

# HUMBOLDT STATE UNIVERSITY

## WASC Senior College and University Commission **Special Visit Report**

**Humboldt State University**

1 Harpst Street • Arcata, CA 95521

**Submitted:** February 10, 2021

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# Table of Contents

<b>Institutional Context and Major Changes Since the Last WSCUC Visit</b>	<b>8</b>
Humboldt State University	8
Mission	11
Vision	11
Values	12
<b>Major Changes Since Last WSCUC Team Visit</b>	<b>13</b>
Infrastructure and Technology	13
Renovations to Buildings and Classrooms	13
Accessibility	14
Other Technology	14
Leadership	14
Strategic Planning (CFR 1.1)	14
Polytechnic Feasibility Invitation from the CSU	15
Key Personnel	15
Changes in College Leadership	17
Impact of COVID-19	17
<b>Report Preparation and Organization</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Response to the Commission's Recommendations</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Budget Communications, Change Management, and Shared Governance: Recommendation 3 (CFRs 1.7, 3.6)</b>	<b>23</b>
University Budget Communications (CFR 3.6)	24
Integrated Assessment Planning and Budget (CFRs 4.1, 4.3, 4.5)	25
Change Management Initiative (CFR 4.7)	26
Impact of Actions	27
<b>Budget, Enrollment Management, Revenue Diversification: Recommendation 6 (CFR 3.4)</b>	<b>28</b>
Financial Challenges and Current Resources	28
Financial Position and Stability (CFRs 3.4, 4.7)	28

Enrollment Management . . . . .	30
Recruitment . . . . .	32
Retention of Continuing Students . . . . .	34
Diversification of Revenue Sources (CFRs 3.4, 3.5, 4.7) . . . . .	36
Impact of Actions . . . . .	37
<b>University-Wide Assessment and Program Review:</b>	
<b>Recommendation 4 (CFRs 2.4, 2.6) . . . . .</b>	<b>37</b>
Quality Assurance Personnel Moves:	
New Hires and New Faculty Fellowships (CFR 3.1) . . . . .	38
New University-Wide Quality-Assurance Structure (CFRs 3.6, 3.7) . . . . .	38
Updated Outcomes Structure of Academic Assessment (CFR 4.1) . . . . .	39
New University-Wide Learning Outcomes (CFRs 4.1, 4.5) . . . . .	40
New Institutional Learning Outcomes . . . . .	41
New GEAR Program Learning Outcomes . . . . .	42
Next Steps for GEAR Assessment . . . . .	43
Core Competencies Pilot Assessment . . . . .	44
Revised and Rededicated Academic Program Review . . . . .	45
Recent Actions and Accomplishments in Institutional Assessment . . . . .	46
Annual Assessment . . . . .	47
Program Review . . . . .	48
A Culture of Assessment in Progress . . . . .	48
New Assessment Management System . . . . .	48
Impact of Institution-Wide Assessment Actions . . . . .	51
<b>Updates on Recommendations Not Included in the Focus of the Special Visit . . . . .</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>Diversity, Equity, and Inclusive Student Success:</b>	
<b>Recommendation 1 (CFRs 1.4, 2.13) . . . . .</b>	<b>54</b>
HSI Subcommittee of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council . . . . .	54
ODEI Diversity Grants (CFRs 1.4, 2.10, 2.13, 2.14) . . . . .	55
Equity Arcata (CFRs 2.10, 2.13) . . . . .	55
Social Justice, Equity, and Inclusion Center (CFRs 2.10, 2.13, 2.14) . . . . .	56
Youth Educational Services (CFRs 2.13, 4.7) . . . . .	56
Financial Aid Services (CFRs 2.10, 2.13) . . . . .	56
Student Learning Communities (CFRs 2.10, 2.11, 2.13) . . . . .	57



HSI STEM Grant (CFRs 2.10, 2.13) . . . . .	57
Place-Based Learning Communities . . . . .	58
Evidence of Success . . . . .	59
<b>Orienting Students to Humboldt County, Student Safety:</b>	
<b>Recommendation 2 (CFR 1.6)</b> . . . . .	63
Building Capacity for Diversity and Attending to Diverse Student Needs (CFRs 1.4, 2.13, 3.1) . . . . .	63
Fostering a Culture of Mentoring (CFR 2.13) . . . . .	63
Prospective Student Communications (CFR 2.13) . . . . .	63
Improved Visit Experience (CFRs 2.12, 2.13, 2.14) . . . . .	64
New Student Orientation (CFRs 2.12, 2.13, 2.14) . . . . .	64
Student Grievances and Complaints (CFRs 2.12, 2.13) . . . . .	65
Maintaining a Safe Campus (CFRs 3.1, 3.5) . . . . .	65
<b>Faculty and Staff Diversity and Inclusivity:</b>	
<b>Recommendation 5 (CFRs 1.4, 3.1, 3.3)</b> . . . . .	66
Efforts to Diversify Faculty (CFR 3.1) . . . . .	66
Efforts to Diversify Staff (CFR 3.1) . . . . .	66
Equity Advocate Initiative (CFRs 3.1, 3.2) . . . . .	67
Building Capacity for Diversity Training, Education, and Outreach (CFR 3.1) . . . . .	67
TK-12 Humboldt-Del Norte Equity Partnership . . . . .	68
Training: Avoiding Unconscious Bias in the Hiring Process . . . . .	68
Training: Cultural Humility . . . . .	68
Training: Whiteness and Microaggressions . . . . .	68
Moving Beyond Bias Initiative . . . . .	69
Diversity Grant Awards . . . . .	69
<b>Equity Fellows Program</b> . . . . .	69
<b>Expanding Inclusivity through Course Design and Pedagogy (CFRs 4.3, 4.4)</b> . . . . .	70
Center for Teaching and Learning . . . . .	70
ESCALA Collaboration . . . . .	73
DEIC Subcommittee on Inclusive Teaching Strategies and Culturally Relevant Pedagogy . . . . .	73
Faculty Efforts and Successes . . . . .	74



<b>Concluding Statement</b> . . . . .	<u>76</u>
<b>Appendices</b> . . . . .	<u>77</u>
Appendix A: State and Federally Recognized Tribes . . . . .	<u>77</u>
Appendix B: Proposed New HSU New Purpose, Vision, and Values Statement . . . . .	<u>77</u>
Appendix C: Change Management Plan . . . . .	<u>77</u>
Appendix D: Strategic Enrollment Management Plan Year One Priorities, 2019-2020 . . . . .	<u>77</u>
Appendix E: Retention and Registration Monitoring . . . . .	<u>77</u>
Appendix F: CSU Program Planning Resource Guide . . . . .	<u>77</u>
Appendix G: Spring 2020 Review of ILO Alignment Across Undergraduate Programs . . . . .	<u>77</u>
Appendix H: Senate Ratification of GEAR PLOs . . . . .	<u>77</u>
Appendix I: GEAR Assessment Pilot Results . . . . .	<u>77</u>
Appendix J: New Program Review Self-Study Template . . . . .	<u>77</u>
Appendix K: Handbook for Operational and Co-Curricular Assessment Plans . . . . .	<u>77</u>
Appendix L: Examples of Operational and Co-Curricular Assessment Plans . . . . .	<u>77</u>
Appendix M: Academic Assessment Materials . . . . .	<u>77</u>
Appendix N: From Me to PhD Speaker Series . . . . .	<u>77</u>
Appendix O: RAMP Executive Summary . . . . .	<u>77</u>
Appendix P: Learning Center Report . . . . .	<u>77</u>
Appendix Q: ODEI Training Feedback . . . . .	<u>77</u>
Appendix R: Faculty Equity Fellows Publications . . . . .	<u>77</u>
Appendix S: Financial Statements . . . . .	<u>77</u>
<b>Acronyms</b> . . . . .	<u>78</u>
<b>Acknowledgments</b> . . . . .	<u>79</u>



# HUMBOLDT STATE UNIVERSITY

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Office of the President

February 10, 2021

Jamienne Studley  
President WASC Senior College and University Commission  
985 Atlantic Avenue, Suite 100  
Alameda, CA 94501

Dear Dr. Studley:

Following the completion in 2018 of our accreditation review, the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) requested a Special Visit to address concerns in the areas of a) budgeting, enrollment management, and diversification of revenue sources and b) a comprehensive university-wide assessment program. The Commission also issued additional recommendations for which we will provide progress updates.

In the July 2018 letter the WSCUC issued several commendations for HSU and we have continued to further enhance those areas. The following report represents significant progress since the visit. The university recognizes that quality assurance is a continuous process and that we must continue with the hard work and dedication to these efforts. We are very encouraged with our progress thus far and expect full implementation of the recommendations by the time the 8-year reaffirmation is completed, if not earlier.

I am pleased to submit this report on behalf of the campus reflecting our collective efforts led by Dr. Mary Oling-Sisay. I look forward to receiving the virtual review team led by Dr. Rita Cheng in April 2021.

Sincerely,

Tom Jackson, Jr, Ed.D  
President, Humboldt State University







# Institutional Context and Major Changes Since the Last WSCUC Visit

## Humboldt State University

**FOUNDED IN 1913**, Humboldt State University (HSU) is the fourth-smallest university and the most remote campus in the California State University (CSU). First accredited in 1949, HSU’s most recent accreditation

included a self-study and a WSCUC team visit in 2018. HSU is located in a rural setting on the Pacific coast in Arcata, California, 275 miles north of San Francisco. It currently serves 6,431 undergraduate and graduate students.

Figure 1: Region of Origin — Headcount and Percent of Total

	Region of Origin	Fall 2015	Fall 2016	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020
<b>Percent</b>	Local	13%	14%	15%	15%	15%	17%
	Northern CA	10%	10%	10%	10%	11%	11%
	SF Bay	12%	12%	13%	13%	12%	12%
	Sacramento	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%
	Coast	5%	4%	4%	5%	5%	5%
	Central CA	7%	7%	7%	7%	7%	7%
	Los Angeles	32%	32%	32%	30%	29%	28%
	San Diego	8%	8%	7%	7%	7%	7%
	Other	10%	9%	9%	9%	9%	9%
<b>Headcount</b>	Local	1,182	1,175	1,233	1,148	1,073	1,086
	Northern CA	880	827	812	798	755	714
	SF Bay	1,095	1,039	1,044	1,012	868	767
	Sacramento	322	329	345	333	295	261
	Coast	401	381	354	352	341	302
	Central CA	600	613	590	520	489	461
	Los Angeles	2,772	2,751	2,636	2,368	2,025	1,828
	San Diego	700	641	598	550	517	445
	Other	838	747	735	693	620	567
<b>Percent</b>	Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>Headcount</b>	Total	8,790	8,503	8,347	7,774	6,983	6,431

HSU STUDENTS enjoy an extraordinary college experience, attending small classes (18.7:1 ratio) taught by professors who know them by name and living and learning in one of the world's most beautiful places, surrounded by ancient redwood forests, mountains, rivers, and beaches. Since its founding over a century ago as a teachers' college, HSU has grown into an institution known for quality academic programs, a commitment to environmental and social justice, and a deep connection with its unique place. The university provides students an experience in higher education that is distinctive among public universities in California by offering true place-based learning, built on a special relationship among the campus, the curriculum, the local communities and tribes, and the natural environment.

HSU's student body includes the highest percentage of Native American students at any university in the CSU, and the three-county region has 13 federally recognized Native American Tribes ([appendix A](#)). The university was the first **CSU** to offer a baccalaureate degree in **Native American Studies**, and it also offers several programs to support its Native students, including the **Indian Tribal and Educational Personnel Program** and the **Indian Natural Resources, Science, and Engineering Program**.

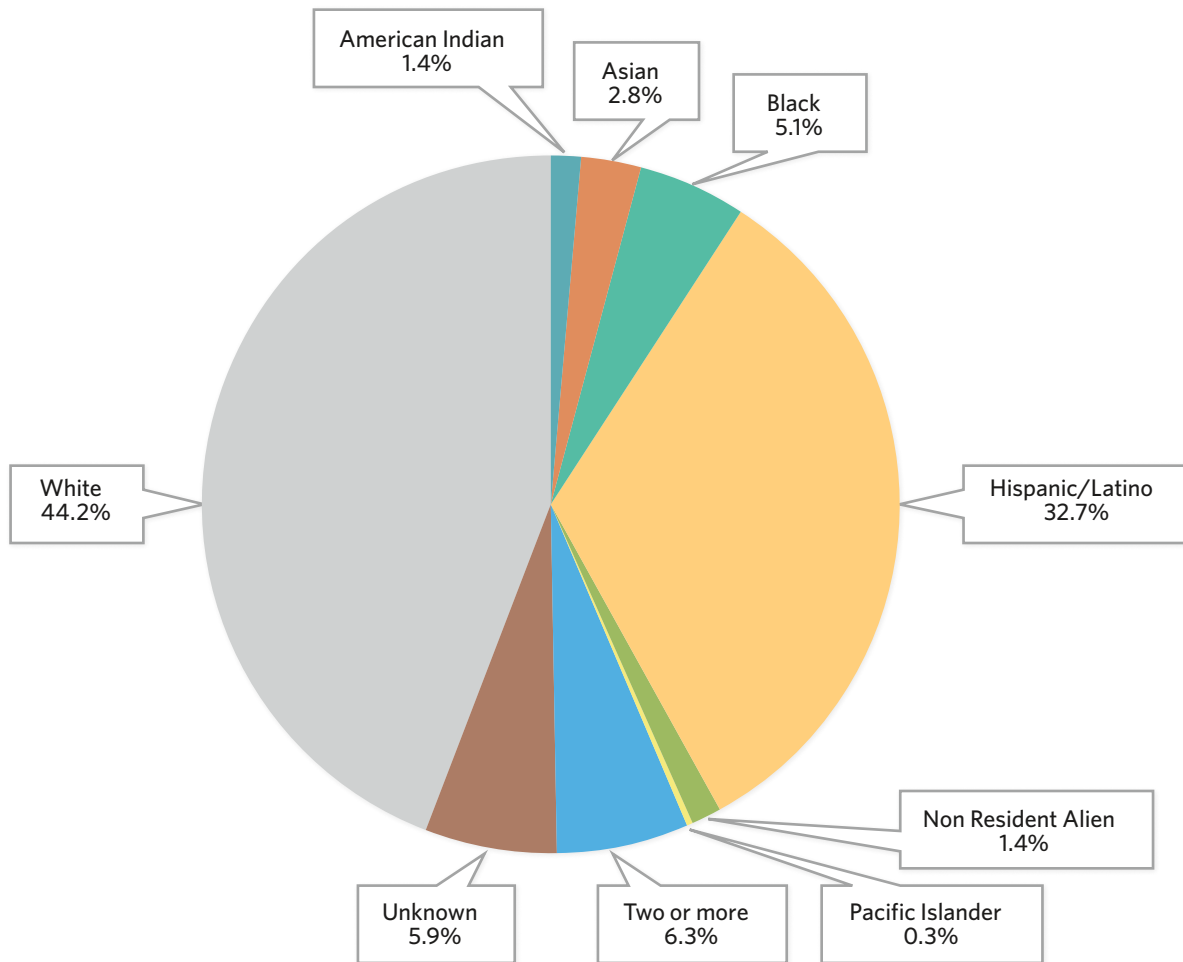
HSU students are known for their spirit of adventure and their passionate desire to make a difference in the world. The university provides a wide array of programs and activities that promote understanding of social, economic, and environmental issues and prepare students to become responsible citizens in a fast-changing world. Most HSU students take a **graduation pledge** to consider the social and environmental consequences of all their future career endeavors. Students began this tradition in 1987, and it has since been adopted by many educational institutions around the world.

Through its academic colleges, HSU offers 52 undergraduate majors, 72 minors, 12 graduate degrees, and 14 credentials (2020-21 catalog). In 2019-20, the university awarded 1,800 bachelor's degrees, 214 master's degrees, and 70 credentials issued by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. HSU is both a Minority-Serving Institution and a Hispanic-Serving Institution.

In fall 2020, the university enrolled 6,431 students; 91 percent were undergraduates, and 87 percent attended full-time. In keeping with its HSI designation, 33.3 percent of HSU students were Hispanic/Latinx, with the remainder 45 percent white, 3.4 percent Black, 1.4 percent American Indian, 6.4 percent two or more races, 1.4 percent nonresident alien, 2.9 percent Asian American, 0.3 percent Pacific Islander, and 6 percent unknown.

HSU's student demographics have changed rapidly over the last decade. Enrollment of racially minoritized first-time freshmen students in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM) majors increased by 39 percent from 2009 to 2019. The majority of these students arrive from the distant urban centers of Los Angeles, San Diego, and the Bay Area. This growth and change in demographics present challenges for HSU to achieve inclusive success, particularly for racially minoritized and first-generation students. The university has made significant progress in addressing these matters as is detailed in recommendation 1 on page 54 and recommendation 2 on page 63.

Figure 2: Fall 2020 Headcount by Race/Ethnicity (Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System)



HSU has numerous opportunities for undergraduate student engagement in the arts, humanities, sciences, and applied sciences in real-world research experiences and hands-on learning with professors engaged in research and community service. Examples include the Coral Sea, an oceangoing vessel where students study with leading experts in oceanography, marine biology, and wildlife programs; the study of the properties of forest fires; and lab experiences bringing sustainable lighting to the developing world. HSU students participate in activities outside the classroom in more than 140 campus clubs, at the university's state-of-the-art recreation center, and

as members of HSU's 11 NCAA Division II athletic teams. Students also broaden their horizons via the nationally recognized performers and speakers that the university brings to campus each year.

As of fall 2020, HSU had 356.5 FTE instructional faculty (500 headcount). Of these, 215.2 FTE (218 headcount) are tenured/tenure-track faculty and 141.3 FTE (282 headcount) are contracted lecturers. It is anticipated that HSU will search for at least five new tenure-track faculty members by June 30, 2021. Two of those searches are currently underway in the biological sciences and geology programs.



## Mission

**Humboldt State University** is a comprehensive, residential campus of the California State University. We welcome students from California and the world to our campus. We offer them access to affordable, high-quality education that is responsive to the needs of a fast-changing world. We serve them by providing a wide array of programs and activities that promote understanding of social, economic, and environmental issues. We help individuals prepare to be responsible members of diverse societies.

## Vision

**Humboldt State University** will be the campus of choice for individuals who seek above all else to improve the human condition and our environment.

**WE WILL** be the premier center for the interdisciplinary study of the environment and its natural resources.

**WE WILL** be a regional center for the arts.

**WE WILL** be renowned for social and environmental responsibility and action.

**WE BELIEVE** the key to our common future will be the individual citizen who acts in good conscience and engages in informed action.

**WE WILL** commit to increasing our diversity of people and perspectives.

**WE WILL** be exemplary partners with our communities, including tribal nations.

**WE WILL** be stewards of learning to make a positive difference.





# Values

**Humboldt State University** values the following academic principles that represent attributes of an academically integrated university, and provide a framework for accomplishing our collective vision and mission.

**WE BELIEVE** our primary responsibility is to provide the best possible education for today's world.

**WE BELIEVE** that teaching excellence is of paramount importance as is learning excellence.

**WE BELIEVE** in an environment of free inquiry where learning occurs both inside and outside the classroom. As a community of learning, the campus curricular and co-curricular environment encourages intellectual discourse, aesthetic creativity and appreciation, and significant opportunities for involvement and service. We prepare students to take on the commitments of critical inquiry, social responsibility and civic engagement necessary to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

**WE BELIEVE** in intellectual growth through scholarship, creative activities, and research. We prepare individuals to be successful in advanced academic and professional degree programs, to be in positions of leadership, and to be proactive and productive members of society.

**WE BELIEVE** in the dignity of all individuals, in fair and equitable treatment, and in equal opportunity. We value the richness and interplay

of differences. We value the inclusiveness of diversity, and we respect alternative paradigms of thought.

**WE BELIEVE** in collegial dialogue and debate that leads to participatory decision making within our community of student, staff, administrator, and faculty learners.

**WE BELIEVE** the university must assist in developing the abilities of individuals to take initiative and to collaborate in matters resulting in responsible action.

**WE BELIEVE** individuals must be environmentally, economically, and socially responsible in the quest for viable and sustainable communities.

**WE BELIEVE** our location is an ecologically and spiritually rich asset that we embrace as an integral part of our learning community. Our curriculum is relevant, collaborative, and responsive to our geographical location.

**WE BELIEVE** we have a special opportunity to learn from the Native American cultures, the unique ecosystem, and the special communities of our region—and to apply that knowledge.

**WE BELIEVE** the university is an integral part of our local and regional communities.

**WE BELIEVE** the university is a repository for archiving accumulated knowledge with inclusive access for our academic and broader communities.

In 2020, HSU's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council recommended replacing the university's mission statement with a statement of purpose. For many, mission connotes colonial language that ignores that HSU sits on unceded land initially occupied by the First Nations People of this area. After extensive dialogue, the council proposed a new statement of purpose and revised vision and value statements. These are available in [appendix B](#).

## Major Changes Since Last WSCUC Team Visit

### Infrastructure and Technology

#### Renovations to Buildings and Classrooms

HSU has worked to support student learning by renovating classrooms and buildings and updating technology. The library's seismic retrofit project was largely completed by fall 2020, the goal of which was to strengthen the building from seismic failures that could harm students and the university community. The project was also a focused time to seek student input and develop a transformative plan to meet their needs for a variety of flexible learning spaces and access to emerging technology. The library doubled group study and group computing spaces, and use increased even as enrollments declined. The **Brain Booth** and **Makerspace** were added to the library to support student mindfulness and creativity, and special collections, the digital media lab, and **HSU Press** grew to accommodate need and interest.

Although a related project to add sprinklers to three of the four floors was added to the project to take advantage of the building closure during COVID-19, the library is projected to open fall 2021, with various student services

moving to the library and center of campus, including Academic and Career Advising and Youth Educational Services. The library's new active-learning classroom will open at that time, with eight student-collaboration stations (capacity 40 students) and two projectors. Veterans Services, Student Disability Services, and the Testing Center have received much-needed space expansion. Access across the library has expanded, as well, providing more opportunities for study, social interactions, and campus events, all of which enhance the campus experience and learning opportunities (CFR 3.5).

HSU has recently spent over \$1 million renovating instruction spaces across the university. Classrooms have received technology updates and flexible furniture to transform them into 21st-century teaching and learning spaces. The technology in over half of campus classrooms has been standardized to decrease the time faculty spend figuring out technology, thereby increasing the amount of time available for students. This work was prioritized by the Academic Technology Advisory Committee's survey of faculty technology needs, which indicated that 92 percent of responding faculty rated a consistent classroom technology setup as important or very important and 87 percent rated technology failures during class as disruptive or very disruptive.

Ambitious renovations are planned for Jenkins Hall, as well, with completion projected for fall 2022. Ten million dollars have been budgeted for this project, which will update the building to support contemporary pedagogy by ensuring that teaching spaces are interdisciplinary, flexible, collaborative, and sustainable (CFRs 3.5, 4.7).



Finally, the university has also invested over \$50 million in building-infrastructure upgrades to support a sustainable and efficient campus that provides a healthy, reliable, and attractive environment. These improvements include heating and building controls, roof replacements, lighting replacements, electrical distribution, elevator replacements, fire safety measures, door and access security, and interior finishes such as painting and flooring.

## Accessibility

Since 2018, HSU has made significant progress in creating a more accessible environment for its students. The university has funded and hired an accessibility coordinator who oversees progress toward accessibility goals, and all IT purchases are now reviewed to ensure that the most accessible options are chosen. In keeping with this priority, Blackboard Ally was implemented in 2019 to provide faculty an instant accessibility rating of their course materials in Canvas. In this last year alone, the number of faculty who have had files converted to accessible formats has increased by 30 percent (CFRs 2.13, 4.3).

## Other Technology

The university has completed several technology projects to support student success and learning. Examples of these include enhancing and streamlining the enrollment process for all freshman students; providing personalized four-year paths to graduation; improving communications via a chatbot and email, enabling students to access expensive lab software from anywhere with an internet connection; and improving the student experience between the Student Health Center and Counseling and Psychological Services. During this time, HSU also became the first in the CSU to use student-specified pronouns on class rosters and other systems. HSU's IT

department has also been working to strengthen systems to maintain services in the event of natural disasters or loss of network connectivity to the campus.

## Leadership

HSU has undergone significant leadership transitions since the WSCUC team's 2018 re-accreditation visit, beginning with the arrival of a new president, Dr. Tom Jackson, Jr., in 2019, followed by four new divisional vice presidents in the subsequent year. The changes, which are covered in the *Key Personnel* section below, have engendered a renewed sense of community, inclusion, and agency to address the opportunities and challenges that the university faces.

## Strategic Planning (CFR 1.1)

The university is currently engaged in a new strategic-planning process that places an academic roadmap at the center of its efforts. The building blocks of the **2021-26 HSU Strategic Plan** have been crafted through the research, dialogue, and imaginations of working groups organized around the six themes below.

- Student Experience and Success
- Academic Roadmap
- Future-Proofing HSU
- Employee Engagement and Success
- Resource Stewardship and Sustainability  
Community Collaboration and Shared Success

Phase one of the plan was completed in late January after a period of public comment on the draft plan. Phase two is currently underway, as division leaders are engaging in an inclusive planning process to determine actions necessary to meet the goals identified in phase one. This work will reach its conclusion with the designing of an overarching assessment plan to be tied to resource-allocation planning. The university is scheduled to be in the final phase of strategic planning at the time of the April Special Visit, wherein major budget units will finalize operational plans. The WSCUC recommendations have been incorporated into each phase of the process.

## Polytechnic Feasibility Invitation from the CSU

President Jackson sent out a **message** in November 2020 notifying university stakeholders that the Chancellor's Office had issued an invitation for the university to conduct a feasibility study of the possibility of HSU becoming the CSU's third polytechnic university. The invitation offers HSU the momentous opportunity to be the only polytechnic university in Northern California. This would better position HSU to meet specific workforce needs on the North Coast and statewide, and it would significantly raise the university's profile among prospective students and grant-funding organizations.

Reaction within and outside HSU has been positive. President Jackson voiced his enthusiasm by calling the invitation an incredible, transformative opportunity. "This is our moment," he wrote. "First, let's allow ourselves to imagine, dream, and consider Humboldt as a polytechnic. What are the possibilities for this region and future students? What are the possibilities for new grants and research?" CSU Chancellor Timothy White wrote in his **letter of invitation**, "Humboldt State University is

a vital institution on the North Coast and for California. The campus currently has many distinct strengths in the sciences, with a special capacity for matters pertaining to forestry, oceanography, energy, and agriculture. As we look to the needs of California in the decades ahead, programs dealing with the development and application of new knowledge in the fire sciences, aquaculture, sustainable energy, north coast crops, and environmental sustainability are among a few areas where HSU could provide world-class programs."

## Key Personnel

HSU began the 2019-20 academic year by welcoming several new senior administrators. Following a national search, President Tom Jackson, Jr., began his tenure in June of 2019. President Jackson previously served as president of Black Hills State University in South Dakota. He has held other leadership roles in higher education including vice president for student affairs at both the University of Louisville and Texas A&M University-Kingsville. He has also held administrative positions at McMurry University, University of Texas at El Paso, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, the University of Southern California, and St. Mary's University. President Jackson earned an associate's degree from Highline Community College, a bachelor's degree in business management/personnel from Southwest Minnesota State University, a master's in counseling/student personnel from Shippensburg University, and a doctorate of education from the University of La Verne. A first-generation college student, President Jackson is also a veteran of the US Coast Guard Reserve, Army National Guard, Texas State Guard, and Indiana Guard Reserve.

Sherie Gordon, chief of staff in the Office of the President, is currently serving as the interim vice president for administration and finance and a national search is underway. Ms. Gordon replaced Douglas Dawes after his departure in 2020. To maintain continuity of major projects underway, including strategic planning, Dr. Lisa Bond-Maupin was appointed interim deputy chief of staff in 2020.

Dr. Jenn Capps began her role as the new HSU provost and vice president for academic affairs on August 1, 2020. She comes to Humboldt from the Metropolitan State University of Denver where she was the dean of the College of Professional Studies, which has 6,000 students in 38 undergraduate programs and six graduate programs. Her training is in criminal justice and criminology, with expertise in high-risk juvenile offenders. She recently served as an expert witness for gang-involved juveniles serving sentences of life without parole.

Dr. Jason Meriwether was hired as HSU's vice president for enrollment management in 2019, which reflects the high priority that President Jackson has placed on enrollment. Dr. Meriwether has provided leadership in higher education in areas including enrollment management, academic support, athletics, TRiO programs, and student affairs. He has published on topics such as adult learning, student retention, digital learning and engagement, student affairs fundraising, and hazing prevention.

After serving as interim vice president, Frank Whitlach was appointed vice president for university advancement in fall 2019. In this role, he oversees efforts to expand charitable support and enhance public understanding of the university. He leads the Office of Development, Marketing, and Communications and the Office of Alumni and Engagement. He also serves as executive director of the HSU Foundation.

In 2020, Jane Teixeira became HSU's director of intercollegiate athletics and recreational sports. Teixeira most recently served as senior associate commissioner and senior woman administrator at the PacWest Athletic Conference. Prior to that, she worked at the University of Southern California, the National Collegiate Athletic Association, and Texas A&M International University.

Several associate vice president positions have also been filled since 2018. After national searches in 2019, Dr. Mary Oling-Sisay became HSU's vice provost for academic affairs and WSCUC accreditation liaison officer, and Dr. Simone Aloisio became the university's new associate vice president for faculty affairs. Dr. Eboni Turnbow was appointed interim dean of students in fall 2019, and Dr. Elavie Ndura joined HSU's administration as the new associate vice president and campus diversity officer in January 2021 after a national search last fall.

Dr. Oling-Sisay has more than 20 years experience in academia as a faculty member and an administrator, including experience in both academic and student affairs. She served in various academic administrative capacities prior to coming to HSU, including academic dean and vice president. She has been a peer evaluator for WSCUC for several years and previously an accreditation consultant evaluator for the North Central Association of Schools and Colleges/Higher Learning Commission. She is a graduate of the American Council on Education Fellows Program.

Prior to joining HSU, Dr. Aloisio was the interim associate dean for the School of Arts and Sciences at California State University Channel Islands, where he held the rank of professor and served as chair in the Department of Chemistry for twelve years.

Dr. Eboni Turnbow has several years experience with students and university services. She serves as the regional

engagement coordinator on the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) Region IV-E board and as the research and scholarship co-chair on the NASPA Women in Student Affairs Knowledge Community national board. She also serves on the Education Advisory Group national board for the National Association for Campus Activities.

Dr. Elavie Ndura brings to HSU over 30 years of leadership, scholarship, and practice. She most recently served as the vice president for equity, diversity, and inclusion at Gallaudet University in Washington, DC, where she engaged employees, students, alumni, and members of the board of trustees in diversity and implicit-bias training, cross-cultural conversations, mindful-facilitation training, and culturally responsive curriculum development and teaching.

## Changes in College Leadership

Leadership has changed in all the university's colleges since the 2018 team visit. HSU welcomed Dr. Shawna Young as the new dean of the College of Professional Studies in 2019, and Dr. Alexander Enyedi, provost and senior vice president for academic affairs, left HSU at the end of that year. Dr. Lisa Bond-Maupin, dean of the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences, served as interim provost until the arrival of Dr. Capps last August, at which time Dr. Bond-Maupin entered the Office of the President. Dr. Rosamel Benavides-Garb was appointed interim dean of the college and continues in this role to date. Dr. Dale Oliver was named interim dean of the College of Natural Resources and Sciences in May 2018, and, following a national search, Dr. Oliver was appointed permanently to this position in 2019. Carl Hansen retired from his role as dean of the College of Extended Education and Global Engagement in December 2020. Library

Dean Cyril Oberlander has taken over this portfolio on an interim basis in addition to his library deanship.

## Impact of COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic presented numerous challenges for HSU, including unanticipated costs and revenue losses, which interfered with the progress that the university has been making. HSU prides itself on its hands-on learning experiences, and the pandemic has obviously had a significant impact on programs all across the university. Significant revenue losses occurred in student housing and dining due to the closing of residence halls and provision of refunds, and strict spending and hiring restrictions have been enacted. Intentional and timely business and instructional continuity have helped HSU meet the challenges, as faculty and leadership were able to successfully transition courses to remote offerings while maintaining targeted face-to-face courses. The latter presented substantial costs associated first and foremost with classroom safety measures, but many other necessary actions needed funding, as well:

- Isolation and quarantine program for the residence halls
- Investment in instructional support, from expanding bandwidth to the classroom IT apparatus to improving WiFi to supporting asynchronous learning
- Physical adjustments around campus such as placing and maintaining barriers, establishing and staffing new student study spaces, and many others
- COVID-related goods and services, including procurement of protective gear (masks, gloves, sanitizer) and enhanced cleaning



A university is more than its budget, and, indeed, the pandemic has demanded a great deal of everyone and strained the budget. Through all this, HSU has remained true to its core mission, reflected in myriad efforts by so many dedicated faculty, staff, and administrators. Priorities that have remained in focus include:

- Investing in instructional continuity

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- Investing in faculty and staff support

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- Continuing to support research programs

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- Selectively investing in academic programs

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- Supporting food-insecure students

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- Investing in diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts

HSU's health and safety protocols seem to be working effectively, as the university has not experienced the kind of outbreaks that other universities have seen. From a budgetary standpoint, the pandemic came just as leadership was operationalizing plans to stabilize the budget. Nonetheless, as long as the situation does not worsen, if the university stays the course described below, the budget should continue to have a "rough stability."







# Report Preparation and Organization

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Institutional quality assurance and continuous improvement is coordinated by HSU's new Quality Assurance Team (QAT), which was established by the provost's office in fall 2020. Led by the vice provost and accreditation liaison officer, the team includes HSU's associate directors of assessment, faculty assessment fellows, and representatives from the University Senate, the Division of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs, the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and the President's Cabinet.

HSU's 2021 Special Visit report focuses on budgeting, enrollment management, diversification of revenue sources, and assessment. The main body of the report responds to these areas and the final section of the report provides updates on other recommendations made by WSCUC. Contributors to the report include members of the Divisions of Enrollment Management, Administrative Affairs, Academic Affairs, and University Advancement; the Office of the Vice Provost (graduate and undergraduate programs); the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; Academic Personnel Services; the Office of Institutional Effectiveness; the Integrated Curriculum Committee; the Department of Mathematics; place-based learning community support teams; and the first-year writing and writing-across-the-curriculum programs.

As part of the report preparation, the QAT led consultative sessions with various stakeholders across all divisions, including sessions with each college's council of chairs facilitated by the faculty assessment fellows. Stakeholders received a survey template following each session to encourage written accounts of responses to the six WSCUC recommendations, and this feedback informed the report. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness provided the majority of institutional data for the report; Dr. Mark Wicklund, associate director of academic assessment and faculty in the English department, edited the document for clarity, style, and consistency of voice; and the Department of Marketing and Communications published the report.







# Response to the Commission's Recommendations

In its 2018 letter reaffirming HSU's accreditation, the Commission commended the university for its enhanced student-recruitment efforts, particularly in the Los Angeles region; its educational objectives and their alignment with stated priorities; student commitments to the environment, sustainability, and social-justice issues; the active involvement of students in applied learning and co-curricular programs; and its institutional-research capacity. Specifically, the July 20, 2018 Commission Action Letter made the following six recommendations:

1. Implement and sustain appropriate responses to the increased diversity of HSU's students. The evaluation of HSU's academic and student support services, including tutoring, housing, students with disabilities programs, financial aid counseling, career counseling and placement, and multicultural centers, and the adaptation of services based on evaluation results will better meet the needs of different students. Evidence-based decisions would ensure that curricular and co-curricular programs are aligned and are sufficiently funded and staffed by qualified faculty and staff. (CFR 1.4, 2.13)
2. Continue and advance efforts to orient prospective students from large, urban areas to HSU's rural, small-city context. As HSU incorporates a more diverse student body, intensifying efforts on student grievances

and complaints, safety, and life in the local community will help students to feel supported and avoid feelings of alienation and isolation. (CFR 1.6)

3. Improve the university leadership's communication strategies and efforts across the campus, including continued transparency about HSU's budget challenges. Change-management training will assist HSU in making critical choices among the myriad campus initiatives. (CFR 1.7)
4. Implement a comprehensive university assessment plan developed by faculty so that effective assessment is consistent across the institution and widely shared among faculty, staff, and students. Improving the assessment of GEAR and consistently embedding the expectations for student learning in the standards faculty use to evaluate student work are components of effective assessment. (CFR 2.4, 2.6)
5. Prioritize diversification of faculty and staff demographics, including the use of new hires, to align with the diversity of the student body. Engaging faculty and staff in cultural-competency professional development will further the academic achievement of students and contribute to the achievement of the institution's educational objectives. (CFR 1.4, 3.1, 3.3)

6. Engage in realistic budgeting, enrollment management, and diversification of revenue sources. Strengthening fundraising and private partnerships will help alleviate the stress on the budget in the upcoming years. More detail in the 2017 Environmental Scan Visualization Plan will clarify how HSU will counter current trends and reach its enrollment, graduation, retention, and achievement gap targets. (CFR 3.4)

In granting an 8-year period of reaffirmation, the Commission called for a Special Visit for spring 2021 to address progress on budgeting, enrollment management, diversification of revenue sources, and university-wide assessment (Recommendations 3, 4, and 6).

HSU has made significant strides in addressing all the above recommendations. Fundamental in this progress has been strengthening and sustaining communication and collaboration between leadership and the wider HSU community, including external partners and stakeholders.

The following sections first address the Commission's concerns about budgeting, enrollment management, diversification of revenue sources, and assessment that were detailed in recommendations 3, 4, and 6. While not required, subsequent sections outline progress on recommendations 1, 2, and 5.

## Budget Communications, Change Management, and Shared Governance: Recommendation 3 (CFRs 1.7, 3.6)

***Recommendation 3 from Commission Action Letter: Improve the university leadership's communication strategies and efforts across the campus, including continued transparency about HSU's budget challenges. Change-management training will assist HSU in making critical choices among the myriad campus initiatives. (CFR 1.7)***

University leaders have continued a commitment to shared governance. President Jackson's office regularly apprises HSU stakeholders about the university's financial situation. His office makes reports on these matters to the University Senate and includes faculty, staff, and students in major initiatives including strategic planning. To sustain communication and consultation, the president works with several **advisory groups** (CFRs 3.6, 3.7, 3.8), which include the President's Administrative Team; the President's Cabinet; the President's Community Advisory Committee; the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council; the Native American Advisory Council; equity arcata; and the university ombudspersons.

HSU has made demonstrable efforts to elevate shared governance and inclusive excellence since the last WSCUC team visit. These efforts have served as catalysts for the university's recent successes in attracting new leadership and faculty, strengthening community partnerships, and renewing efforts to build resources that allow a diverse, comprehensive public university to thrive.

## University Budget Communications (CFR 3.6)

HSU has made significant progress to strengthen communication across the university and enhance transparency regarding existing and anticipated budget challenges and opportunities. This is seen in presentations from the **University Resources and Planning Committee** (URPC), accounts of all URPC meetings on the budget website, publicly available interactive dashboards, and regular reports from President Jackson's staff.

The URPC is a standing committee of the University Senate, co-chaired by the provost and a faculty member. Membership consists of faculty, a college dean, staff members, and a student representative (CFRs 3.7, 3.8). The committee has formally established annual fall and spring campus budget meetings, and presentations to various university groups are frequent. In fall 2019, URPC leaders hosted several open-forum budget presentations to both the senate and the council of chairs. The committee shares all agendas, minutes, presentations, and critical correspondence with the president on its webpage, with the senate through regular, detailed reports, and in university-wide portal announcements (CFRs 4.5, 4.6).

The budget office features interactive **OpenBook** dashboards accessible to all members of the university community. Introduced in fall 2017, the dashboards provide details of all university budgeted funds. These efforts have established a critical and important framework for an open and transparent process for budget discussions (CFR 3.7). The budget office continues to enhance the utility of these dashboards so members of the university community can access vital information. For instance, to provide a single snapshot of current budget challenges, the office recently added a dashboard that shows **budgeted surpluses and deficits by entity**.

Guided by the recently revised **URPC budget principles**, the university employs a collaborative budget process that aligns resource allocation decisions with institutional priorities. The budget office and other university partners (institutional effectiveness, enrollment management, etc.) provide budget and financial data, including state, CSU, and university considerations; multi-year analyses and trends; and quarterly financial reviews detailing university performance and projected year-end balances. In determining its annual budget recommendation, the URPC takes into account multi-year projections, university priorities, available reserves, and new and continuing funding. The recommendation is offered in the context of a five-year planning horizon to illustrate and make transparent its multi-year impacts. The URPC sends this recommendation to the University Senate for review and input and concludes the process by presenting it to the president.

URPC meetings are open to the entire university, and the committee provides bi-weekly updates to the senate. Agendas, meeting notes, and documents are publicly available on the **budget website**. This site contains budget policies, procedures, and recommendations; reports and dashboards; university communications; URPC activity; systemwide financial-analysis data; and the president's response to URPC budget recommendations (CFRs 3.6, 3.7)

HSU has also increased the frequency of general communication with its stakeholders, which include regular reports and updates from the president and the provost. A **fall welcome** outlines the president's priorities for the year, and a **spring welcome** is an opportunity to highlight progress and celebrate accomplishments. A new **President's Report**, which debuted in 2019, is regularly



distributed across the university, and President Jackson published a first-year review, ***Resilience & Community***, in December 2020. Leadership also implemented a series of new additional communications aimed at keeping the university informed. These include the following.

- ***Celebrate Everything*** small events and receptions for university successes
- Portal university-wide and divisional messages that are automatically emailed to designated groups
- Regular divisional reports to the University Senate
- ***Weekly Wednesdays*** provost reports
- Publication of Operating Fund reserve policy
- Publication of Operating Fund roll-forward guidelines

## Integrated Assessment Planning and Budget (CFRs 4.1, 4.3, 4.5)

To strengthen the transparency of budget decisions, HSU has developed a framework to connect planning and assessment processes to resource allocation. The Integrated Assessment Planning and Budget (IAPB) framework is a transparent, evidence-based resource-allocation process that clearly demonstrates where and how resource allocation/deallocation decisions are made (CFRs 3.7, 3.8).

Improving strategic budgeting and incorporating assessment in decision making was a cornerstone of HSU's 2015 strategic plan. In response, an IAPB committee developed a disciplined, transparent, and principled strategic budgeting and assessment process with a goal to gradually apply it to budget decisions across all divisions.

The IAPB process map below lays out the process and timeline of assessment and decision making. Using a two-year planning and budgeting cycle that is updated annually, the model identifies leadership in charge of informing university stakeholders of short-term and long-term priorities. The planning and budgeting cycle includes a continuous loop of assessment, planning, implementation, and assessment that unites all divisions under shared deadlines and calendar cycle.

The design of the IAPB process began in 2015-16, and while progress has been slow, resource request and allocation processes for CSU Graduation Initiative 2025 (GI 2025) funding and for facilities space now model the IAPB framework. The IAPB committee collaborated with the **Student Success Alliance** on decisions for the disbursement of HSU's 2019-20 and 2020-21 GI 2025 resources, and annual assessment reports will hold recipient programs accountable for their expenditures.

The IAPB implementation approach shifted gears in 2019-20 with the rollout of the integrated strategic-planning framework. Instead of piloting individual areas and implementing the IAPB process in segments over a multi-year period, focus has been on first comprehensively aligning university planning efforts. The strategic-planning framework establishes and aligns planning and assessment structures at all levels of the organization. Phase one (institution level) is nearing completion, and phases two (division) and three (college/major budget unit) aim to establish operational plans—with objectives, outcomes, and measures—across the university by May 2021. Phase four (continuous assessment, improvement, and annual institutional budget planning) will simultaneously infuse initial IAPB process work with the newly established strategic planning framework to fully integrate budget and planning efforts going forward.



a change-management perspective to the process. To this end, a change-management plan ([appendix C](#)) was developed to launch a change-management initiative for the entire university in tandem with the strategic planning. President Jackson approved the plan, and it is expected to launch by the end of April 2021. As part of the plan, four HSU employees will become Prosci ADKAR certified, and they will guide the initiative moving forward.

As HSU embarks on significant updates in strategies and priorities in light of the new strategic plan, ongoing fiscal challenges, and the COVID-19 pandemic, it is vital that the university has a robust, intentional process that informs and engages employees and other stakeholders. The Prosci ADKAR approach to implementing people-centered change management at HSU will inform and guide university leadership in their decision making.

## Impact of Actions

Improved communication around budget matters and the involvement of shared-governance committees have enhanced accountability and collective action to reduce spending. Extensive efforts to share budget information via presentations, dashboards, reports, and website resources have successfully broadened campus awareness. Real-time budget information is available to all faculty and staff through the URPC updates on resource-allocation criteria and the large budget-reduction framework. There was stakeholder engagement in budget-reduction planning and implementation in all divisions.

The IAPB process guided two rounds of GI 2025 fund allocations and introduced students, staff, and faculty to the model, with the significance of assessment and continuous improvement highlighted throughout. The process provided the foundation for the new planning model to integrate planning with assessment and resource allocation. The GI 2025 pilot breathed life into the conceptual framework of the continuous-improvement IAPB process, increasing university comfort with this integrated approach. It also articulated to the university the importance of program development tied to overarching strategic goals designed for collective impact. While HSU continues to engage in dialogue regarding resource allocations, consistent communication has alerted stakeholders to the university's financial position in the face of declining enrollment.

The university has made proposals on spending cuts, which are included in its plan for a three-year balanced budget. As part of the plan, HSU offered a voluntary early-exit program to eligible employees in 2020-21. This initiative will allow the university to further fine-tune its human resources in alignment with budget expectations.

While considerable action has been taken to improve communication across campus, opportunities remain to further enhance communication across the organization. The new strategic plan, once complete, will inform the budget process and prioritization efforts and leverage the integrated strategic-planning framework to expand alignment of communications and planning throughout all university levels. As change comes, HSU is embedding ADKAR change-management processes in all major decisions and planning efforts, including the current strategic planning and the polytechnic feasibility study.



## Budget, Enrollment Management, Revenue Diversification: Recommendation 6 (CFR 3.4)

***Recommendation 6 from Commission Action Letter: Engage in realistic budgeting, enrollment management, and diversification of revenue sources. Strengthening fundraising and private partnerships will help alleviate the stress on the budget in the upcoming years. More detail in the 2017 Environmental Scan Visualization Plan will clarify how HSU will counter current trends and reach its enrollment, graduation, retention, and achievement gap targets. (CFR 3.4)***

### Financial Challenges and Current Resources

HSU has made significant progress over the past three years to address its structural deficit through extensive multi-year budget-stabilization efforts that have resulted in \$11.5 million in spending reductions and new funding sources through 2019-20 (\$1.5 million in 2017-18, \$9 million in 2018-19, and \$1 million in 2019-20). During spring 2020 budget planning, the university projected an additional budget gap of \$20 million over the next two to three years. As of the 2020-21 budget, HSU has realized 37 percent of the targeted reductions (\$7.3 million) and is on track to realize at least \$7 million in additional reductions by June 30, 2021. With the advent of COVID-19 in early 2020, much of the work that had been undertaken to decrease deficit spending was severely hampered, but the situation has been somewhat ameliorated by continued one-time funds from the Chancellor's Office and from the CARES Act.

The university's deficit-elimination efforts have focused on the use of base funding to support strategic priorities, and significant additional budget-stabilization activity is underway. With enrollment declining for

many CSUs, and with the continuing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, HSU has redoubled its efforts on strategic enrollment management. To address the critical importance of this function, the former vice president for student affairs position was elevated in 2019 as a repurposed position of vice president for enrollment management. To ensure the continued attention on student affairs, an associate vice president for student success was added to provide oversight for university auxiliary services as they relate to the student experience. Under this portfolio are housing, residence life, dining, off-campus student services, the university bookstore, and the children's center. The creation of the Office of Off-Campus Student Services in 2017 has supported over 2,000 students in finding access to safe and affordable housing off campus. The financial challenges, changes in key personnel positions, enrollment targets, and pandemic are all part of the realities of HSU's current position.

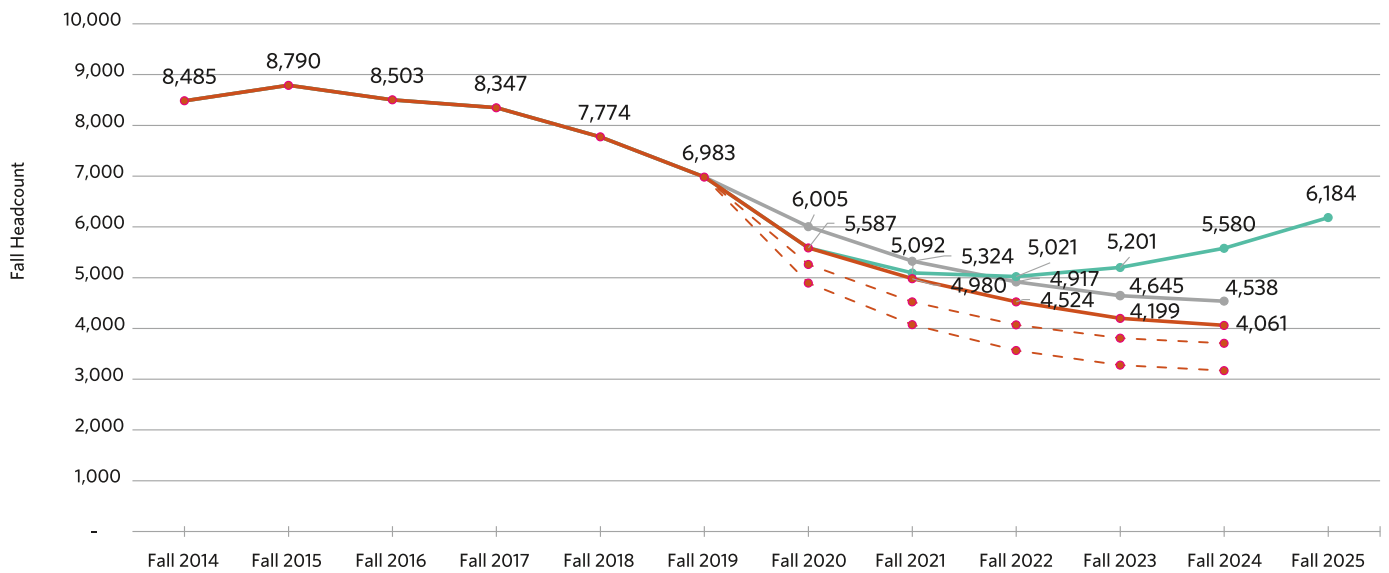
### Financial Position and Stability (CFRs 3.4, 4.7)

HSU's operating fund budget in fiscal year 2020-21 was \$128.7 million, with 26.7 percent from student tuition and fees, 66.5 percent from state appropriations, and 7.8 percent from other revenue sources. The university has managed to consistently strengthen its financial position even as it has navigated considerable financial challenges, including a 30-percent decline in enrollment over the past five years. An additional decline of \$5.5 million in state allocations in 2020-21 has further underscored the need for HSU to streamline its resource allocation.

Long-range financial analysis guides transparent financial planning and decision making. HSU's current planning efforts strive to balance the importance of stabilizing the current budget and solidifying the core

Figure 4: **Fall Headcount Scenarios**

- Prelim Budget:** initial scenario in use for planning (pre-COVID-19) — incoming enrollment, retention rates, and graduation rates remain consistent for the five year period based on fall 2020 enrollment projections
- Growth:** scenario we are striving to reach based on HSU's system enrollment target of 7,603 annualized resident FTES — requires significant increase in incoming students and retention rates to achieve
- COVID-19 Update:** scenarios depicting potential impact of COVID-19, with the solid red line reflecting the enrollment projection now incorporated into current five-year budget planning



while simultaneously investing and positioning for growth (CFR 3.4). In August 2019, President Jackson charged the University Resources and Planning Committee (URPC) with developing a multi-year balanced-budget plan sustainable through 2025 (CFR 4.7). The URPC engaged in developing this plan throughout 2019-20, developing a method to maintain a multi-year balanced-budget plan even as the university's budget forecast worsened with the onset of COVID-19 last spring.

Undeterred by the pandemic, HSU continues to make significant strides to plan proactively over a multi-year

horizon, utilizing a variety of possible enrollment and funding scenarios to ensure that the university is prepared for changing conditions (CFR 3.4). The charts of fall headcount and budget deficit scenarios on the previous page are examples of the scenario-planning resources used by leadership and the URPC to plan and communicate enrollment and budget-deficit scenarios during spring 2020 budget planning.

The above fall headcount chart shows five different enrollment scenarios for which the university is actively planning, including the preliminary budget pre-pandemic

Figure 5: **Budget-Planning Scenarios - Deficit Ranges**

Date: May 14, 2020

**Baseline Assumptions:**

- Starting point is Maintenance of Effort budget from state (new funding for retirement/health only)
- State appropriation vulnerability due to being under enrolled not factored in
- No costs for general salary increases reflected, all units currently bargaining

State Approp Reduction (0%)	2019-20 Budget	2020-21 Projection	2021-22 Projection	2022-23 Projection	2023-24 Projection	2024-25 Projection
Pre-COVID Planning (-14%)	(2,925,000)	(7,780,000)	(11,981,000)	(14,431,000)	(16,112,000)	(16,788,000)
Mid-COVID Planning (-20%)	(2,925,000)	(10,268,000)	(13,990,000)	(16,743,000)	(18,718,000)	(19,596,000)
Mid-COVID Planning (-25%)	(2,925,000)	(12,297,000)	(16,769,000)	(19,504,000)	(21,110,000)	(21,746,000)
Mid-COVID Planning (-30%)	(2,925,000)	(14,564,000)	(19,524,000)	(22,555,000)	(24,293,000)	(24,994,000)
Mid-COVID Planning (Growth)	(2,925,000)	(10,286,000)	(13,467,000)	(13,930,000)	(13,058,000)	(11,193,000)
State Approp Reduction (-2.5%)	2019-20 Budget	2020-21 Projection	2021-22 Projection	2022-23 Projection	2023-24 Projection	2024-25 Projection
Pre-COVID Planning (-14%)	(2,925,000)	(14,271,000)	(10,070,000)	(16,721,000)	(18,402,000)	(19,078,000)
Mid-COVID Planning (-20%)	(2,925,000)	(16,280,000)	(12,558,000)	(19,033,000)	(21,008,000)	(21,886,000)
Mid-COVID Planning (-25%)	(2,925,000)	(19,059,000)	(14,587,000)	(21,794,000)	(23,400,000)	(24,036,000)
Mid-COVID Planning (-30%)	(2,925,000)	(16,854,000)	(21,814,000)	(24,845,000)	(26,583,000)	(27,284,000)
Mid-COVID Planning (Growth)	(2,925,000)	(12,576,000)	(15,757,000)	(16,220,000)	(15,348,000)	(13,483,000)
State Approp Reduction (-5%)	2019-20 Budget	2020-21 Projection	2021-22 Projection	2022-23 Projection	2023-24 Projection	2024-25 Projection
Pre-COVID Planning (-14%)	(2,925,000)	(12,360,000)	(16,561,000)	(19,011,000)	(20,692,000)	(21,368,000)
Mid-COVID Planning (-20%)	(2,925,000)	(14,848,000)	(18,570,000)	(21,323,000)	(23,298,000)	(24,176,000)
Mid-COVID Planning (-25%)	(2,925,000)	(16,877,000)	(21,349,000)	(24,084,000)	(25,690,000)	(26,326,000)
Mid-COVID Planning (-30%)	(2,925,000)	(19,144,000)	(24,104,000)	(27,135,000)	(28,873,000)	(29,574,000)
Mid-COVID Planning (Growth)	(2,925,000)	(14,866,000)	(18,047,000)	(18,510,000)	(17,638,000)	(15,773,000)
State Approp Reduction (-10%)	2019-20 Budget	2020-21 Projection	2021-22 Projection	2022-23 Projection	2023-24 Projection	2024-25 Projection
Pre-COVID Planning (-14%)	(2,925,000)	(16,940,000)	(21,141,000)	(23,591,000)	(25,272,000)	(25,948,000)
Mid-COVID Planning (-20%)	(2,925,000)	(19,428,000)	(23,150,000)	(25,903,000)	(27,878,000)	(28,756,000)
Mid-COVID Planning (-25%)	(2,925,000)	(21,457,000)	(25,929,000)	(28,664,000)	(30,270,000)	(30,906,000)
Mid-COVID Planning (-30%)	(2,925,000)	(23,724,000)	(28,684,000)	(31,715,000)	(33,453,000)	(34,154,000)
Mid-COVID Planning (Growth)	(2,925,000)	(19,446,000)	(22,627,000)	(23,090,000)	(22,218,000)	(20,353,000)

scenario, a recalibrated growth scenario, and three COVID update scenarios, given the uncertainty around the pandemic’s potential impact on enrollment (CFR 4.7).

Building off the enrollment scenarios, the above deficit scenarios illustrate projected budget shortfalls over five years at five different enrollment levels in combination with three different state appropriation-reduction scenarios. Synthesizing the eight scenarios into a single snapshot provides the university with a clear picture of the \$20 million reduction target in the context of all planning

scenarios, with red cells highlighting where the budget shortfall exceeds \$20 million.

### Enrollment Management

HSU has made intentional and concerted efforts to stabilize its enrollment. These have entailed utilization of data to inform decision making. The following changes to recruitment, admissions, and retention were made by having a unified strategy that is synergetic and consistent. The Division of Enrollment Management



(EM)—specifically the areas of recruitment, admissions, and retention—has made strategic changes to create a realistic plan to stabilize enrollment and focus on growth.

A strategic enrollment management (SEM) plan was established in 2019 (CFRs 2.10, 2.12, 2.13, 2.14), which was followed as the new leadership in EM came on board that year, including the new vice president of enrollment management and the new dean of students in summer 2019. Leadership and staff across the university diligently monitored HSU’s SEM 2019-20 year-one priorities ([appendix D](#)), which included the following.

- Increase recruitment

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- Demonstrate commitment to a culture of student completion

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- Invest in Humboldt County

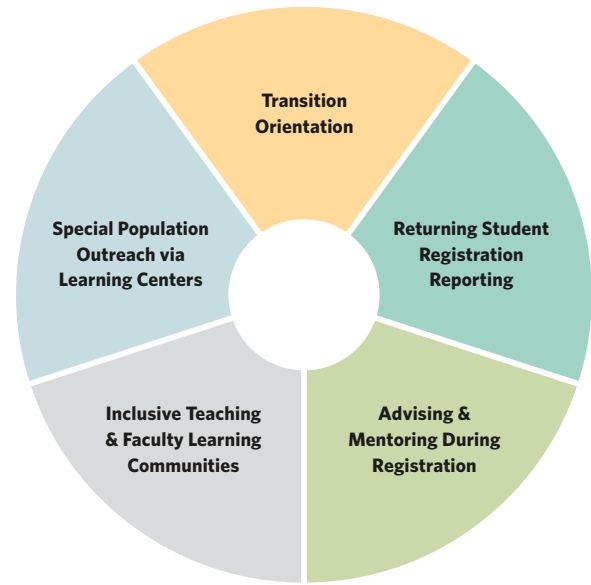
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- Establish student communication life cycle

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- Enhance student experience

Figure 6: **Overview of Enrollment-Management Activities from 2019-20.**



**Transition Orientation**

- Learning focus sense of belonging
- shift from bill pay registration
- assessment-yield retention

**Returning Student Registration Reporting**

- Returning students
- increase in students registration appointed time

**Advising & Mentoring During Registration**

- Intrusive advising and referrals
- Measurables

**Inclusive Teaching & Faculty Learning Communities**

- Student success

**Special Population Outreach via Learning Centers**

- Measurables

HSU continues to be vigilant in monitoring prospective student interest. This work has entailed a detailed and data-informed process of reviewing and monitoring applications month by month. Figure 7 illustrates this work.

Figure 7: Application to Registration Monitoring



## Application to Registration Monitoring

### Understanding Confirmed Students

Admitted applicants may confirm and then be unconfirmed. This dashboard examines those who remained confirmed until the end of the process (i.e., sum of confirmed) and those that unconfirmed before the end (i.e., sum of applied).

### Running Total of Applied and Confirmed Students by Confirmed Date

Term Name	February			March			April			May			June		
	Applied	Confirmed Running Sum	App - Confirmed	Applied	Confirmed Running Sum	App - Confirmed	Applied	Confirmed Running Sum	App - Confirmed	Applied	Confirmed Running Sum	App - Confirmed	Applied	Confirmed Running Sum	App - Confirmed
Fall 2016	621	946	-618	638	1,422	-780	1,072	2,181	-1,093	211	2,293	-1,192	55	2,334	-1,206
Fall 2017	424	1,255	-366	661	1,810	-472	1,002	2,634	-650	273	2,865	-692	67	2,927	-697
Fall 2018	313	934	-269	532	1,378	-357	1,083	2,265	-553	231	2,439	-610	88	2,513	-624
Fall 2019	405	547	-118	383	873	-175	897	1,626	-319	274	1,832	-387	80	1,904	-395
Fall 2020	177	619	-144	285	863	-185	593	1,346	-295	356	1,651	-346	164	1,798	-363
Fall 2021		460	-1		460	-1		460	-1		460	-1		460	-1

**Filters**

Redirected Applications  
Original Application

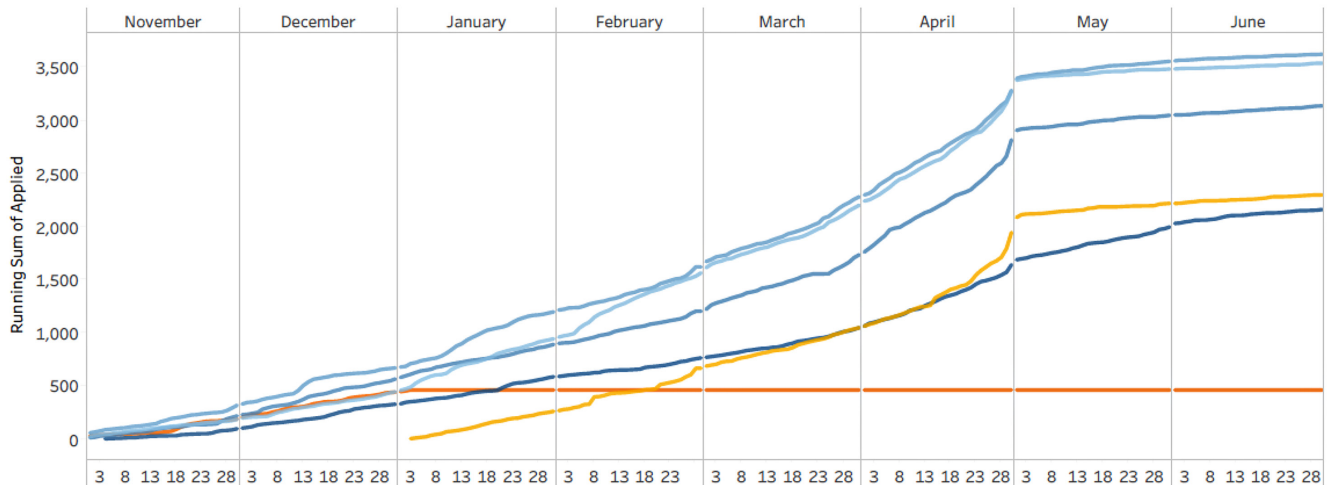
Apptype  
All

Month of CONFIRM\_DT  
Multiple values

Note. October to January data is accounted for, but hidden.

Last updated:  
1/4/2021 11:35:06 AM

### Running Total of Registered Students by Confirmed Date



## Recruitment

HSU has realigned priorities toward sustaining incremental growth of new student numbers. Three strategies are noteworthy.

- The university’s search and communication strategy includes segmenting its overall market and differentiating messages to constituents. These include first-year beginners, adult learners, Humboldt-area residents, students across the state, and targeted out-of-state students.
- The yield strategy includes gathering comprehensive data on HSU’s top fifty in-state feeder high schools and feeder community colleges, using site-based recruiters in Los Angeles and Fresno (soon expanding to San Diego) and providing academic deans with \$5K per school, per year, for the next four years. This will fund faculty engaged in student-recruitment efforts in identified high-yield areas based on the data.

- **The messaging strategy has been to aggressively reintroduce HSU's academic quality and affordability to high schools and community colleges. EM's comprehensive communication plan leverages the customer-relationship management system to generate messaging directly to prospective students, parents, and high school counselors and teachers.**

The messaging strategy is overseen by HSU's enrollment-management communications coordinator, who was hired to automate and personalize communications. The coordinator oversees all EM communication efforts, working with the director of admissions to stabilize communication and expand it beyond transactional. This included an evaluation of the current tools available to staff to communicate to prospective or current students, which led to the purchase of Slate, a customer relationship management platform that improves communications, tracks student success, and provides early identification through the student life cycle (CFRs 4.3, 4.7). This purchase not only enhanced these efforts, but it also allowed the unit to stay within the current budget allocation.

In 2019, HSU contracted with the National Research Center for College and University Admissions/Eduventures with the aim of improving the enrollment funnel and understanding the reasons why students choose to attend or not attend HSU. The result has been the growth of the first-time freshmen funnel and a predictive model score. The university utilizes these data to allocate resources directly to populations that represent the highest potential to enroll. Data from surveys of admitted students inform the marketing, message, and strategies to recruit and yield future incoming classes.

Collaboration with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness has increased the use of data in evaluating the entire enrollment funnel, reporting registration numbers with various filters to represent segmentation, and identifying trends by various topics including major, departments, and ethnicity. All these data are used daily to make decisions, educate staff, and direct initiatives (CFRs 4.1, 4.2).

To support the new recruitment efforts, HSU eliminated the \$25 registration fee for preview day, the \$25 open house fee, and the \$50 family orientation fee. The university also expanded campus tours to six days a week and invested \$50K for additional student ambassadors to highlight the value of attending HSU.

The division has diversified its efforts by opening up new areas of recruitment, which include the realignment of scholarship dollars. The Humboldt First Scholarship launched a \$250,000 drive to triple the number of local students who enroll at HSU over the next four years. The initiative includes creative efforts to motivate students to attend HSU by providing early admissions offers to all who are eligible and by reaching out to those not yet eligible. The scholarship also supports timely degree completion by supplementing financial aid packages. In addition, a new \$1,000 annual housing scholarship was implemented fall 2020 for all students in campus housing for four years. Evidence shows that persistence and academic success at HSU correlate strongly to students living in campus housing. This award is funded by the housing reserve fund.

A few recent actions warrant mention in closing. Project Rebound was added this year to increase the number of formerly incarcerated students attending HSU; this was accompanied by funding to support a program coordinator and provide services to students. A combination of various efforts are converging to complement HSU's primary focus on enrolling eligible



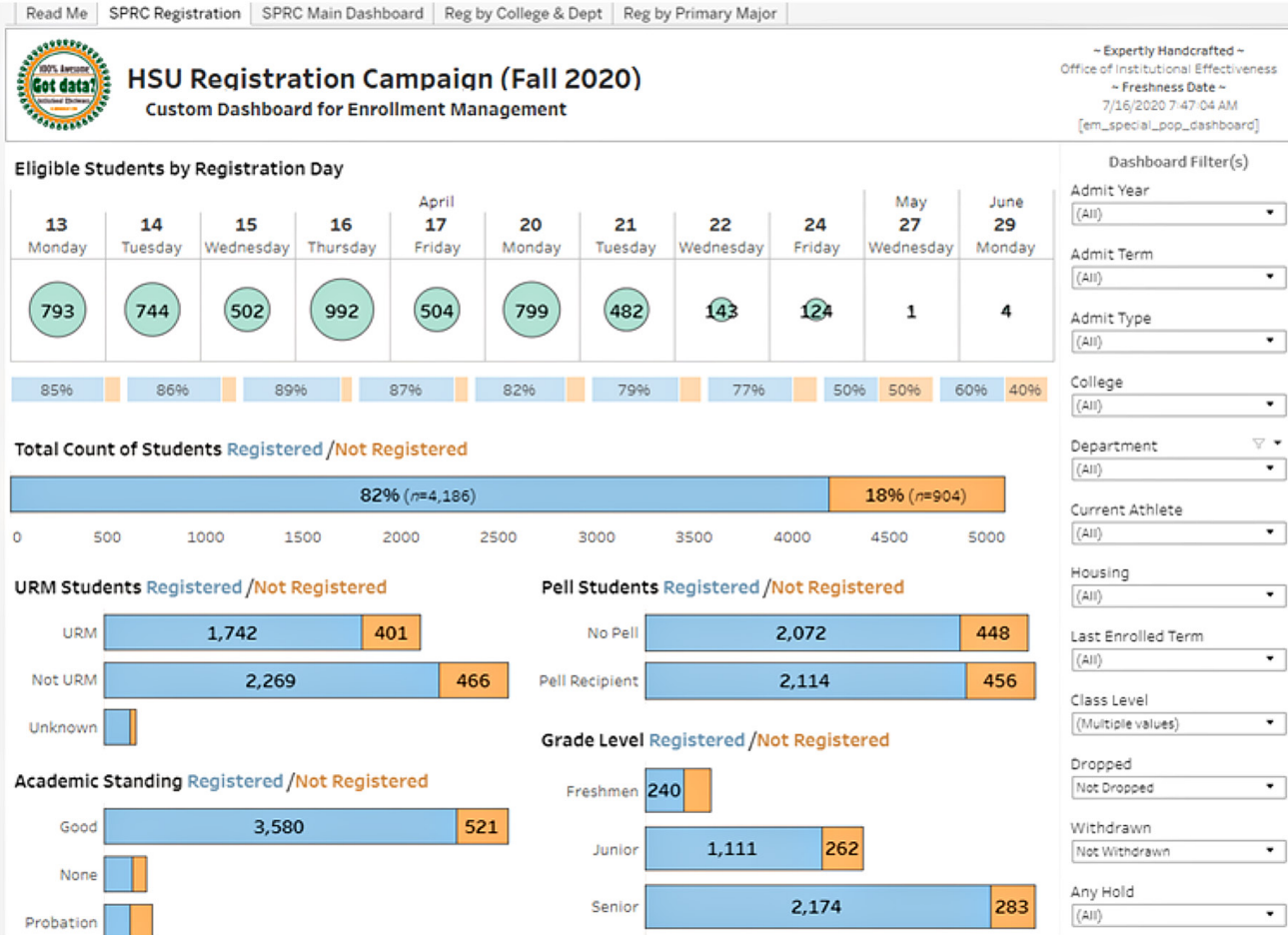
California students with an increased ability to reach non-California residents. Finally, a recent memo of understanding with Cal Poly San Luis Obispo established an improved redirection model that allows admissible students not accommodated by Cal Poly to enroll at HSU.

### Retention of Continuing Students

Several retention efforts have been established since the 2018 evaluating team’s visit. HSU added capacity to the Student Disability Resource Center to support increased demand for its services, and the Special Population Registration Campaign initiative was implemented in

2019. Data regarding continuing students and registration patterns and statuses are provided college by college. Targeted follow-up is employed to ensure that the university understands the student experience and the enrollment-cycle dynamics. The goal is to remove barriers to enrollment for eligible students in an effort to eventually reach an 80 percent retention rate and improved student outcomes and graduation rates. The data are segmented by several student attributes so as to facilitate targeted and appropriate follow-up. A screenshot of the returning-student registration-monitoring report is below. Details of the initiative can be found in [appendix E](#).

Figure 8: Fall 2020 Registration Campaign



Finally, the Chancellor’s Office invested \$1 million in one-time funds in 2019 to help HSU make strategic investments for enrollment growth. The university has made infrastructure investments by leveraging these funds, as seen in the table below.

Figure 9: **Strategic One-Time Funds Investments**

Budget Item	Brief Description	Year 1	Year 2
Name Buy Increase	Increased Name Buy of SAT Names. Base ACT name buy is included in NRCCUA Proposal with the potential purchase additional names, if needed. (75K total)	\$50,000.00	\$50,000.00
NRCCUA Edu-venture Agreement	Purchase of services to develop enrollment predictive model with name purchase support through the Eduventure/ACT platform. Includes additional services and name buy discounts for a total of 200 high school juniors and seniors from California.	\$143,000.00	\$143,000.00
NRCCUA Digital Proposal	Purchase of services through NRCCUA digital services that include geo-fencing of targeted regions and geo-marketing to purchased names. Impressions rollover.	\$47,000.00	\$47,000.00
Cappex/College Greenlight	Cappex creates warm leads through their nationwide network of college access sites and CBO’s. This campaign will focus on WUE and Learning Community messaging to attract new leads.20, 000 Guaranteed Inquiry Volume which also includes CBO partnership development.	\$38,000.00	\$38,000.00
Increased Recruitment Travel	Increased budget allocation for recruitment travel to WUE states and partnerships development with school districts across California to compliment any international travel.	\$70,000.00	\$70,000.00
Texting Platform	Candance Texting Platform by Mongoose with 1 team pricing structure	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
Print/Design for Search	Production of Search Plan publications, design charges, and postage	\$107,000.00	\$107,000.00
Faculty Travel	Faculty designed recruitment efforts supported by Academic College Deans	\$15,000.00	\$15,000.00
		<b>\$480,000.00</b>	<b>\$480,000.00</b>

## Diversification of Revenue Sources (CFRs 3.4, 3.5, 4.7)

Efforts are underway to strengthen fundraising and private partnerships, as seen in the hiring of a consultant in spring 2019 to explore private-partnership opportunities and in President Jackson's significantly enhanced community-engagement activities. The Office of University Advancement has reorganized operations, reduced overall costs, and reduced its number of staff positions, all of which have allowed greater investment in frontline gift officers. To this end, HSU added an executive director of special initiatives to better leverage donor cultivation and grant-seeking efforts. This director works closely with promising university projects to develop strategies to secure external funding.

The division is also adding two new directors of development and a campaign director who will be responsible for cultivating individual donors. By June 2021, the university will have tripled the number of staff assigned to major gift work over a two-year period. The HSU Foundation board and the President's Administrative Team have endorsed the general plan for a capital campaign, and the foundation is actively exploring strategies to support the campaign through one-time investments and individual volunteerism. HSU conducted a feasibility study for a capital campaign in fall 2020, and the university's first comprehensive fundraising campaign is now in the quiet phase, with \$6 million already raised (CFRs 3.4, 3.6).

HSU has engaged its community internally and externally. Over \$160,000 was raised for scholarships at the dinner following the president's investiture activities, and deep partnerships in the community led to multiple large gifts for the RN-to-BSN program, including a \$2 million grant from St. Joseph Health Humboldt County. The

university endowment has reached \$33 million and now distributes about \$1.3 million annually for HSU scholarships and programs. The HSU Foundation also recently acquired eight acres of buildable property near campus, which will be held in the endowment as an investment until such time as the university needs it for expansion.

Between 2015 and 2020, the HSU funded-research and community-service grant enterprise achieved 81.1 percent actual growth, further diversifying the university's revenues (CFR 3.4). Faculty and staff submitted an average of 267 grant and contract proposals per year, reflecting a 25 percent increase in total dollars requested. Achieving these benchmarks helped fulfill HSU's strategic plan objective to "develop a campus-wide focus on externally funded research, scholarship, and creative activities through the **Sponsored Programs Foundation** and foster supportive collaborations for grant writing, management, and research." In 2019-20 alone, grant revenues totaled \$34.9 million, with the direct revenue of \$32.1 million supporting research projects and programs benefitting HSU students, while indirect revenue of \$2.8 million supported campus infrastructure to manage and expand HSU's research enterprise (CFRs 3.4, 3.5).

One example of impressive success in garnering external funding is seen among HSU's environmental resources engineering faculty. The total awards won by engineering PIs for current projects (2017 – present) is \$16.5 million, generating indirect cost revenues of \$2.2 million. The engineering department supports joint teaching and research appointments that are successful in providing quality teaching and productive research. Engineering donors give over \$20,000 annually for undergraduate students, and the **Schatz Energy Research Center** has secured roughly \$90,000 annually for graduate fellowships.



## Impact of Actions

The university's intentional planning is yielding positive results. Evidence of the positive impact of these efforts on HSU's financial position can be seen in university reserve balances and year-end financial statements. Over the past five years, **HSU's designated balances and reserves** have steadily increased even as the university has implemented significant reductions. This reflects the efficacy of proactive efforts to balance the budget and align spending with available revenue instead of relying on one-time reserves to ineffectively address ongoing structural deficits. Likewise, the university's 2018-19 audited financial statements demonstrate an improving financial position, with HSU's net position increasing by \$13 million over the prior year ([appendix S](#)).

As of February 2021, revised enrollment and budget charts are being finalized to guide current budget planning. It is noteworthy that the university outperformed the enrollment declines anticipated during spring 2020 planning, so new projections under development depict a slightly improved enrollment picture. The focus on the advancement office that has culminated in HSU's first comprehensive campaign is a positive step for the university in terms of expanding resources.

## University-Wide Assessment and Program Review: Recommendation 4 (CFRs 2.4, 2.6)

***Recommendation 4 from Commission Action Letter: Implement a comprehensive university assessment plan developed by faculty so that effective assessment is consistent across the institution, and widely shared among faculty, staff, and students. Improving the***

***assessment of GEAR and consistently embedding the expectations for student learning in the standards faculty use to evaluate student work are components of effective assessment. (CFR 2.4, 2.6)***

HSU is committed to participatory, iterative, and evidence-based continuous improvement through regular assessment, evaluation, and data-informed decisions. The university's assessment infrastructure and processes have evolved in sophistication as HSU has prioritized a shift from a culture of compliance to a culture of assessment, discussion, and action. Since the last WSCUC visit, HSU has clarified and emphasized the connection between program-level review and institution-level assessment. The university has also devoted significant funds to build an assessment infrastructure unprecedented at HSU. These commitments include

- new personnel and new faculty assessment fellowships;
- overhaul of the university-wide assessment structure and program-review processes;
- new institutional learning outcomes and GEAR program learning outcomes;
- creation of a university-wide institutional assessment cycle including the structure for co-curricular and operational units' annual and program-review processes; and
- ambitious innovations harnessing Canvas to manage university-wide assessment.

## Quality Assurance Personnel Moves: New Hires and New Faculty Fellowships (CFR 3.1)

The university invested in key personnel to support assessment since the 2018 evaluation team's campus visit, as seen with the hire of a new vice provost (after a series of interim vice provosts) with extensive experience in assessment and accreditation and with the creation and filling of two new positions, an associate director of academic assessment (ADAA) and an associate director of institutional assessment (ADIA). These positions are direct reports to the vice provost, and both incumbents are graduates of WSCUC's Assessment Leadership Academy. Additional support leadership now resides in the Division of Enrollment Management, as well, following the naming of a new director of student success outcomes who coordinates student affairs assessment.

Faculty involvement has been a personnel priority, as well, as seen in the spring 2019 commitment of resources for the appointment of new faculty assessment fellows. The four fellows receive course releases to devote time to support faculty across the colleges in their efforts to refine their outcomes and assessment practices. The work of these fellows has been instrumental in the accomplishments detailed below.

## New University-Wide Quality-Assurance Structure (CFRs 3.6, 3.7)

Efforts to facilitate continuous improvement and assure the quality, meaning, and integrity of an HSU degree are anchored in the annual assessment and program-review processes expected of university academic, co-curricular, and operational units. Institutional quality assurance is coordinated by HSU's new Quality Assurance Team (QAT), a joint committee of faculty, staff, and students (CFRs

3.7). In fall 2020, members of the QAT were charged in the short term with gathering information and facilitating participation across the university to inform the responses detailed in this document, and they were charged in the long term with serving as leaders in HSU's continued efforts to grow and enhance its evidence-based infrastructure.

Pockets of excellent assessment activity existed at HSU in the past, but there was little consistency across the institution. Nonacademic assessment and program review was nearly nonexistent, as were cohesion and leadership in academic learning assessment, and the existing academic program-review process was inconsistently applied. Under the leadership of the new ADAA and ADIA, the annual assessment and program-review structures have been created and/or revamped with intentional designs that prioritize continuity and intersection between the academic and nonacademic systems. The central structure for assessment is now overseen by a single body (QAT) that is responsible for annual and program-review activities, with the exception of the Integrated Curriculum Committee, which oversees academic program-review practices. This union of assessment and accreditation—new with the formation of the QAT—offers HSU centralized leadership involving faculty, staff, and administration.

In sum, the university has a deliberate and coordinated comprehensive quality-assurance system for academic, co-curricular, and operational units that involves academic and administrative leadership at all levels. Through this system, HSU is beginning to facilitate data-informed planning at unit and institutional levels. The following sections offer detailed updates to these practices. These accounts are the result of significant progress in making quality assurance and continuous improvement a core component of HSU's planning and decision-making culture.

Figure 10: **Sample Outcomes for a BS in Biological Sciences**

Sample Outcomes for a BS in Biological Sciences (CSU)		
ILO	PLO	SLO
Graduates will think critically and creatively and apply analytical and quantitative reasoning to complex problems.	Graduates will solve complex biological science problems.	Using biological science data sets, student will analyze and synthesize the data to solve a scientific problem in the interest area.

### Updated Outcomes Structure of Academic Assessment (CFR 4.1)

Several academic programs at HSU had long been using a purposeful approach to learning assessment, but the majority lacked precision in their structure. Indeed, many faculty had expressed frustration about a lack of clear assessment expectations and guidelines to meeting them. Without a firm structure and consistent leadership guiding its implementation, HSU languished in the state described in our 2018 self-study: scattered individual successes but no cohesive university-wide culture of assessment.

The overhaul and standardization of HSU’s system of learning assessment began fall 2018 with the adoption of the CSU’s assessment-plan template (detailed in the CSU’s *Program Planning Resource Guide*, which is available in [appendix F](#)), which is based on alignment of institutional learning outcomes (ILOs), academic program learning outcomes (PLOs), and student learning outcomes (SLOs). While it is an assessment fundamental that ILOs highlight the general knowledge and skills and PLOs the discipline-specific knowledge and skills expected of students upon graduation, the CSU’s conception of SLOs in this structure is critical. Distinct from the course learning outcomes that appear on syllabi, SLOs are program-internal outcomes that “clearly convey the

specific and measurable behaviors that students will demonstrate in order to achieve a program’s outcomes.”

This level of precision was lacking in HSU’s past learning-assessment endeavors. Programs had learning outcomes, but few had systematic strategies for assessing them. Through the PLO/SLO alignment in this new structure, faculty identify precisely how they will assess student achievement of their program’s learning outcomes (CFRs 2.3, 2.4, 2.7, 2.10). Figure 10 is an example of ILO/PLO/SLO alignment in a biology program (taken from the *Program Planning Resource Guide*).

The example presents a program that has identified the ability to solve complex biological science problems as an outcome of their curriculum, and they have noted that this fulfills the institution’s desire that graduates will think critically and creatively in the application of analytical and quantitative reasoning. Crucially, through the wording of the SLO, program faculty have described exactly what their students will do to demonstrate the PLO. In effect, the SLO loosely describes a signature assignment used to assess the PLO.

Now observe the same alignment in how HSU’s Critical Race, Gender, and Sexuality Studies BA program assesses a PLO aimed at HSU’s critical thinking ILO (figure 11). Once again, an SLO describes exactly what students will do to



Figure 11: PLO Assessment for BA in Critical Race, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

PLO Assessment for BA in Critical Race, Gender, and Sexuality Studies (HSU)		
ILO	PLO	SLO
Critical Thinking: HSU graduates will be able to critically evaluate issues, ideas, artifacts, and evidence to guide their thinking.	Graduates will be able to explain prominent debates in critical social theory.	Students will use two or more critical social theories to analyze a core concept in the field, e.g., power, knowledge production, ideology, resistance, agency, identity.

achieve the PLO; a reader from any discipline can loosely infer the structure of the signature assignment that CRGS faculty are using to assess student learning of this ability.

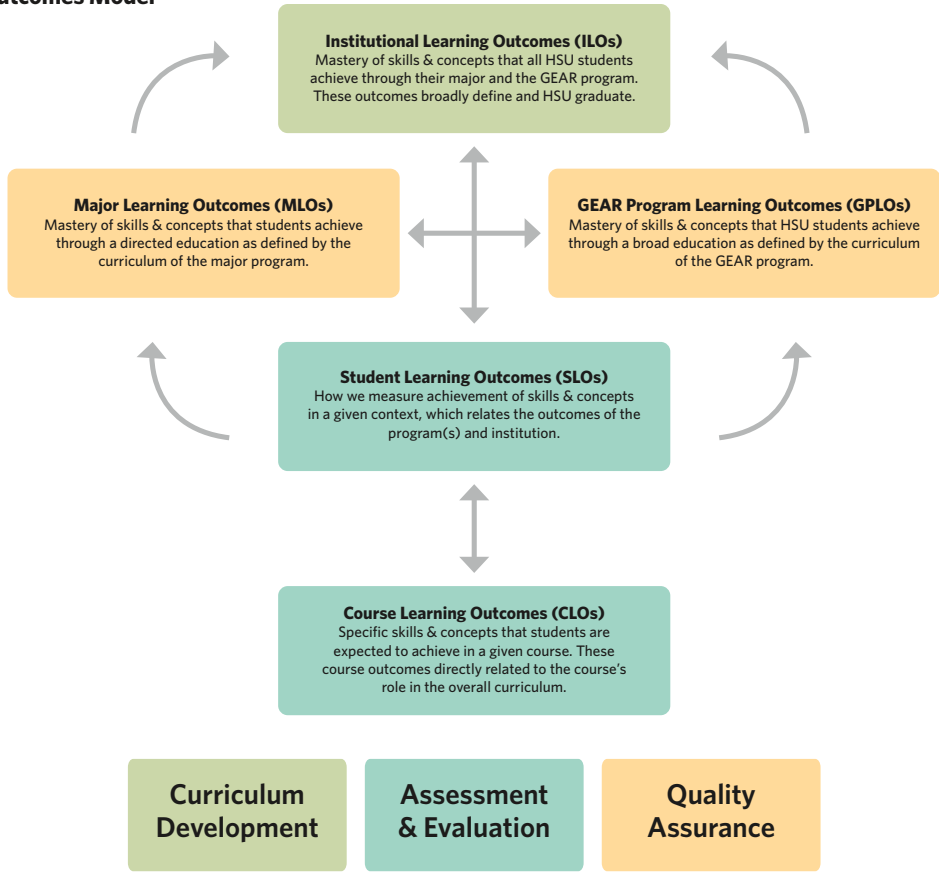
Adopting the above structure under the leadership of the new ADAA and funding faculty assessment fellows to guide faculty in its implementation have been vital to building the foundations for effective university-wide learning assessment (CFRs 2.3, 2.4). As of fall 2020, 46 of HSU’s 48 bachelor’s programs and all 11 master’s programs have submitted updated PLOs, curriculum matrices, and new assessment plans (CFR 2.4). (Note that the two missing programs are only out of compliance due to the methodical approach they are taking to complete outcomes overhauls. This is a positive, not a negative.) In addition to detailing ILO/PLO/SLO alignment, these assessment plans identify where signature assignments are embedded in the curriculum, what tools are used to measure learning, and how they are all assessed at least once per six-year program review cycle. **Annual assessment reports** are now submitted every fall, wherein faculty identify the SLO assessed the previous year, summarize the findings and the discussion that followed, and detail any actions planned in response.

This accomplishment is the result of inspiring work by the faculty assessment fellows, in coordination with the ADAA, and by numerous faculty across the university. Program learning outcomes, curriculum matrices, and assessment plans are now publicly available for all **bachelor’s programs** and **master’s programs**. The thorough, actionable plans—all following the same institutional structure—vividly represent a level of unified university-wide understanding of learning assessment not previously achieved at HSU. Faculty in major programs are now able to say definitively, *This is what we want our students to learn, and this is how and where we will regularly assess how well we are accomplishing it.*

### New University-Wide Learning Outcomes (CFRs 4.1, 4.5)

With the work to standardize HSU’s structure of outcomes alignment, it quickly became apparent that the university’s institutional learning outcomes needed a faculty-driven overhaul. HSU’s ILOs held little influence beyond the web page where they lived, and while the university’s general education and all-university requirements (GEAR) learning outcomes had recently been paired down from nearly 40 outcomes to a manageable seven outcomes,

Figure 12: Learning Outcomes Model



this had been achieved prior to the adoption of the new emphasis on ILO/PLO/SLO alignment (CFR 2.2a, 2.3).

Figure 12 illustrates the goal of these endeavors, and the following sections describe the efforts that led to the goal's realization.

**New Institutional Learning Outcomes**

In order to align the PLOs of HSU's major programs with institutional learning outcomes, a review of the then-current ILOs was paramount, as they were largely ignored and not easily assessed. Academic year 2018-19 featured lengthy discussion of new ILOs in the Integrated Curriculum Committee (ICC), which included the active participation of the director of the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. The ICC chair and the ADAA

presented draft ILOs to the University Senate and the provost's council of chairs, and faculty discussions ensued. The process culminated in March 2019 when the senate ratified **seven new ILOs** that place curricular focus on the five core competencies and HSU's commitment to equitable, inclusive, just, and sustainable societies.

There is currently no university requirement that major programs align to a minimum number of the ILOs. This was the source of lively conversation in the senate and council of chairs, with much debate on the blended roles of the GEAR program and individual degree programs in bringing HSU graduates to competence in all seven ILOs (CFRs 2.3, 2.4). A spring 2020 self-assessment ([appendix G](#)) across all undergraduate programs revealed significant ILO alignment:

Figure 13: **New Institutional Learning Outcomes**

## New ILOs Approved by Senate March 2019

<p><b>1. Equity and Social Justice</b></p> <p>HSU graduates will be able to identify and evaluate systems of power and privilege and identify methods for creating diverse, inclusive, and racially just and equitable communities.</p>	<p><b>4. Critical Thinking</b></p> <p>HSU graduates will be able to critically evaluate issues, ideas, artifacts, and evidence to guide their thinking.</p>
<p><b>2. Sustainability and Environmental Awareness</b></p> <p>HSU graduates will be able to explain how the functions of the natural world, society, and the economy depend on the resilience, sustainability, and conservation of ecological systems.</p>	<p><b>5. Written Communication</b></p> <p>HSU graduates will be able to develop and express ideas effectively in writing.</p>
<p><b>3. Information Literacy</b></p> <p>HSU graduates will be able to locate, evaluate, and employ information effectively and ethically for a wide range of purposes.</p>	<p><b>6. Oral Communication</b></p> <p>HSU graduates will be able to effectively communicate orally for informational, persuasive, and expressive purposes.</p>
	<p><b>7. Quantitative Reasoning</b></p> <p>HSU graduates will be able to apply math concepts and skills to the interpretation and analysis of quantitative information in context.</p>

- Nearly every program is aligned to the critical thinking, written communication, and information literacy core competencies.
- Over 80 percent also assess oral communication.
- Quantitative reasoning remains predominantly (though not exclusively) the domain of the sciences.
- Many programs rely on the GEAR program to educate their majors on equity (ILO1) and sustainability (ILO2).

The extent to which equity and sustainability curricula can be expanded across the various degree programs will certainly be a source of ongoing discussion as HSU’s culture of assessment continues to grow—and as HSU considers its possible new role as a polytechnic university.

### New GEAR Program Learning Outcomes

The next accomplishment in the revision of university-wide learning outcomes was achieved at the end of 2020 when the University Senate ratified 14 new **GEAR PLOs** that identify core-competency- and ILO-aligned outcomes in addition to foundational discipline-specific outcomes. This accomplishment is a source of pride for many, as it is the culmination of countless hours of work.

After conducting a review of general-education outcomes and assessment across the CSU as part of his project in cohort X of the WSCUC’s Assessment Leadership Academy, the ADAA presented three possible models to members of the GEAR Curriculum and Assessment Committee and to the provost’s council of chairs in fall 2019. Extensive feedback and discussion followed, and committee members eventually chose a model and began drafting new outcomes.



Figure 14: **New Program Learning Outcomes**

## New GEAR PLOs Approved by Senate May 2020

### Foundational Skills

1. Demonstrate emergent skills and dispositions necessary for lifelong learning and self-development.
2. Locate, evaluate, and employ information effectively and ethically for a wide range of purposes.
3. Critically evaluate issues, ideas, artifacts, and evidence.
4. Develop and express ideas effectively in writing.
5. Effectively communicate orally for informational, persuasive, and expressive purposes.
6. Demonstrate knowledge of broad college-level quantitative concepts and apply mathematical or statistical methods to describe, analyze, and solve problems in context.

### Disciplinary Knowledge

7. Apply scientific methods and models to draw quantitative and qualitative conclusions about the physical and natural world.
8. Transform materials, ideas, or solutions into new forms through creative expression, innovative thinking and making, risk taking, or problem solving.
9. Analyze literary, philosophical, historical, or artistic works and explain their cultural and/or historical significance and context.
10. Analyze concepts, research methods, and theories pertaining to one or more of disciplines of the social sciences.

### Broad Perspectives

11. Demonstrate a critical understanding of the history of the US, and its structures of constitutional government, as a foundation for civic participation at all levels.
12. Apply knowledge produced by voices and perspectives of marginalized communities to analyze systems of power and privilege and identify strategies for creating just and equitable societies.
13. Describe how the resilience, sustainability, and conservation of ecological systems is a foundation of the functions of the natural world and/or economies.
14. Articulate how a resilient future interfaces with the development of just and equitable societies, economies, environmental protection, and/or resource management at the local, national, and/or global levels

The GEAR committee finished its first draft of the new outcomes by December 2019 and twice returned to the council of chairs in the spring for working sessions aimed at meticulous wordsmithing and faculty input. Senate ratification of the PLOs came at the end of the spring semester ([appendix H](#)), an easy result after the level of faculty engagement achieved in the process (CFR 2.4)

### Next Steps for GEAR Assessment

Faculty assessment fellows and the ADAA are currently working with faculty in various disciplines to draft SLOs that will describe what students will do to demonstrate achievement of the GEAR PLOs. This is a significant challenge, as general education assessment across multiple disciplines is never straightforward, but early progress is encouraging.

- Faculty in the Department of Mathematics have written an SLO that will serve the multiple quantitative-reasoning courses offered; accompanying signature assignments are being piloted spring 2021 in Math 102 College Algebra and Math 101T Trigonometry.
- Faculty in the College of Natural Resource Sciences have written an SLO for use in the variety of Science 100 courses that meet the CSU's Area E lifelong-learning requirement.
- Faculty in the composition program have written an SLO for use in the written communication courses they offer.
- Faculty in the Departments of Music; Art; and Theatre, Film, and Dance have written an SLO that will measure student achievement of the creative thinking-oriented outcome (**GEAR PLO8**).

As SLOs are written and signature assignments are developed, assessment of learning in the GEAR program will be facilitated through HSU's new innovations in Canvas, which are detailed further below.

## Core Competencies Pilot Assessment

The GEAR committee conducted a pilot assessment of core competencies in 2018-19, the year prior to the revision of the GEAR PLOs. The primary objectives of this project were to begin a dialogue with GEAR faculty, learn how their course outcomes intersect with the WSCUC's five core competencies, and plant the seeds of an assessment culture across all three HSU colleges.

The chair of the GEAR committee contacted faculty across the GEAR curriculum, asking them to review the rubric and indicate whether they were currently assigning

tasks in their classes that could be scored via the rubric. Faculty in art, biology, English, Native American studies, and general science volunteered to participate in their fall 2018 courses.

As a preliminary endeavor, the goal of the pilot was not to gather reliable learning data from which firm inferences could be drawn but, rather, to take a first step and learn from the process. Upon reviewing the various assignment prompts, instructor scores, and committee member scores, the committee concluded that

- applying the rubric to already-designed assignments led to varying levels of applicability;
- rubric discussion and norming among participants is vital; and
- an eight-criteria rubric integrating three core competencies is more applicable to particularly significant assignments, for instance those at the capstone level.

The ADAA presented the results (**appendix I**) at the Association of American Colleges and University's 2019 general education conference in San Francisco, where it garnered an enthusiastic response. The findings were influential in GEAR committee discussions of GEAR assessment processes, and they motivated the ADAA to focus on general-education assessment in his WSCUC Assessment Leadership Academy project the following summer. By adopting a strategy to pinpoint GEAR outcomes assessment more narrowly, HSU has developed a manageable and sustainable process. Assessment of multiple core competencies via integrated rubrics like the one used in the pilot is planned for future steps, but it will likely occur at the major-program capstone level. Capstone artifacts will provide faculty with opportunities

to assess student achievement of HSU’s ILOs, which comprise the five core competencies, sustainability, and equity/social justice.

## Revised and Rededicated Academic Program Review

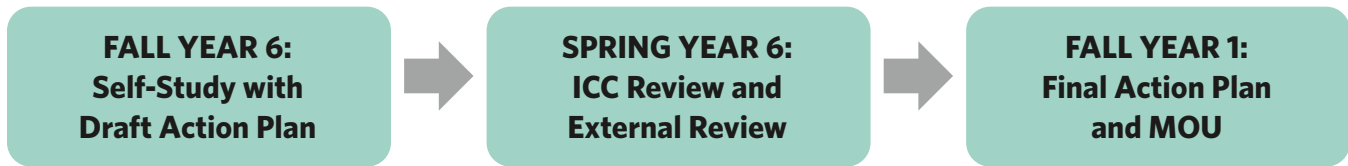
As a public trust, HSU strives to assure its many constituents that it fulfills its obligations to create, preserve, and disseminate knowledge for the public good. Academic, co-curricular, and operational program reviews are predicated on the idea of expert evaluation, but a lack

of a university-wide cohesive focus on program review hindered past efforts to establish meaningful, sustainable practices. In an effort to refocus and clarify, academic program review was placed on hold in 2018-19 while the ICC revised the process and templates for reporting, the results of which are detailed below. A key element across all program-review processes is an emphasis on evidence from annual outcomes-based assessment practices.

The moratorium on academic program review (APR) allowed the ICC to review and revise past practices and report templates while sending faculty

Figure 15: Action Sequence for Program Review

### Six-Year Cycle Action Sequence for Academic Program Review



1. Program faculty meet with director of academic assessment in preparation for upcoming review.	March April May	<b>Year 5:</b> final year of activity
2. Program faculty write self-study, culminating in new assessment plan and first draft of action plan. 3. Program chair submits list of possible external reviewers to college dean. Upon dean approval, program begins arrangements for an April review.	August September October November December January	<b>Year 6:</b> review and plan
4. Program chair submits self-study to ICC for peer review by the end of January. 5. ICC submits their review to program chair and college dean by end of February. 6. Program faculty revise self-study as warranted and send to external reviewer in advance of April campus visit. 7. External reviewer visits campus and conducts interviews. 8. External reviewer presents report to program chair and college dean by end of semester.	January February March April May	
9. Program chair presents self-study to provost, vice provost, and college dean in September, revised as warranted based on internal and external review. 10. Program chair reaches agreement on action plan with college dean, resulting in MOU by semester’s end. 11. New cycle begins in January.	August September October November December	<b>Year 1:</b> finalize plan begin new cycle



an acknowledgement that no further efforts should be expended until the university had rededicated itself to a meaningful, sustainable process. The result is a new self-study template ([appendix J](#)) and a more precise, purpose-driven action sequence of review years (figure 15).

The resumption of APR under the revised process in 2019-20 was disrupted considerably by the COVID-19 pandemic, but a handful of programs did complete the process that spring, and a number of programs are currently in review. After reflecting on last year's pilot run of sorts, the ICC concluded in fall 2020 that a lack of consistency in past APR practices generated a need for increased faculty guidance through the process. This has led to a new protocol for internal and external review: Programs now submit their self-studies to the ICC at the end of January in their review year. Faculty on the ICC conduct anonymous peer reviews, the results of which are presented to the full committee by a peer-review subcommittee comprising the ICC chair, two other faculty members, a librarian, and the ADAA. After this full-committee discussion, the peer-review subcommittee sends letters of internal review to the appropriate chairs, copying their college deans. Faculty in each program have the opportunity to revise their self-study before sending it to an external reviewer for an April review.

The merits of this process timeline are legion, but here are three: Programs will receive the courtesy of feedback from multiple colleagues from across the university, adding validity and integrity to the process; programs will have the opportunity to improve their self-study before sending it out to the scrutinizing eyes of peers at other institutions; and readers on the ICC will acquire in-depth knowledge of the strategies, challenges, and successes of their colleagues from diverse disciplines, which will strengthen their qualifications as university

leaders. The collaboration between faculty, staff, and administration that led to this new process is noteworthy, and HSU leadership is excited about the enthusiasm already witnessed in the internal-review process. The reader is invited to click on the following links to review the university's APR schedule [by program](#) and [by year](#).

## Recent Actions and Accomplishments in Institutional Assessment

In response to the evaluation team's recommendation, HSU embarked on an expanded assessment design aimed at establishing co-curricular and operational assessment plans across the university and aligning ILOs and strategic plan themes with division student learning outcomes and program/department objectives. With the creation and hire of the ADIA in August 2019, the new assessment categories were identified as *academic*, *co-curricular*, and *operational* (CFRs 2.11, 2.13, 2.3).

The creation and standardization of HSU's system of co-curricular and operational assessment began in fall 2019. The goal in developing infrastructure for assessment practices has been to establish sustainable systems with an annual-reporting structure to support a culture of evidence. In the past, HSU has started and stopped assessment plans, especially in student affairs, without long-term sustainability or any formal annual reporting structure. A draft document of guidelines for co-curricular and operational annual assessment and program review has been written and will go live in spring 2021 (CFRs 2.3, 2.4).

The system of support for co-curricular and operational assessment continues to evolve in response to stakeholder and institutional needs and as part of the IAPB process. Currently, the ADIA provides strategic and methodological support for annual and program-review activities that addresses priorities for advancing student learning and

success as well as program efficiencies. The ADIA's goal is to provide effective communication of assessment, purpose, values, methods, and resources.

The first priority was to ascertain familiarity with the purpose and value of co-curricular and operational assessment across the university and gauge staff capacity in assessment practices. It was found that while there is more familiarity in student affairs than in other departments, the majority of all staff members are very willing to learn, adhere to institutional requirements, and make the process meaningful for the work of their offices.

The ADIA then developed a university-level strategy to communicate expectations, support sustainable practices in co-curricular and operational assessment, and build an integrated workflow and planning cycle. This is currently in progress and will be reaffirmed when the institutional guidelines are enacted. The timeline for co-curricular review is still under development.

Fall 2020 saw the establishment of divisional assessment liaisons, one each for the Divisions of Enrollment Management, Administrative Affairs, and University Advancement, who coordinate with the ADIA to offer logistical support for annual and program-review activities. As these administrative divisions have undergone substantial reorganizations in recent years, the ADIA has been cautious to implement a structure without due consideration to resourcing and capacity building. However, as the university is also gathering data to support planning and manage change, the value of assessment and data-informed process improvement is expected to grow. Upon completion of the new assessment management system (see below), the divisional student learning outcomes will have a crosswalk with the institutional learning outcomes so that all program-level data will eventually be aligned with HSU's ILOs.

## Annual Assessment

All units are required to submit an annual report to their vice president, who will then report to the vice provost. The first annual report deadline is October 2021. Each unit designs its own assessment plan in consultation with the ADIA using HSU's handbook for developing operational and co-curricular assessment plans ([appendix K](#)). This involves the development of appropriate learning and/or performance objectives and plans for implementing direct and/or indirect measures (usually both), interpreting the findings and acting on the results.

In the past year, the ADIA has worked with the Division of Enrollment Management (EM) to create assessment plans, with 23 of 25 units (92 percent) completing multi-year assessment plans. Most of these plans are written for six years to correspond with the six EM student learning outcomes and to prepare for a seven-year program-review cycle (six years of annual assessments). As a pilot group, all academic programs situated in the Office of the Vice Provost have completed their assessment plans—specifically, the Center for Teaching and Learning, the Academic and Career Advising Center, the Center for Community-Based Learning, the Learning Center, and the Retention through Academic Mentoring Program. The ADIA is currently working with the other divisions to complete assessment plans, but the co-curricular programs situated in EM (also known as student affairs) and the training of their assessment staff was the starting priority (CFR 4.1).

With additional participation and renewed momentum in EM for assessment, Marjorie Dorimé-Williams, PhD, a consultant known for co-authoring the Shults Dorime-Williams Support Outcomes Taxonomy, was brought in to facilitate a six-hour workshop in October

2020. Nearly 60 staff and supervisors attended. Future plans to improve assessment support include other workshops and sources of professional development (after all assessment plans have been completed across the university). Support materials also need to be developed, such as examples and templates, and clarifications are needed on how university leadership will use assessment results. The goal is to move institutional assessment from initial to emerging levels of practices and processes.

### Program Review

Program review of co-curricular and operational units was inconsistent in the past. With the new guidelines, each unit or division including multiple units (depending on the culture of the offices) will participate in rigorous program review, conducted in the spirit of learning and improvement. A document of guidelines will be created to maintain a transparent process, and the program-review cycle is proposed to be seven years. A schedule will be unveiled once the guidelines are approved by leadership.

The Quality Assurance Team will provide continuity in maintaining a culture of evidence by reviewing and responding to annual and program-review reports, addressing results and budget requests, and publicly recognizing the work as important and meaningful.

### A Culture of Assessment in Progress

Assessment staff will continue to reinforce the understanding that assessment is defined by identifying and measuring learning outcomes or process-oriented objectives for improvement. Fears of assessment are alleviated by communicating that results will not be met with punitive action at the unit or individual level. This has been difficult with current budget constraints and lingering fears that the purpose of assessment is to justify

elimination of units deemed inefficient. Leadership will continue to prioritize assessment and emphasize that devoting time to assessment is the responsibility of all staff members.

The ADIA will continue to build assessment-related skills and knowledge by developing guidelines, templates, and a glossary and implementing a process to provide units with feedback on their assessment reports.

### New Assessment Management System

The vice provost's office spearheaded the development of an electronic system to facilitate the management, archiving, and reporting of annual assessment results for academic, co-curricular, and operational units. Primary among the requirements of an assessment management system (AMS) is that the application be highly customizable in order to support ever-evolving approaches to assessment across all university divisions. Assessment leadership contextualized such a system within the university's work flows and found that Campus Labs did not meet key functional requirements, especially at the current cost.

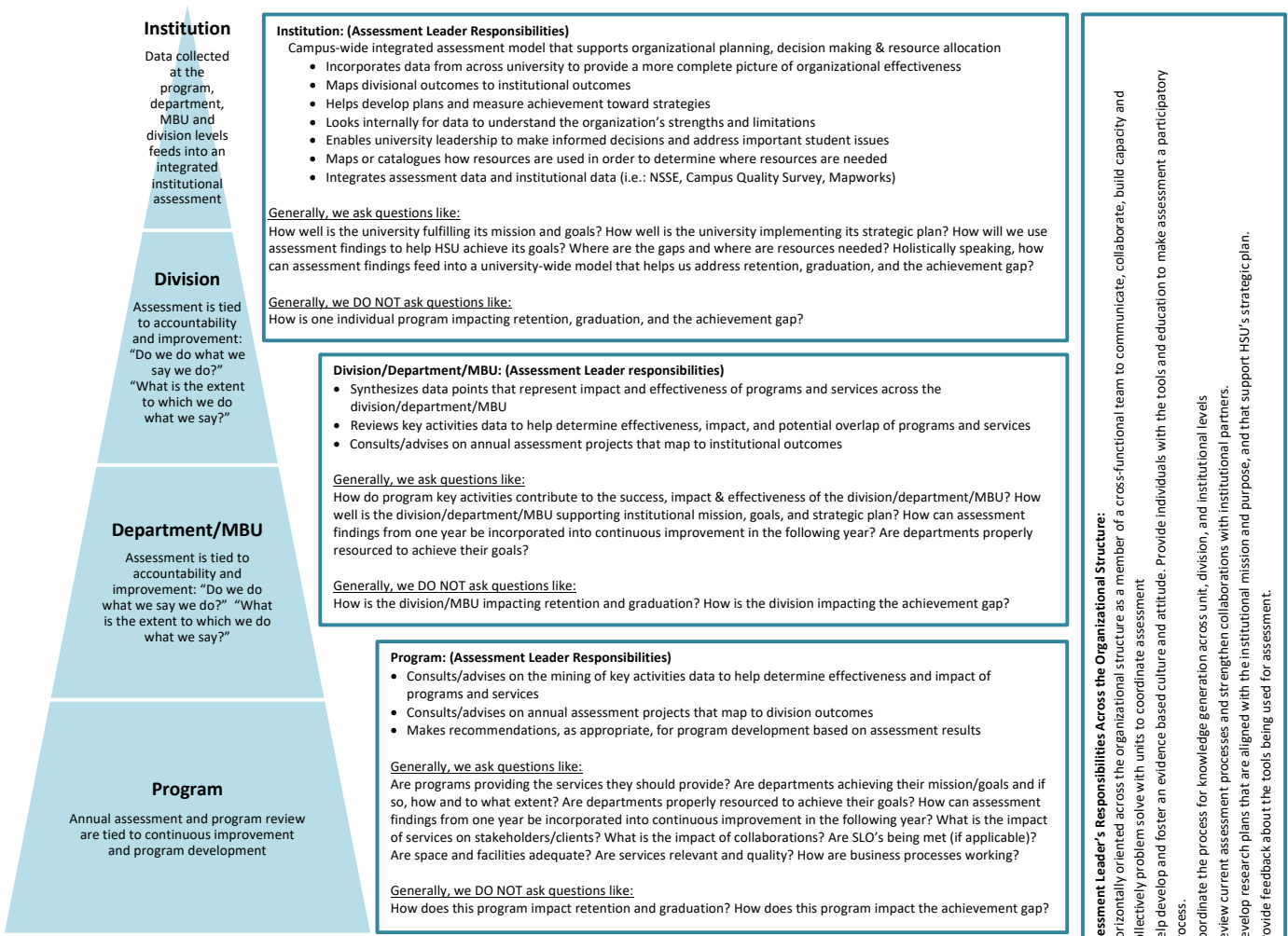
In order to facilitate the management, archiving, reporting, and analysis of annual assessment results for academic and administrative units, the vice provost, the two assessment directors, the faculty chairs of the GEAR and Integrated Curriculum Committees, and the director of the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) developed a home-grown AMS in Canvas. This AMS will make assessment results accessible and useful across the university in support of the planning and decision making that dovetail with program review and institution-level assessment. It will interface with related data systems including the course-management system



Figure 16: Campus-Wide Design for Non-Instructional Assessment

**HSU Campus-wide Design for Non-Instructional Assessment**

“The aim of assessment is not compliance. The goal is **informed action**. The role of assessment leaders is to shape/reinforce that vision.” –Barbara Walvoord  
 author of *Assessment Clear and Simple: A Practical Guide for Institutions, Departments, and General Education*



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already established in Canvas, HSU's student information system (PeopleSoft), and the OBI data dashboards and visualization options currently in use. Canvas was chosen because it can connect coursework with competencies defined at any level of the institution (CFRs 3.7, 4.1). The Department of Mathematics is piloting the **new system** in a spring 2021 pilot assessment of its new SLO for the GEAR program's quantitative-reasoning learning outcome (**GEAR PLO6**). The goal is to have all GEAR outcomes assessed in Canvas by the end of spring 2022, with expansion to major-program capstone projects to follow in 2022-23.

The CTL has led this AMS development as one part of a multidimensional strategic plan to more effectively integrate the planning, documenting, and reporting of student learning for continuous improvement. The primary objective of the design is to centralize data alignment between SLOs assessed in courses and PLOs and ILOs. It provides a one-stop system for examining these relationships and rendering more timely and efficiently generated reports. The Canvas outcomes tool will streamline and improve the process that faculty, programs, and colleges use to collect and assess learning outcomes. Canvas will provide longitudinal assessment data and reports as traditional institution-wide assessment products. The CTL continues to develop the Canvas tool, as the creation of the infrastructure for institution-wide assessment is one of several stages in the long-term strategic development of HSU's AMS/LMS. Future steps include

- use of SLO data to identify equity gaps within academic programs;

- tracking of student GPA, standardized test scores, completion of program requirements or milestones, etc.;

- use of Canvas Analytics student view to allow students to track their progress and engagement in classes and programs;

- use of ePortfolios to allow students to review and reflect on their intellectual development;

- development of rich data-visualization reports through eventual integration of Canvas—Data Warehouse—OBI—Tableau (for example); and

- coordination of advising frameworks streamlining user experiences for students, faculty, academic programs, and co-curricular programs/support units.

The development of the Canvas AMS is an exciting structural step. On the academic side, as faculty across the university develop SLOs describing signature assignments for the 14 new GEAR PLOs, instructors of the relevant courses will be trained to score the assignments in Canvas. The first pilot in this rollout is in the two spring 2021 mathematics courses mentioned above. When all 14 PLOs have signature assignments embedded in all GEAR courses, HSU will have the capacity for robust university-wide learning assessment: the ability to see how well students are demonstrating their achievement of HSU's goals for general education. Individual major programs will gradually adopt the Canvas AMS, as well, leading to eventual assessment of how well graduates are achieving the goals of HSU's ILOs. On the co-curricular and operational side, Canvas will be the repository for assessment plans with direct alignment to ILOs or strategic plan goals and for the assessment reports that follow annually.

## Impact of Institution-Wide Assessment Actions

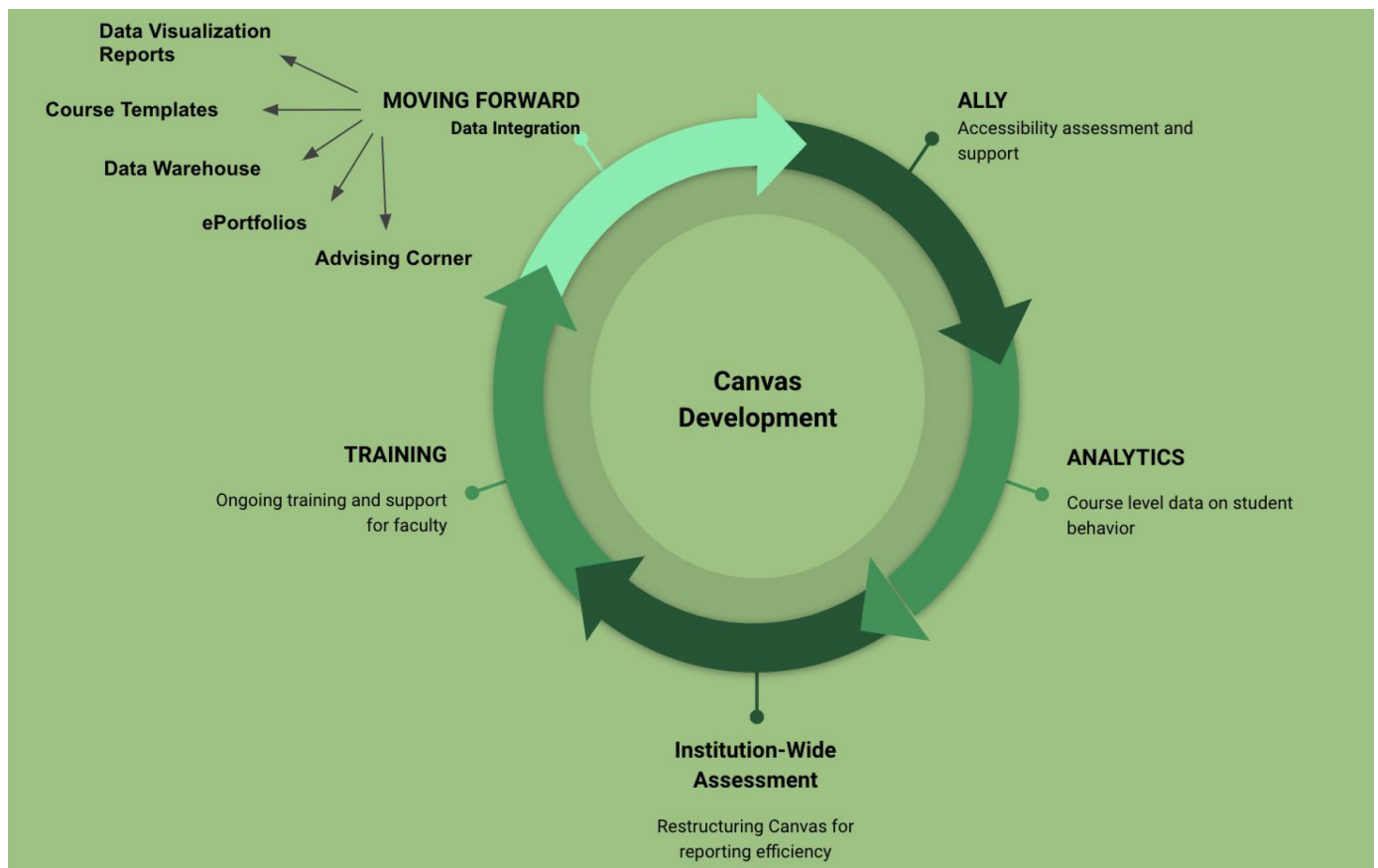
The preceding sections offer accounts of extensive measures that HSU has taken to empower knowledgeable assessment leadership, elicit faculty and staff support and participation, and build a sturdy university-wide assessment infrastructure. The accomplishments described speak to the effectiveness of these measures:

- Faculty across all colleges are aware of HSU's ILOs and GEAR PLOs in a manner that is unprecedented. Numerous faculty engaged in the dialogue around the revision of these learning outcomes, which has been vital to university efforts to build an integrated culture of assessment.

- Faculty mentor one another in assessment practice via the new faculty assessment fellows program. When they need guidance, they get it from faculty colleagues, not just the administration. Moreover, the ADAA has taught in the English department since 2012.

- Program faculty now get earnest feedback from their colleagues on the ICC, and the first MOUs under the new system will emerge next fall. Faculty on the ICC have expressed appreciation for the knowledge and best practices that they are gaining from other programs' practices.

Figure 17: Canvas Development and Assessment



While the first annual co-curricular and operational assessment deadline is in the future, and thus evidence of learning or effectiveness cannot be reported yet, a major milestone has been met through the creation of student learning outcomes for the Division of Enrollment Management and the alignment of its units' assessment plans with those learning outcomes. Additionally, the network of support and alignment to institutional goals for assessment in co-curricular and operational units is now in place. These plans are intended to align with the strategic plan.

The new Canvas AMS is still in a pilot phase. While it is too early to offer evidence of robust new loop-closing assessment endeavors under the newly built ILO/PLO/SLO outcomes structure, the reader is reminded of the GEAR assessment pilot project presented at the AAC&U conference and how those findings influenced subsequent decisions on HSU's GEAR outcomes overhaul.

Finally, the reader is invited to peruse the appendices for the following examples of assessment activities and accomplishments.

#### **Appendix L:**

- Two assessment plans from operational and co-curricular programs (Academic Advising-ACAC and YES volunteer program)

#### **Appendix M:**

- Written communication assessment occurring in the first-year writing program and HSU's burgeoning writing-across-the-curriculum program

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- Two undergraduate assessment plans and the ADAA's feedback

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- Examples of PLO/SLO alignment in various programs

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- The recent self-study from the wildlife program and the ICC's letter of internal review

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- Reports from 2019-20 assessment efforts





# Updates on Recommendations Not Included in the Focus of the Special Visit

## Diversity, Equity, and Inclusive Student Success: Recommendation 1 (CFRs 1.4, 2.13)

***Recommendation 1 from Commission Action Letter: Implement and sustain appropriate responses to the increased diversity of HSU's students. The evaluation of HSU's academic and student support services, including tutoring, housing, students with disabilities programs, financial aid counseling, career counseling and placement, and multicultural centers, and the adaptation of services based on evaluation results will better meet the needs of different students. Evidence-based decisions would ensure that curricular and co-curricular programs are aligned and are sufficiently funded and staffed by qualified faculty and staff. (CFR 1.4, 2.13)***

The university recognizes that the diversity of its student population continues to increase, and it has been making concerted efforts through its community, co-curricular, and educational programs to create consistently appropriate responses. HSU has a long-standing commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI); in recognition of the critical importance to DEI work, the executive director position was elevated to an associate vice president and campus diversity officer. Dr. Elavie

Ndura was hired after a national search, and she began in her new role on January 4, 2021. Under her leadership, ODEI is developing principles of community that will ground HSU's path to inclusive excellence. The six pillars of inclusive excellence—a safe and welcoming community, equitable opportunities and outcomes, strategic partnerships, intercultural-competency development, institutional resources, and collaborative leadership with shared accountability—will frame an overarching university-wide vision for inclusive student success.

### HSI Subcommittee of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council (DEIC) serves as an advisory working group of the President's Cabinet and partners with ODEI to provide advisory council and expertise to create institutional and systemic change. The 26 members include student representatives and faculty and staff from the Divisions of Academic Affairs, Enrollment Management, Administrative Affairs, and University Advancement as well as the Office of the President. The executive team includes one chair and the chairs of three subcommittees focusing on

- faculty and staff development and professional opportunities,
- what it means for HSU to be a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) and a Minority-Serving Institution (MSI), and
- inclusive teaching strategies and culturally relevant pedagogy.

In the 2019-20 academic year, the HSI subcommittee focused on the charge “to help educate the campus community on what it means to fully serve our students as a federally identified Hispanic-Serving Institution.” The subcommittee partnered with faculty in ESCALA (faculty development for HSIs), HSU’s faculty equity fellows (see recommendation five below), El Centro Académico Cultural de HSU (Latinx center for academic excellence), and the Department of Psychology. With the help of psychology faculty Dr. Maria Iturbide’s research lab on cultural diversity and adolescent development, the subcommittee revised HSU’s **Diversity Resource Guide**.

The HSI subcommittee has been successful in connecting Latinx students, staff, faculty, and HSI grant recipients to discuss the HSI efforts going on within and outside the DEIC. With the support from existing structures across HSU, a culturally responsive approach was created to design the subcommittee’s initiatives work. Throughout this work, the subcommittee has continually asserted the importance of keeping student voice and experience at the center of its work.

## ODEI Diversity Grants (CFRs 1.4, 2.10, 2.13, 2.14)

The Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion has awarded 24 **diversity grants** since fall 2018. These grants provide

faculty (\$5,000) and students (\$1,000) with funding to support programs that raise awareness, deepen understanding, and engage the campus community in dialogue about the multiple dimensions of diversity, including ability, culture, ethnicity, and sexual orientation. The grants committee prioritizes proposals intended to increase the participation and retention of racially minoritized faculty, staff, and students. For example, two psychology faculty received a diversity grant to expose students to researchers of diverse backgrounds via a speaker series called *From Me to PhD* ([appendix N](#)).

## Equity Arcata (CFRs 2.10, 2.13)

Created in 2017, **equity arcata** is a partnership between HSU, the city of Arcata, local business owners, and community members working to make Arcata a more inclusive and welcoming environment for all, particularly minoritized community members who identify as Black, Indigenous, and/or People of Color. The purpose of equity arcata is to create a welcoming, safe, and racially equitable community by focusing on systems of change that yield equitable opportunities and outcomes in education, employment, health, and housing. Equity arcata operates in a collective impact model that uses a common agenda, system of shared measurement, continuous communication, mutually reinforcing activities, and backbone support to manage the groups. Its working groups are Communications, Home Away from Home, Just Arts, Ongoing Learning, Police and Student Safety, and Welcoming Businesses.

A one-credit Community Leadership in Action class was created to facilitate student participation in the equity arcata working groups and to offer students an opportunity to apply concepts of systems change for



racial equity, racial-identity development, and servant leadership. Twenty-eight students have participated in the class (20 racially minoritized students and eight white students) since fall 2018, and six students are enrolled in the spring 2021 course. As an expression of the university's commitment to equity arcata and the critical importance of the community connection to supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts, HSU provides two paid student interns and half the salary of the network manager.

## Social Justice, Equity, and Inclusion Center (CFRs 2.10, 2.13, 2.14)

As of fall 2020, HSU's Multicultural Center is now called the Social Justice, Equity, and Inclusion Center (SJEIC). The impetus for this name change came from the advocacy of students and the dean of students. It also aligns appropriately with the equity emphasis of HSU's **ILO1**. All SJEIC actions — creating programming, sharing resources, providing safe spaces, and engaging and connecting with students — aim at advocating for a more just, equitable, and inclusive environment for all underrepresented and marginalized students at HSU. In addition to changing its name to emphasize its goals, two other actions are noteworthy:

- The center now sponsors for the fall 2020 and spring 2021 semesters certain Associated Student programs, such as the **Eric Rofes Multicultural Queer Resource Center**, the **Asian Desi Pacific Islander Collective**, and the **Women's Resource Center**, to ensure that they continue to provide the services and programming that students need to succeed (CFR 2.13).

- A new student-run queer podcast, *HSQ Cast*, seeks to increase students' sense of belonging.

## Youth Educational Services (CFRs 2.13, 4.7)

**Youth Educational Services** (YES) is home to 10-14 student-led community-engagement programs that provide opportunities for HSU students to volunteer in local school and community sites.

In 2019-20 post-program evaluations, 96 percent of volunteers (n=104) and 96 percent of student leaders (n=40) agreed that YES gave them a sense of belonging. In similar evaluations in 2018-19, students (n=107) reported gains from their YES experience in the following areas.

- Increased Awareness/Knowledge/Hands-on Experience (22 percent)
- Friends/Connection (22 percent)
- Skills in public speaking, leadership, teamwork, experience working with kids, time management, communication, critical thinking, and patience (19 percent)
- Confidence/Personal Growth (18 percent)
- Satisfaction/Enjoyment/Purpose (11 percent)
- Career Experience/Exploration (8 percent)

## Financial Aid Services (CFRs 2.10, 2.13)

The Office of Financial Aid employs 13 professional staff, of whom six are counselors and two are professional advisers. Five staff are fluent in Spanish, which significantly increases



accessibility of clear, inclusive financial-aid information for student families. Office documents are available in Spanish to accommodate Spanish-speaking counselors and families in local high schools. The office director encourages all staff to participate in professional development focused on white privilege and diversity and inclusion.

A student adversity fund (SAF) was started in April 2018 in partnership with the Division of University Advancement, which receives a local grant from the Humboldt Area Foundation. Funds also come from alumni to directly help students in crisis. Financial-aid staff partner with Counseling and Psychology Services, the Oh SNAP food programs, and the dean of students' office in order to provide these funds to any student in crisis.

HSU received \$5.15 million in CARES funding this past year due to the pandemic. These funds have been distributed seamlessly to students thanks to distribution structures that were already in place. Undocumented students are not eligible for federal funds, however, so the SAF has been vital in meeting their needs. Forty-four HSU students received SAF support in fall 2020, totalling nearly \$28,000, with loss of employment the reason for need in 70 percent of these cases. Other reasons cited included deportation of parent(s), technology/supply needs for remote learning, homelessness, mental health struggles due to financial stress, food insecurity, and dental expenses.

## Student Learning Communities (CFRs 2.10, 2.11, 2.13)

HSU student learning communities have also blossomed since the 2018 WASC visit. In the College of Natural Resources and Sciences, the first-year learning communities have become opt-out, fostering community and jumpstarting resilience in a coordinated effort (see PBLCs, below). In the College of Arts, Humanities, and

Social Sciences and the College of Professional Studies, new first-year learning communities have emerged to support diverse student populations (bilingual students, survivors of sexualized violence, undeclared students, and teaching pathway students). These learning communities embody the expectations requested by the WSCUC team, including dedicated support for financial aid, block scheduled courses, tutoring, career counseling, and dedicated opportunities to work with faculty.

First-year student learning communities have connected to the institutional learning outcomes by building assessment models that align with the campus ILOs and reviewing assessment data to adjust programming for continued success toward those outcomes.

## HSI STEM Grant (CFRs 2.10, 2.13)

HSU has two active federal HSI grants and a new third grant in the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences focused on sustainable food systems and food justice. In 2016, HSU was awarded a \$3.9 million grant by the US Department of Education's Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSI) Science, Technology, Engineering, or Mathematics (STEM) and Articulation Program. This award extended over five academic years, 2016-17 through 2020-21. Funding increased a year later when HSU also received a \$1 million Inclusive Excellence Award from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute.

The program has two primary goals—to increase the number of Latinx and/or low-income students attaining degrees in the fields of science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM), and to develop model transfer and articulation agreements between two-year and four-year institutions in such fields. Over the life of the five-year grant, \$336,000 was **budgeted for student wages**, and over 60 percent of these employees have been Latinx students.

One of the **four components** supported by the grant is HSU’s place-based learning communities (PBLCs). Still in their infancy at the time of HSU’s 2017 WSCUC institutional report, the PBLCs had already shown an impact on student perceptions of belonging, community, awareness of campus resources, study skills, and optimism about their future in science.

A brief description of HSU’s PBLCs is offered below, followed by recent assessments of effectiveness since the 2018 WSCUC team visit.

### Place-Based Learning Communities

The shifting demographics that resulted from a higher percentage of students coming from large urban areas is part of what prompted the creation of the PBLCs in the College of Natural Resources Sciences (CNRS). The design of the programs centers on turning the challenge of isolation into an asset by structuring academic content and hands-on experiences around the unique aspects of HSU’s location. The PBLC design integrates multiple high-impact practices to build a community of support to help address student feelings of alienation and isolation and reduce equity gaps.

The overarching purpose of all PBLC activities is to build a sense of belonging and community around academic discipline regardless of student backgrounds and where they come from. All students are welcomed during a 4-day summer immersion prior to the start of classes. Summer immersion introduces students to the Humboldt community, connecting them to the landscape, thriving Indigenous communities, faculty, staff, and their peers through a series of hands-on field and lab experiences. These connections continue through the first year, enabled by block scheduling that allows program coordinators to cohort the students in classes together and link content between these courses to further connect students to curriculum and their disciplines.

A primary vehicle for establishing these goals is the Science 100 GEAR course (Area E, lifelong learning and self-development), which combines a welcome to the major/academic discipline, information on how to succeed as a STEM student, and an introduction to the various services across HSU to support personal and academic needs. These connections to support services are strengthened by a tight-knit relationship

Figure 18: **Place-Based Learning Communities (PBLCs)**

**Klamath Connection** Launched in 2015

Environmental Resources Engineering, Environmental Science & Management, Fisheries Biology, Forestry, and Wildlife majors

**Stars to Rocks** Launched in 2017

Chemistry, Geology, and Physics & Astronomy majors

**Rising Tides** Launched in 2018

Biology (Marine Biology concentration) and Oceanography majors

**Among Giants** Launched in 2019

Biology, Botany, and Zoology majors

**Representing Realities** Launched in 2020

Mathematics and Computer Science majors

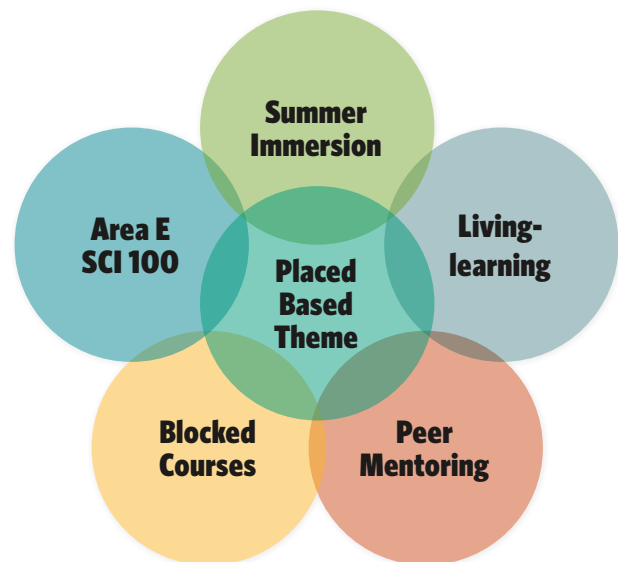
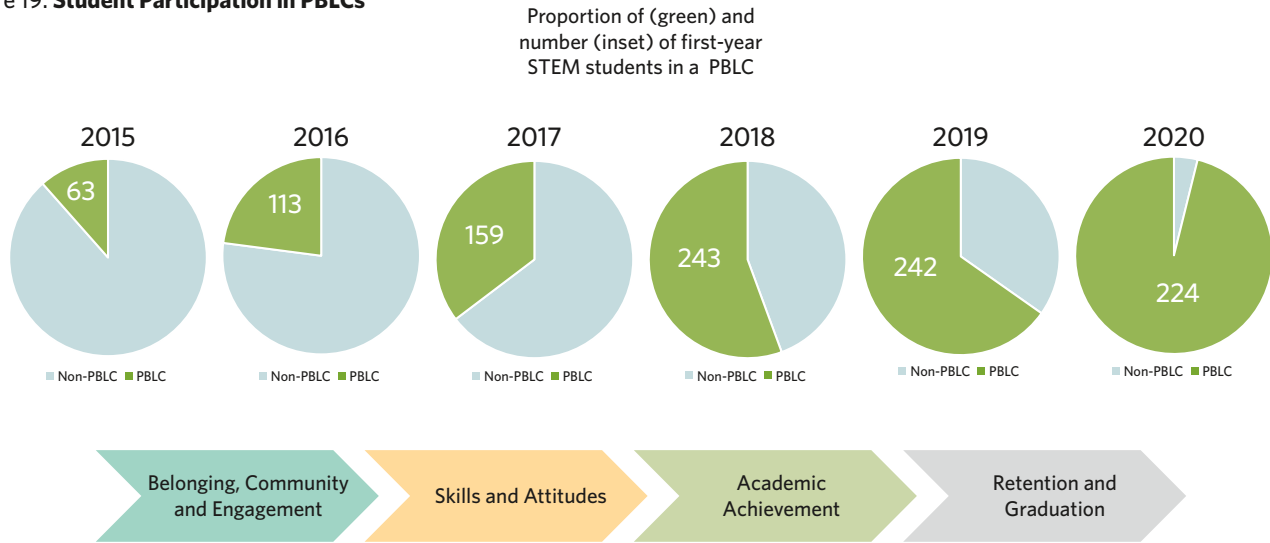


Figure 19: **Student Participation in PBLCs**



with the Retention through Academic Mentoring Program (RAMP), where each RAMP mentor’s caseload directly matches enrollment in one of the Friday break-out group discussion sections of the SCI 100 course. Conversations are structured to compliment each other and send students unified messages of support.

Students are able to strengthen their relationships with peers by participating in themed housing connected to their program. Choosing to live alongside classmates enables students to easily form study groups and support one another in their coursework, and it allows for additional programming such as faculty-led study sessions in the residence halls and connecting students to clubs, activities, and resumé-building opportunities. As of fall 2020-21, the PBLCs had expanded to serve all incoming first-time freshmen in CNRS (approximately 44 percent of the incoming freshmen class).

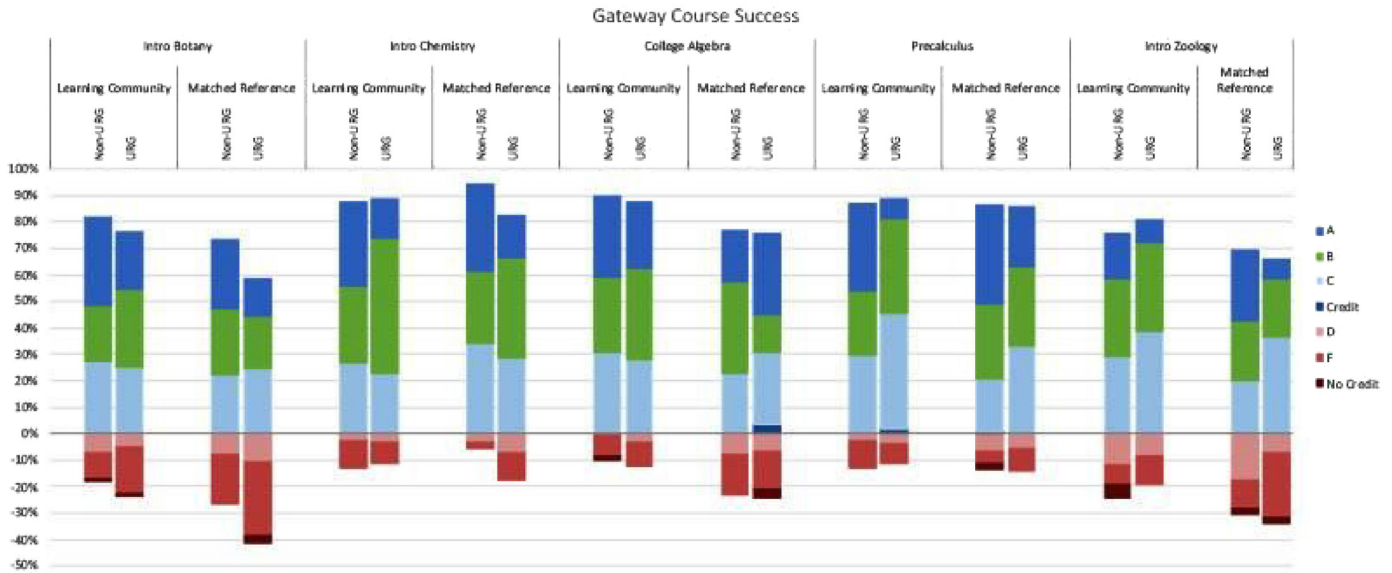
### Evidence of Success

Evidence demonstrates that HSU’s longest-running PBLC, the **Klamath Connection**, has helped Latinx students succeed. Comparisons of Latinx students in the first three Klamath

Connection cohorts (2015-17) to students not in the program, matched on STEM major, high school GPA, Latinx and first-generation statuses, mathematics preparedness, and AP units, show that the program significantly improved Latinx students’ sense of belonging and academic achievement.

- Stronger sense of belonging (composite Mapworks survey score: 5.49 vs. 5.31)
- More units earned in first year (27.8 vs. 24.3)
- Higher first-year GPAs (2.85 vs. 2.65)
- Higher rates of gateway course completion (especially in botany and chemistry courses and in Math 113/101)
- Higher first-year retention at HSU (81 percent vs. 73 percent) and in STEM specifically (78 percent vs. 65 percent)
- Elimination of gap in STEM retention between Latinx students and their non-Latinx counterparts in the program

Figure 20: Gateway Course Success



Similar patterns exist for all racially minoritized students and for students overall; these achievements were recently published in *The Journal of Innovative Higher Education*. Averaging across cohorts from 2015 to 2019, the following data compare minoritized students in PBLCs to minoritized students not in PBLCs.

- Stronger sense of belonging (composite Mapworks survey score: 5.38 vs. 5.29)
- More units earned in first year (35.95 vs. 27.36)
- Higher first-year GPAs (2.76 vs. 2.56)
- Higher first-year retention at HSU (78 percent vs. 68 percent) and in STEM specifically (74 percent vs. 65 percent)

The PBLCs are also tracking equity gaps in institution-wide data, as aligned with **Graduation Initiative 2025**. The following line charts show retention and graduation rates for first-time undergraduates and

transfer students entering as STEM majors. Data are disaggregated by racially minoritized, first-generation, and low-income statuses. The dates shown are for the term of graduation or the term of retention (for example, four-year graduation rate for spring 2018 is for students who started in the fall 2014 cohort; first-year retention in fall 2018 is for students who started in fall 2017; etc.).

Figure 21: First-Year Retention of STEM Students

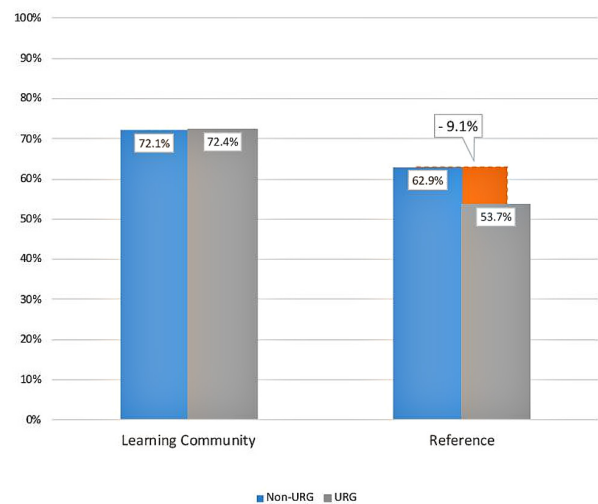
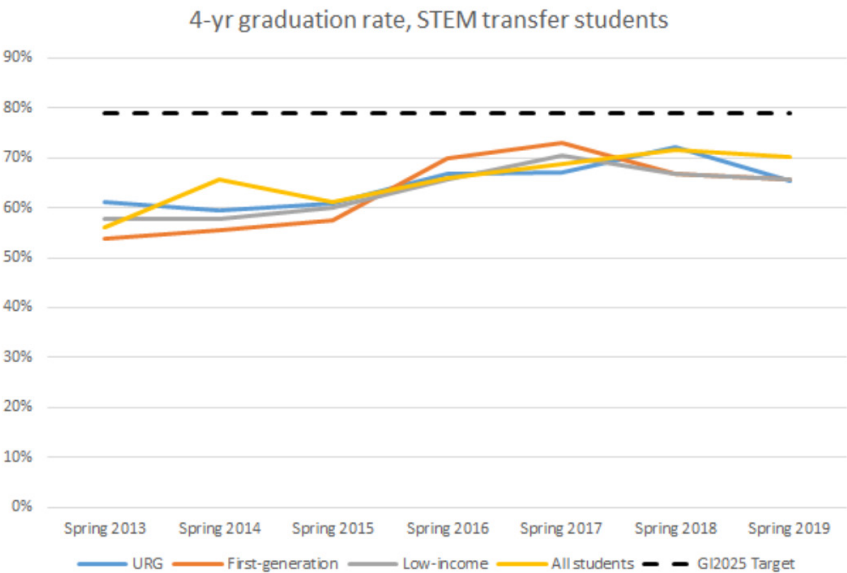
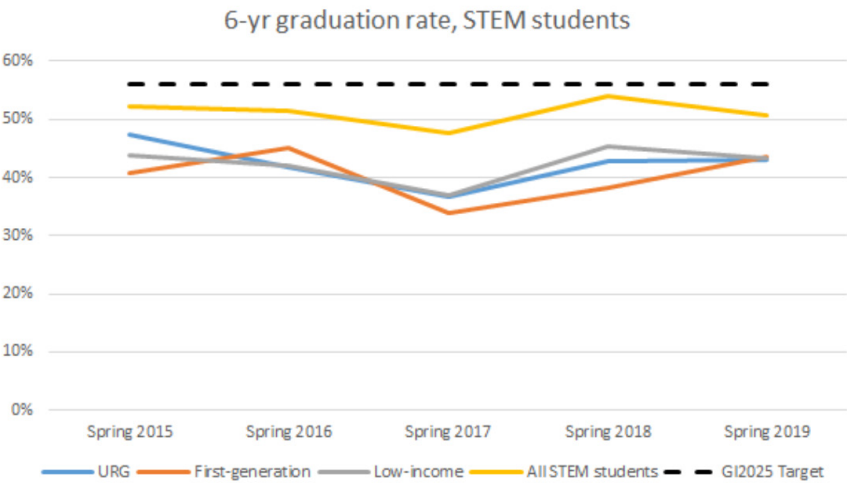
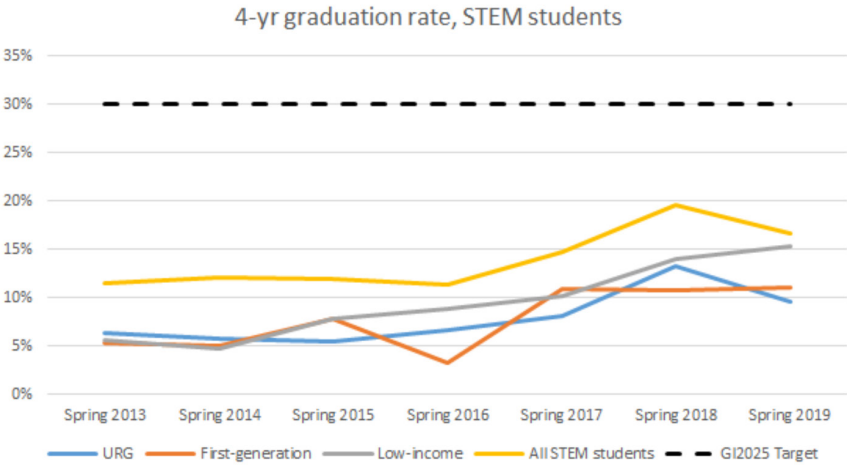




Figure 22: Graduation Rates of STEM Students



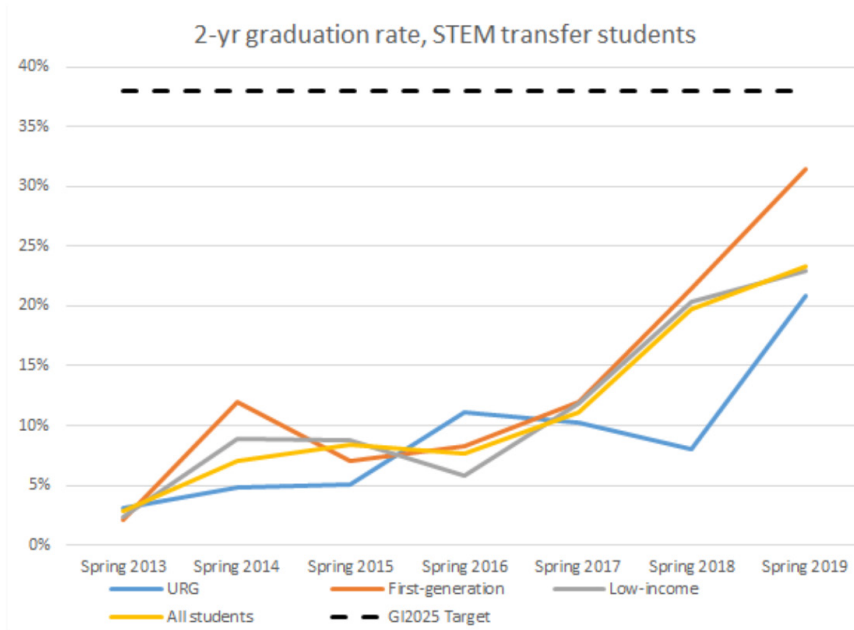
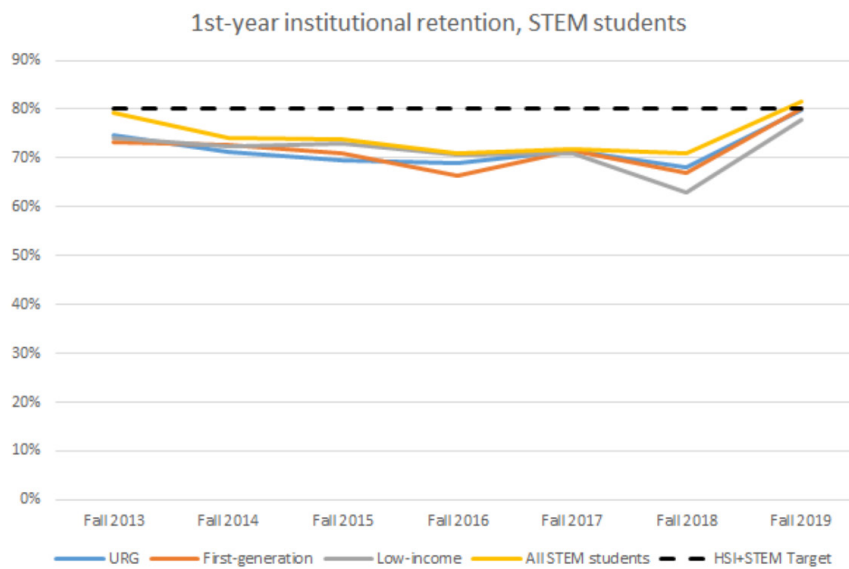


Figure 23: Retention of STEM Students



## Orienting Students to Humboldt County, Student Safety: Recommendation 2 (CFR 1.6)

**Recommendation 2 from Commission Action Letter: Continue and advance efforts to orient prospective students from large, urban areas to HSU's rural, small-city context. As HSU incorporates a more diverse student body, intensifying efforts on student grievances and complaints, safety, and life in the local community will help students to feel supported and avoid feelings of alienation and isolation. (CFR 1.6)**

### Building Capacity for Diversity and Attending to Diverse Student Needs (CFRs 1.4, 2.13, 3.1)

HSU has spent considerable time reflecting on student needs in response to the increasing diversity of incoming students. To this end, the executive director position of the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ODEI) was elevated to an associate vice president and chief campus diversity officer (CFR 3.1). Dr. Elavie Ndura began in this role January 2021. In the meantime, ODEI has continued to provide service in the form of training and supported mediation efforts to ensure student issues are equitably handled. In its next phase, ODEI is working on a cogent model that will include cultural humility and cognitive empathy. These will be guided by the institution-wide non-instructional evaluation framework (CFRs 4.1). The ADIA will be working with ODEI to clarify measurable outcomes. This work will be in tandem with other university efforts to close opportunity gaps (CFR 2.10) so as to support the retention and graduation of students as HSU continues to address the needs of all students. The Office of the Dean of Students maintains a **basic needs website** where students can access a variety of resources.

### Fostering a Culture of Mentoring (CFR 2.13)

The university is committed to continuing efforts to advance equity and inclusion. HSU's initiatives to support the whole student and to build a more inclusive community are manifest in a variety of ways. Under the umbrella of Academic Programs with Academic Affairs, the past two years have seen the pilot Retention through Academic Mentoring Program (RAMP) demonstrate great success (**appendix O**), as peer mentors assist students with all aspects of academic life. The university has allocated additional funding to expand RAMP to all majors, though this expansion has been interrupted by the pandemic. In response, RAMP has worked to pivot to virtual mentoring. Both mentors and mentees demonstrate not only a sense of belonging but are also showing progress towards graduation (CFRs 2.12, 2.14). In 2018, the Learning Center introduced a number of initiatives, including the use of the ESCALA framework for Hispanic-Serving Institutions to close the gap in educational access and completion rates for Latinx students, mainly through faculty-development programming to provide students with academic support. The supplemental instruction and tutoring efforts were all revamped, and staff were trained utilizing an equity approach. The progress thus far as exemplified by the Learning Center report in **appendix P** is promising. The center also introduced **peer coaching** designed to keep students on steady academic progress and nurture skills to navigate academic issues as they arise (CFR 2.13).

### Prospective Student Communications (CFR 2.13)

The Office of Admissions has been actively working on changing policies, procedures, and communications to more accurately represent HSU's academic programs,

campus and community climates, support services, and costs to prospective students and to the public at large. The Office of the Dean of Students is also working on streamlining policies and procedures to address behavior issues while facilitating fair and equitable treatment to support racially minoritized students.

In a proactive stance, the Office of Admissions is partnering with academic departments to facilitate sharing of information about where HSU students come from. These sessions provide information to assist with designing initiatives to create a welcoming environment for all students. Special presentations for off-campus partners such as the local community college and local community organizations have been implemented to promote understanding of what students can expect when attending HSU. Communication to parents includes demographic information about the campus and Humboldt County in various recruitment materials. Spanish-language communications are part of this effort.

### Improved Visit Experience (CFRs 2.12, 2.13, 2.14)

Since the summer of 2019, the campus-visit program has evolved in an effort to clearly represent the campus experience in which HSU students learn. Major public events, such as Fall Preview, now integrate several community partners. Guests are provided an opportunity to explore downtown with the support of the city of Arcata. In addition, they will also have access to on-campus and off-campus police and fire departments to respond to various questions related to campus and community safety. This addition complements the current expanded **academic department fair** and various services available throughout the experience.

HSU continues to redesign its visit experience at multiple levels to reach the maximum number of potential students. Enhancements include the utilization of virtual campus visits with various online presentations for families unable to travel to campus. The campus-visit center has been remodeled to refresh the university brand and allow for an interactive and welcoming space for all visitors. The basic tour is also making changes by integrating more interactive elements such as in-class experiences, individual appointments, and an expanding understanding of the deep history of the university.

### New Student Orientation (CFRs 2.12, 2.13, 2.14)

The new student orientation was revamped in fall 2019 but full implementation was disrupted by COVID-19 pandemic. Changes were designed to front load pertinent information and resources to incoming students and to allow ample time for students and their families to ask questions. With the pandemic, **orientation** has been moved to virtual. Sessions address needs for specific student groups including transfer students. In addition to students, special care has been taken to also provide information for families. The Forever Humboldt Families 101 is a free, nine-week online course designed for new families that provides strategies on how they can support their student while at HSU.

When fully implemented, the new orientation process will begin with students completing a student registration Canvas course in the spring and summer. This will provide them with the tools necessary to successfully register for courses. In August, students will then complete an orientation Canvas course that will be full of campus resources and success strategies to begin their fall semester. A two-day in-person orientation will



serve as the conclusion of their orientation experience where students can meet faculty, staff, and current students and be introduced to the spirit of the Lumberjack family. This revamped format is coordinated by the newly formed University Orientation Planning Committee, which consists of faculty, staff, and administrators for a complete student experience.

## Student Grievances and Complaints (CFRs 2.12, 2.13)

HSU students are provided a variety of resources and trainings regarding safety, including **Title IX** matters. New students receive the CSU **policy** and HSU's **grievance policy** at orientation along with information on how to understand and procedures and how to file complaints. HSU continues to provide professional development for faculty and staff who participate in the resolution of student complaints and grievances. The Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion has ongoing professional development opportunities for all students, faculty, and staff.

In addition to the above mechanisms addressing student concerns, there is also the University Senate's Student Grievance Committee, which handles grievances regarding issues not related to discrimination or misconduct. The committee is composed of faculty from each college, student representatives, and staff. The vice provost is ex-officio and makes final determination on appeal.

## Maintaining a Safe Campus (CFRs 3.1, 3.5)

In response to concerns about safety and in an effort to enhance campus police service, HSU has established a committee to review and recommend solutions for issues that affect the safety and quality of life for students, faculty, and staff. Committee membership includes students, faculty, staff, and community members from greater

Humboldt County. HSU is committed to providing a safe teaching and learning environment, and this work intersects with its communications with prospective students, faculty, and staff about what to expect in Humboldt County.

### Nine pillars guide the committee's work:

- Campus Safety and Wellness
- Community Policing
- Engagement and Communication
- Financial Awareness and Accountability
- Policy and Oversight
- Race, Gender, and Sexuality Awareness
- Recruitment and Selection
- Technology and Equipment
- Training and Education

Primary areas of focus in 2020-21 were to evaluate policies and practices around disarmament of campus police, rejection of lethal equipment funneled through program 1033, establishment of social-based services founded on harm reduction for emergency calls made to UPD that do not require an officer present, and community engagement between UPD and the campus community.

## Faculty and Staff Diversity and Inclusivity: Recommendation 5 (CFRs 1.4, 3.1, 3.3)

### **Recommendation 5 from Commission Action**

**Letter: Prioritize diversification of faculty and staff demographics, including the use of new hires, to align with the diversity of the student body. Engaging faculty and staff in cultural-competency professional development will further the academic achievement of students and contribute to the achievement of the institution's educational objectives. (CFR 1.4, 3.1, 3.3)**

HSU has put forth tremendous effort to diversify its faculty and staff and to engage all employees in professional development aimed at equitable hiring practices, cultural competency, and inclusive classrooms. The sections below detail hires and changes in hiring practices; the development and implementation of training through the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and the Center for Teaching and Learning; the work of HSU's new faculty equity fellows; and faculty efforts to build a twenty-first century curriculum for equity, including collaborations with ESCALA.

### Efforts to Diversify Faculty (CFR 3.1)

HSU has hired 61 tenure-track faculty members in the last four years. Of these, 39 identify as female (63.9 percent), 16 identify as racially minoritized (26.2 percent), and 29 identify as white (47.5 percent). This is progress, but HSU faculty are still disproportionately white. By FTE, as of fall of 2020, 54.7 percent of the faculty identify as female, 12.7 percent identify as racially minoritized, and 71.8 percent of the faculty identify as white. Of the tenure-line faculty members, 50.7 percent identify as female, 14.0 percent identify as racially minoritized, and 68.3 percent identify as white.

The university has employed several tactics to encourage diversification. All members of search committees take implicit bias training, and all search committees have an equity advocate (detailed below). Recruitment targets greater diversity, as well. Faculty searches in 2017-18 and 2018-19 averaged 1.1 advertisements per position in locations specifically targeting diverse candidates. Faculty searches in 2019-20 and 2020-21 increased to 1.5 advertisements per position in these locations, a 36 percent increase. During the most recent search cycle, all positions were advertised in at least one of these locations.

Finally, the university recently obtained a CSU faculty-retention grant, which funded the creation of an affinity group for racially minoritized faculty in fall 2020. Leaders from Academic Personnel Services, the Center for Teaching and Learning, and the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion are also using the grant to fund an inclusivity conference in March 2021 titled *Real Conversations about Structural Barriers to Faculty of Color Success at HSU*. Conference goals are to identify ways HSU can better support faculty of color.

### Efforts to Diversify Staff (CFR 3.1)

In an effort to eliminate the structural deficit, HSU reduced its staff (including administrators) by 3.75 percent from 2018 to 2020 (640 to 616). The reduction actually served to increase the percentage of staff in all ethnicity subcategories. During this time period:

- Black employees decreased by one staff member but increased by four administrators, for a total increase of 14 percent (21 to 24). This included this year's arrival of HSU's first Black female athletic director and first Black head coach.

- Hispanic/Latinx employees increased by five staff members and decreased by one administrator, for a total increase of 8 percent (50 to 54).
- Asian American employees increased by one staff member and one administrator, for a total increase of 10.5 percent (19 to 21).
- American Indian/Alaskan Native employees increased by one administrator, for a total increase of 4 percent (24 to 25).

Regarding diversity of gender, the percentage of female-identifying staff decreased from 60 percent to 58.7 percent from fall 2018 to fall 2019 (366 to 359). Female-identifying administrators decreased from 47.5 percent to 46.1 percent (38 to 35).

### Equity Advocate Initiative (CFRs 3.1, 3.2)

HSU strengthened its efforts to recruit a diverse workforce in 2018 by adding equity advocates to the recruitment process for all university hires. Equity advocates are process observers who are critical in helping the search committee draft interview questions with an equity lens. This initiative serves to ensure that search committees are putting into practice the skills and strategies taught in their mandatory unconscious bias training session.

The equity advocate model was developed by the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and implemented in collaboration with Academic Personnel Services and Human Resources. Recruitment forms have been updated to ensure that searches do not move forward without an equity advocate present. To date, twelve advocates have served on faculty search committees, and approximately ten have served on staff and administrator searches.

### Building Capacity for Diversity Training, Education, and Outreach (CFR 3.1)

HSU has continued to strengthen its diversity, equity, and inclusion infrastructure. Leadership in the **Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion** (ODEI) was recently elevated from an executive director position to that of associate vice president and campus diversity officer. After a nationwide search, **Dr. Elavie Ndura** was appointed to the position effective January 2021. ODEI provides consultation and professional development on various topics and also provides **grants** (described above in the university's response to recommendation one) for initiatives designed to enhance DEI work across the university.

Since its inception, ODEI has contributed immensely to HSU's efforts in responding to DEI issues and has provided leadership in proactively addressing DEI matters. ODEI has implemented myriad trainings and events described below, and the office has a representative in the senate who provides periodic updates. As part of its outreach efforts, ODEI advises the university on its public messaging with the aim of becoming a model for responsiveness.

In addition to the resources provided on campus, ODEI also connects HSU to resources and dialogue beyond campus. This was strengthened in March 2018 with the hiring of a community-development specialist position. This specialist supports systemic change for equity on HSU's campus as part of the ODEI team, serves as a key supporter of equity work in the community with equity arcata (described above in HSU's response to recommendation one), and focuses on working with leaders and educators in the public schools. ODEI has worked tirelessly with the surrounding community to cultivate and maintain a welcoming environment for

HSU students beyond the campus. These efforts have been very well received by the community.

A detailed account of ODEI's work since the 2018 WSCUC team report follows. A sampling of feedback from participants in ODEI trainings is available in [appendix Q](#).

## TK-12 Humboldt-Del Norte Equity Partnership

Racially minoritized staff, faculty, and administrators who leave HSU have cited their children's negative experiences in Humboldt County TK-12 schools among their reasons for departure. In response, ODEI began work in area TK-12 schools in March 2018 to address systemic racism in schools and to work towards racial justice and equity. The TK-12 Humboldt-Del Norte Equity Partnership is coordinated by three lead partners (ODEI, Humboldt County Office of Education, and the Equity Alliance of the North Coast) to support the work in more than 30 districts and charter schools across Humboldt and Del Norte counties. They work with cohorts of school staff, and a new cohort of administrator learners will form in January 2021.

The goals of the partnership are to normalize conversations about race and racism; to create shared understandings and language related to implicit bias and internalized, interpersonal, institutional, and systemic racism manifested in schools; and to promote equitable outcomes by supporting school staff in their spheres of influence to apply a racial equity lens to their work.

## Training: Avoiding Unconscious Bias in the Hiring Process

ODEI is responsible for providing professional development sessions on the topic of unconscious bias in hiring. The titles of the sessions are *Avoiding Unconscious Bias in the Hiring Process: 1.0* and *Unconscious Bias in Hiring Refresher*:

*Ensuring Equitable Practices*. Forty-nine workshops have been offered since 2018, with approximately two hundred faculty, staff, and administrators participating.

## Training: Cultural Humility

Introduced in 1988 by Dr. Melanie Tervalon and Dr. Jann Murray Garcia, cultural humility transforms cross-cultural education into a model derived from four basic principles:

- critical self-reflection and lifelong learning;
- recognition and mitigation of inherent power imbalances;
- mutually beneficial non-paternalistic relationships with community members, highlighting the expertise that resides in the community, away from the university, agency, or clinic campus; and
- institutional accountability and alignment.

ODEI facilitated HSU's first cultural-humility training session in spring 2019 to a group of faculty from the university's place-based learning communities. Roughly 10 sessions have been held since then, both on campus and off, with an average of 40 attendees per session. DEIC staff members and HSU faculty equity fellows have been trained to facilitate the sessions.

## Training: Whiteness and Microaggressions

The Office of the Dean of Students offered the first educational session on whiteness and microaggressions in the summer of 2018, and ODEI took over the facilitating responsibilities that fall. A total of 312 participants attended the monthly sessions throughout the academic year. The session has been offered on a by-request basis since fall 2019.



## Moving Beyond Bias Initiative

HSU is preparing to launch Moving Beyond Bias (MBB), an anti-bias curriculum designed to reach staff, faculty, administrators, and students with a common framework to mitigate bias across the university. This curriculum was designed as part of a CSU/UC system-wide initiative funded by the State of California. Pilot training inclusive of administrators, faculty, and students from across the CSU/UC system was held in February 2020 and showed “demonstrated gains among participants in awareness of their personal biases and understanding of how to disrupt bias personally and institutionally.”

The COVID-19 pandemic temporarily stalled these efforts, but in November 2020, 13 HSU staff and faculty representing 11 different departments, including the ODEI and Human Resources, were trained virtually to facilitate the MBB curriculum. These facilitators are currently customizing the curriculum to complement the other anti-bias work currently in place. Pilot courses will be held in spring 2021, and a full rollout of the curriculum is slated for fall 2021.

## Diversity Grant Awards

Details of the diversity grants are provided in this report under HSU’s response to recommendation one. These grants fund projects across the university aimed at responding to the diversity of HSU’s students.

## Equity Fellows Program

While ODEI provides a centralized effort to promote a university-wide commitment to diversity and inclusion, these are also supported at various levels of the campus. A significant development to this end came fall 2019 with the advent of the Faculty Diversity and Equity Fellows Program (FDEFP).

The FDEFP is a one-year fellowship open to academic tenured and tenure-track faculty (with at least two years of service to HSU). The program is designed to promote the use of strengths-based approaches in the classroom that will facilitate the success of all students. Fellows assist their colleagues in efforts to eliminate academic barriers and to incorporate diversity, equity, and inclusion into the curriculum and classroom. In the course of this work, they are developing an actionable curriculum in the areas of cultural humility, microaggressions, and implicit bias to enhance the student experience in and outside the classroom.

The fellows developed peer-to-peer professional-development opportunities to support equitable learning environments and increase retention and graduation rates among racially minoritized students. Content included a framework for cultural humility, three data-based methods for assessing equity outcomes in courses, and examples of several empirically based inclusive teaching practices.

The fellows met with faculty from 28 programs in 2019-20 and 12 more programs this fall, and a total of 154 participating faculty members completed a self-reflection survey on their teaching practices and responsibilities to students. The fellows were scheduled to present the results of the survey at the CSU’s 2020 Symposium on Teaching and Learning, but this was cancelled due to the pandemic. HSU’s Teaching Excellence Symposium was held virtually in December 2020, however, and the fellows presented the results there. A paper documenting the project and findings is currently under peer review for publication, and both this paper and the symposium poster can be found in [appendix R](#).

Two of the equity fellows also teamed with the Center for Teaching and Learning’s educational developer to publish “Equitable and Inclusive Practices Designed to

Reduce Equity Gaps in Undergraduate Chemistry Courses” (also in [appendix R](#)) in the *Journal of Chemical Education*, the American Chemical Society's premier journal for chemical-education research. Stemming from their work discussing equitable and inclusive classroom strategies at HSU, this paper broadened the equity fellows' audience to undergraduate chemistry instructors and professionals across the world.

## Expanding Inclusivity through Course Design and Pedagogy (CFRs 4.3, 4.4)

### Center for Teaching and Learning

HSU provides a robust portfolio of programs, events, and services to support faculty and academic programs in the redesign of courses to close equity gaps and further student success. The bulk of this work is designed and facilitated by the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL). Under the leadership of its first permanent director, hired in July 2018, the CTL works to cultivate the critically reflective educator through the deep integration of technology, pedagogy, and curriculum to advance equity, build on evidence-based practices, and engage faculty to further student success within and across all disciplines. Here are several key programs and accomplishments that exemplify these efforts:

- Funded by a CSU grant obtained by CTL leadership, the center offers an annual **course design institute** aimed at helping HSU meet GI2025 goals and develop a global teaching presence. Since the 2018 visit of the WSCUC team, 52 faculty have participated in the institute across all colleges, representing over 20 programs. The center has collected faculty feedback, instructional artifacts, and development plans throughout the institute's

many iterations. These artifacts are now being organized in a newly established teaching showcase hub housed in Canvas and accessible to all HSU faculty of any rank.

- The CTL worked closely with the College of Natural Resources and Sciences to support the efforts associated with closing equity gaps among racially minoritized students generally and Latinx students specifically as part of the Inclusive Excellence Award from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute STEM grant and collaboration with ESCALA. Multiple participating faculty have contributed their curriculum and/or pedagogical projects to a digital showcase.
- Inspired by the impact of this work, the CTL partnered with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Institutional Technology Services, and ESCALA-alumni faculty to create a course equity-ratio report (figure 24) that is now embedded in all course redesign programs. This report provides faculty with course-level equity information that allows them to identify any gaps relevant to racially minoritized, Pell-recipient, first-generation, and gender-identity statuses. The tool provides further information to facilitate critical reflection in the redesign of course structure and/or pedagogy.
- PIVOT to Online Teaching is an asynchronous course that walks faculty through a wide range of topics and activities associated with rethinking and redesigning courses to enhance student success in online learning modalities. Based on frameworks including universal design for learning, backwards design, classroom learning assessment, and humanized instruction, this course has resulted in the creation and sharing of over 50 instructional

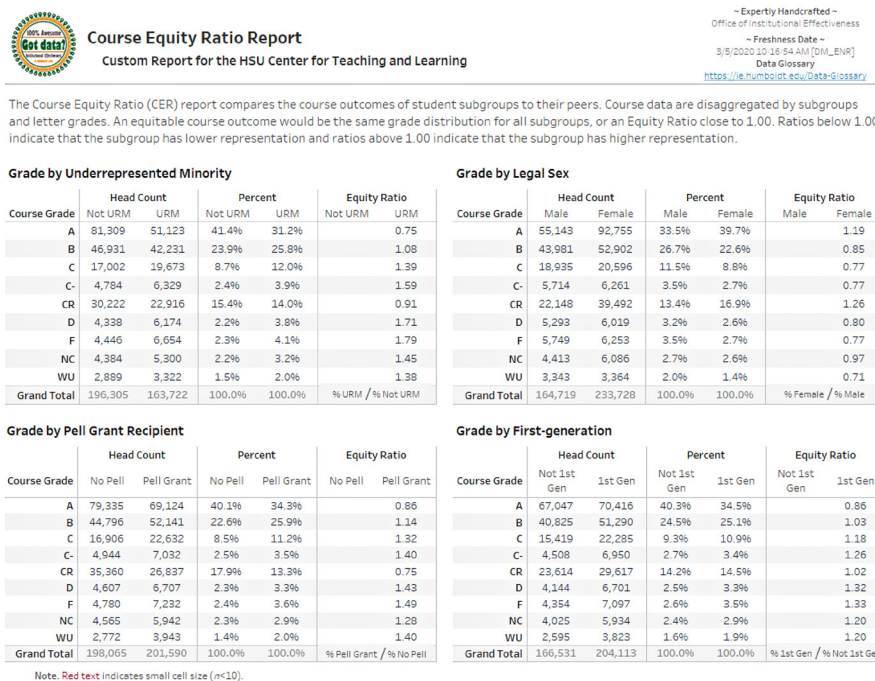
artifacts shared university-wide through the CTL's **Pivot to Online Teaching Showcase**<sup>1</sup>.

- Through its **mid-semester feedback program**, the CTL offers instructors the opportunity to make informed, timely adjustments to course structure and/or pedagogy. Facilitators solicit anonymous feedback from students in faculty-identified courses for use in consultation with the CTL to consider recommended adjustments to further student learning.
- Topics of professional learning communities since 2018 WSCUC visit include infusing early alert into learning environments, **inclusive teaching**, equitable approaches to teaching and assessing writing, equity in community engagement, and integrating sustainability and social justice into teaching and learning.
- The **inclusive teaching guide** is one of many **instructional resources** the CTL has developed

as part of its equity and inclusion efforts. The guide orients instructors to various dimensions and strategies as they craft safe and inclusive learning environments within and across teaching and learning modalities.

- The CTL has also advanced the development and integration of additional technologies to help further equity, accessibility, and early alert in Canvas.
  - Ally is an integrated tool that evaluates the accessibility of all materials and images in a canvas course. It is active in all HSU courses.
  - The CTL and the Accessibility Resource Center provide support services to assist faculty to fix any accessibility problems.
  - The CTL has implemented Canvas Analytics in all courses. This tool provides faculty with behavioral data for every student enrolled in their courses so that instructors can identify and easily connect with students to help them monitor their engagement and performance.

Figure 24: **Course Equity Ratio Report**



<sup>1</sup>WSCUC team members can access the Pivot showcase with username wscuguest and password hsuWSCUC2021.

Figure 25: Course Data in Canvas Dashboard

## Explore Your Course Data

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) website is a great place to begin your exploration around course data, such as success rates, opportunity/equity gaps, and other valuable information to provide another lens that informs your exploration.

### What You Will Need to Get Started

- Request your unique faculty code from OIE (email to Mike Le at [Mike.Le@humboldt.edu](mailto:Mike.Le@humboldt.edu)).
- Follow the Vlab Instructions to access the Tableau software (see below)
- For grade distribution data, please fill out a [data request form](#) and specify that you'd like your "Course Equity Ratio Report."

### Accessing Tableau Software

1. Follow the [Vlab instructions](#) to access Tableau
2. [Access Strategic Data Workbooks](#). This PDF will guide you in accessing the data workbooks from a Mac or PC. You must be on campus to access the data.

### An Example of How Faculty Use Data

Through [CSU Course Redesign with Technology](#) projects, faculty were led through a process to enable models that impact student success. Faculty diligently redesigned, analyzed their impact using campus data, and then, shared out their insights.

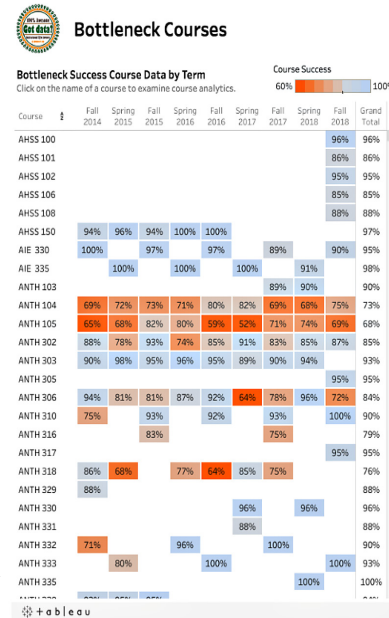
Inferences in this case, show how data can be used to inform your teaching in many areas:

- Historical success data, for example – DFW rates
- Course level opportunities, e.g., opportunity/equity gaps
- Program statistics, bottleneck courses

### CSU System Dashboards

The [CSU Student Success Dashboards](#) also provide access to a number of data views by system, course/campus, and equity gaps. Faculty play a critical role in the success of students and this exploration helps us to understand where we might help students.

The [Faculty Dashboard Home](#) is a great place to begin looking at who our students are, their paths, their struggles, the opportunity gaps, and more.





## ESCALA Collaboration

Leadership in programs funded by the Inclusive Excellence Award from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute and the HSI STEM grant have collaborated with Dr. Melissa Salazar of ESCALA Educational Services to provide faculty and staff with professional development opportunities in culturally competent pedagogical practices. Though ESCALA's focus is on Hispanic-Serving Institutions, the principles and strategies have been shown to benefit students from other traditionally underrepresented backgrounds.

The process began with four student success summits in 2017-18 that were attended by 82 faculty and staff. An HSU team has attended each of ESCALA's summer institutes since 2017, with a total of 44 faculty and staff participating. Twenty-four of these participants earned certification, and nine of them have been trained as coaches. These summer institutes were the genesis for the equity-ratio index described above.

Dr. Salazar is currently working with the university's HSI Steering Committee, the CTL, and HSU Escala Alumni to develop workshops led by HSU ESCALA alumni. Alumni have completed a survey to inform the process, and while the pandemic has affected certainty, the team is optimistic that the first of these workshops will be offered in 2021-22. Student experience and faculty reflections will be captured to document the impact of these efforts.

## DEIC Subcommittee on Inclusive Teaching Strategies and Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council (DEIC) partners with ODEI to provide advisory council and expertise to create institutional and systemic change. The 26 members include student representatives and faculty and staff from the Divisions of Academic Affairs, Enrollment Management, Administrative Affairs, and

University Advancement. The executive team includes one chair and the chairs of three subcommittees focusing on

- faculty and staff development and professional opportunities,
- what it means for HSU to be a Hispanic-Serving and Minority-Serving Institution, and
- inclusive teaching strategies and culturally relevant pedagogy.

Formed in 2018, the subcommittee on inclusive teaching and culturally relevant pedagogy (ITS/CRP) is in its third year working to operationalize inclusive teaching through existing university structures. In 2019-20, the ITS/CRP engaged in three major efforts:

- Members created a framework for excellence in inclusive teaching that aligns with changes in faculty personnel policies for retention, tenure, and promotion in HSU's faculty handbook. The senate committee on faculty RTP criteria and standards accepted and approved the ITS/CRP's **RTP Model Language for Excellence in Inclusive Teaching** in December 2019. The standards offer five categories of essential evidence of excellence in inclusive teaching.
- Using its five categories of essential evidence, members updated HSU's existing instructional-observation checklist with language that integrates equity and inclusion into the collegial observation process. The **modified checklist** is currently under review by the senate Faculty Affairs Committee.
- Committee members began to develop an HSU Inclusive Teaching Toolkit, which will include guides, checklists, and examples to support faculty in meeting the new faculty personnel policies for retention, tenure, and promotion.

## Faculty Efforts and Successes

HSU's environmental engineering resources program is a national leader in diversity. While only 28 percent of engineering faculty in the US are women, 67 percent of HSU's engineering faculty are women, tied with Smith College for highest female representation in the US. Thirty-three percent of the engineering faculty identify as racially minoritized (22 percent Latinx, 11 percent Black), which makes the program the sixth most diverse engineering program in the US.

All new engineering faculty are supported by the department trust funds to attend the National Effective Teaching Institute, where they learn research-based information on how to teach effectively to a diverse engineering classroom. Over half of the faculty have attended the ESCALA summer institute, and they are preparing in-house professional-development materials based on ESCALA.

The oceanography program recently worked with ODEI to survey current students and alumni on program inclusivity. Thirty-five responses were received by October 2020, and analysis is underway.

Thirty-five percent of HSU's psychology faculty identify as racially minoritized women. Annual faculty retreats focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion topics such as white privilege and decolonizing writing assignments. The program has a DEI assessment team that has developed a student survey to evaluate every course in the program for student experience of support, community, exposure to diverse ideas and people, and integration of equity-minded pedagogy.

In light of faculty work with ESCALA, wildlife program faculty introduced in 2020-21 a cultural journey assignment in the Science 100 course to acknowledge where students are from—culturally and geographically—and to value what all students bring to the classroom. Faculty also formally introduce students to HSU's **Indian Natural Resources, Science, and Engineering Program** and **Cultural Centers for Academic Excellence** as part of the curriculum.

In December 2020, the Department of Theatre, Film, and Dance (TFD) faculty and staff participated in a three-day Whiteness Within workshop aimed at challenging white-supremacy culture using story sharing, reflection, and physical expression to give participants a chance to recognize and shift away from racism. Several faculty from the Departments of Art and Music also participated in this workshop. In January 2021, the group participated in a Decolonizing the Classroom dialogue led by two TFD faculty. The workshop explored ways to rethink, reframe, and reconstruct the teaching and learning process to shift power dynamics, increase equity, and partner with students. Faculty set specific goals for the upcoming semester and will meet in March to share and discuss their processes and progress.







## Concluding Statement

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In addition to HSU's work on transparent budgeting, enrollment-management strategies, diversification of revenue sources, and university-wide assessment, the university has also earnestly attended to the other recommendations made by the 2018 evaluation team.

The assessment department in the vice provost's office now maintains all reports, reviews, and feedback on a Google drive in the effort to improve consistency of assessment reports, increase closing-the-loop activities, and document formal processes. As part of continuous improvement, connections are now being made between program activities and specific learning outcomes, in both academic and non-instructional areas, to facilitate loop closing. The work on the GEAR PLOs was momentous and served to connect faculty more deeply with GEAR as the centerpiece of the curriculum. There is a commitment to quality assurance in ways that did not exist before. The ICC's engagement in reading self studies for various programs has stimulated new opportunities to share best practices and to foster a culture of evidence.

HSU has made great strides in communicating to stakeholders about its budget situation. While differing perspectives continue to exist about how to address the issue, engaging with disparate viewpoints is an appropriate part of the discourse and ultimately enhances the university's decision making. The process and initiatives that HSU has put in place since the 2018 WSCUC team visit have served to build skills in change management, understanding of funding sources, enrollment management, and leadership

and governance. The process of writing this report has served to validate the progress made and to identify areas of continued work. It has provided invaluable insight for next steps and also cautious optimism in several areas.

The university has embarked on a new strategic plan, which will include an academic road map and will pay special attention to WSCUC expectations. Professional development allows HSU to be intentional about diversity, equity, and inclusion while exploring its role as an HSI and MSI. This process has invited bold thinking about what can be done to enhance the student experience, and a first-ever capital campaign presents an opportune moment in the university's trajectory.

Challenges are ahead, but there is cause for optimism. HSU is primed and ready to go forward with the university's story while uncovering new opportunities. The polytechnic feasibility study gives all university stakeholders an opportunity to pause and consider where the university has been and, upon completion, where it is likely to go.



## Appendices

**Appendix A: [State and Federally Recognized Tribes, 9](#)**

**Appendix B: [Proposed New HSU New Purpose, Vision, and Values Statement, 13](#)**

**Appendix C: [Change Management Plan, 27](#)**

**Appendix D: [Strategic Enrollment Management Plan Year One Priorities, 2019-2020, 31](#)**

**Appendix E: [Retention and Registration Monitoring, 34](#)**

**Appendix F: [CSU Program Planning Resource Guide, 39](#)**

**Appendix G: [Spring 2020 Review of ILO Alignment Across Undergraduate Programs, 41](#)**

**Appendix H: [Senate Ratification of GEAR PLOs, 43](#)**

**Appendix I: [GEAR Assessment Pilot Results, 44](#)**

**Appendix J: [New Program Review Self-Study Template, 46](#)**

**Appendix K: [Handbook for Operational and Co-Curricular Assessment Plans, 47](#)**

**Appendix L: [Examples of Operational and Co-Curricular Assessment Plans, 52](#)**

**Appendix M: [Academic Assessment Materials, 52](#)**

**Appendix N: [From Me to PhD Speaker Series, 55](#)**

**Appendix O: [RAMP Executive Summary, 63](#)**

**Appendix P: [Learning Center Report, 63](#)**

**Appendix Q: [ODEI Training Feedback, 68](#)**

**Appendix R: [Faculty Equity Fellows Publications, 69, 70](#)**

**Appendix S: [Financial Statements, 37](#)**

## Acronyms

ACAC	Academic, Career and Advising Center
CBA	Collective Bargaining Agreement
CTL	Center for Teaching and Learning
GEAR	General Education and All-University Requirements
GI2025	Graduation Initiative 2025
HSU	Humboldt State University
IABP	Integrated Assessment, Planning and Budget Process
ICC	Integrated Curriculum Committee
ILO	institutional learning outcome
ODEI	Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
OIE	Office of Institutional Effectiveness
PAT	President's Administrative Team
PBLC	Place Based Learning Community
PLO	program learning outcome
RAMP	Retention through Academic Mentoring
SLO	student learning outcome
URPC	University Resources and Planning Committee

## Acknowledgments

This Special Visit Report was prepared with the assistance of many individuals.

The 2020-21 Quality Assurance Team is a group of dedicated faculty and staff who gathered information and provided analysis. We thank them for their service and diligence.

**Corliss Bennett**, Director, Student Success Outcomes

**Amber Blakeslee**, Director, University Budget Office

**Taylor Bloedon**, Assistant Professor, Department of Kinesiology and Recreation Administration

**Lisa Bond-Maupin**, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the President

**Enoch Hale**, Director, Center for Teaching and Learning

**Nicole Jean Hill**, Professor, Department of Art

**Stephanie Lane**, Director, Alumni Relations

**Sonja Manor**, Lecturer, Department of Mathematics

**Amy Moffat**, Associate Director of Institutional Assessment

**Mary Oling-Sisay**, Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies

**Lisa Tremain**, Assistant Professor, Department of English

**Mark Wicklund**, Associate Director of Academic Assessment

**Travis Williams**, Operations Specialist, Alumni Relations

**Appreciation** also goes to the following administrators, faculty, and staff for their contributions to the report:

**Simone Aloisio**, Associate Vice President  
for Faculty Affairs

**Daniel Barton**, Associate Professor and Chair,  
Department of Wildlife

**Jenn Capps**, Provost and Vice President  
for Academic Affairs

**Christine Cass**, Associate Professor and Chair,  
Department of Oceanography

**Eileen Cashman**, Professor and Chair, Department  
of Environmental Resources Engineering

**Adrienne Colegrove-Raymond**, Coordinator,  
Native American Center for Academic Excellence

**Michael Fisher**, Planning Director, Facilities Management

**Katlin Goldenberg**, Director, Place-Based  
Learning Community, HSI STEM Grant

**Frank Herrera**, Coordinator, Social Justice,  
Equity and Inclusion Center

**Tasha Howe**, Professor and Chair,  
Department of Psychology

**Matthew Johnson**, Professor, Department  
of Wildlife; Director, HSI STEM Grant

**Susan Karl**, Director, Learning Center

**Molly Kresl**, Student Life Coordinator,  
Office of Student Life

**Michael Le**, Director, Office of Institutional Effectiveness

**Jenessa Lund**, Executive Director, Associated Students

**Lauren Lynch**, Assistant to the Provost

**Steven Margell**, Lead Evaluator, HSI STEM Grant

**Holly Martel**, Director of Academic Resources

**Pedro Martinez**, Director of Admissions

**Bori Mazzag**, Professor and Chair, Departments  
of Mathematics and Computer Science

**Jason Meriwether**, Vice President for  
Enrollment Management

**Peggy Metzger**, Director, Financial Aid

**David Montoya**, Associate Vice President  
for Human Resources

**Elavie Ndura**, Associate Vice President  
and Campus Diversity Officer

**Cyril Oberlander**, Dean of the Library; Interim Dean,  
College of Extended Education  
and Global Engagement

**Nancy Olson**, Training Specialist, Human Resources

**Meridith Oram**, Community-Development Specialist,  
Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

**Fernando Paz**, Coordinator, *El Centro Academico Cultural*

**Eldemira Reynoso**, Interim Executive Director,  
Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

**Angela Rich**, Assessment Specialist

**Bethany Rizarrdi**, Chief Information Officer

**Dan Saveliff**, Executive Director, EOP/SSS  
and TRIO Programs

**Douglas Smith**, Coordinator, African American  
Center for Academic Excellence

**Melea Smith**, Coordinator, Youth Educational Services

**Tracy Smith**, Director, Retention through  
Academic Mentoring Program

**Taylor Sorrels**, Administrative Support Specialist,  
Academic Programs

**Amy Sprowles**, Chair, Department of Biological Sciences

**Kristen Stegeman-Gould**, Director of Marketing,  
Department of Marketing and Communications

**Eboni Turnbow**, Dean of Students

**Roger Wang**, Associate Dean of Students

**Corrina Wells**, Program Coordinator,  
Developing Hispanic Serving Institution  
Grant, School of Education

**Frank Whitlach**, Vice President for  
University Advancement