Education for Equity and the Environment

> **“**I can't see myself just doing research by myself without sharing the joy of doing research.**”**

Professor Mihai Tomescu | Botany (Left)

WSCUC INSTITUTIONAL REPORT

HUMBOLDT STATE UNIVERSITY

*Education for Equity
and the Environment*

"If my office door's open and the lights are on, that means 'come in.' Not everyone feels comfortable knocking. I want everyone to walk in there and say what they want to say and to get all the support they need to get from their first day to their last day at HSU."

Professor Kerri Malloy | Native American Studies (Right)

"I want my students to explore anything they can explore until they find that passion."

Professor Paola Rodríguez Hidalgo | Astronomy & Physics (Right)

Table of Contents

Table of Contents *continued*

"In my meetings with Dr. Han, I have a lot of opportunities to explain my thoughts, which I feel helps me grow as a student."

Kyungrok Hwang | Forestry major (Lower Left)

"Eugene doesn't just teach us music. He gives us life lessons. It's awesome to be able to connect to music just through life experiences."

Richard Rios | Music major (Right)

CHAPTER 1: Introduction to the Institutional Report and Response to Previous Commission Actions

Humboldt State History and Overview

Humboldt State University (HSU) students enjoy an extraordinary college experience, attending small classes taught by professors who know them by name and living and learning in one of the world's most beautiful places. The campus is located on the Pacific coast in Arcata, California, 275 miles north of San Francisco, surrounded by ancient redwood forests, mountains, rivers, and beaches.

Since its founding over a century ago as a teachers' college, HSU has grown into an institution known for quality academic programs, a commitment to environmental sustainability and social justice, and a deep connection with its unique place. HSU provides students an experience in higher education that is unique among public universities in California by offering true place-based learning, built on a special relationship among the campus, the curriculum, the local communities, and the natural environment.

HSU's student body includes the highest percentage of Native American students of any campus in the **California State University** (CSU), and **Humboldt County** has eight federally recognized Native American Tribes (**Appendix A—List of State and Federal Recognized Tribes**). The university was the first CSU campus to offer a baccalaureate degree in **Native American Studies** (NAS), and it also offers several programs to support its Native students, including the **Indian Tribal & Educational Personnel Program** and the **Indian Natural Resources, Science, & Engineering Program**.

With **51 undergraduate programs, 69 minors, 12 graduate programs, and 13 certificate programs** (fall 2016-17), HSU offers students a number of paths. The campus features numerous facilities for learning, research, and scholarship in a variety of fields, and given the outstanding natural resources of the area, it is no surprise that hands-on, place-based learning is infused across the curriculum and extracurricular life.

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

Capacity, Infrastructure, and Operations

The university has more than 2.3 million square feet of built space that includes 103 individual facilities either leased or owned by HSU. Over the last ten years, the university has constructed six new facilities, including the **Kinesiology & Athletics building**, the **Behavioral & Social Sciences building**, the **Schatz Energy Research Center**, the **Humboldt Bay Aquatic Center** (off-campus), and the **College Creek Apartment Complex** (comprising five buildings). While HSU has been active in expanding its campus, it faces continued challenges associated with maintaining the physical campus, as evidenced by deferred maintenance costs that are currently estimated at $183M.

HSU's physical teaching capacity currently meets its needs. There is room to grow enrollment slightly above the university's funded 2017-18 enrollment targets without adding additional space. The 61 lecture rooms have the capacity to support 102% of projected enrollment, and the 105 teaching laboratories can support 100-101%. The campus has 158 spaces (nearly 40,000 square feet) devoted to conducting and supporting research. HSU maintains 15 self-instruction and 25 computer laboratories.

Off-site facilities include the **Telonicher Marine Laboratory**, located 15 miles from campus in Trinidad, the **Humboldt Bay Aquatic Center** and the **Third Street Art Gallery**, both located eight miles from campus in Eureka, the 385-acre **L.W. Schatz Demonstration Tree Farm**, located 25 miles from campus in Maple Creek, and the **HSU Natural History Museum** in Arcata. HSU owns the 90-foot-long "**R/V Coral Sea**," a research vessel moored in Eureka.

Economically, HSU provides more than 2,300 jobs and $190 million of **economic impact** in the local communities and more than $400 million impact on the statewide economy.

Structure and Changes (CFR 1.6)

In the 1990s, the campus was organized into three constituent colleges: the College of Natural Resources & Sciences, the College of Professional Studies, and the College of Arts, Humanities, & Social Sciences. Since the last full WSCUC review in 2008, HSU has added six new Bachelor of Arts degrees (**Criminology & Justice Studies; Critical Race, Gender, & Sexuality Studies**; **Environmental Studies**; **International Studies**; **Film**; and **Theatre Arts**) and has discontinued two Bachelor of Science degrees (nursing and industrial technology) and a master's in theatre arts.

HSU has been a leader among CSU institutions in the growth and development of online/hybrid curricular offerings. From 2012 to 2016, the number of students enrolled in individual online sections increased from 2,702 to 5,581 (106%). Nearly half of the HSU student population took at least one online course in 2016. Several new online programs have been developed, including bachelor's and master's degrees in **Social Work**, a master's degree in **Education**, and a degree-completion program in **Interdisciplinary Studies—Leadership Studies**.

HSU's division of **Academic Affairs** has had a number of personnel changes in recent years. The current provost, Dr. Alexander Enyedi, joined HSU in January 2016 after two interim provosts served following the retirement of Dr. Robert Snyder in June 2014. Since his appointment, Provost Enyedi has worked diligently to fill numerous vacancies and interim positions within the division. Academic Affairs has also undergone recent restructuring with the establishment of the **Retention & Inclusive Student Success** (RISS) office in 2014 and **Office of Institutional Effectiveness** (OIE) in 2016.

Currently (fall 2016), HSU has 8,503 total students (undergraduate, graduate, and credential; the **OIE Enrollment Dashboard**), 571 faculty (includes librarians, excludes coaches), 616 staff members, and 61 administrators (2016-17 Human Resources Survey, U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics).

Overall enrollment has been relatively steady since 2010, but in that time, HSU has experienced one of the most radical shifts in student demographics in the CSU:

- **Traditionally underrepresented groups (URG), Pell-eligible, and first-generation college student enrollment has doubled since 2010.**

- **HSU became a Hispanic-Serving Institution in 2013, and in 2016, URG students made up 43% of the student population, the highest percentage in HSU history.**

- **First-generation college students now make up more than half of HSU's current student body.**

The impact of this shift is profound. Most HSU students come from urban areas, and they must quickly adjust to life in rural Humboldt County. In response, HSU has developed new centers on campus to provide social and academic support to African American and Latinx students: the **African American Center for Academic Excellence**, the **Latinx Center for Academic Excellence**, and the **MultiCultural Center**. These centers are collectively administered by the director of the **Cultural Centers for Academic Excellence**. The university also maintains a center for student-**veterans**, and an **LGBTQ** center is currently in development.

2015-2020 Strategic Plan (CFR 1.1)

In July 2014, President Lisa A. Rossbacher, the seventh president to serve at HSU, took the post following the retirement of President Rollin Richmond. President Rossbacher immediately led the university community in working together to develop a **strategic plan**. At the heart of the strategic planning process was a clear and consistent commitment to data-driven decision making and continuous improvement. These two ideas form the core of HSU's new approach to program assessment and development, and they inform every aspect of its strategic plan implementation.

HSU's planning process in 2014-15 began with several town hall gatherings led by the **Increasing Student Success and Academic Excellence Committee**. These events resulted in a better understanding of HSU student data (**IRP 2015 Action Research Presentations**) and how campus members can use those data in assessing program success. During the planning process, the university set substantive goals and objectives and created a **blueprint** for action that is data driven and assessable, supports student learning, enhances campus culture, and prioritizes the realignment of resources necessary to achieve those enhancements. The new strategic plan envelopes the WSCUC self-study work and past WSCUC team recommendations.

Response to Previous Commission Actions (CFR 1.8)

In 2009, HSU formed the **Cabinet for Institutional Change** (CIC) in response to the 2008 WSCUC Commission Review (see chapter 2). In February 2010, the CIC released its report, *Building the Capacity for Change: Improving the Structure and Culture of Decision Making at HSU*, that outlined recommendations for improvement in the areas of campus vision; shared governance; student success; developing a collegial, respectful, and responsive community; and cultivating evidence-based decision making. In April 2010, the **Change Steering Committee** (CSC) was created with the charge of keeping the CIC's recommendations in focus and ensuring that those with the resources and authority to act on them do just that. The committee offered regular progress reports in this area until the chair formally handed campus priority oversight to the University Senate in March 2012.

HSU submitted its Interim Report in 2013, which targeted areas of focus requested in the 2010 WSCUC Commission Action Letter. In response, the WSCUC Interim Report Committee (IRC) commended the university for its:

- **scorecard approach to communicate the university's planning and implementation progress,**

- **transparency and candor,**

- **approaches to student learning assessment and program review,**

- **use of program-review data in light of financial data for program prioritization,**

- **newly developed enrollment-management plan with strategies and desired outcomes,**

- **achievements in environmental sustainability, and**

- **robust evidence of realigning resources and institutional structures.**

The IRC also directed the university to continue to focus on (1) assessing student learning, (2) making excellence inclusive, (3) maintaining a positive campus culture, and (4) realigning resources and institutional structures.

To address these WSCUC recommendations, in spring 2017, the division of Academic Affairs started working on an Academic Tactical Plan (ATP). The ATP will serve as a continuous-improvement process designed to align with the campus strategic plan, institutional data, and the new **California State University Graduation Initiative 2025** mandates for retention and graduation. The ATP will prioritize the highest-impact projects to promote student success. Prioritized projects will feature tasks and plans that follow the stages of the continuous-improvement cycle. Each task is associated with a **RACI** (Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, Informed) matrix to define roles, ensure completeness, and clarify accountability.

The ATP will be used as a guide to assess progress toward the main goal of improving inclusive student success by:

- **increasing student learning, retention, and graduation,**

- **eliminating all achievement gaps,**

- **assessing all efforts to improve student success, and**

- **aligning resources with this goal.**

Preparation for the Accreditation Review

Focused preparation for the current review began in 2014 with the development of the strategic plan. A campuswide **orientation** by WSCUC Staff Liaison Dr. Maureen Maloney occurred in January 2016, and, in February 2016, President Rossbacher appointed students and members of the faculty and staff to the **Self-Study Steering Committee (SSSC)**. All three colleges, the **University Library**, the **Division of Enrollment Management & Student Affairs**, and **Administrative Affairs** are represented on the committee. CSU's Graduation Initiative 2025 emerged as an important system-wide mandate in fall 2016, and HSU quickly incorporated the CSU goals for improving graduation and retention rates into its WSCUC self-study. Reaccreditation efforts were initially led by Dr. Jená Burges, Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate & Graduate Studies and Accreditation Liaison Officer (retired August 2016), followed by Dr. Mary Glenn, Interim Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate & Graduate Studies and Accreditation Liaison Officer, and Dr. Rock Braithwaite, Chair of the SSSC and Chair and Professor of the Department of Kinesiology & Recreation Administration.

The SSSC completed a self-study and review (**Appendix B—Review under WSCUC Standards Worksheet**), created definitions, established a **webpage** with feedback links, and **prioritized the WSCUC criteria for review with the strategic plan blueprint** objectives. Subsequent activities focused on gathering data, conducting interviews, and writing the report essays (chapters). Campus participation and feedback were encouraged throughout the process and included **world cafés**, teaching and learning luncheons, town hall meetings, the interactive SSSC web page, and electronic communications to the university community (**Appendix C—WSCUC Self-Study Communication Plan**).

Report drafts were available to the HSU community for review and comment. Writing team leaders incorporated feedback into chapter drafts and made subsequent versions available for input. The president and her cabinet as well as the leadership team in the Office of Academic Affairs participated in editing several essay drafts. Dr. Mark Wicklund, a faculty member from the English department, edited the document for clarity and consistency of voice, and Marketing & Communications published the report. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness provided the majority of institution-wide data for the report.

Throughout the process, in-person progress updates were provided regularly at meetings of the President's Cabinet, University Senate, Staff Council, Academic Affairs, Administrative Affairs, Enrollment Management & Student Affairs, Council of Chairs, and Associated Students. A formal communication plan was developed and followed. In addition, a student-led video for faculty and staff was produced, emphasizing an inclusive student-success message and self-study themes (see **We Are Humboldt**). These activities kept members of the university community informed and engaged in developing the self-study report. These consensus-building steps have ensured that this report represents a true and complete self-assessment conducted by the entire university community.

"It's rewarding to inspire students to conserve wildlife. Tracking and observing elk is one way I show students the techniques for protecting wildlife and their habitats.".

Professor Micaela Szykman Gunther | Wildlife (Center)

CHAPTER 2: Compliance with Standards
Self-Review under the Standards and the Compliance Checklist

"HSU should provide substantial evidence in its institutional report for the next comprehensive review of a positive campus culture that is producing results and sustaining momentum."

—WSCUC Interim Report Committee, April 7, 2014

Worksheet for Self-Review/ Compliance Checklist (CFR 1.8)

In March 2016, the **Self-Study Steering Committee** examined and ranked WSCUC compliance areas while reflecting on previous WSCUC recommendations, undergraduate and graduate learning, inclusive student success, and HSU's future as an institution. After each member of the committee completed the *Review under WSCUC Standards and Compliance with Federal Requirements* worksheet, comments were synthesized and the mode for each rating was tabulated (**Appendix B—Review under WSCUC Standards worksheet**).

Self-Study under the Standards

HSU has made significant progress in several areas outlined in its self-study. This chapter details the measures taken to address the areas identified for improvement in the 2008 WSCUC Commission Review and in the 2014 WSCUC Interim Report Committee (IRC) feedback letter.

Areas of Strength (CFRs 1.3, 1.5, 1.8, 2.9)

The rapid change in student demographics represents an area of both strength and challenge for HSU. With the dramatic rise in enrollment of first-generation, Pell-eligible, and traditionally underrepresented students, the university community has readied itself to assess, adapt, pilot, evaluate, and scale to meet the changing needs of its student body. HSU's strong social justice focus and its commitment to embracing diversity have propelled its student-success efforts forward.

The university's strengths also include the unique learning opportunities presented by its student-focused faculty and its physical location. Members of the

faculty are **evaluated** on and supported in their teaching, scholarship, and service to ensure a student-centered approach. The faculty, staff, and administrators at HSU have repeatedly shown the ability to reassess and re-group in order to address areas in need of improvement. University-wide strategic planning and implementation efforts exemplify this ability.

Other HSU strengths include continued progress in data gathering and analysis, development of academic program assessment strategies, and the development of a continuous improvement process under the tutelage of the new Office of Institutional Effectiveness. Going forward, quality assurance will be driven by a culture of evidence, as the institution moves out of a culture of tradition and justification (**Appendix D—Measuring a Culture of Evidence rubric**). This shift in culture will help HSU make the decisions necessary to prioritize the im-provement of student learning, retention, and graduation.

Areas of Challenge (CFRs 1.2, 1.8, 2.2a, 2.2b, 2.3, 2.6, 2.8)

HSU recognizes the urgent importance of addressing the areas recommended by the WSCUC Commission as well as the need to embrace change, make critical data-driven decisions, and sustain these efforts. HSU's reaffirmation of its mission, vision, and values during the recent strategic planning process also enabled the university community to focus on the main areas in need of improvement:

- **Student learning assessment**

- **Inclusive student success (retention and graduation rates and achievement gaps)**

- **Campus climate**

- **Resources aligned with priorities**

Since the WSCUC Educational Effectiveness Re-view visit in February 2010, the university community has continued its work on numerous initiatives, many of which grew out of program prioritization, the rec-ommendations of the Cabinet for Institutional Change, and the momentum established during the process of WSCUC accreditation reaffirmation. One of HSU's big-gest challenges, however, is to balance its identity, its *Humboldt Essence*—its grassroots movements in building social change, its environmental responsibility, and its place-based learning—with the efforts and initiatives necessary to move the institution forward in making data-based decisions aligned with its budget, WSCUC, and its strategic plan priorities.

Addressing Areas of Challenge

Assessment of Student Learning

HSU's Integrated Curriculum Committee has developed guidelines and criteria for curriculum development. A group to oversee **General Education & All-University Requirements** (GEAR) replaced a structure that had been fragmented across the three colleges, and it is now in its fourth year. GEAR student learning outcomes (SLOs) are currently being redesigned to implement measurable and assessable outcomes while establishing GEAR as a

single, coherent program with a clearly defined mission and set of goals.

These are significant strides. However, the university has yet to fully develop a continuous-improvement cycle for academic program assessment, and we acknowledge the need to create a pervasive culture of evidence, particularly in assessing student learning. **Program Review, Evaluation, & Planning** was introduced in 2011-12 as annual and five-year review processes, replacing a program-review process that reported every seven years and showed limited ability to close the assessment cycle. Academic program assessment has continued to experience uneven development and follow through.

In 2015-16, HSU took two significant steps to establish a foundation for successful continuous program improvement:

- **Realignment of resources to develop and support an Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE), an expansion of the Office of Institutional Research & Planning**

- **Restructure of annual and five-year academic-program assessment prompts and processes**

The OIE has developed new data dashboards for program assessment, and an Academic Assessment Coordinator will start in fall 2017. The OIE plays a key role in the implementation of HSU's strategic plan, as it houses process-management and -improvement coordinators for all areas across campus.

The new process of academic-program assessment provides the framework for departmental and college reviews of strategies to decrease course-level achievement gaps, develop and offer supplementary courses, improve advising, broaden curricular offerings in terms of diversity of perspectives, and inform purposeful faculty development. Efforts in this area include re-examining student learning outcomes at various levels and assessing curricular changes against results of prior assessments.

In addition to the OIE's assessment developments, in fall 2017, the university is launching a **Center for Teaching & Learning** (CTL), which is a collaboration among the **Office of the Provost**, **HSU Library**, **College of Extended Education & Global Engagement**, and **Information Technology Services**. Through the OIE and CTL, the university has implemented aspects of the strategic plan and created pathways to effectively assess student learning and build institutional capacity through data-driven decision making, aligning resources with priorities, and establishing a culture of evidence and continuous improvement. These areas focus on transforming assessment feedback into clear actions by responsible units, committees, departments, and programs.

Inclusive Student Success

Since 2010, efforts to eliminate achievement gaps have been mixed but promising. For the class of 2015, students from traditionally underrepresented groups actually had slightly higher retention rates than the total population (70.6%/70.2%) while first-generation students were only slightly behind the total (69.8%/70.2%) (**Service Group Retention and Graduation Report Options**).

HSU has numerous student success initiatives underway, including the new *Stars to Rocks* broad-based general-education course for physical science majors (refer to the **GI 2025 Student Success Plan**) and the

place-based experiential learning program **Klamath Connection**. In addition, the university has received nearly $5 million through a Department of Education STEM grant for Hispanic-Serving Institutions to fund the expansion of place-based cohort pilot programs designed to enhance peer-mentoring and tutoring resources and to make student success services more sustainable.

HSU is also one of 44 institutions participating in the American Association of State Colleges & Universities program, **Reimagining the First Year of College** (RFY). The program's goal is to share knowledge among institutions to improve student success, with special attention paid to populations of low-income and first-generation students from underrepresented groups. The RFY learning community within HSU and across RFY institutions provides reviews and shares evidence-based practices, programs, and implementation strategies.

The university is participating in other collaborations, as well. The CSU's expanded support of **High-Impact Practices** (HIP) through the Graduation Initiative 2025 and the chancellor's allocation for academic and student-success programs (**Appendix E— TPW-Presidents-Memo-4-9-13-Reducing-Bottle- necks-and-Improving-Student-Success Memorandum**) provided an opportunity to learn about practices at other CSU institutions and to compare assessment techniques in order to analyze the effect of HIP on student success and retention.

HSU recognizes that its student-support services need to be assessed and better integrated with academic initiatives and other activities across campus. This includes the need to expand the growth and academic mission of the **Cultural Centers for Academic Excellence**; to move tutoring services to a more accessible physical location; and to successfully implement and integrate the student-retention system **Skyfactor MapWorks™**, the course-planning software **u.Direct**, and other systems to track student progress and provide a more effective early alert system.

Positive Campus and Community Climate

In response to the 2008 WSCUC Commission Review, HSU's Cabinet for Institutional Change detailed its recommendations in the 2010 report, *Building the Capacity for Change*. The report identified the need to empower cross-divisional working groups to address diversity, sustainability, and the need to integrate the university's vision into all key decision-making processes. The strategic planning process in 2014-15 reaffirmed the university's statements on its mission, vision, and values and introduced the first campuswide **world café** discussions. The campus community benefitted from **opportunities to participate** in constructive conversations about university priorities. From the Action Research Campus Discussions in 2015, the **Student Success Summits** in 2016-17, and other campuswide initiatives, the university community is beginning to appreciate the benefits of inclusive planning.

HSU implemented its intranet for more effective communication across campus units, created additional all-university socials and events, and improved new faculty orientation and integration, which has been extended to a year-long learning community designed to foster social connections with the second-year tenure-track faculty.

The **President's Native American Advisory Council** regularly brings together representatives from the Northern California Tribal Chairman's Association, HSU students, and staff and faculty members to discuss areas of mutual interest. In addition to the important

Tribal relationships, a 2015 survey of faculty and staff engagement in community outreach demonstrated the university's continued commitment to engaging the community at large. And, the **Equity Alliance for the North Coast** is a campus-community collaboration focused on improving cultural competence improving cultural competence and racial equity in the region.

Realigning Resources (CFR 1.6)

In 2010, a $12 million cut in state allocations dramatically reshaped HSU's fiscal reality, leading to seven years of deficit spending. One-time funding has frequently been used to support ongoing initiatives and unfunded state mandates. While the university budget is still not at the levels of funding experienced before 2009, state funding has slowly increased over the past four years. This has helped decrease the deficit spending while also providing funds to improve faculty and staff compensation. The university has focused on eliminating the deficit and using base funding to support strategic priorities. Positive signs of transformation include a shift to strategic budgeting and a developing clarity regarding the role of the University Resources & Planning Committee (see chapter 7). Strategic budgeting will ensure that resources are aligned with HSU's strategic priorities over the next five years and beyond.

HSU has worked to recruit an associate vice president (AVP) for Enrollment Management following the departure of its previous AVP in December 2015. This has been a challenge, and the university had no one in that role for over a year. In January 2017, President Rossbacher appointed an interim enrollment AVP to focus on fall 2017 yield activities while she rethinks the structure and viability of the existing organization.

Meanwhile, HSU contracted with AACRAO Consulting to provide feedback on the university's enrollment management structure, effectiveness, and efficiency. With the help of these consultants, HSU is developing a new strategic enrollment plan, which will guide the university into the future.

"Students get to address some of the most interesting scientific questions in stem cell biology and regenerative medicine by conducting experiments together and doing it multiple times."

Professor Amy Sprowles | Biology (Center)

< TOC   APPENDIX >

CHAPTER 3: Degree Programs

Meaning, Quality, and Integrity of Degree

"For HSU to move beyond design and implementation to the production of student learning outcomes results across the institution, at every level, that are regularly used to improve learning and teaching, HSU should provide substantial evidence of its efforts to 'close the loop' in its institutional report ... "

—WSCUC Interim Report Committee, April 7, 2014

A degree from Humboldt State University is founded on the academic standards and requirements of the CSU and further defined by the quality and uniqueness of the major programs on campus. As HSU continues to build a culture of evidence, opportunities exist in many areas to fully articulate, align, and incorporate its vision throughout the curriculum. More work is needed to ensure outcomes are coordinated and measurable in ways that promote inclusive student success and growth. Strides have been made since the last WSCUC review, including the creation of program learning goals and annual reviews (CFR 4.5), the development of the Office of Institutional Effectiveness to support outcome assessment, and the implementation of numerous initiatives aimed at inclusive student success and greater collaboration on curriculum. Nonetheless, work remains. HSU still lacks university-wide agreement on how student learning and outcomes should be defined

and assessed. Many assessment efforts require further coordination and alignment. As the demographic composition of the university continues to diversify, consistent assessment practices that close the loop and lead to identifiable improvement in the degree outcomes need further development and implementation.

Meaning of Degree
(CFRs 1.1, 1.2, 2.2a, 2.2b, 2.4, 2.6, 2.10)

Humboldt State University is part of the **California State University system**, and, therefore, students must satisfy certain state-mandated requirements in order to graduate with either a baccalaureate or master's degree (**Title V of the California Code of Regulations**). These requirements must be met by both the major coursework and the **General Education & All-University Requirements** (GEAR).

Depending on a student's choice of major, the graduate will earn a Bachelor of Arts, a Bachelor of Science, a Master of Arts, a Master of Science, or a Master of Social Work.

As stated in HSU's **Student Learning Outcomes**, upon completion of the baccalaureate degree, graduates will have demonstrated:

- **effective communication through written and oral modes,**

- **critical and creative thinking skills in acquiring a broad base of knowledge and applying it to complex issues,**

- **competence in a major area of study, and**

- **an appreciation for and understanding of an expanded world perspective by engaging respectfully with a diverse range of individuals, communities, and viewpoints.**

Graduates will also be prepared to:

- **succeed in their chosen careers,**

- **take responsibility for identifying personal goals and practicing lifelong learning, and**

- **pursue social justice, promote environmental responsibility, and improve economic conditions in their workplaces and communities.**

In support of these outcomes, all graduates will demonstrate **competency** in these areas: critical thinking, oral communication, written communication, science, arts and humanities, social science, lifelong learning and self-development, diversity and common ground, and American Institutions.

In addition to those requirements defined in Title V (GE Areas A-E and American Institutions), HSU students are also required to take two Diversity & Common Ground courses, which are defined as any courses that require students to analyze and consider diverse, multicultural, and/or global perspectives (CFRs 1.1, 1.2; see also 2.4, 2.6, 2.10).

Beyond the general outcomes and competencies in place for all students, each program also defines outcomes for their graduates, which are listed in the **HSU catalog**. Program outcomes are translated into course outcomes that are part of each course syllabus and defined through the content of instruction.

Ideally, the meaning of an HSU degree should align with course-level student learning outcomes and program-level learning outcomes. A word cloud aggregation of program-level learning outcomes derived from the 2013-14 annual program reviews of 54 undergraduate

and graduate programs suggests that the meaning of an HSU degree primarily involves *research ability, social skills, understanding information*, and *demonstrating knowledge*. Although many program-level outcomes do incorporate the university-level outcomes, there is room for further integration and alignment.

Quality of Degree (CFRs 2.5, 2.10, 2.11, 3.1, 3.10, 4.3-4.7)

A degree from Humboldt State University represents a distinct experience. HSU's reputation with respect to social justice, environmental responsibility, hands-on learning, and place-based learning communities has grown organically from the interests of the student body and faculty over the 104-year history of the university. This focus is codified in HSU's **vision** and is represented throughout the components of the HSU degree and in the many quality programs on campus. Classroom engagement is supported by hands-on science-based programs, a strong arts program and culture, and professional opportunities in the local community. A degree at HSU is much more than a classroom experience.

Consistent with HSU's **mission** to improve the human condition and the environment, a key part of students' degree experiences at HSU is participation in local internships and service activities (**Appendix F—Service Learning & Academic Internship Courses AY 2015-16**). **Experiential learning** is a strong component of the HSU degree, supported by the university's unique location and its connection with the local area. Every year, HSU provides the opportunity to over 1,000 students through more than 50 courses to integrate with the community through service learning and academic internships. The

university assists in coordinating more than 350 approved learning sites, many of which are located in Humboldt County. The College of Professional Studies also provides an **internship map** to assist students with an overview of internship sites.

HSU is committed to providing students with multiple opportunities for hands-on learning with professors and for participation in research and community service. For 40 years, HSU students and faculty have studied the ocean and its fisheries, wildlife, biology, chemistry, and geology aboard the **R/V Coral Sea**. As with HSU's **Telonicher Marine Lab** in nearby Trinidad and the **Child Development Laboratory** on campus, these "classrooms" provide rich learning opportunities for both undergraduate and graduate research. HSU students study and conduct research alongside the world's leading experts on redwood trees; they study sustainable energy systems at the **Schatz Energy Research Center**; they study forest fires in the cutting-edge **Fire Lab**; they create art in the jewelry, metalsmithing, and ceramics labs; they study ancient Mayan history in Belize; they create theatre, dance, and film productions; they study the mechanics of walking in the **Biomechanics Lab**; they work with children in local schools; and students in the Spanish program engage in service learning by providing interpretation services for local non-governmental organizations and community partners. In short, possibilities abound for undergraduate and graduate students to experience research and hands-on learning.

In 2015-16, roughly 500 students gave nearly 50,000 hours of service to the community through the **Center for Community Based Learning**. HSU currently has 19 formally designated service-learning courses with six additional courses being piloted during the 2016-17

academic year. Additionally, over 20 programs at HSU have formal academic internship options for their students.

Participation in externally funded research for undergraduate and graduate students supports the overall goals of an HSU degree. Grants provide direct support and scholarships for students and provide equipment for instruction and research. Undergraduate students in all disciplines benefit from being a part of the funded research of the university faculty and staff. These opportunities provide undergraduates with hands-on experiences as they prepare for graduate school or professional training. The programs and mentors at HSU support students as they explore possible career paths, and many undergraduates make research a focal point of their academic training. Engagement in undergraduate research is an important high-impact practice that increases student retention. **Appendix G—Grant Submissions and Awards** provides examples of external funding.

One example of research support is the **Undergraduate Research and Mentoring Program in the Biological Sciences** (URM). Funded by the National Science Foundation, this program provided nearly $900,000 from 2009 to 2015 to support undergraduate students with financial aid and housing stipends. URM put particular emphasis on broadening participation of members of groups historically underrepresented in science and engineering: American Indians, Hispanic Americans, African Americans, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders, and persons with disabilities. The participating faculty led several workshops on how to prepare for graduate school and the job market.

In the humanities and social sciences, experiential learning is embedded in the curriculum, ensuring that students connect classroom activities with real world experiences. English majors visit the annual Shakespeare Festival in Ashland, Oregon; religious studies students experience religious ceremonies and traditions through weekend workshops with Buddhist, Jewish, Christian, and Native American spiritual leaders; political science and international studies majors compete in Model United Nations programs in San Francisco and New York; and both Spanish and international studies programs require study abroad experiences.

Integrity of Degree (CFRs 1.2, 2.1-2.4, 2.6, 2.7, 2.10, 3.1, 4.1-4.6)

Like all institutions of higher learning, HSU routinely examines the meaning, quality, and integrity of its degree programs. The university's vibrant history offers students a distinctive degree experience and presents challenges for assessment that are being addressed through several processes. The assessment and continuous-improvement cycle is outlined briefly here as it relates to degree integrity; it is discussed in greater detail in later sections.

Academic programs at HSU conduct full program reviews every five years. In addition, each program completes annual reports on curriculum and pedagogy assessment, enrollment/diversity, and student success and department activity to continually improve programs and to provide context and regular updates to the more extensive program reviews. This process, known as **Program Review, Evaluation, & Planning (PREP)**, was introduced during the 2011-12 academic year and has seen annual refinement, the details of which can be found in chapters 4 and 6 (CFRs 2.3, 2.4, 2.7, 2.10, 3.1, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5).

Parallel to the work carried out by academic programs to ensure their quality, periodic attempts have been made in recent years to examine the quality of **GEAR** courses. Due to a number of reasons, there have been no meaningful attempts to assess (or document the assessment of) GEAR as a program. The fractured and decentralized nature of HSU's GEAR program has left individual academic programs in charge of the administration and assessment of GEAR courses at a time when those programs were feeling the pressure to assess first and foremost their own major outcomes. The closest thing to centralized stewardship of GEAR as a program has been the GEAR committee, a group of faculty whose membership and leadership change annually, contributing to a lack of consistency and continuity that has hampered efforts to reform the program over the years (CFRs 2.1, 2.3, 4.1, 4.3, 4.5, 4.6).

HSU has taken significant steps during the past five years to understand the role and value that assessment plays in improving the student experience. However, expanded use of assessment has been hindered by the lack of an academic assessment coordinator and a faculty development director. Between 2010 and 2013, the university had two different academic assessment coordinators, and since 2014, the three academic associate deans have served as de facto coordinators for their respective colleges. In 2016, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness was charged with focusing on institutional effectiveness and supporting program review and assessment activities (CFRs 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6). As part of this charge, the office will house an academic assessment coordinator and work closely with the new Center for Teaching & Learning.

In addition to internal program reviews, the quality of the HSU degree is also supported by ongoing reviews through external audits and accrediting bodies, (**Appendix H—Academic Program External Review**). Work continues across campus to improve the overall degree experience. One challenge is to think of an HSU degree as the baccalaureate as a whole, not simply the student's major program at graduation. Ideally, the HSU baccalaureate should garner a reputation for excellence, and creating a common set of student learning outcomes that all HSU students must achieve in order to graduate is paramount. These SLOs must be more than the five core competencies, as those serve as a baseline for all universities and do not make a unique HSU experience (CFRs 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.6).

The meaning, quality, and integrity of the degree are driven by the success of students during their time at HSU and in their chosen paths after graduation. Assessing student learning and outcomes is a vital component to ensuring the quality and integrity of the university's degree programs. As discussed in the following chapters, HSU continues to grow in these areas, but significant opportunities still exist to improve, refine, and expand the assessment of student learning outcomes and, in the process, close the loop by implementing changes that positively affect all students.

“I want my students to take away an appreciation for preserving the past and that we have a lot to learn from our shared ancestry with ancient cultures.”

Professor Marisol Cortes-Rincon | Anthropology (Left)

CHAPTER 4: Educational Quality

Student Learning, Core Competencies, and Standards of Performance at Graduation
(CFRs 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.6, 2.7, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4)

"However, it bears repeating that the university needs to provide evidence of the outcomes of its numerous activities and initiatives, showing their impact, and needs to show how results are being used to make improvements."

—WSCUC letter to President Rollin Richmond, April 7, 2014

The Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators, submitted with the WSCUC 2014 Interim Report, documents the full participation of programs across campus in the design and implementation of student learning outcomes.

Humboldt State's **student learning outcomes** were most recently updated through campuswide strategic planning in 2001. In 2012, faculty updated the learning outcomes for all credential programs through the reaccreditation process with the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. In 2016, the faculty of the Graduate Council established student learning outcomes for all master's degrees.

In 2013, HSU completed a project to identify and align program-level and course-level student learning outcomes. Within each program (undergraduate, credential, and graduate), faculty created maps that link course-, program-, and degree-level outcomes. HSU's **syllabi policy** requires that all three levels of learning outcomes are included on every course syllabus so that expectations for learning guide instruction and help students understand how coursework contributes to outcomes for the program and degree in which they are engaged.

Standards of Student Performance (CFRs 2.2, 2.2a, 2.6)

At the baccalaureate level, the institutional standards for student performance have been focused on grades at course completion. Most degree programs require grades of C- or C (B- for credential and graduate programs) as minimum grades in required coursework. In general education, a minimum grade of C is required in the "golden four" lower-division courses in Quantitative Reasoning, Oral Communication, Critical Thinking, and Written Communication. Students who have demonstrated sufficient

achievement to earn a passing grade in all required courses have, by design, met the standards of student performance at the program level and university level.

Additional evidence of appropriate standards for student performance has come from data in national surveys such as the **National Survey on Student Engagement (NSSE)**, in which HSU seniors report that the top gains from their academic programs include thinking analytically (87%) and writing clearly and effectively (68%).

Of course, tracking student grades provides only a small piece of the larger picture of student learning, and, in particular, it does not provide clarity on the attainment of course-, program-, or university-specific student learning outcomes. New approaches, such as assessing specific student output using the Association of American Colleges & Universities' core competencies rubrics, have been developed and implemented to provide a clearer understanding of how well our students are mastering the outcomes set for them. These new approaches are part of HSU's renewed focus on the process of continuous improvement through assessment and program review.

Improving Student Success by Course Redesign (CFRs 4.3, 4.4)

In 2011-12, an effort was made to reduce the list of gateway courses on campus. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness defines gateway courses as courses with a student success rate (defined as a passing grade of C- or better) lower than 85%. A series of course-related efforts, including pedagogical and curricular changes, led to the removal of 14 courses from this list. This reduction in the number of courses with low success rates is evidence

that the university's efforts to improve student success through course transformation have been working.

The Department of Chemistry's curriculum overhaul of CHEM 109 and later courses in the sequence included lowering content density by re-assigning content to later courses and increasing student time with instructors. The initial data are promising: The overall success rate (the percentage of students receiving a grade of CR or C- or higher out of all students receiving grades, excluding grades of RU, I, RD, RP, and W) in CHEM 109 increased from a historical average of 69% to 81% (**Appendix I— CHEM 109 Curriculum & Success Data**).

The Department of Economics has introduced **supplemental instruction** for ECON 210 and ECON 310 in recent years. The overall success rate has increased from a historical average of 82% to 86% in ECON 210 and from 80% to 96% in ECON 310.

In 2015, the Department of Psychology transformed PSYC 104 to increase student engagement through the introduction of small discussion sections. Preliminary results show an improvement in the success rates and a reduction in the achievement gap. In 2011-12, the success rate in PSYC 104 was 70% for URG students and 80% for non-URG students. For 2015-16, under the new design, the success rates were 83% for URG students and 86% for non-URG students.

Improving Student Success with Evidence-Based Teaching Practices (CFR 4.4)

HSU prioritizes evidence-based teaching practices as important components of its degree programs. Research (**Brownell and Swaner, 2009**) suggests that these

high-impact practices increase rates of student retention and student engagement and, thus, student success. Moreover, the university's use of evidence-based teaching and learning practices is one of the ways it can confirm that students are learning.

Writing-Intensive Experiences

In 2015-16, under the leadership of Maria Corral-Ribordy, lecturer in the Department of Critical Race, Gender, & Sexuality Studies, HSU launched an innovative journal of student writing titled *CouRaGeouS Cuentos: A Journal of Counternarratives*, published through the HSU library's HSU Press. The idea for the journal emerged from the interests of Chicanx and Latinx students in Corral-Ribordy's class.

Faculty members in English at HSU are also working to replace HSU's Graduation Writing Proficiency Exam with a more comprehensive and more easily assessed Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) program.

Addressing Gaps through Academic Assessment Activities and Program Review (CFR 2.7)

While Humboldt State has made efforts to define and align expectations for student learning and support student success, the university also recognizes that it has more work to do to ensure that student learning is consistent with expectations. HSU is currently transitioning from an assumption that grades accurately measure student learning toward a set of metrics that will better inform the continuous-improvement cycle within each degree program. A critical vehicle for doing this work is a recently refined process for Academic Assessment Activities &

Program Review, Evaluation, & Planning. Academic program review is discussed in detail in chapter 6 of this report.

Building a Foundation for Campuswide Assessment (CFRs 4.3, 4.4)

For the past five years, HSU has been building the foundation for an improved assessment process of evaluating core competencies. A campuswide assessment was conducted in 2011-12 wherein every program was tasked with identifying discipline-specific writing skills for its majors and conducting assessment in this area. For some programs, this assessment was an opportunity to attend to a fundamental university-level learning outcome that program faculty may not have considered their responsibility. Several examples of incorporating assessment findings into the continuous-improvement cycle and closing the loop on pedagogical or curricular changes to improve student success follow.

The spring 2011 Environmental Resource Engineering program's assessment was devoted to evaluating technical writing (**Appendix J—ERE Written Comm Assessment**).

In spring 2012, the French & Francophone Studies Program conducted a developmental/intermediate "Short Reading Analysis in French" writing assessment (**Appendix K—French Written Comm Assessment**).

In 2012-13, many programs across campus worked with the director of educational effectiveness to refine their program outcomes so that they were more easily assessed and more connected to the WSCUC core competencies. This resulted in far fewer learning outcomes employing the phrases *appreciation for* or *exposure to*, and many more employing the words *identify, articulate, evaluate,* and *apply.*

This refinement produced both small and large changes across campus. For example, the Physics department started fresh in 2012-13 by first identifying student learning outcomes at the course level, which led to extensive discussion of the fundamental learning outcomes for the major. This, in turn, led to significant program revisions (removing, adding, and changing courses) so that the curriculum would more strongly support student learning. The results of the mapping exercises proved to be of immediate use to better inform temporary faculty of the principal role that individual courses are expected to play in supporting student learning.

Assessing the Core Competencies in Undergraduate Majors (CFRs 4.3, 4.4)

In 2013-14, program faculty were tasked with connecting the existing alignment of course and program learning outcomes to the core competencies so that annual assessments of student learning would inform the faculty about student learning in the majors and inform the university about student learning in the core competencies that are developed and mastered in those majors.

In spring 2014, program faculty analyzed student work using the Association of American Colleges & Universities Information Literacy rubric. Unlike earlier assessments that informed department faculty about students in their classrooms, this assessment of core competencies helped the institution characterize efforts to close the loop between assessment data and continuous-improvement practices across campus. After gathering and compiling assessment results on information literacy across campus, actions taken by program faculty included:

- reviewing the information literacy goals explicitly with all program faculty members to ensure that opportunities for mastery of all aspects were accounted for within the curriculum,

- embedding research in several milestone classes in the major, discussing learning objectives with all new majors (first-year and transfer), and developing practices to enhance successful research skills for all majors, and

- working with designated library liaisons to put together information-literacy workshops for students and comprehensive research guides to support student success in specific courses.

One example of the above actions occurred in Recreation Administration, where program faculty identified three courses that students should take earlier in their academic career in order to learn methods to evaluate information and sources and to use information effectively (**Appendix L— Rec Admin Information Literacy Assessment**).

In 2014-15, departments were asked to assess their learning outcomes that were most connected with oral communication. Sample results from the assessment, including actions to close the loop, are included here (**Appendix AC— Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators**).

In the Department of Critical Race, Gender, & Sexuality Studies, students were assessed through an oral presentation in which they discussed the ways that their curricular and co-curricular activities have prepared them for their post-graduation plans for work or graduate study (**Appendix M—CRGS Oral Comm Assessment**).

Standards of Attainment (CFR 2.6)

For the assessments of the core competencies, the Academic Programs Office has encouraged faculty to use the **VALUE** (Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education) rubrics from the Association of American Colleges & Universities (AAC&U). With the suggestion that the VALUE rubrics could be modified to fit discipline-specific aspects of the core competencies, the generally accepted proficiency level for all students at graduation is comparable to Milestone 3 of the VALUE rubrics.

Based on the assessments that have occurred and the data that have been collected from across campus, it is estimated that about 80% of HSU graduates are demonstrating the competence expected in written and oral communication within their disciplines (with 40% exceeding expectations, **Appendix AJ—Oral Communication Assessment Results (Responses)**, and about 65% are demonstrating expected competence in information literacy (with 30% exceeding expectations, **Appendix AK—Information Literacy Results Tally (Responses)**. More work still needs to be done to ensure that all HSU students are graduating with at least the expected level of competence in these skills.

Written communication is measured in part through the Graduate Writing Proficiency Exam (GWPE) in fulfillment of the CSU requirement that all students demonstrate writing proficiency before graduation. At Humboldt State, the exam consists of two 45-minute essays that serve to verify components of the AAC&U Written Communication VALUE Rubric at level 3. All HSU graduates since 1979 have passed the GWPE; however, the university is preparing to replace it with a WAC program that supports students' writing knowledge and development through a vertically articulated course of study with discipline-specific writing-intensive courses, a practice identified as high impact by the AAC&U (**Appendix N—Writing Across the Curriculum Proposal**).

Assessment of Core Competencies at the Graduate Level (CFRs 2.2b, 2.3, 2.4, 2.6, 2.7, 4.3, 4.4)

Evaluative Rubrics (CFR 2.2b)

To evaluate the core competencies at the graduate level, thesis committee members are asked to complete an evaluative rubric for each student's oral presentation and thesis. Rubrics from master's programs in education, environment and community, kinesiology, environmental systems, biology, applied anthropology, and business were examined by the Office of Graduate Studies. The rubrics provide descriptive text for each of three levels of performance of student learning outcomes to ensure consistent scoring and to ensure the usefulness of the collected information.

Closing the Loop—An Example from Natural Resources (CFRs 2.3, 2.4, 2.6, 2.7, 4.3, 4.4)

The assessment process using rubrics for the Master of Science in Natural Resources offers a useful example of closing the loop. Graduate students writing and oral communication skills for the thesis process are evaluated as "Not Demonstrated", "Demonstrated", or "Mastered" according to specific criteria. Data from the rubric provide a comprehensive overview that allow for the Natural Resources program to evaluate students and make changes. Both the rubric and data are provided for review in **Appendix O—NR Program Review**.

> **My focus is to offer students more practical experience. To do this, students have a chance to test and train people from the local community.**
>
> **Professor Young Sub Kwon** | Kinesiology (Left)
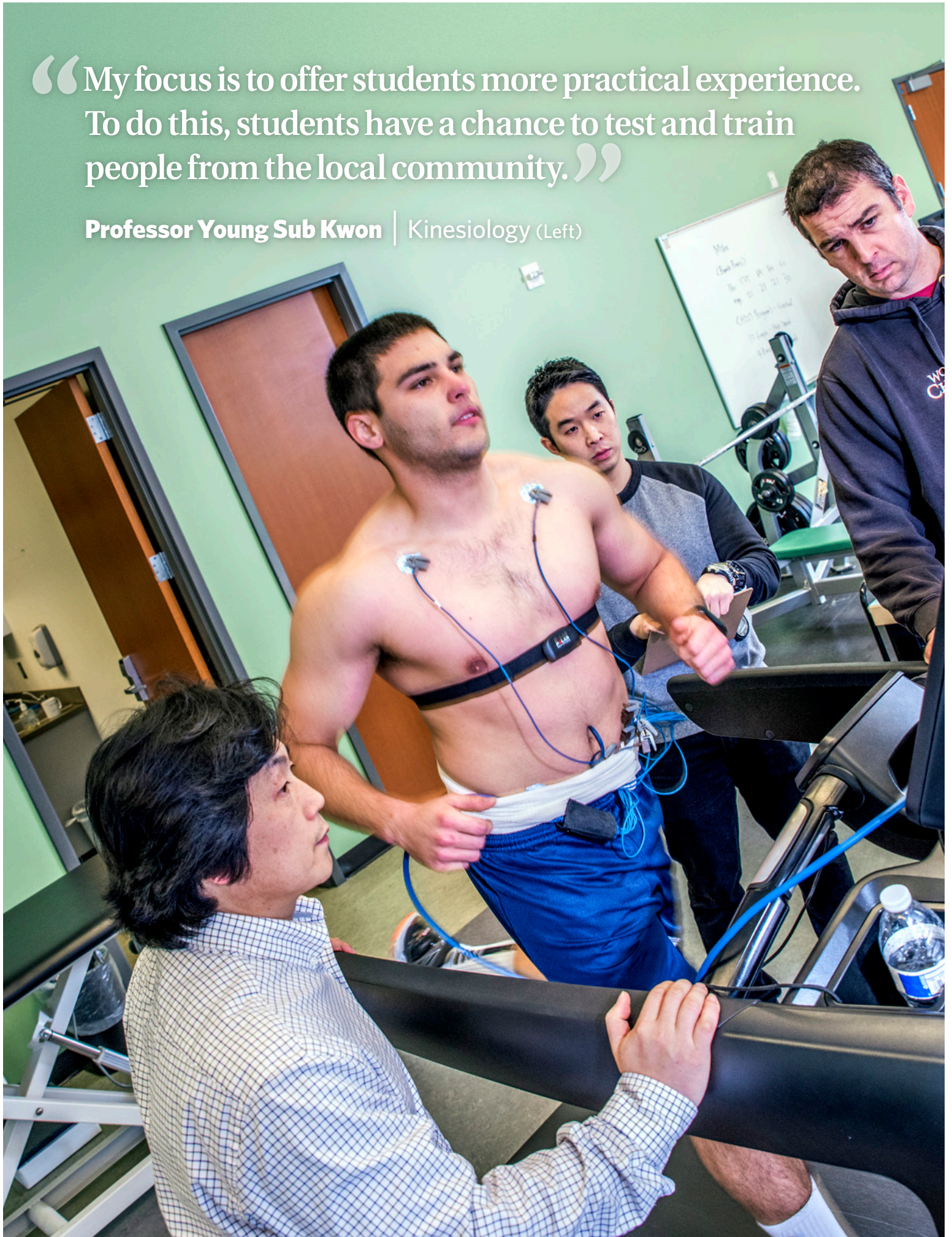
CHAPTER 5: Student Success

Student Learning, Retention, and Graduation (CFR 1.2, 2.7, 2.12, 2.13, 2.14)

"HSU should provide substantial evidence in its institutional report for the next comprehensive review that these programs and initiatives are producing meaningful and sustainable results and that assessment of student learning supports the success of students from different racial and ethnic backgrounds."

—WSCUC Interim Report Committee, April 7, 2014

Setting the State's Stage for Student Success (CFRs 1.2, 2.7, 2.11-2.13, 4.1, 4.2)

California State University Graduation Initiative and Graduation Initiative 2025

Humboldt State has considered increasing student success within a broad context and using the life-cycle model. The CSU has long focused on increasing the number of students enrolled in public higher education and the number completing a baccalaureate degree. In 2009, as part of the CSU Graduation Initiative, HSU set a goal of increasing by 2015 the four-year graduation rate for students belonging to underrepresented groups (URG) by 15% and by 12% for the rest of students. To support this goal, the university initiated a series of activities that are discussed here.

Performance in improving four-year graduation rates has been mixed. As of fall 2015, 14.5% of first-time, full-time undergraduates graduated within four years. Significant differences exist when comparing URG students to the overall rate. Only 11.4% of African American non-Hispanic students and 8.2% of Hispanic students graduated in four years, which is significantly lower than the 17.4% success rate for white students. Most recently, HSU set campus goals as part of a system-wide graduation initiative, which has set a goal of increasing first-time, full-time undergraduate four-year and six-year graduation rates to 30% and 56%, and two-year and four-year transfer

graduation rates to 38% and 79% by the year 2025. Additional targets aim to eliminate the achievement gap between the overall population and URG and low-income students. See Graduation Initiatives **2009** and **2015** for full reports, including proposals and updates.

The Changing HSU Student

Chapter 1 detailed how dramatically the demographics of the HSU student body have shifted in recent years. In addition to the recent surge in URG and first-generation students, HSU has seen a rise in students with fewer finances at their disposal. In 2010, 45% of students who applied for financial aid expected their families to contribute $1,000 or less toward their college expenses. By 2016-17, this number had risen to 54%—an increase of 20% in just six years. Most (75%) of these lower-income students arrive with plans to complete their baccalaureate degrees at HSU. Similar trends are evident in the graduate student population as well. **Appendix P—Student Demographics 2009-2016** has a complete student demographic breakdown of HSU enrollment.

In 2015-16, HSU conducted several **action research studies** to identify ways to better address the needs of its growing population of first-generation URG students, who now make up over half of incoming freshman, and to identify factors contributing to all students' success. Student surveys indicate that many URG students would benefit both from a better onboarding experience and from additional social support once on campus. Data also show that 30% of first-time undergraduates earn less than a 2.0 GPA in their first term at HSU (resulting in academic probation), and nearly 30% leave after their first year. HSU students placed on academic probation are *four times less likely to* graduate in four years than

students who are never on probation. The overarching goal is to provide a structure that helps students earn their degrees efficiently in an environment where they feel welcome, supported, and equipped to succeed.

Enrollment Management and Student Life Cycle (CFRs 2.13, 2.14, 3.4)

Kalsbeek (2013) defines strategic enrollment management in **Hossler and Bontrager (2015)** as "a comprehensive approach to integrating all of the university's programs, practices, policies, and planning related to achieving the optimal recruitment, retention, and graduation of students".

Results from the 2009-2016 enrollment management recommendations (**Appendix Q—Enrollment Management Plan (2009-2016) Summary**) have been mixed. The percentage of first-time undergraduates who retain to the second year has fallen. The classes of 2012-2015 retained at rates of 76.2% (an institutional high), 73.2%, 74.5%, and 70.2%. Upper-division transfer student one-year retention rates rose from 83.3% to 85.1% during this time.

Pre-matriculation Support

Success for URG students begins prior to their arrival on campus. HSU's Early Outreach Department houses seven programs designed to increase college readiness and strengthen the local five-county-area pipeline from post-secondary to college graduation. Three TRiO programs—**GEAR UP** (Gaining Early Awareness & Readiness for Undergraduate Programs), Upward Bound, and Educational Talent Search—are supported by federal funds, and the remaining four programs—Early Assessment Program, Parent Institute for Quality Education, Student

Academic Services Outreach Program, and Local Pathways—are state funded.

The university achieved another success in this area in 2015 when it was awarded $3 million through California's Innovation Awards competition. The award was presented for HSU's work with the **Humboldt Post-Secondary Success Collaborative**, which has the goals of increasing bachelor's degree attainment, reducing time to degree, and increasing transfer pathways for local students. The university is using the funds to partner on several initiatives with the College of the Redwoods (CR), Humboldt County Office of Education (HCOE), and Humboldt Area Foundation (HAF). These include providing college exploration programming to area students in grades 7 to 12; establishing a one-stop online application for over 250 scholarships available to area students; developing new transfer articulation agreements between HSU and area community colleges, especially CR; and developing a means of data sharing among local high schools, CR, and HSU. An assessment plan is also being developed for these initiatives, with assessment expected to occur over the next three years.

Orientation

The **Humboldt Orientation Program** (HOP) provides a comprehensive orientation program for in-coming first-time undergraduates, and HSU has a new "Transfer Orientation" program. Content is delivered both online and in person and includes degree and graduation requirements and corresponding policies, student-support program information, and mandatory training concerning policies related to sexualized violence and alcohol and other drug use. In 2016, HSU took a further step to support the success of incoming students by tasking a

working group with envisioning new student on-boarding programs and processes for both first-time freshmen and upper-division transfer students. A phased implementation of the group's recommendations will begin with fall 2017 incoming freshman.

Closing the Achievement Gap (CFRs 2.4, 2.6, 2.7, 4.3, 4.4): Retention, Academic, Cultural, and Social Support

Retention & Inclusive Student Success (RISS)

In 2013, following the recommendations of the Retention & Student Success Reorganization working group, HSU began an organizational restructuring of the student-services programs focused on supporting retention and student success, and it launched a new unit, **Retention & Inclusive Student Success** (RISS). This decision emerged after a multi-year process of analyzing data on student success and conducting multiple qualitative assessments of student needs. The goal in this restructuring was to bring focus and energy to the university's efforts to support student success and to build new programs for URG students.

This effort was part of a larger campuswide approach to increase retention and graduation rates and to close the achievement gaps. Existing programs such as the **Educational Opportunity Program/Student Support Services**, the **Learning Center**, the **Academic Career & Advising Center**, the **Indian Tribal & Educational Personnel Program**, the **Indian Natural Resources, Science, & Engineering Program**, the **MultiCultural Center**, the **Center for Community Based Learning**, and the **Retention**

through **Academic Mentoring** were brought together, and new student centers were launched—in particular, the **African American Center for Academic Excellence** and the **Latinx Center for Academic Excellence**.

Purposeful Refinement: Office of Diversity & Inclusion to Office of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

HSU's 2013 WSCUC interim report outlined progress toward HSU's goal of making excellence inclusive. In the years since, demographic changes in the incoming student population have underscored the centrality of this work to HSU's institutional mission. The university has continued to make sustained progress toward this goal, with the **Office of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion** (ODEI) coordinating the ongoing development, implementation, and refinement of the **Campus Diversity Action Plan**. The office released the plan in fall 2013, and it has provided a framework for the university's work in this area since then.

Specific efforts since 2013 include the ODEI's implementation of a comprehensive action plan for faculty diversity. Changes to the faculty hiring process that were first implemented in 2009 resulted in marked increases in the diversity of faculty applicant pools and in new faculty appointments. This included the design and delivery of an *Avoiding Unconscious Bias in the Hiring Process* training curriculum that has engaged more than 1,100 staff and faculty members across campus. Another effort since 2013 has been integrating a focus on increasing inclusive excellence and decreasing achievement gaps with the annual planning and evaluation process for all academic programs. To this end, HSU launched the university-wide

Institute for Student Success, which has offered faculty, staff, and administrators twice-yearly professional development conferences, book circles, and other educational offerings throughout the year. These are all focused on inclusive student success, with topics such as creating inclusive campus environments and effective pedagogy. Refer to the **Office of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion's 2012 Dissecting Diversity** (2008-12 retrospective) and **2014 Cultivating Diversity at HSU** reports.

In fall 2016, the search was completed for a new executive director, who sits on the President's Cabinet.

Early Matriculation Programming and Support

Remediation

Student preparation is a key indicator of student-success efforts at Humboldt State. As of fall 2016, nearly 60% of first-time undergraduates were assessed as college ready, although nearly 20% needed remediation in both math and English. Over the last five years, 68% of students who needed both forms of remediation enrolled for their second year, compared to 75% of those who did not. Incoming freshmen who do not demonstrate readiness for college-level work are encouraged to participate in the **CSU Early Start Program** the summer prior to arriving at HSU. The online courses are intended to assist students in adjusting their placement, and, if adjustment is not possible, students need to register for remedial courses. In accordance with CSU requirements, students have one year to complete their remediation requirements, and academic advisors work closely with their student advisees to assist them in doing so. The registrar's office

maintains all records and updates milestones as students proceed through their required courses.

ALEKS-PPL

A way that HSU handles math remediation and the corresponding need for additional units is through **Assessment and Learning in Knowledge Spaces Placement, Preparation, and Learning** (ALEKS-PPL). ALEKS-PPL is an artificially intelligent online program that solves two critical problems for incoming students: math placement and course preparation. ALEKS-PPL combines research-based placement assessments with personalized learning tools to help students refresh lost knowledge. Accurately assessing student competency reduces the need for students to take additional units in math and reduces the chance that these students will end up on academic probation. Prior to fall 2016, HSU used the Mathematics Diagnostic Test Program, a single-sitting one-hour exam with a pass rate of 15%. The university switched to ALEKS-PPL fall 2016, and from a cohort of 57 students, 33 placed into Calculus I, for a success rate of 58%.

Place-Based Learning

A unique feature of Humboldt State is the natural environment of its Northern California location. To capitalize on this location and leverage it to support student learning, in 2015-16, HSU introduced **Klamath Connection** (KC), a place-based community model targeted at STEM majors (biology, botany, zoology, and wildlife). Results after the first year indicate success in engaging and retaining students. Surveys of participating and non-participating reference students conducted during the first week of fall classes suggested that the summer immersion experience sharply improved students' perceptions of belonging, community, awareness of campus resources, and study skills. Likewise, Skyfactor Mapworks™ surveys showed that participants recorded significantly higher responses for social integration, optimism about their future in science, feeling part of the HSU community, and development of time-management skills.

These benefits were also associated with differences in academic achievement. For example, in the large introductory botany class (BOT 105), a gateway course in which KC students and reference students were in the same class with the same instructor, program participants scored significantly higher than reference students, and gaps in academic achievement between student groups were reduced or in some cases eliminated. Data from the first-year cohort show positive course GPA trends in foundational and gateway science and math courses such as CHEM 107, CHEM 109, and WLDF 210. When compared to first-time undergraduates not participating in KC, KC students (N = 63) had higher GPAs overall (2.77 vs. 2.47), lower rates of academic probation (11% vs. 32%), and higher retention rates into their second year (84% vs. 72%); they had also completed more units toward their degrees (14.5 vs. 11.1) (**Appendix AL—Results from First Cohort of the Klamath Connection**).

These positive results assisted the campus in securing a five-year, nearly $5 million grant from the US Department of Education to expand efforts that already boost the success of STEM majors. This allowed for the addition of fisheries and environmental resource engineering to the targeted degree programs participating in KC and doubled the number of KC students in 2016-17

from the previous year. Areas that will be addressed by this grant-funded initiative include:

- **place-based learning communities involving a summer immersion, STEM-based first-year seminar, peer mentors, and linked gateway courses,**

- **enhanced tutoring and coaching services for gateway STEM courses integrated into the new HSU Learning Commons,**

- **co-requisite approach to math remediation, and**

- **strengthened relationships and streamlined articulation agreements with two-year Hispanic-Serving Institutions.**

To broaden this success to non-STEM majors, faculty in the College of Arts, Humanities, & Social Sciences are developing a similar program called "Global Humboldt," which will target undeclared students and focus on aspects of the sense of place and community in Humboldt County in a globalized world.

Proactive Interventions

The number of URG and first-generation students at HSU has doubled since 2010 (see chapter 1 and **Appendix P— Student Demographics 2009-2016**). With that increase in diversity comes the responsibility to meet students where they are in helping them achieve their academic goals. The goal is to provide the right intervention at the right time for the student who needs it. This section describes some of the university's efforts to date and examples of continuous improvement based on this work.

Professional Advising Model

HSU is in the process of implementing a developmental academic advising model that eventually will offer a dedicated professional academic advisor to all first-time freshmen during their first two years, after which students will transition to faculty advisors. This major-based model emerged from the spring 2014 recommendations of a campuswide advising working group (**Appendix R—Advising Implementation Update**). Assessing outcomes of phase 1 of this model proved challenging. The impact of students migrating in and out of the majors covered in phase 1 made it difficult to define an appropriate control group with which to compare results. Additionally, data entry was inconsistent, and outcomes assessment revealed mixed results. Overall, the use of student-support services increased dramatically, however, and academic advising visits more than tripled during that time frame. A more robust assessment plan for professional advising is scheduled to be completed by the end of fiscal year 2016-17.

An academic success specialist was hired and began work at the **Academic & Career Advising Center** (ACAC) in February 2017, allowing other staff to expand advising outreach to an additional 476 first-time undergraduates who are either on academic probation or at risk for academic probation. The ACAC also is collaborating with the freshmen mentoring program, **Retention through Academic Mentoring** (see below) and the **Learning Center**, to support outreach and to help students on academic probation.

Career Services

The **Career Curriculum Integration** program began in 2012 as a joint effort among the Advising Center, the Career Center, and the College of Arts, Humanities, & Social Sciences. The goal is to address the need to help students connect their course of study with their goals and aspirations for life after graduation. The program has grown since its inception and is currently expanding into majors in HSU's other two colleges; an assessment plan was put in place in 2016-17 for this program but no data are available yet.

In the summer of 2014, as part of this integration program, the Advising Center and the Career Center merged to form the Academic & Career Advising Center (ACAC). ACAC advisors are now cross-trained on academic and career advising, especially in the areas of exploring majors and career advisors offer tailored preparation for students' career paths, including graduate school. ACAC extends career services to students, both in and outside the classroom, through various workshops, collaborations and events. ACAC attends to diverse populations by collaborating with other campus departments, such as the Centers for Academic Excellence, EOP, and RAMP. ACAC connects students to employers and graduate programs through on-campus recruitment, information sessions, and fairs. In 2015-16, ACAC had 5,337 student visits to the Center, offered 171 workshops, and hosted four fairs that served over 220 organizations and hundreds of students (586 at the Career & Volunteer Expo alone).

About 75% of HSU students change their major at least once while they are enrolled. Having the advisors able to assist them in major and career selection streamlines the process and enables students to select majors and careers earlier and/or have a greater sense of confidence in their major, once selected. ACAC has also expanded services to include more interest/values assessments to facilitate major/career selection (**Appendix S—International Studies Annual Reviews**, **Appendix T—Career SLO Assessment October 2016**, and **Appendix U—Career Scaffolding F 2016**).

Peer Mentoring

Research on student retention routinely references the need for early alerts. Humboldt State's version of this work was launched in fall 2012 through the Retention through Academic Mentoring Program (RAMP). The program's goals include providing:

- **safe support network of peers and peer mentors,**

- **reliable information that helps students navigate the campus,**

- **support for academic planning,**

- **assistance in acquiring the transition skills that help freshmen acclimate to college life, and**

- **support for first-year students' personal and academic progress.**

RAMP was initially intended to serve all first-time undergraduate students, but resource limitations recalibrated efforts toward first-generation students only. Through their mentorship, the 36 RAMP staff members create unique relationships with each of their (roughly 25) assigned students. Using the power of proximity to

the student experience, the RAMP mentors connect students to curricular learning experiences and support services. Term-to-term GPA analyses have demonstrated that students participating in RAMP are consistently performing better than their non-participating peers.

Support for Veterans

Established in 1990, HSU **Veterans Enrollment & Transition Services** (VETS) provides a primary point of contact on campus to support and build community among student veterans. VETS is staffed with veterans and family members of veterans who share experiences and career goals. HSU currently serves approximately 500 military-affiliated students, working to provide a safe and supportive learning environment while offering many other services.

Enriching, Supporting, and Purposeful Programming

Purposeful programming is key to inclusive student success at HSU. This work spans both the Academic and Student Affairs divisions. Highlights of these efforts below illustrate how the university supports students through various activities and how data have informed changes to them.

Rethinking Student Progress by Reimagining the First Year

HSU recognizes that to fully support its diversifying student body it needs to reconsider how it facilitates student success at both the macro and micro levels. One way the university is going about this is through **its participation** in the **Reimagining the First Year of**

College (RFY) project of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, supported through the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Strada Education Network. The RFY initiative includes a comprehensive approach that engages the entire campus in focusing on four key areas to improve first-year student success: institutional intentionality, curriculum redesign, changes in faculty and staff roles, and changes in student roles. HSU has committed to 16 student success initiatives including expanding place-based learning opportunities, exploring co-remediation, and strengthening academic advising. The full list of activities and corresponding outcomes is in **Appendix V—RFY Plan and Strategies**.

Learning Center

The HSU **Learning Center** coordinates and provides peer-to-peer support and professional academic assistance. The mission of the Learning Center is to promote student success and progress to degree by emphasizing the connection between effective learning, classroom success, and goal achievement. It serves about 25% of the student population annually. An external review team visited the Learning Center in spring 2013 to evaluate its effectiveness. As a result, the Learning Center unified its tutor training by using a peer-tutor conference model, developed online tutoring services for the Writing Studio, centralized the location of the Math Tutoring Lab and the Writing Studio in the library, created partnership opportunities with first-year programs such as Klamath Connection and RAMP, and implemented swipe card technology with tutor scheduling and tracking software (TutorTrac) to streamline data collection.

Supporting Students in Mind and Body

HSU believes that student mental and physical health is essential to academic success, and student feedback reinforces that belief. Results from the 2016 implementation of the National College Health Assessment Survey (NCHA) (**Appendix W—NCHA_ExecutiveSummary_IE**) indicate that the top three impediments to academic success at HSU are stress (41%), anxiety (32%), and sleep difficulties (30%). HSU continues to invest in services to promote student wellness through its **Student Health Center**, accredited by the Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care, and its Health & Wellness Education programs, which have been expanded to increase campuswide interventions.

In 2015, over half of HSU students who participated in a **campuswide survey** (N=1,504) reported experiencing low (reduced diet quality) and very-low (reduced diet quantity) food security. To combat food insecurity, a strategic campus partnership between HSU Health Education and Department of Social Work, with guidance from student leaders and in collaboration with off-campus community partners, developed **Oh SNAP!** Student Food Programs.

A final important data set from the 2016 NCHA survey pertains to the intersection of students' mental, physical, and sexual health. When asked about the last 12 months, 24% of students reported being verbally threatened, 13% reported being sexually touched without consent, and 11% reported being in an emotionally abusive relationship. University officials know that individuals who are affected by sexualized violence often leave college, and the nationally recognized **CHECK IT** health education program is the university's answer to creating a campus culture that does not tolerate sexualized violence, dating violence, or stalking.

Setting the Stage for Student Success: Putting Theories into Practice

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) has a foundational framework for considering and assessing initiatives that relies on the application of **Tinto's model of "Student Departure" (1987, 1993, and 2012)** and its structural components as a means to coordinate purposeful activity. HSU has experienced an 80% increase in enrollment of URG students since 2009, and, in light of this dramatic change in student demographics, the university is rethinking how it can best serve its students. **Tinto (1993)** notes that as students matriculate into post-secondary education, their rate of success is influenced by how well they integrate both academically and socially; the stronger the integration, the more successful students are in completing their degrees. Tinto's work shows how a campus can positively influence student success at each stage of their academic careers, and HSU has used this model in developing intervention strategies that span the spectrum of its students' experience.

HSU is also investigating other theories, such as **Rendón's (1994)** theory on validation and its influence on the success of first-generation and URG students. In general, validation refers to the "intentional, proactive affirmation of students by in- and out-of-class agents (i.e., faculty, student, and academic affairs staff, family members, peers) in order to (1) validate students as creators of knowledge and as valuable members of the college learning community and (2) foster personal development and social adjustment" **(Muñoz and Linares**

2011, page 12). Rendón also notes that there are two types of validation, academic and interpersonal. Her research suggests that increases in student success, both in retention and graduation, can be achieved by orienting campus activity to facilitate and reinforce validation.

Continuous-Improvement Efforts (2.7)

Action Research

One of the most important vehicles supporting institutional change is disseminating relevant data widely on campus. In 2015, the Office of Institutional Research & Planning conducted a series of **action-research studies** and corresponding open forums to clarify the context of HSU's changing student body and to identify what successes have materialized and where continued efforts are necessary. The OIE followed this with a 2017 town hall meeting to share the results of the 2016 NCHA survey discussed above.

Selected Student Outcomes

Student Satisfaction

Research suggests that assessing student satisfaction is an indirect measure of campus impact on retention **(Suhre, Jansen, and Harskamp 2007, Umbach and Porter 2002)**. In spring 2013, 1,303 first-year and senior HSU students participated in the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE); first-year student response rate was 29%, and senior response rate was 34%. First-year students rated HSU's ability to challenge them as good/excellent overall, and they indicated that the

campus provides support for their overall well-being (recreation, health care, counseling, etc.). Senior student respondents were overall positive about their learning experience at HSU. They indicated a connection between their learning and societal challenges; they recognized connectivity among courses; and they expressed that were given opportunities to work with faculty members beyond coursework (committees, student groups, etc.) and engage with the faculty in course topics outside of class. Seniors believe that HSU prepares students to be informed, active citizens capable of solving complex real-world problems. HSU participated in NSSE again in 2017 and will be comparing results with the 2013 results in order to indirectly measure the impact of recent initiatives.

Departmental Best Practice Highlights (CFRs 2.3, 2.10-2.14)

HSU is committed to using departmental data to guide decision making and program improvement related to student success. Departments and programs are working to narrow achievement gaps and increase retention and graduation rates by participating in annual program reviews that assess student learning outcomes, diversity and inclusive excellence, strengths and challenges, five-year action plans, and external reviews. Some departments have led the way in retention and graduation rates, and descriptions of promising strategies follow in the sections below.

Social Work

Social Work Department competencies are based on the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) from the 2015 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards.

The department utilizes five sources for data: faculty assessment of students, field placement supervisor assessment of students, student self-assessment, alumni self-assessment, and employer assessment of alumni. In the last five years, enrollment for undergraduate social work majors has been steadily rising. While the five-year average for first-time freshmen graduating from HSU in four years is 10%, it is 22% for majors in social work. This is the fifth-highest four-year graduation rate out of 24 programs graduating 15 or more students per year in this time period. BASW graduation rates of URG and non-URG students are comparable when average degrees granted per year are compared over the last five years, with an average of 17 URG students and 23 non-URG students earning their degrees each year.

Critical Race, Gender, & Sexuality Studies

The **CRGS Major** has been developing strategies for increasing overall success and decreasing the gap between URG and non-URG students. Issues addressed include course goals, syllabi, class climate, and collegial and faculty evaluations. Based upon this assessment, key changes have been made to emphasize depth over breadth of curriculum, and effective means for assessing the climate of the class have been incorporated for mid-semester use. The program has a majority of URG students, making it one of the most ethnically diverse majors on campus. To increase student success further, the department will begin group advising joined with community building, and peer advisors within the major are under consideration. The first-year (78.6%), second-year (80.5%), and third-year (80.5%) retention rates exceed both the college and university averages.

Student Flow (Sankey) Diagrams

One unique contribution to program review has been the OIE's development and deployment of student flow (Sankey) diagrams. These cloud-based interactive diagrams visually represent how students flow through their programmatic life cycle and to what degree and frequency they migrate between and across major programs. Called a game changer by some department chairs, these types of data visualizations are helping academic leaders to better understand student migration patterns and how more flexible program pathways can be created. **Appendix X—Student Flow Diagram Example-Psychology**.

"I'm an older student and I never thought at this point in my life I'd go to grad school. But Professor Chris Harmon helped me realize my capabilities and potential as a scientist."

John Andre | Chemistry major (Left)

CHAPTER 6: Quality Assurance and Improvement

"The team noted that seven institutional outcomes have been defined, but at the time of the visit, the university could not provide evidence that the outcomes were being achieved… On the Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators only a little over half of programs report assessment of outcomes or improvements made as a result. General education assessment is described as "nascent." In addition, "alignment of curriculum requirements and assessment of student learning at various levels is still a work in progress." The report concludes that "there is little…to suggest that student learning results are currently being systematically and universally assessed and that the assessments are being used to improve learning and teaching." The Commission sees this as an area in which further progress is needed. (CFRs 1.2, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.6, 2.7, 4.6, 4.7)"

—WSCUC Commission letter, July 14, 2010

Summary and History of Continuous Improvement at HSU

Humboldt State's **Program Review, Evaluation, & Planning** (PREP) process was initiated in 2011-12 to encourage annual program reflection on enrollment, participation of majors, assessment of student learning, participation and support of underrepresented students, and scholarly activity of program faculty. As part of the annual review and assessment process, each program reviews its enrollment, demographic, and student success data and responds to a series of prompts regarding these data. This information highlights achievement gaps in

retention and graduation rates at the program level and differences in student success at the course level. The resulting annual PREP reports are synthesized in the five-year program-review cycle. The PREP synthesis was envisioned to streamline the program-review process, but it has been hindered by an ineffective software solution and a necessity for programs to generate several annual reports; as a result, program participation and institutional feedback on the reports have been inconsistent.

History of Annual Assessment 2009 to Present
(CFRs 2.4, 2.6, 2.7, 4.1, 4.3, 4.4)

HSU has struggled to effectively assess student learning. Attempts to create a standardized process for assessing student learning outcomes (SLOs) and program effectiveness have met with limited success.

In fall 2016, a program-review workgroup was convened to review the current state of assessment and propose recommendations for improvements to the process. Some of the group's findings and recommendations are presented below.

Key Findings:

- **Most academic departments have participated in some assessment practices such as assessing individual assignments using AAC&U VALUE rubrics, but none was standardized. There has been no follow-up to close the loop.**

- **Little has been done to analyze diversity and achievement-gap data.**

- **Institutional support for the assessment process was limited to difficult-to-navigate data directories from Institutional Research and web access support from the Academic Programs office.**

- **Archived reports were missing and/or hard to access. Departments could not review work done in the past for reference.**

- **Two assessment coordinators have come and gone since 2010. The position has been unfilled since fall 2013.**

- **HSU has not attempted General Education assessment since 2001.**

- **There is no culture of assessment wherein responsible stakeholders with clearly defined roles see results, get feedback, and have a reason to participate.**

- **The annual assessment process and reports are not clearly reviewed or effectively linked to five-year action plans.**

Actions Taken:

- **A new five-year model for academic program review has been developed. The new plan uses a RACI model that clearly delineates steps, timelines, roles, and responsibilities. The plan is structured to close the loop with progress tracking, feedback, deans' reviews,**

and continuity. The Integrated Curriculum Committee (ICC) approved the model in January 2017, and it is now in place to begin fall 2017.

- **The ICC PREP Peer Review Subcommittee has been re-established and conducted pilot reviews using standardized rubrics in spring 2017. (Appendix Y—PPR Anthropology)**

- **The assessment and program review archives will be redesigned for easier access. (Scheduled for fall 2017)**

- **An academic assessment coordinator and a director of the Center for Teaching & Learning should be in place by fall 2017. Their work will be coordinated to support the continuous improvement cycle for academic programs.**

A more detailed review is in **Appendix Z—Academic Program Assessment Self-Study**.

Assessment Tools in Campus Learning Management System

HSU is currently transitioning the campus learning management system (LMS) from Moodle to Canvas, which has the capacity to collect assessment data on SLOs at the institutional, program, and course levels via the Canvas Outcomes and Rubrics tools. HSU tested these tools when it piloted Canvas during the fall 2016 term, and the official instance of the Canvas LMS was made available to all faculty in spring 2017 as an option for

teaching courses or developing future courses. WSCUC Core Competencies and institutional-, baccalaureate-, and GEAR-level outcomes were created for faculty to import into their courses and course activities to collect assessment data on the fulfillment of SLOs. The architecture has been created for college, department, and program outcomes at the account level in Canvas. In addition, WSCUC Core Competency Rubrics have been created at the account level for faculty to import into course activities.

Canvas provides a more robust model of assessment analytics than Moodle to improve courses for greater student success. The reporting and tracking of SLOs in Moodle is limited to course-level aggregation of data, whereas the Canvas LMS has the capacity to assess data on SLOs at the institutional, program, and course levels. Canvas also allows students to access their individual analytics on performance and progress toward learning outcomes, a feature not available in Moodle. Moving forward, the Office of the Provost will determine how faculty will utilize the outcomes and rubrics features in Canvas to collect and analyze assessment data on all programs and SLOs.

Continuous Improvement Success Stories

While HSU has continued to revise and revamp its university-wide process of assessment and program review, several programs have taken the initiative in reacting to trends in their assessment data and taking meaningful actions to improve student success. Several of these success stories are described below.

Data-driven Curriculum Change in Environmental Science & Management

The Department of **Environmental Science & Management** (ESM) houses two undergraduate degree programs: environmental science (containing four concentrations) and environmental management and protection (containing three concentrations). In 2014-15, ESM faculty reviewed graduation-rate data for these two programs. They also gathered data from faculty advisors regarding confusion among students about the differences between these two programs. Even though the two degree programs were in the same department, the different course requirements were making it difficult for some students to change from one major to the other.

Based on an analysis of these data and input from faculty advisors, the ESM faculty decided to restructure the curriculum by combining the two majors, reducing the seven concentrations to six by combining two of the existing options. The faculty also reduced the course requirements of each concentration by an average of 10 units. All six concentrations now share a common set of core course requirements, and although each still features its own unique set of option-specific course requirements, the single common core will make moving between the concentrations much easier. The ultimate goal of these changes, which take effect fall 2017, is to reduce time to graduation.

Science Literacy Concept Inventory

The **College Of Natural Resources & Sciences** (CNRS) conducted a Science Literacy Concept Inventory (SLCI) of a number of its courses in 2013; 427 CNRS majors and 208 non-science majors were included in the survey. First-generation students scored 9% lower than non-first-generation students (approximately 73% vs 82%), and students whose first language is not English scored about 7% lower than their native English-speaking peers. Male students scored slightly higher than female students, but this effect is due at least partially to the fact that HSU women in 2013 were 1.3 times more likely than men to be first generation and 1.6 times more likely than men to be non-native speakers of English.

These results highlight the need to provide additional support to first-generation students, to those whose first language is not English, and to women in STEM fields. When compared to national average scores on the SLCI, HSU students scored higher than students from other institutions with comparable ACT composite scores.

General Education & All-University Requirements (GEAR) Assessment

The Integrated Curriculum Committee (ICC) was established in 2009; it includes faculty from all three colleges as well as students, staff, and administrators. A subgroup of the ICC was established in 2011 to oversee **General Education & All-University Requirements** (GEAR), replacing the former structure that was fragmented across the three colleges.

New GEAR Overarching SLO

Some areas of the GEAR program have been assessed productively; however, the challenges identified above have led to a fragmented assessment process in some areas, and no assessment at all in others. To address this, the GEAR committee has worked on revising the General Education & All-University Requirements SLOs and creating program-level SLOs. The GEAR committee

sent a proposal for an overarching Program SLO to the University Senate, which was approved in April 2017. It will continue its work in revising area-specific SLOs and developing an assessment model in fall 2017 (**Appendix AA—GEAR Resolution for Program SLOs**).

Program Review
(CFRs 2.4, 2.6, 2.7, 4.1, 4.3, 4.4, 4.6, 4.7)

The HSU program review process has been in place since 2000. The university's goal to enhance the role of assessment, combined with the feedback from the last WSCUC review cycle, led HSU to significantly revise its five-year program review in 2010. Since 2011, program review is supported by the Campus Labs platform and uses prompts listed in the template Program Review Report document. External reviewers are encouraged but not required. A clear protocol for closing the loop, however, has not been established, and feedback has been sporadic (**Appendix AB—Revised Program Review Prompts AT 17-18**).

Results of program review and assessment efforts have not typically been used beyond the departmental level, and assessment results remain largely disconnected from decisions at the college, divisional, or university levels. Neither program review nor assessment is currently emphasized in budgetary requests or allocations. A new working group has been formed to create an infrastructure and protocol for connecting assessment efforts to institutional decision making.

In the past five years, department-level assessment activities have led to smaller curricular and pedagogical adjustments throughout the university, but attempts to close the loop on these adjustments, as well institutional-level assessment activities, still lag behind (**Appendix AC—Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators**).

Data Collection, Analysis, and Dissemination
(CFRs 2.10, 4.2-4.7)

Office of Institutional Effectiveness

The Office of Institutional Research & Planning (IRP) traditionally filled the primary role for data collection, analysis, and dissemination of institutional outcomes. In 2016-17, a realignment of institutional resources was enacted to expand the scope of this office, and the IRP was transformed into the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE). This office is charged both with overseeing assessment activities and institutional data collection, reporting, and visualization as well as with helping to close the loop through change-management functions. The OIE works to coordinate and align the assessment processes.

The OIE has engaged in a multi-year process to create data dashboards that provide data visualization and reporting tools that make data more accessible to the university community. These dashboards provide a variety of relevant information, including data on student pathways to degree, gateway course metrics, seat demand, enrollment, retention, graduation, and achievement gaps. The dashboards are directly linked to specific questions developed by the Academic Master Planning Committee, and the data provide standardized analyses of program information, thus streamlining their use and ensuring consistency of evaluation (**Appendix AD—Program Review Dashboard Screenshot**).

New Developments: Assessment, Pedagogy, and New Center for Teaching & Learning and the Office of Institutional Effectiveness

The Center for Teaching & Learning's (CTL) faculty development director and the OIE's academic assessment coordinator together will help to expand faculty understanding of the vital relationships among assessment, curriculum, teaching effectiveness, and student learning. The focus of assessment activity led by the new assessment coordinator and supported by the faculty development director will be to identify gaps and successes in student performance, emphasize high-priority learning outcomes, and provide an evidence-based approach to appropriately allocate resources to improve student learning and success.

Specific activities that will be pursued in the CTL are:

- **revising and systematically assessing general education and baccalaureate outcomes,**

- **mapping course, program, general education, and baccalaureate outcomes to inform curricular revision and, where necessary, revising curricula to improve alignment with student learning outcomes,**

- **evaluating student-performance data to inform resource-allocation decisions,**

- **implementing tools for direct assessment of student learning that facilitate external benchmarking of results, and**

- **aligning curriculum requirements with assessment of student learning at program and university levels.**

Moving forward, both the CTL and the OIE will provide ongoing assessment guidance, training, and consultation, and they will collaboratively develop assessment planning, reporting, feedback, and policy through the Academic Master Planning Committee and the University Senate. To encourage programs to learn from each other's experiences, the outcomes, assessment plans, results, and comments will be made available broadly to the campus and will be discussed at multiple venues. These efforts will enable HSU to improve its decision-making processes.

Non-Academic Assessment (CFR 2.11)

HSU conducts non-academic annual assessment in accordance with the six-step assessment model recommended by the Steering & Self-Study Committee, illustrated in **Appendix AE—SSSC Continuous Improvement Model**.

In 2013-14, the **Enrollment Management & Student Affairs** (EMSA) division revised its assessment process and rewrote its mission and goals as well as those of all EMSA departments. As a result, each EMSA department annually identifies and evaluates three-to-five outcomes in the areas of program overview, office structure, organization, staffing, sustainability, and assessment. The outcomes must inform each department's practice and support at least one divisional goal. Guidance, instructions, and templates developed to standardize the process are found in the **EMSA Assessment Workbook** located on the EMSA **assessment website**.

Results of annual assessment (reports available on the EMSA **assessment website**) are used by each unit/department for the purpose of improving the program or its practice; however, they are not strongly connected to division decisions, including budgeting. The division of **Administrative Affairs** developed and implemented its assessment process starting with the 2012-13 academic year. Based on the priorities set by the university, Administrative Affairs defined its mission, established goals, and determined how to measure tasks associated with those goals so that key processes continuously meet the needs and expectations of students, parents, employees, faculty, and other stakeholders. Goals are aligned at the university, division, department, and employee levels and are assessed annually. The *Assessment Handbook*, rubrics, templates, and report can be found on the Administrative Affairs **assessment website**.

Other areas of the university, such as the **Library, Information Technology Services**, **International Programs**, and **Retention & Inclusive Student Success** practice regular or ad hoc assessment, although the results are not incorporated into the overall Academic Affairs division's annual assessment.

During the 2014 strategic planning process for 2015-2020, HSU committed to linking the budget planning process to evidence and institutional priorities, as well as to incorporating relevant data in evidence-based decision making and continuous improvement (Objective 4.1 of the *2015-2020 HSU Strategic Plan*). The current implementation of a multi-year strategic budgeting model will allow the university to adjust future resource allocations and financial decisions on the results of each of its divisions' ongoing assessment results.

Summary

Challenging changes still lie ahead. Curricular changes that effectively engage every learner require thoughtfully designed connections across departments, programs, and colleges. Comprehensive transformation is often made possible by small changes that are coordinated, encouraged, and owned by faculty, students, and staff. Facilitating evidence-based discussions about change requires authentic assessment of student learning across courses and program. To achieve the CSU Graduation Initiative 2025 targets, a comprehensive assessment process with shared and connected learning outcomes that transform the curriculum is needed in General Education to improve the four-year graduation rate and retention rates. HSU has undertaken initial assessment phases with PREP, and the OIE is identifying crucial areas in need of immediate attention. The faculty and the campus at large, then, will have an enhanced opportunity to shape curricula that improve every student's ability to succeed.

"The most rewarding aspects are seeing students realize that they can do something that they didn't think they could do before."

Professor Shannon Morago | School of Education (Right)

CHAPTER 7: Institutional Sustainability and Fiscal Stability

Preparing for Changing Higher Education

"HSU's most pressing challenge has been to align its resources with educational objectives and institutional purposes. To meet this challenge, HSU has built new infrastructure and engaged in program prioritization...The team noted, however, that the process was limited by inconsistent data, varying quality of program reports, and little or no external benchmarking and comparative analysis."

—WSCUC Accrediting Commission Letter to President Richmond, July 2010

"By all accounts, HSU has undergone a remarkable transformation in a relatively short period of time, and this transformation speaks well for the entire campus community. The ultimate test of all these efforts, however, will be their sustainability over time."

—WSCUC Accrediting Commission Letter to President Richmond, July 2010

Historical Overview: 2009 to Present

Humboldt State was given specific feedback by Keeling & Associates consultants (2008) and WASC/WSCUC (2008, 2010, 2014) to address several longstanding issues. In 2013, the WSCUC Interim Report Committee 2013 indicated that HSU should document the realignment of resources to show evidence of closing the loop for decision-making processes, positive campus culture, assessment of student learning outcomes, and program review. The WSCUC Commission described sustainability

as critical "not only for learning and student success but for the university's viability and adaptability to new educational needs."

To address these sustainability recommendations, this chapter will focus on how the strategic plan and its accompanying blueprint (CFR 3.7), the University Resources & Planning Committee (CFR 3.4), strategic budgeting (CFR 3.4), long-range academic master planning (CFRs 4.4, 4.6), enrollment management (CFR 4.7), the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (CFRs 1.7, 4.1, 4.3), and campus culture (CFRs 3.3, 4.3-4.7) link to the various aspects of sustainability and provide evidence of progress.

Cabinet for Institutional Change

The **Cabinet For Institutional Change** (CIC) was established in 2009 as the university's response to identified campus deficiencies. There were **five guiding principles** identified to align decision making with the vision and mission of the university. Guiding principles 4, Focus on Change, and 5, Results, were specific to sustainability and financial viability. Focus on Change was an active process to prioritize campus work and resources toward improving efficiency and effectiveness. Results were to be used to develop and implement innovative short- and long-term solutions with measurable outcomes. Specific areas of focus were then recommended for action to advance a distinct vision related to campus culture, planning and budgeting, and ensuring a high-quality and affordable education. **Areas of focus** mostly related to sustainability and financial viability including campus governance and developing a culture of evidence. The **Campus Satisfaction Survey** results provide an overview of campus progress.

Prior to 2009, campus governance was used for combined decision-making structures that directed the university to make effective choices that sustained its common purpose and vision with limited participation from non-academic campus units. The HSU governance system has been restructured with the **University Senate** to achieve university-wide priorities, particularly in curriculum oversight and budget development. The Senate charged the **Integrated Curriculum Committee** with the careful consideration of all academic planning and curriculum matters. The **University Resources & Planning Committee** (URPC) and the **University Space & Facilities Advisory Committee** provide oversight for the university's financial resources and natural and built environments with a focus on sustainability. HSU also needs to comply with the CSU Board of Trustees expectations of educational policy, finance, campus planning, facilities, and evaluation of campus leadership (CFR 3.9). These are outlined below, and they can be read in detail in the **CIC Report 2010**.

HSU's financial situation is in a period of transition. While key financial indicators (return on net assets ratio, net income ratio, operating income ratio, and viability ratio) are cumulatively at their highest level since 2006, HSU's budget still has a structural deficit. State allocations are below 2007-08 funding levels, and tuition remained unchanged for the last five years. The **enrollment** growth experienced in the past five years has declined in the current fiscal year and is expected to decline again in the coming year. To achieve a balanced budget and re-align resources for sustainable long-term success, the university must focus on the CIC recommendations and the priorities outlined in HSU's strategic plan.

University Resources & Planning Committee (CFRs 3.4-3.6, 3.8)

The **URPC** was formed in 2011-12 as a key committee under the **University Senate** governance structure. It is responsible for overseeing financial viability and includes faculty, staff, students, and senior administrators. Since the 2013 Interim Report, the URPC has focused on developing a strategic budgeting approach, a policy to support the allocation of strategic assets, and a policy for reserves. The committee provides important oversight to ensure that budget allocations and reallocations support the implementation of the strategic plan and the university's highest priorities. The URPC provides its budget recommendation annually to the university President (**Appendix AG—Changes in Operating Fund Base Budget Allocations**).

Key recommendations made by the URPC include new positions within the **Office of Institutional Effectiveness** and **Administrative Affairs** (**Budget Office**) to support the university's diverse student body, ensure student success, and support strategic financial planning. As part of the growing culture of evidence, the Budget Office has continued to provide an **annual budget book** and to expand on the **reports** for budget units and divisions. In addition, HSU has purchased and implemented a budget software tool, Questica, to provide position control and multi-year budget data.

During the 2016-17 fiscal year, the URPC focused on tackling the budget deficit by reducing the overall budget by 5%. The President's Cabinet recommended using a three-phased approach to achieve the necessary budget reductions over the 2017-18 and 2018-19 fiscal years, with a 5% reallocation being implemented in the final phase. Phase 1 recommendations include new revenue opportunities, funding-source changes, reducing and/or stopping services, and eliminating positions. The initial list of Phase 2 options reflects large-scale redesign concepts, complete with preliminary savings targets. The Phase 2 designation for these options reflects the need for further dialogue about these topics and is not meant to indicate that progress on Phase 2 options should wait until the completion of Phase 1. As the university works through Phases 1 and 2 of the budget recalibration, it will be necessary to determine if the current enrollment decline is an anomaly or a new reality.

The **University Space & Facilities Advisory Committee** is a sub-committee of the URPC that, in conjunction with facilities management, has developed a **space policy** and facility condition assessment reports (**Appendix AF—Reported HSU State Buildings Maintenance & Renewal Costs**). The committee will be working on an integrated capital project prioritization process in conjunction with the Integrated Assessment, Planning, and Resources process to ensure that facilities support the university's strategic mission.

Strategic Plan

President Rossbacher developed a **Strategic Planning Committee** in 2014 to determine HSU's direction for the next five years. A new **strategic plan** was subsequently developed, and it now functions as HSU's guiding document for the SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Timely) goals that the university created through dialogue, feedback, and collaboration. The strategic plan was translated into a **strategic blueprint** to ensure that a culture of evidence was used in its implementation. The blueprint articulates attainable sub-outcomes and

objectives that direct the HSU community as it works toward the timely realization of these goals. This structure is important for HSU in this new era of accountability and transparency for public institutions of higher learning. Strategic Plan Blueprint links (CFRs 3.1, 3.4, 3.7) and more information can be found in chapters 1, 2, 5, and 6.

Integrating the Strategic Plan into Governance and Planning

In order to prioritize its strategic blueprint, **HSU's Steering & Self-Study Committee** (SSSC) provided **recommendations** and links to the blueprint. Specific SSSC recommendations that connect to sustainability and financial viability include two overarching recommendations: (1) implement the campus six-step continuous-improvement process and (2) clarify the priority and sequence of campus program activity with tracking, timelines, and accountability measures.

More specific recommendations include:

- **developing a sustainable, comprehensive, multi-year assessment plan for all units across the university,**

- **connecting results of student learning assessment to ongoing campuswide discussions, and**

- **using student learning assessment data to make recommendations for resource allocations.**

Financial Strategic Plan (CFR 3.4)

Discussions regarding the implementation of the strategic plan led to further questions about campus priorities, such as:

- **How does the university know it is making progress on the plan?**

- **How do we make sure the highest priorities are being properly funded?**

- **How do we know what changes need to be made and whether we have enough information to make these decisions?**

Based on these questions, a **working group** created a framework to identify and develop an ideal budget (money, people, facilities, equipment, and brand) and planning-process model. The group developed a list of principles and assumptions to focus on transformation versus addition. The features of the Integrated Assessment, Planning, and Resources Process Model include the following:

- **two-year planning and budgeting cycle is updated annually,**

- **leadership communication of short- and long-term priorities to the campus and adjustments to plans accordingly,**

- **planning and budgeting cycle is a continuous loop of assessment, planning, implementation, and assessment,**

- entire campus is on the same planning and budgeting cycle,

- all units are focused on carrying out the strategic plan, and

- hard decisions are made, explained, and implemented.

Aligning Resource Allocations with Strategic Plan (CFRs 3.7, 4.2)

Assessment and resource planning are vital components of educational planning and are foundational for institutional change. HSU defines assessment as the processes of systematically gathering information used in making decisions about its educational programs and institutional progress. Resource planning is a process in which money, time, attention, and other assets are aligned to strategic plan priorities.

To facilitate sustainable, data-informed decision making, HSU uses a five-year interactive planning spreadsheet to visually illustrate the financial impacts of budget allocations over time. In addition, in fall 2015, the university's self-support entities and auxiliary organizations developed five-year business and financial plans that are updated annually to ensure that all efforts are coordinated.

For several years, the URPC has used a **strategic budgeting overview** to provide the president with funding recommendations to implement strategic initiatives. Incorporating the Integrated Assessment, Planning, and Resources Process into how decisions are made supports our efforts to improve student success. This integrated process strengthens HSU's accountability (**Appendix AH—Integrated Assessment-Planning-and-Budgeting Process Schematic**).

Long Range Academic Master Planning (CFRs 2.2, 3.4, 3.10, 4.4, 4.6)

Academic Tactical Plan (CFR.s 3.4, 4.6)

At least 158 academic initiatives have been connected to HSU's Strategic Plan Blueprint and Graduation Initiative 2025. In developing HSU's Academic Tactical Plan, a systematic process will be used to identify, sort, select, and prioritize low-cost and high-impact practices to yield positive outcomes. Initiatives will be prioritized by comparing how each is connected to graduation and retention efforts, achievement gap improvements, and/or sustainability efforts.

Integrated Curriculum Committee (ICC)-Academic Master Planning (AMP) sub-committee (CFRs 2.2, 3.10, 4.4)

The **Integrated Curriculum Committee** (ICC) is key to ensuring that the strategic plan priorities are incorporated into the curriculum. Tasks assigned to the ICC include evaluating course and degree proposals and changes according to university and CSU policies and procedures, developing and updating curriculum processes, and reviewing and evaluating PREP (Program Review, Evaluation, & Planning) for academic units to connect curricula to decisions made in Academic Affairs. The University Senate expects that ICC members will work collaboratively and act in the best interests of the university community and in consideration of the HSU mission

and strategic plan. Given this expectation, the Senate accepts most ICC recommendations without further deliberation. The ICC is the only campus body with the authority to forward recommendations on academic planning and curriculum to the University Senate and the Provost's office.

The ICC created the subcommittee on Academic Master Planning (AMP), whose scope of work involves the following:

- **annually reviewing and updating the Academic Master Plan,**

- **developing and updating the process, proposal formats, and evaluation criteria for Letters of Intent for New Programs and New Program Full Proposals, including a template for reporting out of subcommittee to the ICC recommendations on proposals,**

- **developing and updating the *HSU Curriculum Handbook* and related web resources, and**

- **overseeing the PREP process, including reviewing PREP MOUs and developing and updating PREP protocols.**

Identifying and Enhancing Student Competencies for the Future (CFR 3.7, 4.1, 4.3, 4.7)

Reimagining the First Year (RFY) (CRF's 4.1, 4.3)

Reimagining the First Year (RFY) focuses on student success, retention, and graduation at Humboldt State. RFY supports a purposeful student experience through integrating academics, advising, support services, student activities, student life, and community partnerships. HSU is committed to the goals of **RFY** to dramatically improve the quality of learning and student experience in the first year, increase retention rates, and improve student success.

Enrollment Management (CFRs 3.7, 4.7)

HSU's student enrollment numbers for 2016-17 declined 153 FTE from the previous year, putting the current (fall 2016) enrollment 298 FTE below the CSU target. Several factors contributed to this decline, including the loss of the associate vice president of enrollment management and a delay in refilling that position. Enrollment is expected to decline again in 2017-18 as the campus works to identify contributing factors and to fill critical positions in enrollment management.

Declining enrollment has a significant impact on the university's budget and the available resources to meet our priorities. HSU needs to increase its efforts to recruit, matriculate, retain, and graduate higher numbers of students. The university has sharpened its focus in these areas, as evidenced by the various initiatives outlined throughout this report, such as RFY, Centers for Academic Excellence, and expanded advising services. With a keen focus on streamlining the time to degree,

HSU is revising the strategic enrollment master plan to support success in recruitment and graduation and to be integrated with the strategic plan and the budgeting plan.

Maintaining Focus on Educational Effectiveness (CFRs 1.2,1.7, 3.2, 3.3, 3.7, 4.1, 4.3-4.7)

The OIE and Strategic Budgeting (CFRs 1.2, 1.7, 3.7, 4.1)

Humboldt State developed and staffed an Office of Institutional Research & Planning in response to the recommendations from the last WSCUC visit, and it has since been transformed into the **Office of Institutional Effectiveness** (OIE). The OIE includes a change-management function to collect, manage, and analyze evidence. This provides critical support to administrators, faculty, and staff in developing and implementing both process and continuous-improvement efforts; this includes setting outcomes and objectives, determining how to measure campus activities, and using the data to improve student success. The function of the OIE includes applying best practices in managing change and navigating conflicting priorities.

The university is developing a comprehensive standardized assessment process to ensure that student success is being measured and evaluated through a continuous-improvement process. The process will be partially implemented in August 2017 with a comprehensive assessment plan to begin August 2018.

HSU's Changing Institutional Culture (CFRs 1.4, 3.2, 3.3, 4.3-4.7)

HSU has high standards of transparency, collegiality, and civil discourse, and the university has made measured progress in making changes that support the institution's cultural strengths and improve upon its weaknesses. What follows are examples of specific recent changes.

The university believes that the key to our common future will be the individual citizen who acts in good conscience and engages in informed action. In 2015, HSU broadened its graduation pledge to **encourage the entire HSU community** of current students, faculty, and staff to discover the social and environmental consequences of their choices and to engage in positive change on the campus and in the community.

HSU's vision includes a commitment to increase and support its diversity of people and perspectives, and there are multiple examples of actions to this end. The university's efforts to be an exemplary partner with the surrounding communities have been detailed in the earlier chapters' accounts of how HSU is partnering with local businesses, municipal governments, and the tribal nations of the surrounding area. In an effort to increase staff and faculty diversity, the university the university trains members of hiring committees on **unconscious bias** in hiring to ensure that all employee recruitments are equitable. And finally, as reported in the 2013 Interim Report, HSU has restructured its senate in order to increase inclusivity.

Building on the drive to make governance more inclusive, the University Senate voted in the fall of 2016 to add the new executive director for the Office of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (ODEI) as a voting member of the Senate. The **ODEI** is charged with coordinating a process

to track, monitor, and report on a range of key indicators of campus diversity at HSU. To respond to the changing needs on campus, the ODEI provided three **Campus Diversity Updates** in 2014-15 that analyzed key indicators of equity and diversity. The updates highlighted areas for improvement, celebrated successes, and monitored progress toward the many related goals outlined in the new strategic plan. As a supplement to the diversity updates, the ODEI collaborated with Institutional Research & Planning to develop **online data dashboards** for understanding diversity-related data.

Data from the **2013 National Survey of Student Engagement** reflect dynamic strengths related to key university learning outcomes. First-year students at HSU reported connecting their learning to social issues and problems, having discussions with people of races, ethnicities, and economic backgrounds different from their own, and engaging diverse perspectives in classroom discussions, assignments, and projects. Seniors described an institutional emphasis on events pertaining to significant social, political, and economic issues.

Responses from students to the **2013** and **2016 Safer Campus Survey** resulted in program and institutional changes to improve and enhance student perceptions of campus safety. These include program development for peer health educators, training for housing staff and community advocates, the introduction of Skillport online training modules, outreach for Title IX education initiatives, and the **University Police Department Survey**.

Several more specific initiatives and partnerships that highlight HSU's progress toward integrating different demographic groups into a more positive campus and community culture can be found in **Appendix AI—Campus and Community Culture**.

HSU believes in respectful and collegial dialogue and debate that lead to participatory decision-making among student, staff, administrator, and faculty learners. By embracing these important but difficult changes to institutional culture, HSU will be positioned to adapt to a changing higher education landscape, to systematically reallocate resources based on priorities aligned with HSU's strategic plan blueprint, to drive institutional reform through evidence-based decision making, and to continue to deliver a distinctive education focused on its core values of social justice and environmental sustainability.

Conclusion

Humboldt State University has implemented a number of initiatives to address the previous WSCUC team's recommendations concerning decision making, realignment of resources, and sustainability. Current decisions are realigning resources according to university priorities. We look forward to understanding the effects of the resource realignment related to student outcomes and sustainability. Key stakeholders will need to develop thoughtful and deliberate metrics that allow for program evaluation related to positive university outcomes.

"What's so great about Julia and other professors is they communicate effectively in a friendly and open way. A wrong question or wrong answer isn't going to be hammered down."

Naoki Omatsu | Art major (Right)

1. Education research Brownell and Swaner Here's the MLA reference: Brownell, Jayne E. and Lynn E. Swaner. "High-Impact Practices: Applying the Learning Outcomes Literature to the Development of Successful Campus Programs." Peer Review, vol. 11, no. 2, Spring 2009, pp. 26-30. EBSCOhost.   28

2. Hossler, D., & Bontrager, B.(2015) Handbook Of Strategic Enrollment Management. 1st ed. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.   34

3. Rendón, L. I. (1994). Validating culturally diverse students: Toward a new model of learning and student development. Innovative Higher Education, 19(1), 33–51.   41

4. Suhre, C. J., Jansen, E. P., & Harskamp, E. G. (2007). Impact of degree program satisfaction on the persistence of college students. Higher Education, 54(2), 207-226.   42

5. Tinto, V. (1987). Leaving college: Rethinking the causes and cures of student attrition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.   41

6. Tinto, V. (1993). Leaving college: Rethinking the causes and cures of student attrition. Second Edition. University of Chicago Press.   41

7. Tinto, V. (2012). Completing college: Rethinking institutional action. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.   41

8. Umbach, P. D., & Porter, S. R. (2002). How do academic departments impact student satisfaction? Understanding the contextual effects of departments. Research in higher education, 43(2), 209-234.   42

9. Muñoz, S. M. and Rendón Linares, L. I. (2011). Revisiting Validation Theory: Theoretical Foundations, Applications, and Extensions. Enrollment Management Journal, 12.   41

> **"** What's most rewarding is being able to know students personally and being able to reach them personally and influence their lives holistically—not just in the classroom but outside the classroom. **"**

Professor Nancy Vizenor | School of Business (Center)

WSCUC INSTITUTIONAL REPORT

HUMBOLDT STATE UNIVERSITY