4 FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS

> **4.1** The institution evaluates success with respect to student achievement consistent with its mission. Criteria may include: enrollment data; retention, graduation, course completion, and job placement rates; state licensing examinations; student portfolios; or other means of demonstrating achievement of goals. **(Student Achievement)**
>
> **X** Compliance

Narrative

An integral part of the University of West Florida's (UWF's) mission is to enhance educational access and attainment, as well as personal and professional development, for its undergraduate and graduate students. Both UWF and the Board of Governors for the State University System (SUS) of Florida monitor student access and achievement closely through a variety of metrics, including those related to enrollment, successful course completion, student retention and graduation, job placement and continued education, and professional licensing examinations. Additionally, UWF administers survey questionnaires to both enrolled students and alumni to ensure that their perceptions of the services provided by the University are aligned to their academic and student support needs. Using data from these and other sources to inform the development and refinement of strategies and programs to promote student success is a UWF priority.

As delineated in the narrative for Core Requirement 2.5, UWF maintains data-informed planning, assessment, and improvement processes at all levels of the University, and across locations and program modalities, with clear linkages to UWF's mission, vision, values, and strategic priorities. This integrated system of planning, evaluation, and accountability provides critical information regarding student achievement, as well as the effectiveness of academic and student support services designed to promote student achievement.

Performance Accountability

UWF's performance accountability system is grounded in responsibilities outlined in the Florida Constitution and Florida Statutes, as well as regulations of the Board of Governors for the State University System of Florida and the UWF Board of Trustees. Florida Statutes reinforce the constitutional expectation that the Board of Governors, or the Board's designee (i.e., the University Board of Trustees), (1) define "the distinctive mission of each constituent university"; pr0ategic plan specifying goals and objectives for the State University System and each constituent university, including each university's contribution to overall system goals and objectives"; [3] (3) "implement an accountability process that provides for the systematic, ongoing evaluation of quality and effectiveness of state universities"; and (4) "monitor performance at the system level in each of the major areas of instruction, research, and public service, while recognizing the differing missions of each of the state universities." [4] Florida law goes on to state, (5) "The Board of Governors shall develop an accountability plan for the State University System and each constituent university. The accountability plan must address institutional and system achievement of goals and objectives specified in the strategic plan . . . and must be submitted as part of its legislative budget request." [3]

University Work Plan and Annual Accountability Reports

In fulfilling these responsibilities, the Board of Governors instituted a comprehensive planning and performance monitoring system in 2009. The Board also approved Regulation 2.002, which requires each institution to submit a multi-year University Work Plan (with annual updates) and an Annual Accountability Report designed to inform strategic planning, budgeting, and other policy decisions for the State University System of Florida. The University Work Plan outlines an institution's top priorities, strategic directions, and specific actions and financial plans for achieving those priorities. The Annual Accountability Report "describes progress against articulated goals and summarizes other key data, with accompanying narrative to highlight or explain information, when applicable." [5]

UWF's current Strategic Plan [6] sets forth the University's mission and strategic priorities. Chief among these priorities is a focus on enhancing student access, progression, learning, and development. With UWF's mission and Strategic Plan as a foundation, the University Work Plan and Annual Accountability Reports provide venues for establishing targets, evaluating performance, and ultimately improving on metrics associated with student access and achievement. UWF, in collaboration with the Board of Governors, establishes thresholds for success. Typical metrics tracked by means of the University Work Plan and Annual Accountability Report include such indicators as enrollment, retention and graduation rates, percent of bachelor's degrees awarded without excess hours, average time to degree, degrees awarded annually, bachelor's degrees awarded to minorities, and percent of bachelor's graduates employed or continuing their education in Florida. The Board of Governors requires institutions within the System to set both short-term (1-year) and longer-term (3-year) goals for key metrics, as well as to evaluate performance trends. [7] UWF has provided a copy of the latest annual update to its University Work Plan [8] and a copy of its latest Annual Accountability Report [9] in the supporting documentation to illustrate one way the University establishes targets and then evaluates its success with respect to student achievement consistent with its mission.

Performance-Based Funding

In January 2014, the Board of Governors approved a performance-based funding model for the System. The model includes 10 metrics that evaluate the institutions on a range of issues. Two of UWF's 10 metrics are "choice" metrics, with one picked by the Board of Governors and one by UWF's Boards of Trustees. The Board of Governors chose the performance-based funding (PBF) metrics after reviewing more than 40 of the metrics included in the University Work Plans. The model has four guiding principles: (1) Use metrics that align with SUS Strategic Plan goals; (2) reward excellence or improvement; (3) have a few clear, simple metrics; and 4) acknowledge the unique mission of each institution. The PBF metrics include measures that are relevant to student achievement, such as the percent of bachelor's graduates employed full-time in Florida or continuing their education in the U.S. one year after graduation, the six-year graduation rate for FTIC students (full- and part-time), the academic progress rate (second-year retention with a GPA equal to or greater than 2.0), and bachelor's degrees awarded without excess hours. (Refer to page 6 in the 2014-2015 Update to the UWF Work Plan for a complete list of PBF metrics and UWF targets.) [8]

Each year, institutions within the System are evaluated on either excellence or annual improvement for each metric. Both the excellence scale and the improvement scale have five benchmarks ranging from low to high. The lowest benchmark receives one point, whereas the

highest receives five points. The higher points earned for either excellence or improvement are counted in a university's total score. Although the criteria and funding parameters may change as the Board of Governors refines the model, currently, a university must earn more than 25 points to be eligible to receive new funds, as well as to have a held-back portion of its base funding restored. A university scoring 25 points or fewer (or the three lowest scoring universities) will receive no new funds; additionally, the university must submit an improvement plan to the Board of Governors and show improvement according to that plan in order to have withheld base funding restored. The benchmarks for excellence are based on 2025 goals in the State University System of Florida Strategic Plan and an analysis of relevant data trends, whereas the benchmarks for improvement are based on a review of data trends for each metric. Performance-based funding metrics have been incorporated into the annual updates to the University Work Plans and will be incorporated into the Annual Accountability Reports going forward. [10]

Key Performance Indicators

In addition to monitoring UWF's performance on metrics identified in the University Work Plan and Annual Accountability Report, UWF's Board of Trustees monitors the University's performance on other Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) related to the University's mission and priorities. [11] UWF has identified a number of universities that have certain individual characteristics and records of performance on select metrics, which, when taken in the aggregate, help create composite pictures of desirable peer and aspirational peer institutions. Given the significant variety among colleges and universities, no single institution serves as a comprehensive peer or aspirational peer. However, collectively, identified peer and aspirational peer universities can provide appropriate and challenging benchmarks for UWF on a series of performance metrics. The Board has reviewed select trend data at UWF and at the identified peer and aspirant universities, has identified benchmarks, has established targets for many KPIs, and now tracks progress on these metrics annually. The annual evaluation process includes not only a review of trends, but also any needed adjustments to targets, and recommendations for improvement strategies. The Board of Trustees monitors enrollment trends, as well as KPIs related to student achievement, such as retention and graduation rates, degrees awarded annually, and the median salaries of baccalaureate graduates. Although UWF continues to pursue means by which to improve its performance on these KPIs, the University has consistently achieved outcomes at levels similar to or better than its identified peers. [12]

Strategic Enrollment Planning

UWF proposes enrollment targets in the annual updates to the University Work Plan, including planned growth in headcount by student type (FTIC, AA transfers from the Florida College System, other transfers, master's-level students, doctoral students, and non-degree-seeking students). For example, future targets for master's-level student enrollment reflect the historical trend at UWF of graduate-level students constituting an increasingly larger proportion of the student body as a whole. UWF also proposes student-credit-hour FTE targets based on method of instruction (distance, hybrid, traditional), as well as FTE by level and student residency for tuition purposes, with an indication of whether they are state-fundable FTE. For example, the planned annual growth rate for non-state-fundable FTE is larger than for state-fundable FTE, again based on historic trends in student credit hour FTEs. All of these targets must be approved by the Board of Governors. [13]

A challenge for any regional public institution of higher education is to determine the level of access it can provide within the context of its mission and available resources. In recent years, UWF has focused on extending access to a greater number of students and gaining a better understanding of those factors that lead to persistence and academic success for UWF students. In the 2012-2017 update to UWF's Strategic Plan, the University articulated a need to "develop and execute a University-wide coordinated and strategic recruitment and enrollment plan that defines an optimal student profile within the context of UWF's mission and available resources." [6] UWF convened an ad hoc strategic enrollment and management team, consisting of members of the UWF community from offices related to enrollment planning and management, to make recommendations regarding how to achieve this objective. Informed by the team's recommendations, UWF created a standing Strategic Enrollment Planning and Management Council to monitor, evaluate, and revise strategic enrollment plans; track enrollment KPIs, benchmarks, and assessments; and coordinate the work of the various units involved in enrollment planning and management. This Council is chaired by the Assistant Vice President for Enrollment Affairs, who is assisted in planning efforts by the Director of Student Retention Initiatives and the Director of Strategic Enrollment Planning and Institutional Research. [14]

The Council presented an institutional Strategic Enrollment Plan to the Provost at the end of the 2013-2014 academic year. [15] The plan is informed by data and analyses necessary to determine successful and "at-risk" student profiles; to develop enrollment forecasts and models; to monitor enrollment of subpopulations; and to track other student groups, such as those who are accepted to the University but do not enroll, those who enroll but are not retained, and those who graduate and continue in higher education. Additionally, the Council plays a lead role in determining planned growth by student type, by method of instruction, and by fundable FTE, as required by Section 1011.90, Florida Statutes. [16]

Successful Course Completion

Another means by which UWF assesses the educational attainment of its students is by monitoring students' successful course completion. UWF examines successful course completion predominantly through analyses of D, W, and F (DWF) posted grades (at both the course and the section level) across instructional sites and modalities. UWF's ASPIRE (Accreditation, Strategic Planning, and Institutional Research & Effectiveness) unit completes these type of analyses regularly and provides reports to the Director of Strategic Retention Initiatives and members of the Committee on Retention Efforts. These individuals, in turn, review the reports to pinpoint courses of concern that may be targeted for interventions, such as Supplemental Instruction. [17] A few data points from a recent University-wide analysis of DWF rates over the past three fall semesters is presented below:

Table 4.1 – 1 Analysis of DWF Rates at the University of West Florida

		Fall 2011	Fall 2012	Fall 2013
Number of courses offered (all types)		1277	1310	1269
Number and percent of courses (all sections combined) with 30% or greater DWF rate		109 8.5%	95 7.3%	91 7.2%
Number and percent of courses (all sections combined) with 30% or greater DWF rate and 10 or more students enrolled		87 6.8%	76 5.8%	66 5.2%
Number of courses at each level with 30% or greater DWF rate and 10 or more students enrolled	1000-level courses	7	11	9
	2000-level courses	29	24	24
	3000-level courses	26	24	14
	4000-level courses	20	17	17
	5000-level courses	4	0	1
	6000-level courses	1	0	1
Number of sections		2239	2384	2307
Percent of sections with 30% or greater DWF rate		11.66%	10.36%	9.62%
Percent of grades awarded in DWF categories (all sections)		15.78%	15.89%	15.37%
Percent of each grade type awarded (all sections)	A	26.97%	25.91%	28.07%
	A-	10.88%	10.30%	10.10%
	B+	5.73%	8.40%	8.34%
	B	12.59%	12.45%	12.59%
	B-	8.90%	6.13%	5.71%
	C+	4.54%	4.92%	4.89%
	C	6.86%	7.29%	7.15%
	C-	2.08%	2.25%	2.26%
	D+	1.25%	1.37%	1.35%
	D	2.62%	3.05%	2.91%
	F	4.91%	5.53%	5.09%
	G (Defending Thesis or Dissertation)	0.18%	0.30%	0.39%
	Pass	0.10%	0.07%	0.08%
	Satisfactory	1.73%	1.35%	1.26%

		Fall 2011	Fall 2012	Fall 2013
	TR (Withdrawal with full refund)	0.32%	0.12%	0.10%
	Unsatisfactory	0.07%	0.07%	0.06%
	Withdrawn	6.58%	5.67%	5.58%
	WF (Withdrawn, failing)	0.13%	0.12%	0.13%
	WR (Withdrawn with partial refund)	0.29%	0.16%	0.30%
	X (Audit)	0.16%	0.13%	0.15%
	XX (No grade)	3.10%	3.14%	2.43%
	ZZ (Purged for non-payment)	0.03%	0.05%	0.03%
	I (Incomplete)	*	1.14%	0.97%
	I* (Grade not reported)	0.00%	0.09%	0.07%

* ASPIRE staff conducted this analysis in 2014, and all Incompletes had been converted to letter grades per University policy, which states that an "I" becomes an "F" at the end of the next regular semester (summer excluded), unless the grade is changed by the instructor to a letter grade "A-F." [18]

Retention and Graduation Rates

The UWF Board of Trustees regularly monitors the University's performance on retention and graduation rates in conjunction with updates provided on the set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) established by the Trustees. Additionally, the Trustees and the Board of Governors monitor UWF's performance on these metrics in conjunction with the UWF Work Plan, UWF's Annual Accountability Reports, and the State University System of Florida's performance-based funding metrics. The Boards monitor these rates for part-time and full-time FTIC, AA transfer, and other transfer students. State and/or locally established targets, as well as median rates for peer institutions, are used as benchmarks. [19]

UWF has experienced some unevenness in student persistence and success rates in the past several years, as it has focused on finding the appropriate balance among extending access to a greater number of students; maintaining high quality; and recruiting students whose interests, aptitudes, and personal goals are well-aligned with what UWF offers. The University analyzes the factors contributing to its students' success and adjusts admissions standards and recruitment efforts accordingly, while simultaneously engaging in University-wide efforts to improve student persistence and academic success rates. [20]

One of the persistence metrics most frequently used in higher education is the fall-to-fall retention rate for full-time, first-time-in-college (FTIC) students entering in a given fall (or summer, continuing into that fall). A look at UWF's performance on this metric indicates that retention rates at UWF have averaged above 73 percent during the last ten years (ranging from 70 percent to 79 percent for different cohorts). UWF's retention rates compare favorably to those of its peer institutions. (The peer median was 69 percent for the cohort entering in Fall 2011, the most recent publicly available number, when UWF's rate was 71 percent.) However,

the University Board of Trustees established a target reach a 74.5 percent retention rate for the cohort entering in Fall 2015.

UWF tracks both four- and six-year graduation rates for full-time and part-time, first-time-in-college students entering in a given fall term (or summer continuing into that fall). The table below includes a five-year history of rates for full-time FTICs only, which allows for comparison with the rates for peer institutions, as well as current-year estimates and future-year targets as determined by the UWF Board of Trustees.

Table 4.1 – 2 Four- and Six-Year Graduation Rates for Full-Time FTIC Students

Four-Year Graduation Rates for Full-Time FTICs	2005 Cohort	2006 Cohort	2007 Cohort	2008 Cohort	2009 Cohort	Estimate for 2010 Cohort	Goal for 2011 Cohort
UWF	23%	24%	20%	27%	26%	22%	24%
Peer Median	22%	22%	21%	NA	NA	NA	NA

Six-Year Graduation Rates for Full-Time FTICs	2003 Cohort	2004 Cohort	2005 Cohort	2006 Cohort	2007 Cohort	Estimate for 2008 Cohort	Goal for 2009 Cohort
UWF	45%	47%	48%	45%	42%	49%	51%
Peer Median	44%	45%	44%	44%	45%	NA	NA

Source: ASPIRE Informational Database.

Transfer student graduation rates are tracked differently, based upon whether or not a student has an Associate of Arts degree (AA) upon entry to UWF. For AA transfers entering in the fall term, the percent graduating two years from entry and four years from entry are the metrics used for monitoring; for non-AA transfers, it is the percent graduating five years from entry. The tables below provide a five-year history for these metrics. For AA transfers, the tables also include estimates for the current year and targets for the up-coming year as established in the University Work Plan. (No specific goals have been established for non-AA transfer graduation rates.)

Table 4.1 – 3 Two- and Four-Year Graduation Rates for Full-Time and Part-Time AA Transfer Students

Two-Year Graduation Rates for AA Transfers	2007 Cohort	2008 Cohort	2009 Cohort	2010 Cohort	2011 Cohort	Estimate for 2012 Cohort	Goal for 2013 Cohort
UWF	30%	27%	29%	31%	23%	19%	20%

Four-Year Graduation Rates for AA Transfers	2005 Cohort	2006 Cohort	2007 Cohort	2008 Cohort	2009 Cohort	Estimate for 2010 Cohort	Goal for 2013 Cohort
UWF	68%	69%	61%	66%	65%	62%	64%

Source: ASPIRE Informational Database.

Table 4.1 – 4 Five-Year Graduation Rates for Full-Time and Part-Time Other Transfer Students

Five-Year Graduation Rates for Other Transfers	2004 Cohort	2005 Cohort	2006 Cohort	2007 Cohort	2008 Cohort
UWF	54%	56%	55%	52%	52%

Source: ASPIRE Informational Database.

Florida Education Equity Act Report

Another mechanism by which UWF assesses progress toward goals related to retention and graduation rates is the Florida Education Equity Act Report, which is submitted to the Florida Board of Governors in June of each year. This report is completed by each Florida public university and includes information on the university's progress in implementing strategic initiatives and performance related to equity and access in academic services, programs, and student enrollment; equity in athletics; and equity in employment. In the most recent report, [21] comparisons were made between academic year 2010-2011 and academic year 2011-2012 to determine progress. Between these years, retention (for full-time FTICs) increased among black students, Hispanic students, students identifying themselves as two or more races, and female students. Six-year graduation rates (for full-time FTICs) increased for black and Hispanic students.

Degree Completion

UWF plays a critical role in the State University System's efforts to increase Florida citizens' educational attainment levels. Here, UWF presents some key data regarding degrees awarded. Please note that different years are referenced for different metrics, depending on the most

recent year for which data are available. In 2013-2014, the University awarded 2,609 degrees (first major only; up 18.7 percent from 2009-2010), including many degrees awarded to students from traditionally underrepresented groups. UWF awarded 1,936 baccalaureate degrees, which was below the target number of baccalaureate degrees (2,109), as established in the 2013-2014 update to the UWF Work Plan. However, the number of baccalaureate degrees awarded (first major only) represented a 13.7 percent increase from 2009-2010. The number of graduate degrees awarded (673) was substantially above the established target of 604.

Illustrating UWF's commitment to access for students from traditionally underrepresented groups, 50 percent of all baccalaureate degrees awarded at UWF in 2012-2013 were awarded to students who had received a Pell grant from an institution in the State University System within six years of graduation (up from 38 percent of the baccalaureate degrees awarded in 2008-2009). UWF awarded 159 baccalaureate degrees to Non-Hispanic Blacks (up from 155 in 2008-2009) and 127 baccalaureate degrees to Hispanics (up from 82 in 2008-2009).

For total degrees awarded in 2011-2012, UWF ranked third (of 11) among its comparable peer institutions. In terms of goals established in the Florida Education Equity Act Report for degrees awarded to underrepresented groups in 2011-2012 compared to 2010-2011, the percentage of Black students who were awarded bachelor's degrees exceeded the goal, and the percentage of Hispanic students who were awarded bachelor's degrees met the goal. The University also exceeded its goal for doctoral degrees awarded to Black students.

In 2013-2014, 18.4 percent of all undergraduate degrees awarded at UWF were within a science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM) discipline, as were 14.4 percent of all graduate degrees. Comparisons between 2009-2010 and 2013-2014 show a 25.3 percent increase in the number of degrees in STEM disciplines awarded to undergraduates and a 16.9 percent increase in those awarded to graduate students. To reach targets established by the UWF Board of Trustees, UWF will need an additional 12.0 percent growth in STEM-discipline degrees awarded to undergraduates and an additional 17.5 percent to graduate students between 2013-2014 and 2015-2016.

In 2009, the Florida Legislature established an "Excess Credit Hour Surcharge" to encourage students to complete their baccalaureate degrees as quickly as possible. This legislative action, in turn, led both the State University System and individual universities to be more mindful of student progress toward degree completion. The percentage of students at UWF who have completed their baccalaureate degree programs without excess hours (defined as greater than 110 percent of the catalog hours required for a degree) has fluctuated during the last several years, from a high of 70 percent in 2008-2009 and 2011-2012 to a low of 65 percent in 2012-2013. Both the estimate for the 2013-2014 academic year and the target for the 2014-2015 academic year stand at 66 percent. Between 2008-2009 and 2012-2013, the average time to degree for UWF undergraduates dropped from 4.7 years to 4.62 years. UWF's target is to achieve an average time to degree of 4.57 years by 2015-2016.

Job Placement and Continued Education

UWF takes an active role in assisting students with their post-graduation goals in keeping with its mission to empower alumni for personal and professional success. Great careers and graduate school opportunities result from a progressive education, solid career planning, and opportunities to acquire real-world experience.

The Florida Legislature and Board of Governors are particularly interested in how many graduates from the state universities are employed or continuing their education in Florida. According to the most recent data posted on the FETPIP (Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program) [22] website, 60 percent of the 2009-2010 UWF baccalaureate graduates captured for the study were employed in Florida in Fall 2010. In Fall 2011 and Fall 2012, 61 percent of the UWF baccalaureate graduates captured for the study were employed in Florida. FETPIP also reports that 19 percent of 2009-2010 UWF baccalaureate graduates, 18 percent of 2010-2011 UWF baccalaureate graduates, and 17 percent of 2011-2012 baccalaureate graduates were enrolled in continuing higher education in Florida in Fall 2010, 2011, and 2012, respectively.

In the recently approved Performance Based Funding model for the State University System, the percent of baccalaureate graduates employed or continuing their education in Florida has been combined into one metric: "Percent of Bachelor's Graduates Employed Full-time in Florida or Continuing their Education in the U.S. One Year After Graduation." Using a 60 percent baseline rate on this metric for 2011-2012 undergraduate degree recipients, UWF has set targets for future graduating classes of 61 percent for 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 graduates and 62 percent for 2015-2016 graduates.

Of course, not all four-year degree recipients in Florida remain in the state for employment or continued education. National Student Clearinghouse Student Tracker data obtained from the Florida Board of Governors indicate that an additional five percent of 2010-2011 UWF baccalaureate graduates continued their education out of state in 2011-2012. UWF is working with the Florida Board of Governors staff as they seek ways to capture more information about employment and continued education for graduates who leave the state.

Payscale.com reports that, based on the results of a 2013 survey, UWF baccalaureate graduates had a median starting salary of $36,700, down almost 3.5 percent from the previous year's results. The overall median for UWF's peer group rose almost 6.5 percent between the 2012 and 2013 surveys. Although defined differently, wage data are also part of the new performance-based funding metrics within the State University System of Florida. Based on a baseline of $31,000 for 2011-2012 undergraduate degree recipients (based on annualized unemployment insurance wage data from the fourth fiscal quarter after graduation), UWF has set targets for future graduating classes of $32,935, $33,948, and $34,992 for 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 graduates, respectively.

Professional Licensure Exam Pass Rates

Students in a number of UWF's undergraduate or graduate programs complete professional certification or licensing examinations. Below are examples of data that UWF programs capture and use for evaluation and program improvements.

Accounting

According to the NASBA (National Association of State Boards of Accountancy) 2012 Uniform CPA Examination Candidate Performance report, [23] UWF ranked fifth of 266 institutions with small accounting programs (i.e., with 10 to 20 reported first-time candidates sitting for the CPA exam), below Duke University, Furman University, Augusta State University, and College of Saint Scholastica. UWF had 16 candidates sit for the exam on which this report was based, with an average score of 80.6. UWF's pass rate was 81.1 percent; the highest pass rate (Duke) was

94.6 percent. UWF's pass rate on this exam was the second highest in the state of Florida among programs of any size.

Nursing

Table 4.1-5 below presents trend data for UWF nursing program baccalaureate graduates taking the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX), as well as national benchmarks. These data are publicly available on the Florida Board of Nursing website. [24] Pass rates are for first-time examinees only; national benchmark data are based on January thru December NCLEX-RN results for first-time examinees in US-education baccalaureate degree programs as published by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing. UWF's pass rates are consistently well above the national benchmarks.

Table 4.1 – 5 Pass Rates on the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX)

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Number of UWF Examinees	33	32	29	38	34
UWF Pass Rates	94%	94%	93%	100%	88%
National Benchmark	90%	89%	89%	92%	85%

Source: Florida Board of Nursing website.

Athletic Training

Board of Certification (BOC) pass-rate data by program are available on the website of the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE). [25] Three hundred fifty-eight professional programs (333 bachelor's and 25 master's) had students challenge the BOC examination during the 2011 to 2013 academic years. (Pass rates are aggregated across the three years for each program.) The first-time pass rate across all 358 programs was 82 percent, whereas the overall pass rate was 92 percent. Exam candidates from UWF's Athletic Training bachelor's degree program had an aggregate three-year (2011-2013), first-attempt pass rate of 60 percent and an overall (any attempt), three-year pass rate of 73 percent. Standard 11 of the CAATE Standards for the Accreditation of Professional Athletic Training Programs states that programs must meet or exceed a three-year aggregate of 70 percent first-time pass rate on the BOC examination; however, non-compliance with Standard 11 will not be considered grounds for probation until 2016. The Department of Exercise Science and Community Health has submitted a plan of action to CAATE for raising pass rates.

Clinical Laboratory Sciences

Graduates of UWF's Clinical Laboratory Sciences Program take the Medical Laboratory Scientist (MLS) board exam offered by the American Society for Clinical Pathology. This exam is not required for graduation, but it is the industry standard for hiring, so most of the degree recipients take it. The table below contains information on test scores for the last four years.

Table 4.1 – 6 Pass Rates on the Medical Laboratory Scientist (MLS) Board Exam Offered by the American Society for Clinical Pathology

	2010	2011	2012	2013
Number of first-time UWF examinees	25	26	32	36
Number (%) of UWF examinees who passed on first attempt	21 (84.4%)	23 (88.5%)	27 (84.4%)	27 (75%)
Total number (%) of UWF examinees who passed including second attempt	23 (92%)	25 (96.2%)	29 (90.6%)	30 (83%)
National pass rate (1st attempt only)	82.3%	79.1%	78.4%	84.5%

Source: ASCP Board of Certification.

Teacher Education and Educational Leadership

Pursuant to Sections 1004.04, Florida Statutes, [26] in conjunction with State Board of Education Rules 6A-5.066 and 6A-5.081, Florida Administrative Code, [27] [28] all certification programs in the Teacher Education and Educational Leadership department at UWF require passing scores on the Florida Teacher Certification Exam (FTCE) or the Florida Education Leadership Exam (FELE). For undergraduate-level programs (Elementary Education/ESOL, Middle School Education (in teach-out), and Exceptional Student Education), prior to student teaching, candidates must achieve passing scores on the FTCE General Knowledge, Professional Education, and Subject Area Exams. For graduate-level programs, passing scores are required for graduation. These programs (and the required exams) include Education Leadership - Administration (FELE) and Reading Education (FTCE K-12 Reading Subject Area Exam). The TEEL department tracks scores prior to graduation, and the Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) tracks success (for those employed in Florida public schools) after graduation for one year and shares those data with the department.

As reported by the FLDOE, out of 383 students who completed teacher education programs at UWF in 2011-2012, 173 (45 percent) were hired by the state in the 2012-2013 academic year. Out of these 173 employed graduates, 39 responded to a survey sent by the state in 2013 (for a response rate of about 23 percent). Of the respondents, 84 percent had either signed a contract (8) or a contract was expected (25) for the next academic year. Almost 13 percent (5) were unsure about a job for the next year and one person (2.6 percent) was not pursuing a profession in teaching and education. In terms of self-perceived efficacy in their profession, 7.7 percent (3) felt they were developing as teachers, 53.8 percent (21) felt they were effective teachers, and 38.5 percent (15) considered themselves highly effective teachers. From the total of 173 employed graduates, 23 (13 percent) had principals who completed surveys to indicate their level of employer satisfaction with teacher performance during the 2012-2013 academic year. Means for each area assessed in this survey are presented in Table 4.1 – 7. (The rating scale ranged from 1=Unsatisfactory to 4=Highly Effective.)

Table 4.1 – 7 Professional Education Unit Satisfaction Survey Summary (Employer)

Area Assessed	Response Mean (N=23)
Please rate this teacher's performance in the area of Instructional Design and Lesson Planning.	3.04
Please rate this teacher's performance in the area of the Learning Environment.	3.00
Please rate this teacher's performance in the area of Instructional Delivery and Facilitation.	3.00
Please rate this teacher's performance in the area of Assessment	2.91
Please rate this teacher's performance in the area of Continuous Professional Improvement.	3.09
Please rate this teacher's performance in the area of Professional Responsibility and Ethical Conduct.	3.35

Source: Florida Department of Education.

Public Health

UWF's online Master of Public Health program is accredited by the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH). The planning, development, and evaluation of the online MPH program is guided by a Master of Public Health Steering Committee, with program competencies adopted from the Association of Schools of Public Health. The adopted competencies are also the basis for the national Certified in Public Health (CPH) exam administered by the National Board of Public Health Examiners. According to the MPH Academic Advisor, graduates of UWF's MPH program currently have a 100 percent pass rate on this exam. Additionally, at least 90 percent of graduates of the MPH program are employed in public health venues, including the U.S. military and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Student and Alumni Survey Results

Gathering information about students' perceptions of their experiences while at UWF is one important way by which the University documents their assessment of their achievement. UWF's Division of Student Affairs and the Office of Alumni Affairs administer surveys on a regular basis to current students, as well as graduating students and graduates. A few examples are discussed below.

National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)

Part of UWF's mission is to engage students in rigorous, high-impact, student-oriented learning experiences that enhance personal and professional development. One of the ways that UWF assesses the accomplishment of this part of its mission is through the regular administration of the National Survey of Student Engagement.

Consistently, over the last three administrations of NSSE at UWF (2009, 2011, and 2013), almost half of surveyed seniors indicated that they participated in an internship, co-op, field experience, student teaching, or clinical placement. Almost a third of NSSE senior respondents

reported having completed a culminating senior experience (capstone course, senior project or thesis, comprehensive exam, portfolio, etc.). [29]

Data from NSSE also indicate that students believe UWF does a good job of supporting their academic, personal, and professional achievement. For example, when asked how much UWF emphasizes providing support to help students academically, the majority of both first-year and senior students surveyed in all three years answered either "quite a bit" or "very much." (Percentages of students giving these responses ranged from 73 percent of seniors in 2013 to 82 percent of seniors in 2009.) Table 4.1 - 8 below displays percentages of students who responded "quite a bit" or "very much" to the question, "How much has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas?" (The number of respondents is given in parenthesis below each percentage.)

Table 4.1 – 8 National Survey of Student Engagement Results

	2009 First-Year Students	2009 Seniors	2011 First-Year Students	2011 Seniors	2013 First-Year Students	2013 Seniors
Writing clearly and effectively	87% (284)	76% (849)	79% (331)	78% (881)	67% (264)	72% (614)
Speaking clearly and effectively	66% (282)	69% (845)	69% (333)	78% (881)	59% (263)	65% (612)
Thinking critically and analytically	82% (287)	86% (845)	81% (330)	85% (877)	76% (262)	84% (614)
Acquiring job or work-related knowledge and skills	58% (285)	78% (850)	57% (331)	76% (878)	53% (263)	70% (615)

	2009 First-Year Students	2009 Seniors	2011 First-Year Students	2011 Seniors	2013 First-Year Students	2013 Seniors
Solving complex real-work problems	**58% (285)**	**59% (844)**	**57% (330)**	**64% (872)**	**52% (264)**	**61% (610)**
Working effectively with others	72% (287)	76% (851)	68% (334)	80% (880)	57% (264)	70% (610)

2012 UWF Alumni Survey

As part of its mission, UWF seeks to empower alumni to contribute responsibly and creatively to a complex 21st Century global society. Thus, it is important to assess, through alumni and graduating senior surveys, whether UWF is accomplishing this part of its mission.

In 2012, UWF surveyed 5,781 alumni, asking them to participate in an online questionnaire; 612 surveys were completed for a response rate of 10.6 percent. UWF contacted an additional sample of 944 alumni and asked them to participate in a phone survey; 606 responses of this

kind were collected for a response rate of 64.2 percent. The majority (73 percent) of UWF alumni surveyed reported that they were very satisfied with their experiences while at the University. Approximately two-thirds of surveyed alumni were currently employed (most others were students, retired, or disabled), and almost a third were employed in fields directly related to their UWF degrees. Also, about a third of respondents indicated that they had pursued additional degrees after graduating from UWF; these degrees ranged from Associate in Arts degrees to doctoral and professional degrees. Of about 75 percent of the sample who gave income information, most reported an annual income level of $50,000 to $69,999.

Graduating Senior Survey

Each spring and fall, all graduating students are invited to participate in an online survey intended to obtain information about their plans for post-graduation and how well they think their experiences at UWF have provided them with the skills needed to be successful. The results of the 2012 survey are presented here as an illustration. UWF sent survey invitations to 1,168 students, and 379 surveys were completed for a 32.4 percent response rate. The final sample consisted of 286 graduating seniors and 93 graduate students. Of seniors, 60 percent expected to be employed full-time after graduation, 27 percent expected to go on to graduate or professional school, and 4 percent expected to be employed part-time. Seventy-five percent of graduate students expected to be employed full-time after graduation; eight percent to be employed part-time; and three percent to seek an additional graduate degree. The majority of seniors reported that UWF was "extremely helpful" or "very helpful" in helping them to obtain verbal communication skills (78.5 percent), critical thinking skills (80 percent), and the ability to solve problems (81.4 percent). Fifty-seven percent of seniors indicated that they had participated in at least one experiential education opportunity while at UWF (e.g., co-op, internship, service learning, or research project). More than 80 percent of graduate students responded that UWF had been "extremely helpful" or "very helpful" in the areas of conducting research (80.4 percent), obtaining critical thinking (82.6 percent) and written communication (88 percent) skills, and improving their ability to solve problems (82.6 percent).

Programs and Procedures That Promote and Support Student Success

The University of West Florida's current (2012-2017) Strategic Plan lists four important strategic directions and twelve high-level priorities. These priorities are not listed in any ranked order, except for Priority 1.1, which focuses on student learning and development. UWF's commitment to students and their success is at the core of the institution's mission and values, and that commitment has manifested itself in numerous high-quality academic programs and support services. As referenced in several narratives for SACSCOC (e.g., Core Requirement 2.5, Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1.1), UWF documents the success of its academic programs in several ways, including regular discipline-specific program reviews. Additional programs and procedures that encourage and enhance student success at UWF are discussed below, organized in the categories of (1) support services for enrolled students, and (2) access options for potential students.

Activities, Programs, and Systems for Enrolled Students

Academic Early Warning System

Based on a study of historical data, UWF researchers found that students who receive early warning notices and see their advisors are more likely to persist to the sophomore year than

students who do not. In recognition of the need to intervene quickly when students are experiencing academic difficulty, UWF promotes the reporting of at-risk students through an Academic Early Warning System, a program designed to assist freshmen and athletes early in an academic term who demonstrate academic hardship or red-flag behaviors. Data indicate that an increasing number of faculty teaching freshmen are utilizing the Early Warning System. In the most recent spring term (2014), ninety-seven percent of faculty teaching freshmen participated in the reporting of students needing assistance, up from 96 percent in Spring 2013 and 89 percent in Spring 2012.

Academic Foundations Seminar (AFS)

UWF designed the three-credit hour AFS course to anticipate many of the questions and challenges that first-year students might have as they transition from high school to college and to help maximize students' potential for college success. The Academic Foundations Seminar also teaches students about campus resources and how to improve study habits and skills. Class members learn about creativity, communication, collaboration, and project management through joint planning and execution of a class-chosen service activity. An example of a recent AFS class activity was the "Yellow Bike Project," in which students used broken or used bicycles as resources to create useable ones to serve as building-to-building transportation on UWF's campus. According to UWF's First-Year Advising Center, AFS students typically report a higher grade point average after their first year at UWF than students who did not take the course and are also more likely to graduate. These comparisons are possible because, at present, AFS is not a required course; however, discussions are underway at UWF to investigate possible benefits and consequences of making it a mandated part of the undergraduate curriculum.

Advising

There are three types of advisors at UWF: those affiliated with the First-Year Advising Center, advisors within academic programs, and advisors for pre-professional students. Advisors within the First-Year Advising Center work with new students to ensure that they meet their academic requirements as they work toward graduation. These advisors promote themselves as more than schedule builders; they work with students to build partnerships. Advisors may help students choose or change majors, help students interpret academic policy, and direct students toward resources needed when students encounter academic or personal difficulties. All incoming freshmen meet one-on-one with an advisor during orientation. Each department assigns an academic advisor that meets with a student and focuses on completing the major degree requirements. This advisor may be a faculty member or a departmental advisor. Pre-professional students have both an advisor and an advisory committee that help them establish timelines for applying to professional schools and prepare for entrance exams.

UWF recognizes the importance of quality academic advising for student success. The Division of Academic Affairs presents an annual monetary award to a faculty member who has demonstrated outstanding advising as shown by evaluation of these skills by both students and peers. An Academic Advising Team is a sub-committee of the Committee on Retention Efforts (CORE) and is charged with formulating and maintaining systems and policies necessary to support effective and cohesive campus-wide advising that promotes student success and completion. As a final example of UWF's emphasis on quality academic advising, numerous academic departments maintain web pages devoted to assisting students majoring or minoring in their programs. [30]

Degree Audits

All degree-seeking undergraduate students at UWF have access to a Student Academic Support System (SASS) degree audit. Based upon the student's major and catalog year, an individualized degree audit is generated. SASS audits are available for all undergraduate majors and minors and all current master's programs. Information is available on UWF's website to inform students of where they can get an audit, how to read it, and why it is important. [31]

The University of West Florida is now implementing DegreeWorks, a degree-auditing system designed to integrate with the Banner Student module, which replaces SASS. In comparison to SASS, DegreeWorks is more interactive and user-friendly. DegreeWorks' more intuitive audit allows students to see all of their degree options and monitor their academic progress. For example, students are able to explore different degree plans and immediately see the implications of a change, and a GPA calculator allows students to see how current semester estimated grades may affect their UWF GPA.

Living-Learning Communities (LLCs)

Research on Living-Learning Communities for college students indicates that they can have a positive influence in promoting student engagement, as well as academic success and persistence. UWF has two fully functional LLCs, with more planned. Delphi, a living-learning community for first-year students, began in fall 2008. It consists of a maximum of 320 new students (based on the number of beds in the designated residence hall) and is guided by three principles: academic success, civic engagement, and interpersonal development. In Fall 2011, the UWF Delphi program enrolled its fourth cohort. Of the 289 Delphi students who enrolled in Fall 2010, 76 percent returned in the Fall 2011 (compared to 72 percent of the other students who were newly enrolled freshmen in Fall 2010). In 2011-2012, UWF also established an Oracle program, which is a second-year, living-learning community that focuses on helping students identify academic plans, career goals, and leadership aspirations. Oracle is housed in UWF's newest residence hall, a suite-style residence hall with 250 beds. To date, no evaluation has been made on the success of Oracle in contributing to students' academic success or retention, but plans are underway to do so in the upcoming year as a cooperative venture between the Office of Institutional Research and the Office of Student Retention Initiatives. A priority for the Division of Student Affairs, according to that unit's 2013-2017 Strategic Plan, is to review and strengthen the Delphi and Oracle residential learning communities.

New Hires

Several recent actions and initiatives have focused on improving student retention and timely progression to degree. For example, in 2013, UWF hired a Director of Student Retention Initiatives. This individual collaborates with University faculty, staff, and administrators to design, develop, implement, and measure outcomes of new programs and adapt existing programs/courses/support services to increase the number of students at all class levels who return to UWF each year, complete their degree and graduate. In the same year, the University also established a Committee on Retention Efforts (CORE) and a First-Year Student Success Team to help identify barriers to retention and graduation, while providing valuable insight to the Director of Student Retention Initiatives. Other recent hires or appointments relevant to helping students be successful at UWF include a Career Coordinator and a Program Coordinator within the Office of the Registrar to address institutional withdrawals and the processing of change-of-major requests. The Career Coordinator assists FTIC students with connecting values,

interests, personality, and strengths (VIPS) with academic success. UWF has developed a VIPS curriculum and trained Academic Foundation Seminar instructors to provide FTIC students with career exploration activities that assist them with the discovery of connections between their undergraduate academic programs and professional opportunities after graduation. Each student who withdraws from UWF must meet with the Registrar's Program Coordinator to discuss the reason(s) for leaving, as well as possible interventions or services that might assist the student with overcoming barriers that led the student to consider withdrawal.

Military and Veteran's Resource Center (MVRC)

In the 2013 fall term, 1,243 military-related students were enrolled at UWF (active duty, veterans, and dependents). UWF's Military and Veteran's Resource Center (MVRC) is dedicated to supporting these students. The MVRC serves as a leading campus advocate for military and veteran students, working to ensure the needs of these individuals are met through coordinating with multiple offices and services. The Center provides assistance with coordinating academic advising, tutoring, counseling, disability accommodations, GI bill education benefits, and referrals to state and federal resources and services.

New Writing Course

UWF's English department has introduced a new course titled "Writing Studio," which is designed to support college student success in writing courses. Writing Studio is a one-hour elective in which students examine and discuss writing projects assigned in other courses. It is designed as a Studio component linked to ENC 1101 and 1102 (English Composition I and II, respectively) curricula. Students receive one-on-one feedback on their writing in a small group-workshop context. Class size is limited to 10 students. Writing Studio provides an intensive investigation into the skills and objectives that make college composition effective. In a collaborative workshop environment, students interpret assignments; generate and research ideas; invent topics; and write, evaluate, revise, and edit drafts. Studio teaches these activities as "recursive," in that writers engage and re-engage in them throughout the planning, drafting, and revising of assignments. In any given Studio session, students might closely read an assignment description and plan how to begin a project, rhetorically analyze the purpose and audience of a given writing project, workshop drafts at any stage of the writing process, and/or actively reflect on writing choices. Students share final productions and process materials. Through learning to ask critical questions about their own writings, students engage in a wider, more nuanced conversation about academic conventions. The course was offered for the first time in Spring 2013 so data about the success of the course are limited. However, early indications are that the course is beneficial to students targeted for course participation (due to their participation in programs for "at-risk" students or prior failure of ENG 1101). All Writing Studio students enrolled in Spring 2013 earned a grade of B- or higher in their corresponding writing-intensive courses.

Student Success Programs

Several support, advising, and tutoring programs target at-risk student populations to help improve their success in the areas of persistence and graduation. These programs have been specifically designated as "Student Success Programs." [32] For example, the federally funded TRIO Student Support Service program has been in existence at UWF since 1993 and currently serves more than 200 students. This program provides academic support for low-income and first-generation college students. Also available to low-income students since 1995 is the

"Borrow-a-Book" program. An in-house book library is maintained to assist with students' book needs by loaning textbooks. Upon signing an agreement, a student may borrow a book for a full semester and return the book upon completion of his/her class.

Additional programs in the Student Success Programs' suite include the Learning Center, a mentoring program, Multicultural Support Services, and "Brother-to-Brother." The Learning Center provides free tutorial assistance and academic support services for all students, including distance learners, enrolled at UWF. The mentoring program is designed to pair UWF students with peers or professionals who advise and direct students on the path to success in their chosen field. Multicultural Support Services provides support for University initiatives aimed at the recruitment, retention, and graduation of minority students. Affiliated with Multicultural Support Services is the "Brother-to-Brother" program, which was developed to increase retention and graduation among the African American, Latino, and Hispanic male student populations at UWF. Additionally, UWF hosts an annual Men of Color retreat, the purpose of which is to convene members from diverse communities, disciplines, and interests on the campus to contribute, discover, and foster positive outcomes for men of color.

UWF Chemistry Scholar's Program

Most of the student success initiatives discussed thus far have focused on students at risk for attrition. However, UWF also has numerous programs intended to foster even greater success among high-achieving students. For example, UWF encourages high-achieving chemistry students, particularly ones from traditionally underrepresented groups, to pursue doctoral studies through the UWF Chemistry Scholars Program. Students hear guest speakers discuss summer research programs and post-baccalaureate opportunities, receive career advice, participate in peer-to-peer mentoring, and receive professional development and mentoring from faculty in the Department of Chemistry. Since the UWF Chemistry Scholars Program was established, the number of underrepresented UWF chemistry students pursuing PhD or MD-PhD degrees increased from 2 percent in 2009-2012 to 26 percent in 2012-2013.

College of Business Executive Mentor Program

The College of Business Executive Mentor Program helps to prepare students for successful careers in business by integrating academic learning with real-world experiences. The goals and objectives of the program are (1) to help identify career paths for students and to support students' personal growth; (2) to provide an opportunity for students to learn and practice professional networking skills; (3) to equip students with the understanding and tools to make ethical and informed decisions; (4) to shape students into confident graduates with excellent leadership, communication, critical thinking, professionalism, and other critical skills important to the transition to the world of work; and (5) to help student mentees identify and pursue opportunities for employment related to their degrees.

Support for Graduate Students

The student support services described above target undergraduate students. UWF's Graduate School provides numerous support services for graduate students. For example, the Graduate School conducts training workshops for new graduate assistants; provides funding for the UWF Writing Lab to hire graduate students to assist others with papers, dissertations, and theses; and sponsors a monthly student support group for doctoral students. An additional support for doctoral students is provided through the College of Professional Studies' Doctoral Support

Center. [33] The Center provides assistance throughout the entire dissertation process, from the initial write-up to the final review. Graduate Assistants (GAs) employed by the DSC have extensive knowledge in APA style, as well as the UWF Thesis and Dissertation Guidelines. The GAs are not editors and do not make extensive changes, but rather provide direct guidance on areas that do not meet the APA or Dissertation Guidelines.

Access Options for Potential Students

Providing access to higher education opportunities is a key component of UWF's mission. UWF's service region includes many individuals seeking to continue their education, but who are working full-time, have financial need, or are facing other barriers to obtaining a college degree. Two significant ways in which UWF assists these potential students are through the Complete Florida Degree Program and a wide range of online courses and degree programs.

Complete Florida Degree Program

Each year, a significant number of students are forced to discontinue their pursuit of a college degree due to numerous factors that may include financial, work-related, family obligations, health problems, and more. In Florida, approximately two million adults have some college credit, but no degree. To increase the number of Floridians holding a baccalaureate degree and thereby help to build a strong workforce and improve economic conditions in the state, a new online statewide Complete Florida Degree Program has been initiated, with UWF named as the lead institution. Key elements of the plan include competency-based course credit, multiple start dates for courses, mentors, collaboration with other institutions to provide course credit, and programs that will assist students in securing employment in economic gap areas.

Online Courses and Degree Programs

For all potential students, regardless of age, previous college credit, or location, UWF's line-up of online courses and degree programs provides a level of access to higher education unparalleled in the University's history. In 2013-2014 (Summer 2013, Fall 2013, Spring 2014), UWF offered 1,648 fully online course sections (up 7 percent from 2012-2013 and up 25 percent compared to 2011-2012). Over the past three fall terms, almost 50 percent of UWF's students took at least one online course. In Fall 2013, 15 percent of undergraduate students and 63 percent of graduate students were taking only online courses. UWF offers 21 complete degree programs online, including seven undergraduate programs, thirteen master's or specialist's programs, and one doctoral program. [34]

Conclusion

The University of West Florida evaluates success with respect to student achievement consistent with its mission. Both UWF and the Florida Board of Governors establish targets and monitor student access and achievement closely through a variety of metrics, including, but not limited to, metrics related to enrollment, successful course completion, student retention and graduation, job placement and continued education, and professional licensing examinations. Through its policies, practices, and related documentation, UWF demonstrates its compliance with Federal Requirement 4.1 (Student Achievement).