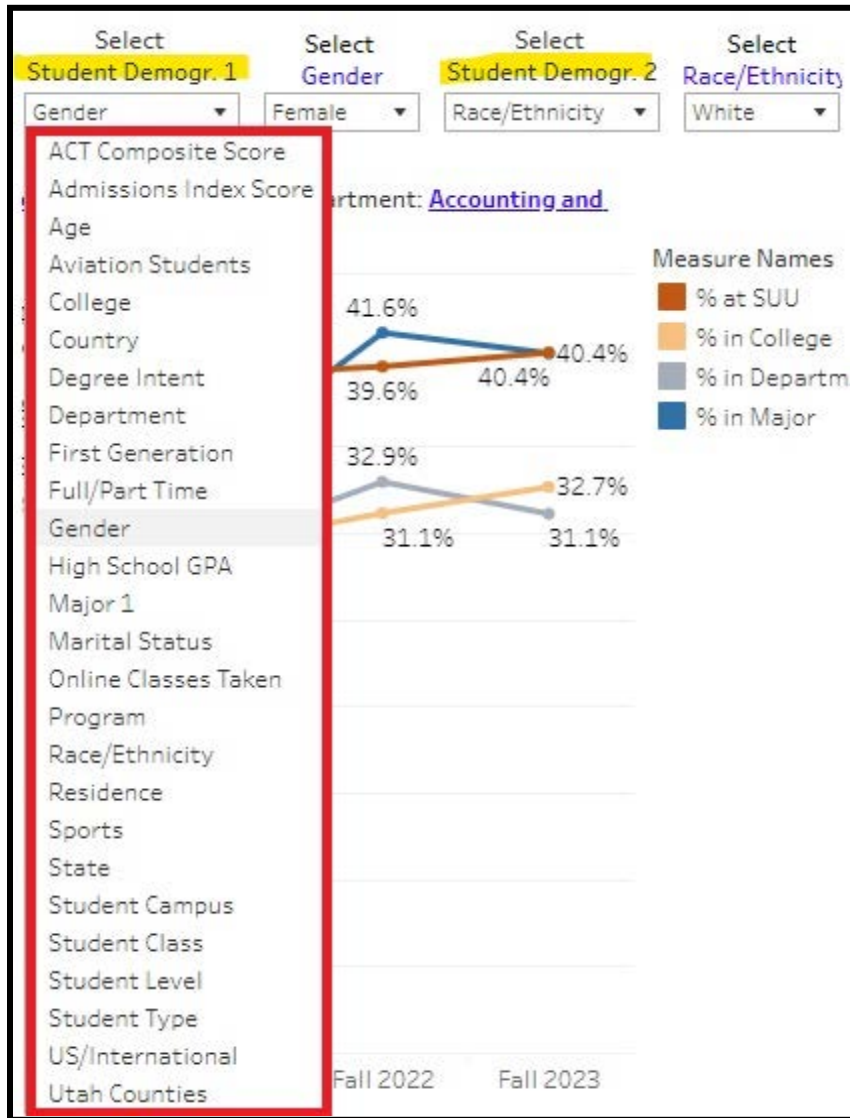
Within each category, the user can explore different institutional variables, including Term, Student Level, College/Department, and Major.

Screenshot #3: Broad Categories & Range of Institutional Variables



In terms of student demographic data, this diversity dashboard allows the user to explore a variety of student subpopulations (First Generation, Marital Status, Age, Gender, Race/Ethnicity, International, etc.).

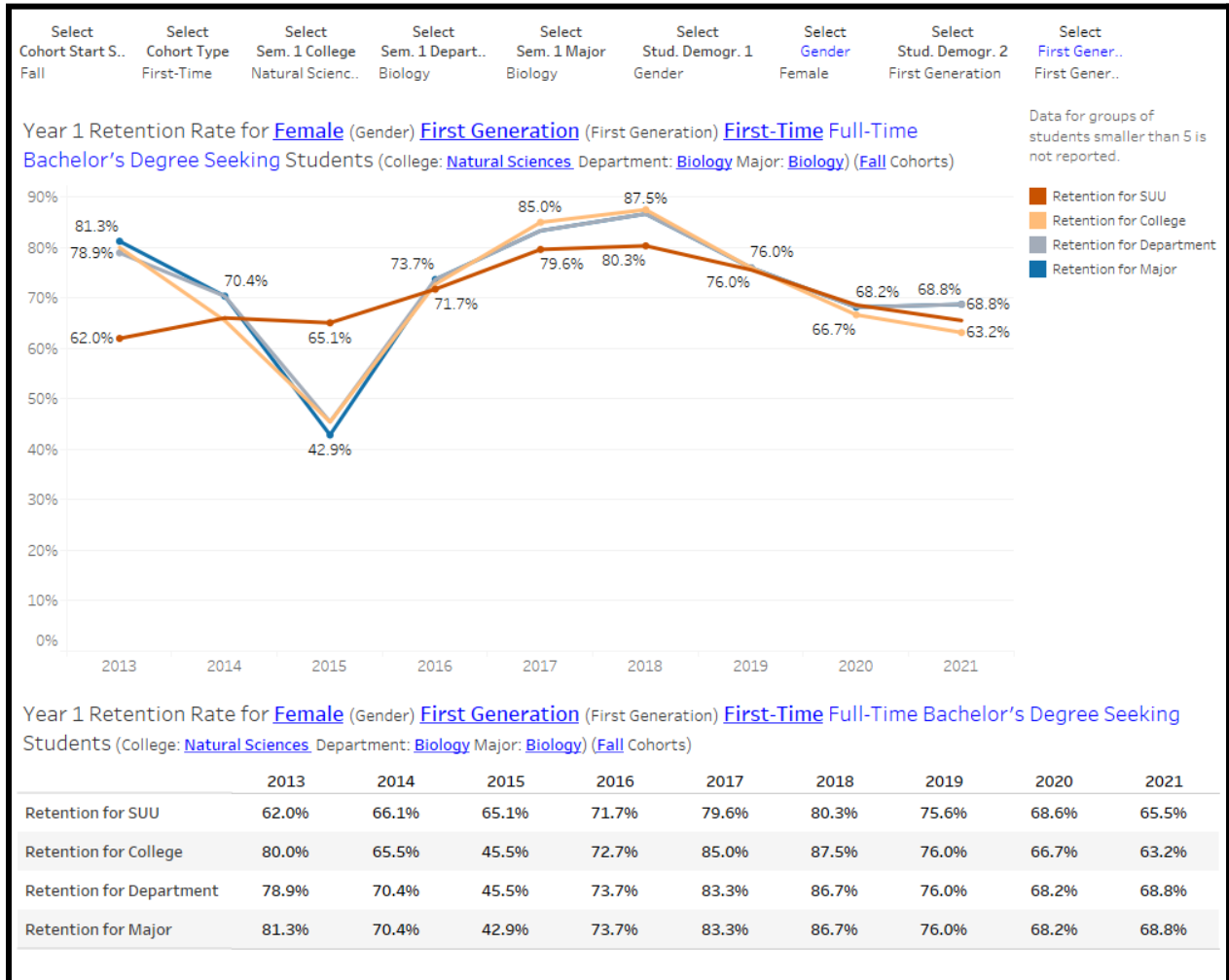
Screenshot #4: Range of Student Demographic Variables



This diversity dashboard allows users to disaggregate student demographic data (by term, college, and program) and display comparative data across the institution. The dashboard also allows the user to select two demographic attributes at the same time. This data dashboard was designed to support the decentralized approach to identifying differential rates of student achievement and to take action to close equity gaps.

For example, the diversity dashboard is able to display retention rates for first-time degree seeking Biology students who are female and first-generation. In this particular case, for the 2021 cohort, SUU’s overall retention rate for female first-generation students is 65.5%, and the retention rate for female first-generation students is 68.8% for the Department of Biology. Below is a screenshot of this disaggregated retention data.

Screenshot #5: Range of Student Demographic Variables (Displaying Retention Rates for Female, First Generation Biology Majors)



This suggests that, relative to the institution as a whole, the Department of Biology is supporting female students who are first-generation. Or, at least, it appears that the Department of Biology is not creating any significant barriers for students in this demographic category.

However, in the hypothetical case where retention rates for female first-generation students in Biology were significantly *lower* than the institutional retention rate, then this could prompt the Department of Biology to further explore why female first-generation students are not being retained at higher rates. Again, this aligns with the decentralized model where individual colleges, departments, and majors are responsible for identifying barriers to student success and taking meaningful action to help close equity gaps.

Belonging Fellow for Data Analysis (Rick Brown, Mathematics)

To further efforts to make disaggregated data readily available and usable, the Belonging Fellow for Data Analysis position was created in the CDO's office. Dr. Rick Brown, Assistant Professor

of Mathematics, is working with the Office of Institutional Research & Assessment (IR&A) to provide predictive analysis for student data.

For example, Dr. Brown conducted a logistic regression analysis to predict the probability that a student obtains a DFW in a class based on their sex, race/ethnicity, and high school GPA. This type of analysis is foundational to understanding possible causes of equity gaps, rather than solely identifying the disparity. Utilizing course data from Fall 2016 to Summer 2022 (approximately 550,000 records), this analysis identifies the high school GPA that predicts a 25% probability of a student getting a D, F, or W, by student group. The model for each group, broken up by race and sex, is given below.

Screenshot #6: Preliminary Equity Gap Report

Group	Logistic Model	GPA 25% Cutoff Value	Number of Records Below Cutoff	Percent of Records Below Cutoff
White Female	3.611 - 1.645(GPA)	2.863	8,426	4.15
White Male	2.112 - 1.209(GPA)	2.656	10,090	6.50
Asian Female	2.851 - 1.448(GPA)	2.727	60	1.53
Asian Male	1.746 - 1.012(GPA)	2.811	520	19.10
Hispanic Female	3.399 - 1.545(GPA)	2.912	2,287	11.99
Hispanic Male	2.068 - 1.108(GPA)	2.857	2,721	18.47
Nonresident Female	-0.258 - 0.613(GPA)	1.373	58	0.87
Nonresident Male	-1.005 - 0.176(GPA)	0.530	76	0.67
2+ Races Female	2.427 - 1.198(GPA)	2.943	370	11.91
2+ Races Male	1.178 - 0.762(GPA)	2.989	452	25.46
Unknown Female	2.406 - 1.214(GPA)	2.886	1,234	7.70
Unknown Male	0.942 - 0.778(GPA)	2.624	1,414	12.78
USoC Female	2.535 - 1.192(GPA)	3.048	2,131	22.16
USoC Male	0.994 - 0.756(GPA)	2.768	2,205	20.57

In this model, USoC stands for “underrepresented student of color” and includes the racial categories of Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander. This meta-identity allows analysis of underrepresented student groups without the need to omit data because of small population sizes.

The Data Analysis Fellow will continue to explore and conduct these types of analyses to inform targeted initiatives to eliminate equity gaps.

(3) Campus Climate

In 2020, SUU conducted the [HEDS Climate Survey](#). Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic made it difficult to collect sufficient data to make generalizations for the campus.

In February 2023, the Equity and Inclusion Committee and the Culture Committee (created by President Benson in August 2022 to find ways to enhance SUU’s culture of caring) began planning the development of a new community survey to assess climate and institutional culture.

Taking the lead from President Benson who indicated that “SUU should be a place where everyone feels valued, respected, accepted and engaged,” the Committee, under the leadership of Institutional Research & Assessment, sent out a campus-wide survey, collected 952 responses, coded the data, and established themes around which SUU could establish a framework for improving culture and a climate survey to assess it.

Those themes are:

- Acknowledgment
- Community
- Resources
- Effective Leadership
- Compensation
- Meaningful Work and Learning

Currently, because of bandwidth limitations and concerns emerging from the Utah Legislature (restricting the use of diversity, equity, and inclusion concepts), the climate survey is on hold.

Additional Efforts

Native American Tuition Gap Award — SUU developed the Native American Tuition Gap Award, which covers student tuition and mandatory fees and SUU scholarships for undergraduate students who are enrolled members of Utah’s federally recognized tribes and other Native American students. This award is a direct effort to improve the retention of tribal students, who have indicated that financial need is a major factor contributing to attrition (and thus exacerbating equity gaps for Native American students).

Q Center — In Fall 2022, SUU opened a full student support office centering the needs of LGBTQ+ students with the priority of increasing a sense of belonging and connecting students to mental and other health resources, all of which have been identified as substantial barriers to retention (and thus exacerbating equity gaps for LGBTQ+ students).

Summary & Next Steps

While the University has made significant strides in the areas of capacity-building and data availability, completing a comprehensive campus climate survey has faced challenges and setbacks. This is one aspect that will require additional effort in the future. Likewise, while some targeted interventions have occurred, the development of the diversity dashboard and the work completed by the Data Analysis Fellow have established the foundation upon which additional targeted interventions can occur.

ADDENDUM 2

Recommendation 2 - Student Support Services

Text from [2021 letter from NWCCU](#):

Recommendation 2: Spring 2021 Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness — Develop systematic and sustainable evaluation and planning processes to refine the effectiveness of student support services, and to evaluate appropriate resources for student support services. (2020 Standard(s) 1.B.1; 2.G.1)

Student success is a top priority for SUU and this recommendation from NWCCU has prompted the University to engage in these topics in meaningful ways. What follows is a progress report on Recommendation 2. Beyond supplying this progress report in connection with SUU’s Mid-Cycle Review (Spring 2024), SUU will continue to work on systematic ways to support student success and will include a final report on Recommendation 2 in connection with SUU’s Year-Seven Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness (EIE), scheduled for Spring 2028.

To address Recommendation 2, the Division of Student Affairs engaged in a robust, division-wide planning and effectiveness process that culminated in the production of updated and more robust Unit Effectiveness Plans (UEPs) and Assessment Reports for each unit within the Division.

Each [Student Affairs UEP](#) includes an updated mission statement, service area outcomes, learning outcomes, metrics/data, and outcomes aligned to the Strategic Plan. There are some additional sections that help the units articulate why they exist, how they contribute to student success, and how they are addressing the effort to close equity (attainment) gaps. These UEPs also include a brief history of the unit.

Essentially, these UEP documents serve simultaneously as historical documents, business plans, and annual reports, all of which are a priority for the Vice President of Student Affairs, Dr. Jared Tippetts.

Brief Background

In 2017, Vice President Tippetts initiated the idea of “Program Overview” documents within the Division of Student Affairs at SUU. Ultimately, those documents inspired the University’s “Unit Effectiveness Plans” (UEPs) under the 2015-2022 Strategic Plan. As such, these original Program Overview documents experienced a name change to “Unit Effectiveness Plans” (UEPs) and the elements of those UEPs have been refined with subsequent iterations as deemed appropriate.

Beginning in the Spring of 2020 and throughout the 2020–2021 and 2021–2022 academic years, the Division of Student Affairs was at the forefront of responding to student needs during the COVID-19 pandemic. Student Affairs staff took on additional duties helping with COVID-19 testing, delivering meals to quarantined students, performing contact tracing, and communicating with individuals at risk due to close contact (all while attempting to remain healthy themselves). Student Affairs employees faced significant challenges to keep the services of their different offices running when staff and student workers became ill or were quarantined. Many offices had to reinvent processes to offer online (virtual, synchronous remote) services during this period of time.

Recognizing that his staff members were exhausted and stretched thin, Vice President Tippets made the compassionate decision to suspend the annual Unit Effectiveness Plans (UEPs) during the pandemic. Student Affairs offices were still encouraged to track service numbers and assess outcomes to whatever extent was useful for them and that they had capacity for, but the centralized reports were placed on hold. Understandably, this may have contributed to the development of Recommendation 2 during SUU’s Year-Seven Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness (EIE) in April 2021.

Beginning in Summer 2020, SUU changed its academic calendar in order to create a new 14-week summer session that would be of equal length to fall and spring sessions. With the influx of new state funding to support summer course offerings and the new option for students to use their scholarships during the summer, this resulted in an increase in the number of students enrolling in summer courses.

For example, in Summer 2019 (before the change), the total number of undergraduate students enrolled in summer was 1,974 (headcount) and those students earned a total of 11,910 credits. Over time, those numbers have steadily increased. In Summer 2023, the total number of undergraduate students enrolled was 4,068 (headcount) and those students earned a total of 27,832 credits. During this period of time (2019–2023), the total number of undergraduate students enrolling in summer semester has doubled, and the number of credits those students have earned in summer semester has increased 134%. In order to support this institutional initiative to increase summer enrollments, the Division of Student Affairs was tasked with extending its services and building robust summer programming to both attract and support students.

Much to everyone’s surprise, and thanks to the dedication and support provided by SUU’s faculty and staff, SUU’s enrollment continued to grow through the pandemic. While new faculty lines were the main budget priority, Student Affairs was successful in securing funding for six additional offices to support student populations with unique and pressing needs: Financial Wellness, Health & Wellness, Parent & Family Services, Q-Center, Student Outreach & Support (SOS), and the SUU Childcare Center. Two units were also transferred from within Academic Affairs to Student Affairs (Community Engagement Center and the Hope Pantry). In short, the Division of Student Affairs grew from 18 units to 26 units. In addition, a partnership was formed with FourPoints Health to establish a new Student Health Clinic on campus.

As the pandemic became less acute, COVID-19 management efforts became more automated and a new “normal” was established. Subsequently, the UEPs and Assessment Reports were able to be prioritized once again. VP Tippetts asked his Chief of Staff and Executive Director of Academic Success, Ms. Toni Sage, to lead the effort on behalf of Student Affairs.

Assessment & Unit Effectiveness Planning

Throughout December 2022 and January 2023, Executive Director Toni Sage and Vice President Jared Tippetts began planning to reignite efforts around assessment and Unit Effectiveness Plans. These efforts faced several challenges.

One challenge was the Division of Student Affairs adding several new units (mentioned above) that had never completed UEPs or engaged in assessment. Likewise, due to typical employee turnover across the whole Division and subsequent organizational changes, many units had new Directors or Coordinators who were unfamiliar with the approach to UEPs and assessment within the Division. As mentioned above, SUU’s academic calendar was adjusted to include a 14-week summer semester with the intent of increasing summer enrollment. As a result, units within Student Affairs were expected to provide additional support and programming during the summer. And finally, the COVID-19 pandemic proved to be a challenging period of time for everyone, and UEPs were put on hold. Taken together, these challenges (new units, new directors, summer session, and a pandemic) were significant and required a systematic, sustained effort to get back on track.

Given these challenges and recognizing the reality of the situation, Tippetts and Sage made the decision to rebuild assessment “literacy” within the Division from the ground up. They separated Assessment Reports from the UEP, requiring the assessment of at least one outcome each year. A new template was created for Assessment Reports and the UEP template was updated to reflect current needs, strategic initiatives, and the interim strategic plan. Below are the key dates and activities related to the systematic and sustained effort within Student Affairs to address both Assessment Reports and UEPs in 2023:

- Feb 16: Kick-Off Event (Zoom)
- Feb 24: UEP Follow-Up Meeting — Deep Dive into Resource Folder (Zoom)
- Feb 27: UEP Follow-Up Meeting — Deep Dive into Resource Folder (Zoom)
- Feb – Mar: Review shared drive: Assessment Resources for Student Affairs
- Feb – Mar: One-on-One consultation meetings with Toni Sage
- Feb – Mar: Plan evidence needed for Assessment Report
- Feb – Mar: Write draft UEP
- Mar 30: UEP draft due
- Feb – Apr: Gather evidence for Assessment Report
- Mar – May: Analyze evidence for Assessment Report
- Apr – May: Meet with VP Tippet & Exec Dir Sage for feedback on report drafts
- May – June: Revise UEP and Assessment Report
- June 30: Final UEP and Assessment Report Due
- Jul – Aug: Refine action plan (continuous improvement step)
- Fall 2023: Implement action plan (continuous improvement step)

- Fall 2023: Gather new evidence
- Nov – Jan: Analyze new evidence

Attendance at the Kick-Off Event was required of all Student Affairs employees (not just Directors or Coordinators). The presentation ([link to slides](#)) was designed to be a primer, laying the groundwork for the purpose of the UEPs and Assessment Reports, what assessment and accreditation is, and why it is important. The Kick-Off Event also provided an overview of NWCCU’s Recommendation 2, how assessment fits within the work completed within Student Affairs, and a timeline for the development and completion of Assessment Reports and updated UEPs.

Finally, Toni Sage assembled a robust set of resources, general guidance ([link to slides](#)), examples ([link to example](#)), and templates ([link to template](#)) to support these efforts, and presented the continuous improvement process. She also scheduled one-on-one meetings with those who needed extra support and guidance.

It is easy for Student Affairs professionals to become overwhelmed with the prospect of Assessment Reports and UEPs. UEPs are very formal and assessment can feel like research, which is unfamiliar to most Student Affairs staff. The prospect of these reports being used for very official purposes (like overall institutional effectiveness) can be intimidating and staff can become distracted with feelings of “not doing it right” or “not being good enough” or “having to prove their worth.”

Being aware of this propensity, Toni Sage made the decision to embed the theme of Wabi Sabi within the Kick-Off Event and presentation. Wabi Sabi is a Japanese philosophy that embraces the idea that all things are in an imperfect state of flux and that nothing is perfect, nothing is finished, change is the only constant, and perfection doesn’t exist.



Kintsugi pottery -- examples of Wabi Sabi and the continuous improvement approach to Assessment Reports & UEPs in the Division of Student Affairs

Related to this philosophy is the art of Kintsugi, where broken pottery is repaired with lacquer mixed with precious metals. Citing both Wabi Sabi and Kintsugi, Sage emphasized the idea that when approaching Assessment Reports and UEPs, the ideal of perfection is not realistic and not expected. As such, Directors should look for the cracks in their programs in order to repair them with meaningful change focused on student success. One slide summarized this idea with the

Kintsugi sentiment: “Strive not for perfection, but for excellence instead” ([slides for Kick-Off Event](#)).

The purpose of including these notions of Wabi Sabi and Kintsugi was to put people at ease, alleviate their anxiety, and help them focus on continuous improvement. Rather than hiding flaws or ignoring gaps, the overall approach was based on open and honest self-evaluation and a shared commitment to improving the ways Student Affairs could support students and their success.

The Kick-Off Event was followed shortly thereafter by two follow-up meetings (via Zoom and also recorded) to provide a deeper dive into the resources within the shared drive. In these meetings, Toni Sage offered greater explanation about templates (including completed examples), articulating outcomes, measuring outcomes, alignment with the draft strategic plan, the timeline, and additional resources. Directors were also invited to have one-on-one meetings with Sage if desired and seven Directors did so.

Initial drafts of UEPs and Assessment Reports were submitted to Vice President Tippetts and Executive Director Sage by March 30. Throughout the months of April and May, Tippetts and Sage met with each unit individually to discuss their documents and offered verbal and written feedback about how to make the reports stronger, more meaningful, and sustainable.

Sage then sent all Division staff members a questionnaire to determine whether or not further support was desired before the deadline for final reports. As a result, one additional large-group meeting was scheduled for June 6 primarily to discuss various ways to measure different outcomes and how to present metrics/data. Completed reports for all units in the Division of Student Affairs were submitted by June 30, 2023. The UEPs were compiled into one document and shared with all employees in the Division, all SUU Vice Presidents, and the SUU Board of Trustees.

Overall, the response to this process was very positive. Across the Division of Student Affairs, Directors, Coordinators, and their staff members appreciated the opportunity to think critically about *what* they are doing, *why* they are doing it, *how* they are doing it, and *whether or not* it makes a difference. After all, supporting students and their overall success is the main purpose of Student Affairs. Vice President Tippetts routinely encourages units to stop doing things that don't make a difference or what “doesn't move the needle” on student persistence (retention, completion), but without attending to what “makes a difference” in a systematic way, individual units within Student Affairs will be unable to make informed decisions about what to discontinue and what to develop further. These Assessment Reports and UEPs are precisely the set of tools needed so that Student Affairs units can identify what students need and how to support their success.

As a result of this review process, Vice President Tippetts insisted that every unit include an outcome related to student persistence, and how their unit directly contributes to overall student success. Ideally, this student persistence outcome should be included in the unit's mission statement or outcomes.

Summary & Next Steps:

Student persistence, retention, and completion have always been central to the mission of Student Affairs at SUU. Under the leadership of Vice President Jared Tippetts, the Division has been responsive and innovative in its approach to making significant gains in these areas. However, some units within the Division have struggled to document a systematic and data-informed approach to the changes they have implemented. Colloquially speaking: their hearts are in the right place, their motivations are admirable, and their daily work is on point, but their efforts are not always informed by data or assessment results, and as a result it is unclear which efforts actually make a difference with regard to supporting student success.

Recognizing this, Student Affairs has embarked on a significant effort to develop Assessment Reports and Unit Effectiveness Plans (UEPs) to provide each Student Affairs unit with the framework needed to identify their unique outcomes directly related to student persistence and to document progress in these areas (see [2023 - Student Affairs - UEPs - COMPLETE](#)).

The units within Student Affairs have also engaged in various ways to gather information (more or less formal types of data) about how their services are linked to student success. While all units have completed Assessment Reports, there are several units that have demonstrated a continuous improvement process to make adjustments and measure their progress. For example, the Assessment Reports of three Student Affairs units are provided in the Resource folder to illustrate ways assessment data is used to support targeted interventions to improve student achievement and post-graduation success.

The [Resource folder](#) includes copies of these Assessment Reports and improvements (link to combined document including [Academic Advising, Career Center, and Tutoring Center](#)). These efforts are also described in the main Mid-Cycle Report. This is all significant progress since April 2021 when the previous NWCCU visit occurred.

Now, with this important infrastructure in place (Assessment Reports and UEPs), the student support units across the Division of Student Affairs can begin to engage in a deeper exploration of the unique student populations that they support. This is made possible through a variety of tools, such as the Success Hub (SUU's student success and tool) and data dashboards which provide insights into disaggregated student demographic data. Student support units are now poised to evaluate their success in terms of disaggregated student groups and develop targeted interventions to better serve their students. Importantly, this connects to Recommendation 1.

For example, Student Affairs units serving smaller demographic subpopulations (e.g., non-traditional, multicultural, LGBTQIA+, veterans, disabled, low-income, first-generation, etc.) have access to tools to help them measure retention of these populations. These tools pull directly from SUU's student information system (Banner) and allow for this analysis. However, this demographic information is only actionable against the backdrop of the infrastructure of UEPs and Assessment Reports.

Likewise, Student Affairs units that serve thousands of students across the entire campus (e.g., the Tutoring Center, Campus Recreation, Advising, Student Involvement and Leadership, etc.)

have not had access to such tools and have struggled to disaggregate data in order to demonstrate an impact on retention, persistence, and graduation. Those units are now situated to access relevant data sets and develop interventions. Again, all of this access to data is only actionable against the backdrop of the framework established by the UEPs and Assessment Reports. Looking ahead, Vice President Tippetts and the Student Affairs Executive Directors are contemplating ways to continue building a culture of reporting and assessment within the Division. For example, with the recent approval of a new 2024–2030 Strategic Plan, Executive Director Toni Sage will revise the UEP and Assessment Report templates in Spring 2024 to reflect the updated institutional outcomes, goals, and initiatives in the new Strategic Plan. Student Affairs units will complete both the UEPs and Assessment Reports on an annual basis. Additionally, the idea of a “data summit” is being contemplated to allow Student Affairs units to share their goals, assessment, insights, and planned changes.

Tippetts and Sage are also creating an “accountability scorecard” for each unit in Student Affairs to communicate progress made toward institutional and departmental goals on a semesterly basis. An accountability scorecard could be added to the reporting for each unit and allow each unit to engage in a check-in process to capture greater detail of who they serve.

Finally, Toni Sage connected with Dr. Christian Reiner (Office of Institutional Research & Assessment), and together they developed a plan for how to obtain the persistence data of students served by these Student Affairs units without overwhelming the Office of Institutional Research & Assessment with numerous requests from multiple units. A timeline was devised for this information so that it will be returned to Student Affairs by the end of November each year, in time for budget decisions for the upcoming spring. This is an important connection to SUU’s annual budget cycle and the allocation (or reallocation) of resources.

While central to the mission of Student Affairs, a systematic, data-informed approach to measuring student persistence has been difficult to achieve. However, this sustained, systematic effort to develop Assessment Reports and UEPs is intended to provide each Student Affairs unit with the tools needed to identify and assess outcomes directly related to student success.

ADDENDUM 3

Recommendation 3 - General Education Assessment and Revisions

Text from [2021 letter from NWCCU](#):

Recommendation 3: Spring 2021 Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness — Continue to refine its practices for analyzing general education student learning assessment data, and using these analyses to inform general education curricular revisions and learning support practices. (2020 Standard(s) 1.C.6; 1.C.7)

What follows is a progress report on Recommendation 3. Beyond supplying this report in connection with SUU’s Mid-Cycle Review (April 2024), SUU will continue to work on systematic ways to refine the General Education program through both curriculum review and assessment processes. SUU will include a final report on Recommendation 3 in connection with the University’s Year-Seven Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness (EIE), scheduled for Spring 2028.

Background, Context, and Leadership

As a member institution of the Utah System of Higher Education (USHE), Southern Utah University’s General Education (GE) program requirements are guided by policy R470. Specific details about these requirements (and a list of approved GE courses) appear in SUU’s [Catalog](#).

USHE policy R470 identifies three “core” area requirements: Written Communication (6 credits), Quantitative Literacy (3-4 credits), and American Institutions (3 credits). This policy also identifies five “knowledge” area requirements: Fine Arts (3 credits), Humanities (3 credits), Social & Behavioral Sciences (3 credits), Life Sciences (3 credits), and Physical Sciences (3 credits).

Within policy R470, each of these core and knowledge areas includes a brief definition and a list of learning outcomes. As allowed by policy, SUU has identified an additional 1-credit information literacy course (INFO 1010) taught as a co-requisite with ENGL 2010 (a requirement within the Written Communication area). Overall, students must earn a minimum of 30 GE credits and complete all GE requirements.

At SUU, the General Education Committee ([GEC](#)) oversees the GE program, its curriculum, and its assessment, and as well as recommends related professional development. The GEC is co-chaired by a faculty member (elected by and from the voting members of the GEC) and a representative from the Provost’s Office (either an Associate Provost or Assistant Provost). This leadership arrangement ensures that SUU’s GE requirements remain consistent with policy R470 (and other emerging trends within USHE, such as transfer policies related to GE) and that SUU faculty have ownership over the GE curriculum and assessment efforts. Below is a table depicting the co-chairs of the GEC since the 2020–2021 academic year.

Table 1: General Education Committee Leadership, Academic Year 2020–21 thru 2023–24

Year Semester	AY 20–21			AY 21–22			AY 22–23			AY 23–24		
	FA20	SP21	SU21	FA21	SP22	SU22	FA22	SP23	SU23	FA23	SP24	SU24
Krystal McCoy	X	X		X	X							
Emma Turner							X	X		X	X	
* Johnny MacLean	X	X	X	X								
* Bill Heyborne					X	X	X	X				
* Camille Thomas										X	X	X

* indicates co-chair from the Provost's office

Given that background, context, and leadership, the remainder of this progress report on Recommendation 3 will include the main efforts undertaken by SUU's General Education Committee (GEC), primarily between April 2021 and December 2023.

For the last 10 years, SUU's General Education Committee has included a working group focused on curriculum and a working group focused on assessment. A third working group has focused on other topics such as faculty professional development, sharing resources, connecting with academic advisors, and communicating with students. This progress report will primarily focus on the activities taken by the curriculum workgroup and the assessment workgroup.

Curriculum Workgroup

The GEC's curriculum workgroup is responsible for two main tasks: routine annual reviews of existing GE courses and review of course proposals seeking GE designation. In both cases, the curriculum workgroup ensures alignment between the designated GE course and the learning outcomes defined by R470 for that GE category. Following a set schedule, the curriculum workgroup reviews all GE courses on a three-year cycle.

Table 2: GE Curriculum Review Cycle

Semester	GE Category Reviewed
Fall 2021	Social & Behavioral Sciences
Spring 2022	Fine Arts
Fall 2022	Written Communication, American Institutions, Quantitative Literacy, Info Literacy
Spring 2023	Humanities
Fall 2023	Life Sciences & Fine Arts
Spring 2024	Physical Sciences

When reviewing a GE course, the curriculum workgroup requests from the department (i) a copy of the course syllabus and (ii) a response to a brief series of survey questions. For example, these questions include: *Does this course continue to meet the learning outcomes for this GE category? Does the syllabus list the official GE learning outcomes? Does this course have any prerequisites? Does this course also serve as a major requirement?* These questions help the curriculum workgroup evaluate the overall alignment of the course with GE learning outcomes. These questions also remind departments of the expectations associated with offering courses that receive GE designation.

Based on course syllabi and survey responses, the curriculum workgroup provides feedback to departments (including recommended changes or revisions) and produces a final report. Copies of these final reports are included in the [Resources](#) folder. For example, here is the report for [Fall 2021 - Social and Behavioral Sciences](#) and for [Spring 2022 - Fine Arts](#).

This GE curriculum review process has helped to ensure alignment between the learning outcomes defined in policy R470 and the specific GE courses offered at SUU. It has also reinforced the idea that GE courses should be focused on meeting the needs of students who are completing GE requirements (as compared to meeting the needs of students entering into a major or program of study). This is an important curriculum management process for the GE program as a whole.

On occasion, this GE curriculum review process will lead to a recommendation to remove a GE designation from a course (which no longer addresses GE learning outcomes) or suggested revisions to a course to ensure alignment with GE learning outcomes. Likewise, when new courses are proposed (seeking GE designation), the curriculum workgroup provides a careful review and recommendation to the GEC as a whole (either supporting the proposal, suggesting revisions to receive support, or denying the proposal).

Assessment Workgroup

The GEC's assessment workgroup has been focused on two main tasks: seeking ways to use assessment information to improve the GE program and designing a new GE assessment approach after recognizing limitations associated with prior approaches to GE assessment. What follows is a brief history of GE assessment efforts.

In 2014, in response to feedback from the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) and in concert with other USHE institutions, SUU adopted [15 Essential Learning Outcomes \(or ELOs\)](#) based on those published by AAC&U as part of the LEAP States initiative. SUU's General Education Committee (GEC) assigned two of these 15 ELOs to each GE category ([depicted in this mapping of ELOs to GE categories](#)) and required instructors to report assessment information for their GE courses. GE instructors were then required to report assessment results for these two assigned ELOs through the University's learning management system (Canvas).

This approach to GE assessment was a type of “Coverage Model” to ensure each of the 15 ELOs was “covered” by different GE categories. This Coverage Model was used from 2014–2018. In response to challenges associated with this Coverage Model, during the 2018–2019 academic year, the GEC transitioned to a New Model, allowing GE instructors to select any two ELOs to assess (see [summary of New Model](#)).

Removing assigned ELOs allowed greater flexibility and autonomy for GE instructors, as well as better alignment between the two ELOs selected and their individual GE course; as such, the intention was to ensure assessment information was more meaningful and authentic. This New Model was used from 2019–2022. Below is a table depicting the shifts in GE assessment approaches.

Table 3: History of GE Assessment Approach

Year	GE Assessment Approach
2014 – 2018	Coverage Model: Report on 2 Assigned ELOs
2018 – 2019	Transition: Communication & Training
2019 – 2022	New Model: Report on 2 Self-Selected ELOs
2022 – 2024	Transition: Study, Evaluation, & New Assessment Pilot
2024 – forward	New Strategy: Self-Reports on “Naming” & “Framing” GE Learning Outcomes

However, while solving prior challenges, this New Model did not resolve the issue of attempting to manage two sets of GE learning outcomes (the 15 ELOs and the learning outcomes included in USHE policy R470). In addition, the New Model gave rise to a new challenge associated with giving GE instructors more choice and made programmatic assessment and improvement more difficult.

Challenge 1: Two Sets of Learning Outcomes

The first challenge was highlighted in April 2021 by the NWCCU external reviewers. Based on their feedback, the GEC started to rethink the use of the 15 ELOs. This was valuable feedback because most LEAP institutions (across the country and in the State of Utah) had discontinued use of the 15 ELOs and instead identified a smaller number of outcomes to use in their approach to GE assessment.

SUU’s GE program requirements already included one set of GE learning outcomes that were established by USHE policy R470 and used in the curriculum review process (described above). Those learning outcomes served as the foundation for what qualified a course to receive a GE designation. Yet, for many years, a second set of learning outcomes, the 15 University ELOs, served as the basis of the GE assessment approach. As such, SUU’s GE program was attempting to simultaneously adhere to the learning outcomes in R470 (for the purposes of curriculum review) and also adhere to the 15 ELOs (for the purposes of assessment). This was both confusing and unnecessary.

Recognizing this tension between two sets of learning outcomes, the University's GEC engaged in robust, sustained discussions regarding this challenge and decided to no longer rely on the 15 university ELOs. Instead, the focus moving forward will be on a single set of GE learning outcomes for each GE requirement as they appear in USHE policy R470 and in SUU's current [Catalog](#).

Challenge 2: Insufficient Coverage and Inconsistency of Assessment

The focus on the R470 learning outcomes meant that the GE assessment approach needed to be adjusted to better align with these learning outcomes. This also provided the opportunity to address the second challenge that emerged. Giving instructors choice and flexibility with respect to which two ELOs they assessed introduced two risks: (i) the first risk involved generating an insufficient amount of assessment information for any given ELO; (ii) the second risk involved generating inconsistent assessment practices across different GE categories (in part due to how GE instructors from distinct disciplinary backgrounds would interpret and assess the ELOs differently). So, this second challenge (based on these risks) meant that GE assessment results would be difficult to compare and analyze at the GE program level.

In response to these two challenges, the University's GEC decided on a new assessment approach (labeled as the New Strategy) utilizing feedback from faculty and students regarding the GE learning outcomes. With this New Strategy, GE instructors will provide feedback regarding the degree to which the intended GE learning outcomes were addressed in their GE course. Likewise, students will provide feedback on the extent to which they made advances with respect to the GE learning outcomes.

Comparing instructor and student feedback in this way allows for the identification of gaps between intended and perceived learning at the course and the program level. This "gap analysis" can then provide an avenue for making improvements at the course level and the program level. At the course level, an instructor may notice a higher gap between intended learning and perceived learning than the average for all courses for a given learning outcome. This can lead to improvements in course design and delivery. At the program level, this gap analysis can be used to identify any needed adjustments to courses within a given GE category, the learning outcomes, or even professional development to be offered to GE instructors.

A comprehensive pilot of this new assessment approach is occurring in Spring 2024 ([link to GE Assessment Pilot document](#)). Then, beginning in Fall 2024, all of SUU's GE courses will be required to participate in this New Strategy for GE assessment. Furthermore, looking ahead, the GEC recognizes that this indirect assessment method will help to refocus (and realign) GE courses around a single set of learning outcomes. Then, once that alignment has taken place, the GEC will implement direct assessment methods (similar to those used previously). In this sense, the GEC is embarking on a two-step process: first, an alignment effort using indirect assessment methods, and second, a direct assessment method for measuring student learning.

Summary & Next Steps

During the period of time between April 2021 and December 2023, the University's GEC was engaged in robust, sustained discussions regarding the two key challenges described above and identified a new approach for GE assessment moving forward. During this period of time, the GEC also conducted several small "pilot" programs to explore this new approach to GE assessment.

What emerged from these careful deliberations is a "New Strategy" for GE assessment that relies on feedback from faculty and students regarding the GE learning outcomes. Importantly, this New Strategy for GE assessment no longer relies on the 15 ELOs; instead, the focus is on a single set of GE learning outcomes for each GE requirement as they appear in USHE policy R470 and in SUU's current [Catalog](#).

This New Strategy includes gathering instructor feedback regarding the degree to which those intended GE learning outcomes were addressed. Likewise, this new approach allows GE instructors to "name" and "frame" these GE learning outcomes within the context of their course so that students are more aware of how learning activities are connected with these intended learning outcomes. Finally, this New Strategy gathers student feedback on the extent to which they made advances with respect to the GE learning outcomes.

Moving forward, the R470 GE learning outcomes will serve as the common set of learning outcomes for all of SUU's undergraduate degree programs (because all associate and bachelor degrees require the full GE program). Of course, individual associate or bachelor degree programs can identify additional learning outcomes that go beyond the GE learning outcomes (for example, those learning outcomes that are aligned specifically with their disciplines).

Next steps for the General Education Committee:

- The GEC needs to clarify for itself and others several questions related to this new approach to GE assessment. For example: Who will be using assessment results and how those results will be used? Answering these questions will ensure assessment data is collected, collated, and shared appropriately.
- The GEC needs to provide GE instructors with information about the new assessment approach and how it will be implemented.
- The GEC needs to collaborate with the Center for Teaching Innovation (CTI) and other interested units to ensure appropriate training opportunities are offered.
- The GEC needs to update the curriculum workgroup's course assessment process by eliminating reference to assessing the 15 university ELOs.
- The GEC needs to involve faculty in ongoing state-wide discussions of policy R470 learning outcomes in order to ensure those outcomes are serving students across all USHE institutions, including SUU.
- The GEC needs to work with GE instructors to create course resources and assignments in order to assess R470 learning outcomes effectively and consistently.