# IMPROVING INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

STANDARD 1.B – PREAMBLE

Institutional Governance and the system for continuous improvement have evolved.

In 2016, WOU's institutional governance consisted of the State Board of Higher Education and the Oregon University System to whom the university president reported. The president was advised by shared governance groups (i.e., faculty senate, staff senate, student senate) and delegated execution of operations to vice presidents and executive directors. At the time, our system for continuous improvement was undeveloped.

A University Advisory Committee was formed to identify meaningful key performance indicators that would point to mission fulfillment, but the group was unable to reach consensus on indicators or targets for acceptable performance (2016 Self-Evaluation, p. 15-16). Planning and budget decisions were managed centrally by the president with input from vice presidents and executive directors. New initiatives arose from conversations within informal networks rather than through a transparent, systematic process (2016 Self-Evaluation, p. 114). Figure 1 illustrates our 2016 governance structure and system for continuous improvement.

Figure 1: Institutional governance, shared governance and continuous improvement, 2016
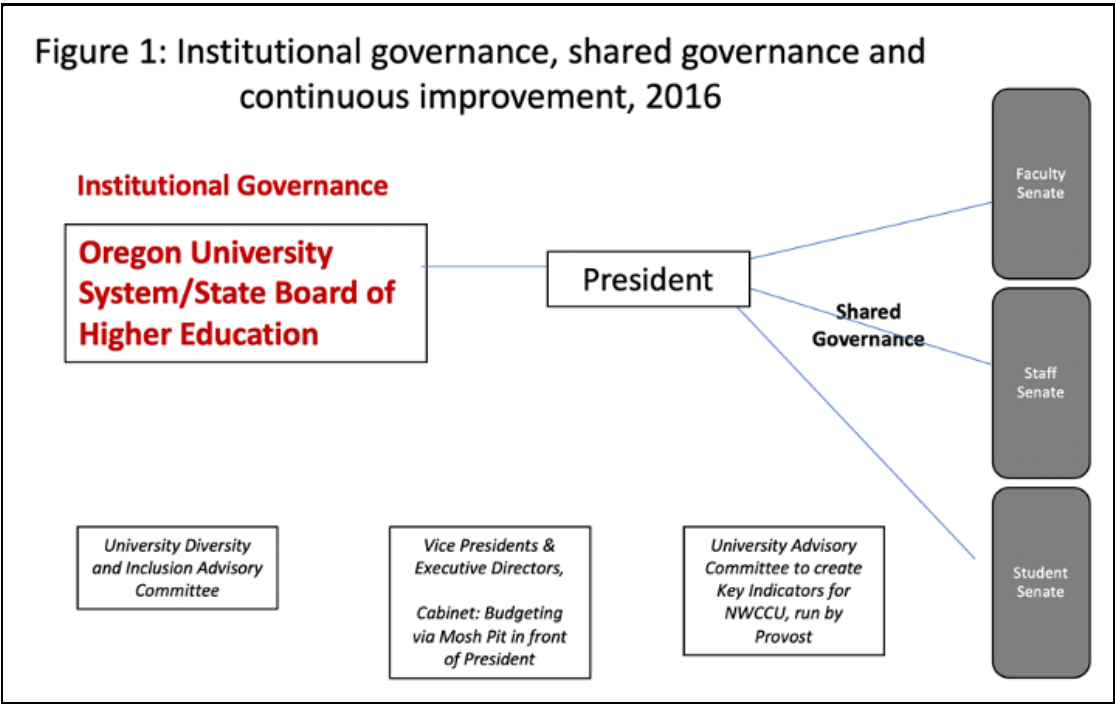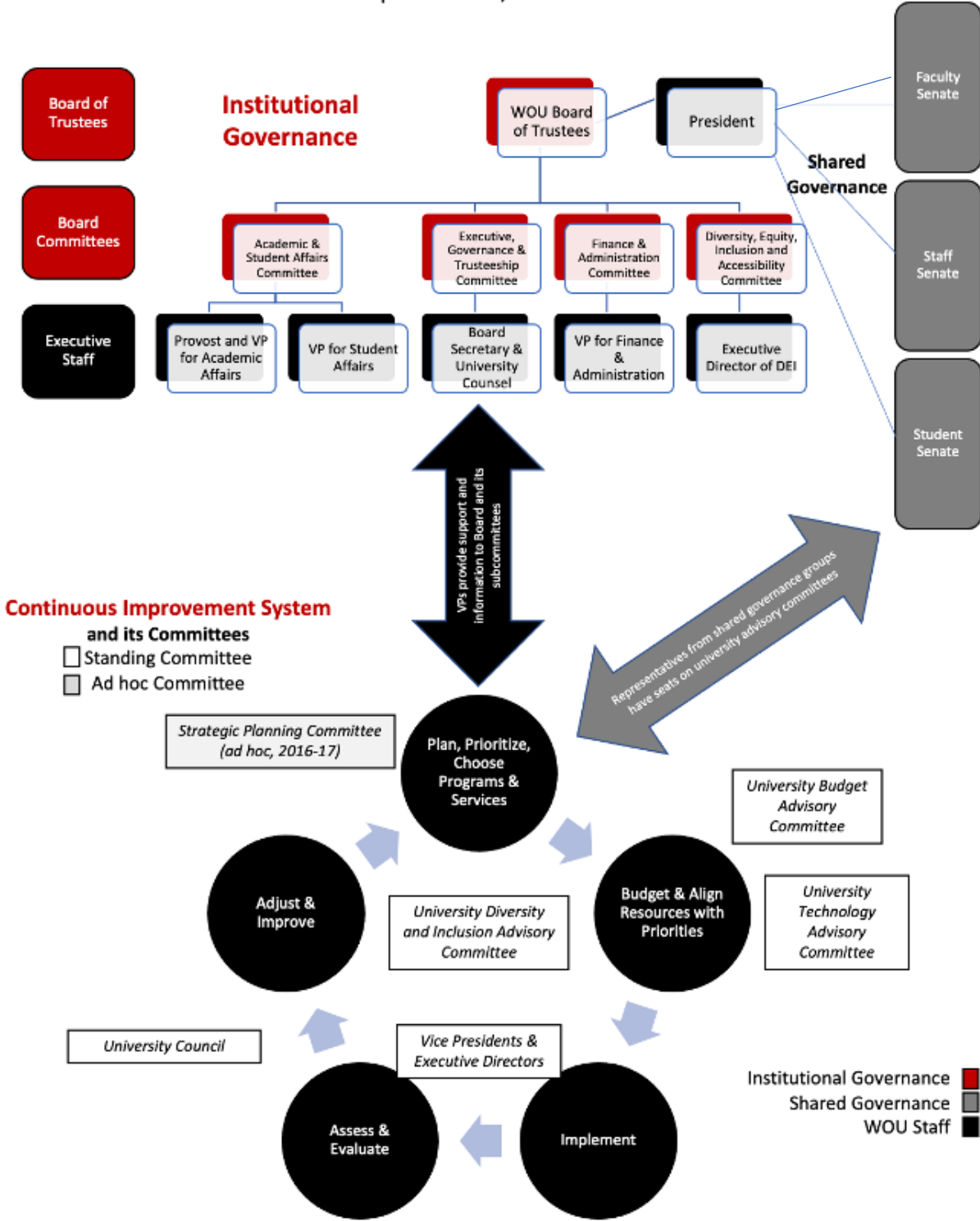
In sum, WOU lacked (1) structures for inclusive, broad-based, comprehensive planning and resource allocation and (2) meaningful indicators to assess mission fulfillment. Our processes did not meet NWCCU standards associated with "Improving Institutional Effectiveness," and we received numerous recommendations from the NWCCU regarding mission fulfillment; outcomes, objectives, indicators,

planning, and budgeting; and assessment and continuous improvement. In response to those recommendations and under the leadership of a new president, WOU developed a strategic plan and established inclusive, university-wide advisory groups, which included University Council, University Budget Advisory Committee, and University Technology Advisory Committee. The University Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee was also reinvigorated. In 2017, WOU submitted its Mission Fulfillment and Core Themes Report, where it identified a set of meaningful goals, objectives and indicators.

We will demonstrate that the continuous improvement system that has emerged is more inclusive, comprehensive, broad based, and transparent than past practice (1B1, 1B3). As a result of the dissolution of the Oregon University System, our governance body has also changed; WOU is now governed by an independent Board of Trustees. We will also demonstrate that, via the board and its subcommittees supported by appropriate vice president-level staff, the university's work, strategic position, and future directions are actively monitored and managed (1B4). WOU's current governance structure and continuous improvement process, depicted in Figure 2, represents significant development of infrastructure for strategic planning, budgeting, assessment of mission fulfillment, and continuous improvement.

Figure 2: Institutional governance, shared governance and continuous improvement, 2022

Board of Trustees

Board Committees

Executive Staff

Institutional Governance

WOU Board of Trustees

President

Shared Governance

Faculty Senate

Staff Senate

Student Senate

Academic & Student Affairs Committee

Executive, Governance & Trusteeship Committee

Finance & Administration Committee

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility Committee

Provost and VP for Academic Affairs

VP for Student Affairs

Board Secretary & University Counsel

VP for Finance & Administration

Executive Director of DEI

VPs provide support and information to Board and its subcommittees

Continuous Improvement System
and its Committees
☐ Standing Committee
☐ Ad hoc Committee

Representatives from shared governance groups have seats on university advisory committees

Strategic Planning Committee (ad hoc, 2016-17)

Plan, Prioritize, Choose Programs & Services

University Budget Advisory Committee

Adjust & Improve

University Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee

Budget & Align Resources with Priorities

University Technology Advisory Committee

University Council

Vice Presidents & Executive Directors

Assess & Evaluate

Implement

Institutional Governance 🟥
Shared Governance ◻
WOU Staff ⬛

3

STANDARD 1.B.1 – CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PROCESS

The institution demonstrates a continuous process to assess institutional effectiveness, including student learning and achievement and support services. The institution uses an ongoing and systematic evaluation and planning process to inform and refine its effectiveness, assign resources, and improve student learning and achievement.

The process for assessing institutional effectiveness of student learning, achievement, and support services is established, integrated, systematic, and ongoing.

WOU's system for assessing institutional effectiveness and ensuring continuous improvement incorporates inclusive university-level committees that coordinate, communicate, plan, guide the allocation of resources, and assess progress towards mission fulfillment. Representatives of shared governance groups are represented on these committees. As described in the preamble, this system represents a significant development of institutional infrastructure to be transparent, inclusive, and effective in pursuit of our mission. Figure 1B1-1 plots key elements of WOU's university-level system for continuous improvement (i.e., University Budget Advisory Committee, University Technology Advisory Committee, University Council, and University Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee) within our cycle of planning, assessment, and continuous improvement.

Figure 1B1-1: Continuous improvement process at WOU
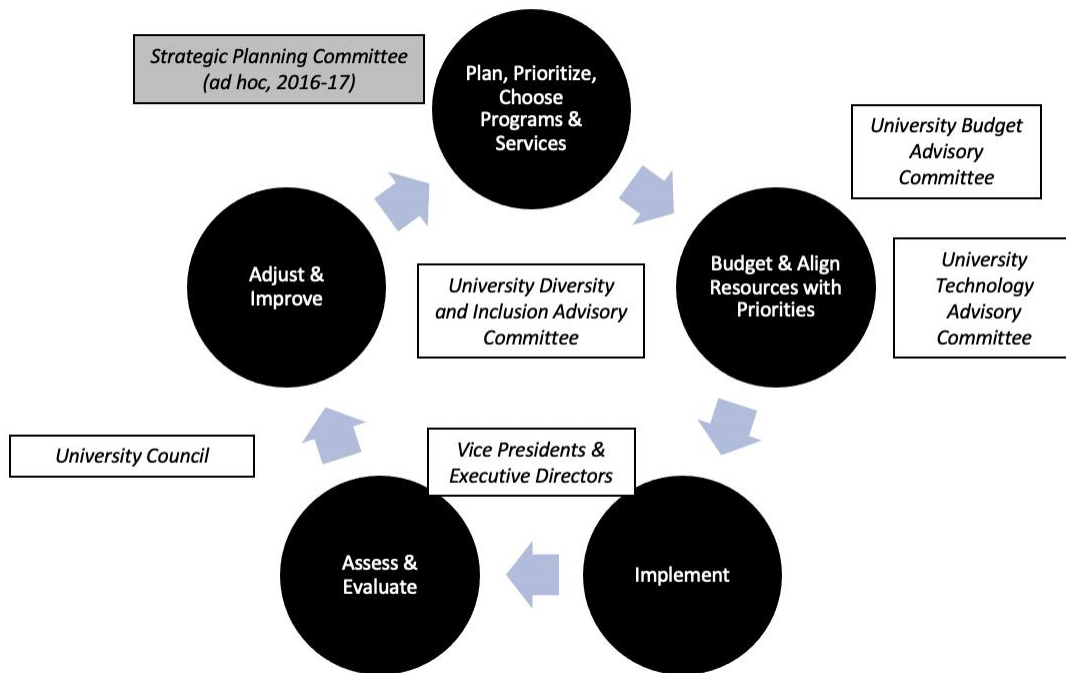
Guided by these cross-institutional groups and the insights they bring forward, and supported by an increasingly effective Institutional Research Office, WOU has advanced initiatives to refine our effectiveness, assign resources, and improve student learning and achievement.

The processes are clearly defined and understood, and inform the refinement of systems, practices, and strategies; the assignment of resources; and the improvement of student learning and achievement.

University-level continuous improvement

The University Technology Advisory Committee (UTAC) is an advisory committee charged with receiving, developing, and submitting recommendations related to the university technology systems and academic technologies that are aligned with WOU's strategic plan.

The University Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee (UDIAC) is a presidential advisory committee charged with annually recommending and supporting diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) priorities that are rooted in our core institutional values and informed by our university diversity action plan and the needs of the university community.

The University Budget Advisory Committee (UBAC) is an advisory group consisting of representation from faculty, classified staff, unclassified exempt staff, students, and administrators. This body is advisory to the president, and all members are appointed by the president based on recommendations from appropriate constituencies. The UBAC hosts campus budget conversations and serves as an educational platform for learning about the university's finances. The UBAC makes recommendations to the president on budget prioritization to both sustain and grow the university. UTAC and UDIAC have also informed institutional decisions with allocation implications; examples include funding of the quasi-endowment, the establishment of new academic programs (e.g., MA in Organizational Leadership), the expansion of program delivery via WOU:Salem 2018 and 2019), the adoption of Canvas as our learning management system (UBAC recommendation, UTAC review process), and the initiation of a two-year equity audit.

University Council is our primary venue to disseminate information about internal and external developments and to monitor our responses. University Council hears reports from UBAC, UTAC, and UDIAC, along with accreditation updates. In addition, the group has monitored work related to student achievement, learning, new programs and enrollment management, and vital resources and infrastructure to support student achievement and learning. Since its inception, the University Council has posted minutes from its meetings. In 2021, University Council added links to presentations to disseminate information more broadly about important university developments.

University Council has reviewed and supported (1) refinements in systems, practices, and strategies and (2) the allocation of resources in the areas of student achievement and supports, student learning, new programs and enrollment management, and vital infrastructure (see Table 1B1-1).

Table 1B1-1: University Council Review of Refinements & Allocation of Resources

Student achievement and supports ("Student Success")	Student Learning ("Academic Excellence")
• Retention and graduation rates, including equitable outcomes (2021, 2022). • Retention efforts and assessment (2018, 2019, 2020). • Transfer initiatives (2017, 2018, 2019). • Process to identify new peer comparators (2020).	• General Education redesign (2017, 2018). • The ACE Learner Success Lab initiative (2020, 2021). • Exemplary academic assessment practices in Gerontology (2020) and WOU's accelerated learning program (2019).
New Programs/Enrollment Management • Enrollment updates (2020, 2022). • The development of professional doctorate programs (2018, 2019, 2020). • WOU: Salem (2018).	**Vital Infrastructure** • COVID planning (2020). • Open Educational Resources initiatives (2020). • Cybersecurity efforts (2019). • Campus climate (2019, 2020). • Cabinet-level assessment (2019). • State funding projections and other legislative updates (2021, 2020, 2019). • CARES Act funding (2020). • Partnerships (2018, 2019). • Enrollment-related program reduction and faculty layoffs (2020).

Concurrent work within units

Aligned work of continuous improvement also occurs within subunits of the university. Units assess their contributions toward larger mission fulfillment and use findings to plan and allocate resources. Much of this work is described and assessed in greater depth in our responses to standards in 1C on student learning (see Table 1B1-2).

Table 1B1-2: Additional refinements & Allocation of Resources not reviewed by University Council

Student Achievement and Supports ("Student Success")	Student learning ("Academic Excellence")
• 1C7: Destination Western Bridge program (Student Affairs & Academic Affairs). • 1C7: Wolf PACK student orientation (Student Affairs & Academic Affairs). • 1C7: Financial Aid distribution (Student Affairs).	• 1C Preamble: Creation of position for Associate Provost for Academic Effectiveness (2016) • 1C5: Assessment of Academic Program Learning Outcomes (Academic Affairs). • 1C1, 2, 3: Academic Program Review (Academic Affairs). • 1C6: Establishment and assessment of Institutional Learning Outcomes (Academic Affairs).

Related to Assignment of Resources	Adoption of New Technologies
• 1C7: Instructional budgeting process to advance equitable academic resources (Academic Affairs). • 1C7: Reallocation to fund First Year Seminars (Academic Affairs).	• Canvas (Learning Management System) • Slate (Admissions CRM) • Wolf Connection System (Student Success and Advising EAB Navigator) • My Major (Student Success and Advising)

General reflections

WOU has established structures and practices for assessing institutional effectiveness, with the results leading to improvements in student learning (e.g., program learning outcomes), student achievement (e.g., 4- and 6-year graduation rates), and support services (e.g., more effective orientation and advising practices). The availability of reliable institutional data is integral to this work. Evidence related to student achievement and support is widely discussed across the university and has been reported to our Board of Trustees. Student success and personalized support are widely understood as central to our work as a university.

We have identified challenges in sustaining this work. First, the scope of advisory committees is still being refined, and sometimes it is unclear where or when a topic, conversation or decision should be addressed. Second, much mission-centric work occurs within units (e.g., within an academic program, Academic Affairs, or Student Affairs) and the results are not always communicated more broadly. For example, evidence of student learning remains mostly siloed within academic programs or Academic Affairs more broadly. Learning is more amorphous than graduation or retention rates, thus harder to capture in a statistic; however, we recognize that learning deserves just as much attention as the clearly quantifiable. Third, the system must be maintained through use, and is fragile during times of leadership turnover when new leaders may not fully understand or utilize existing systems. For example, an interim president prioritized convening people around enrollment over convening University Council. As a result, the University Council met only once in 2021-22. New leadership also brings opportunities, however, and the new permanent president has initiated a review of the current system that we expect will result in thoughtful and intentional refinements.

STANDARD 1.B.2 – MEANINGFUL GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND INDICATORS

The institution sets and articulates meaningful goals, objectives, and indicators of its goals to define mission fulfillment and to improve its effectiveness in the context of and in comparison with regional and national peer institutions.

The institution has established mission fulfillment objectives, indicators, and goals.

In our 2017 Mission Fulfillment and Core Themes report, WOU identified core themes, goals, objectives, and indicators related to mission fulfillment. While core themes are no longer used as an organizing principle by NWCCU, WOU's core themes, goals, and indicators align closely with the first two pillars of our university's larger strategic plan: student success and academic excellence. For that reason, we retained the overarching goals established in our 2017 Report, along with their objectives and most of the indicators, as our framework for determining mission fulfillment. Detailed information on the goals, objectives, indicators, and the justification for their selection can be found in Table 1B2-1.

Table 1B2-1
Goal -- Student success, defined as degree completion

Objective	Indicators	Comparator data	Find It
Curriculum is delivered to students via multiple paths.[1]	Percent of courses with at least one section offered via flexible course format during the academic year.	Not available	1D2
Students complete programs in a timely and efficient manner.[2]	Percent of programs that can be completed in 180 credits	Not available	1C1
	Undergraduate annual calculation for six-year graduation rate, for first time, full-time student cohort	Available	1D2
	Total credits at graduation for first time, full-time students (graduating class based, not fall cohort based)	Not available	1D2
	Total credits at graduation for transfer students (graduating class based, not fall cohort based)	Not available	1D2
	Undergraduate annual calculation for four-year graduation rate, for first time, full-time student cohort	Available	1D2
	Retention for undergraduates from year one to year two for first- time, full-time student cohort	Available	1D2

Student-support services facilitate student persistence and academic achievement.[3]	Achievement gap in six-year graduation rate for undergrad students who are Underrepresented minority students	Available	1D3
	Achievement gap in six-year graduation rate for undergrad students who are Pell-eligible students	Available	1D3
	Added: Achievement gap in six-year graduation rate for undergrad students who are first-generation.	Available	1D3
	Added: Achievement gap in six-year graduation rate for undergrad students who are Hispanic	Available	1D3
	Discontinued: Achievement gap in six-year graduation rate for undergrad students who are students from rural communities.	Not available	
	Discontinued: Achievement gap in six-year graduation rate for undergrad students who are students from rural communities.	Not available	
Faculty and staff cultivate positive and personalized interactions with students[4]	Students' perceptions of frequency of student-centered interaction with faculty, first-year and seniors, from NSSE	Available*	1D2
Financial hardships that interfere with student completion are minimized.[5]	Cost of attendance, all students, average net price and rank among Oregon public universities	Available	1D2
	Cost of attendance, middle-income students, average net price and rank	Available	1D2

[1]We set a 2023 target of 25% of all courses to be available off-campus, in the evening, online, hybrid or weekends. This measure is meaningful because it is an indicator of our support of degree completion among students with competing demands on their time.

[2]We focused on curricular structure to ensure that our undergraduate requirements could be completed within 180 credits. Originally we hypothesized that this would contribute to higher 6-year graduation rates, lower excess credits for first-time students, and gereater affordability of our degrees. We have added two indicators: 4-year graduation rates for first-time, full-time students and excess credits for transfer students. The 4-year graduation rate allows are meaningful because they indicate minimized opportunity costs for attending college. Reducing excess credits in transfer students has been identified as a state-level priority in Oregon, and aligns with our efforts to offer affordable degrees to all students.

[3]Retention from 1st to 2nd year was chosen as an indicator of student persistence, and because this indicator has been stuck for over a decade and represents an area in need of improvement. We originally focused on achievement gaps for URM and Pell Eligible students because they are most relevant to our student population. With NWCCU's 2020 standards, we added indicators for achievement gaps for Hispanic, first generation and male/female students. In addition, our original plan also said we would track achievement gaps in six-year graduation rates for graduate students; we have discontinued that set of indicators because that particular measure is not meaningful. At this time we don't track achievement gaps at the graduate level. We originally included measures achievement gaps for Veteran's and rural status because they aligned with categories recognized in Oregon's Student Success and Completion Funding Model. We discontinued their use because comparator information is not readily available and the measures are less relevant to our current work.

Goal -- Academic Excellence, defined as well-defined curricular and co-curricular opportunities that enable students to engage in purposeful learning experiences.

Objective	Indicators	Comparator data	Find It
Alignment across course, program and university learning outcomes is clear.[1]	Percent of curriculum with alignment among course, program and university learning outcomes.	Not available	1C2
Academic and co-curricular programs are responsive to the evolving needs of students.[2]	Completion of program reviews per seven-year program review cycle.	Not available	1C1
WOU champions outstanding teaching, research and scholarship that serve student success.[3]	Academic challenge as indicated by NSSE Higher order learning, seniors & first-years	Available*	1C7
	Academic challenge as indicated by NSSE Reflective and integrative learning, seniors & first years	Available*	1C7
	Academic challenge as indicated by NSSE Learning strategies, seniors & first years	Available*	1C7
	Academic challenge as indicated by NSSE Quantitative Reasoning, seniors and first years	Available*	1C7
WOU students engage in high impact learning practices (HIP).[4]	Student scholarship, research and creative activity as indicated by AES	Available	1C7
	Student scholarship, research and creative activity as indicated by PURE Insights	Available	1C7
	Percentage of seniors who have participated in at least one HIP	Available*	1C7
	Percentage of seniors who have participated in two or more HIPs	Available*	1C7

[1]Alignment provides evidence of intentional and thoughtful curriculum design that builds to ultimate learning outcomes for students at the program and degree level.
[2]Program reviews allow for deep reflection on academic programs, and an opportunity for renewal that goes beyond the adjustments that result from ad hoc logistical concerns and annual assessment of student learning.
[3]At the time these indicators were chosen, we did not have assessable general education outcomes. In the absence of such outcomes, these measures from NSSE were those most meaningfully associated with our focus on academic excellence, transformative education, and personalized supports. That program

has begun assessment, after initial implementation in 2019-20, and in future cycles evidence related to the results of the general education program, along with evidence from program assessment, will be more appropriate sources of evidence of academic challenge and student performance.

[4]High impact learning practices are meaningfully connected to personalized support and transformative education.

Standardized data are accessible at both unit (i.e., academic department) and institutional levels.

Institutional-level data is available on our Institutional Research website and include the following: enrollment, retention rates, graduation rates, degrees awarded, faculty, transfer students, cohorts, majors, and other miscellaneous reports. Additionally, academic programs have access to a set of standardized reports on our Institutional Research website.

Regional and national peers have been identified, based on clear criteria. Peer institutions are reviewed regularly to ensure appropriate and meaningful comparisons.

We used a transparent process to select regional and national peers for comparison of student achievement indicators. Our peer institutions include the following:

- Arizona State University – West (Glendale, AZ)
- California State University – Channel Islands (Camarillo, CA)
- Colorado Mesa University (Grand Junction, CO)
- Eastern Oregon University (La Grande, OR)
- East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania (East Stroudsburg, PA)
- Emporia State University (Emporia, KS)
- Northwest Missouri State University (Maryville, MO)
- Shippensburg University (Shippensburg, PA)
- Southern Oregon University (Ashland, OR)
- University of Washington – Tacoma (Tacoma, WA)

Arizona State University-West ceased reporting IPEDS data as an independent institution in 2020, shortly after we updated our list of peer institutions and, therefore, is not used in more recent comparisons to peer institutions.

In addition to the peer list described above, we often compare our student achievement, enrollment, and finances to the other Oregon public universities. Our Human Resources office generates salary ranges for the hiring of new staff and administrators by examining CUPA-HR data at Masters Colleges and Universities.

The current list of regional and national peers was identified in 2020 at the time that NWCCU published its newest standards. While annual reconsideration of peers is not a part of our current plan, WOU will review these peers for appropriateness at the time of our next Mid-cycle and Year Seven reviews.

The institution assesses progress over time using longitudinal data and analyses.

Overall, we have made significant progress in identifying meaningful measures of student achievement and using findings to increase student achievement. For example, data related to graduation rates and excess credits sparked a holistic review and revision of university graduation requirements; data on the size of degree programs, along with the implementation of program reviews, helped us see our curriculum clearly and identify alternatives to serve today's students; the tracking of graduation rates and excess credits over time allowed us to observe and document how curriculum review and revision improved student achievement and increased affordability; and monitoring equity gaps in degree completion using disaggregated data gave us a deeper understanding of universal or specific effects.
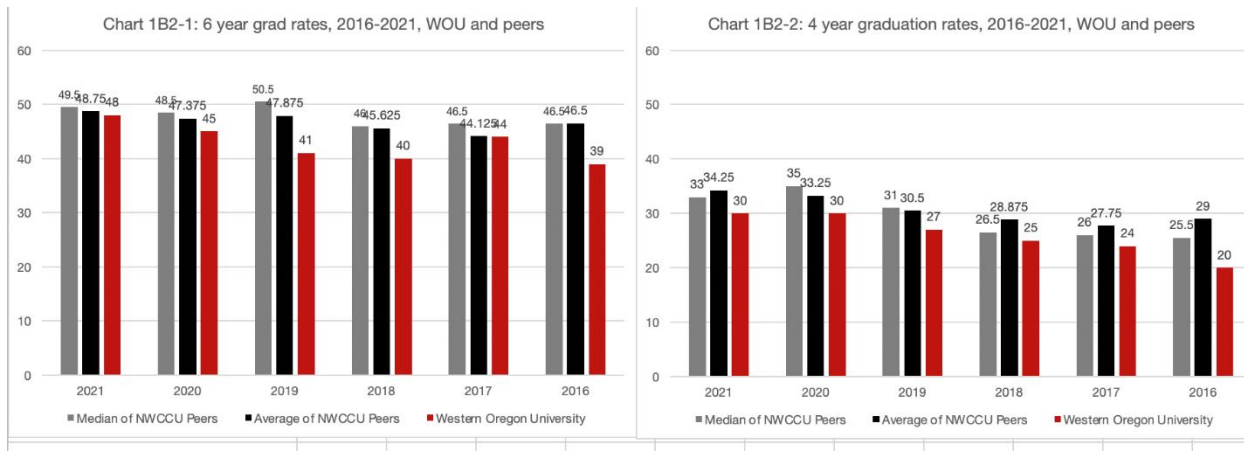
The definitions of measures, along with their importance for achieving our mission, are increasingly understood across campus. An example of increased awareness includes a shift in embracing our role as agents: prior to identifying graduation rates and excess credits as meaningful indicators, concern about our graduation rates was low and we tended to view our students' struggles as a function of their own deficits rather than something that our deeply rooted but unexamined practices might be causing. Data enabled us to see barriers that we had unintentionally put in place and begin the process of collectively and individually dismantling them.

Additional examples of indicators playing a significant role in improving institutional effectiveness include (1) data on affordability compared with other Oregon public universities drove a deliberate strategy over several years to limit tuition increases and (2) data on 1st-to-2nd-year retention led to the development of our bridge program, Destination Western, and a collaborative and cross-unit redesign of student orientation (Wolf PACK). Finally, our Institutional Research Office has developed [regular reports for distribution to academic units](), which include some of the indicators described in Table 1B1 and other indicators that have been requested by unit-level academic leaders.

There is evidence that mission fulfillment data has improved effectiveness in comparison with regional and national peers.

The work described above has resulted in WOU improving its performance in four- and six-year graduation rates as compared to peers.

Graduation rates at six years lag our peers, though the gap in six-year rates has narrowed in recent years as we have improved in this area. In 2016, our six-year graduation rate was 7.5% lower than the mean of our comparators; in 2021, the gap had narrowed to 1.5% (see Chart 1B2-1). As noted previously, WOU has made substantial progress in improving its four-year graduation rate, which increased from 20% in 2016 to 30% in 2021. Our peers have also made progress on this measure. Nonetheless, our 2016 four-year graduation rate lagged our peers' average by 9 percentage points while the 2021 gap was reduced to 4.25 percentage points (see Chart 1B2-2).

Chart 1B2-1: 6 year grad rates, 2016-2021, WOU and peers

Chart 1B2-2: 4 year graduation rates, 2016-2021, WOU and peers

General reflections

While we have made progress in our use of indicators to assess progress on goals and objectives, there are some areas where we are working to improve.

First, with the new NWCCU standards, WOU identified peer comparators for our student achievement data in 2020. While we have retrieved and reviewed this data, our performance in the context of peers has not been disseminated widely, perhaps because it is discouraging that we lag our peers on retention and graduation rates, despite significant work and progress at WOU to improve. As the peer comparator data reveals, we still have much to accomplish.

Second, we have generally made better use of student achievement indicators than indicators of student learning. Student learning results tend to remain in a black box, either unexamined or examined but with results not shared broadly with the university and the public. For example, we have NSSE data going back to the early 2000s, along with comparator data, yet we do not disseminate that data beyond posting on our website. Faculty largely do not know about the data and do not use it to inform their teaching or advising. Thus, while the 2019 re-envisioning of General Education placed high value on high-impact practices and engaged in substantial research into high impact practices and their effects on learning and achievement, the NSSE data on our students' experiences with those practices were not reviewed during the re-envisioning process.

Finally, with respect to transparency, while public-facing data related to nearly all measures is available on WOU's Institutional Research webpage, the data is not consolidated into a single dashboard or other easily viewed format. Originally we planned to consolidate the measures into a "Mission Fulfillment Matrix" ([2018 iteration](#)); however, the maintenance of this matrix was unrealistic, especially given the overly complex calculations embedded in our targets. In retrospect, we can now see that choosing indicators related to institutional effectiveness requires collaboration with professional Institutional Research staff who were not in place in 2017 when our indicators and their targets were first identified.

STANDARD 1.B.3 – INCLUSIVE PLANNING PROCESS

The institution provides evidence that its planning process is inclusive and offers opportunities for comment by appropriate constituencies, allocates necessary resources, and leads to improvement of institutional effectiveness.

The planning process reflects the participation and meaningful contribution of an expanding or broad constituent base.

Figure 1B3-1 details the membership of the key planning committees.

Figure 1B3-1: Inclusive Committees

Committee (click link for detailed information on membership)	Summary of Membership (actual membership, 11/15/22, empty positions not counted)
Strategic Planning Committee (Ad hoc, 2016-17)	Faculty (9), Student (3), Academic Affairs staff (3), WOU BOT (2), WOU Foundation, Alumni Board, Athletics staff, Student Affairs staff (3), President
Standing Committees	
University Council	President chairs. Dean (4), Faculty (4), Vice President/Executive Director (6), Student , Academic Affairs staff (6), Student Affairs staff (1), Finance & Administration staff (2) – overlap with representatives from Faculty, Staff and Student Senates; SEIU and WOUFT
University Budget Advisory Committee	VP for Finance and Administration co-chairs. Faculty (5), Academic Affairs staff (3), Finance & Administration staff (4), Foundation, Student Affairs staff (1) – overlap with Faculty, Staff and Student Senate; SEIU and WOUFT
University Technology Advisory Committee	Dean of Libraries and Director of University Computing Services co-chair. Academic Affairs staff (5), Student Affairs staff (2), Finance & Administration staff (2), Faculty (3), Student – overlap with Faculty, Staff and Student Senate; SEIU and WOUFT
University Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee	Co-chaired by a faculty member. Faculty (6), Academic Affairs staff (1), University Counsel (1), Finance & Administration staff, Student (4), Student Affairs staff (2), Athletics, Ex Dir of DEI – overlap with Cultural Competence Committee, Freedom Center, Faculty and Student Senates.

Our formal planning processes are designed to support mission fulfillment and strategic priorities.

As alluded to in the Preamble to Standard B, each advisory body was created to play a distinct role in supporting WOU's strategic priorities and ensuring mission fulfillment:

- University Council was formed to sustain the work of WOU's ad hoc Strategic Planning Committee. The council determines the degree to which the university is meeting its mission and is engaged in comprehensive, ongoing, systematic assessment of its work that leads to mission fulfillment and continuous improvement.
- University Budget Advisory Committee makes recommendations to the President on budget priorities to both sustain and grow the university.
- The University Technology Advisory Committee is charged with receiving, developing, and submitting recommendations related to the use of technology for university technology systems and academic technologies that are aligned with the strategic plan.
- The University Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee is charged with recommending and supporting diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility priorities for each academic year that are rooted in our core institutional values and are informed by our university diversity action plan and the needs of the university community.

These advisory bodies have enriched inclusive decision making at WOU. In 2016, decision-making was informed by shared governance groups that represent WOU's faculty, staff and students. However, we lacked a systematic way for stakeholders in different offices and different roles to work together to address university concerns like budget, technology, and important or new initiatives. The advisory bodies that now make up our university-level continuous improvement system provide those venues. They include seats for representatives from shared governance, and bring insights from important cross-cutting conversations to the President and the cabinet for consideration as decisions are made.

Formal planning is clearly aligned to institutional objectives, indicators, and outcomes.

As described in the response to Standard 1B2, WOU's planning process centers on goals, objectives, and indicators that we have identified for student success and academic excellence.

Planning guides resource prioritization and allocation.

During the most recent accreditation cycle and as described in 1D4, institutional planning has prioritized assessing and allocating resources related to improving equitable student achievement.

There is evidence that planning leads to improvement of institutional outcomes.

In turn, as described in Standard 1B2, we have seen positive results from those assessment and planning and resource allocation efforts with increases in four- and six-year graduation rates and reductions in excess credits for transfer students.

General reflections

TBD