Faculty Senate Executive Committee Agenda, November 16, 2020

Utah State University

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FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
November 16, 2020  
3:30 – 4:30 p.m.  
Zoom Meeting

Agenda

3:30  Call to Order ................................................................. Timothy Taylor
Approval of Minutes – October 19, 2020

3:35  University Business ..................................................... Noelle Cockett, President | Frank Galey, Provost

3:50  Information
EPC Monthly Report – November 5, 2020 ........................................... Paul Barr
Spring Calendar Update ...................................................................... Renee Galliher
Course Fee Policy ............................................................................. Renee Galliher
Dixie State Faculty Senate resolution to change university name............ Timothy Taylor
Faculty Senate Meeting dates for Spring 2021........................................ Timothy Taylor

4:10  Reports
Center for Student Analytics Student Insights Report ............................. Mitchell Colver
USUSA Annual Report ........................................................................ Sami Ahmed

4:20  Old Business
N/A

4:20  New Business
Faculty Forum Task Force .................................................................... Timothy Taylor
Term Appointment Faculty Task Force .................................................... Timothy Taylor
Code 404.3.6 Changes/Final (First reading) ........................................... Nikki Kendrick

Adjourn: 4:35 pm
FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES
October 19, 2020
3:30 – 5:00 p.m.
Old Main-Champ Hall

Present: Timothy Taylor (President), Patrick Belmont (Past-President), Boyd Edwards (President-Elect), President Noelle Cockett (Ex-Officio), Provost Frank Galey (Ex-Officio), Michele Hillard (Exec. Sec.), Benjamin George, Maureen Hearns, John Ferguson, Yoon Lee, Nicholas Roberts, Jessica Lucero, Soren Brothers, Vicki Allan, Britt Fagerheim, Denise Stewardson, Jan Thornton, Robert Wagner

Absent: Don Busenbark

Guests: Paul Barr, EPC Chair
Michael Lyons, AFT Chair
Edward Heath, Athletics Council Chair
Christine Cooper Rompato, Library Advisory Board Chair

Call to Order - Timothy Taylor
Approval of Minutes – September 21, 2020
Minutes approved as distributed.

University Business - Noelle Cockett, President | Frank Galey, Provost
Provost Galey – USU currently has a working group looking at face-to-face instruction. The CIDI group has worked with the CARES team and faculty members have a status on their students regarding COVID. There will be a graduate student town hall next Thursday. During that town hall mental health professionals will be available to talk with students. Sent a survey to grad students to see how they are doing and what areas need to be targeted. Recently accepted by APLU ASPIRE IP Change network. Focused on STEM faculty to see what we can do to include diversity and inclusivity in hiring. Also looking at inclusive pedagogy. The team overseeing these items is headed up by Claudia Radel, Michelle Baker, and Abby Benninghoff. A proposal was sent to the graduate council asking that the requirements for the GRE exam be dropped campus wide. If a department wants the GRE they can still require it. This will go through the Academic Standards subcommittee and then will go through EPC.

President Cockett – The higher education system in the state has gone through a restructuring. Instead of having two systems one for university and one for trade colleges, these have been combined under one umbrella. This weekend and today COVID has occupied less than 50% of the president’s time. USU student positive rates are staying flat compared to the increased numbers across the state. Fewer and fewer students are coming on campus for classes. They are extremely comfortable using Zoom and social media platforms. Spring semester will have the same kind of restrictions, but we will see more offerings for courses through Zoom. Tim Taylor is involved with a new committee looking at how to help faculty. Going to be difficult for changes through the fall semester. The USU testing site is now open and is available for anyone in USU. The beauty of the site is that results can be sent to the individual within 6-8 hours if they test in the morning or the next morning if they test in the afternoon. You must register for an appointment and the test is free of charge. USU nursing students are helping with the collections and the testing is taking place here on campus. The other campuses have strong relationships with their local health departments and they can get individuals in for testing very quickly. Utah came out with a new way to measure areas and it is based on numbers of infection. The numbers of cases are continuing to increase so the governor has instituted a 2-week circuit breaker. This would limit the number of individuals in social gathers hoping to drive down the number of positive cases.
Blanding and Price is in the medium level of infection. Not through with this yet and it could get worse before it gets better. Stay safe and healthy. If you have been within 6 feet of an individual for 15 minutes that has tested positive you must quarantine for 14 days. Stay 6 feet apart and wear your masks. Moving forward what is teaching and courses going to look like? In spring USU may realize where we are going. Labs are very difficult to do remotely and does not seem to help the students. The challenge is giving students a hands-on opportunity for tech and lab classes. Students are definitely missing the social interaction and this is hurting the freshman class more that the others. If you have a gathering, even if you’re outside, you need to have a seating chart so that we will know how many people may have been exposed. College Record came out with top 10 universities for COVID responses and USU ranked number six. Great Job USU!!!

Information
EPC Monthly Report – October 1, 2020 - Paul Barr
Academic Standards Subcommittee – did not meeting – nothing to report.
General Education – 8 designations were approved.
Approved 131 course requests. Approved five R401 requests.
Discussed T-grades and standardization of course justifications.
Move to Faculty Senate agenda.

Carbon Emissions Reductions - Charles Darnell
Updated Faculty Senate on the progress that has been made and also the challenges.
The university is ahead of schedule on converting to LED lights. DoT has expanded opportunities for carpoolers and electric vehicles. USU has approval to purchase one electric vehicle for the USU motor pool. President Cockett approved to pay the carbon fee for anyone traveling during 2020. Each year she will pay 10% less. If departments reduce their carbon footprint, they won’t have to pay. Purchasing renewable energy portfolios has taken a lot of time and is proving to be very difficult. Building a coalition of large energy users and going through negotiations right now.
Move to Faculty Senate Agenda.

Reports
Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee (AFT) Annual Report - Michael Lyons
There is one major item in report, but most commonly the cases are promotion and tenure cases. The AFT assists in pulling together panels to discuss these cases. The major case arose from a tenure denial from April 2019 and it is suggested that the Faculty Senate look at the code so that this particular issue doesn’t happen again. The claim was that an administrator had discriminated on the basis of gender. The office of equity deals with the general discrimination and the AFT deals with other issues. Legal Counsel asked that the Office of Equity handle their grievance first. It was in late February 2020 when the grievance hearing was organized. Not able to conduct the grievance hearing until May 2020 due to COVID. At this point the additional year at USU had expired. Panel has met and made a recommendation to the president. Two more faculty members came forward but did not meet the timetable so those cases were not brought forward. Code needs to be looked at especially timeframes/deadlines that are hard to meet. Provost Galey has had an initial meeting with Nikki Kendrick. Looking at redoing Code 407 and will look at working these things in parallel.
Motion to move the Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee Annual Report to the Faculty Senate Agenda made by Ben George. Seconded by Britt Fagerheim. Moved to the agenda.

Athletics Council Annual Report - Edward Heath
The Athletics Council meets four times a year and there are four subcommittees that report to the council. USU athletes are first in the mountain west conference on graduation rates. COVID has shortened the season for most athletes. Usually by this time we have the actuals and variance. The October 28 meeting will provide those numbers.
Motion to move the Athletics Council Annual Report to the Faculty Senate Agenda made by Denise Stewardson. Seconded by John Ferguson. Moved to the agenda.

Libraries Advisory Council Annual Report - Christine Cooper Rompato
Meet once a semester to discuss the ongoing initiatives of the budget for the library. Talked about the library moving to online instruction. The hands-on courses cannot happen but e-journals are available. Reduced the number of seating in the library. They have noticed an overall drop in the student’s utilizing the library. Because of COVID 19 the library was able to negotiation contracts for lower rates. Disability
access is an ongoing issue for the library. Currently working to improve the access. Journal subscriptions are being renewed. Survey results - USU faculty report using google scholar for their scholarly pursuits. It is very important for the library to support the graduate students and Digital Commons is very important to them as well.

Motion to move the Libraries Advisory Council Annual Report made by John Ferguson. Seconded by Nick Roberts. Moved to the agenda.

Old Business
N/A

New Business
Faculty Forum Discussions - Timothy Taylor
What do we do for a Faculty Forum during COVID 19? Open for suggestions. Set up a date/time for departments and utilize a Zoom meeting. Last year we did college level forums. Total participation was 75-80 faculty members. The broader concern is that the model is outdated and the notion of just having one day is not effective. There isn’t great attendance or follow up and faculty feels that it is not effective in moving faculty issues forward. The suggestion was made to have faculty concerns come forward any time during the year and have faculty members articulate their issue(s). It was recommended to scrap it from faculty code and replace it with something that is better reflective of a substantive discussion. The senate needs to look at different ways to solicit information from the faculty and then be able to evaluate its effectiveness. Online forums might be a good way to move forward. Create a forum system that is moderated and issues can be submitted either anonymous or not. Those who want to be anonymous could contact the Faculty Senate President or a moderator. Names and other information could be redacted. Maintain the forum but using the suggestion box comments that have come from the faculty. Pull together a proposed agenda that will cover the issues that have been brought up by faculty. Possibly use CANVAS for any/all ongoing discussion threads. This would allow faculty to connect and move items forward. Possibly have these discussions monthly and have them come forward to faculty senate to make sure that the issues and concerns are dealt with in a timely manner. Send out a survey where faculty members could bring forth items.

Motion to move New Business to the Faculty Senate agenda made by Yoon Lee. Seconded by John Ferguson. Moved to agenda.

Adjourn: 4:40 pm
The Educational Policies Committee (EPC) met on November 5, 2020. The agenda and minutes of the meeting are posted on the Educational Policies Committee web page (www.usu.edu/epc).

During the November 5, 2020 meeting of the EPC, the following actions were taken:

1. **General Education Subcommittee**
   - No September meeting to report

2. **Academic Standards Subcommittee**
   - Modifying language to include the Provost Office for approval of transfer credit from institutions that are not regionally accredited.
   - Modify language to extend the time limit for a leave of absence from 1 year to 3 years.

3. **Curriculum Subcommittee (October 1, 2020)**
   - Approval of 134 course requests.
   - Request from the Department of Aviation and Technical Education in the College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences to correct the acronym from Police Officers Standards and Training to Peace Officer Standards and Training.
   - Request from the Department of Art and Design in the Caine College of the Arts to offer an Associate of Arts in Art at the USU Eastern campus.
   - Request from the Department of Marketing and Strategy in the Jon M. Huntsman School of Business to create a new Consulting Minor.
   - Request from the Center for Persons with Disabilities in the Emma Eccles Jones College of Education and Human Services to change the name of the Center for Persons with Disabilities to the Institute for Disability Research, Policy and Practice.
   - Request from the Department of Languages, Philosophy and Communication Studies in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences to create a certificate of proficiency in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages.
   - Request from the Department of Biology in the College of Science to discontinue the Biology: Environmental program – current listed as “not currently offered”.
   - Request from the Department of Biology in the College of Science to change the emphasis program name from Ecology/Biodiversity in the Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science to Ecology and Evolutionary Biology.
   - Request from the Department of Computer Science in the College of Science to restructure the current Master of Computer Science program to a 33-credit professional, coursework-only degree.

4. **Other Business**
• Discussion of the Graduate Student Survey and the GRE requirement.
• Draft language for the standardization of course justification.
• Discussion of EPC/Curriculum handbook. A draft and will be completed and circulated for the January meeting.
• IDEA Evaluation update for 7-week Courses
Calendar Committee Members 2020-2021

Renee Galliher, Office of the Provost – Chair  
Mykel Beorchia, University Advising  
LuAnn Bladen, Registrar’s Office  
Alex Braeger, Graduate Studies Senator - USUSA  
Molly Cannon, Faculty Senate  
Jared DeLisle, Faculty Senate  
Julie Duersch, Staff Employee’s Association  
Nancy Hanks, Office of the President  
Joan Hevel, Faculty Senate  
Cooper Karras, Engineering Senator – USUSA  
Konrad Lee, Faculty Senate  
Andi McCabe, Office of the Provost

Molly Cannon, Faculty Senate  
Jared DeLisle, Faculty Senate  
Julie Duersch, Staff Employee’s Association  
Nancy Hanks, Office of the President  
Joan Hevel, Faculty Senate  
Cooper Karras, Engineering Senator – USUSA  
Konrad Lee, Faculty Senate  
Andi McCabe, Office of the Provost

Charge

The Calendar Committee is charged with the responsibility of reviewing, evaluating, and recommending the University’s academic calendar and employee holidays. The committee represents faculty, staff, students (undergraduate and graduate), Student Affairs, Academic and Instructional Services, the Provost’s Office, and the President’s Office. The actions of this committee are ratified by the Executive Committee after review by the Faculty Senate.

November 2020 Actions

1) The committee recommends a revised academic calendar for 2020-2021 to reflect changes made as a result of the deliberations of the President’s COVID-19 Stabilization Task Force. Here is the background and summary of the changes:

   The taskforce is taking steps to respond to the widespread concern across campus about the impact on student well-being associated with the loss of Spring Break. In lieu of the week-long break, two three-day weekends are proposed to give time off from class.

   Thus, it is proposed that Utah State University will add two Fridays of No Class Days to the Spring 2021 calendar. They will be spaced mid-month. March 12 is a Friday that would have corresponded with the original Spring Break. April 9 is the other proposed Friday with no classes that would coincide with the end of the K-12 break. Because two Friday classes will be impacted with this change, classes on Thursday, April 8 will follow a Friday schedule.

Changes include:

   a. Adding a No Class Day on Friday, March 12
   b. Adding a No Class Day on Friday, April 9
   c. Classes on Thursday, April 8 will follow a Friday schedule.

(See Supporting Materials #1a and #1b)
**Status**

This report resulted from deliberations by the President’s COVID-19 Stabilization Task Force. It was considered by the Calendar Committee on November 6, 2020.

**Supporting Materials – See Following Pages**

1a. Proposed Revised 2020-2021 Academic Calendar Chart
1b. Proposed Revised 2020-2021 Academic Calendar
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summer Semester 2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7-week Session #1                                May 4 - June 19 (M-F; 33 instr. days, 1 test day)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-week Session #2                                June 22 - August 7 (M-F; 32 instr. days, 1 test day)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14-week Session                                 May 4 - August 7 (M-F; 66 instr. days, 1 test day)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer Session Holidays Mem 25 Memorial Day (M); July 3 Independence Day observed (F); July 24 Pioneer Day (F)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall Semester 2020 (70 instruction days, 5 test days)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Day of Classes                              August 31 (M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First 7-Week Session                             August 31 - October 19 (34 instruction days, 1 test day)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor Day                                     September 7 (M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second 7-Week Session                            October 20 - December 10 (34 instruction days, 1 test day)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classes Delivered Remotely          November 23 – December 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thanksgiving Holiday                         November 25 - 27 (W - F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No-Test Week                                  December 7 - 10 (M - R)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last Day of Classes                           December 10 (R)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interim Day                                   December 11 (F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Examinations (Remote Delivery)           December 14 - 18 (M - F)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spring Semester 2021 (70 68 instruction days, 5 test days)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Day of Classes                              January 19 (T)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First 7-Week Session                             January 19 - March 9 (34 instruction days, 1 test day)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presidents' Day                                 February 15 (M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second 7-Week Session                            March 10 - April 27 (32 instruction days, 1 test day)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Class Day                                    March 12 (F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday Class Schedule                           April 8 (R)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Class Day                                   April 9 (F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No-Test Week                                   April 21 - 27 (W - T)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last Day of Classes                            April 27 (T)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interim Day                                    April 28 (W)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Examinations                             April 29 - May 5 (R - W)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commencement                                   May 6 - 7 (R - F)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# 2020-2021 Proposed Revised Academic Calendar

## Notes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Instruction Days</th>
<th>Test Days</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2020</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2021</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 2020</td>
<td>14-Week</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Summer 2020
- 14-Week Session (66 instr. days, 1 test day)
- May 4, First Day of Classes
- August 7, Last Day of Classes
- July 24 - Pioneer Day

### Fall 2020
- 70 instruction days, 5 test days
- August 31, First Day of Classes (Full Semester & 1st 7-Week Session)
- September 7, Labor Day
- October 19, Last Day of 1st 7-Week Session
- October 20, First Day of 2nd 7-Week Session
- November 23 - December 10 Classes Delivered Remotely
- November 25-27, Thanksgiving Break
- December 7-10, No-Test Week
- December 10, Last Day of Classes (Full Semester & 2nd 7-Week Session)
- December 11, Interim Day
- December 14-18, Final Examinations

### Spring 2021
- 68 instruction days, 5 test days
- January 19, First Day of Classes (Full Semester & 1st 7-Week Session)
- February 15, Presidents’ Day
- March 9, Last Day of 1st 7-Week Session
- March 10, First Day of 2nd 7-Week Session
- March 12, No Class Day
- April 6 - Friday Classes
- April 9, No Class Day
- April 21-27, No-Test Week
- April 27, Last Day of Classes (Full Semester & 2nd 7-Week Session)
- April 28, Interim Day
- April 29 - May 5, Final Examinations
- May 6-7, Commencement

### Supporting Materials
- 1b

No Class Days of March 12 and April 9.

Friday classes held on Thursday, April 8.

Proposed to the Calendar Committee November 6, 2020
Student Insights Report, Fall 2020

The Center for Student Analytics

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STUDENT INSIGHTS REPORT

Prepared by
THE CENTER FOR STUDENT ANALYTICS
FOR THE PAST FOUR YEARS, the staff of the Center for Student Analytics have collaborated with dozens of units across campus to discover data-informed insights about what helps students succeed at Utah State University.

The following pages highlight 20 of the most useful insights that we have come across over the past year, organized across five audiences—students, faculty, staff, university leadership, and parents & prospective students.

As you explore this report, we encourage you to see the student data as a window onto Utah State University itself.

We have discovered that while big data helps us to understand how individual students are performing at our institution, it generally tells us a great deal more about the health of USU as an institution—an Aggie community that works diligently to cultivate opportunities for student learning, discovery, and engagement.
DATA PROTECTION AND VALUE

UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY VALUES PRIVACY and honors our commitment to excellence by working with student data in an intentional and secure way. As part of these efforts, USU has a transparent privacy policy regarding the ethical use of data collected from the USU community, including procedures that prevent unauthorized access or disclosure of private student data.

Officers of the institution that work closely with student data use a transparent, collaborative approach to safeguard data against being used inappropriately. The controls and procedures utilized by the Center for Student Analytics to create this report align with federal and state laws regarding protection of privacy and also adhere to the highest standards of student data ethics.

If you have questions about the practices and procedures USU employs to protect student data, contact:

CENTER FOR STUDENT ANALYTICS
435-797-0623
analytics@usu.edu

INSIGHTS IN THIS REPORT

STUDENTS PG.5
FACULTY PG.11
LEADERSHIP PG.19
STAFF PG.27
FUTURE AGGIES PG.33

Pages that include this symbol throughout the book include insights that are based on data relevant to our Statewide and Online students.
INSIGHTS FOR STUDENTS

1. REMOTE-BASED ADVISING
2. REMOTE-BASED ADVISING STILL WORKS
3. ADVISING EQUITY MATTERS
4. COMPUTER LABS
### REMOTE-BASED ADVISING

#### USU Advising Appointments by Month

This chart shows the total count of advising appointments attended by USU students each month over the past three years.

#### Persistence Prediction

**participants and comparison students**

- **Comparison**
- **Participant**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>90%</th>
<th>80%</th>
<th>70%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>77.9%</td>
<td>83.3%</td>
<td>9.94%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Predicted**

**Actual**

**IN THE MIDST OF A GLOBAL PANDEMIC**, a legitimate question is whether students can receive as high quality of an experience in a remote-based setting compared to the in-person experience.

An important question to answer is: Does this service work as well in a remote format compared to the in-person experience?

Recently, we partnered with University Advising to investigate whether remote-based advising appointments remain an effective tool in helping students succeed at USU. Nicely, we discovered that engaging in a remote-based advising appointment with an academic advisor leads to a 9.94% lift in students’ likelihood to persist towards graduation.

With the move to remote learning, academic advising also migrated to virtual formats. Although virtual advising may seem to create a barrier for student access, we actually saw a dramatic increase in advising appointments.

In May, we saw 2,766 total advising appointments—previously, this number had never exceeded 2,000. Despite the global pandemic, advisors continue to provide stellar service to students, using virtual tools that enhance a crucial service.

### REMOTE-BASED ADVISING STILL WORKS

**ENGAGING IN A REMOTE-BASED ADVISING APPOINTMENT WITH AN ACADEMIC ADVISOR LEADS TO A 9.94% LIFT IN STUDENTS’ LIKELIHOOD TO PERSIST TOWARDS GRADUATION.**

**IN THE 2019 STUDENT INSIGHTS REPORT,** we highlighted how meeting with an advisor is one of the most important things a student can do outside the classroom to increase graduation likelihood.

**Prepared by The Center For Student Analytics**
OFTENTIMES, STUDENTS WHO ARE FEELING ACADEMICALLY INSECURE because of poorer grades or a lack of interest in their courses are less likely to respond to university emails. Students may also be constrained in ways that make getting to an advising appointment more difficult.

In Spring 2019, the advising team in the College of Education and Human Services (CEHS) noticed that academically vulnerable students (shown in orange) were less likely to utilize advising services than their peers (shown in gray).

Undeterred by these challenges, the CEHS advising team made a concerted effort in Fall 2019 to target outreach to students for whom the advisors’ contact would make the biggest difference. The effort was not only successful in serving a higher proportion of vulnerable students than in the previous semester, but was also associated with a much higher increase in student persistence rates (a 1.4% gain compared to a 0.5% loss). This equates to an additional 45 students remaining engaged in their studies, working towards graduation.

DID YOU KNOW THAT USING AN ON-CAMPUS COMPUTER LAB actually leads to an 1.71% increase in students’ likelihood to remain enrolled at USU?

For reasons we can only guess at, using the on-campus computer labs (especially during Spring semester) seems to boost students’ academic engagement. This may be due to the fact that using an on-campus space helps students “settle in” on campus and get the most out of the social vibe of academic productivity that tends to prevail in the computer labs. While we can only speculate why this effect is occurring, our advice to students is to make the most of the computer labs for completing homework, working on assignments, and feeling productive amongst peers.
INSIGHTS FOR FACULTY

5. HANDS-ON LAB COURSES
6. FACULTY AND ACADEMIC SERVICES
7. COMMUNITY-ENGAGED LEARNING
8. GRADING RUBRICS
In collaboration with Empowering Teaching Excellence, we occasionally help faculty members to determine if specific approaches to curriculum and instruction have helped them be more or less successful in their courses. These Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) projects have included a partnership with Dr. Karl Hoopes from Animal, Dairy, and Veterinary Sciences and a partnership with Dr. Jennifer Grewe from the Psychology department. These two projects are highlighted on the following pages as Insight #5 and Insight #6.

**IN SPRING 2017, DR. KARL HOOPES** decided to make some significant changes to a science lab—Animal A&P—a course that introduces students to foundational knowledge that will help them to be successful later in their programs.

Working with the instructional design team at the **Center for Innovative Design and Instruction**, Dr. Hoopes worked to make the lab more practical by incorporating animal cadavers, tightening up the learning outcomes, and providing expanded training to the course teaching assistants (TAs).

After a few years of running the new lab, Dr. Hoopes partnered with the Center for Student Analytics to look at students’ grades in outcome courses (those that required Animal A&P as a prerequisite). We discovered a dramatic increase, following the lab changes, in the proportion of students who went on to earn grades in outcome courses that were greater than or equal to their grade in Animal A&P. Overall, this project provides nice evidence that hands-on lab courses go a lot further in preparing students to be successful later in their programs.
IN FALL 2018, DR. JENN GREWE PARTNERED WITH USU LEARNING SPECIALISTS to pilot an opportunity for students who had performed poorly on psychology exams in her class.

Students could elect to work with a learning specialist to evaluate their exam performance and strategically approach subsequent exams.

The goal of this Reflective Exam Analysis (REA), designed by learning specialist Dennis Kohler, was to facilitate improvement on subsequent test scores. After several years, Dr. Grewe partnered with the Center for Student Analytics to determine if the intervention was having any effect.

Comparing exam score gains/losses of students who participated to those who did not (and to those who had taken the course before the intervention was offered), we found a significant difference in the number of students posting higher exam scores after participating in the intervention. This finding not only highlights the importance of students learning effective study strategies, but also shows the importance of faculty partnering with student services to build excellent student experiences. Dr. Grewe is now working on a model that would scale up similar services to other General Education courses at USU.

THE CENTER FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT partners with faculty to build community-engaged service learning opportunities into their courses. While these services are available across all types of courses, community-engaged learning is most prevalent in upper division courses.

In partnership with the Center for Community Engagement, and using Prediction-based Propensity Score Matching (PPSM; see page 40), we discovered that students who took an upper division community-engaged learning course significantly increased their likelihood to persist towards graduation—an average 2.04% lift. While this number may seem small, it represents an estimated 35 students each year who persist when they otherwise would be expected to leave USU.

Doing service is about more than checking a box for a class assignment. The positive impact of these experiences contributes meaningfully to students’ ability to remain enrolled and work towards graduation.
WE KNOW FROM LEARNING SCIENCE LITERATURE that students who complete an assignment using a rubric tend to score significantly higher, on average, than students who do not.

While there are instances in which grading rubrics can be inappropriate, in general, CIDI’s instructional design team recommends their incorporation into a course’s grading structure.

Using new learning analytics, our data science team uncovered a hidden byproduct of using rubrics. For more complicated assignments that took from 1 to 30 minutes to grade, the use of rubrics was associated with saving an average of 1.5 minutes per entered grade. In other words, if a faculty member were to use a rubric for a final project submitted by 50 students, they would likely shave 75 minutes off their time grading. While not the primary goal of using grading rubrics, this is still impressive!
INSIGHTS FOR UNIVERSITY LEADERSHIP

9. COVID-19 - STUDENT VOICES
10. USU LIBRARY
11. CURRICULAR ANALYTICS
12. THE CHALLENGES OF BEING A PWI
<p>As I think about going to be fine going on, I know that having a positive experience now will help me to know that I’m going to be fine in the future.”

The insights gleaned from these in-person interviews were synthesized with insights from nearly 50 pages of qualitative feedback that students provided in a series of institution-wide online surveys. Overall, student concerns centered on the following four themes, each of which is accompanied by a student perspective:

1. **CONCERNS ABOUT TUITION & FEES AND FUTURE ENROLLMENT:**
   “As I think about going into next semester, with the possibility that this will all still be going on, I know that having a positive experience now will help me to know that I’m going to be fine in the future.”

2. **APPRECIATION FOR PRESIDENT NOELLE COCKETT AND CENTRAL LEADERSHIP:**
   “The emails sent out have been really consistent. And, even though things are difficult, I have found I’m a lot more self-motivated than I realized.”

3. **BOTH POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE IMPRESSIONS ABOUT REMOTE LEARNING:**
   “The effect of social distancing has been to amplify faculty preparedness or lack of preparedness—both the good and the bad.”

4. **AN AWARENESS OF THE NEED FOR CONTINUED FACULTY DEVELOPMENT IN REMOTE TEACHING STRATEGIES:**
   “A lot of the approaches faculty have used before have been tested. But what they are doing right now is like an experiment.”

When students were asked to express their hopes for what a great remote learning experience would look like this coming semester, their advice for faculty was organized around the following ten themes:

1. Students said that receiving Canvas announcements (not more than once-a-week) really helped them stay on track with the material and course expectations.

2. When it comes to recorded lectures, students expressed that it really helps them when faculty chunk the videos down to 20 minute sections. They also expressed appreciation when assignment instructions were chunked out into a separate video, rather than being buried in the middle or at the end of a longer lecture video.

3. Students said that they really missed interacting with their peers right before and right after in-person classes. Many said they didn’t realize how much they counted on that interaction for their social well-being. They hoped that faculty would find ways to incorporate more opportunities for students to get together in virtual spaces, even if only for structured study sessions.

4. In the institution-wide surveys that went out, both students and faculty complained about the quality of online discussions, saying that they felt forced, inauthentic, and like busywork. To address these concerns, we partnered with Associate Professor Matthew LaPlante from Journalism—who has received rave reviews from his students for providing high-quality online discussions in his classes—to record a webinar about that very topic (see page 39).

5. Students explained that when their Canvas courses are built using the “Design Tools” modules, their experience with the course is a lot more positive. Faculty who are unfamiliar with these tools that help organize their Canvas-based course content can reach out to instructional designers at CIDI to learn more.

6. Students spoke about their appreciation for faculty who set clear expectations for how assignments are to be completed. Many mentioned how thankful they are when faculty use clearly written assignment rubrics, an insight discussed in greater detail on page 16 of this report.

7. Students repeatedly mentioned how appreciative they were when faculty used canvas-based course content to learn more.

8. Recognizing the negative impacts that remote learning can have on student well-being, many faculty offered their students advice on how to set up an effective remote learning space, free from distractions and well-stocked with snacks. Students appreciated when faculty connected about the global crisis in informal ways, such as by sending a minute or two introducing their cat or showing the nice view out their window.

9. One student remarked that remote learning “feels like a heavier load, because you’re alone—and it really is a lot more work!” Students in all focus groups emphasized how appreciative they were of faculty who understood how to appropriately balance the student workload, including by eliminating busywork where possible.

10. Finally, students mentioned that they would have liked more opportunities to connect with their faculty members, despite the limitations of remote learning. One idea that seemed popular with both students and faculty was the idea of required mini-meetings—like virtual office hours, but a lot more focused and brief.

Overall, students expressed their awareness that a great remote learning experience is not just a checklist for students to follow.
TRADITIONALLY, A WELL-STOCKED UNIVERSITY LIBRARY has served as a hub for students’ academic lives. Whether hitting the books with a study group or doing research in the stacks, students often spend hours benefitting from the beautiful natural lighting offered by the Merrill-Cazier Library. Numerous online and remotely accessible resources, like ebooks and “chat with a librarian,” are also a key aspect to the library’s offerings.

With the digital transformation of the 21st century, the library has worked to supply digital resources, tangible materials, and spaces that accommodate modern learning. Overall, our recent evaluation revealed that regular use of library resources (both digital and tangible) are associated with an increase in persistence towards graduation, after controlling for baseline variability. As shown in the graph, you have to visit the library more than once a semester to see the effect, but we see an average of 2% increase in student persistence as a result of students using the library at least every other week (8+ times) during a semester.

At USU, degree complexity scores range between a low of 39 and a high of 379, with an average of 116. Programs with complexity scores in the hundreds tend to be more rigorous as a result of requiring heavily sequenced content, with advanced courses that require students to have a lot of foundational knowledge.

We see an important relationship between the complexity of a degree program and how likely students are to graduate in those programs. Looking at a multi-institution dataset, we see a 1% drop in graduation rates for every 17 points of curriculum complexity in the average major.

Recognizing the importance of reducing curriculum complexity, where appropriate, the Provost sponsored an institution-wide training on this work. Long-term goals are to reduce unnecessarily complex curriculum paths and ultimately increase student completion rates.

A NEW TREND IN THE WORLD OF HIGHER EDUCATION IS USING ANALYTICS TO EVALUATE how complex a degree program is for students to complete. Lots of prerequisites and long course sequences can clutter a program in a way that frustrates students’ progress to graduation, resulting in lower completion rates.
PREDOMINANTLY WHITE INSTITUTION (PWI) is a term used in higher education to indicate when white individuals make up at least 50% of an institution’s student population.

This term helps researchers communicate about the common challenges that PWIs face in serving students in an equitable manner, especially issues that emerge from having a racial majority.

The student body of Utah State University is composed of students of many races and ethnicities, but 82% of our student body is white. This creates both inherent challenges that we all must work to overcome as well as opportunities that we must live up to.

As recently shared by President Cockett in the midst of the national protests and unrest that followed the tragic death of George Floyd, “These are the times for our Aggie Family to join together and reflect about our commitment to USU’s Principles of Community - our institutional Aggie pledge to diversity, human dignity and social responsibility.”

NEW INSIGHTS...

As the use of technology has expanded in higher education, we are able to benefit from more consistent metrics about the way we serve our students. For example, prior to 2017, the way academic advisors tracked appointments with students varied at USU from college to college and from campus to campus. As analytics for advisor appointment tracking became available, a disturbing pattern emerged in the data that revealed a previously unseen equity gap:

In any given semester, roughly 40% of all USU students meet with an academic advisor. However, only 27% of racially diverse students avail themselves of the same service, despite evidence that advising positively impacts students from all backgrounds.

WHY MIGHT THIS BE HAPPENING?

Decades of research have shown that being a student of color at a PWI can be challenging. Not all racially diverse students feel as welcome to rely on the support of advisors who may not look like them and so who may not completely understand all of the issues they are facing as a college student.

For example, all students face what has been called situation-dependent struggles—when a problem arises that is the result of just being a college student. Almost any advisor or mentor is well-positioned to offer students advice about resolving situation-dependent struggles. However, students of color and other historically/contemporaneously marginalized student populations often also face identity-dependent struggles. These concerns are wrapped up in systemic barriers related to their race, ethnicity, first language, sexual identity, and more (Molen, 2020).

Oftentimes, identity-dependent struggles are not obvious to less or non-marginalized professionals, who may have never experienced personal discrimination or the related consequences. This lack of awareness could mean that advisors or mentors do not ask questions about identity-dependent struggles when they are working with marginalized students, which likely prevents these students from getting support that acknowledges the systemic barriers they encounter. Identity-dependent struggles often become mixed with situation-dependent struggles, making the conversation and support that is needed by diverse students even more complex.

Students of color at USU have repeatedly expressed how appreciative they are to have members of the staff to rely on who have experienced the same identity-dependent struggles these students face on a daily basis. Only 26% of USU employees identify as individuals of color. A lack of access to these professionals is not an insurmountable barrier to increasing the services provided to racially diverse students, but it is an important element of the challenges we face as a PWI.

WHAT ARE WE DOING TO IMPROVE THE SITUATION IN ADVISING?

With the benefit of these newly available analytics, the University Advising office recently partnered with the Inclusion Center to provide academic advisors across campus with expanded training specific to issues faced by racially diverse students. Topics included implicit bias, anti-racism, relationship building, and fostering trust.

INSIGHTS FOR UNIVERSITY STAFF

13. ON-TIME REGISTRATION MATTERS
14. WHY STUDENTS WAIT TO REGISTER
15. DEGREEWORKS
16. REPEATING A COURSE
ON-TIME REGISTRATION MATTERS

IN JULY 2017, NEW ANALYTICS REVEALED that students who wait to register for courses are at much greater risk for not persisting towards graduation. Students who register within the first weeks of registration opening tend to fare much better. Armed with that insight, the enrollment management team began a campaign to encourage on-time registration.

We saw a dramatic increase in on-time registrations for Spring 2018, with a 16% increase in participation during the first week (higher than ever before). On-time registration helps students commit to their studies, gives them a better selection of courses, and makes them plan ahead. They also have the added benefit of partnering with an academic advisor to make that plan happen.

ON-TIME REGISTRATION MATTERS

Students who register within the first weeks of registration opening tend to fare much better. Armed with that insight, the enrollment management team began a campaign to encourage on-time registration.

Each summer, the Office of Student Retention and Completion employs a student team of Outreach Specialists to communicate with other students about their needs, answer questions, and learn more from students about what can help them be successful.

These Outreach Specialists ask students about barriers they face to registering on time. The three identified insights are incredibly valuable and all are easy to address.

First, university staff need to consistently remind students of registration dates and the importance of on-time registration. Students who miss the deadline are likely trending toward less student engagement in academics and campus life. Procrastination and overlooking registration dates are early-warning signals that a student is at risk of attrition. Timely outreach to reinvigorate their goals is a useful strategy to support student persistence.

Second, since academic advising is one of the most important services students can participate in, university staff need to highlight its value.

Third, since many students don’t know that tuition is not due at the time of registration, staff can encourage students to register now and pay later. Students can then be referred to USU’s new Student Money Management Center to learn budgeting principles, as well as to the Financial Aid and Scholarship offices for strategies to help them finance their education.

This chart shows trend lines for the percentage of the student body that has registered during each day of the registration cycle. In 2018 and 2019, the trend lines shifted to much earlier enrollment, showing that our work to help students register on-time has paid off.

REASON NO. 1
I DIDN’T KNOW THE REGISTRATION DATES AND/OR PROCRASTINATED.

REASON NO. 2
I HAVEN’T YET MET WITH MY ACADEMIC ADVISOR.

REASON NO. 3
I AM UNCERTAIN ABOUT FUNDING MY EDUCATION AND WANTED TO WAIT.
WHILE ALL STUDENTS BENEFIT FROM HAVING A DEGREEWORKS PLAN IN PLACE, the degree planning process is particularly valuable for first-generation college students.

Each semester, we use an analysis approach called Prediction-based Propensity Score Matching (PPSM; see page 40) to estimate the impact of specific resources on students’ likelihood to remain enrolled.

When we examined the impact of degree planning on first-generation students, we found a unique pattern in the data. Rather than a DegreeWorks plan increasing their persistence rates, we learned that not having a DegreeWorks plan in place was leading to a decreased persistence rate. In other words, having a DegreeWorks plan provides first-generation students with a clear strategy/path for their studies that helps keep them engaged. Without this resource, there is a 3.95% drop in their likelihood to persist toward graduation, simply because they do not have a plan in place.

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE REGISTRAR’S OFFICE, the Center for Student Analytics recently conducted an interesting analysis of which courses students have to repeat after earning unsatisfactory grades.

While our students have had to repeat a course for a second time roughly 20,000 times over the past three years, that number dramatically reduces for the students who have to take a course for a third time. The overall count of third attempts since Spring 2017 is 2,336, which works out to roughly 259 each term (if you count summers). Interestingly, students taking a course for a third time is concentrated in only 22 courses across campus, as shown in the table.

Because repeating a course more than once can create significant obstacles to successful completion of a program, we strongly encourage students to meet with their advisors should they find themselves needing to take a course more than two times.
INSIGHTS FOR PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS AND PARENTS

17. REASONS STUDENTS TAKE A BREAK
18. THE SNAC
19. CHANGING YOUR MAJOR
20. THE AGGIE PASSPORT EXPERIENCE
17 REASONS STUDENTS TAKE A BREAK

Unplanned Leaves of Absence
Reasons Cited

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>18.36%</td>
<td>Transfer</td>
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<td>Other</td>
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<td>Medical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>Work/Employment</td>
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<tr>
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<td>3.64%</td>
<td>Delinquent Courses Not Approved</td>
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<td>1.25%</td>
<td>Social</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.13%</td>
<td>Exhilarating Circumstances</td>
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<td>Personal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.15%</td>
<td>Lack of Housing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

EACH YEAR, WE HAVE THOUSANDS OF STUDENTS TAKE A LEAVE OF ABSENCE (LOA). Some LOAs are planned ahead, like for serving a religious mission or in the military, or taking a humanitarian service trip.

However, there are many unplanned reasons that students leave, such as a medical crisis or academic difficulties.

We want parents and prospective students to know about these reasons because many of these LOAs are avoidable through preventative planning. For example, financial distress is the most common reason for students taking unplanned LOAs. In Fall 2019, this accounted for a full 22% of students taking an unplanned LOA—or 177 students! As a result, USU has expanded retention scholarships to help students remain enrolled when they would otherwise leave.

We want students and their families to know we have many resources, such as the new Student Money Management Center, to help them plan ahead and avoid these departures from school.

Often, unplanned breaks come with significant opportunity costs, not in the least because roughly only 30% of those who leave for unplanned reasons return within six years.

18 THE STUDENT NUTRITION ACCESS CENTER (SNAC)

NATIONAL STUDIES HAVE FOUND THAT AS MUCH AS A THIRD OF COLLEGE STUDENT POPULATIONS EXPERIENCE FOOD INSECURITY, hunger, and even homelessness. Realizing these serious challenges faced by everyday students, the Val R. Christensen Service Center has for years offered students a well-stocked food pantry to help fill this gap, called the SNAC (Student Nutrition Access Center).

As with our evaluation of other student services on campus, we recently partnered with the SNAC to determine if use of their services was associated with an increase in student persistence. Nicely, we found a significant increase in student persistence during terms they used the food services provided by the SNAC. As you can see in the chart, these effects were pronounced for students who have completed more terms at USU, which indicates that the SNAC helps students closer to graduation remain enrolled when food insecurity may have otherwise caused them to leave their studies.

For reasons that are unclear, the SNAC has a greater positive impact on students who have completed more terms at the institution.
19 CHANGING YOUR MAJOR

However, there are some important indicators that a student may need to consider changing their major in order to have a greater likelihood of graduating.

Specifically, we know from our analytics and from other research in higher education that consistently earning lower-than-average grades in a program can be an indication of a lack of interest in the selected major, rather than a lack of academic capacity.

In fact, including those students who started at USU with a declared major (not in the exploratory program), we see a meaningful association between staying in the same major with a GPA below 3.0 and a decreased likelihood to persist towards graduation. In contrast, students with a GPA below 3.0 who have changed their major at least once are significantly more likely to persist towards graduation. While we do not encourage students to change their major often or without consulting their academic advisor, we know that lower grades can be a sign that a major-change conversation with an advisor may be advantageous.

STUDENTS OFTEN ENTER UNIVERSITY WITH THE IDEA that declaring a major is so important that it can never be changed.

EACH YEAR, USU OFFERS INCOMING STUDENTS A VARIETY OF OPPORTUNITIES TO ENGAGE with their peers in social, co-curricular, and extra-curricular events.

For those who choose to participate, the Aggie Passport Experience incentivizes this participation by keeping a count of when students use their ID cards to “swipe in” at events across campus during the first few weeks of the Fall semester.

On average, students swipe in at about three of these events, but students who can attend at least 10 events get $20 added to their Aggie Express meal card, which can be used at various dining locations around campus.

Interestingly, we have found that attending at least three Aggie Passport sponsored events results in a 6.0% increase in student persistence. This is equivalent to roughly 34 students persisting to the next semester who were otherwise expected to leave USU after their first semester.
REMOTE TEACHING & LEARNING ANALYTICS WEB SERIES

WITH THE WIDESPREAD MOVE TO REMOTE TEACHING, the Center for Student Analytics partnered with the Office of Empowering Teaching Excellence to offer a virtual webinar series grounded in learning analytics.

Using the latest analysis techniques in combination with the learning sciences, the following sessions were designed to help faculty optimize their courses for remote delivery moving into the following year.

SESSION 1
LOW-EFFORT, HIGH IMPACT TEACHING STRATEGIES FOR REMOTE-BASED LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION
How are university students experiencing the move to remote learning? And what impressions do they have about their future in higher education? Students shared a number of valuable insights that align with research-based best practices that we believe will help faculty make the most of the recent nationwide move to remote-based teaching.

SESSION 2
POSITIVE FEEDBACK IN REMOTE TEACHING AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS
Feedback for students is as important as ever, with face-to-face interactions temporarily being absent from the education experience. Using analytics and machine learning techniques, we’ve developed valuable insights as to what effects feedback and its tonality has on students.

SESSION 3
RIGOR & RELIEF IN REMOTE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS
How can we provide manageable rigor for my students in remote-based learning environments?
During a series of focus groups in late March, students shared a number of valuable insights that align with research-based best practices that we believe will help faculty make the most of the recent nationwide move to remote-based teaching.

SESSION 4
PROMPTNESS IN GRADING
In the education experience, students are eager to receive feedback and information about how they are performing. In this session we discuss how impactful prompt grading practices can be for a student in their education experience, as well as additional levels of detail used to paint the grading picture.

SESSION 5
LEVERAGING INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES TO OPTIMIZE REMOTE TEACHING
What professionals at the institution can faculty rely on to enhance their remote teaching? This is a question addressed by Travis N. Thurston, PhD in this session about services that faculty can rely on to help make their remote teaching experience exceptional.

SESSION 6
STRUCTURE FOR SUCCESS: BUILDING MEANINGFUL ONLINE DISCUSSIONS WITH THE PIONEER METHOD
Students and faculty alike consistently bemoan the quality of online discussions. In this sixth installment of the “Remote Teaching and Learning Analytics Web Series,” Matthew LaPlante introduces a new approach to online discussions that scaffold higher engagement and quality student contributions.

SESSION 7
USING RUBRICS TO OPTIMIZE THE GRADING EXPERIENCE
Want to save time grading student work using a method that also improves student performance? In this webinar, the value of using grading rubrics is explored and newly available analytics reveal the time savings that grading rubrics can produce for faculty.

Access all webinars and additional content at: https://www.usu.edu/ais/analytics/remotelearning

Prepared by The Center For Student Analytics
METHODS

FACTOR IDENTIFICATION & RISK MODELS
In order to determine which measurable student variables are associated with students’ likelihood to remain enrolled and working towards graduation, the Center for Student Analytics incorporates data from the Student Information System (Banner), the Learning Management System (Canvas), and a system that stores student attendance counts for many of our co-curricular and extra-curricular events like football games (Blackboard Transact). Hundreds of variables are leveraged in sophisticated prediction models to forecast how likely our students are to remain enrolled from term to term. As of the creation of this report, these models accurately predict 85.6% of the student outcomes being forecast.

As a side product of making these predictions and checking their accuracy each semester, we discover variables that have a higher association with student well-being and variables that are less associated with the outcomes the university community cares about. By sifting through this information, we uncover an increasingly clear picture of those experiences that closely align with student success and well-being. The bulk of the Student Insights Report is made possible through this risk model and the associated student variables it highlights as being critical to student success.

PPSM
Software called Illume Impact runs a Prediction-based Propensity Score Match (PPSM) between co-curricular participants and non-participants to determine how program participation associates with student retention. Successful programs show a certain percentage “lift” in participants’ persistence rates from term-to-term, the basis for many of the insights provided in this report. USU contracts with a third-party analytics vendor, Civitas Learning, which hosts this software to provide us with the ability to analyze the impact of student participation in various co-curricular services and programs.

QUALITATIVE SURVEYS
Some of the insights provided in this report were created using information collected through qualitative surveys. Occasionally, USU will conduct target-ed student surveys that solicit feedback regarding students’ satisfaction with the university experience. Whenever these data are available, the Center for Student Analytics relies on this expanded view to convey more comprehensive descriptions of the overall student experience.

CANVAS DATA
A critical resource for developing greater understanding of the student experience is learning activity data collected in a Learning Management System (LMS). From years of exploring analytics insights provided to us by Canvas, we have learned that the time and attention faculty devote to creating high-quality digital learning environments for their students really matters. Summary analytics available in every Canvas course help faculty to see how and when individual students are engaging with the digital course content. This online interaction data helps us to understand how the virtual learning environment each faculty member curates can dramatically shape the academic outcomes students are empowered to achieve.

THE STATE OF HIGHER EDUCATION
As with any research enterprise, an important element of working with any data is understanding the context of the data that informs the analysis process. The Student Insights Report synthesizes insights we have gained from USU student data with insights gleaned from student development research literature across the globe. A complete picture of the well-being of our institution is not possible without thoughtful consideration of how our institution performs in comparison to the larger community of higher education. For more insights about how this report aligns with national trends, please reach out to any of our team members for a more in-depth conversation.
Utah State University Student Association (USUSA) is having a successful year despite the irregularities of COVID-19. The entire month of October was centered around a re-imagined HOWL with weekly drive-in movies, a drive through spook alley, a comedy and stunt show, and a scavenger hunt. Additionally, October brought our annual Mr. USU event. Our Academic Senate and our Executive Council both passed legislation that allow them to meet via Zoom, should the need arise, which will allow for student initiatives to continue in-person or via technology. Student Body President Sami Ahmed was elected to serve as President of the Utah Student Association (USA), and former Vice President and current Administrative Assistant Dexton Lake is serving as USA’s Chief of Staff. They, along with the other student body presidents of Utah higher education institutions, are working on a student fee transparency initiative that will help Utah students understand better how their institutions recognize and utilize student fees.

Our student fee board kicked off in October. Our student officers are now acquainted with those administrators over student fees and are having discussions on how to minimize the impact of fees on students and the future of fees at USU. Several college weeks have happened including a very successful College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences Week, Business Week, and Science Week. Another successful two weeks were spent by our Government Relationship Council (GRC) encouraging students to vote in the 2020 Election by providing resources to help
them register. Upcoming, we have the College of Education and Human Services Week and several football games. We are also beginning election preparation and several other college and themed weeks that will take place in the Spring Semester.
Policy 404: Faculty Appointments

404.1 APPOINTMENT

An appointment is a contractual agreement between a faculty member and the university. The terms and conditions of the appointment are described in this manual, the faculty member’s role statement (policies 405.6.1 and 11.1), and salary notification and benefits forms. As an integral part of the appointment, faculty shall be entitled to the full range of benefits and privileges for which they are eligible.

1.1 Policies Respecting Appointments

The university shall take sufficient time to seek, and then to investigate thoroughly, candidates for appointment to assure that only highly qualified personnel are employed, and shall not discriminate against any candidate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, age, veteran status, marital or parental status, or the presence of any sensory, physical or mental disability or handicap.

The university shall hire as faculty members only candidates who are committed to carrying out the mission of the university.

Faculty positions and administrative positions to be filled by faculty members, when external searches are being conducted, shall be advertised in media most likely to reach qualified persons who may have an interest, including those media that will encourage under represented applicants. In addition to candidate-initiated applications, faculty will be invited to submit nominations; and the search and screening committee will be obligated to identify qualified candidates by encouraging nominations and aggressively pursuing promising nominees.

1.2 Professional Services

Faculty members shall be employed and their professional services and compensation shall be determined in accordance with the following policies. Professional services are, for example,
teaching, research, extension, library, professional career and technical education, and related and supporting services, and are described in the role statement.

(1) The university has a right to the full-time professional services of each faculty member as described in the role statement to the extent prescribed by his or her appointment.

(2) The appointments of tenured faculty members shall be automatically renewed annually. Notice in writing of intent to dismiss a tenured faculty member shall be in accordance with policy 407.2.1(5). Notice to terminate the employment of a tenured faculty member shall be in accordance with policies 406.2.3 and 4.4. Dismissal and termination are defined in policy 407.2.1(5).

(3) The appointments of tenure-eligible faculty members in the probationary period are automatically renewed annually unless they receive notice of non-renewal in accordance with policy 407.7 (in particular, 7.3). Notice in writing of intent to dismiss a tenure-eligible faculty member shall be in accordance with policy 407.2.1(5). Notice to terminate the employment of a tenure-eligible faculty member shall be in accordance with policies 406.2.3 and 4.4. Dismissal and termination are defined in policy 407.2.1(5).

(4) Term appointments for faculty members are automatically renewed annually, based on performance or funding, unless the faculty members are given notice of non-renewal in accordance with policy 407.7 (in particular, 7.3). Notice in writing to dismiss a faculty member with a term appointment shall be in accordance with policy 407.2.1(5). Notice to terminate the employment of a faculty member with a term appointment shall be in accordance with policies 406.2.3 and 4.4. Dismissal and termination are defined in policy 407.2.1(5).

(5) Special appointments for faculty members are renewed at the discretion of the academic unit in which the appointment is held. Special appointments may expire without notice of nonrenewal.

(6) Decisions to resign shall be submitted in writing by the faculty member as soon as possible, but not later than three months prior to the effective date of resignation. The notice shall be submitted to the department head or supervisor; that administrator shall advise the appropriate academic dean, chancellor, or vice president for extension and agriculture, or regional statewide campus dean, of the decision. The appropriate academic dean, chancellor, or vice president for extension and agriculture shall advise the provost who, in turn, shall advise the president. A
faculty member's resignation terminates all rights and privileges, such as rank and tenure, which he or she enjoyed as a faculty member.

(7) A faculty member's professional service to the university shall be covered by appointment compensation. This shall not, however, prevent the university from employing faculty members for temporary assignments on supplemental appointments with additional salary covering professional services beyond a standard load. Commitment for such extra service must have the specific approval of the appropriate department head or supervisor, academic dean, chancellor, vice president for extension and agriculture, or regional statewide campus dean, and the specific approval of the provost and the president. Supplemental appointments shall not adversely affect the responsibilities described in the role statement under the regular appointment.

(8) An initial role statement and any subsequent revisions to the role statement shall be prepared in accordance with policies 405.6.1 and 11.1.

(9) The merit salary increase of individual faculty members shall be arrived at following an annual appraisal of performance by the appropriate administrators, including the department head or supervisor, academic dean, chancellor, vice president for extension and agriculture, or regional statewide campus dean. Consideration shall be given to the quality of the entire range of professional services as defined in the faculty member's role statement.

1.3 Minimum Educational Requirements for Tenured and Tenure-Eligible Appointments

The minimum educational requirements for tenured and tenure-eligible faculty can be found in policy 401.3.1 through 401.3.5.

1.4 Graduate Degrees from the University

Except under unusual circumstances, it is the policy of the university not to grant graduate degrees to its own faculty members, where the degree satisfies a prerequisite for appointment or advancement in rank. Requests for exceptions must be individually considered and approved by the provost based on appropriate recommendations.
404.2 TERM OF APPOINTMENT; DEFINITION OF ACADEMIC YEAR

In the appointment of faculty members, two types of terms will be used: (1) an appointment on an academic year basis and (2) an appointment on a fiscal year basis.

Academic year appointees receive holidays and sick leave; however, they do not earn annual leave. Faculty on academic year appointments may be absent from campus between terms after they have fulfilled the professional responsibilities of their assignments; they may earn up to three additional months of salary for teaching, research or administrative assignments during the summer that precedes the academic year.

An academic year does not exceed 274 consecutive calendar days commencing in August. Within this framework in any given year the specific dates for the academic year are approved by the Executive Committee.

Fiscal year appointments are made for teaching, research, extension, library, or administrative assignments, or for a combination of such assignments. Fiscal year appointees receive holidays and earn annual and sick leave.

404.3 APPOINTMENT PROCEDURES, TENURED OR TENURE-ELIGIBLE FACULTY AND FACULTY WITH TERM APPOINTMENTS

The department head or supervisor and the search and screening committee are responsible to ensure that all university regulations pertaining to affirmative action and equal opportunity are adhered to throughout the appointment process.
The faculty of departments and other academic units, in conjunction with the department head or supervisor, shall determine the need for and general parameters of faculty appointments congruent with its mission and role.

3.2
The department head or supervisor, shall obtain authorization from the provost, through the appropriate academic dean, chancellor, vice president for extension and agriculture, or regional statewide campus dean to establish or fill any appointment on the academic unit's faculty.

3.3
The department head or supervisor shall appoint a search and screening committee of not less than five members. A majority, and, where possible five members, must be appointed from among the faculty of the department or the Library if the search occurs there. In searches for faculty who will reside at campuses other than Logan, the search and screening committee must include faculty representation from the campus where the new faculty member will reside. See policies 401.4.3(4) and 5.3(2) for limitations on appointments of faculty to serve on search and screening committees.

3.4
In consultation with the department head or supervisor, and the faculty of the academic unit and, where appropriate, the academic dean, chancellor, vice president for extension and agriculture, or the regional statewide campus dean, the search and screening committee shall prepare the job description and advertising in accord with university regulations.

3.5
The search and screening committee shall screen applicants according to the job description and identify a suitable pool of candidates to be further considered by the faculty and pertinent administrators. Where feasible, at least three candidates shall be identified.

3.6
Candidates shall be invited to come to the Logan campus and, when appropriate, to the campus location where they will reside, at university expense to be interviewed by the academic unit’s faculty and pertinent administrators, to give lectures, and/or to participate in departmental seminars and other appropriate campus activities in order that the candidates shall become better known and evaluated, and to assure that they become acquainted with the institution and the locality of their prospective work and domicile.

In an effort to provide additional voices in the hiring process, improve transparency, and provide unique perspectives on prospective faculty, the department head or supervisor, associate vice president will establish a mechanism to encourage the involvement of involve and obtain feedback from students regarding in the evaluation process of any faculty candidates. This applies to candidates interviewed for a position that includes teaching as part of the role statement at-brought to the Logan or regional statewide campuses to interview for a position that includes teaching as part of the role statement. For practical reasons, County Extension faculty searches are excluded from this requirement. Examples of student participation in the search and screening procedures could include, but are not limited to, the following: including a student as a non-voting member of the search and screening committee; establishing a student screening committee that acts independently from the faculty screening committee and has dedicated time to interview the candidate; or inviting students to participate in research or teaching seminars or group question and answer sessions with the candidates. Student participation could also include asynchronous participation (e.g., reviewing recordings of research or teaching presentations). Instructions for how students shall provide feedback will be provided to students when the position is initially advertised and students will be given advance notice when candidates are invited to campus to interview or before the time when the schedule is developed for other groups with whom the candidates will meet. This student feedback shall be reviewed by the search committee. For practical reasons, County Extension faculty searches are excluded from this requirement.
When the investigation of candidates has been completed, the search and screening committee shall solicit recommendations from faculty and pertinent administrators. Utilizing these recommendations and their own knowledge of the candidates, the search and screening committee members shall present its list of acceptable candidates and all supporting information to the department head or supervisor, ranked in order of preference.

3.8

The department head or supervisor shall forward a recommendation from the list of acceptable candidates recommended by the search and screening committee, including all supporting information, to the academic dean and, where appropriate, the chancellor, or vice president for extension and agriculture.

3.9

The academic dean and, where appropriate, the chancellor, or vice president for extension and agriculture, shall forward to the provost the academic unit’s recommendation together with all pertinent and supportive data from the faculty and the department head or supervisor. If the provost is in agreement, the provost, as the president’s designee, shall approve the appointment of the candidate.

3.10

Tentative offers can be made to a prospective appointee only with the approval of the provost.

4.1 Adjunct and Visiting Ranks and Titles

The department head or supervisor is responsible to ensure that all university regulations pertaining to affirmative action and equal opportunity are adhered to throughout the appointment process.
Before appointing faculty in the adjunct and visiting ranks, the department head or supervisor shall consult with the faculty and then make a recommendation to the academic dean and, where appropriate, the chancellor, vice president for extension and agriculture, or the regional statewide campus dean. In turn, the academic dean and, where appropriate, the chancellor, vice president for extension and agriculture, or the regional statewide campus dean shall make a recommendation to the provost. If the provost is in agreement, the provost, as the president's designee, shall approve the appointment of the candidate.

4.2 Temporary Ranks and Titles

(1) The faculty of departments and other academic units, in conjunction with the department head or supervisor shall determine the need for and general parameters of temporary faculty appointments congruent with its mission and role.

(2) The department head or supervisor shall obtain authorization from the provost through the appropriate academic dean, chancellor, vice president for extension and agriculture, or regional statewide campus dean to establish or fill a temporary appointment in an academic unit’s faculty.

(3) The department head or supervisor, together with the appropriate academic dean, chancellor, vice president for extension and agriculture, or regional statewide campus dean, shall prepare the job description and advertising in accord with university regulations.

(4) The department head or supervisor shall consult with the faculty and then make a recommendation to the appropriate academic dean, chancellor, vice president for extension and agriculture, or regional statewide campus dean. In turn, the academic dean, chancellor, vice president for extension and agriculture, or regional statewide campus dean shall make a recommendation to the provost. If the provost is in agreement, the provost, as the president's designee, shall approve the appointment of the candidate.

4.3 Emergency Appointments

Emergency appointments to the temporary ranks (policy 401.5) may be approved by the provost after consultation with the appropriate academic dean, chancellor, vice president for extension and agriculture, or regional statewide campus dean and the appropriate department head or supervisor without following the procedures in policy 404.3.
404.5 APPOINTMENT PROCEDURES: FACULTY WITH ADMINISTRATIVE DUTIES IN AN ACADEMIC UNIT

The academic dean, chancellor, vice president for extension and agriculture, or regional statewide campus dean and the search and screening committee are responsible to ensure that all university regulations pertaining to affirmative action and equal opportunity are adhered to throughout the appointment process.

5.1 External Search Procedures for Heads of Academic Units

The academic unit will make good faith efforts to acquire the resources to conduct an external search for faculty with administrative duties in the academic unit. Applications from qualified faculty of the university will be considered.

(1) The faculty of academic units, in conjunction with the academic dean, shall determine the need for and general parameters of faculty appointments with administrative duties in an academic unit congruent with its mission.

(2) The academic dean shall obtain authorization from the provost to establish or fill a faculty appointment with departmental administrative duties.

(3) The academic dean shall appoint a search and screening committee of not less than five members. A majority, and, where possible five members, must be appointed from among the faculty of the department or the Library if the search occurs there. See policies 401.4.3(4) and 5.3(2) for limitations on appointments of faculty to serve on search and screening committees.

(4) In consultation with the academic dean and the faculty of the academic unit, the search and screening committee shall prepare the job description and advertising in accordance with university regulations.

(5) The search and screening committee shall screen applicants according to the job description and identify a suitable pool of candidates to be further considered by the faculty and appropriate administrators. Where feasible, at least three candidates shall be identified.
(6) Candidates shall be invited to come to the Logan and, when appropriate, to the campus location where they will reside, at university expense to be interviewed by the academic unit's faculty and pertinent administrators, to give lectures, and/or to participate in departmental seminars and other appropriate campus activities in order that the candidates shall become better known and evaluated, and to assure that they become acquainted with the institution and the locality of their prospective work and domicile.

(7) When the investigation of candidates has been completed, the search and screening committee shall solicit recommendations from faculty and pertinent administrators. Utilizing these recommendations and their own knowledge of the candidates, the search and screening committee members shall present a list of acceptable candidates and all supporting information to the academic dean listed in alphabetical order without any indication of ranking or preference, unless otherwise mutually agreed between the academic dean and the search and screening committee.

(8) The academic dean shall forward a recommendation from the list of acceptable candidates recommended by the search and screening committee, including all supporting information, to the provost.

(9) If the provost is in agreement, the provost, as the president's designee, shall approve the appointment of the candidate.

(10) Tentative offers can be made to a prospective appointee only with the approval of the provost.

(11) The tenure of faculty with administrative duties is held in the appointing academic unit.

5.2 Internal Search Procedures for Heads of Academic Units

The procedures for an internal search are identical to the procedures for an external search, with the following differences:

(1) The authorization in policy 404.5.1(2) shall be to establish or fill a faculty appointment with administrative duties in a department or other academic unit from among the department's or other academic unit's faculty.
(2) The job description shall not be advertised, but shall be circulated internally to the academic unit’s faculty. The job description will include the requirement that the appointee be tenured in the department or other academic unit. Interested faculty will submit applications to the search and screening committee.

5.3 Appointment of Faculty with Assistant or Associate Departmental Administrative Duties in a Department or Other Academic Unit

Assistants or associates to these positions (for example, department heads) are appointments of the administrator in charge, subsequent to consultation with the faculty.

404.6 APPOINTMENT PROCEDURES: FACULTY WITH ADMINISTRATIVE DUTIES OUTSIDE AN ACADEMIC UNIT

The president, or designee, and the search and screening committee are responsible to ensure that all university regulations pertaining to affirmative action and equal opportunity are adhered to throughout the appointment process.

6.1 External Search Procedures

A good faith effort will be made to acquire the resources to conduct an external search for administrators who require faculty status. Applications from qualified faculty of the university will be considered.

(1) When a vacancy occurs the president shall appoint a representative search and screening committee and chair following consultations with the President of the Faculty Senate, administrators, appropriate faculty, and affected staff. The committee shall be structured to represent the interest of the faculty at large in conducting searches for chancellors, vice presidents and for the provost, and to represent an academic unit’s faculty when conducting searches for academic deans.
(2) As its first order of business, the search and screening committee shall refine the current
description of the position, and if necessary, prepare an appropriate description. The
announcement shall be reviewed with the provost and president before its publication. The
position announcement shall be published by the university.

(3) Through the steps listed below, the committee shall reduce the list of applicants to three or
more acceptable finalists, where feasible, who can be recommended to the president.

(a) The committee shall evaluate all applications using the position announcement as the initial
criterion for eliminating unqualified applicants. (b) The committee shall reduce the number of
qualified applicants to manageable proportions. (c) Each committee member shall evaluate the
remaining applications and should participate in deliberation of their relative merits. Any
conclusions the committee may arrive at concerning the relative merits of the finalists should not
be withheld from the president.

(4) When the final list of candidates has been reviewed with the president, the names of the
finalists will be announced to the university community along with a series of interview dates
when the candidates will be able to visit the campus for interaction with concerned faculty and
staff.

(5) The president shall evaluate input from the committee, administrators, faculty, and staff in
making a selection from the list of final candidates recommended by the committee. The
committee shall be informed of the president's selection.

(6) The president shall recommend to the Board of Trustees the appointment of the selected
candidate.

(7) In cases where faculty status is to be sought for an individual who functions primarily as an
administrator, the faculty in the academic department or academic unit in which the faculty
status is sought shall decide whether and at what level to grant such status within the provisions
of this policy (policy 405).

(8) Administrative appointments that require faculty status are subject to the approval of the
Board of Trustees.

(9) When applicants for administrative appointments that require faculty status seek tenure, any
such tenure must be held within an academic department or other academic unit.
6.2 Internal Search Procedures

While every effort will be made to conduct external searches for appointments at this level of administration, this policy is included for those occasions when an internal search is considered appropriate.

The procedures for an internal search are identical to the procedures for an external search, with the following differences:

(1) At the time the president appoints a representative search and screening committee, the president shall communicate the reasons that an internal search is being conducted.

(2) The position shall be advertised in a manner most likely to reach qualified persons who may have an interest in such a position.
Clean version:

In an effort to provide additional voices in the hiring process, improve transparency, and provide unique perspectives on prospective faculty, the department head or associate vice president will establish a mechanism to involve students in the evaluation of faculty candidates. This applies to candidates interviewed for a position that includes teaching as part of the role statement at the Logan or statewide campuses. Instructions for how students shall provide feedback will be provided to students at or before the time when the schedule is developed for other groups with whom the candidates will meet. This student feedback shall be reviewed by the search committee.