

2021 WSCUC Institutional Report



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COMPONENT 1 – INTRODUCTION TO THE INSTITUTIONAL REPORT

1.1 Institutional Context

On Wednesday, March 4th, 2020, our WSCUC Institutional Report Steering Committee had its first meeting. Led by the Associate Provost, the steering committee was composed of sixteen people that included the Provost, the Chief Financial Officer, the deans and key senior administrators, who in turn led eight inquiry circles consisting of over seventy faculty, staff and students. We were excited about the project. Everything seemed to be business as usual, but in the background there were news reports about the year's flu, something called the Coronavirus. Some people began voluntarily wearing masks, but it was flu season after all. At this point we had no idea what lay ahead.

Then, on March 13th, the university ceased in-person operations, for two weeks to flatten the curve. Students, faculty, and administrators had to pivot to a fully-online environment and anticipated a call-back any day. The weeks turned to months, months turned to a year. We are only now emerging from what turned out to be a global pandemic which changed the world forever. We conducted the entire process virtually. From when the process began, we had only one face-to-face meeting. Moreover, one of our inquiry circle members, Billie Jean Wiebe, passed away during the writing of this report and it is dedicated to her memory. By the time we completed the report, we had virtually examined thousands of artifacts of evidence over some ten thousand hours, and managed to weave together an institutional report that celebrates our successes and challenges us to grow.

1.2 Our Story

The Mennonite Brethren Church, part of the anabaptist tradition, was established in 1860. Later, a denominational structure emerged in the United States. Our university was founded in 1941 as an educational extension. In 1944, the Pacific Bible Institute began offering courses in a home in Fresno. Soon, the institution grew and moved to a former YWCA building in downtown Fresno with an emphasis on training future church leaders. By 1948, the institution received Bible Institute Accreditation as the student body grew to 178. Since the mid-1950s, it worked closely with the Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary. In 2010, the seminary formally became a part of the university.

Enrollment began to decline in the early 1960s, so the institution added a junior college curriculum to its biblical studies core and changed its name to Pacific College. It moved to its current location in



southeast Fresno which provided additional space for growth. In 1963, a four-year liberal arts program, with biblical studies at its core, was added and the university received full accreditation as a four-year liberal arts institution.

In the 1970s, Pacific College added master's degrees and professional development courses for teachers. In 1976, the institution changed its name to Fresno Pacific College. In the 1980s, a strategic decision was made to broaden the base beyond its original denominational boundaries to include churches beyond the Mennonite Brethren Conference.

In 1997, with increasing growth, the college changed its name to Fresno Pacific University (FPU). The 2000s saw an expansion to regional campuses in Visalia, North Fresno, Bakersfield, and Merced. These campuses offered accelerated degree completion (DC) courses for adult students, giving a "second chance" to those who were unable to complete their degrees due to life circumstances. In 2008, the university was designated an [Hispanic Serving Institution](#) (HSI) by the Department of Education, and is a certified Title III and Title V Institution. Additionally, 64% of this population completes their degrees within six years, an Hispanic graduation rate among the highest of faith-based universities in the United States. FPU is a member of the [Hispanic Association of Colleges & Universities](#).

Over 60% of the FPU undergraduate student class resides within Fresno and Tulare Counties. The [US Census](#) ranked Fresno County as having one of the highest rates of poverty in California at 20.5%. Of the full-time students receiving financial aid, 32% came from families making less than \$30,000 ([IPEDS](#) median family income reported, 2019). Amidst these challenging circumstances, the university is the only faith-based institution in the Central Valley that serves these students. Dr. Joseph Jones, President since July 1 of 2017, speaks of his vision for this diverse student population: "They come with doubts and fears and the usual baggage that is seldom spoken; but we are a hope, a dream and a possibility for deliverance from these weights they carry." ([Connections, May 6, 2020](#))

FPU has 2,325 undergraduate and 1,278 graduate [students](#). There are 47 bachelor's programs, 31 master's programs, and 17 non-degree certificates or credentials. It is classified by the [Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education](#) as "Master's Colleges & Universities: Larger Programs." In its ranking of schools overall, *US News and World Report* ranks FPU [#3](#) in Top Performers on Social Mobility, [#27](#) in Best Value Schools, and [#37](#) in Regional Universities West. It is a vibrant Christ-centered



university transforming California's Central Valley and global communities through service to students of all races, ethnicities and cultures.

Innovative programs fulfill its [mission](#) and encourage academic and professional excellence, peacemaking, social justice, ethical leadership, holistic wellness, and spiritual vitality. *Nonprofit Colleges Online* ranks FPU [#11](#) in the top 25 online colleges in California, and its Sports Management master's degree online program [#17](#) in the nation. *Great Value Colleges* ranks FPU [#11](#) in its listing of the most affordable colleges in California online, and [#14](#) in the nation for Online MA in Ministry.

A major recent milestone is the construction of the Warkentine Cultural and Arts Center, a 26,000 square foot complex containing a 400-seat auditorium, a 100-seat black box theater, and an art gallery. It broke ground in the fall of 2020 and should be completed in spring 2022. In addition to supporting FPU visual and performing arts programs, the Center will provide a much-needed performance venue to the community.

1.3 The Fresno Pacific Idea

The theological foundation of FPU is in the twin biblical narratives of stewardship and redemption. On this, a liberal arts education is built with a commitment to the development of the mind in the pursuit of knowledge. Students acquire habits of mind and spirit that form the foundation for professional contribution, citizenship, and personal growth. The [Fresno Pacific Idea](#) commits it to be: 1) a Christian university dedicated to God's Kingdom and to the perspective of the liberal arts which integrates faith, learning, and action; 2) a community of learners that recognizes learning is the result of interaction between persons, ideas and experiences; and 3) a prophetic witness to serve the church and society.

1.4 Accreditation and Response to Previous Commission Actions

Fresno Pacific University has been continuously [accredited](#) by WSCUC [since 1961](#) and was one of the very first institutions to receive accreditation. We are proud to be considered a "role model institution" of higher education and strive for academic excellence and continuous improvement. The following will summarize the Commission actions since 2013, and a more in-depth institutional response to these actions will be covered in the subsequent action item essays.

On March 19-21, 2013, the Capacity and Preparatory Review Team from WSCUC conducted an accreditation visit. Based on these findings, on July 10, 2013, the Commission commended FPU for their



use of inquiry circles as a best practice, having a strong culture of evidence and assessment, and upholding the rigor and meaning of its degrees. The Commission also observed that some areas were in need of continued attention and development, including greater transparency and the use of the strategic plan in budgeting, improved use of assessment findings to determine standards of performance and improvements to student learning, and improvement to retention and graduation rates.

On February 25–27, 2015, the Educational Effectiveness Review Team visited FPU. In response to their findings, the Commission issued a letter on July 15, 2015, which commended FPU's efforts in restoring institutional stability through strong leadership directions and budgetary success, a growing culture of evidence, and new emphases on core competencies and meaning, quality and integrity of degrees. The Commission also pointed out areas for further attention and development, namely the restoration of a more positive atmosphere of communication and decision-making, progress with diversity, implementation and usage of the strategic plan in budgeting, and financial stability.

A special visit was conducted by a review team on September 17-20, 2018. Based on their findings, in its letter of March 4, 2019, the Commission praised FPU for its forthright response to the previous Commission letter, implementing a diversity statement, improving communications, and financial stabilization. The letter also required more tangible and focused efforts with respect to 1) diversity, 2) systematized decision-making, and 3) clearer communication channels. These requirements form the three action items addressed in this report.



COMPONENT 2 – COMPLIANCE WITH STANDARDS: REVIEW UNDER THE WSCUC STANDARDS AND COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS (CFRs 1.7, 1.8)

2.1 Review Under the WSCUC Standards

FPU makes every effort to uphold the letter and spirit of the four Commission Standards of Accreditation throughout our organization and to comply with all federal requirements. In this regard, our [Compliance with Standards: Review Under the WSCUC Standards and Compliance with Federal Requirements](#) worksheet is provided, along with supporting evidence demonstrating our effort to fulfill and uphold all thirty-nine CFRs. An index of CFRs is also included at the end of this report.

FPU invests significant resources into continuous improvement and teaching excellence. Assessment, data, and student learning is coordinated through the Office of the Associate Provost, Dr. Gregory Zubacz. He oversees the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE), which has a full-time director and assessment systems manager, the Office of Institutional Research (IR) which has a full-time director and data analyst, and the Center for Online Learning (COL) which has a full-time director and six employees. The director of the COL coordinates the new Teaching and Learning Center.

2.2 Compliance with Federal Requirements

In terms of federal requirements, first, a new Credit Hour and Program Length Policy was promulgated for the university on January 26, 2021, in response to recent changes in federal regulations. Credit hour assignments are reviewed through Program Review (PR), course and program approval processes, and dean review of syllabi. The Sunbird Central app sets out all meeting times of courses for faculty and students, and the Registrar's Office maintains the course schedules and academic calendars on its page. On-ground courses meet for the required amount of time, and syllabi reflect federal regulations on prescribed course and instructional hour length per semester. Second, marketing and recruitment efforts follow federal regulations in terms of disclosing degree length, cost, and employment opportunities. Typical length of time and cost of degree are indicated. Third, student complaint policies and procedures are in place for financial, non-financial, and administrative issues, and records are maintained. Fourth, the Registrar's Office administers the Transcript Evaluation and Transfer Policy, the formal process for transfer of credit from outside institutions.



COMPONENT 3 - MEANING, QUALITY, AND INTEGRITY OF DEGREES (CFRs 2.1–2.8, 4.1–4.7)

3.1 Introduction

This inquiry circle reviewed and analyzed degree meaning, quality, and integrity at FPU. This analysis discusses how WSCUC standards 2 and 4 are met in the data points through evaluation of the CFRs and demonstrate FPU's commitment to student degree excellence.

3.2 Meaning

FPU's [mission](#) statement clearly describes its purposes. Students who graduate from FPU earn more than just a degree. They earn an understanding of what it means to be part of a larger community. The degrees offered at FPU are representative of our mission. The university develops students for leadership and service through excellence in Christian higher education.

The university has adopted a [Diversity Rationale](#) expressing commitment to embracing and promoting diversity. FPU is an HSI with a [five-year plan](#) to continue systemic development in relation to diversity. Our Diversity Rationale specifically supports degree meaning, quality, and integrity of degrees by ensuring students have diverse curriculum as part of their studies.

The July 10, 2013 Commission letter commended FPU's work with respect to the rigor and meaning of a degree, and encouraged further implementation of the Degree Qualifications Profile ([DQP](#)). Initial work and analysis [mapped](#) relationships among University Student Learning Outcomes (USLOs), General Education Student Learning Outcomes (GESLOs), and the DQP. The inquiry circle collected data with reference to USLOs, Program Student Learning Outcomes (PSLOs), the DQP and [Bloom's Taxonomy](#) and developed a [rigor chart](#). FPU has not yet officially adopted the DQP, although there has been some application in that the definition of degree and program quality is seen through this model.

3.2.1 Degree Meaning – Admission Requirements

General admissions requirements are set at the population level: [Traditional Undergraduate](#) (TUG), accelerated [Degree Completion](#) (Undergraduate), and [Graduate](#) (GRAD). Standard requirements based on population represent a commitment to CFRs 2.2 and 2.2b. [Transfer Requirements/Agreements](#) are posted on the FPU website in two separate policies at the undergraduate level. However, this can produce extra complexity for prospective students.



Individual programs may include specific admissions requirements that ensure appropriate preparation for the program of study. (CFR 2.3) Specific examples include the [Teaching Credential](#), [Bachelor of Science in Nursing](#), and [Master of Science in Nursing](#).

Admission and program exception policies are in place for each population and program. This ensures each degree's meaning, quality and integrity are maintained. (CFR 2.2) Committees are in place for student selections. Certain matters have specific processes, such as [criminal backgrounds](#) or [GPAs under 2.4](#). It should be noted that there are no comparable committees at the graduate level as students who fail to meet requirements are reviewed by program directors (PDs). While this reflects the diversity of programs and level of specialization at the graduate level, a clear articulation of a process for appealing a low GPA would better support CFR 2.2b. For accelerated DC students, a [Cohort Petition](#) is available. The accelerated [DC Failed Courses Policy](#) outlines when a student must cease work in their program.

3.2.2 Degree Meaning – Program Design

Program design ensures a quality student experience together with a well-rounded knowledge of their area of study. This is accomplished through the PR process every five years and in the initial program proposal process. FPU systematically assesses the effectiveness of its programs as faculty engage with students in providing experiences that contribute to the achievement of each USLO as outlined in the [USLOs Achievement Report 2018-2019](#) published by the OIE. (CFRs 2.2, 2.3)

FPU's stakeholders who are regularly involved in the assessment and alignment of education programs include alumni, employers, practitioners, and students. Various advisory groups are in place with annual/biannual reviews, including the [Center for Community Transformation Advisory Group](#), [Nursing Advisory Council](#), [Adapted Physical Education Advisory Board](#), and [Administrative Services Advisory Partners](#). (CFR 4.5)

3.3 Quality

Fresno Pacific University is guided by the [Strategic Map](#) with five thematic goals of Grow, Engage, Innovate, Serve, and Transform ("GEIST"), supported by objectives and success indicators. (CFR 4.6) The Strategic Map keeps the FPU community focused on maintaining the quality of each student's education.



Quality of degrees is measured by PRs, assessment of core competencies, graduate outcomes, and external accreditation reviews. (CFR 2.7) At FPU there are processes in place to ensure quality and rigor of degrees. (CFR 2.6) Such processes include program and course approvals.

PR plays a vital role in [assessing](#) the quality, meaning, and integrity of FPU's degree programs. PRs foster academic excellence at all levels by evaluating educational effectiveness, best practices, program infrastructure, resources, and needs. Recommendations from PRs are aligned with SLOs to provide guidance for administrative and budgetary decisions in support of continuous improvement. (CFRs 2.7, 4.4)

The University Assessment Committee, in conjunction with the deans and the Provost, prepares and maintains a PR schedule which is revised annually. (CFRs 4.1, 4.3, 4.4) To ensure schedules are kept, a [PR audit system](#) was implemented in 2018 which ensures proper completion of reviews. However, a survey of all current PRs shows that several are still outstanding. It is recommended that a change be implemented to ensure all PRs are acquired during timeframes noted and maintained in an easily accessible location.

Scaffolding is utilized and goes hand in hand with lower/upper division requirements. It is recommended that a list of required courses be included as well as prerequisites to clarify how lower division courses support upper division. This list could be linked to curriculum maps to show scaffolding of PSLOs throughout programs. It would help demonstrate how, for example, lower levels of Bloom's taxonomy in SLOs and assessments of student progress through courses and standards of performance set for educational experience are consistently met. (CFR 2.1)

All undergraduate programs have a final course in which students have a culminating experience. (CFR 2.1) This comes primarily in the form of capstones, internships, externships, and senior seminars. The expectation of a culminating experience is a specific requirement of PR.

3.3.1 Quality Through Faculty Development

Fresno Pacific University ensures quality of degrees through the hiring of dedicated and qualified faculty. (CFRs 2.7, 4.1, 4.7) There are strategic faculty hiring processes in place, competitive professional development opportunities, and various approaches to assess faculty quality instruction. The current



[Faculty Handbook](#) was revised to simplify, clarify, and reflect best practices in higher education. [Past Handbooks](#) were less organized, making it difficult for faculty to easily locate information and resources.

Standards for quality faculty recruitment, hiring and search committee processes are outlined in section 3.5 of the [2019 Faculty Handbook](#) and section 3 of the [2021 Faculty Handbook](#). [Faculty curricula vitae](#) demonstrate that standards for qualifications were met. (CFR 2.1) Faculty candidates for tenure (formerly known as “continuing status”) are required to hold the terminal degree appropriate to postsecondary educators in their field of teaching, as noted in Chapter 7 of the 2021 Faculty Handbook.

The [Provost Research Grant Program](#) is a competitive process which provides up to \$2,000 to each successful applicant. (CFR 2.8) All titles of proposals and awards are published on the Provost’s intranet webpage. In the 2019-20 academic year (AY) all five applicants were approved within the school’s budgeted amount of \$6,600.

3.3.2 Quality Through High-Impact Practices

As noted in the introduction, Fresno Pacific University is an Hispanic Serving Institution. Well over half of the entire student population is [Hispanic](#). (CFR 4.5) In addition, our students are [economically diverse](#), and vary in their preparation for college and knowledge of the college experience.

The challenges facing these students are met by [High Impact Practices](#) (HIPs) in six areas: service-learning, learning community, research with faculty, internship/field experience, study abroad and culminating senior experience. (CFR 2.5) FPU undergraduate education includes common HIPs: service learning, [research with faculty](#), [conference presentations](#), membership in [honors societies](#), internships and field experience, [study abroad](#), and a culminating senior experience embedded in majors. Some [learning communities](#) are used in TUG. The cohort system of accelerated DC functions like learning communities. Freshmen and seniors [report](#) greater participation in two or more HIPs compared to other Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCCU) schools and a substantially greater participation in service-learning. Graduate programs develop de facto learning communities and informal cohorts. (CFRs 2.2a, 2.5, 2.8)

FPU’s 2019 National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) finds [student engagement](#) with USLOs (CFR 2.2a), demonstrating commitment to student learning and engagement. The university leads peer institutions of the CCCC for student participation in HIPs, especially in culminating student experience.

3.3.3 Quality Through Academic Service Areas

The quality of a degree is not determined just by data, processes, and policies. It also involves analysis of service areas and their effectiveness. Data is collected every other year using the Ruffalo Noel Levitz (RNL) priorities survey to analyze how service areas are functioning across a wide variety of FPU's departments, faculty, staff, and students. (CFR 4.2) The [Student Satisfaction Inventory \(SSI\)](#) and Adult Student Priorities Survey (ASPS) sections of the survey are key indicators of the current situation of the institution. (CFRs 2.2a, 2.7) The data provides direction for the university to make improvements in the areas that matter most to students. Each department receives their section of the SSI and ASPS report, and each department is to provide details of their response to the areas needed for improvement to the OIE. For example, the Registrar's Office received responses from the [SSI](#) and [ASPS](#) surveys identifying progress made in registration processes, but identifying areas of opportunity within current practice to enhance student experience.

Service areas at FPU have been created and developed to assist students in their studies both while attending the institution and after graduation. Academic advising offers one-on-one support to students at multiple points during their time at FPU, helping with course scheduling, forms, and questions. (CFR 4.4) Advising is approached differently across student populations. The institution employs academic advisors for the accelerated [DC population](#). A combination of [faculty mentors](#) (made up of faculty and PDs), and advisors in the Registrar's Office serve the TUG students. [Advising](#) for graduate students is done by faculty themselves. (CFR 2.3) While the needs of each of these groups may be different, it might benefit from some standardization in student advising.

FPU has an [Academic Success Center](#) (ASC) in which tutoring services are provided. (CFR 2.4) In addition, FPU provides career services to both current and former graduates. The Career Services department has developed a [PR](#) for department specific duties. (CFR 2.1)

Lastly, the quality of an FPU degree is verified through evaluation and conferral of a student's degree. The process for this is outlined in both the university catalog and under the graduation requirements outlined on the [Registrar's Office website](#). Degrees are evaluated for completion, and a determination is made that all requirements are met by the Registrar's Office based on the application for graduation in the [Academic Catalogs](#). (CFR 2.4)

3.4 Integrity

FPU degree programs maintain consistency and integrity through internal policies and processes. (CFR 4.1) These are clearly communicated to students, faculty, and staff using the academic catalog. (CFR 2.4) The academic catalog outlines degree program requirements for incoming freshmen and transfer students. The specific standards set for [transfer students](#) ensure these students have the appropriate course equivalencies to maintain the integrity of an FPU degree.

A typical indicator of quality and integrity of a degree is the fulfillment of disciplinary and competency needs of outside professional accreditors and agencies. These additional accreditations ensure our students have the qualifications needed for professional licensing and career success. Outside program [accreditation](#) is done by the [Council on Social Work Education Commission \(CSWEC\)](#), the [California Commission on Teacher Credentialing \(CTC\)](#), the [Commission on Accrediting of the Association of Theological Schools \(ATS\)](#), and the [Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education \(CCNE\)](#). As of January 2021, the School of Business entered candidacy status with the [Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs \(ACBSP\)](#).

3.4.1 Integrity Through Policy

The Registrar's Office has specific policies in place with respect to [degree requirements](#) listed in the academic catalog for bachelor's or master's degrees, as well as the [Credit Hour and Program Length Policy](#). (CFRs 2.1, 2.2) In addition, there are minimum and maximum requirements which help ensure students are meeting a standard set by accreditation and the university. (CFR 4.1)

3.4.2 Integrity Through Graduation and Persistence

The institution tracks and evaluates [graduation and persistence rates](#). (CFRs 2.7, 4.2) Accurately measuring and documenting completion outcomes demonstrates that students know the discipline because the institution has executed the matriculation contract. The matriculation contract is the [curriculum map](#) template located within all PRs and found in the academic catalog under degree requirements. In addition, certificate programs have the proper [gainful employment](#) disclosures listed. (CFR 2.7) FPU's Biblical Seminary addresses a different set of [disclosures](#), but with similar data.

Graduation and retention data records were reviewed by inquiry circle members. All reports are located on the Disclosure Documents webpage. Each report contains detailed data including the total



number of students, gender, race, and ethnicity. (CFR 2.7) However, a more prominent and easily accessible means of accessing these records may be valuable, such as dashboards.

[Alumni data reports](#) (which are outlined in further detail in s. 5.6) analyze how students are doing after graduation. [Alumni six-month surveys](#) are sent to students six months after graduation. These surveys assess student job placement in relation to their career field, salary scales, and various additional factor with relation to graduate success. Student success in career placement is summarized in a variety of ways. The alumni data reports show 50-71% graduates were employed full-time six months after graduation from FPU in the years 2013-2018. Information gathered from these surveys is reported to WSCUC, US News and World Report, and external accrediting bodies such as the ATS, CTC, and CCNE. (CFR 2.7)

3.5 Reflection

Fresno Pacific University is commended for providing a fruitful, coherent, and rigorous educational experience. The institution is rich in diversity, community engagement, and Christian foundations. Students embody the Fresno Pacific Idea and grow during their time at FPU to become committed members of the community.

The inquiry circle also makes the following recommendations. First, as an institution, the DQP needs to be implemented in a systemic institution-wide effort, with faculty, PD, and dean involvement. Training and external support for the DQP may be necessary to enhance institutional connection to PSLOs, Bloom's Taxonomy measures, and USLOs. Second, FPU needs to review and re-evaluate admissions and advising practices. Some inconsistencies across the university and in treatment of TUG and accelerated DC student populations were observed, creating silos even though they lead to one undergraduate degree. Third, the inquiry circle recommends the development of a disclosure dashboard to provide a visual representation of FPU's current graduation, retention, and diversity statistics and enhance the continuity and accuracy of information disseminated across the university. These dashboards are now in the planning stage.



COMPONENT 4 - EDUCATIONAL QUALITY: STUDENT LEARNING, CORE COMPETENCIES, AND STANDARDS OF PERFORMANCE AT GRADUATION (CFRs 1.1-1.8, 2.1-2.14, 4.6)

4.1 Introduction

The [mission](#) of FPU (CFR 1.1) is to educate students for service and leadership. Student learning to accomplish this mission is measured through [USLOs](#) and [PSLOs](#) (CFR 1.2) in summative assignments and other measures. The mission, learning outcome reports, persistence and graduation rates, and other [disclosures](#) are publicly available. (CFRs 1.3-1.8)

4.2 Student Learning

4.2.1 Undergraduate Curriculum

Undergraduate student learning is structured around a breadth General Education (GE), depth study of a discipline (major), and electives or minors. GE incorporates lower and upper division courses. Majors scaffold curriculum and specify lower division or GE coursework germane to the major. Majors utilize several approaches to provide specialization, offer student choice, and maximize curricular resources. These include emphases, core plus major electives, and distribution. Capstone courses, seminars, projects, or theses are included in majors. Majors are developed with PSLOs linked to USLOs that provide the framework for course outcomes. These are stated in [program proposals](#), [PRs](#), and syllabi (CFR 2.4) which are discussed in more detail below. The accelerated DC program utilizes a prescribed sequencing of cohort courses. Curriculum maps designate introductory, reinforcing, and summative levels for courses.

The GE program has two variations, one for students in [traditional programs](#) and another in [accelerated programs](#). Each pattern includes core and distribution requirements. The size of the core is different between the two patterns. The distribution requirements have minimal differences. GE distribution requirements are closely aligned with public colleges and universities using the CSU GE pattern and Associate Degree for Transfer (ADTs) in order to enhance smooth [articulation](#) of courses and completion of degrees. (CFRs 2.2, 2.14) GE PSLOs include the WSCUC core competencies (CFR 2.2a) plus institutional distinctives linked to university identity and mission in [TUG](#) and accelerated [DC](#) GE. General Education does not currently include a capstone course, though the [GE Revision](#) process is considering a unified GE program and adoption of a capstone. (CFR 2.2a)



Courses in each undergraduate major follow a four-year completion plan with new [three-year options](#) being developed. (CFRs 2.10, 2.14) Three [graduation guarantees](#) are offered: Two-Year Transfer Guarantee for ADT Pathways, Two-Year Degree Completion Guarantee, and a Four-Year Traditional Graduation Guarantee. (CFR 2.14)

4.2.2 Graduate Curriculum

[Graduate program](#) learning outcomes are derived from a combination of the FPU mission, USLOs, and professional and subject areas. Numerous programs meet additional accreditation requirements, such as the CTC in School of Education, ATS in Seminary, and CCNE in Nursing. [Program entrance](#) requirements are appropriate for graduate study. Degree programs have appropriate minimum entrance, unit, and average GPA requirements for graduate programs. Culminating experience options include a master's thesis, master's project, comprehensive examination, capstone courses, or a combination of these. These foster engagement with the literature of the field and create an expectation of scholarship and professional practice, as set out in the [Graduate Academic Catalog](#). Program and course designs are appropriate to degrees offered and reviewed regularly. Workload outside of class is 50% higher than undergraduate, with graduate set at forty-five hours per unit. (CFRs 2.2b, 2.5, 2.11, 2.12)

4.2.3 Faculty

Faculty maintain expected levels of pedagogical proficiency, content knowledge, scholarship, advising, and student interaction. These criteria are outlined in the [2021 Faculty Handbook](#) chapters 3-4, 6-8, and demonstrated in [sabbatical applications](#) (discussed in further detail under s. 6.3), and [recommendations for tenure](#). (CFRs 2.1, 2.8, 2.9)

4.2.4 Co-Curricular and Support Units

Co-curricular and support units, the [ASC](#), academic advising, [ALAS Intercultural Learning Center](#), [Athletics](#), [Career Development](#), [Disability Services](#), [Health Services](#), [Hiebert Library](#), [Office of Spiritual Formation & Diversity \(OSFD\)](#), [On-Site Counseling](#), [Housing and Commuter Life](#), [student clubs](#), [Student Financial Services](#), and [Veterans Services](#) are critical partners in student learning and care. Each department has an established [plan](#) and either has or is in the process of developing an assessment plan. (CFRs 2.11, 2.13) The ASC has worked with faculty to integrate their [services](#) into course assignments for freshmen to help them become aware of these services and break down barriers that might keep them from



utilizing them. Hiebert Library has redesigned its website to provide excellent resources including [Library Guides](#), [Information Literacy](#), as well as providing training sessions on the use of the library and basic information literacy for classes. The Career Services Director has partnered with faculty to teach a [college transitions course](#) for transfer students focused on connecting majors to career paths. The [Retention Committee](#) brings together faculty and staff from numerous departments to identify strengths and weaknesses and address issues affecting undergraduate retention. The Office of Spiritual Formation and Diversity (OSFD) partners with educational programming by offering opportunities for spiritual development, cross-cultural programming, and service opportunities central to the university's religious identity. (CFRs 2.11, 2.13)

FPU is moving towards a new generation of [assessment of administrative units](#) with an interim draft policy. Pilots are being run in the Registrar's Office, the ASC, and the Hiebert Library beginning July 1, 2021.

4.3 Core Competency University Learning Outcomes

4.3.1 Course and Program Level Outcomes

Course-level standards for performance are tied to Course Student Learning Outcomes (CSLOs). CSLOs, standards for performance, and evaluation methods are set by department or program faculty. CSLOs are stated in syllabi along with the grading system and descriptions of planned assessments of student work in order to communicate standards of performance to students clearly and consistently as shown in [syllabi audits](#). (CFRs 2.3, 2.4)

All degree PSLOs are identified in the catalog, and criteria are set for success. (CFRs 2.3, 2.4) Program faculty review the standards for CSLOs for their courses. PDs develop and evaluate curricular programs and plans, which include standards of performance and consideration of the appropriateness of measures of CSLOs and PSLOs, and interpretation and follow-up on data in the [Annual Assessment Reports](#) (AARs). The information is included in PRs but is not always used in decision-making. GE learning outcomes data for this review is embedded within the USLO assessment data for undergraduates. Suitable summative courses are not currently available in GE and early attempts at measurement relied too heavily on introductory level courses. The high percentage of courses transferred in to meet general education



requirements also necessitates using data from summative program courses linked to USLOs. The current [GE Revision](#) plan includes the addition of a summative experience where GE outcomes can be measured.

4.3.2 University Level Outcomes

The FPU mission of developing students for leadership and service is accomplished through the USLOs which are published in the catalog. (CFRs 2.2a, 2.2b) The [USLOs map to the DQP](#) which demonstrates the presence of standard outcomes with the potential to compare FPU student performance to other institutions. (CFR 1.2)

The ten USLOs are on a ten-year review schedule by the Assessment Committee with two USLOs being reviewed each year and recommendations being evaluated in the second half of the cycle, as outlined in Appendix G of the [Institutional Effectiveness Assessment Manual](#). (CFRs 2.4, 2.6) The Assessment Committee includes national surveys and/or standardized tests that allow for comparison, especially the NSSE and the California Critical Thinking Skills Test (CCTST).

Quantitative data for USLO performance is derived from program summative assessment rubrics connected to PSLOs which are in turn linked with USLOs. Program faculty determine the linkages between PSLOs and USLOs with guidance from the OIE. Rubrics are scored in eLumen, FPU's Assessment Management System (AMS). The 2013 Commission letter recommended using assessment findings to define standards of performance and inform changes and improvements in student learning. Program reviews demonstrate consistent use of performance data. (CFR 2.7) However, four concerns surfaced during this review of USLOs. First, this “program up” approach has not been accompanied by a complementary “university-wide down” review process by committees dedicated to each USLO to determine whether appropriate linkages have been made and whether rubrics reflect definitions of the USLOs. A [review](#) of [rubric lines](#) and [USLO-PSLO linkages](#) by the inquiry circle raised some questions about the appropriateness of both linkages and rubric lines particularly since rubric lines are frequently connected to multiple USLOs. (CFR 1.2) The distinctiveness of the USLO can be blurred or lost and some rubric lines do not match the USLO definition even when appearing as the sole USLO being measured. The result is that while there is useful data, there is decreased confidence in the accuracy and usefulness of the data about any specific USLO. Rubrics specific to each USLO are needed. Second, the university AARs have noted instances of potential equity gaps, but the [recommendations](#) have largely focused on assessment.

Establishing oversight groups dedicated to specific USLOs should be considered to increase the quality and use of data to identify and address equity gaps. Third, course-embedded assessment without multiple raters or norming of raters results in an absence of inter-rater reliability. Some programs utilize norming of raters, but the practice is not consistently applied. Fourth, disaggregation of the data into ethnicity and gender frequently results in a [small "n"](#) that has greater potential for skewing performance levels and making it difficult to assess equity gaps or changes in gaps. (CFR 2.4) Categories of $n < 30$ are more prominent with TUG males and in ethnic groups other than Hispanic/Latinx and White. Black or African Americans did not appear in the data for fall 2018 to spring 2020, likely because they might not be part of any summative course being measured. Additional measures or data triangulation is needed. If possible, the "Unknown" category needs to be reduced in both gender and ethnicity.

The five core competencies are integrated throughout the curriculum from GE through to graduate courses. There are specific introductory courses in oral and written communication and quantitative reasoning. Notwithstanding the four concerns raised above, programs have worked to address perceived equity gaps. Many have instituted an advanced written communication course in the major. Critical Thinking and Information Literacy are widely embedded throughout the curriculum. Three grants for supporting first-generation, low-income, and/or Hispanic undergraduate students have raised STEM retention by [8%](#), increased STEM transfer graduation in two-year enrolled students by [25%](#), and provided the ALAS Center with support for this population.

The inquiry circle conducted an [analysis](#) of assessment data from spring 2018 to spring 2020 (5 undergraduate and 8 graduate terms) to determine trends in relation to the university AARs for each USLO. There are four levels for each PSLO: "does not meet" (DNM), "approaches" (A), "meets" (M), and "exceeds" (E). Institutionally, the goal is that 90% "meets" plus "exceeds" (M+E) in summative courses. The results are as follows:

1. Oral Communication (USLO 1): No clear patterns emerged of ethnic groups consistently not meeting the benchmark, but males showed a greater tendency to miss it. NSSE data for [2016](#) and [2019](#) showed perceived gains among seniors in speaking clearly and effectively (81% to 84%). (CFR 2.2a)

2. Written Communication (USLO 2): The frequency of non-White populations that fall below the university benchmark indicates potential dual-language issues or lack of mastery of basic academic writing

conventions. The creation of the Advanced Academic Writing Lab COM-210 was a response to perceived problems of writing in majors. The [ASC](#) has also increased its outreach to accelerated DC and GRAD students. NSSE data for 2016 and 2019 showed that seniors perceived gains in writing clearly and effectively (81% to 88%). (CFR 2.2a) Writing faculty have consistently engaged colleagues to find ways to support them. The relative consistency of rubrics for writing is in large degree due to their efforts.

3. Critical Thinking (USLO 5): This USLO yielded the highest number of disaggregated categories that were below the M+E=90% benchmark. The frequency across populations who fall below the university benchmark makes it difficult to determine whether ethnicity plays a role in educational mastery of critical thinking. The absence of more low scores in accelerated DC populations may be due to the low number of courses involved in measuring USLO 5. The CAT (Critical Thinking and Assessment Test) and CCTST data point to increased achievement from freshmen to senior years distributed evenly across gender and ethnicities. NSSE data for 2016 and 2019 showed strong average scores concerning Higher Order Learning. Some 90% of participating seniors perceived gains in thinking critically and analytically. (CFR 2.2a) Data from the CAT, CCTST, and perceptions from NSSE appear at odds with lower scores in course-embedded assessments. An apparent lack of clarity about what should be included as critical thinking manifests in problems with rubrics that drive institutional data.

4. Quantitative Reasoning (USLO 9): The prevalence of groups with a low “n” who did not meet the benchmark prevents drawing definitive conclusions or suggestions for improvement. Students, however, had strong self-perceptions about their quantitative reasoning. The 2019 NSSE data showed that compared to first-year students and seniors attending other CCCU schools, the averages for both FPU student groups were significantly higher.

5. Information Literacy (USLO 10): The prominence of undergraduate males not achieving benchmarks indicates a need to focus attention on this group. Widespread distribution of ethnic groups who did not meet the benchmark raises the question whether this is, in part, due to the high percentage of males not reaching the benchmark. Another question to pursue is the possible effect of the high level of first-generation students in the undergraduate population. Students, however, had strong self-perceptions about their strengths in information literacy. The 2019 NSSE data showed a difference of twelve percentage points for



seniors with respect to evaluating a point of view, decision, or information source in favor of FPU over other CCCU schools. (CFR 2.2a)

Other University Learning Outcomes are outlined here:

6. Content Knowledge (USLO 3): Scores for the TUG population ranged between 64.8% and 77.4% in four semesters. Widespread distribution of ethnic groups who did not meet the benchmark suggest this is, in part, due to lower overall achievement rather than a function of gender or ethnicity.

7. Reflection (USLO 4): The GRAD male, Unknown gender, and GRAD Unknown ethnicity categories showed lower achievement. The 2019 NSSE data shows improved scores for first-year students since 2013 and 2016 and on par with comparable institutions. (CFR 2.2a) The scores for seniors have decreased but remain above scores of comparable institutions.

8. Moral Reasoning (USLO 6): Males failed to reach the benchmark more frequently than females in TUG and accelerated DC. The scores with n<30 were concentrated in TUG and GRAD ethnic demographics, making it difficult to uncover reliable patterns.

9. Service (USLO 7): The scores with n<30 with M+E<90% were concentrated in TUG and in the majority of non-White ethnic demographics. This made it difficult to uncover reliable patterns in those areas.

10. Cultural and Global Perspective (USLO 8): TUG and accelerated DC males had numerous scores substantially under the benchmark. The scores with n<30 with M+E<90% were concentrated in TUG and GRAD ethnic categories making those areas difficult to uncover reliable patterns. The 2019 NSSE report showed significantly higher scores than peer institutions concerning “Discussions with Diverse Others” for first year and senior TUG students. (CFR 2.2a) The adequacy of the rubric lines being used to assess the USLO is one concern. Another concern is whether “discussions with diverse others” translates into learning that is measured in summative assessments.

4.4 Standards of Performance at Graduation

The 2013 Commission letter noted a decline in graduation rates, especially amongst Black or African Americans and males, and recommended plans to improve graduation and retention. FPU currently works with RNL to coordinate, track, and improve [retention](#) and graduation rates. (CFR 2.10) The five- and six-year graduation rates for TUG students have risen back to around 60%. Previously declining rates for Black or African Americans, Asians, and Non-Resident Aliens have significantly improved. Retention of

males in accelerated DC programs lags behind females but with a much smaller separation. Rates for Black or African Americans in accelerated DC also show a lower graduation rate than other groups. GRAD males tend to have higher graduation rates than females. GRAD Black or African American [completion rates](#) are also on par with other ethnic groups. (CFRs 2.10, 4.6)

The [TUG Retention Committee](#) meets regularly to identify and coordinate strategies to identify and coordinate strategies. A new accelerated DC Retention Committee has been formed. [Sunbird Support](#), a program using Pharos 360, was introduced in 2020 to improve the alert and support system used to coordinate faculty and campus services for the TUG population, which connects students to the appropriate support service. It allows staff and faculty members to be connected to individual students immediately, while maintaining confidentiality of student issues being raised which could lead to students failing or dropping out. Previously, staff and faculty simply would not be directly involved regarding issues around a student's well-being.

4.5 Reflection

The inquiry circle commends FPU on its overall educational quality in terms of quality of student learning, core competencies, and standards at graduation. The following are the recommendations:

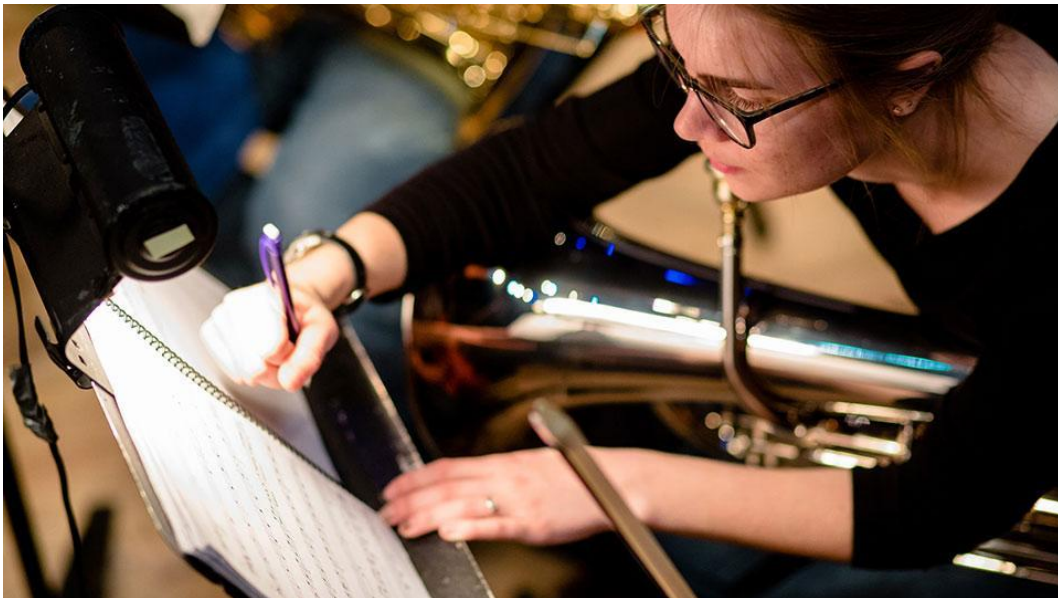
General

- Identify an oversight group for each USLO.
- Develop assessment tools and processes unique to each USLO (to avoid lack of focus in rubrics).
- Devise or revise rubrics to measure each specific USLO.
- Find methods to reduce the number of "Unknown" in gender and ethnicity.

USLO Specific Summary

- **USLO 1:** 1) increase the number of assessments in accelerated DC and GRAD; and 2) observe trends in the performance of males related to USLO 1.
- **USLO 2:** continue creating and refining writing support efforts for non-White populations across all populations.
- **USLO 3:** 1) research reasons and possible corrective actions for high instances of TUG not reaching the benchmark; 2) explore possible reasons for variations between TUG and accelerated DC populations; 3) consider triangulation with standardized exams related to fields of study where applicable.
- **USLO 4:** research reasons and possible corrective actions for high instances of GRAD males not reaching the benchmark.
- **USLO 5:** continue utilizing external standardized tests, such as CAT and CCTST, and broaden the use to more populations.
- **USLO 6:** research reasons and possible corrective actions for higher instances of undergraduate males not reaching the benchmark.
- **USLO 7:** explore whether this is a unique category that can be measured more broadly to have improved reliability.
- **USLO 8:** explore reasons for remedies for the discrepancies between TUG students, particularly males, between NSSE scores and course-embedded assessments.

- **USLO 9:** increase mechanisms and populations for measuring performance.
- **USLO 10:** 1) research reasons and possible corrective actions for high instances of undergraduate males not reaching the benchmark; 2) explore possible reasons for discrepancy between assessment measures and student perceptions of strength; 3) analyze information literacy practices in courses.



COMPONENT 5 - STUDENT SUCCESS: RETENTION, GRADUATION, AND STUDENT LEARNING (CFRs 1.1-1.8, 2.1, 2.10, 4.1-4.3)

5.1 Introduction

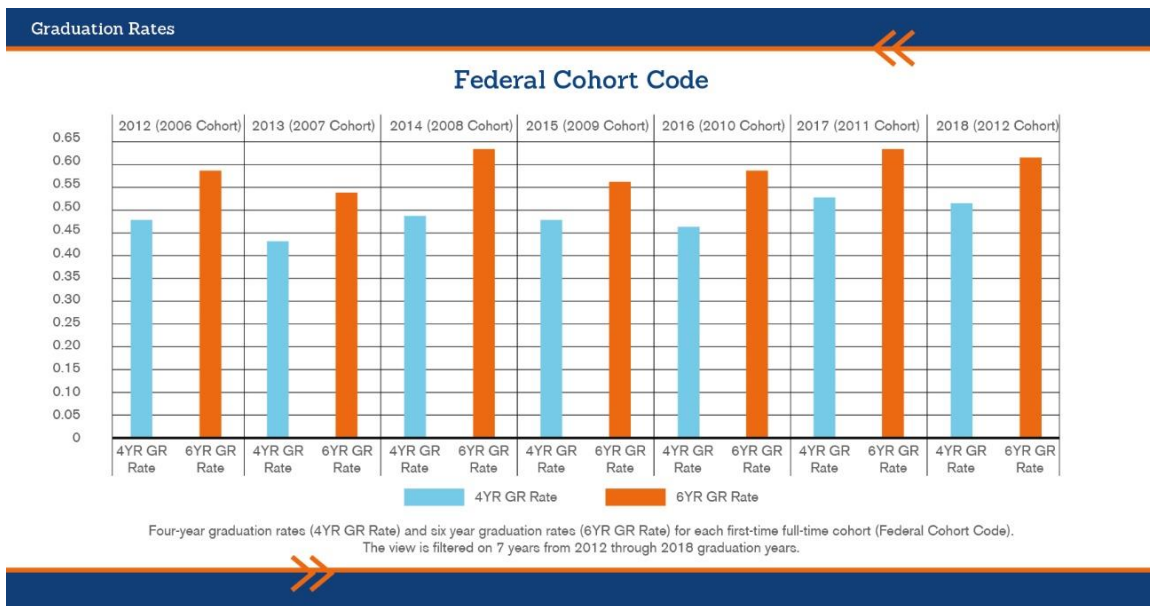
The student success inquiry circle examined the three critical elements of this component. The following will outline the evidence of student success at FPU in terms of retention, graduation, and student learning.

5.2 Student Success Defined

Definitions of Student Success (SS) at FPU are multi-dimensional. The mission statement says that the university “develops students for leadership and service through excellence in Christian higher education.” The [TUG Retention Plan](#) emphasizes “student achievement of his or her unique educational goals; used by institutions...as a collective reference to student retention and graduation.” (CFR 1.1)

5.3 Retention and Graduation

At FPU key indicators of student success are regularly measured and analyzed with the goal of improving it for all populations. Overall graduation rates are generally increasing:



This ongoing process of measurement and analysis has created improvements in data gathering, more granular disaggregation of data, and new student success initiatives. (CFRs 2.1, 4.1) Four primary data sources are used to inform FPU’s work in retention and graduation:

- The Office of Institutional Research (OIR) creates retention and graduation [disclosure documents](#) that provide data disaggregated by population (TUG, accelerated DC, GRAD), gender, and ethnicity. (CFRs 1.7, 4.1)
- RNL provides [retention data](#) for TUG to the retention task force, enrollment team, student financial services, and the President's Cabinet. (CFR 2.10) The information provided includes disaggregation by ethnicity, academic department, athlete/non-athlete, financial aid awards, estimated family income, residential/commuter status, and prior academic achievement. (CFRs 1.2, 1.4, 4.2)
- The Director of Student Persistence conducts [exit interviews](#) with TUG students who have recently voluntarily withdrawn. This provides important data about student experiences and satisfaction for those who are not retained. (CFRs 1.6, 4.1)
- The Retention Task Force creates a [retention dashboard](#) (CFR 2.10) for TUG students and has begun developing one for accelerated DC students. The data is disaggregated by first-time/full-time or full-time transfers, gender, athletes, ethnicity, and high-risk indicators such as first-generation status, low socio-economic status, and prior academic achievement. This data is drafted into an executive report [TUG Retention Plan](#) and provided to the President's Cabinet for review and planning for student success. (CFRs 2.10, 4.1)

Persistence and graduation rates are disaggregated and reviewed by population (first-time or transfer), gender, ethnicity, financial aid awards, estimated family income, residential/commuter status, and prior academic achievement. (CFR 2.10) The inquiry circle analyzed an eight-year [data set](#) for TUG and GRAD students, and a seven-year analysis for accelerated DC. In accelerated DC, new students [enroll](#) in each six-week session, but data for retention was gathered only on a semester basis. Therefore, in 2018 the Retention Committee began piloting new algorithms to more accurately capture the retention of this population, improving detail but disrupting comparisons. (CFRs 4.1, 4.2) Some highlights of summative conclusions from the analyses are as follows:

- TUG first-year full-time student [persistence rate](#) for fall 2020 (75%) is above the national average (71%) for like institutions.
- TUG four-year graduation rate (57%) and six-year graduation rate (67%) [surpass](#) the national [average](#) of both public and private four-year universities.
- Transfer students have a 9.1% greater first-year [persistence rate](#) than first-time students at FPU.
- Disaggregated first-year retention rates show the populations with the lowest [retention](#) rates are first-generation, low socioeconomic status, Black or African American, and students identified during enrollment as academically underprepared.
- FPU categorizes applicants into four tiers of academic preparation and previous performance. Unlike first-year students, the least [persisting](#) group among transfers are those in the second highest academically prepared group—not the least prepared group.
- Fall-to-spring [retention](#) for first-time accelerated DC students is equal to the fall-to-spring retention for TUG first-year and transfer students.

The WSCUC Graduation Rate Dashboard Comparative Tool (which was [discontinued](#) in December 2020) shows FPU on the median (84%) for California institutions on average unit retention rate and just below the median (57.2% vs 58%) for average six-year FTFT graduation rate for 2013-2017. However, with

respect to the average absolute graduation rate, FPU shines at 76.8%, well over the median of 71%, a particularly commendable success given FPU demographics of poor and at-risk students.

The data reports listed above have shed light on opportunities to promote student success by various institutional departments, and helped shape three of the university's [Strategic Priorities](#). (CFRs 1.1, 1.2, 4.3) The following lists some sample action highlights:

- A review of exit interview data prompted the acquisition of student retention software, Sunbird Support - Pharos 360 (discussed in detail in s. 4.4). Early reports show a significant increase in the number of students receiving timely professional support.
- The TUG ethnicity retention data helped prompt the creation of the Students on Academic Requirement ([SOAR Program](#)) for academically underprepared first-year students (piloted fall 2019-fall 2020; launched spring 2021). This program has brought about a 19.8% increase in first semester course pass rates. This program is discussed in further depth below.
- This data has been drafted into an [executive report](#) and provided to the President's Cabinet for decision-making. This Retention Plan supported the implementation of a revised student diversity office which was launched spring 2020.
- Regular review and analysis of data by the Retention Task Force led to the discovery of the flaw in data collection methods for the accelerated DC population. As a result, data collection methods have been improved as of fall 2019.

5.4 High Quality Learning

5.4.1 The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)

NSSE results provide evidence of student success with quality learning. (CFR 1.7, 4.1) For example, the [2019 NSSE snapshot](#) shows the following areas exceeding comparative schools:

- Rigor: Regarding Higher-Order Learning (i.e., application, analysis, evaluation, forming new ideas/understanding), first-year FPU students were similar to those attending comparison CCCU schools. However, FPU seniors were significantly higher ($p > .05$) than those attending comparison schools.
- Faculty Interaction: Regarding instructors providing feedback to seniors on drafts/works in progress, FPU was 15% higher than comparison schools.
- HIPs: More first-year students attending FPU participated in two or more HIPs (12%) than those attending comparison schools (11%).
- Service Learning: Regarding courses that included a community-based project (i.e., service learning), FPU seniors were 15% higher than those attending comparison schools.

5.4.2 Program Reviews

At FPU the quality of student learning is assessed university-wide through the university [AARs](#) and programmatically in the seven-year cycle of PRs. In the last three years, eight programs submitted [PRs](#) and these were analyzed for evidence of student success. (CFR 4.1)

The circle found that FPU programs are tracking, often in detailed charts in section four of the PRs, the matching of CSLOs to program PSLOs. CLSOs were linked to PSLOS in 88% of PRs. PRs also

disaggregate student data by gender and ethnicity/race in section four. The [Biology Program](#), for example, found no significant differences based on gender or ethnicity on one of their primary assessments, the Educational Testing Service Major Field Achievement Test. The [English Program](#) found that overall, females outperformed males and Whites outperformed Hispanics; the program subsequently sought interventions with surveys and a new course, Hispanic Literature. Ample evidence shows that PDs are evaluating their courses and student satisfaction to make improvements. Program improvements included reordering of curricula, adding or improving courses to address a particular inequity, suggestions for focus groups, additional surveys, mentoring, tutoring and other interventions. The [Sociology Program](#) even compares the attainment of PSLOs to attainment of similar PSLOs at a comparable university; FPU had a 27% higher attainment rate.

Student satisfaction with attained learning is measured through the [NSSE](#) and end-of-course survey [IDEA](#). FPU student satisfaction met or exceeded the national benchmark for IDEA for the years 2013-2020 (except for the 2014-2015 year due to a technical error). Some examples of survey categories showing above-average student satisfaction include:

- Gaining a basic understanding of the subject (factual knowledge, methods, principles, generalizations, theories).
- Learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view.

Over the years, these objectives have increased in performance for students to indicate satisfaction in meeting the USLO. Another indicator of student success is career placement. About 70% of the PRs discussed strategies for career placement and provided data postgraduation. Most programs are proactive in providing internships and making connections to career services. However, there is no evidence of comprehensive data of students' careers for most PRs.

The inquiry circle also examined the PRs with respect to academic freedom (CFR 1.3) and religious interference. (CFR 1.5) Nothing was mentioned about either element.

5.4.3 Exemplary Programs

Four exemplary programs were selected by the inquiry circle from PRs in this three-year period as assessed by graduation/persistence rate, satisfaction rate, employment rate of alumni, and improvements made from a previous review:

- **TUG Biology**—for its 53-75% four-year graduation rate, excellent IDEA feedback, changes made based on a previous review, and high employment of alumni.
- **TUG Business**—for its 60% six-year graduation rate, connecting students with future employment, meeting or exceeding PSLOs, and follow through on recommendations.
- **TUG English**—for its 76% five-year graduation rate, 80-90% meeting or exceeding PSLOs, diversifying the curriculum, providing interventions for male students (two recommendations implemented), and employment opportunities for students.
- **Accelerated DC Business Management**—for its seven-year graduation rate of 54.3%; program growth from 226 in 2010 to 338 in 2017; graduating 386 students; and 54% alumni employed in business, 32% outside the industry, 7% in graduate school, and only 7% unemployed.

The [retention and graduation rates](#) between 2013-2020 show the following to be exemplary programs:

- **Accelerated DC programs Liberal Arts:** 83% graduation rate (111 students).
- **Early Childhood Development:** graduation rate 70% (64 students).
- **Organizational Leadership:** graduation rate 71% (31 students).
- **Accelerated DC Liberal Arts:** retention rate 90% (135 students).
- **TUG Social Work:** retention rate 79% (101 students).
- **TUG Psychology:** retention rate 77% (43 students).
- **Accelerated DC Organizational Leadership:** retention rate 83% (35 students).

5.4.4 Service and Leadership

The FPU Mission includes definitions of student success in service and leadership. A 2018 FPU employee [service hours audit](#) shows commitment to service and modeling for students. Of 153 responses (38% response rate), 75% reported service in church organizations, 47% in schools, and 47% in other community organizations, for a total of 12,830 service hours by university personnel for the previous twelve months. No university-wide tracking of student service learning was found; however, athletics and numerous courses, such as CP-152 College Transitions and Success, and ENV-150 Introduction to Environmental Studies require and track student service hours.

In addition to service, leadership is a defining characteristic of FPU student success. Numerous programs recruit and train students in leadership roles. For TUG students, these include first-year peer mentors, resident advisors, honor students (LEAD), student government, tutors, college newspaper editor and writers, supplemental instruction facilitators, and teaching and lab assistants. Student Life trains 90-100 students annually for leadership roles. In accelerated DC, each cohort chooses a representative who facilitates student/institutional communication, builds community, and mediates concerns. No outcome data was found for this latter item.

5.4.5 Support Systems

All incoming TUG students are assigned to a first year “collegium” that consists of fifteen students with one faculty/staff mentor and two peer mentors. The program consists of research-based success practices including reflection on self-knowledge, networking, success skills, service learning, and career assessment. In addition, the [SOAR Program](#) described earlier is FPU’s newest intervention to assist at-risk TUG students, designed to support students through one semester to gain academic success and increase overall student success. The Director of Admissions and/or the Admission Selection Committee require SOAR courses to promote student success, including LANG-170, COM-110A/B, MATH-110A/B, and College and Transitions and Success CP-152L. For example, in 2018, students required to take CP-152L were [80% successful](#) in achieving a GPA of 2.0 or better in their first semester, and 60% were retained. If a TUG student receives a warning or probation status, a student success contract is constructed and monitored by a Registrar’s Office Operations Coordinator.

Accelerated DC applicants who do not fully meet the admission qualifications can petition for consideration through the Graduate and Degree Completion Admissions office. Similar to TUG, it is recommended that accelerated DC students take certain courses created to respond to student needs: CP-150, LANG-170, COM-109 and/or COM-111. [Annual Assessments](#) that evaluate pre- and post-COM 109 writing samples show significant improvement in writing for those who take both pre- and post-assessment. However, the pre- and post-scores are available only for a low percentage of the course participants, and efforts are needed to procure more complete data.

Additionally, FPU support systems are effective in identifying students at risk for [satisfactory academic progress](#) (SAP) and supporting them. (CFRs 1.2, 1.6) FPU uses federal guidelines for SAP: GPA, pace, and time frame. Each academic level (TUG, Accelerated DC, Seminary, GRAD) has its own minimum cumulative GPA standards. After final grades are posted each semester, students who do not meet SAP standards are reported by the Registrar’s Office and notified. They are first placed on warning status. If standards are not met after one semester, students are disqualified from continuing and become ineligible for financial assistance. Students are allowed to appeal with guidelines outlined in the catalog. If the appeal is allowed, students are put on probation, requiring regular meetings with a major/department advisor who



approves an academic plan. [SAP data](#) is tracked for student success by total numbers disqualified each semester and by those returning to good standing. (CFRs 4.1, 4.3)

5.5 Co-Curricular Support of Success

5.5.1 Disability Access and Education

The office of Disability Access and Education (DAE) promotes equity of student success by providing accommodations and educating faculty on student needs. (CFR 1.4) To evaluate success, it monitors student usage of accommodations, including types of disabilities, types of accommodations, population (TUG, accelerated DC, GRAD), and campus location. [DAE data](#) is used to evaluate effectiveness of communication, inform faculty of student needs, and determine staffing, equipment, and software needs. Despite fluctuations in total university enrollment, the number of students using accommodations has steadily increased in the last six years. In 2018 the directorship was increased to full-time with a full-time assistant and student workers. (CFR 4.3) The DAE office also tracks and advises on facility and electronic accessibility needs and [projects](#).

5.5.2 Academic Success Center

The ASC promotes student success by tracking student usage of tutoring (both FPU and Net Tutor services) by population (TUG, accelerated DC, GRAD) and disaggregates by gender and ethnicity. The ASC also tracks [SSI](#) responses, which in 2019 indicated performance equivalent to comparative institutions and availability of tutoring services as an institutional strength. Significant changes in ASC services occurred in 2017-2018 in response to the needs of student populations (now including accelerated DC and GRAD student usage of services) and to create ease of scheduling. Data analysis showed increased student usage from 2016 to 2018 and in response, a full-time director and operations coordinator were hired. Student needs also drove the subscription to a third-party tutoring company (Net Tutor) to provide more tutoring availability on evenings and weekends for all student populations. (CFR 4.2) To eliminate inequities of access indicated by data, promotional information was increased to accelerated DC and GRAD PDs beginning fall 2017 and tutoring hours increased as indicated by student need. (CFRs 1.4, 4.3)

5.5.3 Advising

Results from RNL's [SSI](#) and [ASPS](#) are available on the intranet and announced to the community in [Squawk Box](#). (CFR 1.7) Students are trending towards higher [satisfaction with academic advising](#). (CFRs

2.10, 4.1) Advising and support services are rated strong relative to comparison schools. Some specific strengths from the 2019 [SSI](#) in which FPU surpasses the mean are:

- My academic advisor is knowledgeable about requirements in my major.
- My academic advisor is approachable.
- Academic support services adequately meet the needs of students.
- My academic advisor is concerned about my success as an individual.

5.6 Career Development and Placement Success

FPU's [Career Development and Experiential Learning Center](#) (CDEL) supports all students during enrollment and after graduation. CDEL has collected data for many years including a [PR in 2017](#). A change of leadership in fall 2018 updated the type of data collected. [Data for 2018-2019](#) and beyond showcase the number of individuals supported with detail specific to the designated population for each individual. Data shows the volume of students supported has increased significantly from the 2018/2019 AY to the 2020/2021 AY (currently in progress). Records also indicate students use resumé and cover letter services more than general counseling, work study, career exploration, and job/internship services. Reports further assess outreach effectiveness by correlating outreach numbers and type with student usage of various services. (CFR 4.1)

Evidence for career success is measured by the [alumni survey](#). (CFR 4.1) All alumni receive an anticipatory email followed by an invitation to complete a short, 15-question electronic survey. The Advancement Office encourages survey completion with three additional email requests and a final phone call if required. [Response rates](#) in the last eight years range between 33-59%. Student success in career placement is summarized in a variety of ways, such as the [Alumni Jobs Spreadsheet](#), intranet [dashboards](#) and the [College Score Card](#).

The alumni survey data results show that 50-71% graduates were employed full-time six months after graduation from 2013-2018. Of these, 73-80% were employed in their degree area. For example, of math graduates in those years, 62% responded to the survey and of those responding, 72% were employed in their field. The data report also shows a steady decline in alumni pursuing further education from 16% in 2014 to 6% in 2018, a trend that warrants further examination. Additionally, alumni employment by sector and wages are reported. Career data is used for PRs, marketing, and reporting internally and externally. (CFRs 1.6, 1.8)

5.7 Reflection

The inquiry circle makes the following commendations:

- FPU has a sustained focus on student outcomes. The collection, distribution, and analysis of retention and graduation data has increased, allowing at-risk groups to be identified and decision-making to be influenced.
- FPU has demonstrated commitment and innovation in support of SS, including reforming retention oversight, methods of data collection, and support programs.
- Overall, PRs are doing well at tracking and aggregating data by Ethnicity, Gender, Linkage of CSLOs to PSLOs, program retention, and graduation rates.
- From the PRs, it is clear that on almost every front FPU ranks higher in student success than comparable institutions.
- Assessment data had been hampered by a flawed system and FPU changed that system in 2018 (see [Art Program Review](#), p. 26).

The inquiry circle also offers the following recommendations:

- Multiple new initiatives will need tracking over a long period and ensure progress is made, specifically the SOAR program, student retention software, and career, alumni, and diversity offices, and Degree Completion data collection.
- More effective strategies for increasing success among students of color, particularly those identifying as Black or African American, need to be developed.
- For future PRs, there needs to be standardization and stricter monitoring of the inclusion of all necessary data, particularly from the IDEA surveys and career placement.
- Although gender and ethnicity data are tracked, there needs to be more analysis in PRs about findings and next steps, most PRs list data without considering relevant implications.
- To encourage more systematic tracking of career placement of students in the major, a specific category on this topic should be added to the [PR Template](#).
- A clear definition of student success particular to FPU should be developed and assessed, notably student outcomes in leadership and service.





COMPONENT 6 - QUALITY ASSURANCE AND IMPROVEMENT: PROGRAM REVIEW, ASSESSMENT, AND USE OF DATA AND EVIDENCE (CFRs 2.1-2.4, 2.6-2.8, 4.1-4.3, 4.4-4.7)

6.1 Introduction

FPU is committed to student success, and this is partially accomplished through quality assurance and improvement. Data pertinent to accountability and improvement were analyzed by this inquiry circle, and key findings are represented in this section. Any lack of data usage and/or noncompliance is acknowledged along with suggestions as to how to improve.

6.2 Program Review

Programs offered by FPU are subject to [systematic PR](#). The process includes, but is not limited to, analyses of student achievement of a program's learning outcomes; retention and graduation rates; results of licensing examination and placement; and, evidence from external constituencies such as [employers and professional organizations](#). (CFR 2.7) [Program reviews](#) include an evaluation of faculty teaching in a given program, allowing PDs to evaluate if it is adequately staffed by faculty qualified for the type and level of curriculum offered. (CFR 2.1) For example, graduate PRs show that each program employs at least one full-time faculty member and has a preponderance of faculty that hold the relevant terminal degree in the discipline. (CFR 2.2b) The OIE maintains [Program Review and Annual Assessment Status Reports](#) that indicate when PRs are due, as well as if and when they were completed. Regarding special accreditation, between 2017-2020, 14 School of Education programs were reviewed and reaccredited by the CTC, the Social Work program was accredited by CSWE, and the Master's of Science in Nursing program was reaccredited by CCNE.

The institution employs a deliberate set of quality-assurance processes in both academic and non-academic areas, including periodic PR and assessment of student learning. These processes include collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data; tracking learning results over time; using comparative data from external sources; and improving structures, services, processes, curricula, pedagogy, and learning results. (CFR 4.1)

The institution demonstrates that its graduates consistently achieve its stated learning outcomes and established standards of performance. It ensures that its expectations for student learning are embedded in the standards that faculty use to evaluate student work. Additionally, the institution has an



[assessment infrastructure](#) adequate to assess student learning at program and institution levels. (CFR 2.6) The [USLO Achievement and WSCUC Core Competency Reports](#) show that FPU systematically assesses the effectiveness of its programs as faculty engage with students in providing experiences that contribute to the achievement of the USLOs and WSCUC Core Competencies.

The university has institutional research capacity consistent with its purposes and characteristics. Data are disseminated internally and externally in a timely manner, and analyzed, interpreted, and incorporated in institutional review, planning, and decision-making. Periodic reviews are conducted to ensure the effectiveness of the institutional research function and the suitability and usefulness of the data generated. (CFR 4.2) For example, NSSE and RNL results, as well as curricular and co-curricular PRs, are [submitted to pertinent leaders](#). Although some data are used in planning the university budget, more evidence is needed to show that high-level administration incorporates this data in decision-making. A memorandum of understanding (MOU) was not included in the latest proposed PR template as per [WSCUC's 2013 Program Review Resource Guide](#), but it is scheduled to be added in August of 2021. Completion of [AARs or PRs](#) is not mandatory, though they are for the most part done. In some cases, release time and/or stipends had been given for the additional work, though they remained incomplete. The Faculty Handbook currently does not preclude PDs from receiving sabbaticals if assessment reports and PRs are not completed. According to the Program Review and Annual Assessment Status Report, there are some 21 academic programs that are an average of 17.6 years past due. FPU has, nevertheless, made tremendous progress in collecting PRs, and the goal is to have them up to date by 2022.

6.3 Assessment

Faculty are encouraged to incorporate Bloom's language, indicating the levels of student achievement necessary for graduation, which represents more than simply an accumulation of courses or credits. (CFR 2.2) Evidence of this language can be seen in the PSLOs listed in FPU's academic catalogs, [Undergraduate Syllabi](#), and [Graduate Syllabi](#).

As programs carry out assessments of student learning, a variety of strengths, challenges, and recommendations are identified. For example, in the TUG Business Administration program, [2016-2017 AAR for the TUG Business Administration](#) showed that students did not achieve the 90% benchmark for PSLO 1, indicating they were struggling with quantitative analysis. In response, the program recommended



that all business students study the accounting dimension and that incorporating quantitative analysis tools in more non-accounting courses would be beneficial.

The institution clearly defines expectations for research, scholarship, and creative activity for students and faculty. FPU actively values and promotes scholarship, creative activity, and curricular and instructional innovation, and their dissemination appropriate to the institution's purposes and character. Additionally, where appropriate, policies for faculty promotion and tenure recognize scholarship related to teaching, learning, assessment, and co-curricular learning. (CFR 2.8) For example, faculty were invited to attend the [Innovate 2020 Virtual Conference](#) to learn from academic leaders in the field and participate in critical conversations with colleagues from all disciplines. An internal professional development opportunity in support of research and scholarship is the [sabbatical](#) leave program (6.5 of the [2019 Faculty Handbook](#) and 7.12 of the [2021 Faculty Handbook](#)). Also, faculty salaries are administered with the goal of achieving equity both from internal and external perspectives while recognizing and rewarding individual faculty member contributions, achievements, and continuing professional development as per section 9. Faculty can also pursue tenure as per 3.5 of the [2021 Faculty Handbook](#).

6.4 Use of Data and Evidence

Leadership at all levels, including faculty, staff, and administration, aim to make improvements based on the results of inquiry, evidence, and evaluation. Assessment of teaching, learning, and the campus environment—in support of academic and co-curricular objectives—is undertaken, used for improvement, and incorporated into [institutional planning](#) processes. (CFR 4.3) [Targeted action checklists](#) show that these results were provided to decision makers and whether they actually engaged and acted upon them. Currently, only 9% of targeted NSSE reports have been completed, and only 6% of targeted RNL reports have been submitted.

The [institution's SLOs and standards of performance](#) are developed by faculty and widely shared among faculty, students, staff, and (where appropriate) external stakeholders. The institution's faculty take collective responsibility for establishing appropriate standards of performance and demonstrating through assessment the achievement of these standards. (CFR 2.4)

The SLOs and standards of performance are clearly stated at the course, program, and, as appropriate, institutional levels. These outcomes and standards are reflected in academic programs,



policies, and curricula, and aligned with advisement, library, information and technology resources, as well as the wider learning environment. Additionally, the institution is responsible for ensuring that out-of-class learning experiences, such as clinical work, service learning, and internships which receive credit, are adequately resourced, well-developed, and subject to appropriate oversight. (CFR 2.3) The [2019 NSSE administration](#) showed first-year students and seniors specifically engaged three [USLOs](#): Critical Thinking, Reflection, and Quantitative Reasoning.

Several campus departments maintain and uphold learning outcomes and performance standards, particularly Academic Cabinet as set out in 2.5.A of the [2021 Faculty Handbook](#). [Academic Catalogs](#) published by the Registrar's Office include the institution's SLOs and standards of performance. The Faculty Senate in particular is "the chief deliberative body of the faculty" (2.6.B of the [2019 Faculty Handbook](#) and 2.6.A of the [2021 Faculty Handbook](#)) and regularly discuss learning outcomes and performance standards. The University Assessment Committee (2.4.B.1 of the [2019 Faculty Handbook](#) and 2.5.E of the [2021 Faculty Handbook](#)) prepares reports that analyze learning outcomes and performance standards.

The [Program Review Fiscal Needs Analysis](#) demonstrates that since 2010, at least 39 academic program recommendations were made and 56% (n=22) were approved for planning and resource allocation. The building of the Warkentine Cultural and Arts Center is a good indicator that the institution takes into consideration trends within the institution and the higher education environment as part of its planning and resource allocation. (CFR 4.7)

The institution has institutional research capacity consistent with its purposes and characteristics. Data is disseminated internally and externally in a timely manner, and analyzed, interpreted, and incorporated in institutional review, planning, and decision-making. Periodic reviews are conducted to ensure the effectiveness of the institutional research function and the suitability and usefulness of the data generated. (CFR 4.2) The university's PR process, which contains student achievement data in addition to data provided by OIR, is reviewed against the [WSCUC Program Review Rubric](#) to [ensure](#) its efficacy. It is also regularly updated and improved by the Director of Assessment reformatting the PR template per comments and observations gathered from WSCUC, NILOA, and informal conversations with PDs. This reformatted template is then presented to the Associate Provost and to the PDs. After pertinent revisions are made, the proposed PR template is presented for approval to the Academic Cabinet.



The university's data requests are processed through Salesforce and submitted using a digital webform. The [annual collection of data requests](#) is then reviewed by the Director of IR at the beginning of the following year. The information gleaned from this exercise informs IR's public disclosure documents. IR also conducts an overall [Records and Research Assessment](#) which includes data about the readily available information and satisfaction with IR, as well as the level of confidence in the data provided. The assessment conducted every 4-5 years will be conducted again in 2021.

The institution periodically engages its multiple constituencies, including the governing Board of Trustees, faculty, staff, and others, in institutional reflection and planning processes. These processes assess the institution's strategic position, articulate priorities, examine the alignment of its purposes, core functions, and resources, and define the future direction of the institution. (CFR 4.6) The [Strategic Map](#) describes FPU's vision to transform "California's Central Valley and global communities through exemplary service to students of all ethnicities and cultures" and foster "innovative programs [that] encourage academic and professional excellence, peacemaking, social justice, ethical leadership, holistic wellness, and spiritual vitality." In support of the [WSCUC Equity and Inclusion Policy](#), PR tracks and analyzes the educational achievement of distinct groups of students and acts to close gaps between groups over time by asking PDs to identify the profile of students in the program and how the profile relates to or enhances the mission and goals of the program. Program review also enables PDs to report how their programs are innovative as well as how their programs encourage academic and professional excellence. Additionally, appropriate stakeholders, including employers, practitioners, and others designated by the institution, are regularly [involved](#) in the assessment and alignment of educational programs. (CFR 4.5)

To help transform the Central Valley, FPU participates in the Central Valley Higher Education Consortium ([CVHEC](#)), a group comprised of accredited public and private colleges, universities, and community college district members. Focusing on many education projects, FPU's direct involvement is supporting students in dual enrollment, guided pathways, ADT completion and integrated K-16 systems. This has allowed community stakeholders to speak into the development and alignment of programs at FPU. In addition, this work has led to FPU's involvement in the Developing the Regions' Inclusive and Vibrant Economy ([DRIVE](#)) initiative, a ten-year community investment plan focused on economic development, human capital, and neighborhood development led by a coalition of community leaders,



educators, and businesses. As part of the executive committee, FPU helped to identify high-impact projects and was tasked to lead in developing the expanding Teacher Workforce project. FPU's involvement opened the opportunity to submit a proposal for funding in four different areas: pathways to accounting, engineering, and STEM teachers, as well as funding to provide support for Math and English teachers to obtain their master's to teach dual enrollment. As a result, some funding was received for the proposal and with the ongoing collaboration from the CVHEC and DRIVE initiative, program design along with assessment and alignment are being continuously informed by stakeholders.

6.5 Reflection

The inquiry circle commends FPU on its quality assurance achievements and culture of evidence. FPU continues its tradition as a role model institution, which is evident throughout this section of the self-study. The institution has a few challenges related to quality assurance and improvement. Therefore, the following recommendations are made:

- All co-curricular programs should pursue eLumen participation by 2024 allowing them to engage the required seven-year cyclical PR process by 2026. (CFRs 2.7, 4.1)
- The "New Course Proposal Pathway" should include collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data or using comparative data from external sources immediately. (CFR 4.1)
- The Faculty Handbook should address the required completion of all elements in PRs and annual assessment reports by pertinent faculty member(s) by the 2023-2024 AY. (CFRs 2.7, 4.5)
- Beginning with the 2023-2024 AY, all entities receiving targeted assessment results and requests for action plans from OIE, such as related to NSSE and RNL are to be completed. (CFR 4.3)
- The MOU, as per WSCUC's Program Review Resource Guide, should be integrated into the PR template for both curricular and co-curricular programs in time for the 2023 PR cycle. (CFR 4.3)

COMPONENT 7 - SUSTAINABILITY, FINANCIAL VIABILITY, AND PREPARING FOR THE CHANGING HIGHER EDUCATION ENVIRONMENT (CFRs 3.1 – 3.5, 3.8, 3.10, 4.7)

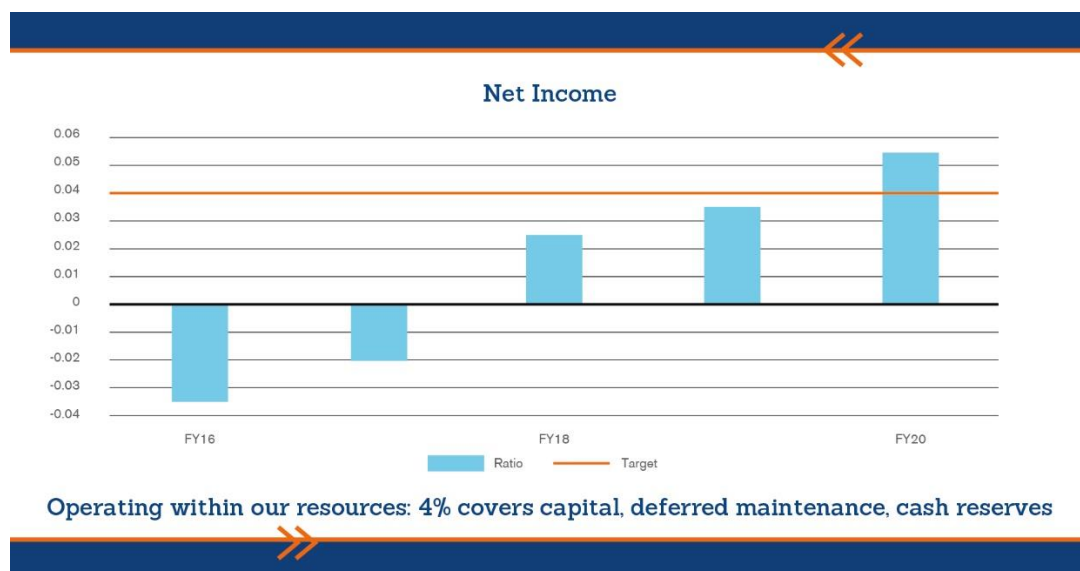
7.1 Introduction

FPU has grown financially stronger over the last five years for several reasons. The Financial Sustainability inquiry circle explored and analyzed the evidence regarding financial viability and preparing for the changing educational environment.

7.2 Operations

7.2.1 Financial Status

Driven by increasing overall enrollment, FPU's [key financial metrics](#) indicate increasing strength and stability. After small deficits in fiscal years (FY) 2016 and 2017, FPU finished with surpluses in the following three years, accompanied by increases in net assets without restrictions. The [net income ratio](#) reflects these, and though not consistently above the optimal 4%, it has been increasing. (CFR 3.4)



The primary reserve ratio is below the target of 0.4, reflecting a shortage of available cash. FPU started a cash reserve in FY 2018 and currently has a reserve of \$2M against a goal of \$10M. FPU is committed to achieving this. In the meantime, the institution arranged for an \$8M line of credit during the COVID pandemic, though this did not have to be used. FPU is also working to improve this ratio by continuing to strive for more substantial surpluses and by controlling expenses.

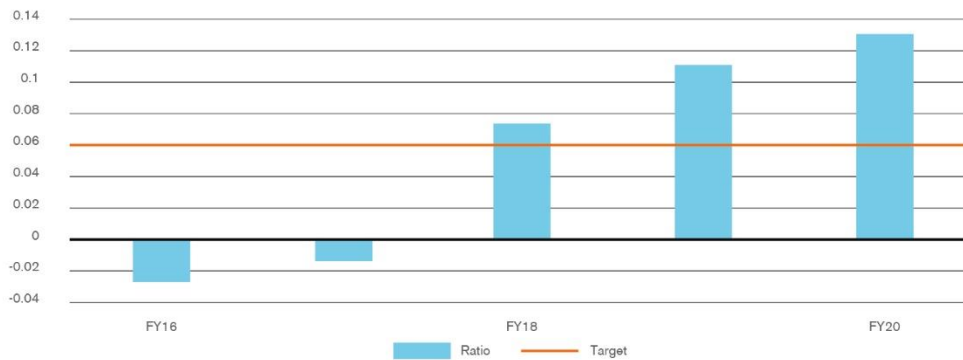
Primary Reserve



Resource sufficiency and flexibility - .4 covers 5 months expense

The return on net assets ratio is well above the 6% target in the last three years, reflecting the recent surpluses and positive stock market performance.

Return on Net Assets

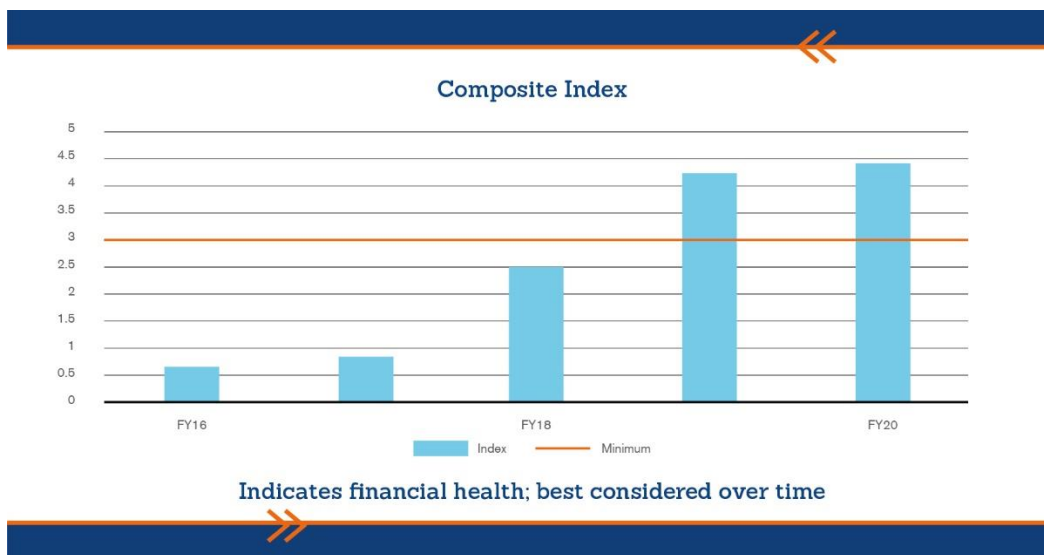


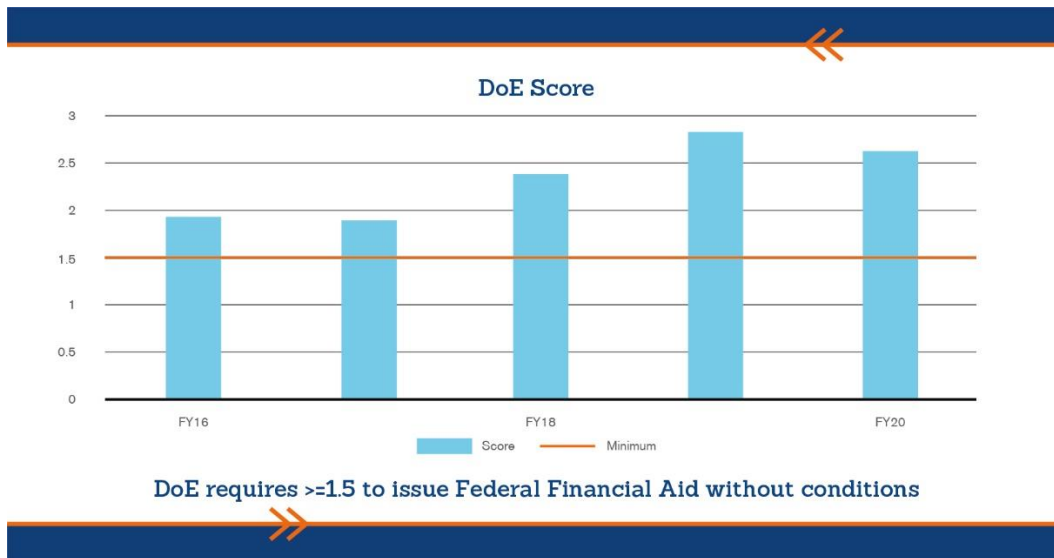
Using our resources efficiently and effectively to grow

Reductions in debt have led to a viability ratio solidly above the target of 1.5. Low debt combined with cash raised for the Culture and Arts Center have led to a strong equity ratio, well above its 0.5 target.



The composite financial index and DoE financial responsibility score are securely above their minimum targets of 3 and 1.5, respectively. FPU does not have a Moody's rating as it has not participated since 2012.





Net tuition per FTE student has increased for TUG and GRAD students and has been stable for accelerated DC students. FPU would like to see net tuition increase, but the financial need of students – 67% of our TUG students come from families with annual household incomes of less than \$40,000, and 55% of our total student population receive Pell grants – makes this challenging. Instructional expense per student declined in the last two years as a result of expense cuts due to COVID. This is expected to increase as things return to normal.

An important factor behind the strong financial results has been reductions in compensation expenses. In the face of a deficit in FY 2015 salaries were reduced 4% and the 6% retirement match eliminated. Half of the salary cut was restored in FY 2016 and the remainder in FY 2019. A 2% retirement match was restored in FY 2016. FPU employees had a 2% cost of living adjustment in FY 2019 (pre-COVID), the first in at least 10 years. FPU is committed to restoring the retirement match and providing regular COLA increases.

The pandemic impacted enrollment in FY 2021, and as these smaller classes roll forward, they impact FYs 2022 and 2023 tuition revenue as well. Fortunately, FPU depends only marginally on room and board revenue. The institution addressed the revenue shortfall with expense cuts, five terminated positions, a hiring freeze, and Higher Education Emergency Relief Funds (HEERF) that offset most additional COVID-related expenses. As a result, FPU projects a small surplus in [FY 2021](#). Continuing to hold the line on hiring



and operating expenses, along with the second and third rounds of HEERF funding will help the FY 2022 budget. FPU has received \$13.7M in institutional HEERF awards.

7.2.2 Strategic Direction

Though FPU developed its [Strategic Map](#) with a three-year time frame (2019-2022), it establishes the foundation and direction for the next decade. This map replaces the previous strategic plan and strategic priorities. Developed by the President and Cabinet with input from across campus, [GEIST](#) has been featured regularly in campus meetings and the Connections blog. The Strategic Map calls for FPU to thrive financially and missionally through ambitious growth in enrollment, retention, academic program development, and advancement, and these areas are responding with the initiatives described below. Inherent is a shift from emphasizing expense cuts to revenue generation. (CFRs 3.4, 4.7)

The university has been working on increasing the inclusion and collaboration of faculty and staff in the work of financial sustainability. Recent efforts in this regard include:

- The establishment in 2018 of the Financial Sustainability Committee, comprised of the Provost and Vice Presidents (VPs) of Finance, Enrollment, Campus Life, and Advancement.
- The Financial Sustainability Committee members, along with the five deans, participated in the Education Advisory Board's 2021 Financial Sustainability Collaborative.
- The Budget Advisory Committee, comprised of 11 faculty and staff, meets seven times each year to discuss financial issues and information with the VP for Finance. These members also serve as a communication channel back to their colleagues.
- Faculty and staff members (one each) serve on the Board Finance Committee.
- The budget process involves 50+ budget managers from faculty and staff.
- The Provost, deans and many PDs are working on academic efficiency.
- In 2019, four VPs worked with the Athletics Director, two coaches, and athletics staff on revenue generation and cost reduction measures for athletics.
- The allocation of HEERF funds incorporated input from 13 different areas at FPU.
- The new IT Project Deployment Policy requires all technology projects and purchases to be developed and deployed in collaboration with the IT Services department.

The CFO, President, Cabinet, and periodically the [President's Council](#) review the budget in its various stages to ensure alignment with the Strategic Map and consideration of a wide range of perspectives, including educational effectiveness, revenue generation, and impact on donors and the community. (CFR 3.8) Priority in the budgeting process goes to items aligned with the Strategic Map.

Examples of investments that reflect these priorities include:

- The Warkentine Culture and Arts Center (Grow, Engage, Innovate, Serve).
- New Nursing program (Grow, Serve).
- Expansion of the Social Work and Criminology programs (Grow, Serve, Transform).
- Additional enrollment and Advancement staff (Grow).
- Registrar's Office and financial services staff to serve the regional campuses (Grow, Serve).



- Fundraising consultants and Raiser's Edge software (Grow, Innovate).
- Government and church relations position (Grow, Engage, Serve).
- IT outsourcing (Grow, Innovate).

While significant cuts were made in FYs 2015 and 2021 to balance the budget, an organization cannot cut its way to success, and the above initiatives indicate institutional readiness to invest in projects that promise to contribute to financial sustainability and mission over the coming decade. The university also plans on restoring the retirement match from 2% to 6%, regular COLA increases, building a \$10M cash reserve, and addressing deferred maintenance. In 2021-2022 FPU will be developing a master plan that identifies building priorities for the next ten years.

7.2.3 Diversification of Revenue Sources

FPU does not have a large endowment or public-private or inter-institutional partnerships to diversify its revenue stream, but it does have effective diversification based on the populations it serves – TUG, GRAD, and accelerated DC. When the economy is down, one or two of these populations still do well. The university is also looking into making Continuing Education a larger contributor. FPU expects Advancement to increase its contribution by \$1M+ through improved fundraising and grants. With these five sources FPU is building a strong foundation of [revenue diversification](#). (CFR 3.4)

7.2.4 Qualified Audit

The FYs 2016-2020 audits note that,

In our opinion, except for the effects of the valuation of the art held for sale, as discussed in the Basis for Qualified Opinion paragraph, the consolidated financial statements... present fairly, in all material respects, the consolidated financial position of Fresno Pacific University.

The FY 2020 Basis for Qualified Opinion reads:

As discussed in Note 21 to the consolidated financial statements, Fresno Pacific University Foundation carries art held for sale at an estimated \$19,926,000 with a valuation allowance of \$11,922,000 for a net carrying value of \$8,004,000 for the year ended June 30, 2020 and at an estimated \$19,931,000 with a valuation allowance of \$11,925,000, for a net carrying value of \$8,006,000 for the year ended June 30, 2019. In our opinion, the valuation allowance is not sufficient based upon the historical sales since the donation occurred. Quantification of the effects of that departure on the financial statements is not practicable.

FPU intends to write down the value of the artwork as annual surpluses make possible. (CFR 3.4)

7.2.5 Audit Management Letters

FPU has significantly improved its internal controls as indicated in the [audit management letters](#). The FY 2016 audit management letter includes 13 concerns. By FY 2020 these had been reduced to two concerns, both of which have been addressed. (CFR 3.4)

7.3 Enrollment

FPU's total [enrollment](#) hit a record high headcount of 4212 in fall 2018. Small declines in FY 2019 and 2020 were exacerbated as COVID forced FPU to move fully online. The fall enrollment headcount by population, per FPU census since 2016 is summarized here:



	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020
Total TUG Headcount	1080	1053	1018	963	959
Total DC Headcount	1281	1578	1808	1843	1680
Total GRAD Headcount	1157	1298	1386	1303	1362
Total TUG, DC, GRAD	3518	3929	4212	4109	4001

TUG has slowly declined from 1254 in fall 2013 to 959 in fall 2020. Athletes comprise a large portion of this population, ranging from 270 to 320 students over these years. FPU's [discount rate](#) has remained roughly 46%. FPU uses a variety of scholarships and grants to maximize enrollment and continues to enroll many Pell and Cal Grant eligible students (48% and 45%, respectively).

Degree completion enrollment grew steadily from fall 2020 until the pandemic. FPU's pathways and partnerships with community colleges have greatly benefited enrollment, as has the two-year graduation guarantee for ADT transfer students. Time to degree, evening classes, and affordability of FPU's accelerated DC program have been important to students at community colleges. The two largest programs are liberal arts and social work. The average age of this population is thirty-three, over 50% receive a Pell Grant, and currently 56% are Hispanic.

Grad enrollment has grown slowly. School of Education houses the largest graduate programs with teacher credentials, school counseling and psychology, and administrative credentials. FPU also has



thriving Nursing and Organizational Leadership graduate programs. Our graduate programs have a strong reputation for career opportunities.

The VP of Enrollment maintains a detailed, multi-layered enrollment planning spreadsheet and reviews enrollment trends multiple times a year with the CFO. The VP of Enrollment also meets regularly with the Provost to discuss academic planning and serves on FPU's Financial Sustainability Committee.

The first goal of GEIST is "Grow Strategically," and this includes an enrollment goal of 5000 students. FPU Enrollment has an action plan with specific initiatives for each population, including increased marketing, strengthening pathways and partnerships, and launching new academic and co-curricular programs. The next decade looks promising for all our populations. Graduate programs lead to jobs that are in demand, particularly in education and nursing, and community college pathways should increase transfers to both our TUG and accelerated DC programs.

In 2020, FPU conducted a price sensitivity study for TUG and accelerated DC programs. FPU's primary competition is local public colleges and universities which charge much lower tuition, and the university was considering lowering tuition to attract additional students. The study concluded this was not to FPU's advantage. Rather, it recommended that affordability marketing be increased and show FPU's advantages in need-based financial aid and time to degree. These two themes will be prominent in future marketing.

FPU undergraduates depend heavily on financial aid, as noted above. The economic disparities of the region also create greater eligibility opportunities for our students. Administration has advocated both personally and through associations such as the CCCU, California Association of Christian Colleges and Universities, and the Association of Independent Colleges and Universities for Christian higher education institutions to fully participate in federal and state financial aid programs. Increases to the Pell Grant in the future would greatly benefit enrollment.

The pandemic and the move to a fully online environment resulted in an enrollment decline less than what was feared. The fall 2020 overall enrollment only declined 2.5% compared to the previous fall. FPU's traditional program stayed level and graduate programs saw an increase in headcount. As FPU returns to face-to-face in fall 2021 enrollment is expected to increase. (CFR 3.4)

7.3.1 Retention

Retention from first to second year between shows a general trend towards improvement:

Retention Rates	FY 13	FY 14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19
TUG	73.70%	69.80%	77.86%	75.60%	76.73%	69.87%	76.40%
DC	75.90%	68.89%	73.48%	84.99%	79.71%	81.29%	80.85%
GRAD	69.29%	54.44%	69.93%	71.62%	74.93%	65.94%	71.54%

FPU's TUG [retention](#) rates meet or exceed the national average for similar institutions. With the appointment of a Retention Task Force under Campus Life and a charge to the Associate Dean of School of Humanities, Religion and Social Sciences (HRSS) to support and develop retention efforts, FPU is developing a coordinated and cross-disciplinary approach to retention and applying this to the TUG, GRAD, and accelerated DC populations. Retention initiatives currently in process include:

- Piloting Pharos software which identifies students displaying risk-factors so student support staff can quickly address student concerns.
- The SOAR program, which engages students in academically enriching activities known to improve retention to ensure a successful transition to FPU.
- A second Retention Task Force focused on improving retention data collection initiatives for degree completion and graduate student populations, and distributing retention reports to the President's Cabinet, Retention Task Force, deans, PDs and other stakeholders for analysis and development of retention initiatives such as the [TUG Retention Plan](#). (CFR 3.4)

7.4 Advancement

FY 2020's jump in [gifts and grants](#) reflects the collaboration and fundraising capabilities of the new President (FY 2018) and VP of Advancement (FY 2019). The FPU endowment has also increased, but at \$13M it is still much smaller than needed, and FPU typically receives only about \$400,000 (less than 1%) of its revenue from endowment distributions.

	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020
Private Gifts & Grants	\$3,804,155	\$4,233,182	\$3,979,604	\$2,838,503	\$5,698,656
Endowments	\$10,895,156	\$11,492,482	\$11,915,873	\$12,391,070	\$12,627,677



Advancement has adopted the following strategies (CFR 3.4) to double scholarship and annual fund revenue and lay the foundation for a highly effective fundraising office for years to come:

Restore Donor Confidence

- Build the Warkentine Culture and Arts Center. After two prior attempts over the past 15 years, FPU successfully raised the funds (approximately \$14.2 million) to build this facility.
- Expand the President's Circle of donors. After five years of diminishing President's Circle (\$1000+) donors the numbers are growing, and 160 attended the last President's Circle dinner vs. 79 the prior year.
- Improve donor communications. In 2021 Pacific Magazine will be re-envisioned, an Annual Report published, and social media utilized more effectively.

Improve Processes to Attract and Retain Donors

- Transition to a new Customer Relationship Manager, Raiser's Edge, to improve donor acquisition and retention and facilitate our first comprehensive campaign.
- Define the ideal donor experience, develop processes to support ideal donor experience, and develop dashboard metrics to measure results.

Expand Capacity

- Hire a Director of Grant Funding Support and Foundation Relations (completed April 2021) to increase funding from government and foundation grants.
- Improve development officer efficiency and productivity utilizing Raiser's Edge.
- Develop strategies to engage alumni in meaningful experiences such as mentoring a student; providing a "lunch & learn" about their profession; or thanking donors.
- Recruit volunteers to assist fundraising efforts.
- Hire a director of the FPU Foundation Development and Legacy Gifts to develop new planned gifts.
- Develop dashboard metrics to promote accountability and focus on goals.
- Reorganize the Advancement team to enhance the leadership of development officers and facilitate initiatives to increase revenue.

Broaden the Donor Base

- Develop the "A Hope & A Future" campaign to create long-term partnerships with business and professional communities throughout the region.
- Develop a team of alumni volunteers.
- Engage next-generation donors through family legacy planning.

Develop Creative Sources of Revenue

- Develop online and in-person workforce training opportunities to provide revenue and form long-term relationships with business owners and professionals.
- Recruit a Director of Grants.
- Market the new Warkentine Culture and Arts Center as a venue for business forums, receptions, luncheons, performances and much more to raise revenue, attract others to our campus, and increase our profile in the community.

7.5 Academics

7.5.1 Program Development and Efficiencies

Since her appointment in 2018, the Provost has been working with the deans and PDs on academic program prioritization and efficiencies. (CFRs 3.4, 3.10) The results include:

- Several programs in teach-out (Ed Tech, Designated Subject, Curriculum and Instruction)
- Low-enrolled programs have established enrollment targets they must meet or face teach-out (Library Science, PACs, Chemistry)
- Declining programs have been re-imagined (MA Math Education, MA Reading)
- New programs are being developed (three-year degree programs, combined TUG and accelerated DC GE courses, accounting program pathways)
- Non-teaching assignments have been reduced significantly
- Low-enrolled sections have been combined or canceled

7.5.2 Online Education

FPU currently offers thirteen fully online degree programs and various online electives. Online faculty participate in curriculum development and assessment within their programs, and online programs undergo the same curriculum evaluation, approval process, and assessment of student learning as face-to-face programs. Online courses can also be approved for “quality of design and student engagement” through an online course quality assurance review process. (CFRs 3.4, 3.10)

The COL supports faculty teaching online courses and programs seeking to develop their online programs. Faculty also have access to Instructional Design and Instructional Multimedia support, consultation services for online course preparation and facilitation, and resources on best practices in online instruction. Online students have access to academic support resources including Academic Support Center, advising, counseling, library, and disability resources. They also have access to technical support for FPU’s LMS Moodle through the IT Helpdesk and the COL.

When the pandemic necessitated a swift transition to distance education, COL developed a [Teaching Continuity Guide](#) to help faculty prepare their courses, hosted virtual workshops on online tools and pedagogy, hosted drop-in support sessions, created a [Course Development Academy](#), and produced video tutorials for help with Moodle, Zoom, and VidGrid. FPU is also implementing an LMS accessibility tool to make online course content more accessible. Initiatives planned for the next few years include investing in analytics software to measure student engagement with the LMS and implementing standards for online course quality.

7.5.3 Library

After several years of using the LibGuides and LibWizard platforms for creating online library tutorials and forms, FPU upgraded to the full LibApps suite, adding LibAnswers (Chat and FAQ), LibCal (scheduling and events calendars), and LibInsight (data collection and management). FPU also adopted the Summon discovery platform from ExLibris to provide improved user interface and content access and better integration with LibApps services.

Through membership in the Statewide California Electronic Library Consortium, the library joined the JSTOR eBook shared collection program, adding over 30,000 eBooks to its holding, and by subscribing to Academic Video Online from Alexander Street Press has added access to almost 70,000 documentary and other educational videos. (CFRs 3.4, 3.10)

7.6 Supporting Operations

7.6.1 Budget Process

The revenue budget is based on a detailed analysis of graduation rates, retention, and recruitment goals broken down by population (TUG, GRAD, accelerated DC) and semester. (CFR 3.4) The VPs for Finance and Enrollment work together to develop these projections. The budget includes a 2% revenue contingency to buffer enrollment shortfalls.

The operating expense budget is zero-based, with all budget managers participating in budget development to increase ownership and transparency. There is much dialogue between the Business Office and budget managers to balance budget. The Business Office is implementing the Colleague budget module to facilitate the development process. The operating expense budget includes depreciation.

Proposals for revenue, compensation changes, and operating expense allocation are discussed with the President's Cabinet before the President and VP for Finance approve requests based on available funding, strategic goals, and strength of justifications. Budget development and priorities are also discussed with the Budget Advisory Committee to get broader faculty and staff input. The Board Finance Committee reviews the proposed budget in detail before it goes to the Board of Trustees for final approval.

Several years ago, FPU began providing monthly budget reports to the managers. The institution recently shifted to reports that make current information available 24/7, provide more reliable reporting, and share the same look and feel as the budget module.



The VP for Finance and the Business Office analyze the university's financial position monthly and communicate this to the FPU community quarterly via Squawk Box and the [VP for Finance intranet page](#). This page also contains the annual audits, VP for Finance Board reports, and the minutes of the Budget Advisory Committee meetings.

The Business Office has implemented a number of improvements. These include automated credit card and reimbursement processing, digitized AP and AR records, and the Colleague budget module to streamline the budget process. It is developing a report to show financial performance by business unit.

7.6.2 Capital Budget

The [capital budget](#) (CFR 3.4) is developed collaboratively by directors of Facilities, IT, Campus Safety, and the VP for Finance, then shared with the President's Cabinet for feedback and additional items. When approved by the Board of Trustees, two-thirds of the budget is typically approved for immediate funding with the remainder contingent upon an adequate cash situation in January of the following year. In 2019 the capital budget was increased from \$1M to \$1.5M annually. With annual depreciation around \$2.3M, the capital budget is not yet where it needs to be but is getting there.

7.6.3 Physical Plant

The average age of facilities on the main campus is 45 years. The facilities are maintained by a combination of in-house experts and outsourcing. Significant recent maintenance projects include chiller replacement in 2012 and boiler reengineering and replacement in 2020 (from two large boilers to eight small boilers), which positions FPU to be sustainable well into the next decade. (CFR 3.4) The Facilities Department uses the School Dude app to log and track projects.

The teaching facilities are more than adequate to meet the Strategic Map's enrollment targets. Our current TUG enrollment is 960, with a goal of increasing this to 1200. In FY 2014, we supported 1250 TUG students in the same facilities we have today without any problem. The regional campuses are fairly new, well-maintained by the landlords, and have no major facilities concerns. Each has options for expanding should enrollment growth require it. We are currently establishing interim lab facilities on our North Fresno campus for the new TUG Nursing program and hope to build a permanent facility on the main campus.

The university completes at least one accessibility project each year to improve safety, accessibility, and educational effectiveness. Recent projects include automated entry doors for Jost Hall,



McDonald Hall, Hiebert Library, and Alumni Hall; grinding sidewalk irregularities; adding ramps to Marpeck and Sattler classrooms; and improving handicap parking provisions.

The Warkentine Culture and Arts Center will open in spring of 2022. Increased enrollment (resulting from enhanced public visibility and appeal to music and theater students) and rentals to community groups should cover the operating costs. The [building cost of the Center](#) is funded entirely by contributions.

Construction of a concessions/restroom facility near the baseball field is next. FPU is discussing future building priorities that will impact the educational experience.

7.6.4 Campus Safety

Though FPU's main campus is in a high crime area, the campus itself is very safe. (CFR 3.5) The [2020 Annual Security and Fire Safety Report](#) shows that in the last three years FPU had a total of only six criminal offenses on the main campus or on adjoining public property, and no criminal offenses on the regional campuses. Factors contributing to this include:

- Many Campus Safety leaders are retired from sworn service in local police forces.
- Emphasis and training on de-escalation.
- FPU monitoring numerous cameras on campus.
- Partnership with Fresno Police Department (FPD). FPU has an excellent relationship with the FPD. FPU hosts a "ShotSpotter" detector for the FPD, uses hand-held radios that can communicate directly with FPD, and regularly shares video of adjacent areas with them. Our cafeteria is open to first responders at staff rates.
- Online dispatch software facilitates quicker response to incidents and allows officers to monitor surveillance cameras from their vehicles.

7.6.5 Human Resources

FPU is appropriately staffed and stable, with 359 full-time employees (including 116 regular faculty), 153 part time employees and 820 adjuncts. (CFRs 3.1, 3.2, 3.3) Human Resources uses NeoEd (formerly NeoGov) to support hiring and ensure consistency and compliance in our hiring processes. Open positions are advertised on a variety of sites to attract diverse candidates. For all faculty and certain administrative positions, a search committee sources and interviews candidates, bringing the top candidates to campus to meet with key constituencies and present themselves to the community at a campus-wide forum. This allows both sides to determine if FPU is a good fit and improves retention.

Faculty have a clear pay scale. HR is developing salary banding for staff positions so that the pay scales for positions with similar levels of skill and responsibility are comparable. This will improve retention for staff and create clear paths for career advancement.



Each department has a budget for conferences and professional development. The Provost has additional budgeted funds to support individual faculty members in their pursuit of excellence and improved teaching and learning outcomes.

7.6.6 Information Technology Services

In 2019 President Jones asked the IT staff to select a partner to assess FPU's IT capabilities and recommend how they could significantly contribute to achieving FPU's Strategic Map. CampusWorks completed the [IT Assessment Report](#) in 2020, noting IT's strengths and weaknesses. Their roadmap to address these weaknesses was compelling; it was also beyond the capacity of FPU to achieve on its own. Cabinet elected to outsource the IT department to CampusWorks for five years to achieve the desired growth, effective November 2020. CampusWorks' CIO, project management orientation, and ability to engage relevant experts have resulted in significant steps forward. (CFR 3.5) Key accomplishments of the last five years include:

- Moving key systems to a cloud environment to achieve better performance, reliability, and availability, including the Colleague enterprise management system, the Moodle learning management system, and many back-office systems.
- Improving the performance, reliability, and overall network experience for students and employees by updating network infrastructures, deploying new fiber at underserved locations, and increasing internet speed and bandwidth.
- Outfitting most classrooms on all campuses with computers and audiovisual systems so that remote learners can participate alongside in-person students.
- Working with departments to ensure technology-based solutions provide integration with current systems, data security, accessibility, and appropriate support.
- Regularly reviewing service contracts to determine if they should be renewed, adjusted, discontinued, or replaced.

Initiatives in process or planned include:

- Transitioning Advancement to Raiser's Edge.
- Implementing the Colleague budget module.
- Collaborating with Institutional Research to establish data governance standards, improve data availability and accuracy, and develop dashboards and reports.
- Adding a part-time Chief Security Officer and strengthening cybersecurity.
- Implementing a comprehensive IT service management system.
- Assessing and modifying the enrollment marketing CRM to support growth.
- Establishing a project management system and mindset in the IT department.
- Continuing improvement of internet access on the fringe areas of campuses.

7.7 Reflection

FPU has grown financially stronger over the last five years for several reasons. The new President and his leadership team are firmly established and work together well. The Strategic Map with the GEIST

thematic goals was developed with campus-wide participation, and has been clearly and consistently communicated and used to guide decision-making. Enrollment, Advancement, and Academics initiatives are setting the stage for significant growth both financially and in terms of academic quality over the next 7-10 years. And, overall, the institution has been shifting its focus from expense cutting to revenue growth. This strategy should position the university to be financial stable and grow over the next decade





COMPONENT 8 - ACTION ITEM – DIVERSITY (CFRs 1.1, 1.4, 2.10, 3.1, 3.2, 3.4)

8.1 Introduction

This inquiry circle focused on the institutional response to the Commission letters to FPU of 2013, 2015, and 2019. It also considered the broader commitment to diversity as expressed in the [WSCUC Equity and Inclusion Policy](#). (CFR 1.4) The Inquiry Circle understands these three letters to be unified in addressing concerns for the institutionalization of systems that guide the University in planning, assessing, directing, and pursuing of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). As has been previously recognized by both the Commission and our previous reports to WSCUC, the goal is to integrate the many good, but sometimes disconnected, expressions of diversity that occur at Fresno Pacific into a more comprehensive and unified approach.

8.2 Commission Letter to FPU of July 10, 2013

The 2013 Commission letter regarding retention and graduation rates recommended an update on graduation rates that appeared to decline with particular focus on Black or African Americans. (CFR's 2.10, 4.6) On further examination, the cohorts for different years were compared over four-year and six-year rates resulting in a false comparison of graduation success rates between two different groups at two different points in time, rather than two different groups at the same point in time. Rates for four-, six- and eight-year graduation rates demonstrate that since the team's visit, the graduation rates in these categories have mostly all improved, including Black or African Americans, with an overall 3% increase in four-year and six-year graduation rates.

Table 1. Percentage of Freshmen Graduating Within Six Years - Comparisons by Year of Entrance. (Source: First time, Full-time, Retention and Graduation reports on Disclosure Page https://www.fresno.edu/about/disclosure-documents)				
First-time, Full-time Freshmen entering class	2011 Cohort	2012 Cohort	2015 Cohort	Percentage change
4-year grad rate	53%	52%	56%	+3%
6-year grad rate	63%	63%	66%	+3%
8-year grad rate	64%	64%		

Across almost every student population, Table 2 shows significant improvements across four-year and six-year graduation rate. The Asian student population had a significant decline. However, as the population is

much smaller with a range between 17 and 23 total first-time freshmen in cohort years, the delayed time to graduation from entry in a few students in the population significantly impact the overall rates.

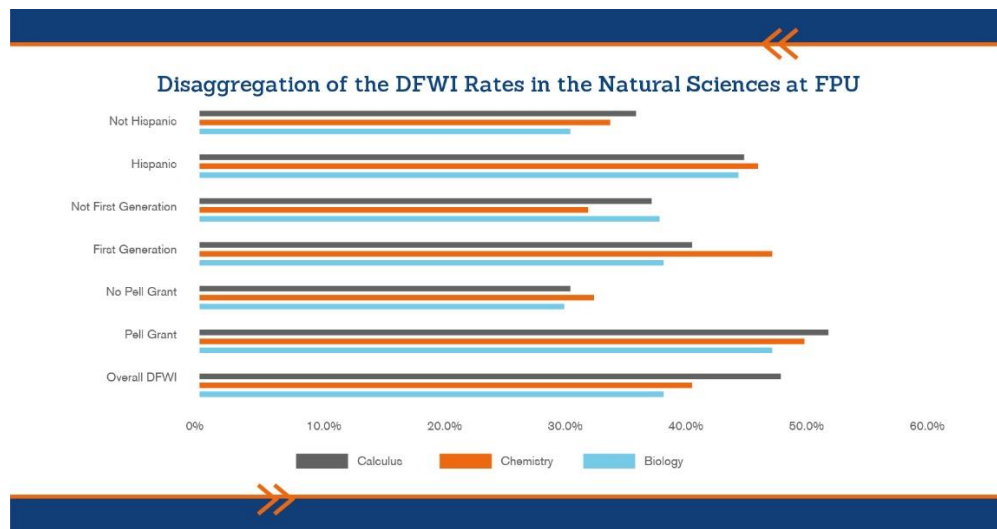
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Table 2. Percentage of Freshmen graduating within six years comparisons by ethnicity and year of entrance. (Source: IPEDS Data Feedback Report, 2015, 2017, 2019)

Data feedback reports for years:	2015	2017	2019	Percentage Change
First-time, Full-time Freshmen entering class	2008 Cohort	2010 Cohort	2012 Cohort	
American Indian or Alaskan Native	50%	100%	n/a	
Asian	67%	50%	43%	-23%
Black or African American	50%	33%	82%	+32%
Hispanic/Latino	65%	50%	69%	+4%
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	n/a	n/a	n/a	
White	68%	70%	100%	+32%
Two or more races	71%	50%	50%	+21%
Race/ethnicity unknown	40%	61%	40%	
Non-Resident Alien	33%	50%	43%	+10%
Total	63%	62%	66%	+3%

The Commission's concerns have guided FPU to make DEI a more central element of academic planning and decision-making, both short- and long-term, as well as an essential part of admissions planning, retention and graduation, instructional and curricular development (both undergraduate and graduate), and other critical institutional activities if equitable success is to be achieved. To that end, several efforts helping to move diversity into the institution's academic core have already been implemented. These include the following:

- The ALAS first-generation program assisted faculty in training to include diversity into the university curriculum. Faculty have created or revised 35 courses, with support from the ALAS program's [Culturally Embedded Curriculum \(CEC\) Grants](#). As these grants were accompanied by required training events, faculty had the opportunity to partake of needed training to develop their curriculum accordingly.
- A [Retention Task Force](#) was developed in response to lowering retention and graduation rates.
- The STEM program REALM was developed and proven to increase the retention rates in STEM majors, as evidenced by the "D"/"F"/"Withdraw" failure rates being lower than comparison groups ([Exemplary Initiative: Improvement in Gateway Courses in STEM](#)).



8.3 Commission Letter to FPU of July 15, 2015

The 2015 Commission Letter to FPU recommended that the institution develop new and improved practices intended to promote systemic diversity and training across the institution. This included a definition of hiring practices.

8.3.1 Shared Vision for Diversity

The [Diversity Rationale](#) was approved by FPU's Board of Trustees on October 24, 2015. University employees are required to affirm this Diversity Rationale as part of the application process for employment. In addition, the [Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion](#) section of the university website was expanded to include a [Commitment Statement](#), [Bias Reporting System](#), [Diversity Plan and Initiatives](#), and [Events and Resources](#). This section is consistently being reviewed and updated. This update also reflects the centralized effort to conceptualize the vision, work, and initiatives of DEI and FPU's biblical commitment, the FPU Idea, the university mission, and the Strategic Map. To promote a systematic approach to implementation of programs and activities that advance the work of equity and inclusion, the University Diversity Committee (UDC) developed an FPU Diversity Plan in fall of 2020 that has been adopted (see section 8.4.2 for additional details of this plan's development). This plan creates AY-specific initiatives that help to focus DEI work toward achieving the objectives of the Diversity Plan such as the [2020-2021 DEI Framework](#).

8.3.2 Systemic Diversity Training

There have been several training events focused especially on students and frequently sponsored by the HR office, ALAS center, International Services, and Office of Spiritual Formation & Diversity (OSFD).



As the “University wide Diversity/Inclusion three-year collection” indicates, these events have enjoyed steady attendance.

Despite some challenges with participation in larger training opportunities, there has been relatively strong faculty interest in issues of diversifying the university curriculum as evidenced by the 35 courses that faculty revised with support from the ALAS program’s [CEC Grants](#). As these grants were accompanied by required training events, several faculty members participated in the additional training.

Training resources have begun to be established by HR to develop clear processes for hiring practices. In the fall 2018 semester, [training](#) offered by ReNew Partnerships was made widely available. However, it was not [attended](#) well by staff, faculty, or administrators who were not required to be in attendance. In August 2020, HR provided the FPU community with extensive harassment and discrimination training through EverFi. This training was [completed](#) by roughly 75% of full-time faculty, 70% of staff, and 85% of staff supervisors. [Human Resources](#) has also worked alongside [UDC Executive](#) to discuss ways to introduce diversity training across campus.

In fall 2020, an additional opportunity for DEI training was made available for all individuals in the FPU community to receive a free copy of Ijeoma Oluo’s book *So You Want to Talk about Race* if they would participate in a group book reading event. This was offered through the UDC in partnership with the Society for Values in Higher Education. It was [advertised broadly](#) and did receive [interest](#) from roughly 50 FPU community members, primarily staff/faculty. Although the participation was smaller than hoped for, this is a positive start that over time will help change the FPU community from the inside out. It also raises questions on how to more broadly reach the 400+ University personnel with non-mandated DEI trainings that are difficult to enforce. This initiative stemmed from an attempt to think more systematically about training for the FPU community as it arose out of the [2020-21 DEI Framework](#) that sets diversity-related learning goals for AYs 2020-2021 aligned with select larger goals from the Fresno Pacific University Diversity Plan, 2020-2025. As the UDC’s role continues to be clarified by current initiatives to coordinate the Chief Diversity Officer’s (CDO) role, the reporting structure, and the President and Cabinet direction for UDC’s place in the structure, the barriers to systematic training initiatives will hopefully be removed. As an example, the HR EverFi training attests that even where mandated trainings are being used, it is not clear how these efforts



from HR are being coordinated with the efforts of the UDC for a more systematic implementation and collaboration.

The UDC Executive Committee embarked on a “Listening Tour” throughout the 2020/2021 AY. The intent was to develop an understanding about the insights, experiences, and perspectives of DEI staff, students, faculty, and administration. Information from these sessions has been documented and will be used to make informed decisions regarding goals, objectives, and action plans for diversity work implementation in the future, including yearly DEI Framework Documents that feed back into the Fresno Pacific University Diversity Plan, 2020-2025, which will shape future training opportunities. In addition to implementing organizational structures, as the UDC and the Interim CDO venture forward in unifying and systematically engaging the work of DEI throughout the FPU community, assessment metrics should also be maintained, accessed, and used effectively to shape initiatives informed by data.

These assessments include, but are not limited to the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) campus climate [survey](#), IDEA course evaluations, a Diversity Plan Annual Progress Report Template, and the [2020-2021 DEI Framework](#). (CFRs 1.4, 3.4)

8.3.3 Defining Hiring Practices

Currently, 57% of staff at FPU are women and 43% of staff at FPU [represent diverse backgrounds](#). The University’s commitment to DEI in the hiring processes for faculty and staff positions are demonstrated as indicated below.

The Faculty Handbook mandates that efforts be made to recruit and hire candidates referenced in the Diversity Rationale. Faculty search committees (composed of at least 3 members) include racial/ethnic, gender, linguistic and Christian denominational diversity. Deans meet with their search committees to review [hiring practices and discuss barriers](#) to the [recruitment](#) of diverse faculty. Part 3.5 of the [2019 Faculty Handbook](#) and the [2021 Faculty Handbook](#) serves as the primary training resource for deans and search committees for effective [hiring practices and procedures](#). For faculty hires, the interview and selection process suggest that the department chair meet with the CDO to ensure that the job description elicits a diverse applicant pool, such as that found on p. 2 of the [School of Education Faculty Interview and Selection Process](#).



The HERI Faculty Survey administered in AY 2019-2020 showed that 52.2% “strongly or somewhat agreed” that “This institution has effective hiring practices and policies that increase faculty diversity.” While that rate is lower than the national average comparison group at 63.9%, it did increase from the results in AY 2017-2018 which showed a rate of 48.8%.

Regarding staff hiring, the [Staff Handbook](#) does not mention the Diversity Rationale (2015). However, the employment policies do express a commitment to hiring qualified individuals “without regard to race, color, age, sex, national origin or disability.” Currently, there are no listed standards for hiring committees or procedures across departments. Staff positions are posted on multiple mainstream recruiting sites in addition to the University’s [internal hiring](#) site for a minimum of two weeks to yield a [diverse applicant pool](#). According to President Jones, hiring for senior administrator positions follow staff expectations for DEI, and job descriptions are created to demonstrate administration responsibility for DEI. Further, the President has [stated](#) that his personal history of commitment to DEI and outreach to such candidates are part of his strategy to recruit administrators. It is unknown how this is to be institutionalized. (CFRs 1.1, 1.4, 3.1)

8.4 Commission Letter to FPU of March 4, 2019

The 2019 Commission Letter recommended that FPU develop the CDO job description and make it clear and widely available, as well as clarify the role of the UDC. These recommendations and the institutional response are explored below.

8.4.1 Chief Diversity Officer

In April 2018, Rev. Angulus Wilson was [appointed CDO](#) by the President as a complement to his role as Campus Pastor. The President framed the position, but no job description was formalized. Positioning the CDO in the OSFD created confusion about the distinction between addressing institution-wide systemic DEI matters such as HR, faculty, and regional campuses, versus programmatic and student-support work done by OSFD such as Multicultural Scholars. As a unit in relationship to Campus Life and later a sub-unit within Campus Life, OSFD was not well-situated to have institutional authority or influence over the larger institutional structure such as HR, faculty hiring, and regional campus policy.

Rev. Wilson introduced the [2018 “Spiritual Formation & Kingdom Diversity Report”](#) with language that focused heavily on issues of spiritual formation rather than diversity. His [2019 departure](#) stalled



progress on both diversity initiatives and left the UDC without leadership as he had assumed that leadership role. From September 2019 until January 2020, activity, leadership, and support for the UDC lagged and was inactive.

In early spring 2020, the President proposed the “Associate Vice President for Diversity, Church, and Community Partnerships” job description which was distributed to the UDC Executive for review and comment. The [UDC Executive Committee’s](#) written responses [recommended focusing the CDO primarily on DEI](#). Similar [conversations](#) which emphasized the distinction of diversity work in OSFD from the larger institutional work of DEI held in what were termed the [“OSFD Disappearing Taskforce”](#) meetings because of their temporary nature.

Growing out of her intercultural work with ALAS, in July 2020, Ms. Patty Salinas was [appointed](#) to the role of “Interim CDO”. In August 2020, the formalized [job description](#) of “Executive Director of University Intercultural Center-Chief Diversity Officer” was approved by the President and Cabinet. The Interim CDO held bi-weekly meetings with the President to discuss DEI initiatives and developments. The Interim CDO position was added to President’s Council (an information sharing and reporting body that meets once a month) and includes the President’s Cabinet and academic deans. Additionally, in her suggested dual role as Executive Director of the University Intercultural Center (ED of the UIC), Ms. Salinas will also report to the VP of Campus Life. As of May 2021, the [CDO job description](#) was finalized in the President’s Cabinet and posted on the FPU [Careers web page](#). The current reporting structure has the CDO reporting to the VP of Campus Life, with a dotted line reporting to the President. Ms. Salinas was [appointed CDO](#) in July, 2021.

When an “Interim CDO” was appointed in July 2020, it was left unclear at that time how this “Interim CDO” position and the UDC were meant to relate. This [lack of clarity](#) remains, and the [Executive Director of Intercultural Integration/Chief Diversity Officer \(EDII/CDO\) organizational chart](#) could also be further clarified. Additionally, no member of the UDC (including the Interim CDO) sits on the President’s Cabinet to advocate for Cabinet-level support of DEI initiatives. The UDC has specifically [asked](#) whether the CDO will become a permanent position in the university organizational structure and about the make-up of the President’s Cabinet. (CFRs 1.4, 3.1, 3.2) President Jones [stated](#) that DEI is the responsibility of all Cabinet members (as demonstrated by changes to the job descriptions of the [Provost](#) and the [VP of Student Life](#)



and the more recent [VP of Campus Life](#) to include diversity advocacy as part of their work). He also [expressed concern](#) about DEI becoming isolated with the CDO, pointing to his experience in working with CDOs through the CCCU Leadership Development Initiative. While affirming that everyone is responsible for DEI efforts, the inquiry circle also affirms that having a unifying person guide the university in DEI efforts is important to coordinate, collate, and collect data for tracking progress on DEI initiatives as well as to house institutional memory regarding DEI that gets lost with administration, staff, and faculty transitions.

The competing reporting structures raise questions as to how DEI is represented at and to the President's Cabinet because of the CDO reporting to the VP of Campus Life with a dotted line relationship to the President, combined with the UDC reporting to the President directly. The current organizational structure still provides a lack of clarity as to who in the University specifically represents DEI concerns at the Cabinet level. Although he maintains that vision for diversity at FPU is a community responsibility, President Jones [advocates](#) for an integrative model that all community members are responsible for DEI, and as a result all represent these concerns as part of an integrated approach. Similarly, to earlier questions raised about the positioning the CDO in OSFD, locating the CDO under the VP for Campus Life situates the position within the organizational structures in a way that does not function in an integrated way with areas outside the scope of Campus Life's responsibility, such as HR, faculty hiring, regional campuses, and enrollment. It also raises the questions as to whether the VP for Campus Life becomes the *de facto* DEI advocate at the Cabinet or the gatekeeper for what concerns are or are not raised at the Cabinet. The inquiry circle recognizes that President Jones' leadership and approach have created a unique context for positive changes and results-based success in FPU's approach to DEI. However, it remains to be determined how institutional systems will reflect these commitments beyond the current administration or leadership.

In what President Jones [describes](#) as the "maturing process" of our approach to diversity, it may be that answers to these questions will become clear over time as will the relationship between the CDO and the UDC, which also continues to evolve. The continued development of the CDO and location on the organizational chart is a progressive step toward institutionalizing DEI in the organizational shaping processes. Steps toward finalizing a permanent DEI advocacy position are underway.

8.4.2 University Diversity Committee

The Commission letter of July 15, 2015 called for the development of a “clearer definition of the role of the UDC.” Since 2020, President Jones has tasked the UDC with responsibility for reviewing, addressing, and implementing systematic action across the university. While the UDC remains a large committee with a [membership](#) of nearly 40 individuals including the CDO, the group is [under-resourced](#) and lacks clear cabinet-level empowerment for its work. As the 2018 [Committee Organizational Chart](#) demonstrates, the UDC is the only committee (except the President’s Cabinet) that reports to the President without a dedicated staff/administrator to guide its work. There is currently a proposal to place the UDC under the CDO as the dedicated staff/administrator, but this has not been finalized or announced as of June 14, 2021.

At President Jones’ encouragement and direction, the UDC developed an FPU Diversity Plan to promote a systematic approach to implementation of programs and activities that advance the work of equity and inclusion. This is consistent with Dr. Jones’ [belief](#) that diversity planning should rise from the university community. In the fall of 2020, the 2020-2025 FPU Diversity Plan was finalized and approved. The plan has been approved by the full membership of the UDC (representing over 30 offices/departments across the university). There are 6 outlined goals in the [Diversity Plan and Initiatives](#) that cover 6 areas of the university: Environment, Infrastructure, Student Success, Employee Success, Instructional Integration and Partnerships. Each goal has success indicators that act as metrics to push the five-year diversity plan in fulfillment by the end of the 2025 school year. The responsibilities for enacting the plan have been divided by each of the six goals and distributed among subcommittees, each led by UDC Executive members. The Diversity section of the FPU website was updated and expanded to include the updated Diversity Plan and additional resources. In July 2020, a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Task Force developed the focused [Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Framework 2020-2021](#) based on initiatives from the in-progress Diversity Plan to carry out in the current academic year. (CFRs 1.4, 3.1, 3.2)

8.5 Reflection

In response to previous WSCUC visits and recommendations, FPU has grown as a diverse institution of Christian higher education. The diversity of our student body in areas such as [Diversity, Inclusion, and Spiritual Formation](#) and [Athletes of Color Alliance](#) is a source of justifiable pride to our

community. Additionally, the institution is working hard to integrate diversity into the institution's academic core through comprehensive planning. At the same time, it would be fair to say that the steps taken to integrate DEI, while substantive, are relatively new and thus the work is still a nascent one. Progress that has occurred is largely due to stability in the administrative structure, particularly in the office of the President. The good progress being made has been slowed by the pandemic. Still, FPU continues to build equity and inclusion on the strong foundation that has been laid and persist in this important diversity work. FPU advances DEI to enrich our entire FPU community in order to uphold the FPU Idea and institutional mission.





COMPONENT 9 - ACTION ITEM – DECISION-MAKING (CFRs 1.7, 1.8, 3.5–3.10, 4.1-4.7)

9.1 Introduction

A diverse group of faculty, administrators, staff, and students formed the inquiry circle to address the decision-making action item identified by the Commission. It directly focused on the three areas outlined in the letters of 2013, 2015, and 2019.

9.2 Commission Letter to FPU of July 10, 2013

A subcommittee of this inquiry circle addressed the main recommendation about the need for greater internal transparency in decision-making and the creation of budgets that flow from the previous [Strategic Plan](#) which was replaced by the current Strategic Map. It found that the CFO makes quarterly reports to the campus in [Squawk Box](#). (CFR 3.8) The CFO co-chairs the Budget and Finance Advisory Committee set out in section 2.4.9.7 of the [2021 Faculty Handbook](#) that includes faculty and staff participation. (CFRs 3.10, 4.1, 4.4) The Board of Trustees includes both Audit as well as Budget, Finance, and Facilities Committees. (CFR 3.9) In April, 2021, the CFO began providing public access to [Quarterly Financial Reports](#), [Audited Financial Statements](#), [Board Reports](#), and [Budget Advisory Minutes](#). (CFR 3.5)

The circle initiated a [survey](#) to test community impressions of progress on this WSCUC mandate. The [quantitative data](#) shows the budget follows strategic plan priorities, but faculty agree less than staff that the university provides mechanisms for participation in budgeting. Only a third of both groups agree that there is a process for budget decision-making contributions through periodic meetings. Comments tend to express more emphatically how constituents experience budget transparency. [Qualitative feedback](#) comments were representative of both agreement and disagreement with the questions.

There was no evidence that the current administration has developed, communicated, and followed a plan to prioritize greater transparency in communicating budget decision-making. Survey results provide partial support for the sense of a climate of trust. On the other hand, more [town halls and campus forums](#) (CFRs 4.4, 4.5) have been examples of greater transparency. With the recent addition of public access to financial reports and minutes, the perception of increased transparency may change.

The new public access to financial reports and minutes suggests initial strides have been taken to advance this objective. As noted under the Sustainability component, during AY 2020/2021, a [self-service budget module](#) was provided to budget managers thus increasing budget transparency and accessibility.

9.3 Commission Letter to FPU of July 15, 2015

A second subcommittee addressed the main issue of this letter, that being the extent to which the change in leadership impacted institutional climate. The following are the key findings:

Information Flow: There is significant evidence of improved communication based on an increase in information flow:

- [COVID Actions Taken by FPU](#) (CFR 4.7) communicate the necessary and continuous institutional responses concerning the pandemic.
- The [Reorganization of Communications and Integrated Marketing - Email](#) (CFR 3.7) points to concrete efforts on behalf of the university to better handle the flow of information externally to promote the university and enhance marketing efforts.
- Continued release of documents such as the [Disclosure Documents](#) (CFR 4.2), the [Financial Summaries](#) (CFR 1.7), and the corresponding [Financial Announcements](#) show that the university is making a concerted effort to provide information, good and bad, to its constituencies, providing transparency of our financial position.
- In 2018, the university developed a centralized intranet website (CFR 1.8) which gives access to policy documents from all areas of the university that have been approved by Cabinet. It is a good example of a fairly recent step to increase the communication flow.
- The [WSCUC Reaccreditation](#) page and the intranet WSCUC Accreditation News Page (CFR 1.7) created by the university provides transparency and openness by informing both internal and external audiences about accreditation.
- Additionally, the [Employee Feedback Policy](#) (CFR 1.8) encourages feedback and communication across the hierarchical spectrum. This provides needed structure to facilitate communication and information flow for all levels regarding personnel goals and concerns.
- The [Annual Assessment Reports](#) (CFR 4.3) show evidence of a longitudinal review and internal assessment, as well as demonstrating that OIE is meeting with other areas to provide opportunities for growth where data suggests weaknesses.
- A document entitled [Revised Business Plan](#) that was distributed to faculty and staff for the August 17, 2020 Town Hall meeting detailed the university's financial position. It also set out a process to address budget cuts and other measures potentially necessary to balance the budget.
- Lastly, the [Squawk Box](#) has been the house organ for university communication for official notices from all departments. Back issues are available to 2013. It is noteworthy that when searching the archive, the first [financial report](#) appears in September, 2015, and these types of reports have been published in the Squawk Box ever since.

It is evident that over the past five years, the university has taken a serious look at communication and made a concerted effort to increase the amount of communication, the types of communication, and the level of transparency in an effort to establish a greater level of trust and openness. Continued effort is needed to maintain and expand these initiatives in order to foster a climate of increased trust and feeling of openness from the administration.

Participation: The next element of review was that of participation, more specifically, constituent voices and discussions, rather than one-way communication from administrators. There are numerous examples

of constituent voices and discussions along with opportunities and structures established for this type of communication to occur:

- The [Inquiry Circle Invitation](#) (CFRs 1.7, 4.4, 4.5) demonstrates the importance to the institution of the collaboration with employees in the accreditation process. Inviting employees and providing them with an opportunity to be directly involved shows intent with regard to listening to constituent voices.
- [Program Reviews](#) (CFR 4.7) offer many examples of the evaluation of staff and financial support. Sections three and six in each program review demonstrated an opportunity for faculty voices to be heard, as these program reviews are used to shape not only the budget but how the strategic priorities are implemented. It is in these sections that faculty and PDs are able to make their case for increased program budgets based on the data in the program reviews.
- Within the [Strategic Map](#) (CFR 4.6), Goal Two is to “engage collectively.” Subpoint three states “Empower faculty and staff governance structures to support collaborative communications for internal and external engagement.” Success indicators are shown as Town Halls, community service projects, and community worship opportunities. The opportunities for engagement provided by the university from within these empowered governance structures help the voice of faculty and staff to be included in the university governance process.

Another element is the existence of structures put in place to provide opportunities for discussions and constituent voices to be heard:

- The entirety of Chapter 2 of the [2021 Faculty Handbook](#) is dedicated to Organization and Governance outlined in the administrative structure and communication. These committee structures are in place and designed to provide places for this sort of communication to occur.
- Another example of a structure that the university has put in place to elicit participation from various constituents is the use of community task forces. The Retention Task Force, the Transfer Student Task Force, and the Emergency Management Team, are all examples of various staff and faculty being pulled together to influence change in an area they are not normally “in charge of.”
- A good example of participation is evidenced in the University Assessment Committee (2.5.E of the [2021 Faculty Handbook](#)) which illustrates information flow to the Provost and Academic Cabinet.
- FPU's Administrative Hiring Process is another example of a policy to gather input and feedback from faculty and staff during the hiring process of positions of leadership within the university. These processes involve panel interviews, group presentations, and the submission of feedback forms from the larger FPU community.
- FPU recently put into place the [Sunbird Support](#) Pharos 360 software (discussed above in 4.4) to allow improved interaction between faculty, students, and staff.

Additional examples of community-wide engagement can be found online and on the intranet. The first example is the [Envisioning the Future Forums](#). (CFRs 4.4, 4.5) These forums show the discussions, feedback, and information gathered at several events meant to provide different constituencies with the opportunity to speak into the future growth and planning efforts of FPU. The [Strategic Mapping Sessions \(intranet\)](#) exercise (CFR 4.6) that the university went through provided opportunities for dialogue, discussion with the FPU community on specific items that should be addressed in a strategic plan, and strategic priorities for the institution.



FPU also integrates the voices of its student constituents. On November 23, 2020, a student club hosted a discussion on sustainability at FPU. The discussion concerned the proposed Culture and Arts Center, and what could be done to make it more sustainable. Students led and organized the event in which faculty, the administration, the architect, and the students whose inputs had been considered were present. It was recorded on Zoom and posted to the intranet. In 2018, students wrote a [paper](#) that analyzed energy sustainability at FPU and presented their findings to the administration and faculty. Eight meetings were held with faculty and/or administration in attendance. The students were seeking to get the building Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)-certified, and this idea was taken to the architect and considered, but proposals were outside the budget.

Climate of Trust and Openness: Finally, changes in improving the climate of trust and openness at the university have been difficult to find. The university seems to have made a significant effort in affecting the climate with the increased communication and opportunities for discussion and input from different audiences in the evidence of the other two questions posed. The HERI campus climate [survey](#) results indicate that there is still work to be done in this area as 63% of the faculty that responded report that they strongly agree or agree that “faculty are typically at odds with campus administration,” however, 54.5% of faculty that responded report that they strongly agree or agree that “administrators consider faculty concerns when making policy” and 56.5% of faculty that responded report that they strongly agree or agree that “faculty are sufficiently involved in campus decision-making.” This data seems to give a mixed message regarding decision-making.

9.4 Commission Letter to FPU of March 4, 2019

To address the recommendation on creating a systemized process for decision-making, this subcommittee focused on each functional area of the university aligned under the VPs. The subcommittee invited each VP (excluding the Provost/SVP) to discuss their organizational structure and decision-making processes within their functional units, and each VP welcomed this opportunity. The subcommittee opted not to interview the Provost/SVP as all subcommittee members were representatives of academics and as such had intimate knowledge of the decision-making processes and governance structures of their respective departments.



The strongest evidence of the overall organization and governance composition and procedures is found in the [2021 Faculty Handbook](#). (CFRs 3.8, 3.10) [Chapter Two](#) is dedicated to Organization and Structure and has largely been revised from the previous Handbook. The Administrative Structure of the university is articulated in section 2.4.

The university's Executive Cabinet is captured in an [Administrative Organizational Chart](#) (CFRs 3.8, 3.9, 3.10) on the university intranet. Additionally, most operational VPs were able to provide or produce [organizational charts](#) for their areas. Human Resources maintains copies of all departmental organizational charts.

Key deliberative bodies of the university are set out in the [Faculty Handbook](#) (CFRs 3.8, 3.9, 3.10) where each [committee](#) is described using a standard framework of Membership and Leadership, Role, Meetings, and Recommendation categories. Sections 2.4.A.1 and 2.4.A.2 outline the President's Cabinet and President's Council and advise the President, but they are not decision-making bodies in and of themselves.

The strongest evidence for a systemized process of decision-making lies within the academic structure outlined in the Faculty Handbook. With respect to the operational areas, systemized decision-making is carried out within each functional area or department; however, less evidence was found that a standardized decision-making structure exists across the university. While each VP was able to discuss decision-making and how decisions are reached, each operational area had its own unique approach to decisions. Some use subsidiarity to delegate decisions to empower colleagues, while others prefer a committee structure.

The governance structure is evidenced in the Faculty Handbook and in the FPU Administrative Organization Chart. Within the President's Cabinet, chaired by the President and consisting of all VPs, there is no differentiation that speaks to the weight of each VP's voice. The VP representation is inclusive of the following areas: Academics, Seminary, Finance and Business Affairs, Campus Life, Enrollment Management and Student Services, as well as Advancement. As it is not clearly delineated, apparently the Provost's voice is equally weighted amongst the other VPs when advising the president on matters discussed by the Executive Cabinet. As such, it should be noted that as an academic institution, the faculty, in essence, have only one representative, voice, and vote. While the President's Cabinet is described as a

recommending body, statements have been inconsistent about the authority of the Cabinet to approve items rather than to recommend to the President for approval. The fact that the President's Cabinet is a central part of major decisions, while the agenda and minutes are not public, provides a challenge for increasing transparency, openness, and confidence in decision-making.

Overall, this subcommittee found that decision-making processes do exist, with the strongest evidence of a systemized process within the academic structure. Additionally, committee purposes, roles, and responsibilities are identified within the scope of the larger governance process. (CFRs 3.6, 3.7, 3.10)

9.5 Reflection

It is the general finding of this inquiry circle that major progress has been made with respect to decision-making in several respects. Further efforts are still needed in several areas. Consideration should be given to the voice of the Provost in President's Cabinet and whether it is appropriate for it to be equally weighted amongst all VPs at an academic institution. Improvement to the relationship between administration, faculty, and staff is also needed. Improving internal relationships between faculty and staff will help increase student success and move the university forward into the next decade.





COMPONENT 10 - ACTION ITEM – COMMUNICATION (CFRs 1.3, 1.4, 1.6-1.8)

10.1 Introduction

Circle members for this action item were representative of university populations including students, regional and main campus personnel, staff, administration, and faculty. In addition to the evidence provided, other artifacts were identified as relevant to communication at FPU. In addition to the artifacts, the circle also surveyed faculty and staff across the organization to address trust.

10.2 Commission Letter to FPU July 15, 2015

The visiting team from the last comprehensive reaccreditation process encouraged FPU to give special attention to its “concern that ‘providing information is welcome but not as valuable as discussions.’” This was related to the abrupt change in presidential leadership in September 2014. This transition, coupled with an institutional financial crisis, prompted what the visiting team report described as “decisive action” on the part of the Board of Trustees to reappoint a former president to address financial issues facing the institution. The Commission observed the varied reactions to this change, and stated, “As part of restoring a more positive climate and greater trust in decision-making, the Board and administration will need to build trust across constituencies ‘so that all voices feel safe and welcome.’”

Since the letter of 2015, the Board and its administrative units have sought out various ways to both improve and be more transparent in their communication. These include posting committee minutes on the shared FPU intranet site, involving a wide variety of voices in the weekly blog postings from the President’s Office, and using town hall meetings to communicate to the FPU community at large. Additional efforts to shift communication patterns within school caucuses include regular reporting from the various committees that support the work of the university. The Board adopted a presidential appointment process and welcomed new faculty representatives to various committees. These, together with other initiatives, indicated progress towards wider participation in decision-making and greater transparency in communication patterns were noted in the 2018 Special Visit.

10.3 Commission Letter to FPU March 4, 2019

In response to these actions, the Commission commended FPU for “initial steps to improve communication” and “the expansion of information available through the university’s intranet.” More importantly, the letter recommended that “the University should pay significant attention to creating clearer,



multidimensional pathways for communication among upper administration and university staff, faculty and students. (CFRs 1.7, 1.8)” The following will examine some of the key institutional responses.

10.3.1 Strategic Planning

The appointment of the current university President in 2017 followed the newly adopted Board-approved [process](#) cited in the Report for the Special Visit. As a new administrative team was formed, the President led the way for renewed attention to strategic planning around a series of institutional priorities.

In April 2019, senior university administrators invited faculty and staff to participate in community-wide campus forums and enlisted their assistance in identifying critical issues and possible initiatives. The Board engaged in a similar process. Together with senior administrators and under the leadership of the university President, following the theme of “Expanding the Possibilities,” the Strategic Map for 2019-2022 described previously in this report was [created](#). The five GEIST themes coalesced and were disseminated across the main and regional campuses through posters and frequent reference in written and oral communication. Throughout AY2019-2020, the President invited administrators, faculty, and staff to reflect on the various themes and their relevance for departments across the university using his weekly blog, [Connections](#). This sharing of a very public platform for communication has been a characteristic of the current administration.

There have been a number of campus initiatives regarding strategic planning. The practice of campus forums has continued since the WSCUC special visit. There were five [Strategic Mapping Sessions](#) for staff, faculty and students in 2018-2019, and town halls were held on May 10, 2019, April 28, 2016, and November 12, 2015. These have proved especially successful in communicating financial news as part of the budgeting cycle, updates on the capital campaign for the new Culture and Arts Center and sports complex improvements, and as the institution worked to create a sustainable financial model. An annual campus-wide audit forum is held with the university’s auditors while a Budget Advisory Committee works with the CFO. In a recent survey, the CFO was [commended](#) (respondent 31) for communicating understandable and transparent financial data. The campus forums also offer an opportunity for questions and comments from participants, which is reflected in their sample agendas and supporting [documents](#). (CFR 1.7)

10.3.2 Communication Resources

FPU accurately represents its academic programs, goals, services, and costs to both students and the wider public on the university's [website](#). Through it, students and the public at large may access a full range of data, policies, [Academic Catalogs](#), [Student Handbooks](#), and disclosure information. (CFR 1.6)

In addition to the website and intranet, a variety of tools exist to facilitate internal communication such as the student newspaper, [The Syrinx](#), [The Scoop](#), which is a digital newsletter that serves students and is hosted by Student Life, the faculty and staff [Squawk Box](#), and Connections. The [Faculty Senate](#), [School Caucuses](#) and staff caucus meet regularly to discuss business, announcements, and receive updates and feedback concerning administrative units. Committees across campus have representatives from the various schools and relevant departments. Committee members are encouraged to both represent their schools or departments in decision-making processes and to bring back relevant information. Each school holds regularly scheduled caucus meetings to process items of business, discuss common concerns, and share information. (CFR 1.7)

Important announcements are regularly sent out via the "FPU Pres" email account. Faculty and staff can also access information through the Squawk Box and the university's intranet, the latter of which includes committee minutes, handbooks (including a statement regarding academic freedom and recruitment strategies for diverse faculty), reports, and policies. Communication to the university community has increased during the COVID crisis as the administration updates policy and practices based on changing government requirements. However, a series of [comments](#) (see respondent 7) arising in the fall 2020 Communication Survey suggests that some community members feel as if too much information is sent out that is not appropriately filtered for the relevant audiences. (CFRs 1.3, 1.4)

The current pandemic tested FPU's patterns of communication, especially in spring 2020 when the budget process revealed anticipated shortfalls. These anticipated deficits required the university to significantly reduce spending for both the then current and upcoming fiscal years. Campus forums held in spring 2020 sought to address both issues in open and honest ways. The CFO gave regular updates on the current AY 2019-2020 budget as well as progress towards a balanced budget for AY 2020-2021, and the VP for Enrollment provided updated enrollment information which was especially relevant given the impact of the pandemic on recruiting events. Information on the [CARES Act and Minority Serving Institution](#)



funds distribution was also made public. The move to virtual space for campus forums, recordings of which are available on the intranet, provided broad access to FPU staff and employees across all campuses. (CFRs 1.6, 1.7)

University academic leadership used a variety of communication avenues to announce decisions regarding the shift to remote work and virtual classrooms. Announcements related to COVID were made via the [“FPU Pres” email address](#), and a [new website](#) and [cell phone app update](#) were developed to provide central access to current information for all FPU populations. The Emergency Management Team provided regular updates to the President’s Cabinet to facilitate decision-making across the various departments and conducted [tabletop exercises](#) to anticipate potential [emergency situations](#).

Mindful of the need to listen to multiple voices as decisions were being made, university leadership surveyed [faculty](#) and [students](#) regarding remote teaching and the possibility of returning to campus in fall of 2020. While the COVID guidelines ultimately made a return to campus inadvisable, leadership also listened to concerns of faculty and students. For example, a faculty task force was put together by several deans to help plan for fall 2020 course delivery. This helped shape an early decision on remote teaching for fall in order to provide faculty adequate time for course preparation. The Provost called on the Faculty Senate Executive Committee to help put together a task force to advise her and help process concerns regarding course delivery and decisions related to online vs. face-to-face course delivery for spring 2021. The Registrar’s Office worked with faculty from the School of Natural Sciences on room assignments for lab classes deemed essential and accommodations for students not ready or able to return to face-to-face courses. The campus facilities team worked with those faculty to determine compliance issues. In response to the pivot to online course delivery, the faculty in the HRSS created a [Remote Online Newsletter](#) to share pedagogical tips and strategies. The newsletter was widely distributed across campus.

This strategy to put together task force groups to participate in decision-making or to share information has been used for other matters, as well. For example, a group of faculty members from the HRSS was actively involved in the [planning and design](#) of the new Culture and Arts Center. A group of staff from various departments worked with the CFO to assess and recommend a new [eSignature](#) platform for the university. An earlier task force worked to assess and recommend new expense management software. This shift from paper to digital methods was helped by well-designed training sessions and ultimately made

timely by the shift to remote work during the pandemic. These efforts represent progress on bi-directional communication and administrative willingness to take into account a variety of perspectives and expertise.

10.3.3 Survey Data

In fall 2020, the Communication inquiry circle designed a [survey](#) to measure perceptions of improvement and levels of satisfaction with communication practices across the University - at the institutional level, the unit level, and in personal engagement. The over 200 responses are strong evidence for evaluating progress in this area with 42.1% of respondents identifying as staff, 29.4% as regular faculty (full- and part-time), 23.5% adjunct faculty with the remaining made up of administrators or preferring to remain unidentified.

When asked whether communication at the institution has improved over the last four years, 62.2% of respondents indicated it “has significantly improved”, 19.2% were neutral, with the remaining 18.7% indicating the university communication “has not improved.”



When added to a positive response regarding the accuracy of FPU’s communication channels, (71.4% “yes, it is my experience that university channels deliver accurate information”) timeliness of communication (64.7% positive and “yes, FPU’s communication is transparent” 63.4%), the data suggest that faculty and staff perceive improvement in these areas. This move in a positive direction is an affirmation of FPU’s efforts to improve communication. At the same time, 77% of survey participants also gave evidence in the [survey comments](#) of strong informal networks that serve to provide needed information or

clarification, suggesting that further efforts toward clarity and easily accessible information in FPU's systems would be helpful.

Some respondents strongly noted conflicting or confusing messages, and lack of transparency. This was particularly evident in [survey comments](#) related to confusion in pandemic responses and changing policies and protocols. Comments supporting "has not improved," were also strong in their critique of communication patterns overall. This suggests that, although progress has been made in the minds of many, if not most, of the respondents, some believe the university's communication processes continue to need improvement. (CFR 1.8)

It seems clear that discussion of issues and input into decision-making happens most effectively at the unit level, such as departmental units and faculty caucuses. This is supported by a strong response of 72.7% of survey participants who indicated some level of safety in expressing perspectives or concerns about issues with 36.4% indicating strong agreement. Participants mostly agree that meaningful conversation happens at unit levels, as well (72.9% positive). In addition, 74.9% of participants listed "supervisor" as their "go-to" contact to share a concern or suggestion for leadership, suggesting a level of trust in those responsible for decisions or who have access to decision-making bodies. Supervisors serve as critical links in bi-directional communication.

A review of the [HERI 2020 Staff Climate Survey](#) supports overall job satisfaction at slightly higher rates than the comparison group (77.5% vs. 73%). Staff members report that they would recommend the institution as an employer to a friend (83.7% vs. 80.8% for comparison group) and affirmed having a public voice (67.4% vs. 60.5% for comparison group). Staff rated "effectively communicates information about employee compensation and benefits" at 63.4% vs. the comparison group of 59%. Most gratifying are the scores related to campus climate which report higher agreement on consideration when making policy (74.6% vs. 69.5% for comparison group), as well as high levels of respect from faculty (92.9%), other staff (97.1%), and senior administration (86.4%).

10.4 Reflection

Our strength is intentionality which is demonstrated by a sincere and genuine interest in improvement. While the over-arching data of the survey is positive, there is room for growth in providing effective communication channels to and from senior administrative levels. The university would be helped

by designating a person or office for communication across the university system. We need to be systematic, comprehensive, and accountable in our communication practices, and it would be helpful to have someone oversee communication. The recent pandemic, for example, has revealed the challenge of coordinating messages through various departments.

There has been increased activity in the area of communication across the campus. Improvement has been noticed by some, while others remain critical of the university's efforts and effectiveness. Some faculty continue to express dissatisfaction over communication practices including learning news through informal networks, and receiving mixed messages from administration. Continued attention to communication practices across the system help advance our mission even if not directly related to student success. We still need to continue improving trust across the campus, and senior administration needs to recognize this as a significant issue impacting campus culture.

Some members of the community also expressed a desire to have more input into decisions such as those relating to the pandemic response. At the same time, even criticism comes with a desire for the well-being of FPU, or as one respondent put it, "I hope my critiques don't come across as overly negative. I love FPU and working here." (CFRs 1.7, 1.8)





CONCLUDING REFLECTION

At the beginning of this self-reflection we outlined our history from its humble beginnings in a home in Fresno right through to our modern campus with its satellites today. The university began as peaceful beacon of light during the dark days of World War II in 1941, and has continuously operated through to today. During this time, it has seen periods of calm, peace, and prosperity, as well as upheaval, uncertainty, and financial challenges. We have benefitted by growing during good times and learning during hard times. Despite these uncertain times, our mission to develop students for leadership and service through excellence in Christian higher education always remains at the center of why we do what we do. The world of higher education is constantly changing, and Fresno Pacific University has been constantly changing with it. The continuous improvement of our university is what drives our quality assurance efforts.

Our commitment to the highest standards in education is realized through the lens of the Fresno Pacific Idea, the principle which unifies us as an institution and the compass which points the way to our future. We are, firstly, a Christian university, committed to the ideals of God's Kingdom and integrating faith, learning, and action into the liberal arts. We are also a community of learners growing out of common commitments, holding to the principle that learning is the result of the interaction between persons, ideas, and experiences. And, lastly, we are a prophetic witness in a broken world, there to serve the church and society through dialogue with and critique of contemporary culture and practice, and building peace.

Through continuous improvement and quality assurance efforts we strive to provide our students with the best education they can have. We look to the past to see the future, and Fresno Pacific University is determined to continuously improve and thrive into the 21st century, moving forward with its mission. With God, all things are possible.

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STUDENT SUCCESS: RETENTION, GRADUATION, AND STUDENT LEARNING

Dr. Karen Cianci, Dean, School of Natural Sciences (Chair)
Fran Martens Friesen, Assistant Professor, School of Humanities, Religion, and Social Sciences
Dr. Barbara Maselli, Assistant Professor, School of Natural Sciences
Kerry Sue Brown, Director of Student Support Services



Melinda Gunning, Director of Disability Access and Education
Jesse Torres, Director of Student Persistence
Martha Reyes, Academic Advisor
Paola Gonzalez-Mendez, Student

QUALITY ASSURANCE AND IMPROVEMENT: PROGRAM REVIEW, ASSESSMENT, AND USE OF DATA AND EVIDENCE

Dr. Candi Alexander, Director of Assessment (Chair)
Denise Baronian, Executive Director of Regional Enrollment
Dr. Michelle Bradford, MBA PD
Dr. Marshall Johnston, History, IMAP, and Personalized Bachelor's Degrees PD
Dr. Lisa Keith, Special Education PD
Dr. Sharon Merritt, MA Teaching PD
Anita Rodriguez, Dean's Assistant, School of Humanities, Religion, and Social Sciences
Ali Sena, Director of Alumni Relations
Maribel Viveros, former Director of Institutional Research, IRB

SUSTAINABILITY, FINANCIAL VIABILITY, AND PREPARING FOR THE CHANGING HIGHER EDUCATION ENVIRONMENT

Robert Lippert, CFO (Chair)
Dr. Gayle Copeland, Provost
John Endicott, VP, Enrollment
Dale Scully, VP, Student Life
Don Griffith, VP, Advancement
Jesse Torres, Director of Student Persistence
Dr. Henrietta Siemens, Director, Center for Online Learning
Gary Estes, Chief Accountant
Jordan Sharp, Executive Director, Human Resources
Gary Metcalf, Director of Facilities
James Long, Chief Information Officer

ACTION ITEM – DIVERSITY

Dr. Quentin P. Kinnison, Associate Professor–Christian Ministry, Biblical and Religious Studies Division Chair (Co-Chair)
Patty Salinas, MA, Interim Chief Diversity Officer, Executive Director of ALAS Intercultural Learning Center (Co-Chair)
Maribel Viveros, former Director of Institutional Research, IRB (Co-Chair)
Taylor Starks, Assistant Director of Spiritual Formation
C.J. Haydock, MA, Head Coach, Men's Basketball
Martha Fregoso, Assistant Director of Admissions, University Diversity Committee Co-Chair
Dr. Melanie Howard, Assistant Professor and PD, Biblical and Theological Studies, University Diversity Committee Co-Chair
Dr. Ken Cheung, Associate Professor and PD, Chemistry
Dr. Angelica Reynosa, Clinical Assistant Professor, School of Education
De'Jshon Maxwell Garcia, Student
BreAnne Wyse, MA, Director of Diversity, Inclusion and Spiritual Formation

ACTION ITEM – DECISION-MAKING

Dr. Katie Fleener, Dean School of Business (Chair)
Dr. Greg Camp, Associate Dean, School of Humanities, Religion, and Social Sciences
Maribel Viveros, former Director of Institutional Research, IRB

Peggi Kriegbaum, Executive Director, Continuing Education
Dr. Laura Schmidt Roberts, Professor, Biblical and Theological Studies
Lynn Jost, Professor and PD, Old Testament and Director of the Center for Anabaptist Studies
Dr. Michelle Bradford, Assistant Professor, Business and MBA PD
Clint Harris, Registrar Operations Coordinator
Luke Smith, Student

ACTION ITEM – COMMUNICATION

Dr. Valerie Rempel, VP and Dean of the Biblical Seminary (Chair)
Dr. Gary Gramenz, Dean, School of Education (Co-Chair)
Mariah Cushing, M.A., Dean's Assistant and Adjunct Faculty Member
April Holloway, Assistant Director of Operations, Merced Regional Campus
Danielle Mercado, Student
Jason McGensy, eLearning Operations Manager, Center for Online Learning and President of University
Staff Caucus Catherine Peck, M.S., Assistant Professor, Accounting, School of Business
+Billie Jean Wiebe, Ph.D. Associate Professor, Communication and English PD, Communication, School of Humanities, Religion and Social Sciences



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