Southern Utah University

STANDARD TWO

POLICIES, REGULATIONS, AND FINANCES REVIEW (PRFR) REPORT

Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities

February 15, 2021

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Institutional Overview

Southern Utah University (SUU) is a publicly funded, comprehensive, regional, masters-level university located in Cedar City, Utah. From humble beginnings in 1897 as Branch Normal School, Southern Utah University has grown into a thriving university that proudly celebrates its 125th year in 2022. The University is an accredited member in good standing of the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU), and has been accredited by NWCCU since 1933. A snapshot of the University at the end of Fall 2020 (compared to Fall 2013, seven years prior) includes the following highlights:

- An enrollment of 12,998 students in Fall 2020 (headcount, measured at the end-of-semester) compared to an enrollment of 8,227 students in Fall 2013 (headcount, measured at the end-of-semester);
- A student-to-faculty ratio of 20.2:1 in Fall 2020 compared to a student-to-faculty ratio 18.7:1 in Fall 2013;
- Improved academic preparedness for first-time students (as measured by the Admissions Index Score) with an average index score of 113.4 in Fall 2020 as compared to an average index score of 110.1 in Fall 2013;
- During the 2018-2019 academic year, the University has entered into a unique, integrated dual enrollment partnership with Southwest Technical College (STECH). For additional information on this partnership, please see **Addendum Two, Appendix 2A**;
- During the 2019-2020 academic year, SUU became the only university in Utah to offer students a three-year bachelor's degree option, as part of a continuing effort to increase the accessibility and affordability of its academic programs. For additional information on this initiative, please see **Addendum Two, Appendix 2B**.

Prior Recommendations and Mission Fulfillment

In response to the Year-Seven Self-Evaluation Report and site visit in Spring 2014, NWCCU noted four Recommendations. As a result of the Mid-Cycle Review in 2017, Recommendations One and Two were removed from special consideration. Response to Recommendation Three (budgeting process) is included in the Standard Two report and response to Recommendation Four (GE assessment) is included in the Standard One report. Dedicated responses to both Recommendations appear as separate appendices in **Addendum Three**.

Since the Mid-Cycle Review, the University has continued to use its 2016-2022 Strategic Plan as the primary tool for measuring institutional effectiveness. The statements of mission and goals, data gathering and reporting mechanisms, and desired outcomes found there (and in the condensed "Scorecard" dashboard version of the Strategic Plan) provide the University with consistent and timely data that is used to measure institutional mission fulfillment.

Report Format

As requested by NWCCU, the reports for Standard One (EIE) and Standard Two (PRFR) are published separately despite both being submitted during the University's Year-Seven accreditation cycle in Spring 2021. Additional narrative outlining the effects of COVID-19 is

found in **Addendum Two, Appendix 2C**, and a list of those that worked to compile this report may be found in **Addendum Two, Appendix 2E**.

Standard 2.A - Governance, Resources, and Capacity

Standard 2.A.1
The institution demonstrates an effective governance structure, with a board(s) or other governing body(ies) composed predominantly of members with no contractual, employment relationship, or personal financial interest with the institution. Such members shall also possess clearly defined authority, roles, and responsibilities. Institutions that are part of a complex system with multiple boards, a centralized board, or related entities shall have, with respect to such boards, written and clearly defined contractual authority, roles, and responsibilities for all entities. In addition, authority and responsibility between the system and the institution is clearly delineated in a written contract, described on its website and in its public documents, and provides the NWCCU accredited institution with sufficient autonomy to fulfill its mission.

Governing Boards

State of Utah Code 53B grants the legal authorization and structure for the state system of higher education. Under this code, SUU is governed by the Utah Board of Higher Education (UBHE), which oversees the Utah System of Higher Education (USHE). The USHE system comprises the eight publicly funded colleges and universities in Utah, as well as the eight publicly funded technical colleges in the state. The Board (known as the Utah State Board of Regents prior to 2020) consists of 18 members, including one student representative each from technical and academic education. All members of the Board are appointed by the Governor. The Utah Board of Higher Education's primary responsibilities include:

- Selecting and evaluating institutional presidents;
- Setting educational policy;
- Reviewing programs and degrees;
- Approving institutional missions; and
- Submitting unified budget requests to the Governor and State Legislature.

The Utah Board of Higher Education delegates certain powers to SUU's Board of Trustees, which is composed of ten members, eight of whom are appointed by the Governor. The other two members include the President of the Alumni Association and the Student Body President (both voting ex-officio). The responsibilities of the SUU Board of Trustees include:

- Approval of new academic programs;
- Approval of significant changes to existing academic programs;
- Fiduciary and audit oversight;
- Advice and consent on institutional policy;
- Facilitating communication between SUU and its communities;
- Assisting in the planning and implementation of development projects; and
- Selecting honorary degree and other award recipients.

Standard 2.A.2
The institution has an effective system of leadership, staffed by qualified administrators, with appropriate levels of authority, responsibility, and accountability who are charged with planning, organizing, and managing the institution and assessing its achievements and effectiveness.

President's Cabinet and President's Council

As established by policy 13.14, the President's Council advises the President and the SUU Board of Trustees on all matters related to shared governance and policy activities. Members of the President's Council are listed below. Please note that seven members of the President's Council listed below also serve as members of the President's Cabinet, which, along with the Board of Trustees, directs the day-to-day operations of the University. Cabinet members are designated with an asterisk (*). Aside from the President, members of the Council and Cabinet include:

- Jon Anderson - Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs*
- Mindy Benson - Vice President for Alumni and Community Relations*
- Debbie Corum - Director of Athletics*
- Marvin Dodge - Vice President for Finance and Administration*
- William Heyborne - Faculty Senate President
- Stuart Jones - Vice President for Advancement and Enrollment Services*
- Nouman Kante - SUUSA Student Body President
- Vacant - Assistant to the President for Diversity and Inclusion
- Maureen Redeker - University General Counsel
- Trisha Robertson - Staff Association President
- Jared Tippets - Vice President for Student Affairs*

The background and qualifications for each member of the Council and Cabinet may be found by clicking on individual names above.

Image #1 - SUU Leadership Organizational Chart
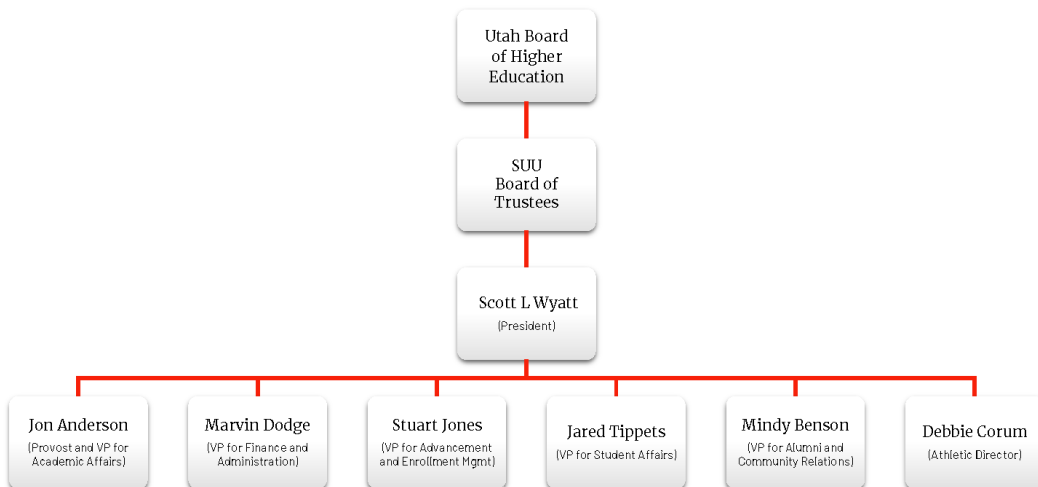
Academic Organization

The Division of Academic Affairs is led by the Vice President for Academic Affairs and a team of academic officers. Responsibilities and accountability for academic officers are outlined in policy 6.2. The division is organized into a number of units, primary among them, the academic colleges:

- The Dixie L. Leavitt School of Business
- The Beverley Taylor Sorenson College of Education and Human Development
- The College of Engineering and Computational Sciences
- The College of Health Sciences
- The College of Humanities and Social Sciences
- The Gerald R. Sherratt Library
- The College of Performing and Visual Arts
- The Walter Maxwell Gibson College of Sciences

The division also houses units that support teaching and learning, including the Center of Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL); the Office of Online Teaching and Learning (OTL); the Concurrent Enrollment office (CE); the Sponsored Programs, Agreements, Research and Contracts Office (SPARC); the Institutional Review Board (IRB), the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (IR), the A.P.E.X. Lecture Series, and the Office of Equity & Inclusion. For a complete organizational chart, please see **Addendum Two, Appendix 2F**.

> ### Standard 2.A.3
> **The institution employs an appropriately qualified chief executive officer with full-time responsibility to the institution. The chief executive may serve as an ex officio member of the governing board(s) but may not serve as its chair.**

University President

Scott L Wyatt is the 16th President of Southern Utah University, currently in his seventh year of service to the institution. He holds a Juris Doctorate degree from the University of Utah's S.J. Quinney College of Law and practiced law for 17 years. He also served as an elected County Attorney and State Representative prior to his appointment as a college president. President Wyatt is a well-respected education leader among Utah's legislative and executive offices and maintains a strong relationship with the local Cedar City community. He oversees both the President's Council and President's Cabinet in directing the operations of the University and spends his time supporting students, staff, and faculty as they explore diverse ideas, create transformative learning experiences, and achieve high-quality outcomes. Committed to ensuring that a degree from SUU is both affordable and accessible, President Wyatt has partnered with SUU's faculty and staff for innovations in experiential learning, general education, and internship programs. His innovative leadership has led to significant enrollment growth and an impressive increase in retention rates all without increasing tuition. For additional information about President Wyatt, click here.

Standard 2.A.4
The institution's decision-making structures and processes, which are documented and publicly available, must include provisions for the consideration of the views of faculty, staff, administrators, and students on matters in which each has a direct and reasonable interest.

Policy and Process Review

The process for decision-making relative to SUU policies and procedures is outlined in policy 5.56. Changes to policies are reviewed by the relevant internal council, department, or association such as Deans' Council, Faculty Senate, Staff Association, and the Student Association. After review by the relevant group, it is presented to the President's Cabinet for review by the Vice President with responsibility for the policy. Following the President's Council's first review, proposed policy and procedure changes are sent out to all University employees for a general review and comment period for 21 days. After edits or additions that take into account the comments and feedback from SUU employees, the President's Council considers the policy for a second time. If approved by the Council, the policy is placed on the Board of Trustees' agenda for their final approval. This inclusive process not only includes the groups, associations, and councils with a direct interest, but also provides the opportunity for all faculty, staff, and students (when applicable) to participate in the review process.

President's Forums

The administration is also committed to providing clear and open communication with employees regarding decisions that may not be specifically associated with a change in policy or procedure as described above, but rather the day-to-day operations of the University. This communication occurs through internal newsletters and email updates from the President and/or Cabinet members. President Wyatt also hosts quarterly open forums to provide updates about the University and answer questions. Recently, the President began live-streaming these forums and allowed faculty and staff to join remotely, resulting in double the attendance of an in-person forum and increased participation and discussion. These forums can be viewed on the SUU website.

The administration also regularly participates in student-specific open forums. Some of these are required by policy or statute (such as the Truth-in-Tuition Hearings), but more typically these meetings are informal and designed to share information. Students are given updates regarding campus initiatives or issues and are invited to respond with questions or concerns.

Public Meetings

As with all public entities in the state, Southern Utah University is subject to the provisions of the Open and Public Meetings Act (Utah Code §52-4-101). All constituents of the University (including students, faculty, staff, and interested citizens) may attend and participate in gatherings that are covered by this law. All meetings of the SUU Board of Trustees and State Board of Higher Education are considered to be public meetings, and the agendas and minutes for these meetings can be found at the links above.

Standard 2.B - Academic Freedom

Standard 2.B.1
Within the context of its mission and values, the institution adheres to the principles of academic freedom and independence that protect its constituencies from inappropriate internal and external influences, pressures, and harassment.

University Policies Supporting Academic Freedom

Southern Utah University supports the principles of academic freedom through adherence to policies and practices that guide and safeguard that principle. Based on USHE policy R481 and Utah Code §53B-2-106(2)(c), University policy 6.6 governs academic freedom on campus. Policy 6.6 also spells out the University policy for faculty academic freedom in teaching, research, and public settings. Should any disputes arise related to academic freedom for faculty, University policy 6.22 guarantees due process for the faculty member involved.

Standard 2.B.2
Within the context of its mission and values, the institution defines and actively promotes an environment that supports independent thought in the pursuit and dissemination of knowledge. It affirms the freedom of faculty, staff, administrators, and students to share their scholarship and reasoned conclusions with others. While the institution and individuals within the institution may hold to a particular personal, social, or religious philosophy, its constituencies are intellectually free to test and examine all knowledge and theories, thought, reason, and perspectives of truth. Individuals within the institution allow others the freedom to do the same.

Southern Utah University maintains an environment that promotes academic freedom for faculty, staff, administrators, and students without censorship or bias with respect to personal, social, or religious perspectives. Faculty are evaluated, promoted, and tenured according to policy 6.1, which includes both peer evaluation and evaluation by administrators. This type of review serves as a check-and-balance to ensure subject matter experts are reviewing faculty achievements while administrative review ensures consistency, fairness, and compliance with policy. This policy also outlines broad ways for faculty to engage and contribute in the realms of teaching, scholarly/creative work, and service. Importantly, faculty are evaluated primarily according to departmental criteria developed by faculty in consultation with the Deans and the Provost. These departmental criteria identify discipline-specific expectations in terms of faculty contributions, and are carefully developed and reviewed so as to support academic freedom, especially with respect to the pursuit and dissemination of knowledge.

With respect to allowing individuals to explore a wide range of theories, perspectives, and ideas, the University supports academic freedom through several other means that benefits key stakeholders. For example, the Library maintains a robust and current set of holdings in both its physical collection and electronic subscriptions which allows faculty, staff, students, and the community to access information without censorship. This intellectual freedom supports the scholarly pursuit of a wide range of academic topics and provides access to contributions made by others.

Faculty and staff also have the ability to submit requests for external funding from local, state, regional, and national organizations. With support from the Office of Sponsored Programs, Agreements, Research, and Contracts (SPARC), faculty and staff can seek additional financial support for their research projects, scholarly endeavors, student support initiatives, and other creative contributions through the performing and visual arts. Finally, graduate students have access to funds to support travel to disseminate their research and undergraduate students have access to funds provided through the Undergraduate Research and Scholarship Program (UGRASP), which is managed within each College/School. These research funds support students to explore research topics of their choosing and to present their findings at professional conferences and events.

The Festival of Excellence (FOE) occurs each spring and includes a day of scholarly and creative presentations, posters, and demonstrations. While this event has evolved over the years, the Festival of Excellence provides another venue for faculty, staff, and students to present their scholarly and creative pursuits, a free and open expression of ideas, exploration of a wide range of topics (including interdisciplinary topics), and the dissemination of knowledge. In this way, the Festival of Excellence supports academic freedom by allowing faculty, staff, administrators, and students the intellectual freedom to explore theories, advance their reasoned conclusions, and share their ideas with others.

Finally, academic freedom is supported through the operation of a variety of committees, associations, and councils, many of which are outlined in University policy. Membership of these groups ensures broad representation from faculty, staff, and students, and upholds academic freedom within the context of shared governance. For example, the Faculty Senate maintains its independence in terms of governance, membership, elections, and establishing its priorities. It is organized by a Constitution and includes a variety of standing, ad hoc, and university committees. Through the Faculty Senate, faculty have representation on numerous key committees and councils across the University, including the President's Council and Deans' Council. Likewise, staff members at the University are represented through the Staff Association and staff routinely serve on key committees, associations, and councils. These two groups offer important avenues for independence of thought and deliberation, thereby supporting academic freedom in terms of shared governance.

The Southern Utah University Student Association (SUUSA) represents the student body and provides opportunities for students to engage in governance. SUUSA organizes itself around a formal governance structure (Executive Council and Student Senate) and is responsible for budgetary oversight for a portion of student fees collected each year. SUUSA also sponsors a wide range of student clubs and organizations, as well as other events, all of which are student-driven. This level of autonomy and self-governance upholds academic freedom by allowing students to identify their own priorities, allocate financial resources, and develop clubs and organizations.

Standard 2.C - Policies and Procedures

Standard 2.C.1
The institution's transfer-of-credit policy maintains the integrity of its programs and facilitates the efficient mobility of students desirous of the completion of their educational credits, credentials, or degrees in furtherance of their academic goals.

Transfer of Credit Policy

The University develops and extensively publishes policies and procedures that are clearly stated, easily understandable, readily accessible, and administered in a fair, equitable, and timely manner. University policies 6.5 and 6.47 govern the transfer of credit for undergraduate students seeking to enroll at SUU. As with all incoming students, transfer students must meet the minimum required score on the SUU admission index. Students not meeting the minimum score may request a review by the University Academic Standards and Admissions Committee as outlined in policy 6.31. University policy further stipulates that transfer students must:

- Submit an official transcript from each college or university previously attended. Transcripts must be sent directly from the prior college or university to the Southern Utah University Admissions Office.
- Provide a high school transcript and ACT/SAT scores if transferring in fewer than 24 semester (or 45 quarter) credit hours.

Students meeting the guidelines outlined in policy 6.5 are allowed to matriculate into the University. As guided by USHE policy R470, the University accepts all General Education and other "commonly numbered" credits from other member institutions. Application of transfer credits toward specific degree programs or majors is reviewed at the department or program level.

University policy 6.61 governs the transfer of credit for those who wish to enroll in SUU graduate programs. The University has a unique dual enrollment agreement with Southwest Technical College (STECH). Though not a typical transfer program, STECH students do receive simultaneous credit for their coursework at SUU. For more information about this program, please see **Addendum Two, Appendix 2B**.

Standard 2.C.2
The institution's policies and procedures related to student rights and responsibilities should include, but not be limited to, provisions related to academic honesty, conduct, appeals, grievances, and accommodations for persons with disabilities.

Student Policies

The University has a number of policies related to student's rights, conduct, and appeals processes, including (but not limited to):

- Academic Standards (policy 6.31)
- Academic Integrity (policy 6.33)
- Accommodation for Students with Disabilities (policy 11.9),

- Disability-Related Grievances (policy 11.11)
- Free Speech and Advocacy (policy 5.1)
- Grade Appeals (policy 6.19)
- Graduate Student Appeals (policy 6.64)
- Graduation Requirements (policy 6.49)
- Operation of Personal Transit Devices (policy 5.65)
- Sexual Misconduct (policy 5.60)
- Student Complaints (policy 11.4)
- Student Conduct (policy 11.2)
- Student Records (policy 11.3)

University policies related to student rights and conduct are regularly reviewed by the Student Association (SUUSA), the Office of General Counsel, the Division of Student Affairs, and the Division of Academic Affairs.

Standard 2.C.3
The institution's academic and administrative policies and procedures should include admission and placement policies that guide the enrollment of students in courses and programs through an evaluation of prerequisite knowledge, skills, and abilities to ensure a reasonable probability of student success at a level commensurate with the institution's expectations. Such policies should also include a policy regarding continuation in and termination from its educational programs, including its appeal and re-admission policy.

Academic Placement

Students are placed in University courses and programs through three primary methods:

1. Course prerequisites, which are listed under each course in SUU's General Catalog;
2. Program prerequisites, which are outlined in the "Program Information" and/or "Program Summary" portion of each program's catalog entry; and
3. Placement exams, such as the ACT, Foreign Language Achievement Test (FLATS), ALEKS, Accuplacer, or home-grown testing instruments developed by individual departments.

Placement exam scores are evaluated by the respective departments to ensure that the tested material continues to align with the necessary knowledge and skills required in the entered course. Individual course prerequisites are determined by department faculty to ensure that students progress through the curriculum in an appropriate way and do not enroll in courses without the necessary prerequisite knowledge, skills, and abilities. Program prerequisites are also developed by departmental faculty and ensure that students are prepared for upper-division coursework.

Academic Continuation Policies

University policy 6.31 establishes the academic standards to which undergraduate students are held accountable. The University requires that undergraduate students maintain a minimum grade point average (GPA) each semester through graduation. Students not meeting the minimum standards have the opportunity to progress through different levels of academic

probation. These levels are outlined in both policy 6.31 and in the General Catalog under the "Academic Standards" and "Academic Standing" sections. Additional information on admission appeal and re-admission review can be found on the Admission Review webpage.

Academic standards for graduate students are found in policy 6.64, which establishes a process for student appeals of academic decisions made while they are currently enrolled in a graduate program. University policy 6.61 outlines the process for graduate students to appeal the process of graduate program admission.

Standard 2.C.4
The institution's policies and procedures regarding the secure retention of student records must include provisions related to confidentiality, release, and the reliable backup and retrievability of such records.

Student Record Retention and Privacy

Southern Utah University complies with the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and specific policies and procedures related to this compliance are found in University policy 11.3. Additional guidelines for the retention of student records by faculty are found in University policy 6.29. As a public institution, the University's record retention efforts comply with the State of Utah's public records policies and procedures.

Student records are stored and secured in the University's student information system (Ellucian Banner). Access to the Banner system is controlled via roles and permissions granted to employees on a "need-to-know" basis after appropriate approval from data stewards at SUU. The University follows a strict separation of duties between approvers and data access implementation. The data in the Banner system is stored in an Oracle database. Select individuals also have direct database access to the Banner data stored in the Oracle database for data reporting purposes. Direct database access is granted on a per-table, need-to-know basis. Direct database access is tightly controlled via network firewall rules and requires layered network access to connect securely to a database.

The Oracle database itself is backed up through multiple channels. The University has real-time standby databases in two separate physical locations, one in the data center in Cedar City, Utah, and one in a cloud-hosted data center in Oregon. Nightly, weekly, monthly, and yearly cold backups of the database in encrypted form are also stored on the AWS S3 storage platform.

Standard 2.D - Institutional Integrity

Standard 2.D.1
The institution represents itself clearly, accurately, and consistently through its announcements, statements, and publications. It communicates its academic intentions, programs, and services to students and to the public and demonstrates that its academic programs can be completed in a timely fashion. It regularly reviews its publications to ensure accuracy and integrity in all representations about its mission, programs, and services.

Divisions of Academic Affairs and Student Affairs Communications

The Divisions of Academic Affairs and Student Affairs communicate with a variety of stakeholders (students, faculty, staff, external audiences, etc.) in a number of ways. Prominent among these are the publishing of a General Catalog, maintaining a variety of webpages, establishing the Academic Calendar, and linking to various University Policies & Procedures.

The most important means of communication for the Division of Academic Affairs is the annual General Catalog, which outlines the program requirements and academic policies that apply to entering students of that year, as well as students who elect to change their "catalog year" to take advantage of updates to program and/or overall graduation requirements. The General Catalog is viewable to all internet users and is linked throughout the SUU website, including a General Catalog dedicated webpage, individual programs within the Program Finder, and inclusion in the general website footer. Each academic program entry in the General Catalog includes the credits needed for the General Education program, the major requirements, applicable electives, and the total range of credits anticipated for completing the program. See the All Programs list for examples. The General Catalog also includes information on tuition and fees, faculty and staff credentials, and University policies.

The SUU General Catalog undergoes an annual comprehensive review and editing process several months before it is published each year. All non-program information is copied and sent out to their respective oversight areas for updates to the content. Academic program and course information is not changed through this review; those modifications are handled through the curriculum change process as outlined in policy 6.8.

Each year, SUU's professional Student Success (Academic) Advisors publish sample four-year graduation plans for each baccalaureate program and post them online to make them available to both prospective and current students. Representatives from the Division of Student Affairs are in regular email contact with students, faculty, and staff, alerting them to upcoming signature events and encouraging students to schedule in-person or virtual advisement meetings during regular business hours. Another effective means of communication is through the course syllabus (guided by policy 6.36). At the conclusion of the syllabus for each course is a link to the campus resources available through the Division of Student Affairs as well as a set of standard syllabus statements (including important information related to COVID-19).

Early in the summer before a new academic year, the Divisions of Academic Affairs and Student Affairs collaborate on a comprehensive list of academic programs to ensure its accuracy and

update with any newly approved programs. This list is used in a publication for admissions recruiters and when meeting with prospective students. As outlined in University policy 6.39, academic deans publish an annual report or newsletter available for each college/school. Those can be found here:

- The Dixie L. Leavitt School of Business
- The Beverley Taylor Sorenson College of Education and Human Development
- The College of Humanities and Social Sciences
- The College of Performing and Visual Arts
- The Walter Maxwell Gibson College of Sciences

It should be noted that the College of Health Sciences and the College of Engineering and Computational Sciences are new since June 2020, and have not yet submitted an annual report.

The Division of Student Affairs manages a number of offices with significant student communications efforts. Many of these offices are highlighted in Standard 2.G.1, *Effective Learning Environments*. In addition to the offices mentioned there, the Division of Student Affairs also manages communications for the SUU Career and Professional Development Center, Financial Wellness Center, University Housing, Student Involvement and Leadership, and Community Engagement Center.

Marketing Communication

The Office of Marketing Communication (OMC) uses a number of campus-based methods to inform students, employees, and the community regarding announcements and initiatives as well as activities and events at SUU.

This information is critical to the success of the campus, and helps the University meet institutional policies and state law regarding public communications. Key components in the communication strategy for this information are:

- The mySUU Portal - The mySUU Portal is an internal communication channel used by all SUU employees and students for informational notices, campus events, and access to data dashboards, Banner, email, course registration, the Canvas Learning Management System, and a host of other tools. Information posted to the Portal is typically narrow in scope and priority is given to campus initiatives and announcements, presidential-level events, and campus-wide surveys. In keeping with State and University policy, the Portal is one method used to alert the campus of Truth-in-Tuition hearings, budget hearings, Presidential campus forums, and other official public meetings.
- The T-Bird Flyer - The T-Bird Flyer is a weekly email newsletter sent out each Tuesday morning to all employees of Southern Utah University. The T-Bird Flyer raises employee awareness of campus events, initiatives, and performances.
- Social Media - The OMC manages and creates content for the official @SUUTBirds social media channels, as well as monitors 548 accounts affiliated with SUU. The social media channels reflect a high standard and were ranked in the top 10 in terms of social media engagement by the 2019 Higher Ed Social Media Engagement Report.
- Faculty/Staff Webpages - As part of the internal communication strategy, the OMC maintains the Faculty and Staff page on SUU's website.

The OMC also provides communication and marketing for most campus events. Because of the large number of events and promotions handled by the OMC and the importance of accurate campus communications, the office staff takes great care to update, edit, or remove materials that are inaccurate, improperly placed, or out-of-date.

> ### Standard 2.D.2
> ***The institution advocates, subscribes to, and exemplifies high ethical standards in its management and operations, including in its dealings with the public, NWCCU, and external organizations, including the fair and equitable treatment of students, faculty, administrators, staff, and other stakeholders and constituencies. The institution ensures that complaints and grievances are addressed in a fair, equitable, and timely manner.***

Institutional Ethics

Southern Utah University's reputation is among its most valuable assets. As outlined in SUU's Code of Ethics (policy 5.62), SUU is committed to integrity in all its endeavors. Adhering to high ethical standards helps the University maintain the trust and confidence of both the University community and the public it serves. All University trustees, officers, and employees are expected to undertake their responsibilities on the University's behalf with diligence, professionalism, and compliance to the highest standards of honesty and fairness. This includes being respectful of the rights of others and forthright in all dealings with members of the University community, as well as third parties; protecting the privacy of confidential information; and compliance with all applicable laws, rules, and regulations.

Ethics Complaints

Consistent with policy 5.62 (mentioned above), SUU is committed to maintaining an environment in which open, honest communication is the expectation, not the exception. Any member of the SUU community or the public should be comfortable notifying SUU administration of instances where they believe a violation of policies or standards has occurred. Complainants wishing to remain anonymous can use the *EthicsPoint* system and still receive feedback and correspondence from SUU regarding their reported issue. A link to the *EthicsPoint* site can be found at the bottom of the SUU homepage.

Since the inception of the *EthicsPoint* system in 2017, there have been a total 61 cases submitted for review. Each issue submitted is assigned a case number and reviewed by Internal Audit, the Vice President for Finance and Administration, General Counsel, and the Chair of the Audit Committee. The Director of Internal Audit coordinates discussions with General Counsel and the Vice President for Finance and Administrative Services, moves each case through appropriate investigations, works with the department(s) or unit(s) involved, and ensures communication, resolution, and closure through the *EthicsPoint* system.

Equitable Treatment

SUU has several robust policies, consistent with state and federal law, that promote the fair and equitable treatment of all members of the campus community, and that are addressed in regular student and employee training, including the following:

- Non-Discrimination/Anti-Harassment (policy 5.27)
- Sexual Misconduct (policy 5.60)
- Student Conduct Code (policy 11.2)
- Accommodations for Students with Disabilities (policy 11.9)
- Employees with Disabilities (policy 5.2)
- Faculty Professional Responsibility (policy 6.28)

Grievances

University policy provides fair and timely grievance processes for members of the campus community in a number of different contexts. For example, all of the equity-related policies referenced in the paragraph above have grievance resolution processes, and there are general grievance resolution processes in campus policy, including but not limited to the following: Faculty Due Process (6.22), Employment Grievances (8.4), and Student Complaints (11.4).

> ### *Standard 2.D.3*
> ### *The institution adheres to clearly defined policies that prohibit conflicts of interest on the part of members of the governing board(s), administration, faculty, and staff.*

Conflicts of Interest

Utah's Public Officers' and Employees' Ethics Act (Utah Code Ann. 67-16) regulates Southern Utah University's governing board, administration, faculty, and staff, and contains prohibitions on conflicts of interest, gifts, inappropriate compensation, the disclosure of private information, and other ethical issues involved in institutional governance and employment. SUU has adopted policies that are consistent with the state ethics laws and expects strict compliance with those policies and the laws upon which they are based.

Under SUU's Conflicts of Interest policy (5.7), administrators and employees must avoid actual and perceived conflicts of interest in a broad array of relevant contexts. SUU also has a nepotism policy (5.18) that defines, addresses, and prevents nepotism or the appearance of nepotism in the employment context. Among SUU's policies related to conflicts of interest is the purchasing policy (5.24) which outlines SUU's procurement process and contains requirements and safeguards against the creation of inappropriate business relationships and the inappropriate expenditure of institutional funds. The University's Consulting policy (8.3.7) also addresses and prohibits engagement in conflicting external business relationships by SUU employees.

Standard 2.E - Financial Resources

Standard 2.E.1
The institution utilizes relevant audit processes and regular reporting to demonstrate financial stability, including sufficient cash flow and reserves to achieve and fulfill its mission.

University Financial Stability

The University's fiscal management team provides timely and accurate financial data to establish annual budgets, assist with institutional planning, and provide safeguards so that public funds are spent in the most effective and efficient way possible.

Audit Reports
Each year the Utah State Auditor's Office conducts an audit of SUU's financial statements in accordance with generally accepted accounting standards as set by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) and other regulatory bodies. These audits provide an assurance to the state taxpayers, financial institutions, federal and state agencies, and general constituents of the University that appropriate controls are in place to ensure financial stability and accountability of all funds. The annual Audited Financial Report is published on the university's Accounting Services website.

Following industry standards, this report includes cash flow statements, balance sheets, and audited financial statements, as well as tuition and fee revenue, state tax funds, and auxiliary operations summaries. The Management Letter for the year ending June 30, 2020 is included in **Addendum Two, Appendix 2D**. The letter indicates the auditors did not identify any deficiencies in internal control that would be considered a material weakness.

Listed as KPI 6.6 in the Annual Strategic Plan Report, the University has set a goal of no findings for its annual Audited Financial Report. During the 2017 and 2018 fiscal years, the University had two audit findings that were addressed within Accounting Services. During the 2019 fiscal year, there were no audit findings. From time-to-time, findings do occur which lead to improvements in institutional processes and procedures to safeguard the University's assets.

In addition to financial audits, the University has an Internal Audit Office. This office operates in an independent function, providing traditional and non-traditional audits along with analysis of University operations and consultation on best practices. Internal Audit reports functionally to the Vice President for Finance and Administration, but has direct access to the University President and Chair of the Board of Trustees. The SUU Board of Trustees includes an Audit Subcommittee to review and advise the annual audit plan and risk assessment developed by the Internal Audit office. The subcommittee meets three to four times a year to review audit reports and provide feedback and recommendations as warranted.

The University regularly participates in audits conducted by the Legislative Auditor General's Office. This office is attached to the Utah Legislature and is primarily tasked with performance auditing. Recent Legislative Audits SUU was engaged with include *A Performance Audit of Employee Evaluation Processes in Higher Education, A Performance Audit of the Utah Board of*

Regents, and *A Performance Audit of Inventory and Security Controls at Institutions of Higher Education.* Each of these audits, along with other audits, can be found at the Legislative Auditor General's website link included above.

Investment and IPEDS Reports
As required by state law and University policy, Accounting Services and Soltis Investment Advisors provide public reports on University endowment and other investments. These reports are submitted to the Board of Trustees for their review and approval as a standing item on its consent calendar. An example can be found here. Soltis Investment Advisors, contracted to provide advisory services for University endowment funds, generates a quarterly report. Accounting Services generates a monthly report covering all general institutional funds.

The University Treasurer is responsible for the prudent investment of endowment and institutional funds in accordance with the Utah Money Management Act, federal law, University, and UBHE policies. The University Treasurer and Controller have regular interactions with Soltis Investment Advisors and other investment firms to actively ensure funds are invested prudently while achieving maximum returns.

As required by the UBHE, the University also submits annual financial reports to the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). The most recent IPEDS Financial Report can be found on the Institutional Research website.

Cash Flow and Reserves
State appropriations account for approximately half (48%) of SUU's FY 2021 Education and General (E&G) budget ($100,898,300) and is used to provide day-to-day educational instruction and University operations. The Accounting Services office monitors daily cash flows, ensuring sufficient funds to meet current obligations. The University remains in a solid financial position. A minimum balance is kept in the University checking account with sufficient other liquid funds invested on a short-term basis with the Utah Public Treasurers Investment Fund (PTIF). The PTIF is available to state and local government entities as a short-term cash investment vehicle. University funds invested in PTIF can be made available as needed within 24 hours of a request.

Carry Forward Funds
In the 2015 fiscal year, the administration ended the previous "use or lose" year-end budget process and now allows departments to carry-forward remaining balances in their non-personnel operating budgets across fiscal years. This change also allows the Office of Planning & Budget to carry-forward negative balances to enforce a level of budget accountability.

These carry-forward funds have grown at a significant rate over the past few years, exceeding the minimum recommendation and approaching the maximum as set by Utah Board of Higher Education rule R562. USHE institutions are encouraged to carry forward at least four percent (4%) of appropriated funds annually; however, if such funds exceed seven percent (7%), a report outlining the reason for a carry-forward balance in excess of the threshold, along with a budget proposal for how those funds will be utilized, is required by the Commissioner. At the University department level, if the carry forward amount is greater than $10,000 and more than 50% of the unit's base operating budget, a justification/budget plan is required by the University Budget

Office. Annual Budget Guidelines provide information on the level of specificity required for this report. It should be noted that this process was modified during fiscal year 2019-20, due to mid-year legislative budget cuts. This situation is discussed in greater detail in the section addressing the University's response to COVID-19 (**Addendum Two, Appendix 2C**).

Outstanding Debt
The University has taken a conservative approach to bonding and debt financing and maintains appropriate bond reserves. This position has allowed the University more flexibility when addressing financial impacts such as COVID-19. Based on audited financial statements for the year ending June 30, 2019, SUU's outstanding bonded indebtedness was $11.8 million. Of this amount, the 2011 series bonds will be retired in 2023, reducing debt service payments by approximately $1.0 million annually.

Pledged revenues dedicated to bond payments remain solid. Auxiliary operating revenues net of expenses, in addition to student fee revenue, exceed the annual principal and interest payments. Based on bond covenants, the minimal coverage ratio for SUU's revenue bonds is 1.15. SUU's actual coverage for the previous five years ending June 30th are as follows: 1.86 for 2019, 1.69 for 2018, 1.66 for 2017, 1.89 for 2016, and 1.47 for 2015.

SUU's only other significant debt is for capital leases tied to the SUU Aviation program. Through the acquisition of rotor-wing and fixed-wing aircraft as well as hangar space beginning in 2016, approximately $13.1 million in capital leases have been authorized. With only two exceptions, capital leases are limited to seven years. As of June 30, 2020, a balance of just $6.5 million remained on outstanding leases. With continued growth in Aviation enrollments, which are now above 400 students, financing for these lease payments continues to be secured.

Auxiliary Reserve Balances
Like many universities, SUU has a number of auxiliary operations, including on-campus Student Housing, the Bookstore, Food Services, and the Student Center. Building reserve balances for these operations provide a level of security for meeting unexpected revenue shortfalls, emergency maintenance and repair items, and long-term replacement of equipment and other assets.

SUU Housing operations maintains a reserve balance twice their annual revenue. Housing is the most dependent on reserves to meet the ongoing replacement of significant building components as they reach the end of their use life. Roofing, parking lot asphalt, heating/air conditioning systems, water heaters, carpeting, and other components are replaced based on industry standards using reserve funds.

The Bookstore and Food Services maintain reserves exceeding 20% of their annual operating revenue. The SUU Student Center maintains reserves greater than 70% of its annual revenue. Like housing, the Student Center maintains reserves for major equipment upgrades, modernization, and remodels.

Capital Improvement Funds
Deferred maintenance is a significant challenge for many higher education institutions. A backlog of maintenance needs often eclipses the funding made available, or in challenging financial years, are often deferred. This is not the case in Utah. The Legislature created a capital improvement funding model that has become the envy of many states. During each annual legislative session, the state appropriates 1.1% to 1.3% of the current replacement cost of existing facilities and infrastructure into a capital improvement fund. The legislative appropriation for fiscal year 2020-2021 totaled $128.5 million.

SUU is the beneficiary of these funds based on the percentage of capital facilities within the state. In recent years, SUU's annual allocation has been as high as $4.0 million. A list of projects is compiled and prioritized annually by the SUU Facilities department and presented to the State Building Board, which has responsibility for authorizing projects and allocating the funds statewide.

For fiscal year 2020-2021, the Building Board recommended funding for $3.6 million in projects at SUU, including replacement of the PE Building's pool equipment, safety and code upgrades, window replacements, HVAC upgrades, new air handlers, ADA hardscape repairs, electronic access controls, and others. Pages 55 and 56 of the state Five Year Building Program outline SUU requests and recommendations. These additional state funds make it possible for SUU to maintain its facilities appropriately without creating a significant backlog or becoming an additional burden on tuition.

> ### Standard 2.E.2
> ***Financial planning includes meaningful opportunities for participation by stakeholders and ensures appropriate available funds, realistic development of financial resources, and comprehensive risk management to ensure short term financial health and long-term financial stability and sustainability.***

As part of the 2014 Year Seven Self Study, The Commission made four recommendations to the University. Recommendation Three dealt specifically with Standard 2.E.2:

> ### Recommendation 3
> *The evaluation committee recommends that the University expand its internal budget process to include broad representation of faculty, staff and students.*

The official University response to this recommendation can be found in **Addendum Three, Appendix 3A**. However, because Standard 2.E.2 encapsulates much of what was contained in Recommendation Three, some of that information is also shared here.

Since the date of the 2017 Mid-Cycle Review, the University has revised its annual budget process to ensure inclusion of broad representation and input from faculty, staff, and students. Research and campus discussions have led the University to realign the budget process to make certain that it more closely adheres to the Strategic Plan, while better matching the expectations of the campus community.

Budget Development Responsibilities and Processes

The President's Council is responsible for developing and reviewing the plans and internal policies of the University in order to make formal recommendations to the Board of Trustees. In 2016, the Council was also designated as the primary budget committee for the University. This additional responsibility includes holding open and public budget hearings each January as part of their review of campus budget requests, and making budget recommendations to the President.

Budget Request Submission and Review Process
The President, in conjunction with the Council, outlines the administration's budget priorities for the approaching year, setting expectations for the campus based on the potential for Legislative funding, enrollment growth, tuition adjustments, and other factors impacting University revenues. From this direction, the official Budget Guidelines Memo is developed and released to campus annually at the Fall Assembly in August.

Following the release of the annual Budget Guidelines Memo, each Cabinet member and academic dean begins working with their leadership team to develop formal budget requests. All budget requests are sent directly to the Budget Office, unprioritized. The Budget Office compiles budget requests for each area and then sends the requests to the appropriate dean or Cabinet member for prioritization. All requests in Academic Affairs are additionally prioritized by the Provost.

The Budget Office evaluates and analyzes prioritized budget requests, and provides a "budget score" for the President's Council, based on an adopted rubric outlined within the Budget Guidelines Memo.

Small dollar requests (less than $3,000) are not generally submitted to the Council and are not ranked by the Budget Office for consideration. These items are typically funded through carry-forward funds held by each office.

Public Hearings and Legislative Session
Each January, the Council holds open public hearings seeking input to inform budget deliberations. These hearings are open to the general public and are announced to the campus via email, through the mySUU Portal, and T-Bird Flyer newsletter. During the meetings, which typically include a full day, members of the President's Cabinet and their senior leadership teams make formal budget presentations outlining their requests for the upcoming budget year. These presentations include a visual component (PowerPoint, Prezi, or similar) outlining division Unit Effectiveness Plans, needs, and priorities. Those involved are asked detailed and searching questions by Council members and from the general audience. Based on the budget information presented and feedback from public hearings, the Council deliberates and makes formal budget recommendations to the President.

Ongoing budget updates are provided by President Wyatt during campus and community forums held several times each year. Forums always conclude with an open question and answer section, which often covers a broad array of topics. Through the months of COVID-19 response, the President has continued these forums in an open Zoom and/or livestream format. Participation at

these remote forums has been impressive, often including more individuals and participation than when they were held face-to-face.

During the budget deliberation process, Utah's Legislature holds its annual 45-day session. During this short time, many decisions are made relative to the University's budget for the approaching fiscal year. Appropriations are finalized for state tax funding (currently 48% of E&G revenue); a compensation package, which is funded 75% by the Legislature and 25% by University resources/tuition (largely for merit, market, retention, and benefit adjustments); USHE system-wide priorities as allocated to each school; capital development projects; and other potential funding through individual legislative bills.

Following the conclusion of the annual Legislative session, the University administration assesses revenue estimates and proposed expenditures from the University budget process and deliberates tuition and fee adjustments. For the past two years, SUU has not proposed nor increased its tuition or general student fees as a result of President Wyatt's challenge that the University live within established tuition and general student fee rates for the foreseeable future.

General and program fees are assessed to each SUU student according to the number of credit hours and the School/College for which they are registered. A more detailed discussion of fees is included later in this document.

Budget Finalization Process
Each April, following the Council and President's deliberations on budget allocations, the President's Office schedules a public campus forum to announce final budget decisions. This presentation includes facts and information from the budget proposals and public hearings, along with the rationale for those decisions. Concurrent with this forum, written details summarizing the final budget are distributed by the Office of Planning & Budget. Later in the summer, the University's annual budget book, outlining final budget allocations, is published.

Legislative budget cuts due to the COVID-19 pandemic implemented in April and June 2020 utilized $3.0 million in SUU carryforward funds to cover University expenditures for May and June 2020. A state revenue shortfall of $840 million occurred due to the federal extension of tax returns/payments from April 15th to July 15th. Biweekly draws from the state treasury were suspended through May and June. The Legislature restored these funds in the fiscal year 2020-2021 University budget; however, payments will be spread throughout the fiscal year. Budget cuts compounded by increases in cases of COVID-19 caused uncertainty for Fall 2020 enrollments, attendance, and state revenue. The University plans to hold carryforward funds as an administrative budget reserve until there is more clarity on its financial future.

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

State of Utah Budget Requirements and Fund Types

SUU currently follows an incremental budget process that allows base budgets to carry forward from year-to-year, with new funding requests as the primary focus of the annual budget process. As with any process, there are pros and cons to incremental budgeting. Pros include (a) budget simplicity, (b) funding stability (funds are structured for multiple year outcomes), (c) operational stability (departments operate in a consistent, stable manner), and (d) limited interdepartmental conflict for resources. Cons include (a) overspending ("use it or lose it" mentality), (b) limited complete budget review, (c) status quo (difficult to raise money for new initiatives), and (d) limited incentive for departments to reduce costs.

SUU's budget process is best described as occurring in several stages. Annually, in mid-August, the Governor's Office of Management and Budget (GOMB) requests high-level budget proposals from the Utah Board of Higher Education through the Commissioner's Office. These requests primarily address compensation adjustments for equity, merit, and retention initiatives, as well as changing healthcare premiums. The Commissioner's Office also requests funding for system-wide initiatives such as distinctive institutional mission- and performance-based funding, student growth, market demand, and other statewide programs. As a general rule, SUU receives funding under these state initiatives commensurate with its percent of students within the entire state system (approximately 5%).

The second stage occurs during the annual legislative session. Representatives of SUU, including the President, monitor legislative appropriation, education, and capital funding committee hearings, providing testimony and responding to questions as appropriate. By the end of each legislative session, final appropriations to SUU are documented and verified in order to begin the third phase of the budget process.

The third phase of budgeting includes setting tuition levels, finalizing estimated enrollment growth (or decline), reviewing and approving general and program fees, and setting budget appropriations for campus. Decisions for all of these areas are determined by the President in consultation with the President's Council as outlined previously in this report. The paragraphs below outline the different types of University funds, and the process for allocating and spending them is described.

Ongoing Funds
Beginning each fall and continuing through the winter, the Office of Planning & Budget projects estimated one-time and on-going revenue funding using a model based on year-to-date tuition collections, changes in enrollment, scholarship awards, resident vs. non-resident students, and other potential sources from the system budget initiatives. These funding estimates are used to inform the budget process and to set expectations of revenue availability for the President's Council. The final revenue estimate is available in March following the conclusion of the annual legislative session.

Budget reallocations can and do occur throughout the fiscal year as well. Base budget reallocations occur at every level of the University as priorities or needs shift. These reallocations remain subject to approval from the appropriate Cabinet representative or the President, following a review and analysis by the Office of Planning & Budget. The University includes a compilation of historic budget allocations, workflows, programs, and processes that have become ingrained in day-to-day operations. Reviews of these situations on a regular basis ensure operations do not become overly bureaucratic or outdated. Since annual revenue growth is not always assured, shifting budget needs and priorities to implement the University's strategic plan will often require funding sources from within existing University operations. With this in mind, along with utilizing Unit Effectiveness Plans, Program Overviews, and other departmental annual reports, the President's Cabinet and Council (in conjunction with the Office of Planning & Budget) are authorized to conduct in-depth budget reviews of selected departments, operations, or offices as appropriate to ensure current priorities are aligned with ongoing funding resources.

One-Time Funds
One-time funds are generated when revenues exceed budgeted expenditures or when expenditures are less than budgeted in any given fiscal year. Examples may include one-time appropriations from the legislature (although these are generally earmarked for a specific use), tuition revenue that exceeds budgeted projections, or programs that were previously budgeted that are now being downscaled or eliminated.

Requests for one-time appropriations are collected with annual budget submissions under the same timelines. These requests are also presented to the President's Council for assessment and consideration. Typical examples of one-time budget requests include the purchase of computers, equipment, office furniture, tools, specialized lab supplies, etc. Just as with ongoing requests, small dollar items are not submitted to the President's Council for consideration but are funded within individual department carry-forward balances.

Tuition and Fees Review Process
Tuition rates at the University remain a particular area of concern and focus for the current administration. Administration is keenly interested in providing greater access and affordability for students. Since the 2012-13 academic year, SUU has not requested a tuition increase beyond those mandated by the Board of Regents across all USHE institutions. However, even with minimal increases, SUU's undergraduate instate tuition rate was at 10.8% of the State Median Household Income, above the recommended benchmark of 10% for regional institutions in the Board of Regents Affordability Metric adopted in 2018. The current administration is striving to float down its tuition rates to comply with the new Affordability Metric.

At their November 2018 meeting, the Regents permanently removed their uniform tuition increase across all institutions policy starting with the 2019-20 academic year. Revised policy (R510, 3.2) allows each institution to recommend a tuition increase independent of other system schools. In its ongoing effort to reduce student costs, SUU determined not to request tuition or fee increases for the 2019-2020 or 2020-2021 academic years. This marked the first time in 42 years that SUU had not raised its tuition and/or fees. Additionally, SUU is the only USHE

institution that did not raise its tuition and fees during this period. It is the intention of the current administration to not raise tuition or student fees for the foreseeable future.

Student Fees
General and other student fees are charged by SUU to cover costs incurred from on-campus student events and activities. Out of an abundance of concern for excessive costs being passed on to students through fees, the Utah State Legislature and Board of Regents established a Student Fee Review Committee at each USHE institution. Governed by University policy 11.8, this committee, which includes students, student government leaders, and staff, conducts hearings annually to determine revenues and expenditures from student fees. This Committee also accepts and reviews requests for increases and decreases in student fees or the creation of new categories. The Committee review is presented annually at a mandatory Truth-in-Tuition hearing, held in conjunction with the SUUSA board meeting in February/March. Per Utah State Code (53B-7-101) and Board of Regent Policy (R510, 3.2.6) meeting notification is given in a wide variety of ways, including the mySUU Portal, T-Bird Flyer, student newspaper, the Utah State Public Notice website, and other outlets.

Program Fees
Program fees, governed by University policy 6.42, were established by SUU to eliminate the onerous burden of maintaining over 800 individual course fees. These fees are assessed to each student by credit hour taken within each academic college. Accumulating costs by college/school allowed the University to determine an average cost assessed by class and reduced the number of fees to approximately a dozen. A Program and Course Fee Committee was established by the administration to monitor and police program rates, quantity, and appropriate use of fee revenue.

Significant Contracts and Grants
The University receives significant grant funding for student financial aid and various educational programs directly related to its educational mission, as well as funding for community programs including Head Start, Rural Opioid Response, the Intergovernmental Internship Cooperative, and others. A list of the University's major grants and contracts is available upon request.

Standard 2.F - Human Resources

<u>*Standard 2.F.1*</u>
Faculty, staff, and administrators are apprised of their conditions of employment, work assignments, rights and responsibilities, and criteria and procedures for evaluation, retention, promotion, and termination.

Human Resources Role and Processes
The strategic objective of the SUU Human Resources (HR) department at SUU is to enable the University's overall mission of being a "dynamic teaching and learning community." This is accomplished through the development and implementation of human capital programs that attract, retain, and motivate a strong institutional workforce. Using both internal expertise and input from top consultants in compensation, benefits, and training/development, the HR department has developed the SUU Total Rewards plan that ensures market competitive compensation, attractive benefits, and programs that support significant professional development opportunities for employees.

It is also the role of Human Resources to act in some ways as "the voice" of SUU's various employee groups, as the University looks to become more effective and efficient in its policies and processes. The HR department at SUU actively solicits feedback from all individuals and constituent employee groups to assist in the process of continuous improvement.

Employment Processes
As an Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) employer, the University posts job openings through a centralized portal. Advertising is done through a range of employment posting services, including state workforce services and boards with a specific focus on diversity. For both staff and faculty openings, a requisition process involves the approval of the hiring manager (Unit Director, Department Chair, or College/School Dean), the respective Vice President or the Provost, Human Resources, Office of Planning & Budget, and the President. Upon requisition approval, searches internal to the University are posted for five days. Searches external to the University are posted for at least 15 days for staff positions and 30 days for faculty positions. All postings are subject to the approval process; however, emergency hires may be made without an approved job posting in the event that there is a ready candidate to fill the position on an immediate basis. These cases are typically one-year hires to allow time for a more thorough evaluation of the need and for an official job posting and hiring process.

Personnel Selection Process - Faculty
The process used for the hiring of faculty positions is directed by University policy 6.38. The application review and interviewing process are conducted by a committee composed of a diverse group of faculty members from the program. A predetermined rubric is provided by the academic program and used by the hiring committee to review all applications. The top three or four qualified candidates are recommended for an interview by the hiring committee, and this is done in tandem with the dean and the department chair. Candidates are interviewed using the same group of questions with an opportunity for follow-up queries. Interviews are offered in the same modality (face-to-face or remote) for all candidates, although this may differ based on cost and candidate availability.

At the conclusion of the interview process, a final recommendation is made by the hiring committee to the dean and Provost for consideration. Upon authorization from the dean and Provost, the committee chair extends a verbal offer to the candidate and initiates the electronic approval process in the HR Applicant Flow database. This database routes the hiring recommendation through a list of approvals, culminating with the President. After proper approvals have been made, a *Notice of Appointment* letter is sent to the candidate that outlines the conditions of employment. Once the appointment letter is signed and returned to the University, the applicant is considered to be ready to enter the University's HR onboarding process.

The *Notice of Appointment* letter for faculty positions consists of the issuance of a contract for the nine-month period of August to May. For tenure-track faculty hires, the contract will automatically renew as long as there are no changes necessitating a new contract or the employee has not been terminated. In the case of non-tenure-track faculty, contracts generally renew on an annual basis but are subject to funding, performance, and need of that faculty to continue in an adjunct capacity. For additional information regarding faculty appointments and contracts, please see University policy 6.24.

Personnel Selection Process - Staff
The hiring of staff is governed by University policy 5.21 and follows a process similar to that of faculty selection, using a selection committee composed of diverse individuals. Depending on the position type and level, the diversity can be drawn entirely from the department where the selected individual will work or from a mix of departments. The committee reviews all applicants, identifies the top three to four, and conducts interviews. As with the faculty interviews, efforts are made to interview using a consistent modality across candidates with consistent questions. Depending on the level of the position and the confidence in the candidate, a second interview may be conducted with candidates that seem best fitted to the position. Following the completion of all interviews, the committee selects a final candidate for the position. The hiring committee chair extends a verbal offer to this candidate and initiates the electronic approval process in the HR Applicant Flow database. After proper approvals have been made, a *Notice of Appointment* is sent to the candidate, and once signed and returned to the University, the applicant is considered to be ready to enter the University's onboarding process.

The HR *Notice of Appointment* letter for staff positions (both full and part-time) is an offer letter outlining the general terms of employment. Beyond a six-month probationary period, the majority of staff positions are considered "at will" and, therefore, are considered to be ongoing unless performance, restructuring, transfer to another position, or resignation occur. In the event that a less-than-half time position is offered, continuity of employment is neither implied nor promised. In all cases, the *Notice of Appointment* offer letter, stating the position, salary offered, and tentative start date are forwarded to the selected candidate. Upon the candidate's signed acceptance of the letter, the background check process and other hiring processes are initiated.

Employee Orientation
The orientation process provides new employees with an understanding of SUU's history, leadership, mission/vision, and unique programs specific to the University. The basic operational needs of a new employee are addressed, with introduction to employment policies, logistical

needs, and required compliance training information. Because the wellbeing of staff and faculty is a priority, the orientation also covers basic safety policies and the benefits offerings. An overview of some of the materials covered in the orientation process can be seen here. Once the University orientation process has been completed, the new employee then receives specific departmental and position-based onboarding as directed by their supervisor.

Employee Evaluation, Promotion, and Termination
Through the orientation, probation, and evaluation processes, employees are informed of their responsibilities and rights. University policies and procedures for employee evaluation are spelled out in detail in Standard 2.F.4. University policies 6.1 and 6.24 guide the appointment, retention, promotion, and tenure processes for faculty members. Staff members are promoted as recommended by supervisors, or by application for employment at a higher position level.

While it is the express intention of the University to provide stable employment opportunities for its workers, certain situations require that the institution has employment separation policies. USHE policies R481 and R482 and University policies 6.12, 6.22, and 8.3.5 govern the circumstances and processes through which staff and faculty may be separated from employment for cause, resignation, or because of University financial issues. As seen in the policies listed above, faculty, particularly tenured faculty, are afforded a higher level of employment protection than staff. However, in cases where budgetary or operational issues necessitate termination of a position, incumbent staff employees may apply for another open position for which they are qualified. In the event there is no other open position for which they are qualified, staff are subject to lay off.

Standard 2.F.2
The institution provides faculty, staff, and administrators with appropriate opportunities and support for professional growth and development.

Professional Growth and Development for All Employees

The University provides faculty and staff with significant opportunities for professional growth, including internal and external training, tuition waivers, sabbaticals, and funding for event attendance.

Tuition Waiver for All Employees
As part of the educational mission of SUU, tuition waivers are available for benefit-eligible employees, their spouses, and their dependents. Tuition waivers cover the cost of tuition but not any course fees, textbooks, or other required materials. Employees become eligible for this benefit on the first day of the course term following employment by SUU, and their application for a tuition waiver must be approved by the employee's supervisor, division vice president, and Human Resources. For additional information about the employee tuition benefit, please see University policy 8.2.1.

Supervisory & Management Training
Currently SUU is engaged with third-party supervisor/leadership training providers to educate and prepare employees for supervisory duties. While the Franklin-Covey suite of training is

currently utilized for staff and student employees, it is ultimately meant to be a supplement to internally-developed content from the HR department at SUU. Once completely developed, the new, in-house content will consist of seminars that focus on both the technical skills necessary to manage personnel as well as the "soft skills" necessary to successfully communicate with and lead a group of employees. These materials will be tied to the goals of the University Strategic Plan and Core Themes.

President's Leadership Academy
The Southern Utah University President's Leadership Academy is sponsored by the Office of the President. The program was developed to build institutional leadership capacity among faculty and staff at SUU and assist with fulfilling the University mission and strategic plan by providing support of faculty and staff in achieving their professional and personal goals.

The academy focuses on three primary areas: 1) personal leadership development, 2) group and team leadership development, and 3) institutional knowledge and context. Academy participants discover approaches to leadership from President Scott L Wyatt along with senior university administrators, faculty, and staff who act as presenters for the group. Participants also learn to recognize the need for leadership and the importance of their personal contributions to the institution. Through the academy, participants gain information and knowledge that benefits the entire university. Participants are chosen through an application process. For additional information on this program, please visit this web site.

A.P.E.X.
Originally begun as SUU Convocations in 1983, the A.P.E.X. Lecture Series (Ask, Ponder, Educate, [X] variable) brings speakers, artists, academics, and other experts from around the world to the campus. The series is sponsored by the Provost's Office and directed by a faculty member on a half-time teaching load with a support staff. All A.P.E.X. events are free and open to the public, and attendees include students, faculty, staff, and community members.

Faculty and Staff Development Funds

Faculty Sabbatical and Leave
One important opportunity is the option for sabbatical leave. Tenured faculty members who have attained the rank of associate professor or above are eligible to apply for a sabbatical leave. Such leaves are designed to "provide time and resources [for faculty] to revitalize themselves through scholarship, writing, or professional/artistic development. Faculty may also use a sabbatical leave for completing a terminal degree" (policy 6.15). The length of time for a sabbatical leave can range from a fraction of a year up to, and not to exceed, one full year. Upon taking a sabbatical leave, the faculty member must serve an additional six years to be eligible for a subsequent sabbatical leave.

Faculty Development Funds
Faculty at SUU may apply for professional development support from two different funds: the Faculty Scholar Support Fund (FSSF) and the Faculty Development Support Fund (FDSF).

The FSSF is funded by the Provost's Office and administered by each academic college/school to accommodate the unique scholarly/creative activity within their disciplines. The FDSF is

funded by the Provost's Office and administered by the Center of Excellence for Teaching and Learning (CETL). The primary goal of the FDSF is to promote pedagogical and professional development for faculty in their efforts to develop as teachers. For both funding sources, any full-time faculty member is encouraged to apply. All funded activities are intended to support the mission and strategic goals of the University as well as the home department and college/school.

<u>Center of Excellence in Teaching and Learning</u>
The Center of Excellence in Teaching and Learning (<u>CETL</u>) is a resource for all faculty who are passionate about teaching and developing their craft. CETL offers a number of professional development opportunities to help faculty stay up-to-date on best practices in teaching and learning, experiment with new teaching strategies, and maximize the impact they have on students. The 2019-2020 academic year was the most successful to date in terms of participation, with 414 total participants and 196 individuals (as some people participated in multiple events), which are increases of 102% and 53% respectively over the 2018-2019 academic year.

<u>Staff Development Funds</u>
The Staff Professional Development Fund (<u>SPDF</u>) is designed to provide University staff with funding for personal and professional development directly related to their job responsibilities. All benefit-eligible exempt (professional/executive) and non-exempt (classified) staff who have completed the six-month probation period may apply. The SPDF is funded by the University as part of its regular budget, and the funds are managed and allocated by a committee of staff, led by two members of the Staff Association Board.

> ### *Standard 2.F.3*
> ***Consistent with its mission, programs, and services, the institution employs faculty, staff, and administrators sufficient in role, number, and qualifications to achieve its organizational responsibilities, educational objectives, establish and oversee academic policies, and ensure the integrity and continuity of its academic programs.***

University Staffing

Southern Utah University employs sufficient faculty, staff, and administrators to achieve its institutional goals, meet student needs, and ensure the integrity of its academic programs. In the 2014 Year Seven Report, the University reported a total of 260 faculty and 533 staff employees (full time and part time) as of Fall 2013. As of Fall 2019, the University employee numbers are as follows:

Image #2 - Current Employees - All Categories

SUU Fall 2019 Employees (As Reported to IPEDS)			
Employee Category	**Full-Time**	**Part-Time**	**Total**
Instructional Staff	334	153	**487**
Other Staff	580	146	**726**
Total	**914**	**299**	**1213**
Source: SUU IR & Assessment Office, 8-17-2020.			

The data reported here represents a significant increase since 2013 for both faculty (87.3% increase) and staff (36.2% increase). The growth in both faculty and staff employees is directly attributable to the nearly 50% increase in student enrollment that the University has seen since the date of the last report. The institution remains committed to providing students with effective learning environments, including small class sizes, and student services that meet the needs of individual learners.

Non-instructional staff position requests are brought forward using the budgeting process outlined in Standard 2.E.2. Departments wishing to add staff make the request through their regular budget development cycle, providing data that shows the need that the new position will fill, and a narrative that ties it to specific objectives in the University Strategic Plan.

Faculty Hiring Models Using Predictive Analytics
Prior to Fall 2019, the University had never attempted to use predictive analytics to forecast faculty needs for future terms. For Fall 2019 a new process was created to forecast student enrollment growth and the number of new faculty necessary to support that growth. This process is now in place and guides the hiring of faculty for the University.

University enrollment and data teams worked with an external consultant to establish enrollment targets for the upcoming fall term based on lead generation strategies, a program/market Ansoff matrix, and high school graduate population trends. Those targets are converted into student credit hours (SCH), and the data team reviews historical enrollment data at three- and five-year intervals to forecast SCH enrollment by course prefix to show where the current full-time faculty shortage "hotspots" are. Using this information, faculty positions are requested as part of the overall budgeting process outlined in Standard 2.E.2 and, once approved, the new positions are opened, advertised and filled following the University policies listed in the narrative for Standard 2.F.1.

> ### Standard 2.F.4
> **Faculty, staff, and administrators are evaluated regularly and systematically in alignment with institutional mission and goals, educational objectives, and policies and procedures. Evaluations are based on written criteria that are published, easily accessible, and clearly communicated. Evaluations are applied equitably, fairly, and consistently in relation to responsibilities and duties. Personnel are assessed for effectiveness and are provided feedback and encouragement for improvement.**

Employee Evaluation

University employees are evaluated and given feedback for improvement as a regular part of their terms of employment, and all employees are reviewed on an annual basis according to the process used by their group. University faculty are evaluated according to the guidelines found in University policies 6.1 and 6.28. Together, these policies spell out the requirements for professional responsibility, the faculty evaluation process (including issues related to rank advancement and tenure), and sample documents to be used. Faculty members are reviewed annually with a specific focus on four areas: (1) Faculty Engagement, (2) Teaching Effectiveness, (3) Service/Leadership, and (4) Scholarship.

The initial evaluation of staff employees is done after a six-month period of employment probation, as stipulated in University policy 8.3.2. After that time, staff employees are evaluated annually by their supervisor, using the HR-published employee evaluation form. Staff who feel that they have been evaluated unfairly may file a grievance under University policy 8.4.

Administrators are also evaluated on an annual basis. All officers in the Division of Academic Affairs are evaluated annually by their supervisor. Every three years, formal evaluations of academic officers are administered per University policy 6.2 that includes an anonymous, standardized survey by eligible faculty, staff, and administrators. In other campus divisions, vice presidents conduct annual reviews of their senior staff, and the vice presidents are evaluated by the President.

The University President is formally evaluated at the end of the first year of employment, with comprehensive evaluations every four years thereafter, as per USHE policy R209. The fourth-year comprehensive evaluations are conducted by a committee appointed by the Chair of the UBHE, at the recommendation of the Commissioner for Higher Education. The President also receives annual performance reviews from two members of the UBHE assigned to SUU to serve as the President's Resource and Review Team. This team meets regularly with the President to assess his relationship with the University Board of Trustees, review the strategic goals of the University, and provide feedback on presidential effectiveness. As directed by USHE policy R208, the Resource and Review Team holds a performance review with the President every spring to share their observations and recommendations for improvement. The results of this review are shared with the UBHE and the Commissioner's office.

Standard 2.G - Student Support Resources

Standard 2.G.1
Consistent with the nature of its educational programs and methods of delivery, and with a particular focus on equity and closure of equity gaps in achievement, the institution creates and maintains effective learning environments with appropriate programs and services to support student learning and success.

In the Division of Student Affairs, Southern Utah University takes a two-tiered approach to the creation of effective learning environments:

- Tier One - A focus on the individual student
- Tier Two - A focus on larger cohorts of students coalesced around certain identifying characteristics, such as gender, race/ethnicity, age, marital status, veteran status, etc.

The following narrative will outline elements of both approaches, and provide evidence that the University has created and maintains effective learning environments there. Additional information regarding effective learning environments from the classroom perspective can be found in Standards 1.B.1 and 1.D.2.

Effective Learning Environments: Tier One - Individual Student Focus

Since 2014, University leadership has placed a special focus on student retention rates (year 1 to year 2) and student completion/graduation rates (150% completion) as large-scale measures of student success. These are tracked on the Data Dashboard and reported on the Annual Report on the Strategic Plan as KPI 2.2 (Year One Retention Rate) and KPI 2.4 (150% Completion Rate). Retention and completion rates are important predictors of student success, because they help measure the likelihood that students will achieve their educational goals and do so in a timely manner.

One additional measure, the Campus Environment KPI 6.9, is important to the indicator because it speaks to student perceptions about whether the campus environment is conducive to learning and the free flow of thoughts and ideas. The score for KPI 6.9 is aggregated from a number of questions and student responses found in the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE, last administered in 2019) and Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI, last administered in 2018). For additional information on how this data was aggregated, please see KPI 6.9 in the Annual Report on the Strategic Plan and **Addendum One, Appendix 1A** which includes additional details regarding the Strategic Plan Scorecard and current status for all KPIs.

Taken together, these three indicators (2.2, 2.4, and 6.9) are at the heart of the Tier One efforts of the Division of Student Affairs. The current university-wide status for these three KPIs can be seen in the SUU Data Dashboards at the links provided above.

As indicated by a wide range of survey responses regarding campus environment, students attending SUU found the University campus to be an effective learning environment, conducive both to the free expression of ideas, and at the same time safe and welcoming. Although the goals of 75% retention and 55% completion have not yet been achieved, the University (through the Division of Student Affairs) has implemented a set of internally developed, cost-effective

initiatives that have raised SUU's retention rate to a historic high of 74% (an increase of 13% since 2014) and a completion rate of 50.1% (an increase of 14.3% since 2014). The University uses the data derived from these three KPIs to guide and support the activities of Student Affairs as they engage students on an individual basis.

Retention Efforts - Predictive Analytics
On an individual student level, efforts are made from the very beginning of the enrollment and advisement process to identify those that may have high retention or completion risk factors. The Division of Student Affairs is assisted greatly in these efforts by the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA). Using a machine learning technique called GBM (Gradient Boosting Machine), OIRA generates retention/graduation prediction scores for new first-time, full-time undergraduate students. This approach uses historical data and computer algorithms to predict a given student's likelihood to be retained/graduate. Prior to the beginning of the first semester, a student's likelihood to be retained in year one is predicted based on known demographic data and academic preparedness scores.

Since historical data has shown that a student's first semester college GPA is an important predictor of future success, a second prediction score is generated at the end of the first semester that incorporates the first semester GPA. Along with the predictive score for retention, a prediction score for the likelihood of graduation is also generated incorporating the student's first semester GPA.

Based on these predictions, students are organized into three groups (red, yellow, green) based on both their own score and how students with similar scores have persisted in the past. This allows Student Affairs and other campus entities to pay special attention to students who may be at greater risk of not persisting. For additional information about the use of data in the advisement process, please refer to Standard 2.G.6.

Retention Efforts - T-Bird Takeoff Questionnaire
The University administers an in-house instrument called the T-Bird Takeoff Questionnaire (TTQ) to all incoming first-year students in an effort to collect information vital to retaining them. It comprises three sections: the Main TTQ, General Education, and Campus Connect. The Main TTQ consists of 45 questions that collect information about the student's motivations for attending SUU, their fears and strengths, their family's educational background, and their plans for paying for college. The General Education section of the TTQ allows students to select their preferred classes. This information is used primarily by Student Success Advisors (SSAs). The Campus Connect section asks 17 questions designed to collect information pertinent to helping the student develop a sense of belonging at SUU.

A variety of staff members use the information gathered from the TTQ to ensure that students are offered the best possible services for their needs. For example, based on TTQ responses, first-generation students are invited to participate in programming specifically focused on first-generation student needs. Students struggling to find their place on campus are connected with activities that line up with their interests. Advisors are able to address student fears and help create plans for overcoming obstacles that emerge in TTQ answers. The TTQ, then, is the first

point of contact that onboarding and advising teams have with students, and it provides Student Affairs staff with a wealth of information that can be used to support and retain students.

Retention Efforts - First Year Experience
The Office of Orientation and First-Year Experience (FYE) strives to retain first-year students, especially first-generation and introverts, by providing them with a sense of belonging and connecting them to various resources, clubs, peers, faculty, staff, etc. Data collected through self-identification questions in the T-Bird Takeoff Questionnaire (TTQ) and quizzes in the Online Orientation modules indicate that of SUU's first-year student body, 43% are first-generation university students and 50% identify as introverts.

The FYE Office, through the First to Fly program, sponsors regularly scheduled "First-Generation Friday" events each semester. These workshops teach success skills and provide networking opportunities between first-generation students. The First to Fly program also provides a bi-monthly newsletter with relevant information, dates, and event flyers for first-gen students. The First to Fly program has created a data bank with contact information of first-generation students, faculty, and staff that are willing to have conversations and give advice to other first-generation students.

The FYE Office uses interest-based pairings to create small, quiet events for groups of introvert students several times each semester. Personal invitations are sent to these events with the intent to keep the attendance small. Introverts also receive a bi-monthly newsletter with information that helps their personality type succeed academically, understand their personality type, and understand their extrovert counterparts.

Retention Efforts - Assistant Coaches for Excellence and Success (ACES)
This initiative, referred to by the acronym ACES, exists to provide upper-division peer mentors for the University's incoming first-year class. The ACES office utilizes email and text messaging to disseminate relevant and pertinent information to first-year students. This communication is based on the personal needs of each incoming student, which can include campus announcements, referrals to office and resources, important deadlines, and regular follow-up to ensure students are finding success.

Completion Efforts - SOAR
Although the University has significantly raised both its retention and completion rates since the last reporting cycle, the completion rate has moved upward more slowly than hoped. In an attempt to graduate students at the same rates they are retained, SUU has created a sophomore-year program entitled SOAR to combat the "sophomore slump" and help more students graduate.

The sophomore year is a critical year for many students. During their first year at college, students often receive an enormous amount of attention through orientation, peer-mentoring, and the first-year experience. However, upon transitioning to their second year, many sophomores experience a slump, which can result in a dip in GPA, persistence, and completion rates. There are a number of factors that lead to this slump, including feelings of pressure to make life-altering decisions regarding their major, internships, jobs, careers, balancing academic activities

and social or extra-curricular activities, or simply a feeling that they are somehow "less special" because they are receiving less attention than they did during their first-year.

The SOAR initiative aims to help second-year students avoid the slump through six primary activities: 1) programming, 2) mentoring, 3) core competencies, 4) major and career selection, 5) seminars and workshops, and 6) roadmaps and planning. A sample of programming and mentoring in this initiative includes an annual Sundaes on Sunday event. During this event, second-year students are invited to meet their SOAR peer mentor, have a conversation with the President's Cabinet, and get an ice cream sundae. This initiative functions as an ice breaker for students to meet their peer mentor and potential faculty or staff mentors.

Completion Efforts - Counseling and Psychological Services
The Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) office contributes to student success, retention, and graduation by providing essential services aimed at reducing students' distress and enhancing their psychological well-being, quality of life, and the ability to function competently. The CAPS office creates psychoeducational information which is disseminated and accessed primarily through the department website. The website provides information about how to access services, types of services, student rights and responsibilities, the department's professional scope of practice, etc. Self-help resources, psychological skill development, coping skills, crisis hotlines and services, along with other educational resources are all accessible on the website.

Completion Efforts - Tutoring Center
The Tutoring Center contributes to the retention and graduation of SUU students by providing peer-to-peer support that enhances learning and promotes academic success. In-person and online drop-in tutoring and Peer-Assisted Learning (PAL) groups are free of charge for all students. Recurring, pre-scheduled tutoring has a modest fee for those interested. Over 60 tutors serve 1,200-1,500 students in roughly 150 courses each semester. Particular focus is on high enrollment/high DFW courses. Tutors are carefully selected in consultation with faculty and trained to work with a diverse student body.

Effective Learning Environments: Tier Two - Student Cohort Focus

In addition to the efforts undertaken by the Division of Student Affairs for students on an individual basis, the Division also sponsors a number of cohort-based organizations to assist students with shared demographic commonalities. These organizations and the initiatives they sponsor are designed to increase retention and completion and to increase the effectiveness of the campus learning environment. The effectiveness of the programs is reported in the Division of Student Affairs Unit Effectiveness Plans.

The Center for Diversity and Inclusion
The Center for Diversity and Inclusion (CDI) contributes to the retention and graduation of historically underrepresented communities by providing emotional, social, and cultural support and education. The CDI staff connects students with campus resources to help them achieve academic success, and sponsors initiatives such as clubs, Beacons (peer mentors), and cultural celebrations. Information regarding CDI activities and initiatives is disseminated via the Center's website, as well as via social and traditional media such as Instagram, Facebook, fliers, posters, emails, digital signage, the Toilet Times (a flyer posted in restrooms), Campus Calendar, and

mySUU Portal. In addition, a <u>weekly newsletter</u> is available by subscription through the Center's website.

Non-Traditional Student Services
Non-Traditional Student Services (<u>NTSS</u>) assists students with diverse life experiences and backgrounds in developing meaningful and lasting connections at SUU. Such connections support and facilitate successful retention, completion, and provide a sense of community and belonging. As of the third week of Fall 2019, based upon age 25+ and married students, non-traditional students comprise 28.3% of the University's total enrollment. A non-traditional student is defined as one who meets at least one of the following criteria:

- Adult learners age 25 or older;
- Married, divorced, or widowed;
- Has dependent children (not counted in the non-traditional student population); and/or
- Returning to school after a break of 3 years of more (not counted in the non-traditional student population).

TRiO Student Support Services
TRiO Student Support Services (<u>SSS</u>) is a federally funded program designed to provide a variety of services, tools, and resources to assist students on their educational path. Southern Utah University hosts three TRiO programs: Upward Bound, Talent Search, and Student Support Services. These three programs have been exemplary over the decades in bringing educationally or economically disadvantaged students into higher education and lifelong learning. TRiO services include assistance in choosing a college; tutoring; personal and financial counseling; career counseling; assistance in applying to college; workplace and college visits; special instruction in reading, writing, study skills, and mathematics; assistance in applying for financial aid; and academic assistance in high school or assistance to reenter high school or college.

Disability Resource Center
The Disability Resource Center (<u>DRC</u>) at Southern Utah University continuously provides support and services to students with disabilities who are overcoming different educational difficulties because of their individual challenges. Reasonable accommodations are offered to participants in the program, giving them access to services requested. The number of students served by the Disability Resource Center has grown significantly from the date of the last accreditation report. In 2013, 179 students were served, and that number grew to 600 students in 2019. Center staff work with every student requesting accommodations or modifications to classroom instruction or assessment to ensure that they are receiving the best educational experience possible.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee

In May 2020, Dr. Schvalla Rivera, Chief Diversity Officer for the University, took employment at another institution. In considering the replacement process for this position, particularly against the backdrop of national and local protests related to the death of George Floyd and others, the President's Cabinet unanimously agreed to solicit input from a wide range of constituent groups prior to re-opening the position. This input gathering process has included:

- Meeting and participating with local protestors;

- Meeting with campus and community law enforcement;
- Meeting with student groups, including the leadership of the Black Student Union;
- Meeting with the leadership of the Faculty Senate and Staff Association, as well as other members of the President's Council; and
- Establishment of a campus-wide task force for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

The new task force was chaired by Head Football Coach DeMario Warren, the first African-American head football coach at the Division I level in the state of Utah. Membership on the task force represented a broad campus constituency and was determined by a process of discussion and nomination. The task force began the process of collecting data from the campus about the environment for underrepresented communities and the desired role and expectations for the Chief Diversity Officer. The committee made its recommendations to the University Strategic Planning Committee on November 30, 2020.

Standard 2.G.2
The institution publishes in a catalog, or provides in a manner available to students and other stakeholders, current and accurate information that includes: institutional mission; admission requirements and procedures; grading policy; information on academic programs and courses, including degree and program completion requirements, expected learning outcomes, required course sequences, and projected timelines to completion based on normal student progress and the frequency of course offerings; names, titles, degrees held, and conferring institutions for administrators and full-time faculty; rules and regulations for conduct, rights, and responsibilities; tuition, fees, and other program costs; refund policies and procedures for students who withdraw from enrollment; opportunities and requirements for financial aid; and the academic calendar.

The University's General Catalog

The University annually publishes a General Catalog. In addition to stating the institutional mission and admission requirements, the General Catalog outlines individual program requirements and academic policies that apply to entering students for that academic year, as well as for students who elect to change their "catalog year" to take advantage of updates to program and/or overall graduation requirements. Searchable links to General Catalogs from prior years are also available at this website for students following academic requirements from previous General Catalogs.

The General Catalog is viewable to all internet users, is easily searchable, and is commonly linked across the Southern Utah University website, including a General Catalogs dedicated webpage and individual programs within the Program Finder. Each academic program entry in the General Catalog includes expected learning outcomes, the credits needed for the General Education program, the major requirements, and any applicable free electives, as well as the total range of credits anticipated for completing the program. Detailed course information is also included for all courses, including credit hours, course description, registration restrictions, and course sequencing. For additional information on specific programs, please see the All Programs link.

The General Catalog also contains links to the academic calendar, general information related to tuition and fees (as well as a link to the current tuition and fees), refund policies and procedures, and links to University policies related to student conduct, grading, rights, and responsibilities. The General Catalog also contains information about the University's faculty and staff, including names, titles, degrees held, and conferring institutions, as well as broader information about the University mission and history.

The SUU General Catalog undergoes an annual comprehensive review and editing process several months before it is published each year. Academic program and course information is not changed through this review but is handled through the curriculum change process as outlined in policy 6.8.

> ### Standard 2.G.3
> ***Publications and other written materials that describe educational programs include accurate information on national and/or state legal eligibility requirements for licensure or entry into an occupation or profession for which education and training are offered. Descriptions of unique requirements for employment and advancement in the occupation or profession shall be included in such materials.***

As an institution within the Utah System of Higher Education (USHE), Southern Utah University is a member of the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA). Membership in NC-SARA requires that each participating institution maintain a "landing page" dedicated to providing information about its academic programs and eligibility requirements for licensure or entry into occupations or professions that are regulated by state agencies. While primarily focused on providing students with information related to licensure or employment within the State of Utah, this page is updated annually with additional information from other states regarding licensure requirements and other regulated occupations or professions.

> ### Standard 2.G.4
> ***The institution provides an effective and accountable program of financial aid consistent with its mission, student needs, and institutional resources. Information regarding the categories of financial assistance (such as scholarships, grants, and loans) is published and made available to prospective and enrolled students.***

Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships

The SUU Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships (OFAS) is dedicated to assisting students finance their educational goals by providing them with clear, timely, and accurate information. The OFAS has a website designed to provide as much information as possible to students who wish to attend, are currently attending, or have attended the University in the past. In addition to the web-based information system, the OFAS is open daily during University business hours to assist students in a face-to-face environment. The University also provides additional support and financial aid information for first-time college students in the Recruitment Office, and additional information for all students about private loans through the *FastChoice* portal.

The University participates in the following federal programs for financial aid:

- The Federal Student Aid Programs (OPE ID 003678-00)
- The PELL and FSEOG (Federal Supplemental Equal Opportunity Grant) Programs
- The Federal Work Study Program (FWS)
- The Federal Direct Loan Programs.

The University also participates in the following State funded Student Aid Programs:

- The Higher Education Success Stipend Program (HESSP)
- The Access Utah Promise Program (UTPromise)
- The Utah State Regents Scholarship
- The Utah New Century Scholarship and
- TDILP (Talent Development Incentive Loan Program).

The University also provides Academic, Department, Talent and Donor scholarships. These scholarships are administered through the OFAS, in conjunction with the sponsoring department or division.

To determine eligibility for the Federal Aid Programs, students must first complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). This application determines a student's eligibility for Grants, FWS, and Direct Loans. When SUU receives the FAFSA information for a student interested in attending SUU, the information is imported into Banner where it is analyzed through a predetermined set of system parameters to determine student eligibility, and the next steps for the application process. If all requirements are met, the Banner system automatically determines the amount of the student's Federal Aid eligibility.

Should a student application be selected for FAFSA Verification (a randomly-determined request for additional confirmation of the information submitted on the FAFSA form), the OFAS uses Campus Logic's Student Forms to complete this process. The staff in the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships regularly meet with students who need assistance in resolving these and any other issues.

Standard 2.G.5
Students receiving financial assistance are informed of any repayment obligations. The institution regularly monitors its student loan programs and publicizes the institution's loan default rate on its website.

Financial Aid Information

The OFAS at SUU follows all requirements related to the Federal Direct Loan Program. Students borrowing for the first time are required to accept the awarded Direct Loans, complete Federal Entrance Counseling, and complete a Master Promissory Note (MPN). In addition, all students (potential, current, and former) can reach out to the SUU Financial Aid and Scholarships Office online, or in person during regular University business hours to receive help in understanding

financial aid options, current aid awards, and loan repayment options. The University provides current and historical information on loan default rates here.

Potential and current students can also receive financial counseling through the Financial Wellness Office, which offers a wide range of services, including:

- One-on-one financial counseling sessions
- Budgeting and financial goal setting
- Understanding FAFSA, aid packages, and the costs of attendance
- Graduation loan repayment
- Support coaching on private scholarship search and applications
- Counseling on dealing with debt
- Support with understanding and managing student loans
- Help responding to an unexpected life event

Standard 2.G.6
The institution designs, maintains, and evaluates a systematic and effective program of academic advisement to support student development and success. Personnel responsible for advising students are knowledgeable of the curriculum, program and graduation requirements, and are adequately prepared to successfully fulfill their responsibilities. Advising requirements and responsibilities of advisors are defined, published, and made available to students.

Academic Advisement

The University's Student Success Advisors (SSAs) promote student retention through holistic and proactive advising that encourages personal growth and responsibility while facilitating an efficient path toward program completion. Advisement staff go beyond advising about academics and strive to truly get to know their students and their individual strengths and challenges. Advisors take a highly proactive approach to advising, staying in regular contact with their students by communicating information and by holding appointments designed to address challenges and to set students up for success.

Upon starting the position, SUU Student Success Advisors participate in a rigorous four-week training program that focuses on the three components of training recommended by NACADA (National Academic Advising Association): conceptual, informational, and relational. This program includes training on all systems and resources across campus, on holistic advising methodology, and on the specific colleges, departments, and majors for which the new hire will be advising. During the four weeks, the advisor (1) shadows a minimum of 30 appointments; (2) conducts a minimum of 15 role play or mock appointment scenarios in which they are given unique student concerns to solve in a mistake-friendly environment; and (3) practices creating education plans and new student schedules in the majors for which they will be advising. Each new advisor also works with a mentor from their content area to ensure they are not only fully prepared with the content needed to advise their student cohort, but that they have also met with and developed a relationship with the faculty and staff in the areas in which they will advise.

Finally, new advisors work with leadership over their first six months to ensure they understand their expectations and how their role supports the overall mission of the university.

Advisors are also provided with on-going training via biweekly Advisor Team Meetings. Examples of recent training topics include student development theory, ethics, and free speech on campus. At each meeting, advisors practice using holistic advising techniques, too. Advisors are presented with a real-life difficult advising scenario that they role play with another advisor to practice and enhance their skills in holistic advising, followed by a team discussion on best practices for handling the situation.

The Advising team is centralized, with each advisor reporting up through a Lead SSA to the Director of Advising. Each advisor is assigned to work with a population of students in a specific college/school across campus. In units requiring more than one advisor, students are divided between advisors according to the first letter of their last name. There are also two advisors who specialize in working with exploratory students who are working toward choosing a major.

An SSA's initial point of contact with students is via the T-Bird Takeoff Questionnaire (TTQ), which they use to register students for their first semester of classes. After reviewing the TTQ and getting an initial schedule together, an advisor's first appointment with a first-semester student will focus solely on getting to know the student: their background, their dreams, their goals, their fears, etc. These initial contacts allow advisors to be a strong influence in students' lives, as they open the door for meaningful connection. Future appointments build on that foundation while incorporating academically focused conversation.

Advisors strongly encourage students to meet with them each semester. Advisors also utilize available resources to target specific groups of students to invite them in for check-in appointments. As mentioned previously, each student is labeled as red, yellow, or green based on their projected risk for not retaining or graduating. Via the Advisor Dashboard, SSAs have access to these predictions and can use them for targeting their most at-risk students. A sample of this on the Advisor Dashboard can be seen below:

Image #3 - Advisor Dashboard Score
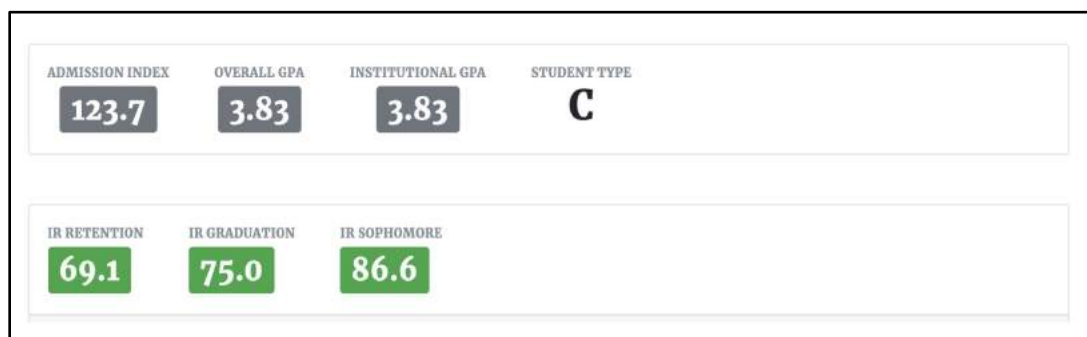
On the Dashboard, SSAs also see a pass/fail prediction for each class a student takes. This, again, allows for targeted outreach to help ensure students are aware of and planning for the challenges of their semester. Advisors also do outreach to students who haven't made an appointment in a

semester, students needing degree plan updates, and students approaching degree milestones (as a few examples).

The Advising program is evaluated each year in February via a student satisfaction survey that is distributed to all undergraduate students. This survey contains questions across four general areas: advisor availability, knowledge and helpfulness, approachability, and ability as an advisor and mentor. Results from this survey are used each year to adjust team goals for the following year. Advising requirements and responsibilities are published on the Advisement website at this location.

Standard 2.G.7
The institution maintains an effective identity verification process for students enrolled in distance education courses and programs to establish that the student enrolled in such a course or program is the same person whose achievements are evaluated and credentialed. The institution ensures that the identity verification process for distance education students protects student privacy and that students are informed, in writing at the time of enrollment, of current and projected charges associated with the identity verification process.

Security in Online Teaching and Learning

In keeping with the University's focus on increased access and affordability, SUU has significantly expanded its online (distance education) presence in recent years through several efforts. The University has increased the staffing and operating budgets in the Office of Online Teaching & Learning (OTL) to provide instructional design and technical support to faculty. As OTL has expanded, efforts have been made to update processes to ensure consistent, high-quality online courses across campus. In the past two years, OTL instructional designers have supported faculty to create and/or redesign over 100 online courses. As SUU continues to expand its online presence, OTL is committed to maintain a high-quality learning environment.

The University has also increased staffing and operating budgets in the SUU Online office that markets and recruits for online-only programs. The SUU Online office now uses sophisticated marketing techniques to reduce the cost per lead and to streamline the enrollment process. Additionally, SUU entered into a partnership in 2019 with Academic Partnerships (AP), an online program manager. Through this partnership, AP helps to recruit students in four online graduate programs and one online undergraduate program.

Cybersecurity and Online Learning
Access to online learning materials is through the mySUU Portal. All students have their own username and password assigned. Via the use of a single sign-on, these credentials provide access to the student's mySUU portal, registration information in Banner, online coursework in Canvas, and computer labs on campus.

In an effort to encourage the use of strong passwords, SUU uses a tiered password approach. All passwords must be a minimum of 10 characters in length. If a password is between 10 and 12 characters in length, it must also use three complexity variants (mix of uppercase letters,

lowercase letters, numbers, or symbols) and the password will expire in six months. A password between 13 and 17 characters requires the use of two complexity variants and will expire in two years. If a password of 18 characters or more is used, there are no complexity variant requirements and the password will expire after three years.

Per University policy 5.51 (section V.C.4.b.), each user is responsible to "protect their user-ID from unauthorized use." Users are ultimately responsible for activity conducted using their account. If a user suspects that their account has been compromised, they should change their password immediately. Additionally, Section V.C.5.b. states that users must not "…knowingly allow other persons to use University Information Technology Resources for personal gain, for example, by selling access to their User-ID." Students who allow others to use their credentials, whether for access to University systems or to facilitate cheating, are subject to disciplinary action, including dismissal from the University.

Should a student forget their password, they can contact the IT Help Desk for assistance. Before password resets are performed by the Help Desk, the student's identity must first be verified. The preferred method of remote identity validation is for the Help Desk employee to send a code via text message to a phone number already on file in Banner or for the Help Desk to hang up and call the student back at a phone number already on file in Banner. Due to the ease of spoofing caller ID, the inbound caller ID is not an acceptable form of identity validation.

In the event that it is not possible for the student to receive a text or phone call, the Help Desk employee can also establish a teleconference with the student and have the student present a government photo ID via video chat. If none of the above are possible, the Help Desk employee can ask the student several knowledge-based questions drawn from information stored about the student in Banner. Once the student's ID has been positively confirmed, a temporary password is sent to the student. Upon first login with the temporary password, the student is forced to change it to a password not previously used.

Student Identification and Online Learning
In addition to students being required to access Canvas with their SUU username and password, the Office of Online Teaching & Learning staff encourages instructors to employ best practices in verifying online student identification and provides guidelines and assistance for promoting academic integrity. Support staff provide regular training regarding online course design and encourage the use of the latest technologies and practices in effectively verifying student identification, including encouraging students to upload photo identification to their Canvas profile. The University currently operates on the premise that the admissions application is completed by the student themselves and that only the student has access to their login credentials.

Standard 2.H - Library and Information Resources

Standard 2.H.1
Consistent with its mission, the institution employs qualified personnel and provides access to library and information resources with a level of currency, depth, and breadth sufficient to support and sustain the institution's mission, programs, and services.

Library Mission and Description

As described on its website and its most recent strategic plan, the mission of the Gerald R. Sherratt Library is to "feed curiosity and inspire the habits, skills, and dispositions in patrons necessary to learn, create, discover, adapt, and grow" and its vision is to "serve the learning community of Southern Utah University (SUU) by facilitating knowledge creation, curation, access, transmission, and innovation." Use of library and information resources are guided by a robust set of Library policies.

The Gerald R. Sherratt Library is an 82,418 square foot, high-tech learning facility with over 550,000 items in its physical collection. Linked to other libraries throughout the State of Utah, the United States, and the world, the Library provides materials and services to support university curriculum in bringing students, faculty, librarians, and technology together. The online catalog and electronic bibliographic indexes provide access to the Library's print and electronic collections and to additional resources worldwide. These materials and services are available to all SUU students, faculty, and staff who have a valid SUU ID card.

Library Personnel
The Sherratt Library has 17 full-time and part-time staff members, as well as 11 tenured, tenure-track, and non-tenure-track faculty employees. The Library is organized around four service departments: Access Services, Copy Center, Information Technology, and Resource Sharing, each under the supervision of a Coordinator who reports to the Associate Dean. Library faculty report to the Department Chair who reports to the Associate Provost. A full listing of Library personnel and their assignments may be found here. For a listing of staff and faculty academic qualifications, please see the University's General Catalog.

Library & Information Resources
To assess the adequacy of the Library's holdings, a faculty librarian is assigned to each academic department/program and serves as a liaison. Liaisons collaborate with departments to ensure programs and courses align with library and information resources. Whenever a new academic program is developed, faculty librarians review the curriculum and the Library's current holdings and provide a letter documenting existing resources and recommend new additions.

Library employees routinely monitor the collection (including consortial subscriptions to ebooks and serials) in terms of alignment with current and emerging trends as outlined by resources published by the American Library Association (ALA) and the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL).

Under the guidance of the Collection Development Librarian, budget allocations for new acquisitions are based on needs of academic programs, student and patron use, and

recommendations from faculty from across campus, and each faculty librarian actively selects materials to be added to the Library's holdings to support the teaching and research mission of the University.

Library Holdings (2019-2020)

Books	225,682
eBooks	329,721
Audiovisual	9,094
Special Collections	34,848
Serials (print & microforms)	627
Serials (electronic, full-text)	40,237

Further details regarding the Library's collections can be found in the 2019-2020 Annual Report.

Library and information resources are supported through membership in the Utah Academic Library Consortium (UALC), an organization formed in 1971 to improve the availability and delivery of information services for higher education libraries in Utah. Membership in this organization provides access to the state-wide expertise and insights from all major institutions of higher learning in the state, including both public and private institutions.

Library Instruction
Key to the Library's teaching mission is specific research training provided at the request of instructors across campus from a wide variety of academic programs. Known as "1-shots," these short-term instructional sessions focus on discipline-specific resources and methods that support upper-division coursework, writing assignments, literature reviews, and undergraduate research.

Unique to the mission of the Sherratt Library is the training of school librarians through the School Library Media Endorsement Program (courses with the LM prefix), which prepares students to become Certified Library Media Specialists in Utah and other states with similar certification requirements. In addition, the Library faculty teach a required one-credit General Education Information Literacy course (INFO 1010), and elective courses on information and society (INFO 3000) and on archives (INFO 4100) that serve students from a range of social science majors, such as history, sociology, anthropology, and other disciplines that attract students who may wish to work in a library or museum setting.

Standard 2.I - Physical and Technology Infrastructure

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

The departments of Information Technology and Facilities Management at the University function as an integral part of the institution by providing data management infrastructure and quality buildings and outdoor spaces that enhance learning opportunities for students. Both departments are thoroughly engaged in a philosophy of proactive and preventive solutions, with a focus on addressing problems before they become critical. An important part of this approach is to employ highly qualified leadership and front-line staff who are able to solve issues and support activities on campus with progressive solutions. These organizations are fervent about safety, security, regulatory compliance, conservation of resources, quality service, and cooperation with campus and state level entities to ensure an environment which fosters learning, collegiality, and innovation.

Facilities Management

Facilities Management at Southern Utah University oversees 1.86M gross square feet of building space spread over a main campus of 157 maintained acres. The department is guided, in part, by the Facilities Master Plan (revised 2008). This Master Plan communicates the vision for capital reinvestment and development, as seen by campus leadership. The Facilities Master Plan is updated every two years and is slated for a significant evaluation and rewrite in 2021. The Utah System of Higher Education ensures the sufficiency of facility quality and quantity. Each year, this governing body approves facility expansion at each state institution, a process that evaluates the quantity of available square footage on every state campus in Utah. In coordination with other state agencies, the Utah System of Higher Education also has personnel who focus on making sure facilities designated for higher education in Utah meet sufficient quality benchmarks to provide optimal code compliance, utilization, standards of care, and other metrics that indicate the quality of these buildings.

As an overall performance measure, Facilities Management reports its Preventative Maintenance (PM) Audit score as a key performance indicator for the University strategic plan. This score reflects the proficiency of facilities care as evaluated during biannual audits performed by the State of Utah Department of Facilities Construction and Management (DFCM). This intensive, third-party audit looks at 188 critical points in 17 different categories, including facilities administration and record keeping, deferred maintenance, custodial care, grounds and landscaping, mechanical infrastructure, building envelope, indoor air quality, interior finishes, and several other categories. A final audit score is generated as a weighted average of the 17 categories.

The State of Utah building officials at DFCM use this audit data, including the final score, to determine the eligibility of each state-owned facility for capital improvement funds which are appropriated annually by the Utah State Legislature. An agency must score consistently above

the 90th percentile to be eligible for these state funds. Southern Utah University has scored over the 90th percentile for more than a decade, indicating that the University facilities are being cared for according to State standards and the best practices recognized in the industry. The status of this KPI can be seen in **Addendum One, Appendix 1A** which includes additional details regarding the Strategic Plan Scorecard and current status for all KPIs.

By consistently scoring over 90%, Southern Utah University is protecting state assets valued at over $545M and is able to secure between $3M and $5M in capital improvement funding each year. These funds are specifically appropriated for the repair, replacement, and development of campus infrastructure systems. Examples include the replacement and renewal of major cooling systems, central heat plant and steam distribution systems, parking surfaces, electrical distribution equipment, building envelope elements such as windows and roofs, and many other infrastructure-related projects. By statute, capital improvement funds are not to be used for programmatic requests unless approved explicitly by the DFCM. Additionally, Facilities Management at SUU uses the audit data to internally assess staffing levels, task assignments, maintenance focus points, administrative records, and funding allocations for the department. For additional information about campus facilities planning, please see the <u>Facilities Management Operations Plan</u> or the <u>Facilities Management Annual Report.</u>

Equipment replacement cycles are determined by evaluating industry standards such as ASHRAE equipment life expectancies, work order system data, presence of redundant systems, availability of replacement parts, and institutional knowledge. Data obtained from facility condition assessments and the preventative maintenance audits are also used as third-party confirmation that a component or system is ready for replacement. Life/safety components and those items critical to campus infrastructure are given top priority.

Facilities Management - Future Projects
In the coming year, beyond routine building maintenance and numerous programmatic remodels, Facilities Management has received funding for capital replacement needs in several areas. By prioritizing replacement projects according to ASHRAE equipment life expectations and campus maintenance records, SUU personnel are able to make capital replacement decisions which maximize equipment life. The goal is to orchestrate systems replacement before a catastrophic failure occurs, which may negatively affect campus operations and academic activities. Funded projects in the coming fiscal year include the following:

- Data cabling upgrade - $360,000 - General Classroom Building
- HVAC systems replacement - $1,201,200 - PE Building, Event Center, Conference Center, Head-end control system
- Window replacements - $430,000 - Geoscience Building (design in process)
- ADA hardscape repairs - $180,000 - Campus wide (design in process)
- Electronic access control enhancements - $125,000 - Numerous locations across campus (in process)
- Safety and Code upgrades - $465,000 - PE Building locker rooms
- Pool water filtration and pumping systems replacement - $630,000 - PE Building (design in process)

In addition to this work, Facilities Management makes a concerted effort to anticipate future trends on campus and respond to administrative directives with ongoing strategic planning and leadership team discussions. These conversations provide objectives and action items that populate the Operations Plan and serve to guide the department in a cohesive manner. Priorities for elements such as meeting ADA standards, campus security, and life/safety come from planning documents (for example, the ADA Exterior Paths of Travel, ADA Campus Evaluation, Legislative Audit Findings, Hazardous Materials management, and others).

All documents referenced in this narrative are compiled by campus personnel, with input from outside consultants and industry experts as needed, and are available upon request.

Information Technology

The Department of Information Technology (IT) has identified several systems that are critical for student success and that are tracked for up-time (availability). Critical systems identified for tracking are:

- The SUU website (www.suu.edu)
- mySUU portal
- CAS, the single-sign-on used for authenticating to mySUU, Canvas, email, etc.
- Banner Self-Serve
- Degree Works

This metric was selected because in order for the systems to be considered up and reachable, most other IT processes and systems also have to be functioning correctly. Additionally, this is a numerically measured metric which lends itself well to presentation in a dashboard. The IT department has monitoring systems in place allowing it to obtain the data needed to feed a dashboard and has set a goal of 99% up-time for critical student systems, which equates to no more than 432 minutes a month of downtime. The status of this KPI can be seen in **Addendum One, Appendix 1A** which includes additional details regarding the Strategic Plan Scorecard and current status for all KPIs.

The IT staff regularly patches its various systems to mitigate bugs and security vulnerabilities in the code. The Administrative Systems team recently deployed a redundant CAS (central authentication service) server which will significantly improve up-time on this key piece of infrastructure. This particular redundancy allows IT to take one server off-line for patches and other updates while the other server remains available for login services (allowing IT to continue providing services with little to no downtime). This upgrade provides enhancements to quality and security as well. In the past, IT only installed Banner upgrades and Oracle patches during two windows of the year (generally over holidays) resulting in a large backlog of upgrades and longer outages. Since the CAS redundancy was implemented, this system has an average uptime of 99.9985%.

Information Technology - Future Projects
The following is a brief list of recent investments in the IT infrastructure, and plans that have been funded for the 2021 fiscal year:

- The data center firewalls will be separated from the perimeter firewalls and VPN capacity will be expanded. This will provide additional security while increasing the robustness of the VPN connections for those working remotely, especially important during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Crowdstrike anti-malware software contract renewed (with coverage July 2020 through July 2025).
- Cameras are being installed in all classrooms across campus to increase the availability of lectures to students who may not be able to physically attend class due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.
- Edge network devices in most campus buildings will be upgraded to 10Gbps capable switches to increase the bandwidth available to allow video streaming of lectures from classrooms. Some fiber upgrades will also be required and will be completed. Wireless will be upgraded to a minimum of 801.11AC capable access points.

As part of the technology master planning process, Information Technology continues to work with Facilities Management to utilize capital improvement funds to entirely replace the data infrastructure in at least one building on campus each year. This process involves replacing all data cabling throughout the building with new cabling that meets current standards, replacing all network switches with new models, replacing wireless access points with the latest technology, and replacing the fiber optic cables that service the building. The following is a brief list of budgeted funds for this effort and showing recent projects completed, as well as plans for fiscal year 2021:

- FY 2018: Walter Maxwell Gibson Science Building ($240,000)
- FY 2019: Engineering and Technology Building ($145,000)
- FY 2020: Bennion Building ($196,000)
- FY 2021 (in progress): General Classroom Building ($360,000)

The technology master planning process also includes an equipment and replacement procedure for campus computer labs and classrooms. The computers in the open student computer labs (available to all students across all disciplines) are replaced every other year in an effort to keep the best technology available to all students. Other computer labs are on three-year replacement cycles. The two-year-old and three-year-old computers that get removed are in turn cascaded to other labs that have lower technology requirements. This allows all labs to be regularly replaced while maximizing the life of the computers, with computers remaining in service for approximately five years. Computers used for teaching in the classrooms across campus are typically replaced every three years.

The enterprise resource planning (ERP) software in use at SUU is Ellucian Banner. This ERP software maintains all records critical to the university business (e.g., student records, course information, human resource information, university finances, etc.). It is deployed in the Amazon AWS Cloud using AWS as infrastructure as a service. The virtual machines deployed in AWS for Banner are purchased as three-year reserved instances. At the end of three years the utilization over the previous three years and expected utilization for the coming three years is analyzed and an appropriate level of reserved instances are purchased for the next three years. This reserved instance replacement/upgrade procedure was most recently completed in February 2020.

Summary and Conclusion

Since its last Year-Seven Self Study Report in 2014, Southern Utah University has undergone a campus-wide planning process that resulted in the approval of a comprehensive 2016-2022 Strategic Plan. That document, which has been cited throughout this report, has been used to guide the University's efforts in terms of mission fulfillment, providing overall statements of vision and core themes, as well as strategies for implementation, and measurable outcomes. Under the direction of Dr. Jon Anderson, new Vice President for Academic Affairs, the University will embark on a new strategic planning initiative during the 2020-2021 academic year.

Policies are in place that govern a wide range of University activities, including governance, academic freedom, institutional integrity, resource allocation and purchasing, student and employee conduct, and human resource processes. These policies comply with USHE policy and statutes within the State of Utah and are regularly reviewed and updated.

Since the last comprehensive accreditation review by NWCCU in 2014, the University has also significantly improved its processes for budget development and resource allocation. As required by Recommendation Three from prior reports, and as outlined here in the Standard 2.E report narrative, the process is now significantly more inclusive and transparent, with ample opportunity for campus participation and public comment (see **Addendum Three, Appendix 3A - Response to Recommendation 3 - Budgeting Process**). Likewise, the University has developed a robust and successful approach to General Education Assessment as required by Recommendation Four (see **Addendum Three, Appendix 3B - GE Assessment** for additional information).

Since 2014, SUU has also enjoyed a period of significant enrollment growth and program expansion. This growth has been planned and purposeful. As a result, this has been achieved without lowering standards for admission and without significant negative impact to the student-to-faculty ratio or average class sizes. The University has invested resources in both recruitment and retention efforts to achieve this objective, and has used predictive analytics to identify students who may be at risk of not completing their education and to expand the faculty and staff to meet the growing student body. Funds have also been invested in developing and maintaining campus facilities and technology infrastructure to meet growing demand.