Delaware State University

“REIMAGINED AND TRANSFORMED”

SELF-STUDY REPORT

2012 – 2022

Presented to the
Middle States Commission on Higher Education
For
Reaffirmation of Accreditation
January 31, 2022

Dr. Tony Allen
President
Table of Contents

Executive Summary--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------- 1
Chapter 1: Institutional Profile -------------------------------------------------------------------------- 3
Chapter 2: Self-study Design and Execution -------------------------------------------------------- 12
Chapter 3: Standard I: Mission and Goals--------------------------------------------------------------- 18
  Overview
  Description
  Analysis
  Continuous Improvement and Innovation

Chapter 4: Standard II: Ethics and Integrity------------------------------------------------------------ 32
  Overview
  Description
  Analysis
  Continuous Improvement

Chapter 5: Standard III: Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience ------------------ 39
  Overview
  Description
  Analysis
  Continuous Improvement

Chapter 6: Standard IV: Support of the Student Experience--------------------------------------------- 56
  Overview
  Description
  Analysis
  Continuous Improvement

Chapter 7: Standard V: Educational Effectiveness Assessment------------------------------------------ 76
  Overview
  Description
  Analysis
  Continuous Improvement

Chapter 8: Standard VI: Planning, Resources and Institutional Improvement ------------------- 92
  Overview
  Description
  Analysis
  Continuous Improvement

Chapter 9: Standard VII: Governance, Leadership, and Administration -------------------------- 114
  Overview
  Description
  Analysis
  Continuous Improvement

Conclusion----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------- 128
Delaware State University  
2022 Self-study Report for Reaffirmation of Accreditation

Delaware State University Reimagined and Transformed

Executive Summary

Delaware State University aspires to be the most diverse, contemporary, Historically Black institution of higher education in the country and has undergone numerous transformations in its 131-year history. This Self-study had provided an opportunity to reflect upon the University’s accomplishments and lessons learned over the last ten years. While leadership changes in the last five years have required the DSU community to be adaptable, the University’s focus never wavered from the goals of PRIDE 2020. This examination of Delaware State University is through the lens of the PRIDE 2020 strategic plan which began in 2012, just after our last self-study, and ended in 2020. PRIDE 2020 had six goals, create an exceptional learning environment, promote student success, increase research activities, expand our outreach, enhance our environmental sustainability, and institutional and operational effectiveness. The self-study looks at how, in carrying out the six PRIDE 2020 goals, the University meets the seven Middle States Standards of Accreditation.

The new strategic plan, REACH 2026, was developed concurrently with this self-study process and bases itself on the five Institutional Priorities identified as part of the self-study process. These institutional priorities, identified by a broad range of university constituents, include Academic Excellence, Student Success, Operational Effectiveness, Financial Planning, and Infrastructure.

There is congruence between the two strategic plans, with REACH 2026 serving as a refined extension of PRIDE 2020. REACH 2026 has four pillars, Academic Excellence and Student Success, Operational Effectiveness, Infrastructure Enhancements, and Financial Health. Both strategic plans focus on improving student retention and graduation rates, teaching excellence including expanding experiential learning opportunities, and career success. A commitment to continuous improvement guides all constituents in pursuit of these goals. While the University did witness improvements in retention, graduation, experiential learning, research activities, and job placement, not every PRIDE 2020 goal was met. REACH 2026 continues to prioritize these student success metrics with greater emphasis on measurement of the operational areas needed to bring these metrics to fruition. Whereas PRIDE 2020 wanted to increase research activities, REACH 2026 aspires to R1 status. To gain R1 status the institution must continue building a strong operational foundation while maintaining its forward momentum with student success and engagement to better prepare students for career success. This is evidenced by REACH 2026’s distinct pillars for operations, infrastructure, and finance and its emphasis on greater communication and collaboration across divisions.

Delaware State University has had many notable accomplishments during the last ten years. The University has risen to #10 for HBCUs (#3 Public HBCUs) on the US News & World Report annual rankings. The University is in the top 1% of all institutions for the social mobility index, a new metric that assesses Delaware State’s ability to support and graduate students from low-resource communities at the same or better rate than the general student population. DSU met its
enrollment goal a year early when fall 2019 enrollment exceeded 5,000. REACH 2026 is looking to grow enrollment to 10,000 by 2030. The Early College High School, established in 2014, is a pipeline for students to attend DSU. By the time they graduate they could have earned 60 college credits and may be eligible for the Inspire Scholarship from the State of Delaware to cover tuition at DSU.

With support from a Gates Foundation grant, the University restructured its advising model and instituted an Individual Development Plan (IDP) for every undergraduate student; eliminated remedial courses and restructured introductory courses to support student success and momentum; and established a Digital Initiative that provided all student with Apple iPads or MacBooks at the start of their freshmen year. Professional development for faculty has increased to support the Digital Initiative and effective teaching to strengthen student learning. The assessment process is expanding to include units outside of academics for a more holistic view of the University.

The University has successfully acquired Wesley College, providing much needed additional space for growth and a location in the heart of downtown Dover. The acquisition occurred during the COVID-19 global pandemic when many employees worked remotely, and classes were virtual, increasing reliance on our IT infrastructure. The University established a testing lab at our Kirkwood Location and partnered with Testing for America to develop comprehensive COVID testing protocols overseen by Risk Management and University Health Services. Capital One contributed an office building in Wilmington slated to be the new home of the graduate program. DSU’s endowment and annual giving reached record levels while the University has received increased State and grant funding.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the civil unrest over social justice issues have inevitably impacted the University. These two issues have had a profoundly negative impact on the community that Delaware State University serves. When the campus closed to lessen the spread of the virus, the University discovered that many students had housing and food insecurities and arrangements were made to safely address the concerns. Students and their families faced financial difficulties, so the COVID-19 Student Relief Fund was established to support the students. CARES Act funds were used to clear balances for graduating students providing some financial relief. At the same time the pandemic was surging, social justice issues surrounding the Black Lives Matter movement had the community on edge. The University helped staff and students address the increased need for mental health services and help everyone to find outlets for their increased anxiety and emotions. The walkway between the MLK Center and the Wellness and Recreation Center was named Black Lives Matter Boulevard to highlight this important issue.

This self-study has provided the opportunity to review the University’s strengths and unfulfilled goals under PRIDE 2020. REACH 2026 will guide the University into the future. DSU will continue to emphasize continuous improvement to support student success and academic excellence, while strengthening institutional foundations. Delaware State University will continue to reimagine what it means to be a diverse, contemporary, and unapologetic HBCU and will take the necessary steps to transform into what has been imagined. To paraphrase Napoleon Hill – Whatever Delaware State University can believe and conceive, it can achieve – and that is because, as President Tony Allen says, “IT ALL MATTERS!”
Chapter 1: Institutional Profile

History of the Institution

Delaware State University (DSU or Delaware State) is a public, comprehensive 1890 land-grant university established by the Delaware General Assembly on May 15, 1891. Created under the provisions of the 1890 Morrill Act (the Agricultural College Act of 1890 (26 Stat. 417, 7 U.S.C. § 321 et seq.), the State College for Colored Students made provision for African Americans in Delaware whose opportunities were limited by segregation. Granted $25,000 under the provisions of the Act, the State of Delaware used one-third of the allotment to fund the State College and acquired a 100-acre tract of land two miles north of Dover, including the historic Loockerman family manor house that became the main college building.

The College launched its mission of education and public service by establishing five courses of study titled Agricultural, Chemical, Classical, Engineering and Scientific. A Preparatory Department was established in 1894 for students unqualified to pursue a major course of study and a three-year teaching certificate was initiated in 1897. The normal course of study expanded to four years in 1911 and the primary courses of study changed the following year to Academic, Agricultural, Mechanic Arts, and Domestic Science. By 1917 the Preparatory Department was phased out, a Model Grade School was established, and a high school diploma was granted upon completion of a four-year course of study. A Junior College Division was added in 1923. Four-year curricula in the Arts and Sciences, Elementary Education, Home Economics, and Agriculture and Industrial Arts were established in 1932. The College earned accreditation by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education in 1945. The College lost its accreditation in 1949 but was re-accredited in 1957 and has maintained its accreditation ever since. In 1947 the Delaware State legislature approved a name change from the State College for Colored Students to Delaware State College. Reflecting continued expansion and growth, the state legislature approved another name change in 1993 to Delaware State University. The 2021 acquisition of Wesley College enables the University to expand into downtown Dover where the Wesley College of Health and Behavioral Sciences is now located at DSU Downtown.

From its modest beginnings, the University has grown to over 5,000 students and more than 200 faculty, 93% of whom have terminal degrees in their field. The previously self-contained campus has grown significantly from its original 100 acres to a greatly improved 360+-acre main campus, and the recently acquired Wesley College adds a 50-acre campus, just two miles away, in downtown Dover. The main campus is comprised of more than 50 buildings that facilitate teaching and learning including classrooms, laboratories, offices, a library, a science center, auditoriums, and lecture halls. Also included are five residence halls and two apartment complexes, a student center, administrative buildings, and a multitude of athletic facilities, including four athletic fields. The DSU Downtown campus consists of 23 buildings which include eight office/classroom/laboratory buildings, six dormitories, athletic facilities, and other buildings, including the Old Dover Library. Prior to the Wesley acquisition, Delaware State also owned the Schwartz Arts Center and Barros office building, located close to DSU Downtown, the former Wesley campus. The University has farm properties in Kenton and Smyrna. The Aviation Program maintains its fleet of planes and base of operations at the Delaware Air Park in Cheswold, Delaware. The University has additional locations in Wilmington and Georgetown, Delaware. It has instructional sites in Changchun and Ningbo, China, and three in Delaware at
Lake Forest High School, Smyrna High School, and Dover Air Force Base. The Wilmington/Kirkwood Highway site also houses the University’s Molecular Diagnostic Laboratory, opened in January 2021. In August 2021 Capital One donated its $4.7 million facility at the Wilmington waterfront to Delaware State. The new space will initially headquarter the University’s School for Graduate, Adult, and Extended Studies; a new partnership with the Teen Warehouse and its workforce development center; and an incubation hub for micro and small businesses with a particular focus on minority and women-owned companies.

**Delaware State University Student Profile and Academic Programming**

Cognizant of its heritage, the University strives to become one of the premier, contemporary, Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) serving a diverse student population. Currently, the University consists of five colleges:

- College of Agriculture, Science and Technology (CAST),
- College of Humanities, Education and Social Sciences (CHESS),
- College of Business (COB),
- Wesley College of Health and Behavioral Sciences (WCHBS), and
- School of Graduate, Adult and Extended Studies (SGAES).

Over the last half century, the University has grown in stature as a center for teaching, research, and public service. In 1968 enrollment surpassed 1,000 students for the first time, in the 1990s it reached 3,000, and as of the fall of 2021 more than 5,500 are enrolled at Delaware State University. The fall 2021 enrollment of 5,649 consists of 4,848 undergraduate students and 801 graduate students. Sixty-seven (67%) percent are female and 33% male. The breakdown of the student population remains consistent at 62% African American/Black, 11% White, 9% Hispanic, 9% Asian, and 5% of two or more races. Full-time students constitute 79% of the population. Forty-two percent (42%) are Pell Recipients and 31% are first-generation students.

Delaware State’s faculty are equally diverse. Of the 238 faculty members, as of fall 2021, 53% are female and 47% male. Approximately 39% of full-time faculty are African or African American, 39% are non-Hispanic Caucasian, 18% are Asian, and 4% are Hispanic.

Four associate’s, 47 baccalaureate, 21 master’s, and 6 doctoral degrees are offered through 17 academic departments. An Honors Program with an Honors Curriculum is offered as well. Instruction is delivered in classes with an average 16:1 student-to-faculty ratio. Online programs have grown in the last six years, offering undergraduate degrees in Accounting, General Management, Human Resource Management, Liberal Studies, Psychology, Public Health, and Social Work. Online master’s programs include Business Administration, Nursing, Public Administration, Social Work, and Sport Administration. Global connections include more than 20 formal international partnerships that facilitate student exchanges, research, and conference collaborations with institutions around the world. There are eight (8) accredited/approved programs listed in Table 1.1 below.
Table 1.1
Accredited Programs at Delaware State University

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accredited Programs</th>
<th>College</th>
<th>Accreditng Agency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>College of Business</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounting</td>
<td>College of Business (COB)</td>
<td>AACSB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Administration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitality Tourism Management</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MBA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupational Therapy</td>
<td>Wesley College of Health and Behavioral Sciences (WCHBS)</td>
<td>ACOTE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinated Program in Dietetics</td>
<td>College of Agriculture, Science and Technology (CAST)</td>
<td>ACEND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education including Physical Education</td>
<td>College of Humanities, Education and Social Sciences (CHESS)</td>
<td>CAEP SHAPE: CAEP SPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing</td>
<td>Wesley College of Health and Behavioral Sciences (WCHBS)</td>
<td>ACEN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Work</td>
<td>Wesley College of Health and Behavioral Sciences (WCHBS)</td>
<td>CSWE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law Studies</td>
<td>College of Humanities, Education and Social Sciences (CHESS)</td>
<td>ABA Approval only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitality and Tourism Management</td>
<td>College of Business (COB)</td>
<td>ACPHA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Enrollment by college, as of fall 2021, is displayed in Figure 1.1.

Fig. 1.1 Enrollment by college, fall 2021
While the student population has grown steadily over the last five years, the most significant growth can be found in the School of Graduate, Adult and Extended Studies, where enrollment has more than doubled since fall 2016. The strongest growth can be found in Educational Leadership, the Master of Public Administration, and Social Work. At the undergraduate level, significant growth can be seen in Psychology (113%), Biological Sciences (114%), Accounting (119%), Aviation (124%), Computer Science (150%), and Nursing (191%). In the College of Business, the Aviation program is one of the only aviation programs at an historically black college with its own fleet of planes. In 2019 the program received a $3.4 million-dollar grant from the Delaware Higher Education Economic Development Fund enabling the purchase of eleven new aircraft to update the fleet. Among the most popular undergraduate programs are Criminal Justice, Mass Communications, Biological Sciences, Nursing/Pre-Nursing, Psychology, Kinesiology, Management, Accounting, and Social Work.

The summer 2021 acquisition of Wesley College was buoyed by the fact that many of Wesley’s programs dovetailed neatly with those at Delaware State. Thus far Wesley’s acquisition has supported growth and expansion in Nursing, Accounting, Management, Biological Sciences, and Kinesiology. It also created an opportunity to add important new programs that support our mission. These include associate’s degrees in Biological Sciences, Psychology, and Liberal Studies, bachelor’s in Law Studies, Music Therapy, and International Studies, a Master of Arts in Teaching, and the Master of Occupational Therapy.

As the “State’s” university, DSU serves as a solutions provider for Delaware. It has the lowest in-state tuition and the most diverse faculty and student populations of all four-year institutions of higher education in the state. Despite the national challenge of shrinking college enrollments, especially among historically black colleges, Delaware State University has grown steadily, reaching its PRIDE 2020 goal of 5,000 students in the fall of 2019. This growth is displayed in Table 1.2.

Table 1.2
Delaware State University Enrollment Trends by College, fall 2016-2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enrollment Trends by College</th>
<th>Fall 2016</th>
<th>Fall 2017</th>
<th>Fall 2018</th>
<th>Fall 2019</th>
<th>Fall 2020</th>
<th>Fall 2021</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>4,265</td>
<td>4,346</td>
<td>4,494</td>
<td>4,601</td>
<td>4,419</td>
<td>4,848</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College of Agriculture, Science and Technology</td>
<td>746</td>
<td>779</td>
<td>841</td>
<td>883</td>
<td>860</td>
<td>875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College of Business</td>
<td>916</td>
<td>881</td>
<td>921</td>
<td>944</td>
<td>916</td>
<td>1,087</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wesley College of Health and Behavioral Sciences</td>
<td>1,021</td>
<td>1,026</td>
<td>1,070</td>
<td>1,098</td>
<td>1,194</td>
<td>1,354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College of Humanities, Education &amp; Social Sciences</td>
<td>1,181</td>
<td>1,182</td>
<td>1,185</td>
<td>1,192</td>
<td>1,098</td>
<td>1,103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No College Assigned</td>
<td>401</td>
<td>478</td>
<td>477</td>
<td>485</td>
<td>351</td>
<td>429</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>335</td>
<td>302</td>
<td>378</td>
<td>453</td>
<td>608</td>
<td>801</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>4,600</td>
<td>4,648</td>
<td>4,872</td>
<td>5,054</td>
<td>5,027</td>
<td>5,649</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Expansion of the graduate, international, and online programs through strategic recruitment and enrollment processes accounts for some of this growth. The Early College High School (ECHS), established in 2014 and currently located on DSU’s main campus, is the only charter school in Delaware that serves students from all three counties and provides free transportation. High school students can earn up to 60 college credits while enrolled at the ECHS and approximately 60% of its graduates enroll at DSU. The Delaware State legislature recently expanded the Inspire Scholarship awarded to students who graduate from Delaware high schools with a 2.75 GPA. The Scholarship now provides four years of full tuition for those maintaining a 2.75 GPA and completing ten hours of community service each semester. Since fall 2016 the number of Inspire recipients has experienced a 47% growth, from 475 to 788.

The COVID-19 pandemic had an immediate impact on the student presence on campus, as the majority of students did not return after spring break in March 2020. During the 2020-2021 academic year, with continued restricted access to the campus, 80% of courses were offered in a virtual format. There was a noteworthy drop in international students, from a high of 251 in fall 2017 to 128 in fall 2020. Travel restrictions created the predominant challenge for international students. Data for fall 2021 shows the numbers are on the rise, with 35% growth to 173 international students.

As an historically black land-grant institution, Delaware State University is committed to providing a high-quality learning experience for its students, particularly students from underserved communities that have had limited opportunities for higher education in the past. Enabling these students to develop and pursue their career goals is closely tied to DSU’s dedication to its land-grant responsibility toward outreach. Outreach in the local community, the state, the nation, and the world can be found through a multitude of projects, many of which support student learning and research. Examples include the Cooperative Extension program in the College of Agriculture, Science and Technology, the University Center for Economic Development and International Trade (UCEDIT), and the Delaware Center for Economic Development (DCED) in the College of Business. In summer 2020 Delaware State received a $20 million restriction-free donation from philanthropist MacKenzie Scott. These funds will support the Wesley acquisition, the University’s endowment, and the recently developed Global Institute for Equity, Inclusion and Civil Rights, an institute designed to build capacity toward an inclusive economy and includes the Center for Global Africa, the Center for Neighborhood Revitalization Research, the Center for Health Disparities, and the Trauma Institute.

The institution’s commitment to research endeavors has steadily increased, especially in the past ten years. Under the direction of the Provost, the Associate Vice President for Research and Sponsored Programs position was created to effectively manage the University’s research programs and to develop the research infrastructure. The University presently has a $23 million portfolio in competitive federal funding including $4.2 million for Capacity Building at 1890s Land-Grant Institutions. University research projects were awarded two U.S. patents for separate applied optics innovations. Delaware State University’s research portfolio puts it in the top third of all research institutions and 5th amongst HBCUs. Campus research centers include the Center for Integrated Biological and Environmental Research (CIBER), Delaware EPSCoR: The Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research, the Delaware IDeA Network of Biomedical Research Excellence (INBRE), and the DSU Hydrogen Storage Research Center. In
fall 2015 the Optical Science Center for Applied Research (OSCAR) was opened to house these research endeavors. Table 1.3 demonstrates this growth in research expenditures and the University’s ranking between 2012 and 2020.

Table 1.3
Delaware State University Research Expenditures and Research Ranking, 2012-2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiscal Year</th>
<th>Overall Research Expenditures (in millions)</th>
<th>Research Ranking Out of ~ 800 institutions surveyed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>$15.7</td>
<td>290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>$17.3</td>
<td>281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>$17.7</td>
<td>279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>$16.0</td>
<td>285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>$21.3</td>
<td>262</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>$20.8</td>
<td>266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>$21.4</td>
<td>261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>$23.0</td>
<td>265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>$23.8</td>
<td>261</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mission, Vision and Core Values

**Mission.** Delaware State University is a public, comprehensive, 1890 land-grant institution that offers access and opportunity to diverse populations from Delaware, the nation, and the world. Building on its heritage as a historically black college, the University purposefully integrates the highest standards of excellence in teaching, research, and service in its baccalaureate, master’s and doctoral programs. Its commitment to advance science, technology, liberal arts, and the professions produces capable and productive leaders who contribute to the sustainability and economic development of the global community.

**Vision.** As one of America’s most highly respected Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Delaware State University is renowned for a standard of academic excellence that prepares our graduates to become the first choice of employers in the global market and invigorates the economy and culture of Delaware and the Mid-Atlantic Region.

**Core Values.** Diversity, Integrity, Scholarship, Community and Outreach

The Delaware State University strategic plan, Personal Responsibility in Delivering Excellence, or “PRIDE 2020,” has come to a close and the new strategic plan, titled “REACH 2026,” will guide us moving forward. Since 2014 the University actively pursued the following PRIDE 2020 goals.

1) Create an exceptional learning environment that promotes challenging, high-quality curricular and co-curricular programs, engaged student learning, and local and global citizenship.

---

2) Recruit, develop, retain, graduate, and place outstanding students.
3) Increase and sustain excellence in scholarly and creative research that addresses significant state, regional, national, and global challenges.
4) Strengthen and expand our outreach, engagement, and economic development programs to benefit the people of Delaware, the nation, and the world.
5) Enhance and extend the University’s environmental stewardship through education, research, outreach, conservation, and innovation.
6) Enhance, leverage, and diversify our resources to fulfill the University’s mission.

As PRIDE 2020 reached its conclusion in the 2020-2021 academic year, the University developed a new strategic plan under the leadership of President Tony Allen which went into effect in January 2022. The self-study process, including the identification of institutional priorities, contributed to the development of the new plan. These priorities, that became the underpinning of REACH 2026, are:

1) Student Success,
2) Academic Excellence,
3) Operational Effectiveness,
4) Financial Planning, and
5) Infrastructure.

The analysis in this report is based on our pursuit and achievement of the goals of the PRIDE 2020 strategic plan.

Recent Opportunities and Challenges

COVID-19

In the spring of 2020, as it was becoming apparent that the COVID-19 pandemic would inevitably impact education across the nation, the University started to prepare. Recognizing that a quick transition to a virtual teaching environment was urgently needed, the Academic Affairs Division and Faculty Senate reached out to faculty who were experienced in delivering teaching in a virtual format to act as mentors for faculty who had more limited knowledge and experience. After students left for Spring Break on March 6, 2020, they were told not to return to campus until April 6, 2020. All official international travel was canceled, and domestic travel was discouraged. All classes were moved to a digital platform effective March 18, 2020. On March 18, 2020, President Allen instructed all non-essential personnel to begin working remotely and all travel was canceled. With the Governor of Delaware’s State of Emergency Declaration on March 23, 2020, all non-essential and some essential DSU personnel were told to work remotely until May 15, 2020, effectively closing the campus to the majority of students and university personnel. An exception was made for faculty and graduate students conducting research that needed to be maintained and monitored. Schedules were developed to minimize contact between individuals needing to be on campus.

The University faculty transitioned 1,447 courses into a virtual format in the space of five days. Fortunately, the University had implemented its digital initiative in fall 2018, as a part of DSU’s participation as a Gates Frontier Set school, wherein faculty and incoming students were given
Apple iPads or iMacs depending on their major. Simultaneously, the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) and the Office of Distance Education and Learning Technologies (ODELT) had begun to train faculty in the use of various digital technologies to support student success. As of spring 2020, all 1st and 2nd year students had these devices. The University then developed a process by which students at home who needed technology to attend their classes online were sent devices. Utilizing the funding of the Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) Inclusive Excellence grant, an online course was quickly developed for faculty to teach them best practices in online teaching and learning and to demonstrate how to transition their face-to-face classes. To date more than 90 faculty have completed the HHMI professional development course. ODEL, in conjunction with the CTL, continues to offer a variety of trainings to support faculty and students.

On April 10, 2020, the University established the COVID-19 Student Emergency Relief Fund to assist students who were suddenly facing housing and food insecurities, the need for medical help or mental health support, as well as scholarships and technology. As a result, over 1,150 students were assisted by the $1,000,000+ raised by more than 450 donors. In 2020 outstanding balances were cleared for 96 graduating seniors. In May 2021 more than $750,000 in student debt to the University was forgiven for students facing financial hardship due to COVID-19.

During the 2020-2021 academic year, campus access continued to be limited for students, staff, and faculty. In the fall semester, approximately 85% of courses were taught virtually and in the spring 75% were offered in that format. In January 2021 the University created a partnership with New Castle County to utilize the Wilmington Kirkwood location to establish a Molecular Diagnostic Laboratory to facilitate COVID-19 testing for the DSU community and others. This facility not only supports DSU’s testing protocols but acts as an important resource for New Castle County and partnering institutions. The consistent enrollment numbers for fall 2020 and fall 2021 attest to the success of these efforts to manage the pandemic.

With the return to campus in fall 2021 formal testing and quarantine procedures were instituted. The University established a stringent testing system and COVID protocols that have kept positivity rates extremely low, below 0.05%. Many classrooms were outfitted with improved technology for virtual delivery, air purifiers, and plexiglass shields and all faculty, staff, and students are required to be masked when inside buildings. As of fall 2021 all students without an exemption were required to be vaccinated to return to in-person classes. Weekly testing is required for those who are vaccinated and twice weekly for unvaccinated staff and faculty and students with vaccine exemptions. In December 2021, in light of the virulence of the omicron variant, Dr. Allen determined that the first two weeks of the spring 2022 semester would be conducted virtually with a return date of January 24th. Students are required to be fully vaccinated to return to campus and have to or are scheduled to have their booster as soon as eligible. While most classes are face-to-face this spring, streaming will continue throughout the semester to accommodate those students unable to return to campus or in person learning.

Wesley Acquisition

In July of 2020 President Tony Allen announced that Delaware State University would start the process to acquire Wesley College, located just two miles south of the main campus. Wesley
College was a natural addition to DSU in that the programming and student body of Delaware State and Wesley were quite similar. More importantly, the acquisition strengthened and expanded programming in important areas included in the University mission and secured a downtown location for the expanding university. The acquisition required both institutions to obtain approval by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE). The Accreditation Liaison Officers (ALOs) from Delaware State University and Wesley College worked closely to prepare and submit the required Complex Substantive Change documentation and the Teach-Out Plan for Wesley students.

The acquisition and substantive change process required the DSU and Wesley ALOs to work with constituents from both institutions to successfully coordinate multiple transition plans for all aspects of university life to satisfy the Middle States accreditors, the program accreditors, the NCAA, and the federal government for Title IV funding. The University Faculty Senate tested its newly created curriculum application process, moving more than 200 proposals for curricular and program changes through the approval process, including Board of Trustees approval, in less than three months. As of June 30, 2021, Wesley College was officially acquired by Delaware State and the Hornets and Wolverines became a family! Delaware State University is the first historically black college to acquire another predominantly white college (PWI) or university in the United States. The former Wesley ALO now works under the DSU ALO in the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE). The two ALOs, along with President Allen and two representatives from MSCHE, presented on the acquisition process at the December 2021 MSCHE Annual Conference.
Chapter 2: Self-study Design and Execution

Delaware State University’s approach to writing this self-study report has been highly collaborative with multiple stakeholders across the University involved in the process throughout. DSU is using a standards-based approach in this self-study to comprehensively examine how we are fulfilling the University’s mission.

Structure of Steering Committee, Working Groups, and Self-study Design

In spring 2019 former President Wilma Mishoe and current President and former Provost Tony Allen selected Current Provost/Chief Academic Officer and former Vice Provost Saundra DeLauder, Vice President for Strategic Enrollment Antonio Boyle, Faculty Fellow and Faculty Senate Chair Alexa Silver, and Associate Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness Lynda Murray-Jackson to serve as Co-Chairs of the Steering Committee and Leadership Team for the self-study process. Dr. Silver was the primary author of the 2017 Periodic Review Report, served on the 2012 Self-study Team and brings a background of institutional knowledge to the leadership team. Dr. Murray-Jackson serves as the University’s MSCHE liaison.

After attending the 2019 Self-study Institute, the Leadership Team and the President resolved to follow the Standards-Based approach. They identified the need for eight working groups, one for each standard plus a compliance group. A survey on Institutional Priorities was then sent to all DSU constituents. The results of this survey can be seen in Figures 1 and 2 in the section on Institutional Priorities below. Many volunteers stepped forward to support the self-study process.

In choosing the co-chairs for each Working Group, the Leadership Team looked for persons with knowledge and expertise in the assigned standard. The Working Group Co-Chairs served on the Self-study Steering Committee, facilitating communication between the Committee and the Working Groups. The Steering Committee also included members not assigned to lead a Working Group but to serve as a resource for all working groups.

The Self-study Steering Committee guided the working groups by scheduling meetings, establishing reporting and evidence submission deadlines, and creating templates to guide reporting. The Steering Committee’s understanding of the PRIDE 2020 Strategic Plan, Institutional Priorities, and MSCHE Standards and Requirements of Affiliation helped facilitate conversations about overlap among the groups in the process of examining the University for areas of success, areas needing improvement, innovative approaches, and gaps in the documentation. The Steering Committee also guided the Working Groups making sure any relevant issues from the 2012 Self-study and the 2017 Periodic Review Report were addressed.

On February 11, 2020, the University conducted two Town Halls – for faculty, staff, students, and other interested stakeholders – and over 400 people attended. The purposes of accreditation, University reporting mechanisms, and the self-study process were reviewed. The seven standards were linked to DSU’s mission and strategic goals. The institutional priorities identified in the November stakeholder survey were discussed. The 2020-2022 reaccreditation time was shared. Finally, a request for assistance was extended.
The initial Self-study design was submitted to Middle States in early April. Our final self-study design incorporated comments from our then MSCHE liaison, Dr. Hilda Colon Plumez. The design was approved on April 24, 2020. Dr. Colon retired and, on July 1st, Dr. Idna Corbett became our new VP Liaison. Her appointment was particularly fortuitous as she was also Wesley College’s liaison and guided us through the complex substantive change acquisition process. On October 7, 2020, the DSU team met virtually with Dr. Corbett. Her interactions with the Board of Trustees, the Steering Committee, and larger DSU community were invaluable in helping us to refine our approach.

Institutional Priorities Addressed in Self-study

In preparation for the Self-study, a survey on Institutional Priorities was sent to all Delaware State University constituents in November 2019. The survey participants identified their top five institutional priorities out of a list of ten items, including two “other” options. The Figures 2.1 and 2.2 below demonstrate the University constituents who responded and their priorities.

Fig. 2.1: Institutional Priorities Survey Participants by Constituent

Fig. 2.2: Institutional priorities survey results by priority
The Delaware State University Self-study addresses the following institutional priorities:

1) **Student Success**

Student success, as measured by retention and graduation rates and timely progression to a career or graduate school, was an important goal of the PRIDE 2020 strategic plan and will continue to be a primary focus. The University has invested broadly in expanding its academic interventions by re-structuring the advising system and implementing the use of the holistic Individual Development Plan (IDP) that seeks to closely align students’ academic interests and their career goals. Increased academic support through tutoring centers and the use of the online Tutor.com is enhancing student learning. Expanded course offerings, through winter and summer sessions, and more online and hybrid courses are enabling students to complete their course of study in a timely fashion.

The University recognizes that student success relies on the deliberate integration of the functions of many divisions, beyond Academic Affairs. A 360° student experience is achieved by integrating multiple functions such as advising, enrollment management, residential life, student government and activities, health services, events, athletics, and career services. The unique needs of international and online students are continuously evaluated and improved. Other divisions indirectly impacting student success include Capital Planning and Facilities, Information Technology, Human Resources, Finance, and Institutional Advancement. The extent to which DSU has successfully integrated these multiple functions to support student success is examined in the self-study process.

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and the Wesley College acquisition created new challenges and opportunities for the University to support our student population. A student COVID emergency relief fund and powerful testing protocols supported all constituents to adjust to a virtual environment. The Wesley Legacy policy, as discussed in Standard IV, Chapter 6, was established to ensure the seamless integration of the former Wesley students and their timely progression. This process necessitated rapid and comprehensive responses in all areas of the University community. These efforts are explored in the self-study.

2) **Academic Excellence**

Student success is predicated on the quality of the curricula offered and the skill with which students are instructed. DSU continues to enhance the educational environment ensuring that all academic programs maintain the highest standards. Continuous assessment of programs, external advisory boards, and professional development to support best teaching practices are essential. Increasing student opportunities in research and experiential and service learning through multiple partnerships supports the DSU’s land-grant commitment to outreach and service. DSU’s Digital Initiative teaches students to utilize digital tools for academic and professional advancement. This initiative and the associated learning technologies are supporting efforts to create more student-centered active learning methodologies.

The Digital Initiative was essential to the DSU’s nimble management of the COVID-19 pandemic. The iPad initiative and the increasing technological and pedagogical training
opportunities supported the transition of more than 1,400 courses to a remote learning environment in only five-days. Faculty quickly educated themselves in virtual learning technologies. The Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) and the Office of Distance Education and Learning Technologies (ODELT) rapidly expanded training opportunities. Utilizing the support of the Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) Inclusive Excellence grant, an in-house course guided faculty in course conversion and best practices in online learning. The self-study process has given us the opportunity to assess the impact of the digital and other initiatives on academic excellence and student success.

3) Operational Effectiveness

DSU’s commitment to optimizing operational effectiveness is ongoing, particularly in the areas of managing the flow of information, course scheduling, space management, and leveraging Banner for reporting purposes. The University’s commitment to improving its assessment processes across all areas of the institution requires the use of data to make well-informed decisions. The pandemic accelerated the University’s transition of many of its operational functions to a virtual environment almost overnight. The use of the DocuSign, Blackboard, and the Faculty Senate Workflow System supports paperless administrative functions. The Digital Initiative has created a culture that seeks to become paperless and allow the University to move many of its processes into a virtual environment. This will increase efficiency while supporting our sustainability goals.

Operational effectiveness examines how DSU carries out daily on-campus activities. The President’s realignment of the administrative team to support operational efficiency is explored in detail in Standards VI and VII. Operational Effectiveness is one of the pillars of the new strategic plan, REACH 2026.

4) Financial Planning

Financial planning and decision-making are integrated and aligned with strategic objectives, quantifiable goals, and organizational systems and controls designed to advance the DSU’s mission. The deliberate coordination of DSU's mission-driven priorities with State of Delaware imperatives and Federal grant-supported research enterprises further strengthens the University's partnerships with principal revenue sources. DSU's primary revenue sources in order of magnitude are net tuition revenue, state appropriations, contractually obligated receipts, gifts, and sales. While the consistent advancement of all revenue categories is indispensable, retention and new student recruitment leading to timely graduation and employment hold strategic primacy.

Leadership transitions stalled the development of the multiyear budgeting process. The new Vice President for Finance has prioritized the implementation of these budgetary systems, complimented by the segmentation and creation of annual capital and operational budgets. The monthly review of division-specific revenues and expenses at the Administrative Council and Board of Trustees levels supports financial accountability. Standard VI, Chapter 8 closely examines the efficiency and clarity of these systems as they relate to long-term sustainability and the advancement of academic excellence and student success.
5) Infrastructure

Infrastructure is an institutional priority because 21st-century higher education requires significant investment in a high-quality learning environment. COVID has taught us the vital need for reliable facilities and connectivity. Issues such as connectivity, data security, hardware and software, facilities, and deferred maintenance must be continuously evaluated to ensure support of the university mission. Many of these issues fall within the domain of Information Technology and Facilities Management, Planning & Construction.

DSU’s commitment to student success and academic excellence, while expanding enrollment, research, and outreach, necessitates the continuous examination of DSU’s current infrastructure including ADA compliance. DSU’s continued growth in harmony with our mission, goals, and Master Plan requires improvement to our housing, classroom, laboratory, office, and auxiliary spaces. The addition of the Wesley campus facilities aligns with these goals. The extent to which DSU’s infrastructure adequately supports our mission is evaluated in Standard VI, Chapter 8. The new Master Plan seeks to address inadequacies.

While the Institutional Priorities are inevitably linked to all the standards, Dr. Corbett encouraged us to take a more deliberate approach. The final linkages between the DSU’s Institutional Priorities and Middle States’ Standards for Accreditation can be found in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1
Delaware State University Institutional Priorities mapped to MSCHE Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priorities mapped to standards</th>
<th>Institutional Priorities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standards of Accreditation</td>
<td>Student Success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. Mission and Goals</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Ethics and Integrity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. Support of the Student Experience</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. Educational Effectiveness Assessment</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII. Governance, Leadership and Administration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The linkages between the Institutional Priorities and DSU’s Mission are displayed in Table 2.2.
Table 2.2
Delaware State University Institutional Priorities mapped to University Mission

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priorities mapped to Mission</th>
<th>Student Success</th>
<th>Academic Excellence</th>
<th>Operational Effectiveness</th>
<th>Financial Planning</th>
<th>Infrastructure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DSU Mission</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. public, comprehensive, 1890 land-grant institution</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. offers access and opportunity to diverse populations</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. heritage as a historically black college</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. purposefully integrates the highest standards of excellence in teaching, research and service in its baccalaureate, master’s, and doctoral programs.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. commitment to advance science, technology, liberal arts, and the professions</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. produces capable and productive leaders who contribute to the sustainability and economic development of the global community.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analysis and Writing

The COVID-19 pandemic created challenges and opportunities as working groups discovered efficiencies in using virtual platforms to hold meetings and share documents. The Wesley acquisition required departments to examine their current offerings and assess the value added through Wesley programs, faculty, staff, students, and facilities. A major challenge arose because many working on the self-study simultaneously played leadership roles in managing COVID-19 and the Wesley acquisition causing workloads to soar.

During fall 2020 the working groups completed their analysis and submitted their chapter outlines. Drs. Murray-Jackson and Silver used the working groups’ findings to develop the first draft, shared with the Steering Committee and the Visiting Team Chair, Dr. Brenda Allen, in October 2021. Dr. Allen offered valuable feedback, helping us clarify the study structure and voice. In late 2021, the writers rewrote the document and shared it with the Self Study Steering Committee and University community in January 2022. Utilizing that feedback final edits were made prior to the January 31, 2022 submission.

Throughout this process, communication with university constituents has been consistent. From the initial kick-off meetings in early winter 2020 through the completion of the document in January 2022, the study leaders have utilized countless forums to share progress reports and seek feedback. These presentations include Board of Trustees meetings, the Faculty Senate and General Faculty meetings, University Institutes, meetings of the Deans Council and the Chairs Council, weekly Tuesday Forums, and the Steering Committee meetings. This open communication has enriched the self-study process and kept all constituents informed. While the editors have worked to create one voice in the document, that voice represents countless University members.
Chapter 3: Standard 1: Mission and Goals

The institution's mission defines its purpose within the context of higher education, the students it serves, and what it intends to accomplish. The institution's stated goals are clearly linked to its mission and specify how the institution fulfills its mission.

Delaware State University is in compliance with Standard I.

A. Overview

The University mission, vision, and core values inform everything the University represents and seeks to accomplish. From its commitment to provide a meaningful education to all students – creating thoughtful, capable, and ethical future leaders – to the broader efforts to contribute to the world through research and outreach, these essential goals and values are consistently reinforced at the University. The PRIDE 2020 (doc. I.01) strategic plan carefully prioritized those goals and identified the resources needed to accomplish them.

The Mission and Goals Working Group co-chairs represented Academics, Student Affairs, and Institutional Advancement as well as staff and faculty from divisions such as Research, Finance, the Deans Council, and the Chairs Council. The subgroups explored each criterion, affirming the breadth and consistency of the publication of the mission, vision, and core goals statements. They then explored the correlation between those goals and the University’s accomplishments through the PRIDE 2020 strategic plan. Several of these important initiatives are described in this chapter. That one of the co-chairs of the working group led the charge in creating the new REACH 2026 strategic plan created a cohesiveness between PRIDE 2020, the self-study, and REACH 2026. Through this process, an analysis of the successes and unachieved goals from PRIDE 2020 could be assessed and included or rejected in the new strategic plan.

B. Description

History of current Mission, Vision and Core Values

Delaware State University (DSU) has a clearly defined, comprehensive, and published Mission Statement that identifies DSU’s purpose and goals as an institution of higher education and is specific to the institution. The Mission addresses instruction, scholarship, research, service, community involvement, who the institution serves, and what it intends to accomplish. The Mission Statement defines the basic focus of the institution, explains the institution’s character and individuality, and is in harmony with and supportive of the specific, mandated, and unique role of a land-grant university as legislated in the Second Morrill Act of 1890 – Act of August 30, 1890, ch. 841, 26 Stat. 417, 7 U.S.C. 322 et seq.

Delaware State University revised and approved its vision, mission, and core values in August of 2021 but, for the purposes of this self-study, the 2011 mission statement will guide the analysis.

The Mission Statement has evolved over time and the wording has been purposely changed to fit the changing needs of the community. The 2007 Strategic Plan established broad institutional goals reflective of DSU’s 1993 Mission Statement and 2003 Vision Statement.
As more University initiatives surfaced in response to changes in higher education – especially in the areas of science, technology, and globalization – and as the University worked through the 2012 MSCHE self-study process, it became clear that DSU’s recent growth in key areas was not fully captured by the 1993 Mission Statement.

Dr. Williams came to DSU in 2008, first in the role of Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs and, in 2010, he was appointed President by the DSU Board of Trustees. Among Dr. Williams’ first actions as President was establishing a Blue Ribbon Commission (doc.I.02) to draft a new Vision Statement that would guide DSU’s journey to becoming one of the best HBCUs in the country. The President sought broad internal and external input to ensure that the vision reflected a future supported by the University community and external stakeholders. The Commission was co-chaired by a university dean and an alumnus who is a former U.S. Congressman. The Commission recommended a set of values. After conducting statewide public meetings, internal forums, and online opportunities to contribute, the resulting Vision Statement and Core Values were approved by the Board of Trustees at its June 2010 Board meeting.

The 2010 Vision Statement reads as follows:

As one of America’s most highly respected Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Delaware State University will be renowned for a standard of academic excellence that prepares our graduates to become the first choice of employers in a global market and invigorates the economy and culture of Delaware and the Mid-Atlantic Region.

Delaware State University’s Core Values are Community, Integrity, Diversity, Scholarship, and Outreach.

- **Community** – We are a caring community, a place where we support one another and provide our members with a sense of belonging. We respect the rights and dignity of our students, faculty, staff, and visitors. We are an educationally purposeful community.
- **Integrity** – We honor our heritage by being honest and ethical in all our efforts. We do what we say we are going to do. We are trustworthy, reliable, and accountable to ourselves and to our community.
- **Diversity** – We are an inclusive community that celebrates educational excellence achieved through diversity in all of its forms. We believe our diversity enriches and expands our students’ educational experience. We are committed to maintaining a diverse learning environment that prepares our graduates for success in a global society.
- **Scholarship** – We are committed to providing the highest quality in teaching and research that extends beyond the classroom. As an institution of higher education, we are, by definition, a place for learning. We are a community of scholars.
- **Outreach** – We are committed to living out the history and tradition of the land-grant university – openness, accessibility, and service to people.

During the fall 2011 semester, President Williams appointed a Mission Review Team to revise the DSU Mission Statement. The University’s concurrent engagement in an intensive self-study,
supported meaningful participation. The President noted that while the 1993 Mission defined DSU’s identity and important role in the community, it was time to examine it in light of the University’s new Vision, Core Values, and expanding portfolio of academic and research programs tied to needs in Delaware, the nation, and internationally.

The 2011 Mission Review Team utilized the Blue Ribbon Commission’s visioning process comments and other sources to prepare a draft for feedback from faculty and staff. A final draft was approved at a special December 2011 Board meeting. The new Mission Statement was unanimously ratified at the January 2012 General Faculty Meeting and was immediately shared on the University’s website, in publications, and on campus signage.

**Delaware State University Mission**

*Delaware State University is a public, comprehensive, 1890 land-grant institution that offers access and opportunity to diverse populations from Delaware, the nation, and the world. Building on its heritage as a historically black college, the University purposefully integrates the highest standards of excellence in teaching, research, and service in its baccalaureate, master’s, and doctoral programs. Its commitment to advance science, technology, liberal arts, and the professions produces capable and productive leaders who contribute to the sustainability and economic development of the global community.*

The 2011 Mission Statement not only more accurately defined the institution and its uniqueness as an HBCU, its role as an 1890 land-grant institution, and its tripartite focus on teaching, research, and public service, but it also lay down clear goals on which current and future strategic planning and assessment processes coalesce. The challenges of preparing students to meet the complex needs of the global society necessitated that these educational experiences are inherently global in nature and integrative in focus. The commitment to excellence and the unique DSU legacy of nurturing the individual student remain strong.

**PRIDE 2020 Strategic Plan**

Delaware State University’s PRIDE 2020 strategic plan is firmly rooted in DSU’s mission and seeks to clearly identify and fulfill the core goals of that mission. Building on the findings of the 2012 Self-study Report, the 2012-13 strategic planning process included over 100 members of the University community including faculty, staff, administrators, students, and Board members. Over the course of six months these working groups met frequently to establish goals, plan objectives, and specify action strategies to pursue the goals. The six strategic institutional goals that emerged from this process include:

1. **Intellectual Climate and Culture:** Create an exceptional learning environment that promotes challenging, high-quality curricular and co-curricular programs, engaged student learning, and local and global citizenship.

2. **Student Success:** Recruit, develop, retain, graduate, and place outstanding students.

3. **Research and Scholarship:** Increase and sustain excellence in scholarly and creative research that addresses significant state, regional, national, and global challenges.
4. Outreach and Engagement (Service Beyond Self): Strengthen and expand our outreach, engagement, and economic development programs to benefit the people of Delaware, the nation, and the world.

5. Sustainability: Enhance and extend the University’s environmental stewardship through education, research, outreach, conservation, and innovation.

6. Institutional and Operational Effectiveness: Enhance, leverage, and diversify our resources to fulfill the University’s mission.

Table 3.1 demonstrates the links between these strategic goals and the University mission.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRIDE 2020 mapped to Mission</th>
<th>Intellectual Climate</th>
<th>Student success</th>
<th>Research and Scholarship</th>
<th>Outreach and engagement</th>
<th>Sustainability</th>
<th>Institutional and operational efficiency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. public, comprehensive, 1890 land-grant institution</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. offers access and opportunity to diverse populations</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. heritage as a historically black college</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. purposefully integrates the highest standards of excellence in teaching, research and service in its baccalaureate, master, and doctoral programs</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. commitment to advance science, technology, liberal arts, and the professions</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. produces capable and productive leaders who contribute to the sustainability and economic development of the global community</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each DSU division and department revisited their own mission statements and revised them to align with the University mission. Similarly, each academic program aligned their student learning outcomes to the University’s learning goals. By this means, all stakeholders clearly recognize the unique way in which they contribute to our common goals.

Fifteen key performance indicators (KPIs) were developed to support continuous tracking of these strategic goals and are reported to the Board of Trustees regularly. Thus, DSU’s progress in fulfilling the goals of the plan can be monitored accurately and in a timely fashion.

While the complete self-study details many of the activities and initiatives that the DSU has undertaken in pursuit of its goals, demonstrating compliance with the Middle States standards, a brief discussion of several initiatives that demonstrate support of these core goals follows.
Student Success and Intellectual Climate

- **Office of Student Success and Individualized Development Plans**

  In 2015 DSU was awarded $1.2 million by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. (doc. I.03) Key project priorities focused on innovations in advising services, developmental education, and digital learning. Through better use of data, including use of the Post-secondary Data Partnership (PDP), the university ended remediation, implemented strategies to boost early momentum, and created a digital initiative to provide students and faculty with devices to support teaching and learning. To create a transformative experience, advisement used the Individualized Development Plan (IDP) charting students’ DSU journey as they actively engage in foundational and meaningful curricular and co-curricular experiences from their first year to graduation.

  The University Data Transformation Team created decision trees to predict students’ retention by identifying key factors that lead to attrition including financial, demographic, socioeconomic, and academic issues. Combining decision-tree models with sequential pattern mining, the University identified the characteristics of successful students as those graduating within four years. This process helped identify students at risk and streamline best advising practices. The University’s Advising Office provides holistic, personalized academic advising that is centralized with professional advisors and faculty mentors. IDP data is used to develop, pilot, and document different initiatives designed to improve results for more students.

  The Office of Student Success (OSS) oversees the Academic Recovery Program and the Early Alert System. OSS also houses Integrated Academic Support Services. Conjoining these programs under the leadership of the Associate Provost enables the University to address students’ needs for academic support in a comprehensive fashion with facilitated communication between advising, academic support, students, and their instructors.

- **Improved Teaching and Learning**

  DSU has been actively engaged in improving faculty professional development through training in active, student-centered, and experiential learning as well as migration into hybrid and online environments.

  - **Quality Matters**: DSU became a member of Quality Matters in 2019. Quality Matters certifies the quality of online course development and delivery through a tested system of training and certification. The Quality Matters Rubric includes seven elements including course design, instructional materials and activities, assessment, technology, student support, and accessibility. Several faculty and staff have completed the QM Teaching Online Certificate. DSU intends to have every online course and program Quality Matters validated.

  - **Blackboard Certification course**: A three-course online Blackboard training is offered by the Office of Distance Education and Learning Technology (ODELT) with instruction in Blackboard Navigation and its multiple tools. This course enables faculty to expand their utilization of the many features of the Blackboard learning management system.

  - **Association of College and University Educators (ACUE) Effective Teaching Practices course**: First offered in 2018, this online 25-module course has been completed by 72 faculty members, and a final faculty cohort is currently enrolled. This course trains faculty in
effective teaching practices from course design to creating a productive learning environment, active learning techniques, promoting higher order thinking, and assessment. The course addresses both face-to-face and online learning environments.

- **Apple iPad Initiative:** Starting in fall 2018 all incoming students, as well as faculty, received an iPad Pro or MacBook Pro with the goal that DSU would be digital by fall 2020. (doc. I.04) This initiative was predicated on the fact that 21st-century students learn in a digital environment and need to learn how to access digital tools for personal and professional growth. This program was critical to the University’s nimble management of the transition to a virtual teaching environment with the onset of the pandemic in March 2020. In the fall of 2021 Delaware State was the first HBCU designated as an “Apple Distinguished School.” (doc. I.05)

- **HHMI Professional Development:** Utilizing funding from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute Inclusive Excellence (HHMI-IE) initiative, (doc. I.05) faculty professional development opportunities have been created to support teaching excellence, especially in a virtual environment. First supporting STEM faculty transition to active teaching techniques, the training expanded exponentially in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic and the urgent need to transition to virtual teaching. Over 90 faculty have completed training supporting the transition of their courses into a virtual environment, both synchronous and asynchronous.

- **Service and Experiential Learning**

The undergraduate student participation rates in research, study abroad, service learning, experiential learning, and leadership programs were tracked in KPIs #1 and #10. Student participation rose from 27% in 2013 to 41% by 2020, despite the limitations imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. An Office of Undergraduate Research, Experiential Learning, and Honors (URELAH) (doc. I.07) was established under the OSS to coordinate these learning experiences, including internships and job shadowing. They have developed a Professional Readiness Opportunity mentoring program which links DSU students with industry professionals in their field of study. The Hornet Leadership Academy was created by the Office of Student Leadership and activities, offering students leadership training and opportunities, including a 6-week training session under the National Society of Leadership and Success Honors Society.

**Research and Scholarship**

- **Optical Science Center for Applied Research (OSCAR)**

In September 2015 Delaware Governor Jack Markell dedicated the $18 million dollar, 28,000-square-foot Optical Science Center for Applied Research (OSCAR). (doc. I.08) Supported with $10 million in State funding, this building houses DSU’s optics research program. In October 2015, University was awarded a $5 million grant for a NASA (doc. I.09) research and education program partnering with the Los Alamos National Laboratory, the Goddard Space Flight Center, and the University of Delaware. Future goals include expanding the research focus on the biomedical sciences and broadening faculty research participation in the bio-behavioral sciences area. This center provides a rich intellectual environment and increased research opportunities to help train students for their careers. OSCAR supports a cadre of 11 faculty investigators who together have brought more than $19 million in total grant funding to the university since 2016.
• **Graduate and Undergraduate Research**

The University commitment to supporting graduate and undergraduate research has expanded significantly in recent years. URELAH was established to provide opportunities for undergraduate students of all disciplines to engage in research. The NIH-funded G-RISE and U-RISE grants also fund undergraduate and graduate research. Faculty have been trained in the development of “Course-Based Undergraduate Research Experiences (CUREs).” (doc.I.10) CUREs are an increasingly important type of active learning instruction, a means to scale up undergraduate research experiences to reach a larger, more diverse groups of students.

In fall 2019 the AVP for Research and the CAST Dean’s Office co-sponsored a full-day Saturday workshop on “Interdisciplinary Team Science and Course-Embedded Research.” Two multidisciplinary faculty teams came together at this workshop and submitted proposals to the NSF IUSE (Improving Undergraduate STEM Education) grant program. One grant was funded and is being implemented to integrate authentic research experiences into courses in three departments in CAST (Biological Sciences, Chemistry, and Agriculture & Natural Resources). Another September 2021 NSF grant supports the integration of research experiences into courses in neuroscience courses. The NIH-funded U-RISE grant supports internal and external workshops and faculty professional development for implementing CUREs.

• **Research Presentations**

In 2017 the University held its first Research Day (doc. I.11) – combining Honors Day, the Graduate Research Forum, and the Faculty Research Forum – to showcase scholarship on campus and provide networking opportunities for students, staff, faculty, and community members. The 2021 virtual forum included a panel discussion on faculty mentoring, a student panel discussion of undergraduate internships, oral presentations by faculty and undergraduate students, and poster presentations by graduate students. Table 3.2 shows the number of presentations given by undergraduate and graduate students as well as faculty and staff over the last five years.

Table 3.2
**Presentations at Research Day, 2017-2021**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Day</th>
<th>Undergraduate</th>
<th>Graduate</th>
<th>Faculty/Staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Canceled due to Covid-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Office of Graduate Studies and Research started the Three-Minute Thesis Competition (doc. I.12) in 2020 wherein graduate students are challenged to persuasively present their thesis or dissertation topic to a university audience in less than three minutes, using a single PowerPoint slide. This is a unique opportunity for students to strengthen academic and presentation skills, while promoting cross-departmental connections and interdisciplinary work. There were 18 participants in fall 2020 and 11 in fall 2021 competitions.
Outreach and Engagement

- **Early College High School (ECHS)**

DSU established the State of Delaware’s first publicly chartered Early College High School (doc. I.13) in 2014 following a model designed specifically to serve first-generation college-bound students from all three counties in Delaware. The model blends a high school and college experience in which students work toward a high school diploma and up to two years of college credit. The model directly challenges the misconception that historically underserved populations are unable to do college-level work and obtain a postsecondary degree. The ECHS first opened in the fall of 2014 with 129 students and now has more than 400, the KPI #7 target set for 2020. The ECHS utilizes a College Readiness Rubric to assess students’ readiness for college-level classes. Currently 125 students are enrolled in multiple college-level classes on the DSU campus. More than 60% enroll in Delaware State University upon their high school graduation.

- **Inspire Scholarship**

Delaware State University offers a 4-year, full tuition Inspire Scholarship (doc. I.14) to qualifying Delaware high school graduates with a cumulative 2.75 high school GPA and demonstrate good conduct, who then enroll at DSU following their high school graduation. Students are required to complete 10 hours of community service each semester. When the program was established in 2010 it only offered six semesters of capped funding to students. In 2018 the program expanded to four years after receiving unanimous support from the Delaware legislature. At the time Governor Carney remarked, “I can't think of a better investment that we can make in the people of our state, in young people of DSU and the whole state of Delaware ...” Students have participated in Habitat for Humanity projects, worked at Bellevue Community Center in Wilmington, installed new energy-saving lighting systems at church and educational facilities, helped in food banks and at community fitness events as part of the service component. In 2021 the program expanded again to cover full tuition for four years.

- **Dreamer Students**

Delaware State is among the top higher education choices for Dreamer students, those supported by the 2012 Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) legislation. Since its 2016 inception the Opportunity Scholars Program (doc. I.15) has graduated 77 Dreamer students and 110 are enrolled for fall 2021. These students had a 100% retention rate and cumulative GPA of 3.4 in 2020-2021. This program is available to students from thirteen states outside Delaware, supports these students with financial aid, academic support services, counseling services, immigration resources, and low cost off-campus housing without using any federal or state funding.

- **Trauma Treatment Conference**

In February of 2019 DSU held a one-day conference (doc. I.16) entitled “Shifting from Trauma-Informed Care to an African-Centered Healing Approach.” The workshop addressed how behavioral health care practitioners provide treatment to African Americans who have
experienced trauma. The conference educated professionals on the limitations of traditional trauma-informed care as a therapeutic approach and why a healing-centered approach is more effective, moving away from a Eurocentric approach to one that addresses the needs of oppressed communities. The conference supported the Delaware Governor’s Executive Order #24 making Delaware a trauma-informed state. DSU has since created a certificate program, “Healing Trauma with an African-Centered Approach,” open to the public and supportive of students in programs such as psychology, social work, criminal justice, education, nursing, and sociology.

The Trauma Treatment Conference resulted in the reconceptualization of the DSU Capital Park location as the Biomedical, Behavioral, and Allied Health Center (BBAHC), (doc. I.17) also housing the DSU Trauma Academy. The BBAHC will expand health disparity related service delivery, serve as a catalyst and community site for research, outreach programming, and experiential learning/training. The DSU’s Trauma Academy’s goal is to educate and train professionals to provide culturally responsive and trauma-informed care.

- **HBCU Philanthropy Symposium**

Since 2013 DSU’s Division of Institutional Advancement has hosted an annual HBCU Philanthropy Symposium. (doc. I.18) A multi-day event, the symposium brings together representatives from HBCUs across the country, foundations, and corporations such as the Thurgood Marshall College Fund, the Kresge Foundation, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Pepco Holdings, Discover Financial Services, Technology for Social Good, and J.P. Morgan Chase, to share best practices and empower schools to address fundraising challenges. The Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) (doc. I.19) awarded the 2021 Commonfund College and University Foundation Award in recognition of contributions in the advancement, quality, and effectiveness of foundations to Dr. Vita Pickrum, DSU’s VP of Institutional Advancement and President of the DSU Foundation. Dr. Pickrum has increased fundraising by 800% since 2008, establishing multiple strategic private and public partnerships to benefit DSU’s mission.

C. Analysis

The PRIDE 2020 strategic goals clearly address the scope of Delaware State University’s mission and vision statements and they have guided the institution through several leadership changes, unexpected opportunities, and challenges since 2014. The KPIs (doc. I.20) were continuously monitored and shared to guide ongoing improvements. The KPIs, including the goals, 2012-2013 baseline, and the 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 actual data, are listed in Table 3.3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual Climate and Culture</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>UG t Participation Rate in Research, Experiential Learning, etc.</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>31% COVID</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.3

Strategic Goals and Key Performance Indicator data
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Success</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>Percent of Students Obtaining Gainful Employment in 12 months</th>
<th>0%</th>
<th>57%</th>
<th>61%</th>
<th>80%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Four-Year Graduation Rate</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>First-Year Retention Rate</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>New Freshman Average SAT/GPA</td>
<td>898 SAT 2.99 GPA</td>
<td>929 SAT 3.16 GPA</td>
<td>921 SAT 3.15 GPA</td>
<td>950 SAT 3.10 GPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research and Scholarship</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Contracts and Grants Awarded ($ in millions)</td>
<td>$19.5</td>
<td>$21.9</td>
<td>$8.5* COVID t ($25 20-21)</td>
<td>$30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outreach and Engagement</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Number of Students in the “STEM” Early College High School</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>393</td>
<td>421</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Number of Online Courses and Programs</td>
<td>27 courses 1 program</td>
<td>132 courses 9 programs</td>
<td>240 courses 9 programs</td>
<td>62 courses 15 programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Number of Certificate Programs</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Undergraduate Student Participation Rate in Sustainability Courses and Activities</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>26% COVID</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Guaranteed Energy Savings ($$ in millions)</td>
<td>This KPI was not tracked.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional and Operational Effectiveness</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Total Students (Headcount)</td>
<td>4,425</td>
<td>4,872</td>
<td>5,054</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Total University Funding ($$$ in millions)</td>
<td>$125</td>
<td>$151</td>
<td>$162</td>
<td>$136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Alumni Giving Rate</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Instruction Expense per FTE Student</td>
<td>$10,966</td>
<td>$11,876</td>
<td>$10,052</td>
<td>$10,600</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An exploration of these KPIs highlight both the successes and the challenges DSU has faced in seeking to fulfill the goals established in the mission statement and PRIDE 2020.
Meeting Our Goals

Delaware State has been making steady progress in meeting many of our strategic goals, particularly in the areas of programming, enrollment management, retention and graduation, and funding.

The 2014-2016 Program Prioritization Initiative (PPI) (doc. I.21) witnessed the thoughtful assessment of all academic programs to determine their support of the University mission and their appropriateness for additional support. While multiple low enrollment programs were eliminated, many others were prioritized for investment and have grown significantly since that time. Similarly, multiple new programs were established that reflect our mission to serve our community. As witnessed in Table 3.3 the number of online programs and courses (KPI #8) and certificates (KPI #9) has grown significantly along with support mechanisms. The recent acquisition of Wesley College further enriched that process, adding even more academic programs that appeal to and support the needs of our mission, student body, and outreach. (See Standard III, Chapter 5 for a detailed explanation of this process and this growth.)

The growth of enrollment, in undergraduate, graduate, online, and international programs as well as the Early College High School, reflects the soundness of multiple academic and co-curricular endeavors. Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) has consolidated most non-academic student services (admissions, financial aid, student accounts, and registrar) seeking efficiency and transparency. This, combined with the academic support offered through the OSS, has not only seen a steady rise in enrollment, in a time when many higher education institutions suffer the opposite, but rising retention and graduation rates. While the University fell short of its aggressive student success goals, the efforts from PRIDE 2020 resulted in the highest retention and graduation rates in the history of the University. (See Chapters 5 and 6.)

The increased funding through three primary sources – tuition, state support, and fundraising – reflects the success of the university leadership in increasing enrollment, seeking support from the State of Delaware, and external research and fundraising efforts. The Office of Institutional Advancement has played a significant role in this process, doubling the rate of alumni contributions while also growing our endowment fund to over $25.5 million and increasing annual giving to over $40 million thanks to a $20 million contribution from MacKenzie Scott. (See Standard VI, Chapter 8 and Standard VII, Chapter 9.)

Challenges

The PRIDE 2020 Research and Scholarship goal was to increase and sustain excellence in scholarly and creative research that addresses significant state, regional, national, and global challenges. This goal had 4 objectives:

1. Increase research productivity in grants, scholarly publications, creative activities, innovation, and patents by 50 percent in five years.
2. Increase, strengthen, and sustain the support systems and infrastructure to assist faculty, staff, and students in all aspects of their research endeavors.
3. Provide more opportunities for undergraduate students to participate in research.
Maintain the highest standards of ethics and integrity in research and management of the research enterprise.

The research Key Performance Indicator focused only on part of Objective 1. KPI #6 had a steep expectation to increase the annual dollar amount of contracts and grants in research and scholarship from $19.5 to $30 million and increase creative activity by 50%. The KPI measurement did not include creative activities, innovation, and patents. While the target was not met, the 2019 AY annual research dollars had risen significantly to $22M. The pandemic caused a drop in research dollars to $8.5 million in 2020, but by 2021 it had rebounded to $25 million. In the past, faculty in STEM programs have produced the bulk of the research dollars, especially from federal funding sources and scholarly publications, however, other areas such as business, education and psychology are increasing their contribution to research dollars through private grant funding. Figure 3.1 shows the number of research publications by discipline since 2005.

To address Objective 2, the Associate VP for Research hired a full-time Research Development Specialist (RDS) in 2019 to support faculty and staff. The RDS works closely with Institutional Advancement in developing applications for government and private funding. The RDS assists in writing proposals for large- and small-scale projects, edits proposals, and assists in training to identify funding opportunities, develops competitive proposals, and seeks other prospects for obtaining external funding. The RDS works with the Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP) to ensure compliance with applicable laws and federal regulations related to external funding.

The AVP of Research created a faculty development course “FUNDamentals: Accelerating Your Research Agenda,” offered through Blackboard, to coach faculty in establishing and funding a research program. The 9-month course walks participants through the process of developing a research question, identifying potential funding opportunities, and writing and submitting a grant.
proposal. Seven of 12 participants in the first cohort completed the course and 6 successfully submitted grant proposals. Twenty-four participants are enrolled for the 2021-2022 year.

Student engagement in research, Objective 3, has consistently expanded with support from the AVP for Research, academic programs, advisors, and the establishment of URELAH. The CUREs initiative discussed earlier has been shown to have a positive impact on students persistence in science and their development of conceptual understanding, problem-solving, analysis, and communication. KPI #10, measuring the percentage of students engaged in sustainability courses and activities, was poorly defined, caught somewhere between the University’s desire to be ecologically sustainable and the desire to expand education and outreach in the areas of sustainability. The data collection was likely underreported. Through URELAH DSU is working to identify courses with embedded undergraduate research and sustainability activities and track students’ internships and special projects.

Ethics and integrity in research, Objective 4, is essential. The Institutional Review Board (IRB) reviews research proposals involving human subjects. Personally identifiable information is removed from data. Researchers are required to follow FERPA and HIPPA. OSP reviews grant reimbursement requests to make sure they comply with the requirements.

The new strategic plan REACH 2026 (doc. I.22) has prioritized research. The new strategic research plan will strive to increase research dollars and intellectual property awards, improve the grant administrative structure to better support research activity and increase consistent degree production to move towards R1 status.

D. Continuous Improvement and Innovation

REACH 2026 Strategic Plan

As noted, Delaware State University completed its new strategic planning process in fall 2021 and the new strategic plan, titled “REACH 2026,” was approved by the Board of Trustees on September 16, 2021. The strategic planning working group included representatives from the administration, faculty, students, alumni, and the Board of Trustees. Building on the institutional priorities (doc. I.23) identified at the start of the self-study process – Student Success, Academic Excellence, Operational Effectiveness, Financial Planning, and Infrastructure – the committee developed four pillars of the new plan.

I. Building the Whole Student: Student Success and Academic Excellence
II. Operational Effectiveness
III. Infrastructure Enhancement
IV. Financial Health

The 2020-2021 strategic planning process was overseen by Dr. Stacy Downing, then VP for Student Affairs. With the completion of the Wesley acquisition and recent administrative restructuring (see Standard VII, Chapter 9), Dr. Downing is now responsible for overseeing the University transformation of the Wesley campus, DSU Downtown. She is also the VP for Strategic Initiatives championing the goals established in the strategic plan and coordinating strategic initiatives moving forward.
Transformation Teams

In fall 2021, working with management consultants, the University established transformation workstreams (doc. I.24) in multiple areas to facilitate the planning and implementation of many of the strategic plan goals. These working groups targeted the following areas:

- academic programming,
- grants and expansion of research,
- the Wesley College of Health and Behavioral Sciences (WCHBS),
- retention,
- enrollment,
- private revenue and advancement,
- culture and organizational health,
- auxiliary revenue and real estate, and
- online programs.

As part of the University’s Transformation, working groups were created to identify and implement growth opportunities across 10 strategic areas, including improving current student enrollment and retention rates, building a flagship HBCU Online program, and enhancing the University’s organizational culture. These working groups, which consisted of administrators, staff, and faculty, created the “Bankable plan,” i.e. a detailed implementation plan including business cases and milestones of all the initiatives to be implemented over the next five years. Through the process, 136 initiatives were proposed, of which 79 were approved for implementation starting in FY2022.

The University intends to invest ~$3.1 million in the implementation of these initiatives in FY2022, ~$1.2 million will be spent on planned operating costs and ~$1.8 million on planned personnel costs. These initiatives will collectively improve student outcomes, enhance student experiences, and drive economic sustainability for the University in coming years. The REACH 2026 Core Implementation Team is in the process of establishing KPIs to chart progress toward the goals. Many of these proposed initiatives are discussed in the following chapters as they apply to the achievement of the University’s mission and goals and support the University’s compliance with the Middle States Standards.
Chapter 4: Standard II: Ethics and Integrity

Ethics and integrity are central, indispensable, and defining hallmarks of effective higher education institutions. In all activities, whether internal or external, an institution must be faithful to its mission, honor its contracts and commitments, adhere to its policies, and represent itself truthfully.

Delaware State University is in compliance with Standard II.

A. Overview

The University adheres to high ethical standards to ensure the integrity of the institution. Integrity is one of the Core Values of the University and is reflected in policies for academic and non-academic programs across all University constituencies. Institutional integrity is sustained in the academic and intellectual freedom of the University, which is further reflected in its policies and contractual agreements. Assessing the integrity of the University and its ability to establish and maintain the highest standards occurs by multiple means.

The Ethics and Integrity Working Group was comprised of a broad mix of administrators, staff, and faculty. Given that integrity is essential in all divisions and should be demonstrated through policies and their implementation, these diverse contributions were critical for accurate assessment of ethics and integrity. To evaluate the extent to which the institution’s policies and procedures satisfy the requirements of Standard II, eighty-four policies, procedures, and bargaining agreements were collected from a majority of the divisions including Academic Affairs, Academic Services for Student Athletes, Admissions, the Child Lab School, Financial Aid, the Health Center, Housing and Residential Education, Human Resources, Internal Audit, International Affairs, Public Safety, Records and Registration, Sponsored Programs, Student Accounts, Student Leadership, the William Jason Library, and the Departments of Social Work, Nursing, Languages and Literatures, and Sociology and Criminal Justice. Questions were then posed for each citing its relevance to each of the criterion, whether the criterion expectations are demonstrated and, if not, recommendations for resolution were requested. For example, for Criteria 1 the following questions were posed:

- Is Criterion 1 relevant to this policy/set of procedures in question?
- If so, is there a fair and impartial commitment to academic freedom?
- If so, is there a fair and impartial commitment to intellectual freedom?
- If so, is there a fair and impartial commitment to freedom of expression?
- If so, is there a fair and impartial commitment to respect for intellectual property rights?

If the answer to any of questions was “No,” the Working Group then made recommendations to address the shortcomings.

B. Description

Academic and intellectual freedom, freedom of expression, and respect for intellectual property rights.
The quality and effectiveness of education at Delaware State University is achieved by promoting the highest standard of academic excellence in all phases of instruction, research, and public service. The administration and faculty have explicitly agreed through the American Association of University Professors Collective Bargaining Agreement (AAUP CBA) (doc. II.01) to the University’s commitment to academic freedom, stating in Article 2.5 that “the parties acknowledge that the faculty must remain free to practice their profession in the performance of their work at the University without interference or harassment because of their opinions or beliefs.” Article 13.1 elaborates on this commitment, stating that

- “unit members are entitled to free inquiry, free expression, and free association to assure academic freedom” (13.1.1);
- “unit members shall also have the right to speak freely, civilly, and to express dissent on matters of educational philosophy, institutional policies, and on the administration and operation of the University…” (13.1.2); and
- “unit members are entitled to access to those facilities and services of the University that are appropriate to their professional responsibilities with due regard for the rights of others” (13.1.5).

The Office of Sponsored Programs’ Intellectual Property Policy (doc. II.02) states that the institution “strives to support its faculty, staff, and students by pursuing the commercial development of intellectual and tangible research property resulting from University research” and “provides a number of administrative and legal services to inventors and authors to effectively pursue intellectual property rights and technology transfer” (Section III.A). Intellectual property developed with institutional support (University time, expense, or substantial use of its resources) remains the property of the institution (Article III.B.) and inventions are “considered by the University, in collaboration with the Inventor(s), for opportunities to commercialize the invention” (Article IV.C.2).

The William Jason Library policies reflect the University’s commitment to securing items and information in support of research and free expression. The University’s Equal Opportunity, Harassment, and Non-Discrimination policies and procedures (doc. II.03) include language stating that the harassment policy is not meant to inhibit academic freedom (Section 3). The academic departments offer a diverse set of bylaws, manuals, and policies. Some of these explicitly reference the AAUP’s CBA explanation of academic freedom, while others describe research and teaching expectations that do not infringe on academic freedom.

**Respect for Diversity**

As an HBCU Delaware State University is committed to the ideals of diversity, equity, and inclusion and University handbooks, policies, and procedures consistently reinforce that concept. In 2017 the University established a Diversity and Inclusion Task Force, which falls under the umbrella of the Office of Human Resources. The Task Force’s mission was to evaluate what diversity looks like at DSU, establish practices to foster an environment that embraces inclusion, and develop strategic practices and structures to support diversity.

In spring 2018 the Task Force administered a Diversity and Inclusion Climate Survey (doc. II.04) to approximately 5,000 DSU stakeholders including students, faculty, staff, and
administrators. The survey confirmed that real progress has been made in expanding the international student population and programs and welcoming and supporting the Dreamer students. The digital initiative in which students and faculty were given access to technology with iPads or MacBook’s was also essential in addressing equity.

In March 2020, just days before the University had to shut down due to COVID-19, President Allen issued a proclamation further committing the University to exploring issues of diversity and seeking more opportunities to develop a community-wide recognition and celebration of that diversity. The proclamation states:

Delaware State University is committed to being the most diverse, contemporary HBCU in the United States. To do that, we work diligently to be a campus environment that encompasses structural and social differences which foster a diverse and inclusive community. In concert with Delaware State University’s core values (Diversity, Integrity, Scholarship, Community and Outreach), our mission is to engage our stakeholders and perpetuate initiatives that enhance the diversity and inclusion of our campus.

The University transitioned the Diversity and Inclusion Task Force to a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Council which comprises faculty, staff, students, and administrators committed to leading the University’s efforts in fostering diversity, equity, and inclusion in all aspects of university life. In fall 2020 a culture assessment was undertaken, focusing on COVID-19, civil unrest – in light of the Black Lives Matters protests after George Floyd’s death – and customer service. Additionally, in 2020, the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Council presented two important virtual panel discussions:

- July 28, 2020: A Voice at the Table: A Conversation on Race, Social Justice, and the Power of Your Vote
- October 16, 2020: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Where Do We Go from Here?

During 2021 the Council further explored diversity, equity, and inclusion through multiple listening tour sessions and town hall meetings including:

- October 14, 2021: Superheroes and Victims: A Real-World Conversation about Ableism and Able-Bodies Privilege
- October 21, 2021: The Power of Pronouns in recognition of LGBTQ History Month

In November 2021, the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council launched its first e-journal (doc. II.05) for faculty, staff, and students, entitled “Dynamic Self Matters – Our Commitment to Affirming You.” The purpose of the e-journal is to stimulate intercultural engagement, improve customer service on our campus, elevate varying levels of support to promote cultural competence, and create an inclusive work environment for faculty and staff and a supportive equitable learning environment for students.

The Office of Student Accessibility Services was recently restructured and renamed the Center for Disability Resources (doc. II.06) and moved to the Office of General Counsel to expand its scope to support all students, employees, and campus guests with disability concerns. The challenges faced by students and employees during the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated the
need for a more inclusive approach. The Center provides advising and consultation, professional development, and training on disability-related topics. They have dedicated procedures for varied constituents and provide information on legal and regulatory compliance, access and equity, the proactive application of universal design, physical and electronic accessibility, the high school-to-college and college-to-career transition, and disability scholarships. Training, workshops, and resources are available to the University and community. The University has made tremendous strides when it comes to accessibility. Policies and documentation have improved. Additionally, the University has invested in Blackboard’s Ally program which helps to ensure the University’s course materials and online courses are accessible for everyone.

Grievance Policies (doc. II.07)

Each of the collective bargaining agreements of the University’s five labor unions include detailed and comprehensive grievance and arbitration procedures designed to ensure the due process rights of their members. These matters are addressed by the Office of Human Resources. Administrative policies and procedures concerning equal opportunity, harassment, and non-discrimination, as federally mandated, have clear grievance procedures which are consistent with the policies of the various collective bargaining agreements. The Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP) has federally mandated policies on grievance procedures concerning researchers. Additionally, the University has taken steps to maintain and enforce the highest level of ethical standards and University policies. Concerns of misconduct and any suspicious activities are filed with the Office of Internal Audit, with the option of being anonymous. The Faculty Senate recently refined its Complaint Against Instruction process and form to resolve student grievances with faculty members in a timely fashion.

Conflicts of Interest

While the Board of Trustees bylaws include a clear Conflict of Interest policy (doc. II.08) (see Standard VII, Chapter 9), the rest of the University community is bound to policies outlined in the Employee Handbook, (doc. II.09) collective bargaining agreements, and in the University’s Policies and Procedures. A 2013 policy titled “4.12 Conflict of Interest” (doc. II.10) details the expectations for faculty, staff, and students regarding an array of potential conflicts of interest.

In addition, Section 10.4.3 of the AAUP CBA states clearly that a faculty member may be discharged for disregarding or failing to meet “scholarly and professional standards and ethics,” or for “fraud or misrepresentation of professional preparation, accomplishments or experience in connection with initial appointment or in the submission of materials for evaluation of promotion, tenure, or merit increases or in connection with other University duties and responsibilities.”

Hiring Fairness, Non-Discrimination, and Harassment (Title IX)

Each of the five collective bargaining agreements (doc. II.11) includes detailed and comprehensive procedures concerning the hiring, evaluation, promotion, disciplining, and separation of employees from the institution, and are designed to ensure the due process rights of the members of the respective unions. The Office of Sponsored Programs procedures for
“Responding to Allegations of Research Misconduct” provide detailed and comprehensive formal processes of inquiry and investigation into such allegations, including the possibility of both discipline and separation from the institution.

The policies of academic departments concerning the hiring, evaluation, and promotion (as well as tenure) of departmental faculty normally take the form of “departmental bylaws” as determined by the DSU-AAUP CBA. The colleges have compiled a Promotion and Tenure Handbook (doc. II.12) which provides discipline specific requirements to supplement the CBA. The policies of academic departments concerning the disciplining and separation from the institution are determined by the policies and procedures of the Office of Human Resources and the respective provisions of the collective bargaining agreements.

The University has clearly stated policies that protect all University constituents from harassment and sexual discrimination. (doc. II.03) There is a comprehensive investigatory process for complaints relating to discrimination and harassment. The Office of Title IX is based in the Office of General Counsel and Risk Management. The Title IX Coordinator offers trainings and directs the complaint process with complete confidentiality.

**Honesty and Truthfulness in Communications**

Communications in recruitment, enrollment materials, and University promotion are accurately portrayed. The Department of Marketing and Communications (doc. II.13) reviews major University communiqués for integrity and consistency in reporting, as well as adherence to branding the University’s identity. The University maintains a website section under Institutional Research, Planning and Analytics (IRPA) (doc. II.14) to provide HEOA Compliance and accurate data for presentations. IRPA generates data for all major reports and presentations for internal and external audiences. The eNews internal communication quickly disperses and clarifies critical information in real time if warranted, in addition to its weekly dissemination. Public Safety’s reporting of crime statistics and alert systems, using email and text messaging, the web, and other mediums, are fully operational and transparent.

**Affordability and Financial Aid**

Delaware State University offers the most affordable undergraduate degrees in the state of Delaware. As of fall 2021 42% of undergraduates were awarded Pell grants and 31% were first-generation college students. To ensure that all applicants and matriculating students are aware of the financial implications and responsibilities of attendance, multiple resources are readily available through the University website. The Financial Aid webpage includes step-by-step instructions to guide students and their families through the financial aid application process including completing the FAFSA application, estimating the cost of attendance, and staying informed of their financial status. The Admissions Resources webpage also includes a listing of tuition and fees and access to the Buffalo Noel Levitz True Cost Calculator to enable students to make appropriate calculations. The Financial Aid (doc. II.15) section also offers information on scholarships for In-State Freshman, Out-of-State Incoming Freshman, Returning and Transfer Students, and the OSHER/Crankstart Scholarships that support students returning after a significant break in their education. Other resources include links to the Nelnet Business Solution
payment plan, information on student employment and work study, and the satisfactory academic progress (SAP) requirements students must maintain to be awarded ongoing federal aid.

Among the reasons that DSU rose to the #10 national rank for HBCUs in the US News & World Report (doc. II.16) annual rankings is due to gains in the social mobility index, a new metric that assesses Delaware State’s ability to support and graduate students from low-resource communities at the same or better rate than the general student population. DSU ranks in the top 1% of all institutions in this important measure.

Compliance: see separate compliance report.

C. Analysis

The careful review of University’s policies and procedures related to ethics and integrity clearly demonstrate compliance. No omissions were uncovered in policies addressing academic and intellectual freedom, freedom of expression, intellectual property rights, conflicts of interest, dishonesty in communications, and affordability and accessibility. However, analysis does reveal that variations exist, best described as limitations regarding clarification, consistency, and periodic review.

Clarification

While policies and procedures acknowledge the importance of respecting a diversity of backgrounds, more could be done to recognize and appreciate diversity of ideas and perspectives. The Diversity and Inclusion Taskforce Survey demonstrated that the University needs to deploy more intentional efforts to support the LGBTQ community members, an issue currently being addressed through campus-wide education through town hall discussions and a diversity, equity, and inclusion training series. The University has received awards (doc.II.17) for extensive work in promoting diversity and will continue to update written policies to reflect the University’s commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Consistency

Academic and intellectual freedom, freedom of expression, and intellectual property rights are clearly designated in bargaining agreements and by the offices most directly involved in supporting these rights. To ensure consistency, it is recommended that a departmental bylaws template be supplied to ensure that each department addresses all important right and procedures.

Policies and procedures for the following areas and offices that concern students at the University include adequate complaint and/or grievance procedures:

- the Office of Academic Affairs, as related to the right to appeal grades and the right to register complaints against instruction
- the Office of Housing and Residential Education
- the Office of Student Judicial Affairs
- the Office of Student Leadership and Activities
- the Office of International Affairs
• the Office of Admissions
• the Office of Financial Aid
• the Office of the Registrar
• the Office of Student Accounts.

The University requires compliance with provisions of the Employee Handbook and policies relating to at-will employment. All departments are expected to utilize these resources to ensure consistency when administering discipline or recommending suspension or termination. Department heads are required to vet proposed discipline with the Office of Human Resources for sanctions that impose suspensions or recommendations for termination. During professional development workshops employees are updated on disciplinary processes and procedures for classified and non-classified employees.

The University adopted a Civility Policy 4.43 (doc. II.18) to codify expectations for all employees to interact with each other professionally in a respectful and civil manner and to value each individual’s opinions, perspectives, and contributions to the University community. The AAUP CBA has included this language in Article 8.6.4.

Assessment and review

The University employees who are responsible for the policies and/or procedures in the various divisions and offices of the University engage in periodic reviews of those policies to ensure consistency and integrity throughout the campus community.

D. Continuous Improvement and Innovation

The REACH 2026 strategic plan includes Enhancing Operational Effectiveness as one of its four pillars. Among its goals are facilitating cross-functional communication and improving customer service for both internal and external customers. Most meaningful for the purposes of ethics and integrity is that creating a “proactive operating culture that promotes and enforces policies to guide efficient practices” is a guiding principle in multiple transformation initiatives. Collaboratively developing a university-wide communication plan will also support this goal.
Chapter 5: Standard III: Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience

An institution provides students with learning experiences that are characterized by rigor and coherence of all program, certificate, and degree levels, regardless of instructional modality. All learning experiences, regardless of modality, program pace/schedule, level, and setting are consistent with higher education expectations.

Delaware State University is in compliance with Standard III.

A. Overview

Though founded as a teaching university, Delaware State University (DSU) is now a comprehensive institution granting graduate and doctoral degrees along with undergraduate degrees. DSU is committed to providing meaningful education programs relying on teaching excellence that integrates research and outreach to prepare our students to become capable and productive leaders for the future.

The Student Learning Experience Working Group was led by department chairs in Sociology and Criminal Justice and Social Work. They were supported by representatives from each college, including Associate Deans and faculty, as well as the Director of Assessment and the Coordinator of the Center for Teaching and Learning. Also included were representatives from the Office of Distance Education and Learning Technologies, Residence Life, the Library, Advising, and the Office of International Affairs. This group was primarily composed of faculty and this broad representation enabled a thorough exploration of the status and quality of our programs across academic disciplines and colleges. Representatives from other divisions also helped to explore co-curricular activities which support student learning and success. As with the other Working Groups, subcommittees were established to explore individual criteria and each subcommittee completed the analysis of their criteria using collected evidence, created a chapter outline, and made recommendations for improvement moving forward.

B. Description

Academic Programs

Delaware State University offers a wide variety of certificate, undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs that lead to a degree or other recognized higher education credential as documented in the respective catalogs. (See URLs) All programs are carefully crafted to create a coherent student learning experience that prepares students for future careers and/or education. DSU has 39 minors and, as a result of the Wesley acquisition, four recently established associate’s degrees in Biological Sciences, Liberal Studies, Psychology, and Social Work. The current undergraduate and graduate degrees, by college, can be found in tables 5.1 and 5.2.

---

3 College titles in the tables are abbreviated as acronyms: CAST: College of Agricultural, Science and Technology; CHESS: College of Humanities, Education and Social Sciences, COB: College of Business and WCHBS: Wesley College of Health and Behavioral Sciences.
### Table 5.1
Delaware State University Undergraduate Programs by College

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CAST</th>
<th>CHESS</th>
<th>COB</th>
<th>WCHBS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>Art Education</td>
<td>Accounting</td>
<td>Kinesiology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biochemistry Health Professions</td>
<td>Criminal Justice</td>
<td>Aviation</td>
<td>Nursing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biological Sciences</td>
<td>Early Childhood Education</td>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>Psychology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td>Elementary Education</td>
<td>Hospitality &amp; Tourism Management</td>
<td>Public Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemistry Pre-Pharmacy</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Management</td>
<td>Social Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Science</td>
<td>History</td>
<td>Sport Management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering Physics</td>
<td>Integrated Studies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food and Nutritional Sciences</td>
<td>International Studies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Technology</td>
<td>Law Studies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics Education</td>
<td>Liberal Studies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>Mass Communications</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics with Data Analytics</td>
<td>Middle Level Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Resources</td>
<td>Music</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physics</td>
<td>Music Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textiles and Apparel Studies</td>
<td>Music Industry</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Music Therapy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>New Media in Arts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Political Science</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sociology</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Studio Art</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 5.2
Delaware State University Graduate Programs by College

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CAST</th>
<th>CHESS</th>
<th>COB</th>
<th>WCHBS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture, M.S.</td>
<td>Educational Leadership, M. Ed.</td>
<td>Business Administration, M.B.A.</td>
<td>Nursing, M.S.N.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied Chemistry, M.S.</td>
<td>Justice Studies, M.A.</td>
<td>Sport Administration, M.S.A.</td>
<td>Occupational Therapy, M.O.T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied Optics, M.S.</td>
<td>Public Administration, M.P.A.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Social Work, M.S.W.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biological Sciences, M.S.</td>
<td>TESOL/Bilingual Education, M.A.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Science, M.S.</td>
<td>Teaching, M.A.T.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Sciences and Biotechnology, M.S.</td>
<td>Educational Leadership, Ed.D.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics, Applied, M.S.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics, Pure, M.S.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Graduate degrees are coordinated by the School of Graduate, Adult and Extended Studies (SGAES) in collaboration with the college that houses the discipline.

The number of DSU Online programs has expanded significantly in recent years, although enrollment remains relatively low. These online programs are listed in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3
DSU Online Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Undergraduate Online Programs</th>
<th>Graduate Online Programs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accounting, B.S.</td>
<td>Business Administration, M.B.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Resource Management, B.S.</td>
<td>Nursing, M.S.N.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal Studies, B.S.</td>
<td>Public Administration, M.P.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management, with a concentration in General Management, B.S.</td>
<td>Social Work, M.S.W.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychology, B.S.</td>
<td>Sport Administration, M.S.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Health, B.S.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Work, B.S.W.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certificate in Alcohol and Drug Counseling Program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The University added fifteen programs in the fall of 2021 as part of the Wesley College acquisition. These adoptions support efficient degree completion for the Wesley Legacy students who joined Delaware State. Even more meaningful is that programs such as the new associate degrees, the bachelor’s in Law Studies and in International Studies, the Master of Arts in Teaching, the Master of Occupational Therapy, and enhancement of the Nursing master’s program enable Delaware State University to expand its footprint and outreach in the state of Delaware, a key component of our mission. The programs added as part of the Wesley acquisition are listed in Table 5.4.
Table 5.4
New Programs arising from Wesley Acquisition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Certificate Programs</th>
<th>Associate’s Programs</th>
<th>Bachelor’s Programs</th>
<th>Graduate Programs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Informatics Certificate</td>
<td>A.A. in Biological Sciences</td>
<td>B.A. in Biological Sciences</td>
<td>M.A. in Justice Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Master’s Certificate in Adult Gerontology</td>
<td>A.A. in Liberal Studies</td>
<td>Replace B.S. in Forensic Biology with Forensic Biology Minor and Concentration</td>
<td>Master of Nursing: Clinical Nurse Specialist in Adult Gerontology and RN to MSN Revision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A.S. in Psychology</td>
<td>B.A. in International Studies</td>
<td>Master of Occupational Therapy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>B.A. in Law Studies</td>
<td>M.A. in Teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>B.A. in Music Therapy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2014 Delaware State University began a Program Prioritization Initiative (PPI)(doc.I.21) to increase the efficient use of limited resources. The Division of Academic Affairs prioritized academic programs placing them on a continuum from elimination to retention to investment. The Program Prioritization Taskforce, made up primarily of faculty with representatives from Institutional Research and Assessment, created a roadmap for investment and reallocation of resources over time. Employing a validated framework developed by Robert Dickeson (2010)\(^4\), the PPI Taskforce developed a survey instrument and an evaluation rubric to examine eighty-two degree programs.

Programs were reviewed not only in terms of enrollment, retention, degree production, instructional productivity, and costs, but also to assess the appropriate balance of available resources against (1) the obligation to respond to the external demand for the program; (2) the program costs; and (3) the quality of program inputs. Reasons for retaining and/or investing in a program included:

- centrality to the institutional mission,
- support provided for other necessary programs,
- quality of program outcomes,
- maintaining institutional program diversity,
- regional uniqueness and relevance of the program, and
- recent developments that may lead to increased enrollments in the future (opportunity analysis).

Nineteen degree programs were identified as high priority and recommended for growth and investment including Aviation, Nursing, Psychology, and the Educational Leadership Ed.D.

Programs falling below a certain threshold were considered low priority by the PPI and slated for elimination. In January 2016 the Board of Trustees voted to deactivate twenty-three programs identified as low priority. Several of these were highly specialized education programs.

Program Information

Delaware State University program requirements and learning outcomes are carefully reviewed by the departments, the Faculty Senate, and the Registrar’s Office to guarantee that the program described in the University catalog is accurate and updated. The catalog includes course descriptions and curriculum sheets so that a student’s course of study is clearly outlined. The Office of Academic Advising works closely with individual departments to ensure that curriculum changes and updates to programs are available to students. The Office of Academic Advising assigns professional advisors to each discipline, allowing the advisors and the programs to communicate frequently regarding changes, updates, and registration.

Program Coherence and Curriculum Mapping

Program coherence is ensured through the two-part process of curriculum mapping. First each degree program links their program learning goals (doc. III.01) to the University and General Education learning goals. Programs also include requirements for research, experiential learning, and professional skill development related to their discipline and industry. The second step maps the program learning goals to the course student learning objectives (doc. III.02) to show the progression of student learning from introductory to advanced levels of skill and knowledge as they advance through the program. The final capstone experience, a requirement of the General Education program, requires that students demonstrate their comprehensive understanding of their discipline and the synthesis of complex ideas explored through their course of study.

Faculty and Teaching

Student Success and Academic Excellence lie at the heart of Delaware State University’s mission. Effective teaching and student engagement in that learning are essential to fulfilling those goals. The University’s mission to support underserved communities requires an even higher level of teaching expertise and comprehensive support for students. The Delaware State University faculty reflect the institution’s commitment to those ideals, whether considering their careful development of program learning goals and curriculum requirements, professional qualifications, (doc. III.03) engagement in professional development to ensure their pedagogical, andragogical, and technological expertise, and through the regular evaluation of their teaching.

DSU utilizes qualified adjunct faculty (doc. III.04) who teach primarily at the 100-200 level, in clinical components, and in graduate programs. DSU takes pride in the long-term relationships between the University and its adjunct faculty, many of whom have taught at the University for years.

The University’s hiring, evaluation, and promotion processes seek to ensure that all faculty are qualified and committed to their teaching responsibilities, including ongoing professional development along with scholarly activities. The AAUP CBA (doc. II.01) the Promotion and Tenure Handbook (doc. II.12) outlines the teaching, research, and service requirements used to evaluate the faculty for promotion and tenure. The hiring process includes a teaching demonstration to assess a candidate’s potential in the classroom. Faculty are evaluated (doc. III.05) by their students, their chair, and a peer in their department. All faculty are to have at least
one classroom observation each year and, for faculty who need support, such observations may occur more often. The Student Complaint against Instruction process, (doc. II.07) recently updated by the Teaching Effectiveness Committee of the Faculty Senate, offers students the opportunity to work through challenges directly with faculty members and, if unsatisfied, to formally engage the chair or dean to resolve the issues. Faculty who are not performing at an acceptable level are required to create a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) (doc. III.06) which is developed with and monitored by the department chair to support their improvement.

To expand student engagement in learning and ensure that the assessment of student learning is effective, the University has intentionally moved far beyond the concept of a “sage on a stage,” delivering lectures and periodically assessing student through exams, to implementing a great variety of learning activities and the production of diverse student artifacts for assessment purposes. Among the variety of teaching activities to support student success are

- a first-year seminar that combines training in essential academic skills with career exploration,
- external speakers,
- student conferences,
- flipped classrooms,
- writing-intensive courses,
- group projects to support problem-solving in a collaborative fashion,
- undergraduate research and presentations,
- experiential and service learning through partnerships and outreach,
- study abroad,
- internships, and
- capstone projects.

DSU has expanded its commitment to faculty professional development, especially in the areas of active learning strategies, student engagement, and use of technology in and outside the classroom significantly. Faculty professional development (doc. III.07) to support the breadth of learning opportunities is offered through several units including the CTL, ODELT, the Digital Initiative (Apple iPad) technical support and, more recently, funding from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute Inclusive Excellence Grant (HHMI-IE). (doc. I.06) This training, detailed in Standard I, Chapter 3, includes on-campus and virtual workshops on such diverse issues as pedagogy, technology, assessment, the promotion and tenure process, and University policies and procedures.

The CTL offers teaching mini-grants of up to $2,000 and travel funding to attend conferences related to teaching, learning, assessment, and/or curriculum development. The CTL maintains a wealth of reference materials on its website. ODELT offers Blackboard training. The Association of College and University Educators (ACUE) Effective Teaching Practices Course (doc. III.08) runs through the CTL. Completers receive a certificate from ACUE and a $750 stipend from the CTL. CTL and HHMI-IE have sponsored faculty and support staff to become Quality Matters (QM) trained.

The HHMI-IE grant initially focused on training faculty to develop flipped classrooms to strengthen student engagement in STEM courses. They were instructed in new technologies for
use in their classrooms as well as Blackboard training. During the 2019-2020 academic year, the grant started to focus more on transitioning STEM courses into an online environment to support non-traditional STEM students. The COVID-19 pandemic soon turned this training course into an institution-wide endeavor. Faculty completed the course during a six-week period over the summer of 2020.

Student Career Development

While the Office of Career Services has always supported students with career fairs and training workshops, the University has also expanded its career-preparation activities at the department and college level to include more diverse experiences and opportunities.

The COB has been holding “DEEP Day” (doc. III.09) since 2016. The Delaware Executive Exchange Program (DEEP) Day is a daylong event where industry leaders deliver keynote addresses and hold panel discussions. Students focus on soft skills such as collaboration and teamwork, personal branding, mock interviews, workshops, and the business case competition. The 2019 competition challenged student teams to develop strategies to enable M&T Bank to better address the needs of multicultural communities. The 2020 challenge addressed how Barclays should present diversity and inclusion (D&I) to internal and external audiences. The DEEP Day event has grown steadily, from only four sponsors in 2016 to 25 sponsors and over 700 student registrants for the 2021 event. Virtual DEEP Days were held in 2020 and 2021.

The Department of Mass Communications holds “Mass Comm Day” (doc.III.10) designed to connect students with alumni and professionals currently working in the industry. The day includes panel discussions, workshops, and a reception. Students have the opportunity meet with professionals representing companies who need interns and employees in the Digital Media, Public Relations and Advertising, and Journalism fields. Students are also connected with graduate schools if they wish to continue their education. Unfortunately, Mass Comm Day temporarily ceased in 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic, but it will restart again once the pandemic is under control. Past presentations and discussion have included topics such as “Covering Washington D.C. and Beyond,” “Social Media: How Far is Too Far?,” and “Industry Preparation: Are You Ready?”

The Law Studies program, (doc.III.11) which has transitioned from a minor to a bachelor’s degree program as part of the Wesley acquisition, has consistently secured funding from the Law Studies Admission Council to send DSU students to the New York Law School Forum. The size of these grants and numbers of students in attendance grew steadily from only six students attending in 2014 to 31 by 2019. More recently a $10,000 grant from Morris James LLP underwrites the cost of fees for the Law School Admissions Test (LSAT) and prep course tuition. The percentage of law school admissions for students of color is only 11%. For low-income students, many of whom hold down several jobs, this additional support is essential as these fees can be daunting.

Through DSU’s commitment to outreach the University has developed multiple partnerships with the intention of creating internship and service-learning opportunities for students while also extending DSU’s commitment to engaging with and supporting local communities.
JP Morgan Chase’s (doc. III.12) December 2020 $1 million award supports a two-year Advancing Black Pathways (ABP) Initiative. This includes internship opportunities, Quality Matters training for faculty, and helping students develop educational portfolios starting in their first year of study.

Capital One (doc.III.13) is enhancing its recruiting relationship with DSU by expanding student opportunities to pursue careers within the company. The partnership emphasizes careers in business analysis, tech development, and product development. The bank will be assigning a dedicated recruiter to work with the University to increase Capital One hiring of DSU’s graduates. It offers access to Capital One up-skill programs for first and second-year students and the HBCU Tech Mini-Mester, a two-week coding skills program to prepare students for STEM-focused internships. This relationship also included the donation of the Wilmington waterfront building to DSU where the School of Graduate, Adult and Extended Studies will soon be located. This location will include a Teen Warehouse and workforce development center.

The Department of Accounting, Economics and Finance secured a four-year grant from Schwab Advisor Services for a Financial Literacy Institute. This grant enables the program to expand its financial planning curriculum and renovate the Financial Network Trading Room in the COB.

In fall 2019 the Office of Undergraduate Research, Experiential Learning and Honors (URELAH) (doc. I.07) was created to coordinate these diverse efforts to engage students in research, experiential learning, and service-learning opportunities and oversee the Honors Program. Formerly these activities were managed at a departmental and college level. This centralization will enable the University to efficiently secure and guide students through these important learning opportunities, while enhancing their skills for future careers and study.

**General Education**

The University’s 39-credit General Education Program (GEP) supports all students to become educated persons and enhances and reinforces the students’ program of study. The University’s learning goals require the development of essential skills in communication, computation, and critical thinking. These skills not only reinforce student growth in their chosen program but encourage lifelong learning. Additionally, the GEP seeks to instill a sense of self-worth, an appreciation of the complexity of the human condition, and to develop a global perspective. These goals, along with studies in their disciplines, foster graduates with the requisite knowledge, skills, and sense of purpose to lead meaningful and productive lives. The GEP was revised (doc. III.14) in 2019 to make it more seamless in its integration with the academic programs.

In 2018 a DSU team of six faculty members from several departments were chosen to attend the **AAC&U General Education and Assessment Summer Institute** in response to concerns expressed by faculty, students, staff, and administrators about the structure and effectiveness of the GEP. These concerns included, among others, the perception that general education consisted of a fragmented menu of courses with little relation to a student’s major, that students were not achieving proficiency in essential learning outcomes, and that the general education requirements acted as a barrier to student success, negatively impacting retention and graduation rates. During
the 2018-2019 academic year, the general education student learning goals were condensed from eleven Across-the-Curriculum goals to five broad areas essential to student growth that are scaffolded across a student’s course of study. This more cohesive program fulfills both the University’s mission to provide students the depth and breadth of a well-rounded liberal arts education while pursuing their career goals in their chosen field. Figure 5.1 illustrates these five concepts.

Fig. 5.1. General Education Program Five Learning Concepts: “The 5 Cs”

These goals emphasize the communication and cognitive skills that should be mastered through the GEP and reinforced throughout the major. The goal of creativity is more closely linked to a student’s particular discipline, activities often associated with the capstone experience in synthesizing complex ideas and developing student artifacts demonstrating mastery appropriate to their major and their industry. Civic Engagement is experienced broadly across the University experience, through academic, co-curricular, and community activities to support the University’s mission of outreach and creating ethical and productive global leaders. Central to all these concepts is the academic content found in the disciplines. These goals are also mapped to the University Student Learning Goals.
The General Education Committee created rubrics to assess student learning in the 5Cs and utilizes them when faculty assess students in General Education courses using our in-house Assessment Data Collection System (ADCS). Starting in fall 2019 the new rubrics were tested. Figure 5.2 demonstrates the levels of communication proficiency demonstrated in the assessment of 12 General Education courses. Standard V, Chapter 7 explores the findings of the Assessment Data Collection System in much more detail.

![FALL 2019 5C Communication - ADCS Data, Pilot test, n = 12 sections](image)

Fig. 5.2 ADCS findings on communication, fall 2019

The General Education Committee also created definitions and rubrics for the six breadth areas that students can explore through a great variety of courses offered across the University. Table 5.5 shows the credits required in each breadth area.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Breadth Area</th>
<th>Minimum Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Sciences: economics, sociology, political science, psychology, mass communications and education</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts/Humanities: languages, philosophy, the arts</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Science with Laboratory</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.5

Breadth Areas and Credits required in General Education Program
Another critical component of the General Education revision was the restructuring of the University Seminar (doc. III.15) courses that students complete during their first year. In its previous iteration the primary text focused primarily on critical thinking skills. The restructured course instead utilizes a text that addresses more comprehensive skills needed for college success including learning styles, time management, essential skills in reading, writing, and note and test-taking, financial considerations, and career exploration. Three quarters of the curriculum is common to all course sections while one quarter is left to the faculty teaching the course, permitting them to focus more closely on their discipline, its academic expectations, and career possibilities. University Seminar also utilizes the Anthology Student Strengths Inventory to support students in the exploration of their interests, strengths, and weaknesses.

C. Analysis

Academic programming and effective teaching and learning lie at the heart of what Delaware State University seeks to accomplish. This requires a meaningful review of programs, faculty, teaching methodologies, and activities crucial to ongoing success of the students and continued growth of the programs. The analysis of the student learning experience focuses on four primary issues, the growth of programs since the 2016 Program Prioritization Initiative, the impact of faculty professional development and COVID on learning, the diversity of educational activities, and the recent redesign of the General Education program.

Program Prioritization Initiative and Wesley Acquisition

From the Program Prioritization Initiative (doc.I.21) that began in 2014 through the acquisition of Wesley College in 2021, Delaware State University has systematically examined its programs to ensure that they reflect the University’s mission to offer access and opportunity to diverse populations, contribute to state priorities, and support the sustainability and development of the global community. In identifying those programs that most support our mission and making investments in them, we have witnessed growth in multiple areas.

Graduate degrees have been added in Criminal Justice, Teaching English as a Second Language, Education, Sport Management, Nursing, Social Work, Public Administration, and an Integrative degree in Agriculture, Food, and Environmental Sciences. Enrollment in graduate programs has expanded from 335 in 2016 to 801 in 2021, particularly in Social Work, Education, Sport Administration, Public Administration, and Business Administration, and the Master of Occupational Therapy (MOT). Figure 5.3 displays this growth without the MOT numbers.
For undergraduate degrees, growth has been noteworthy in Computer and Information Sciences, Nursing, Accounting, Management, and Aviation. This growth is displayed in Figure 5.4.

The Master of Arts in Teaching was reinstated as part of the Wesley acquisition. The Wesley program is particularly appealing as it supports those with four-year degrees in other disciplines to become certified as middle or secondary school teachers.

This program expansion demonstrates the careful consideration of programs that fulfill DSU’s mission. This growth is balanced against thoughtful investment using limited resources helping DSU to grow, despite the enrollment challenges faced by institutions of higher education.
Faculty and Teaching

Delaware State has been able to maintain its healthy student faculty ratio of 16:1. DSU added full-time Wesley faculty as part of the acquisition but expanding programs still require more adjunct instructors, especially for the clinical components of some curricula. Reliance on adjuncts was also exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic as the number of retirees grew. These trends are displayed in Table 5.6.

Table 5.6
Faculty Rank Distribution, Fall 2018 - Fall 2021, (IRPA)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty by Rank</th>
<th>F2018</th>
<th>F2019</th>
<th>F2020</th>
<th>F2021</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adjunct</td>
<td>36.3%</td>
<td>35.6%</td>
<td>38.4%</td>
<td>48.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lecturer</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
<td>12.1%</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
<td>12.1%</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
<td>13.7%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Professor</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
<td>23.9%</td>
<td>24.1%</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The diversification of professional development opportunities in pedagogy and technology has required a significant commitment by the faculty and staff to maintain their expertise. Since the inception of ACUE 73 faculty and staff from across the University have completed the training, and the last 30-member cohort is currently underway. At present, twenty faculty and staff have earned certificates in Quality Matters training and funding is available to train even more.

During the summer of 2020, nine cohorts of 15 faculty and staff from across the University enrolled in the six-week HHMI Online Course Conversion training. Participants indicated that they believed the course was very helpful in preparing them to teach virtually for the 2020-2021 academic year as shown in a survey of 81 participants shared in Table 5.7.

Table 5.7
Online Course Conversion Training Survey Results 2020, N=81

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Course materials were beneficial</th>
<th>Feel better prepared to create online course</th>
<th>Feel better prepared to teach online</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong Agree</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>39.5%</td>
<td>34.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither Agree/Disagree</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A survey completed at the end of fall semester 2020 reveals that faculty successfully applied their new knowledge. Faculty reported feeling their teaching improved and that students were more engaged and successful as a result of the training. Figure 5.5 portrays these findings.
The transition to a virtual environment has created challenges and discomfort for some. During 2020-2021, DSU offered 85% of its courses virtually in fall and 75% in spring. Surveys indicate that connectivity and student engagement in an online environment were the primary concerns for both students and instructors. For students, personal responsibilities including jobs, family obligations, and sharing technology with household members were listed as the top obstacles. Faculty were somewhat satisfied with the experience but cited student engagement and connectivity. Students surveyed (doc. III.16) acknowledged understanding the expectations of their courses (assignment submission, communication, and assessment), had sufficient technology, and could access their course materials, a perception remained that learning was more difficult in a virtual environment. To address these concerns the University has worked to return as many students to campus as possible with appropriate COVID-19 safeguards and testing protocols. (doc. III.17)

Over the past five years enormous progress has been made in enriching DSU’s culture so that teaching excellence is not simply implied but actively pursued through diverse professional development opportunities and the digital initiative. Expanded training in the use of technology, not simply for virtual delivery but for everyday use in the classroom, was particularly fortuitous in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. As we all have experienced, the rapid transition to a virtual teaching and learning environment has created both challenges and opportunities. That such a high percentage of faculty and staff were willing and frequently engaged in these trainings attests to their commitment to teaching excellence in support of student success.

**Diversity of Learning Opportunities and Career Preparation**

Data gathered through our tri-annual participation in the National Survey on Student Engagement (NSSE) (doc. III.18) offers a meaningful perspective on the variety of high-impact practices offered to DSU students. The NSSE data for 2014, 2017, and 2020 demonstrate that student engagement in high-impact practices expands significantly between the first and senior years. The survey section of high impact practices shows that while a noteworthy percentage of
first-year students report engagement in high-impact practices in their first year, 56-63%, by their senior year 95% of students report this engagement.

While DSU falls slightly below the level of other participating HBCUs for first-year student engagement in high-impact practices, by their senior year DSU consistently outpaced the other HBCUs and Mid East Public institutions. Figure 5.6 shows the NSSE data for 2020.

![Fig. 5.6 DSU student engagement in high-impact practices compared to other participating institutions, 2020.](image)

Of note is that Delaware State outpaces other HBCU’s in the areas of research with faculty members, internships, field experiences, and culminating senior experiences as shown in Table 5.8.

Table 5.8
Percentage of Seniors Participating in High-Impact Practices compared to HBCUs, 2014, 2017, 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DSU</td>
<td>HBCUs</td>
<td>DSU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research with Faculty</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internships/Field Experiences</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culminating Senior Project</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These results support the University’s focus on undergraduate research and experiential learning. The establishment of URELAH will help the University to pull together these diverse opportunities that have, until now, primarily been managed across colleges and departments. Considering the plethora of opportunities that already exist, this office plans to engage even more students at multiple stages in their academic career.

**General Education Revision and Assessment Data**

The General Education program redesign is ongoing, but multiple primary goals have already been achieved. By condensing the learning goals, students have more courses to choose from to fulfill their requirements. The streamlined assessment process enables the use of fewer rubrics in a greater variety of courses. The clear links between the learning goals of General Education and the academic disciplines are more clearly delineated. The University Seminar redesign is making the course more relevant to both students and faculty with increased emphasis on the skills required for college success and career exploration.
The General Education Committee of the Faculty Senate continues to seek input from students, faculty, and advisors for further improvements to University Seminar and the General Education program. The Committee is currently looking at the associate degree requirements that arose from the Wesley acquisition. The role of general education in prior learning assessment and experiences is currently being assessed as part of the Prior Learning Experience (PLE) initiative (see Standard IV, Chapter 6).

D. Continuous Improvement and Innovation

The University is pleased with recent growth and the expansion of its academic program offerings, particularly the complementary programs acquired from Wesley. It is essential that this growth is strategic, supported by appropriate admissions and enrollment processes, advising and academic support services (Standard IV), and that they ultimately support the financial health of the institution (Standard VI). The first pillar of the new REACH 2026 (doc.I.22) strategic plan is titled “Building the Whole Student” and includes two components, Student Success and Academic Excellence. Student Success emphasizes retention and graduation rates, experiential learning, career placement, and the quality of the campus (Standard IV). Academic Excellence centers on aligning learning objectives with best-in-class industry standards, expanding professional development in evidence-based and innovative pedagogies across all teaching modalities, and further developing the continuous improvement model by creating a centralized student learning assessment system (Standard III and V).

As noted in Chapter 3, the University is working with management consultants to develop a transformation plan with growth opportunities to support the strategic plan. The initiatives are a product of the transformation workstreams. (doc.I.24) These initiatives fall into three broad categories:

- Student Learning
  - establish a system for biennial review of program learning goals based on student success and industry standards,
  - create a first-year research experience for students in the Wesley College of Health and Behavioral Sciences,
  - create online mini-courses that focus on essential skills such as writing, critical thinking, and presentation,
  - develop a financial literacy program for students,
  - develop a sophomore-year experience involving academic, social, and civic engagement, with emphasis on progress toward academic, career, and life goals,
  - encourage more departments to use Open Resource Materials in their courses to reduce costs for students,
  - develop partnerships with local organizations to expand research, outreach, and experiential learning opportunities,
  - implement a Department of Nursing Summer Immersion: Residency and Boot Camp Program,

- Faculty Development
  - expand the HHMI faculty professional development activities to address needs of specific instructor cohorts: adjuncts, new faculty, and online instructors
o diversify professional development opportunities for faculty to support 100% participation,
o include faculty “champions” from each college as members of the Advising and Retention Task Force,
o expand training for faculty in their capacity as student mentors,

- Student Support
  o seek articulation agreements with institutions in neighboring states to grow the transfer student population,
  o increase scholarships for Honors students to expand the program,
  o use the Early Alert system to track and develop success plans for students who are struggling academically, and
  o improve the course needs forecasting process to ensure timely course offerings to ensure efficient progress toward graduation.

Establishing meaningful key performance indicators (KPIs) for the REACH 2026 strategic plan and the Transformation Initiatives is currently underway and will ensure thoughtful pursuit of these goals.
Chapter 6: Standard IV: Support of the Student Experience

Across all educational experiences, settings, levels, and instructional modalities, the institution recruits and admits students whose interests, abilities, experiences, and goals are congruent with its mission and educational offerings. The institution commits to student retention, persistence, completion, and success through a coherent and effective support system sustained by qualified professionals, which enhances the quality of the learning environment, contributes to the educational experience, and fosters student success.

Delaware State University is in compliance with Standard IV.

A. Overview

Delaware State University (DSU) has deliberately created an environment that fosters student success by identifying and supporting students’ unique interests, needs, and abilities from admission to graduation. The second PRIDE 2020 goal, Student Success, focuses on increasing retention and graduation rates, growing enrollment to 5,000 students, expanding support programs, and places greater emphasis on graduate school and/or career placement. The collaborative efforts of the divisions of Academic Affairs, Enrollment Management, Student Affairs, Institutional Advancement, and Athletics helped DSU meet these goals. Increased effective communication between such diverse areas as advising, enrollment management, residential life, student government and activities, health services, events, athletics, and career services, coupled with academics, enables DSU to provide students with a 360-degree experience. These divisions offer students a cadre of support services through financial aid, advising, academic support, and co-curricular programs. The institution focuses the same intensity on the unique needs of international and online populations, offering programs and services that best incorporate their experience with the HBCU mission. This chapter documents the coordination and collaborative practices in student success, from matriculation to graduation.

The Student Support Working Group was composed of representatives from the many divisions and offices that provide services to students. Briefly, this includes the Office of Student Success, Student Affairs, Financial Aid, Student Accounts, the Registrar’s Office, Admissions, Accessibility Services, Athletics, Title IX, and several faculty members from different colleges. They compiled an enormous amount of documentation from across these diverse divisions.

B. Description

Admissions Process

In accordance with our mission, DSU identifies the level of preparedness of the students it admits and establishes appropriate policies that ensure accurate placement of students in academic programs that provide the greatest opportunity for success in their academic pursuits. Admission to DSU is granted to all applicants whose academic and individual qualifications demonstrate proficiency for success. All applicants, regardless of race, creed, national origin, or handicap, are given equal consideration for admission.
DSU’s admissions policies, criteria, and processes are published on the University Admissions website. (doc. IV.01) Prospective students can access these materials by clicking on a persona (new freshmen, graduate, transfer, and other). The majors and program listing under the Academics tab provides an at-a-glance sense of DSU’s degree offerings. Admissions also distributes this information in printed form. Admissions criteria are printed on all applications, and the University’s annual viewbook includes an at-a-glance major chart. The undergraduate and graduate course catalogs provide information on degree programs, curricular requirements, and policies.

The Higher Education Act of 1965 (HEA), as amended by the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 (HEOA), includes many disclosure and reporting requirements for higher education institutions. The DSU Consumer Information (HEOA compliance) (doc. II.14) information is updated annually through a collaboration between the Admissions Office and the Office of Institutional Research, Planning and Analytics (IRPA), and can be accessed from either webpage.

Delaware State University is an institution whose mission is to provide higher education to diverse populations of Delaware, the nation, and the world. As a significant portion of our students comes from under-served communities, the admissions standards offer opportunities for higher education that reflect our mission. The admission requirements include:
- Diploma from an accredited four-year school or senior high school,
- Minimum GPA of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale,
- Nineteen (19) course units with a C or better (4 English, 3 Mathematics, 2 History, 1 Social Studies, 3 Science, 2 Foreign Languages, and 4 Electives),
- Currently Optional because of the pandemic: Test scores of 800 on the SAT (math and critical reading combined), or 800 or above (after concordance) on the 2016 redesigned SAT, or 17 of better composite score on the ACT.

International students (doc. IV.01) are required to complete the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) unless English is the official language of their country of origin. Their TOEFL score must have a satisfactory score of a minimum of 550 on the paper-based test, or an equivalent score of 79 on the internet-based TOEFL, or a 6.5 minimum IELTS score or documentation (i.e., a transcript, certificate of completion of a program, etc.) of satisfactory completion of an intensive curriculum of English instruction. Transcripts of students educated outside the United States are evaluated by the World Education Service (WES) or the Educational Credential Evaluators (ECE) and forwarded to the Office of Admissions. All academic records must be converted into their U.S. education equivalents by a university-recognized credential agency to obtain transfer credit for education completed at non-U.S. postsecondary institutions.

Weekly admissions tele-counseling guides students through the enrollment funnel, provides clarification of admissions criteria, and answers basic financial aid questions. The Office of Admissions reorganized to provide students and their respective families a more personalized experience. Individual counselors are assigned to transfer, international, and graduate populations for improved information flow. Counselors also recruit special populations such as high-ability students, special scholarship-eligible students, and minority students in their
territories. DSU Alumni contribute by representing the University at college fairs, participating in career fairs, appearing at local events, or visiting campus with prospective students. The Office of Admissions produces transfer student and graduate student-related orientations.

Affordability and Financial Aid

As a public institution, DSU has in-state and out-of-state tuition rates. For the Wesley Legacy students, the drop in tuition cost was 37% for out-of-state and 74% for in-state. In fact, DSU is more affordable than other Delaware institutions. DSU leadership strives to keep tuition increases modest, and flat in some years, to enhance affordability for students. Table 6.1 shows that DSU tuition has remained relatively static over the past ten years.

Table 6.1
Tuition and Fees for Undergraduate Students and University Enrollment, 2013-2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Year</th>
<th>In-State</th>
<th>Out-of-State</th>
<th>Fees</th>
<th>Insurance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2021-2022</td>
<td>$7,038</td>
<td>$16,960</td>
<td>$1,320</td>
<td>$799</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020-2021</td>
<td>$7,038</td>
<td>$16,960</td>
<td>$1,320</td>
<td>$780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019-2020</td>
<td>$7,038</td>
<td>$16,074</td>
<td>$1,220</td>
<td>$754</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018-2019</td>
<td>$7,038</td>
<td>$16,074</td>
<td>$830</td>
<td>$754</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017-2018</td>
<td>$7,038</td>
<td>$16,074</td>
<td>$830</td>
<td>$754</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016-2017</td>
<td>$6,702</td>
<td>$15,308</td>
<td>$830</td>
<td>$754</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015-2016</td>
<td>$6,702</td>
<td>$15,308</td>
<td>$830</td>
<td>$1,040</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2015</td>
<td>$6,506</td>
<td>$14,862</td>
<td>$830</td>
<td>$1,102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-2014</td>
<td>$6,506</td>
<td>$14,862</td>
<td>$830</td>
<td>$1,102</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As DSU’s HBCU mission prioritizes providing education to underserved communities, financial aid plays an extremely important role in supporting student success. Combining the efforts of the Office of Financial Aid and the Division of Institutional Advancement, multiple scholarship opportunities are provided to students. A significant percentage of undergraduates qualify for PELL grants as demonstrated in Table 6.2.

Table 6.2: PELL Recipients as Percentage of Undergraduate Student Body

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fall 2016</th>
<th>Fall 2017</th>
<th>Fall 2018</th>
<th>Fall 2019</th>
<th>Fall 2020</th>
<th>Fall 2021</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Inspire Scholarship provides recent Delaware high school graduates with a 2.75 or higher GPA four years of full tuition. When the Inspire Scholarship was created by the Delaware State Legislature in 2010, it provided six semesters of tuition capped to equal the amount the State of Delaware’s SEED Funding. Inspire was expanded to eight capped semesters in 2018. In 2021 the cap was removed. Now the Inspire Scholarship provides full tuition to qualifying students. Table 6.3 demonstrates the growth in this program over the past five years.
Table 6.3
Inspire Scholars, 2017-2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Year</th>
<th>Number of Inspire Scholars</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2017-2018</td>
<td>464</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018-2019</td>
<td>533</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019-2020</td>
<td>610</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020-2021</td>
<td>698</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021-2022</td>
<td>788</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other scholarship opportunities for undergraduates include the Presidential, Full Tuition, and Partial Tuition scholarships, all of which are merit-based and can cover up to four years. These provide funding to cover the gap between the entire cost of college minus any Federal Title IV (i.e. Pell, SEOG, etc.) and/or state (i.e. Inspire, Aid for Needy Students, etc.) grant funding. The DSU GAP Scholarship, also merit-based, offers $3,000 for the academic year to cover tuition costs. There are also Visual and Performing Arts scholarships for talented students.

The Delaware State University Foundation also supports scholarships for current and returning students. The Alumni Legacy scholarship provides support to students whose parents or grandparents attended DSU. The Osher Reentry Endowed Scholarship (ORES) and Crankstart Reentry Scholarship (CRS) are available to nontraditional students who have experienced a gap in their education of at least five years since completing high school and who are starting or resuming studies toward their first baccalaureate degree. These awards finance tuition in amounts up to $5,000 over two semesters. Figure 6.1 demonstrates the number and dollar amount of scholarships awarded through the Delaware State University Foundation.

![Delaware State University Foundation Scholarship Awards 2011 - 2022](image)

**Fig. 6.1 Number and dollar amount of scholarships awarded by the DSU Foundation 2011-2022**

In response to the burdens imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, $2,782,960 was awarded to the University through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act. Over $1.5 million was initially spent, including funding to clear the balances for 96 graduating seniors and Dreamers in the spring of 2020. In spring 2021 another $750,000 in student debt was forgiven.
In addition to the CARES Act funds, DSU established the DSU COVID-19 Student Emergency Relief Fund. The University surpassed its goal of $1 million by June 2020, in just two months. Over 1,500 students applied for support, whether for housing, food, medical care, mental health counseling, scholarships, or technology. By February 2021, DSU’s COVID relief fundraising exceeded its goal by 60% and continues to accept funds. (doc. IV.2)

To secure a seamless transition of former Wesley students to Delaware State, the Office of Enrollment Management worked with the US Department of Education and other entities to migrate students on the Wesley Title IV account to Delaware State University’s Title IV account. Wesley Legacy students included both the Wesley College and Delaware State University federal identification numbers on their FAFSA applications.

Transfer Students

The Admissions Office considers applications from students seeking to transfer from two-year colleges, four-year colleges, and universities accredited by their respective regional association. The transfer of credit policies is included in the Undergraduate Course Catalog and is accessible on the Transfer Student Admissions webpage. College courses that have been completed more than ten years earlier are not automatically accepted for transfer credit. The transcript(s) of accepted transfer students are evaluated by the department chair in the discipline to determine if they meet the requirements of the DSU General Education or major program. Credit is not granted for correspondence courses or course with grades of C- or below. Students on probation from other institutions for academic or disciplinary reasons are not permitted to enroll for a degree at DSU. If admission is not granted, a written appeal may be submitted to the Office of Admissions for review. Transfer students must submit transcripts from every college or university that they have attended and should be prepared to submit course descriptions from previous institutions for courses not in the transfer credit matrix to ensure accurate articulation and transfer into DSU. Transfer students must earn their last 30 credit hours at DSU. (doc. IV.01)

Transfer students have a point of contact in the Office of Admissions where they can find relevant information on procedures, policies, and acceptable credits. “Transformation Wednesdays” are held every week virtually, from 10 a.m. EST until 5 p.m. EST, where students have an opportunity to speak one-on-one with an admissions coordinator, learn about financial aid, have their transcripts evaluated to find out which credits will transfer, and schedule future meetings with their academic department. The University regularly works with the Delaware Technical and Community College to develop and promote connected degrees for easier assimilation into DSU for bachelor’s degree completion and the University has articulation agreements with over 130 institutions.

The University is in the process of updating its policies and procedures regarding credits awarded through experiential learning, prior non-academic learning, competency-based assessment, and other alternative learning approaches. The University currently accepts Advanced Placement and CLEP exams and credits and has a course challenge policy. A Prior Learning Taskforce is exploring the expansion of these opportunities. Thus far, two pilot programs have been recommended in the Integrated Studies and the Early Childhood Education programs. The Faculty Senate is developing the application approval process for proposed Prior
Learning credits. The Prior Learning Taskforce is exploring a standard military evaluation process, treating the Community College of the Air Force as a standard associate degree, evaluating the current AP and CLEP credits, revising the course challenge policy, establishing an international baccalaureate transfer policy, and working with deans and departments to assess their willingness to accept standardized PLEs.

**Conditional Admission and Academic Support**

Delaware State University does not offer conditional admission, but multiple systems are in place to support students who might struggle with college-level work. Recently the General Education mathematics and composition offerings were restructured to address these challenges, as the University eliminated all developmental courses. The re-envisioning of these courses to ensure student’s academic success and timely progression is addressed in the analysis section.

Additional systems support students who face academic challenges. Students’ whose semester GPA drops below 1.70 are placed on academic probation for the following semester, unless their cumulative GPA is above 2.0. A student on probation may not hold elected positions or represent the University. In the following semester they are limited to taking thirteen (13) credit hours and referred to the Academic Recovery Program where they are enrolled in a three-credit Learning Strategies for Academic Success course. This mandatory class promotes improved learning/study skills as well as exploration of social behaviors that inhibit success. Students are also referred to campus support programs to assist them in their return to academic success. Should a student fail to earn a 2.0 GPA the following semester they are suspended. Suspended students can reapply to the University after one semester to be admitted on probation. They must enroll in the Learning Strategies Course again upon readmittance and complete nine (9) credit hours with a grade point average of 2.0 or better. If the student fails to achieve that goal, they will be dismissed from the University. Dismissed students can reapply if they attend another accredited institution or DSU Summer School and successfully complete twelve (12) credit hours with a “C” or above.

Additionally, the University Academic Progress Policy conforms with the federal regulations (Sections 668.16(e), 668.32(f) and 668.34) and state regulations that govern financial aid programs and require all financial aid recipients (1) to be in good academic standing and (2) to be making academic progress toward a degree in a reasonable amount of time before the financial aid office disburses any federal funds for the subsequent semester. Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP), (doc. VI.03) which determines this eligibility, is monitored at the end of each fall, spring, and summer semester.

**Honors Program**

Delaware State University’s Honors Program was developed to support academically advanced and highly motivated undergraduates. Its goals include providing enriched academic opportunities through Honors level courses, professional development training whether preparing for graduate school or career, leadership skill development, and an on-campus living learning community in dedicated housing. A standalone program, it was incorporated into the Office of Undergraduate Research, Experiential Learning, and Honors (URELAH) (doc. I.07) in fall 2019. This combined entity seeks to maximize opportunities and resources for students and to expand
the professional development and leadership activities of the Honors Program to the entire student population. To qualify for the program students must be admitted to DSU with a GPA of 3.25 or higher, a SAT combined score of 1050 in Mathematics and Critical Thinking with at least a 450 in each section or ACT composite score of 22 in Mathematics and Critical Thinking, two letters of recommendation from high school or college instructors, and a 400-600 word essay explaining a student’s desire to be a member of the program.

Wesley Teach-Out Plan and Legacy Policy

The Board of Trustees approved the Wesley College/Delaware State University Teach-out Policy (doc. IV.04) – “Wesley Legacy Policy” – which outlined the considerations to be given to students transitioning from Wesley. An important component of the Wesley acquisition process was facilitating the seamless migration of Wesley Legacy students into the larger Delaware State student population. A formal Teach-out plan was signed by the presidents of both institutions. The Wesley Legacy students are considered continuing students at DSU. In addition to the adoption of several Wesley programs of study, teach-out plans were developed to ensure that Wesley students received credit for their prior learning. In cases where DSU and Wesley academic requirements diverge, teach-out plans for all transitioning Wesley students were created to ensure that they graduate on time. The DSU General Education program and Wesley College Core Curriculum were carefully evaluated by the General Education Committee for parity, also expediting appropriate credit migration for incoming students.

Juniors and seniors choosing to complete their education at DSU will be taught based on their Wesley curriculum but using DSU courses. Freshmen and sophomores will follow the DSU curricula for their majors, with all credits accepted by Wesley to be accepted by DSU. Wesley non-completer students have a three-year window from the acquisition date to enroll at DSU under this policy.

Enrollment Management

Every year, after the enrollment data census lock, IRPA prepares an enrollment debriefing. (doc.IV.05) The debriefing helps the University understand the success of recruitment efforts, admissions yields, scholarship leveraging, and student migration patterns to enhance enrollment planning. Further, survey results are shared for enrolled and non-enrolled applicants. Subsequent enrollment research is also presented to help understand college destinations for declined admissions and student cohorts lost to attrition. Thus, data has become a valuable part of the DSU enrollment management strategy.

Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) has documented their planning process (doc. IV.06) through 2025 and beyond. The plan bases the overall growth projections on existing and newly approved programs. Growth projections focus on online, international, and graduate programs and increasing transfer and non-degree seeking students. With the addition of the Dover Air Force Base location, as a result of the Wesley acquisition, SEM plans on increasing its efforts in recruiting military personnel and increasing outreach to veterans and their families.
Records and Registration

The Office of the Records and Registration is responsible for maintaining, updating, and securing student records. Delaware State University utilizes the Banner and Blackboard systems to manage student information and provide access to courses. Students have online access to their records through the Banner system, to their student email, and to the learning management system Blackboard. Students have a unique ID for Banner based on their Student Identification number and a self-selected personal identification number (PIN). Students utilize a single sign on system to access webmail and Blackboard with a self-selected password.

The FERPA guidelines are managed by the Office of Records and Registration. (doc. II.14) Each student is given the right to review his/her/their record, to amend said record, and to name disclosures under FERPA. No information is given regarding the student, even to DSU faculty and staff, without a legitimate academic interest in the student. Every student service must sign FERPA documents underscoring that they understand FERPA and the implications of noncompliance. DSU uses the Banner system, software whose security is trusted by higher education institutions throughout the country. This information system is used for preserving, maintaining, and reviewing student records. Banner permits only a single login for students securing access to the students’ record. All student health and judicial records are maintained electronically, and student health professionals observe strict adherence to HIPPA guidelines. FERPA training is available to all employees and must be completed every two years.

DSU utilizes Degree Works to support students’ timely progression to graduation. The system automatically populates the course requirements for General Education and students’ majors and minors. A Degree Works audit allows students, advisors, and departmental chairpersons to assess students’ academic progress to ensure that they are appropriately enrolled in courses and are following a structured path to timely degree completion. Degree Works is updated to ensure new programs and courses, including Wesley adoptions, are accurately reflected.

Wesley’s Registrar communicated (doc. IV.07) with all current students to facilitate the migration of students and their records to Delaware State before the acquisition was complete. Two specific correspondences were sent, one requesting students share their intention to transition to DSU and the second requesting FERPA permission to release their records to Delaware State for advising purposes. Over half of the students gave their permission to release their records to DSU. As part of the acquisition DSU is responsible for all Wesley students’ academic records. A plan was put in motion to migrate to DSU all the spring 2021 student records in July 2021. The final transfer of all Wesley student records occurred in early December 2021. The fall 2021 semester welcomed 417 Wesley Legacy students into the Delaware State University family.

Office of Student Success

In spring 2018, University College was renamed the Office of Student Success (OSS) to align with the PRIDE 2020 Goal 2 Student Success. The DSU administration sought to strategically consolidate and centralize all existing academic programs, advisement centers, and services under Academic Affairs to facilitate student success. As a result, Student Success became a
delegated responsibility under one central unit – the Office of Student Success. (doc. IV.08) The new name reflects the move from a decentralized advisement model to a robust centralized and personalized form of advisement. The new office expanded its key retention services and programs including Advising, Academic Services for Student Athletes, Library Services, Integrated Academic Support Services, the Opportunity Scholars Program, and the Office of Undergraduate Research, Experiential Learning and Honors and is staffed by over 50 professionals, including faculty. Integrated Academic Support Services includes the Writing Studio, Quantitative Reasoning Center, Tutoring Center, Supplemental Instruction, and the Drop-in Computer Lab. Central to the goals of OSS are the KPIs that correspond with the retention initiatives, services, and programs. Student Accessibility Services was renamed the Center for Disability Resources and moved to the Office of the General Counsel and Risk Management to serve the entire University community. (See Standard II Chapter 4 and Standard VII Chapter 9)

The University has invested broadly in expanding its academic retention interventions through a re-structured advising model. During the initial phase in 2017-2018, a comprehensive Advisement Restructuring plan was developed to centralize campus-wide academic advising to create consistency in processes, accountability, and policies and procedures. The plan highlights the use of the holistic Individual Development Plan (IDP) developed with help from the Gates Foundation grant. The IDP drives the advising relationship with each student beginning in their first year. Through two required IDP Sessions with their advisor each semester, students’ academic interests and career goals are documented in the IDP portal, along with other notes evaluating their overall DSU experience. The first page of the portal highlights the student’s background data and admissions profile (i.e. SAT scores, ALEKs placement, personal information, and athletic status). Additional tabs report students’ financial aid status, advising notes, the number of registered credits and advisor alerts to indicate students may be performing poorly at mid-term or failing to complete milestone activities such as pre-registration, FAFSA renewal, or satisfying scholarship renewal criteria. The “15 Strong to Completion Campaign” was created to support student enrollment in at least 15 credits each semester to foster timely progression to graduation and to promote achievement of early momentum indicators that correlate with student success.

The flowchart displayed in Figure 6.2 shows the individualized development plan process for students in their first semester at DSU.
In the second phase of transition the OSS solidified Advising from a decentralized model with separate college advisement centers to a centralized advising framework. This improvement increased Advising’s accessibility and visibility to students and campus partners. The four-year
undergraduate advisement plan emerged with firmly established advisor caseloads and meaningful student learning outcomes integrated within the restructured advisement plan to better measure the impact on the student experience. Students are also assigned faculty mentors who help students explore their disciplines and refine their career goals. As a result of the restructured advisement plan, the OSS Advisement utilized best practices in offering academic recovery programs, first-year experience programs and courses, and academic programs and workshops that support all DSU students no matter where they are in the developmental process. Figure 6.3 demonstrates the advising transition from a decentralized plan only relying on professional advisors for the first year to its current structure.  (doc. IV.09)

![Fall 2018: DSU Advisement Pathway & Matriculation Pipeline](image)

*Fig. 6.3 Advising model transition, 2015-2018*

Partnering with Enrollment Management, OSS Advisement participates in the Office of Admissions enrollment initiatives, including Open House, traveling receptions, Hornet Days, and New Student Orientation. Likewise, OSS partners with the Office of Records and Registration to ensure a smooth transition into courses through pre-registration, course advisement for existing DSU students, and pre-populating registration in preparation for New Student Orientation.

While OSS provides support to all students, it has individual units that provide support to at-risk students, particularly Advising & Retention, Academic Recovery Program, Academic Services for Student Athletes, Student Accessibility Services (now the Center for Disability Resources in the Office of General Counsel and Risk Management), Integrated Academic Support Services, and the Early Alert System. These mechanisms deliver highly effective, reporting systems that help identify students who are at-risk and track progress.

**University Seminar and Freshman Forum**

All first-time first-year students are enrolled in University Seminar, a program designed to engage students with authentic academic learning experiences and develop relationships with faculty within their major departments. The University Seminar program is coordinated and
monitored by the OSS who partner with faculty to implement its curricular goals and objectives. As a result of the digital initiative, students use their Apple iPads and notebooks in University Seminar to access their e-text and academic program’s digital platform. Students access their first-year assessment through the Anthology Student Strengths Inventory which enables them to explore their top strengths, talents, and weaknesses. On average, 85% of the students use their assessment information in their University Seminar culminating e-portfolio project.

Students are required to attend the University Seminar Freshman Forum as a vital part of the first-year experience. These forums feature a variety of campus-wide guest speakers and events, including the fall DSU’s Convocation Ceremony and spring Founders’ Day celebration. Some colleges hold additional forums to address the specific interests of their majors. On average, attendance ranges from 90-96% of first-year students.

The Career Services Office (doc.IV.10) has undergone multiple transitions in recent years. The office continues to sponsor multiple events throughout the year. Career Services professionals meet with first-year students during Freshman Forums. Career and Graduate School Fairs occur in fall and spring, including fairs directed toward STEM and Business. Career development workshops teach professional skills such as interviewing, resume writing, email etiquette, and getting internships and fellowships. Representatives from businesses such as JP Morgan Chase, Deloitte, Citibank, Technadox, and Amazon; nonprofits such as the Nature Conservancy; Urban Ed Academy; graduate schools; the military and police; and the Thurgood Marshall College Fund visit campus. Career Services works with the Assessment Office and Registrar to have all graduating students complete the First Destination Survey which reports out on students’ next steps after graduation, whether into a career or graduate study. This data is tracked in KPI #2.

Close attention is paid to the progress of student athletes, not only in terms of NCAA and EADA reporting, but with unique academic requirements and support. All first-year and transfer student athletes are required to attend study halls which are monitored by full-time staff with planned time management grids. Upperclassmen’s attendance is determined by their grade point average. Coaches can require their athletes to attend study hall and monitor attendance through weekly reports. The Office of Academic Services for Student-Athletes maintains links to a variety of science, math, and general skills websites. Athletes also have a unique academic progress and alert reporting system. (doc. IV.11)

Finally, numerous services and opportunities are available to enhance student life. These include Campus Ministries, the Wellness and Recreation Center, the Opportunity Scholars program and the Office of Student Leadership and Activities (OSLA). OSLA oversees and sets requirements for student organizations including student leadership opportunities, Greek fraternal organizations, and special interest groups and clubs.

C. Analysis

Support of the student experience involves most components of the university. The recent consolidation of divisions and offices has helped to streamline processes and improve communication creating a more comprehensive and holistic approach. But challenges continue to
exist, especially considering that the COVID-19 pandemic impacted student support services as acutely as it impacted the academic programs.

**Enrollment Management**

The IRPA Enrollment Management Debriefing provides information about the success of the recruitment process. Admissions has done an excellent job in recruiting new freshman. As previously noted, the office has provided enrollment projections through 2025 for all programs. SEM has a recent hire focusing on military/veteran students as part of the strategy to increase outreach and recruitment in those areas. The MOU signed with the Dover Air Force Base, as part of the Wesley acquisition, will also provide military personnel with more access to DSU programs. The School of Graduate, Adult and Extended Studies (SGAES) has its own recruitment plan and staff for both graduate and online programs and collaborates with SEM. The graduate enrollment growth and increase in online programs and courses can be attributed to the SGAES recruitment efforts. SGAES is currently working on plans to support near-completers to finish their degree and to accept Prior Learning Credits. Programs with growing enrollment can request additional staff to support the student growth.

DSU does not currently provide housing for graduate students. With the recent reorganization moving Student Affairs, including housing, under the VP for SEM, and the additional dormitories from the Wesley acquisition, housing prioritization for graduate students can now be aligned address these growing areas.

**Office of Student Success**

The consolidation of student support services in the OSS allows the university to improve communication between various offices, increasing opportunities to intervene with students who are struggling. The transition to the professional advisor/faculty mentor system supports the most efficient means to assure that students are registering properly for courses, progressing through their curricula, exploring professional interests through multiple venues, and seeking assistance when needed. The Early Alert system automatically shares information with everyone in the student support network, advisors, faculty, the tutoring office and support for students that fall into special populations, i.e., athletes, Dreamers, and at-risk students. Adding the daily tracking of retention rates with these other indicators assures that appropriate interventions can occur in a timely fashion.

The March 2020 COVID onset fell just at the beginning of the pre-registration Academic Advising period. The OSS adeptly managed to continue to interface with students regularly despite working remotely. Virtual advising opportunities, designed for online and nontraditional students, were quickly expanded to all students. DocuSign was used extensively to get documents completed and signed for students. Some processes were altered to allow the advisor rather than the student to initiate the action within DocuSign. A survey completed in late spring 2020 noted that this transition went relatively smoothly from the students’ perspective, although anecdotally there were indications that communication challenges existed. The results can be found in Table 6.4.
### Table 6.4
Academic Advisement Satisfaction Survey, Spring 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2020 Academic Advisement Satisfaction Survey N=290</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree/Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>As a result of academic advising, I am confident in my ability to…</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• comprehend my major’s curriculum guide and accurately plan my schedule.</td>
<td>46.21%</td>
<td>39.31%</td>
<td>8.28%</td>
<td>2.76%</td>
<td>1.72%</td>
<td>1.72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• recognize the need for tutoring and utilize academic support services.</td>
<td>38.28%</td>
<td>40.34%</td>
<td>11.72%</td>
<td>4.83%</td>
<td>1.03%</td>
<td>3.79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• identify strategies to improve mid-term grades.</td>
<td>35.52%</td>
<td>41.72%</td>
<td>11.38%</td>
<td>5.86%</td>
<td>1.03%</td>
<td>4.48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• evaluate and develop career goals.</td>
<td>43.45%</td>
<td>37.93%</td>
<td>11.69%</td>
<td>4.83%</td>
<td>1.72%</td>
<td>1.38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My academic advisor…</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• is available during office hours and by appointment.</td>
<td>45.17%</td>
<td>35.52%</td>
<td>10.69%</td>
<td>4.14%</td>
<td>2.41%</td>
<td>2.07%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• refers me to campus resources designed to assist me with my academic and professional progress.</td>
<td>38.62%</td>
<td>37.93%</td>
<td>10.34%</td>
<td>5.52%</td>
<td>2.41%</td>
<td>5.17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• encourages me to participate in campus organizations, professional development seminars, leadership and community activities.</td>
<td>34.48%</td>
<td>32.07%</td>
<td>18.62%</td>
<td>6.90%</td>
<td>4.48%</td>
<td>3.45%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results of a spring 2021 academic advising survey (doc. IV.12) demonstrates that overall students were pleased with the guidance they received as displayed in Figure 6.4.

![Quality of Academic Advising, Spring 2021](image)

Fig. 6.4 Advising survey results, spring 2021, N=286
OSS and Wesley Legacy Students

Wesley student data could not be migrated into DSU until after the acquisition was finalized. The first migration of academic data occurred in mid-July 2021 and only included records for students enrolled in Wesley’s spring 2021 semester. Wesley’s server challenges delayed the final full data migration until early December 2021.

In anticipation of the acquisition, OSS worked closely with SEM holding several advising sessions with Wesley students in the late spring and summer 2021. Additionally, OSS held forums for Wesley students to explain DSU’s advising structure and requirements for DSU enrollment. OSS worked with Wesley’s staff to prepare preliminary fall 2021 course plans for students intending to transition to DSU.

The Wesley Legacy Teach-Out plan and policies, along with the DSU/Wesley course alignment matrix, assisted the advisors when making course schedules. DSU accepted all credits that Wesley accepted towards the students’ program of study. An OSS advisor, originally from Wesley, was assigned to support the Wesley Legacy students transitioning to DSU along with other transfer students. Departments worked closely with advisors to resolve any student concerns, with some departments assigning liaisons for Wesley Legacy students. The goal was to graduate the Wesley Legacy students in a timely manner, and everyone worked towards that end.

Despite changes in OSS leadership, the planned restructuring of advising was completed. The advisement team remained resolute in achieving the goals of the centralized advising model and implementing practices to enhance each student’s experience at DSU. The positive results, as reflected in annual reports and tracked through IDP reports, are indicators of a more efficient and streamlined process. Table 6.5 shows the percentage of students completing their IDP sessions with advisors.

Table 6.5
Individualized Development Plan Session I and II Completion Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IDPI</td>
<td>74.6%</td>
<td>89.4%</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>86.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDPII</td>
<td>55.3%</td>
<td>79.4%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>80.16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Honors Program and URELAH

The 2018 review of the Honors Program identified several issues contributing to its lack of growth. Among these concerns were:
- the lack of scholarship opportunities based on admittance to the Honors Program,
- inefficient advising of Honors students, especially in General Education requirements,
- limited Honors course offerings tied to low enrollment in the program,
- limited number of faculty teaching in the program,
- insecurity over continued housing of the Honors Living Learning Community in dedicated dormitory space, and
- low administrative funding limited opportunities to take students to conferences.
To address these identified problems, the University put multiple changes into place and the number of students has grown significantly. (doc. IV.16) New leadership immediately created structural and curricular changes. The student learning outcomes were updated and approved by Faculty Senate in April 2019 to include more emphasis on leadership and professional development. Students are now able to take upper-level courses that are not designated Honors courses by completing an Honors contract with the instructor outlining the additional requirements that would qualify it as an honors-level course. This significantly expanded the course options for Honors students.

In fall 2019 the Honors Program was embedded in the new Office of URELAH. The Hornet Leadership Academy was implemented in spring 2020 to transform students scholars into leaders. The Honors Student Ambassadors were created to recruit current honors student to serve as peer mentors for new recruits. These activities were virtual for the 2020-2021 academic years due to COVID-19. Sixteen Wesley Honor students were invited and inducted into the DSU Honors program in fall 2021. Table 6.6 shows the growth in the Honors Program.

Table 6.6
Student Enrollment in the Honors Program, 2016-2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Freshman</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophomore</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Restructuring General Education Mathematics, Composition, and Speech

Formerly DSU used the Accuplacer placement test to determine incoming student enrollment in mathematics. This placement test indicated that a high percentage of students were unprepared for college-level mathematics, and they were placed in the developmental course, Mathematics 075, a non-credit course. This created an automatic and initial barrier to student success by slowing progression to their degree. Since 2017 Delaware State University has undertaken multiple steps, supported by funding from the Gates Foundation, to address this challenge. Upon President Tony Allen’s, then Provost Allen’s, arrival at the University in 2017, he determined that Mathematics 075 would no longer be offered. The Mathematics Department had already been exploring alternate methods to facilitate the achievement of the mathematics requirements.

The Mathematics Department tackled these barriers by switching from Accuplacer to ALEKS. The ALEKS test utilizes adaptive learning permitting students to retake the exam with indicators of their weak areas. Students can take the exam up to five times with the requirement that they review the topics in which they underperformed before moving forward. This review is facilitated through learning modules that are part of the ALEKS package. This enables students to review their former mathematics training and has resulted in stronger placement results.
The Mathematics Department also made curricular adjustments to support student success in the basic mathematics courses. Currently, students who would have taken remedial mathematics are primarily placed in:
  - MTSC 107: Mathematics and Data Analysis, (a one-semester 3-credit course for students in programs that do not require College Algebra), or
  - MTSC 110: Algebra A and MTSC111: Algebra B (two 2-credit courses taken over successive semesters).

To accommodate students who would have previously taken MTSC 075, adaptive learning modules are included in the course’s online homework that review concepts in which students show deficiencies. For students in the College Algebra route Algebra A/B sequence was restructured to include remediation in Algebra A.

In March 2020 Delaware State University presented this work and its analysis of student progression at the Gates Foundation Frontier Set conference. As a result, DSU won a “Realizing Transformation Award” based on its submission “Architecture in Practice: Developing a Cross-Sector Blueprint for Eliminating Non-Credit Developmental Courses.” Part of that award included working with three other institutions facing similar challenges to advise them on improvements in mathematics placement and support for underprepared students. (doc. IV.13)

The Department of Languages and Literatures also made meaningful changes to the English Composition and Speech courses required as part of the General Education program. The need for revision arose from three primary indicators: (doc.IV.17)
  - The need to update and adapt the curricula to serve our current student population. Students were not entering DSU equipped to be successful in the existing curriculum due to changes in K-12 composition and English instruction. This was identified by department faculty through surveys and student performance evaluations.
  - The need to update the placement process.
    - SAT/ACT scores had been used previously but were ineffective in determining student success in the course.
    - An independent placement and/or pathway for students was needed.
    - The revised format is in alignment with the Frontier Set (Gates Foundation) best practices recommendations that provide a pathway for students to not fall behind if they do not pass a course in the series.
  - The need to update the program to include digital literacy.

Based on these indicators, a program redesign was initiated and implemented in fall 2020 as a pilot. The new program addresses all three of the above indicators by:
  - Redesigning the course using adaptive learning techniques that afford students the ability to quickly progress through skills they have mastered, and focus time and energy on skills needing more reinforcement. This allows the students to progress in a self-paced manner.
  - Offering the courses in abbreviated 8-week sessions, thus allowing any student who fails one session to repeat and then ‘catch up’ over winter or summer semester. They work to make-up an 8-week class, instead of a 16-week class, in the shortened semesters.
  - Focusing the curriculum on the development of oral, written, and digital literacy.
Through piloting the new composition and speech courses, multiple data sources were evaluated (pass rates, ADCS Communication rubric data and student performance, student evaluations, instructor surveys). This data evidenced enhanced performance using the new curriculum and identified the need for additional data sources and further evaluation as the program is fully implemented.

**Fall 2021 Student Climate Survey**

In December 2021 the Office of Institutional Effectiveness surveyed students asking them to rank their overall perception of 91 items in 8 categories from highly satisfied to highly dissatisfied with the option to indicate if they never used the service, it was not applicable, or they did not know about the service. The survey had a 5% response rate. There were 14 items relating to the OSS and 11 items relating to Enrollment Management. The average results for Student Success and Enrollment Management are displayed in Figure 6.5. (doc. IV.14)

![Fall 2021 Student Climate Survey](image)

**Fig. 6.5 Fall 2021 Student Climate Survey**

On average 48.5% of the students rated the OSS items as either never used or not applicable and another 10.6% did not know about the services. That is understandable as many of the services were for specialized populations such as Dreamers, seniors, athletes, students with disabilities, or students needing academic support. Those using the specialized services either held a satisfied or neutral opinion. However, Library Resources, the IDP, and pre-registration, services used by all student populations, were rated highly satisfied/satisfied. This is a testament to how well the advisors are performing despite the challenges they face.

Enrollment Management, as expected, had a much higher percentage of students aware of most of their services. The average results were evenly split between best, neutral, worst, and never used/N/A. Banner Self-Service was a clear favorite with a satisfaction rate of over 60%, followed by the CARES Act and the COVID-19 Student Relief Fund. Nearly one third of respondents never used the Call Center or Lobby Central, but those who did reported high dissatisfaction with the Call Center and were neutral regarding Lobby Central. Generally, responses for the other items were evenly distributed reflecting a need to improve students’ perceptions of Enrollment Management services as shown in Figure 6.6.
D. Continuous improvement and innovation

Recognizing that student success must include a wide variety of support mechanisms, from appropriate admissions policies to effective advising, academic support, career exploration, experiential learning, and leadership opportunities, the recent restructuring of SEM and the OSS is creating synergies to efficiently pursue these goals.

Multiple new and planned initiatives will build on DSU’s strengths, creating new opportunities for students through increased enrollment, streamlined admissions procedures, increased financial aid, and a variety of student success initiatives that broaden the scope of teaching and learning, research, and outreach while also attending to mental health and advising needs. These include: (doc. I.24)

- Admissions/Financial Aid/Student Accounts/Registrar
  - Adopt the Black College Common application (CBCA) where students can instantly apply to 64 different HBCUs with one $20 registration fee.
  - Create a $2,500 yearly scholarship for transfer and adult learners in neighboring states.
  - Increase merit scholarships for students from surrounding states with generous financial aid programming.
  - Elevate micro-grants for students with small outstanding balances.
  - Aggressively market the Inspire Scholarship via social media, billboards in high traffic areas, television commercials, and community events.
  - Expand utilization of Student Ambassadors as “Recruitment Ambassadors” under the work study program, to be assigned to directly work with Admissions counselors.
  - Utilize brief student satisfaction surveys after their interactions with SEM to see the students’ rating,
- Increase outreach to military personnel and veterans utilizing the recently signed MOU with the Dover Air Force Base.

  - **Student Success**
    - Expand data collection, with appropriate training, to make retention modeling more predictive.
    - Explore more opportunities for students to earn prior learning credits through the PLE Task force, including developing innovative programming.
    - Expand mental health programming to provide resources that will help reduce the impact of anxiety, depression, or substance abuse that has risen across the globe for university and college campuses. This initiative will provide students with a culture that focuses on life skills, supportive social relationships, and encouraging them to seek help while training the faculty and staff of the University to identify students who are at risk and the proper channels to manage these situations as they evolve.
    - Strengthen central advising and mentoring alignment for students and academic departments.
    - Expand training for faculty in their role as mentors and career advisors.

  - **Student Engagement**
    - Utilize Anthology software to track student engagement more effectively.
    - Capitalize on the recently signed MOU with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), to create curricular and co-curricular learning opportunities, research, and outreach through the Global Institute for Equity, Inclusion, and Civil Rights.
    - Streamline and centralize the organization of surveys to ensure comprehensive surveys of student services, while not overwhelming constituents with “survey fatigue.”
    - Develop the Sophomore-Year Experience (SYE) program dedicated to helping second-year students thrive by providing innovative and comprehensive educational events that encourage academic and career success including networking, academic, social, and civic engagement events.
    - Reactivate the existing course “The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People” that focuses on personal leadership, personal responsibility, emotional intelligence, emotional well-being, empathetic communication, collaborative mutual benefit, and creative cooperation for student readmits, stop outs and repeater students on academic probation.
Chapter 7: Standard V: Educational Effectiveness Assessment

Assessment of student learning demonstrates that the institution’s students have accomplished educational goals consistent with their programs of study, degree level, the institution’s mission, and appropriate expectations for institutions of higher education.

Delaware State University is in compliance with Standard V.

A. Overview

Effective educational assessment remains a primary objective of Delaware State University (DSU). The 2011 mission states that the University purposefully integrates the highest standards of excellence in teaching, research, and service in its bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral programs. Verifying the effectiveness of our educational programs in producing capable and productive leaders is essential. Both strategic plans, PRIDE 2020 and REACH 2026, include Academic Excellence and Student Success as primary objectives. Assessment of these educational programs and environment is essential to ensuring those outcomes are achieved.

Following the recommendation of the 2016-2017 Academic Task Force, the University established the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) in August of 2018. The OIE consists of the Assessment Office, the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), and Institutional Research, Planning, and Analytics (IRPA). This integration provides training and support for DSU’s assessment processes, data reporting, professional development, digital technology, and pedagogy initiatives. In fall 2018 WEAVE Online was replaced by Anthology (Campus Labs) as the reporting tool for Assessment and Annual Reporting. The University is committed to phasing in a more holistic view of assessment, recognizing that all areas of the institution support educational effectiveness, albeit some contribute indirectly. The Assessment Office is currently working with administrative areas to develop and submit assessment plans with some successes.

President Allen, in his introduction to the new strategic plan, states “REACH 2026 rededicates Delaware State University to our focus on the whole student in terms of Student Success and Academic Excellence while acknowledging that we can only achieve our objectives by transforming our Operational Effectiveness, Infrastructure, and Financial Health.” This approach is having a positive impact on programming, retention and graduation, and career placement as the University recognizes that “IT ALL MATTERS.”

B. Description

Effective assessment of student learning is a complex process involving multiple tools and systems. Ongoing analysis of these diverse reports allows the University to carefully design, deliver, and assess student learning and academic programs in a continuous cycle that targets weaknesses and supports improvement. From the initial establishment of student learning outcomes for each program to the compilation of graduation and placement data, multiple mechanisms are in place to assess student learning and support timely progress toward graduation. Among these tools are:

- thoughtful creation and communication of program and student learning goals tied to the University’s student learning goals,
student, peer, and chair surveys of instructor effectiveness which, in turn, guide professional development,
- assessment of general education learning outcomes using the Assessment Data Collection System (ADCS),
- reporting for external accreditors, both institutional and programmatic,
- program, department, and college annual reporting in Anthology,
- tracking of retention and graduation rates,
- assessment training for faculty and staff, and
- Institutional Research’s daily reports on registration and retention.

**Transition from WEAVE Online to Anthology (Campus Labs)**

In response to concerns expressed after the 2017 MSCHE Periodic Review Report about the efficiency of DSU’s Assessment reporting systems, the Office of Assessment undertook a comprehensive exploration of alternative reporting systems. DSU had relied upon WEAVE Online as its assessment management system since 2009. This software had become outdated with our maturing institutional effectiveness and data analytics needs. WEAVE was not very user-friendly for faculty and staff members, even with training. Most complained that there was a lot of repetitive data entry required in multiple fields and that it was cumbersome. These limitations discouraged faculty, chairs, and administrators from performing analyses of the data gathered. Weave became a data storage system that was rarely mined for trends, patterns, opportunities of improvement, and accomplishments to be celebrated.

The Assessment Office undertook an extensive review of software tools that could provide required functionality to replace WEAVE Online. Once Anthology was identified as the best choice, the Assessment Office requested contact information for other HBCU Campus Lab partner schools. Thirty-six key campus stakeholders then participated in a three-hour demonstration, directed by a Tuskegee University staff member, showing how they were using the system for their upcoming SACS site visit.

Based on attendee feedback from a post-event workshop survey, users commented that,

- Anthology is an enormous improvement over the current system.
- Anthology will allow us to meet various reporting requirements based on one-time input of data.
- Anthology can link to previously disconnected sources of institutional effectiveness information across the entire institution.

Other appealing features include,

- Outcome data can flow in two-way communication with Blackboard.
- Student, course, and faculty data can be exported from the Banner Student Information System. WEAVE did not provide this functionality.
- Teaching and non-teaching units can utilize all system platforms for their unit reporting.
- Anthology includes a survey tool, which allows every DSU user to create surveys and to import existing Survey Monkey surveys and results.
- Anthology includes a student response system, similar to iClickers or Kahoot, that allows open text responses.
DSU transitioned to Anthology during the summer of 2018 with multiple trainings throughout 2019-2020 to help guide faculty, staff, and administrators in use of the new system.

Since adopting Anthology the Assessment Office uses the system for annual and assessment reporting and outcomes data collection. Constituents across the University have taken advantage of the Baseline Survey. The CTL has just migrated to the Anthology Course Evaluation module. The Office of Student Success (OSS) uses the Anthology Beacon product as its Early Alert system.

**Interrelated Learning Outcomes**

All DSU programs are designed to support the institutional mission to identify and integrate high standards of excellence in teaching, research, and service. Department and program missions align with the University’s mission and are published in the college catalogs and department and program webpages. Programs student handbooks include their mission.

DSU’s Learning Goals define the essential skills and habits of mind we seek to instill in our students through a wide range of experiences. They are designed to prepare our graduates to be:

- competitive communicators,
- effective inquirers, critical thinkers, and problem-solvers able to use appropriate quantitative and qualitative information,
- ethical, collaborative, and productive citizens of a complex, diverse world, and
- independent learners able to integrate knowledge and technology to achieve personal and professional success.

General Education and program learning outcomes align with these four DSU institutional learning goals. All DSU undergraduate program student learning outcomes are clearly mapped to the DSU student learning outcomes and to the General Education learning outcomes. In fall 2020, a comprehensive document of undergraduate program mapping was posted to the Assessment webpage. (doc. III.01) All departments are required to review their program maps annually to update for changes, added or deleted programs. In fall 2021 the program mapping was expanded to include graduate programs and new programs added with the Wesley acquisition. This information is being collected for eventual publication on the Assessment webpage.

**General Education Assessment and the Assessment Data Collection System (ADCS)**

The Assessment Data Collection System (ADCS) (doc.V.01) is an in-house electronic system designed to facilitate the collection and analysis of student learning data. The University has been gathering data on the achievement of the General Education learning outcomes for many years. Up until 2018 this required the collection of data on 13 Across-the-Curriculum (A-t-C) student learning outcomes. In June 2018 the Center for Teaching and Learning funded six General Education Committee and faculty members from various disciplines to attend the 2018 AAC&U General Education and Assessment Summer Institute. The team condensed the 13 A-t-C outcomes into the 5Cs: Communication, Cognition, Creativity, Civic Engagement, and Content. The objective was to re-envision the General Education outcomes into a more cohesive program.
that fulfills the university’s mission, honors our land-grant responsibility, provides the depth and breadth of a well-rounded liberal arts education for college graduates, and more actively engages students in their learning. This change simplified the assessment process, permitting a greater variety of courses to be assessed using fewer rubrics. It also created more flexibility in students’ schedules, allowing them to fulfill their General Education requirements using a greater variety of courses. The 5Cs rubric evaluation criteria were adapted from VALUE rubrics published by the Association of American Colleges and Universities. Figure 7.1 displays the curricular and experiential components of the 5Cs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communication</th>
<th>Cognition</th>
<th>Creativity</th>
<th>Civic Engagement</th>
<th>Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Oral and Written Communication</td>
<td>• Inquiry and Analysis</td>
<td>• Artistic Expression</td>
<td>• Civic Knowledge and Engagement</td>
<td>• Knowledge of Human Culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Information Literacy</td>
<td>• Critical and Creative Thinking</td>
<td>• Research</td>
<td>• Intercultural Knowledge and Competence</td>
<td>• Knowledge of the Physical and Natural Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Quantitative Literacy</td>
<td>• Entrepreneurship</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Major Discipline Curricula</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Ethical Reasoning and Action</td>
<td>• Service</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Foundation and Skills for Lifelong Learning</td>
<td>• Teamwork and Problem-Solving</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Synthesis of General and Specialized Studies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 7.1. Curricular and experiential components of 5Cs

Four of the 5C rubrics (Civic Engagement, Cognition, Communication, and Content) were piloted in general education courses starting in fall 2019. During the pilot data was submitted for three of the four rubrics: cognition, civic engagement, and communication. Training workshops, phone, virtual, and email consultations were used to support the ADCS transition to using the 5Cs.

One hundred percent (100%) of the faculty who pilot tested the 5C rubrics responded to a survey on the use of the ADCS. Of the respondents, 61% had used ADCS for more than 3 years and 94% found ADCS to be moderately or very user friendly. An ADCS Data Analysis workshop for chairs and assessment coordinators was held in December 2020 based on a request to provide additional training on how ADCS data helps to document learning in the program of study. Individual and group trainings to support instructors to understand the ADCS system, apply the rubrics, and use the results to make improvements are ongoing.

The data collected in this system is used to assess student learning for the general education learning outcomes and can also be utilized by departments in assessing their majors. Chairs and department assessment coordinators are encouraged to include this data, along with the information collected in their program, in their annual assessment reports.

Assessment and Annual Reporting Process

The Assessment Office is charged with collecting and reviewing the Annual and Assessment Reports for each department and programs. Annual department reports are due at the end of the
spring semester and assessment reports are due at the end of October. Outlines for the Annual Reports and Assessment Reports are available on the Assessment Office Webpage. The complete assessment reports are also posted on the same webpage. The Assessment Director regularly meets with departments to guide and assist them in their reporting.

The Annual Report includes six sections, (doc. V.02)
- Executive Summary,
- Unit Profile,
- Unit Initiatives,
- Honors/Awards/Achievements,
- Closing the Assessment Loop, and
- List of scholarly or professional contributions of unit members.

Department Assessment Reports (doc. V.03) have four strategic goals focusing on accomplishments in teaching, research, service, and student engagement and one optional accreditation goal. The Program Assessment Reports (doc. V. 04) evaluate achievement of the student learning outcomes (SLOs), along with a student experiential activity and a service-learning outcome, to demonstrate that students are getting the requisite knowledge and skills for future success in the discipline.

Utilizing the Office of Assessment template, departments identify their measures and targets to demonstrate student achievement. A variety of student artifacts can be used to make and support these assessments. The reports include recommendations for improvements based on the findings. Student engagement, experiential activity, and service-learning components were recently added as DSU embraces even more diverse learning opportunities to support student success. Among other issues, department assessments consider high failure courses to determine if there are disparities between instructors and what supports can be put in place to improve student performance.

The annual report and assessment reports are meant to work in concert with one another. The Annual Report (doc. V.05) offers the department an opportunity to tell their story of initiatives and accomplishments and should be supported by findings in the Assessment Reports. (doc. V.06)

The Director of Assessment works closely with the department chairs and assessment coordinators to support their collection and use of data to make improvements. The use of virtual meetings because of the pandemic has improved communication between the Assessment Office and the departments. The Assessment Office, in conjunction with the CTL, holds numerous trainings on assessment and how to use the Anthology assessment software. Assessment and the CTL coordinate with Institutional Research, Planning, and Analytics (IRPA) on the use of available institutional data, including the Decision Support Analytics Dashboard suite and IRPA portal and reports, discussed later.
Accredited Programs

Delaware State University currently has eight accredited/approved programs, two added as part of the Wesley acquisition, whose assessment is directed by the accrediting agency’s standards and expectations. The current accredited programs and their accreditors are shown in Table 7.1.

Table 7.1
Delaware State University Specialized Accreditations (doc. V.07)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School/College</th>
<th>Accrediting Agency</th>
<th>Website</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB)</td>
<td><a href="https://www.aacsb.edu/">https://www.aacsb.edu/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP)</td>
<td><a href="https://www.caepnet.org/">https://www.caepnet.org/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitality and Tourism Management</td>
<td>Accreditation Commission for Programs in Hospitality Administration (ACPHA)</td>
<td><a href="https://www.acpha-cahm.org/">https://www.acpha-cahm.org/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law Studies</td>
<td>American Bar Association (ABA) Approval</td>
<td><a href="https://americanbar.org/about">https://americanbar.org/about</a> the aba/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing</td>
<td>Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing, Inc. (ACEN)</td>
<td><a href="https://www.acenursing.org/">https://www.acenursing.org/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinated Program in Dietetics</td>
<td>Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND)</td>
<td><a href="https://www.eatrightpro.org/acend">https://www.eatrightpro.org/acend</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupational Therapy</td>
<td>American Occupational Therapy Association (ACOTE)</td>
<td><a href="https://acoteonline.org/">https://acoteonline.org/</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The program accreditations impacted by the Wesley acquisition – AACSB, ABA Approval, ACEN, ACOTE, CAEP and CSWE – were required to submit evidence demonstrating the continued level of support for the student learning experience in those programs. Only two accreditations were not directly affected by the Wesley Acquisition - Hospitality and Tourism Management (ACPHA) and Coordinated Program in Dietetics (ACEND). The Coordinated Program in Dietetics was fully accredited in January 2020, for seven years. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the accreditation was extended an additional year with the site visit scheduled to occur between January and June 2027. The Hospitality and Tourism Management program (ACPHA) is currently preparing its Self-study Report for submission later this year. (doc. V.08)

The acquisition of Wesley College enabled Delaware State to add the American Bar Association (ABA) Approval for Law Studies and the American Occupational Therapy Association (ACOTE) accreditation for the Master of Occupational Therapy to the list of accredited programs. The ABA required a substantive change request which was submitted in August 2021 and approved in September 2021. The MOT submitted an Interim Report to ACOTE in August 2021 and in September 2021 ACOTE responded indicating three areas of noncompliance. MOT responded to the noncompliance issues in October 2021. ACOTE recently accepted two of the three responses and requested additional information on the third issue by February 10, 2022.

The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) accreditation covers the College of Business, the Business Administration, and the Accounting, Economics and Finance
Wesley College’s business program was accredited through the Accreditation Council for Business, Schools and Programs (ACBSP). In January 2021, the DSU College of Business dean wrote a letter to the AACSB explaining the acquisition of Wesley. In the letter the Dean indicated the intention to keep its AACSB accreditation and that the integration of Wesley faculty and curriculum into the DSU business programs would require no additional level of evaluation or any changes to the organizational or administrative structure. The College of Business is in the process of preparing its AACSB Self-study report for reaffirmation. The report was submitted in January 2022 and a site visit is scheduled for March 2022.

In November 2020 the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) reaffirmed both the BSW and MSW programs in all their existing locations and modalities until June 2028, with a follow-up report due in August 2021 based on the assessment results for their programs. The CSWE was unclear on how the course-embedded projects aligned with the competencies and how those competencies would be measured. The progress report addressing the alignment and measurement issues was submitted in August 2021 was accepted by CSWE in November 2021. While the Department of Social Work’s program was not affected by the Wesley acquisition, the move of the entire College of Health and Behavioral Sciences to DSU Downtown (the former Wesley Campus) required it to notify the CSWE and could have triggered a substantive change. The CSWE responded in July 2021 that there were no concerns with the location change. In October 2021, the CSWE approved the substantive change to add the BSW Online program.

DSU and Wesley shared the same Education accreditor, CAEP. DSU absorbed the Wesley programs, along with 81% of their education students. The Wesley education department worked seamlessly with the DSU team during the transition to make sure that information flowed in a timely manner and, most importantly, to alleviate the stress of students. None of the Wesley AFIs (Areas for Improvement) apply to the DSU programs. The Wesley Legacy students will follow DSU’s Education programs, with the exception of the Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT), where DSU adopted the Wesley program. DSU’s Education Program was reaccredited in 2019 and is scheduled for its next visit from CAEP in Spring 2025.

DSU’s Nursing program’s absorption of the Wesley program required more facilitation than other programs as the external accredits for both programs, ACEN, required approval of the integration plan post-acquisition. Both programs had near identical results for passing licensing exams and job placement rates. Both schools required passage of the Test of Essential Academic Skills (TEAS) for admission to the Nursing program. However, DSU’s admissions requirements, 2.0 HS GPA and 800 combined SAT score applied to all students, including Nursing. Conversely, Wesley’s Nursing program had higher requirements (2.5 HS GPA/1,000 combined SAT) than regular Wesley admits. Wesley accepted students into the Nursing program during the second semester of the freshman year, while at DSU students were considered Pre-Nursing until they were accepted as Nursing students in the junior year. Table 7.2 shows the Delaware State and Wesley licensure, completion, and job placement rate.
Table 7.2
Delaware State and Wesley College Nursing Licensure, Completion, And Job Placement Rates, 2018-2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Delaware State</th>
<th>Wesley College</th>
<th>Delaware State</th>
<th>Wesley College</th>
<th>Delaware State</th>
<th>Wesley College</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Delaware State</td>
<td>95.74%</td>
<td>Wesley College</td>
<td>61.11%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>83.3%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Delaware State</td>
<td>82.93%</td>
<td>Wesley College</td>
<td>63.63%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>92.86%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Delaware State</td>
<td>92.86%</td>
<td>Wesley College</td>
<td>62.31%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The slight curricula differences between the two accredited programs had to be resolved to ensure that Wesley Legacy Nursing students both graduate in a timely manner and have the requisite training to pass the licensure exam. The faculty and staff in Nursing, Advising, and Institutional Effectiveness have worked tirelessly to resolve the numerous issues arising around course scheduling for junior and senior Nursing students and senior graduation audits. One of the former Wesley Nursing faculty members has been assigned as the Wesley Legacy Nursing Student Liaison to address many of these issues. A DSU advisor and the DSU Accreditation & Assessment Specialist, both from Wesley, have been working closely with the Wesley Legacy Nursing students to guide them through this transition.

Professional Development in Assessment, Pedagogy, and Technology

The Office of Assessment, in conjunction with the CTL and ODELT, offers multiple ongoing opportunities for faculty training in best pedagogical practices and in effective and meaningful assessment processes. Table 7.3 displays the number of workshops held in the past five years offering training in assessment, pedagogy, and technology. (doc. IV.07)

Table 7.3
Professional Development in Assessment, Technology and Pedagogy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Pedagogy</th>
<th>Technology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016-2017</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017-2018</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018-2019</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019-2020</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020-2021</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The COVID-19 pandemic has improved attendance at workshops, presumably because virtual trainings are more accessible given the complexity of faculty schedules. The fall ADCS 2019 face-to-face workshop had 8 attendees, while the fall 2020 and fall 2021 virtual workshops had 26 and 54 attendees respectively. The Assessment Office co-facilitates these workshops with faculty experienced in the use of the ADCS. Based on these results Assessment will continue to hold virtual workshops even after returning to campus.

The suddenness of the spring 2020 transition to virtual teaching and learning made it difficult to use rubrics to assess students beyond their performance on exams and assignments, especially in the areas of inquiry, innovation, problem solving, and teamwork. The General Education Committee, CTL, and the Assessment Office continue to work to improve the rubrics and ways
to implement their elements across all teaching modalities. These offices sponsor faculty and staff to attend assessment and teaching conferences such as the Drexel Assessment Conference, Temple Annual Faculty Conference on Teaching Excellence, Science of Teaching and Learning Conference, Conference on Higher Education Pedagogy and AAUP summer institutes.

The CTL is responsible for administering the student course evaluations. Originally these evaluations were done on paper by dedicated staff in the Testing Office. When the responsibility was moved to the CTL the University began to use an online course evaluation tool. Over time questions were added to the survey to capture more information. Unfortunately, the longer evaluation form and the move to an online system resulted in an overall decline in the response rate. Student focus groups were then enlisted to evaluate the tool and recommend improvements. The course evaluation was shortened and modified to address different modalities of teaching, face-to-face, hybrid, and online. The new tool was implemented for the first time in fall 2021. Figure 7.2 details the response rate for the course evaluations by college. (doc. V.09)

University Assessment Summits are held at the end of the spring semester. Delaware State University held its first Assessment Summit, then called “Data Day” in 2013. They were held annually until 2016. Personnel changes and understaffing caused the cancellation of the Assessment Summits for 2017 through 2019. Plans were underway for the 2020 summit when the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the event’s cancellation. In 2021 the summit was reconstituted as a virtual event for faculty and staff. The 2021 Assessment Summit was a half-day event with six half-hour sessions. The opening session provided an update on the Wesley Acquisition and the results from the COVID-19 surveys. The sessions, led by faculty and staff, addressed Teaching and Learning, Student Services, Data and Decision-Making, and Institutional Reporting. The summit was well received with a 95% positivity rating for being well organized and useful. The Assessment Summit Agenda provides details on the breakout sessions. The 2021 attendance rate doubled the 2013 attendance as shown in Table 7.4.

![Fig. 7.2 Course evaluation response rate by college, fall 2018 – fall 2021](graph.png)
Table 7.4  
Assessment Summit Attendance and Featured Speaker (doc. V. 10)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Attendance Count</th>
<th>% Response Rate</th>
<th>Action Plans Returned</th>
<th>Keynote or Featured Speaker</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>1st Annual Data Day</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>2nd Annual Data Day</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Jodi Levine-Laufgraben</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>3rd Annual Data Day</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Jodi Levine-Laufgraben</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>4th Annual Assessment Summit</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Michael Sachs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>Virtual Assessment Summit</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Phyllis Blumberg</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Other Data Sources to Assess Student Progress**

IRPA provides numerous reports to track student progress. Some reports are run daily and emailed to the President, Provost, Deans, Chairs, Administrative Council, and the Strategic Enrollment Management team. These reports provide information on fall-to-fall retention, fall-to-spring retention, pre-registration comparison, housing occupancy, and a variety of enrollment data. IRPA provides access to its Data Reports Portal which offer numerous reports that support different areas in monitoring their progress. Advising is supplied a detailed pre-registration list to track students who have not yet registered. Deans, advisors, and chairs have access to a “DFW” report that provides an overview of the midterm grades compared to the final grades. Using this information, the final grades detail report by student can be analyzed to see if there is a particular class or some other factor contributing to high failure rates. This analysis provided data that led to the removal of remedial classes. The system also tracks gate-keeper courses to identify areas where students require supplemental support. (doc. V.11)

Effective collaboration has helped democratize the use of data on campus. The Associate VP for Academic Operations developed a Decision Support Analytics (DSA) Dashboard suite to expand the use of actionable data to aid decision making, manage administrative areas of the institution, and support student success. Supported by the Gates Foundation Frontier Set grant, the DSA dashboard suite has sections on enrollment, graduation, instruction and faculty workload, section management, classroom utilization, grades and grade trends, student success and momentum, and the Wesley Legacy students. Data normally provided during program review cycles are accessible at any time with this resource. For detailed information at the student level the IRPA Portal remains the primary source. Deans, chairs, and other academic leaders use this data to easily gather insight to their units and support their decisions. Figure 7.3 provides an image of the Decision Support Analytics Dashboard suite with the enrollment dashboard displayed.
IRPA is also the University’s source for IPEDS data. This data is used by *US News* and other rankings of higher education institutions. IRPA provides the Administrative Council with an analysis of the *US News* rankings against our competitor schools to better understand how we compare. This information was presented at the Assessment Summit to help faculty and staff understand how this data is used. A snapshot of the *US News* data is presented in Figure 7.4.
Between March 2020 – 2021, the University conducted numerous surveys on the effect of COVID-19. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) conducted six surveys of students and faculty to assess how they were adjusting to remote instruction. OIE also surveyed the faculty and students regarding ideal scenarios for reopening the University. The OSS surveyed students on their adjustment to virtual advising and to identify their technology needs. Lastly, the Center for Disability Services (CDS) investigated the impact of COVID-19 on students coupled with the civil unrest surrounding the Black Lives Matters movement. (doc. III.16)

The general findings were:

- Faculty and students thought the University responded appropriately to the COVID-19 pandemic as mentioned in Standard III, Chapter 5.
- Students felt faculty were accessible, willing to accommodate challenges, and held classes as scheduled.
- Faculty are becoming more comfortable teaching remotely but are concerned about their ability to engage students.
- Faculty and students felt remote instruction required more time.
- Faculty preference for remote teaching increased.
- Faculty, staff, students, and administrators would be willing to work remotely at least 75% of the time.
- Overall students felt their advisors were helpful.
- Internet and hardware accessibility was still a problem for 20% of the students.
- Students were worried about the possible impact of COVID-19 on their daily lives.
- Students were not experiencing racial issues on campus.

C. Analysis

Different colleges and departments design their own assessment processes. The departments of Education, Languages and Literatures, and Nursing have bi-annual retreats to review their departments and programs. Courses in English and Mathematics have adjusted their entry-level courses to improve passing rates. The Assurance of Learning (AOL) committee of the College of Business (COB) monitors and ensures learning goal measurements across curricula and obtains an assessment of business concepts through ETS Major Field Test every semester. The program coordinators collect and analyze the data. If interventions are needed, programs make the appropriate pedagogical/curriculum changes.

Effectiveness of Assessment Processes

General Education and program assessment data is collected using the current rubrics in the ADCS (Assessment Data Collection System). The instructor submission rate suffered in the early stages of the pandemic, dropping from 82% in fall 2019 to 77% in spring 2020. Fall 2020 was even lower at 74%, although there was a resurgence in spring 2021 to 88% most likely because faculty had had time to create virtual assignments that more clearly assessed these learning goals. Table 7.5 displays the percentage of course sections dedicated to specific learning goals that were assessed through the ADCS system between fall 2017 and spring 2021.
Table 7.5
Percentage of Course Sections Assessed in ADCS System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fall 2017</th>
<th>Spring 2018</th>
<th>Fall 2018 Spring 2019</th>
<th>Fall 2019</th>
<th>Spring 2020</th>
<th>Fall 2020</th>
<th>Spring 2021</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African American Experience</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5C: Civic Engagement</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5C: Cognition</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5C: Communication</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5C: Content</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5C: Creativity</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Transition year without support from IT</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global Learning</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Literacy</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Communication</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quantitative Reasoning</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Capstone</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td></td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing in the major</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total percentage</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td></td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There was a sharp decline in the number of department and program assessment reports completed when the University switched in 2018-2019 from Weave to Anthology in 2018-2019. One benefit of the transition to a new system was the opportunity to work closely with departments to review their assessment processes, clean up their reporting, and reinforce the value of assessment. This transition helped departments and programs revise and remove goals and student learning outcomes that were no longer relevant, poorly defined, or difficult to assess. Through the concentrated efforts of the Assessment Office, the rate of response has increased significantly. Table 7.6 shows the increase in assessment report submissions.

Table 7.6
Assessment Report Submission Rates, 2018-2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Completed</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In Progress</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Findings</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Programs</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Use of Data to Assess Educational Effectiveness

As the University looks to improve its educational programs assessment, it has become apparent that ongoing training is required. Working remotely has enabled the Assessment Office to work more efficiently with departments and programs. The program and department annual reports and assessment reports are the most direct measures of educational effectiveness. There continues to be an overreliance on grades as a measure of educational effectiveness. This is concerning for students in introductory courses when assessing their readiness to progress to higher level courses. The use of more high-impact practices in introductory courses should improve student engagement and learning along with providing direct assessment information for courses and programs.

There is still a need to simplify the process and make the collection and reporting of assessment data a more natural and seamless task. Departments need to collect data continuously, rather than waiting until the end of the spring semester. Programs with external accreditations validate their educational effectiveness through their accreditors self-study process and annual updates. The information in their assessment reports more accurately reflect the program accreditor’s standards.

The University successfully uses a variety of other methods to assess the effectiveness of its educational delivery. The IRPA Portal and the Decision Support Analytics Dashboard suite provide a wealth of information for diverse users that inform them of the effectiveness of our educational programs. These indirect assessments are particularly useful in identifying areas for further analysis. Recent hires will enable IRPA to provide additional and ongoing training on the use of the University’s data and the tools to present the data.

Course evaluations is another indirect assessment of educational effectiveness. The noticeable drop in fall 2020 student evaluations is likely a reflection of the pandemic. Nevertheless, faculty need to actively encourage students to complete these evaluation tools. During the spring 2021 semester the CTL, in concert with the deans and chairs, encouraged the faculty to incentivize the completion of course evaluations as an important mechanism of accountability. The goal is to increase student course evaluation response rate to 50% overall.

Additionally, the Assessment Summit provided a means to reinforce the usefulness of utilizing assessment data to improve teaching and learning. A word cloud exercise, displayed in Figure 7.5, conducted during the Assessment Summit demonstrates a shared understanding of the value of assessment.

Fig. 7.5 Word cloud of responses regarding value of academic assessment
Use of Data from Assessment Process

Departments use the information gleaned from their annual reports and student learning outcomes assessments to make improvements to their programs. A review of several Faculty Senate curricular changes gives insight into the use of data to make improvements to programs. (doc. V.12 & doc. V.13)

In 2018 the Department of Accounting, Economics and Finance piloted two courses, Principles of Accounting I Lab and Principles of Accounting II Lab, in response to high failure rates in these gateway courses. From fall 2011-spring 2016 the failure rate for Accounting I averaged 46.4%. The fall 2016 failure rate was 41.8% and 41.6% in spring 2017. After piloting the additional lab classes, the failure rate dropped to 33.7% in fall 2017. With that data, the department permanently added the courses to their curricula to support continued student success. Likewise, the University piloted an initiative to increase success in a gateway mathematics course by supporting students with an opportunity to repeat the course during the winter term at no cost. The project helped increase the pass rate from 62% to 71%, helping more students build early momentum and stay on track in their program. (doc. IV.13)

The Middle Level Education program faced problems with low pass rates on the Middle Level Social Studies and Language Arts Praxis exams. Working with faculty in the History and Languages and Literatures departments, dedicated courses to support these students were developed, Middle Level Social Studies Praxis Prep and Middle Level Language Arts Praxis Prep. Thus far, students completing the Social Studies Prep course have had success on the exam, although the COVID-19 pandemic suspended the Praxis requirement for student teaching for the 2020-2021 academic year.

In spring 2020 the establishment of the B.A. in Liberal Studies created new options for preparing undergraduate students to enter the multidisciplinary 21st-century workplace. The program offers a route for non-completers to earn their bachelor's degree while utilizing their life experiences to earn credits. The flexibility of this program is intended to give nontraditional students or those with associate’s degrees the opportunity to obtain a B.A. The program is a comprehensive multidisciplinary major that is satisfied by concentrations and individualized studies. Students must complete the General Education program requirements, complete four Liberal Studies core courses, as well as 36 credits in upper level (300-400) courses. The program offers specified concentrations in Law Studies, Criminal Justice and Political Science or Media, Arts and Culture. Students can also enhance their degree by choosing from multiple minors and certificates at the University that emphasize areas of interest and further their career goals.

D. Continuous Improvement and Innovation

Most of the Delaware State University faculty and staff are committed to continuous improvement. In terms of assessment that improvement requires continued training on assessment techniques, best practices, the use of rubrics, and developing curriculum maps of courses to programs. The Assessment Office (AO) will expand more thoroughly into the assessment of graduate programs. AO is also looking to extend educational assessment to programs outside of academics that provide educational content such as Student Affairs.
Assessment will continue to meet virtually, at more mutually agreeable times, with departments to assist with report preparation and provide guidance and suggestions. The AO is planning to augment the assessment process by putting departments and programs without external accreditors on a cycle for more intensive program review, focusing on how they are closing the loop and making program updates using a variety of assessment data.

The AO will continue to hold virtual Assessment Summits. 2021 participants provided suggestions for future summits. The AO Director began planning the 2022 summit after the close of the 2021 summit. The integration of Wesley students and faculty should provide some interesting topics for summit consideration.

With the new course evaluation software, colleges and departments can add a few focused questions to provide more specific information for their unit. Raising the course evaluation response rate and getting additional college/department specific information will provide additional information for assessment. College-specific questions may result in the deans incentivizing higher response rates.

With the recent hiring of more staff for IRPA the plan is to expand training to assist departments access to program-specific data presently available such as program retention, growth, grades, and graduation rates. The use of the Decision Support Analytics Dashboard suite will be expanded and enhanced by the Academic Economics dashboards currently being developed. The additional staff will allow IRPA personnel to respond to more internal and external data requests and support assessment with external accreditors. IRPA has planned to create dashboards based on common data requests to allow users to access their own data from a reliable source.
Chapter 8: Standard VI: Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement

The institution's planning processes, resources, and structures are aligned with each other and are sufficient to fulfill its mission and goals, to continuously assess and improve its programs and services, and to respond effectively to opportunities and challenges.

Delaware State University is in compliance with Standard VI

A. Overview

Strategic and operational planning, especially those elements including financial stability and resource allocation for institutional improvement, is critical to Delaware State University’s success in the origination, development, and execution of long-term transformative strategies. By any measure, during the past decade DSU has enjoyed a period of unprecedented growth and capacity expansion.

The original chairs of the Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement Working Group represented Finance, Athletics, and the Administrative Council with members from Facilities, Capital Planning, Budgeting, Human Resources, Operations, IT, Advancement, and other faculty and staff from across the University. Unfortunately, the co-chairs left the University before the self-study was complete, but not before providing some description and analysis of the standard. The working group explored this standard through the lens of the University’s strategic plan, PRIDE 2020, and the various board and administrative changes that have occurred since the last accreditation report.

Between 2009-2021 the University
- increased enrollment by 40%,
- opened a new facility in New Castle County,
- pioneered multiple international agreements,
- renewed seven institutional and/or program accreditations and added two additional program accreditations with the Wesley acquisition,
- chartered the Early College High School,
- increased the institution’s annual research portfolio from $17-23 million,
- increased annual fundraising to $40 million in 2020,
- acquired Wesley College, (doc. VI.01) and
- received the donation of the Capital One building at the Riverfront in Wilmington.

These and other transformative accomplishments are all the more remarkable considering the relatively constant changes in top leadership. Between 2012-2021, Delaware State University had only three years (2013-2016) with the same leadership team in place. During this period there were three chairpersons of the Board of Trustees, three University Presidents, three Provosts, and five Chief Financial Officers. Despite the changes in top leadership, hard-working and dedicated lieutenants kept the focus on the PRIDE 2020 strategic goals and remained consistent.
B. Description

Pride 2020 Strategic Plan

In 2012, DSU administrators, faculty, and staff began a two-year process of writing the strategic plan titled “Personal Responsibility in Delivering Excellence” or “PRIDE2020.” (doc. I.01) The plan was formally adopted by the Board of Trustees in 2014. The clear link between the PRIDE 2020 strategic goals and the University mission is demonstrated in Chapter 3, Standard I, Table 3.1. The six broad areas for improvement identified include DSU’s academic culture and learning environment, student success, research, outreach, sustainability, and institutional and operational efficiency. Initiatives were put in place to support the six strategic goals. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) (doc. I.20) were identified, enabling the University to track its progress in achieving these clearly established goals and initiatives. Monitoring the progress of these KPIs was assigned to Board of Trustees committees – Student Success, Operations, and Innovation and Sustainability – based on their oversight of those areas. Members of the Administrative Council were responsible for implementing the initiatives that support the achievement of these KPIs and reported to the Board committees at their quarterly meetings.

The six goals of PRIDE 2020, the associated KPIs, the responsible BOT committees, and responsible administrative division can be seen in Table 8.1.

Table 8.1
PRIDE 2020 Strategic Goals, KPIs, Responsible Board Committee and Administrative Division

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRIDE 2020 Strategic Plan Goals</th>
<th>Key Performance Indicators</th>
<th>Board Committee</th>
<th>Administrative Division</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual Climate and Culture</td>
<td>1. Undergraduate Student Participation Rate in Research, Study Abroad, Service Learning, Experiential Learning and Leadership Programs</td>
<td>Student Success</td>
<td>Provost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Success</td>
<td>2. Percent of Students Obtaining Gainful Employment in 12 months</td>
<td>Student Success</td>
<td>Student Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Four-Year Graduation Rate</td>
<td>Student Success</td>
<td>Provost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. First-Year Retention Rate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. New Freshman Average SAT/GPA</td>
<td></td>
<td>Enrollment Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research and Scholarship</td>
<td>6. Contracts and Grants Awarded (dollars in millions)</td>
<td>Student Success</td>
<td>Provost</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Outreach and Engagement**  
(Service Beyond Self) | 7. Number of Students in the “STEM” Early College High School | Student Success | Enrollment Management |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8. Number of Online Courses and Programs</td>
<td></td>
<td>Provost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9. Number of Certificate Programs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sustainability</strong></td>
<td>10. Undergraduate Student Participation Rate in Sustainability Courses and Activities</td>
<td>Student Success</td>
<td>Provost</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Institutional and Operational Effectiveness** | 12. Strategic Enrollment Increase [Total Students (Headcount)]  
• Graduate Students  
• Online Students  
• International Students  
• STEM Students  
• Undergraduate Students  
• Transfer Students  
• Other | Operations | Enrollment Management |
|                        | 13. Increase Overall University Funding (dollars in millions) [Total University Funding]  
• Tuition and Fees  
• Contracts and Grants  
• Auxiliary Revenue  
• Endowment Income | Operations/Finance / Advancement |                      |
|                        | 14. Alumni Giving Rate                                       | Innovation & Sustainability | Advancement |
|                        | 15. Instruction Expense per FTE Student                     | Operations     | Operations/Finance   |

Administrative Council members aligned the plans of their respective units to support the goals, objectives, and KPIs of the strategic plan. They regularly reported to the Board to reflect upon progress, missteps, and plans for moving forward. PRIDE 2020 has functioned as the blueprint guiding the University forward through the multiple leadership.

**Restructuring for Improvement**

The changes in the Board of Trustees, Administrative Council, College groupings and reporting structure of administrative units all seek to increase cross communication and improve efficiencies. The committees of the BOT were re-aligned to clearly link to the leadership members of the Administrative Council. While these personnel changes are addressed in Chapter 9, Standard 7, Table 8.2 displays this realignment.
Table 8.2
Realignment of BOT Committees to Administrative Council Positions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Board Committee</th>
<th>Administrative Council Positions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Executive Leadership</td>
<td>VP Human Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operations</td>
<td>Chief Operations Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chief Financial Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chief Information Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Asst. VP Facilities Management, Planning &amp; Construction,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic &amp; Student Success</td>
<td>Chief Academic Officer/Provost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>VP Strategic Enrollment Management and Student Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chief Administrator DSU Downtown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovation &amp; Sustainability</td>
<td>VP Institutional Advancement Chief Academic Officer/Provost (Research)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audit &amp; ERM</td>
<td>General Counsel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Asst. VP Enterprise Risk Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chief Financial Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athletics</td>
<td>Athletic Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Affairs</td>
<td>VP Strategic Enrollment Management and Student Affairs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The work of the Academic Restructuring Task Force (ARTF) (doc. VI.02) offers an excellent overview of the functionality of strategic planning leading to thoughtful implementation, in this case in the academic division. The ARTF was created in 2016 and was co-chaired by the Interim VP of Academic Affairs, the Senior Associate VP of Human Resources, and the Past President of the DSU Chapter of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP). The ARTF included a diverse mix of twenty trustees, administrators, faculty, staff, and students charged to make recommendations for operational efficiencies within Academic Affairs and its directly supporting divisions. In January of 2017 the ARTF made a series of recommendations which were approved by the President and the Board of Trustees and have since been implemented. They include

- relocating the School of Graduate Studies to the Kirkwood Highway facility and tasking that dean with strategic initiatives to expand graduate, online, and adult education;
- realigning and consolidating the University’s six academic colleges into five colleges;
- restructuring the responsibilities of Department Chairpersons to increase their ability to conduct day-to-day academic operations efficiently; and
- consolidating all professional academic advising under the five college advising centers into a single, comprehensive unit under the University College (later, the Office of Student Success).

In 2018 the Provost also established the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) to provide coordinated oversight of the offices of Institutional Research, Planning, and Analytics (IRPA), the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), and the Assessment Office. The OIE supports data-driven strategic planning through a comprehensive system for assessing institutional effectiveness in academic programs, administrative units, and service areas while promoting faculty/staff professional development. The OIE is also responsible for MSCHE and programmatic accreditations and was instrumental to the success of the Complex Substantive Change to acquire Wesley College. (doc. VI.03) These changes have resulted in increased communication to strengthen the University and support student success.
Budgeting

The role of CFO has undergone multiple changes since 2012 resulting in several changes in the budgeting process. Dr. Teresa Hardee was hired in 2012 as the Vice President of Finance responsible for overseeing and managing the day-to-day fiscal operations of the University, including budgets. In 2015 Dr. Hardee was promoted to the Sr. VP of Finance and Chief Operating Officer (COO). Dr. Hardee left her position the end of 2017. At the beginning of 2018 Ms. Denese Lindsey stepped in as Interim Chief Finance Officer (CFO) and consultants were brought in to assist her while the University underwent a CFO search. Mr. Rob Schrof was hired as the new VP of Finance in May 2018 and migrated to become the University’s Internal Auditor in March 2020. At that time Mr. Cleon Cauley became the COO and interim CFO/VP of Finance. Mr. Anas Ben Addi was hired in August 2021 as the CFO/VP of Finance.

Under Dr. Hardee’s leadership, in the latter part of 2016, an Economic Education Outcomes Model (EEOM) of budgeting was implemented. Departments and units were trained in the new budget development process which included a three-year allocation with an additional two years to create a long-term five-year planning process. Budget requests from academic units included data on student and program outcomes to target resources for improvement.

With the departure of Dr. Hardee, the EEOM implementation came to an abrupt halt. While consultants helped with the multi-year budgeting process, timing made implementation impossible for the 2018-2019 academic year. Instead, Mr. Schrof concentrated on getting the Banner Human Resources, Budget Development, and Business Document Management modules implemented to allow Finance to use Banner budget development processes. DSU Banner Self-Service Budget Training began in April 2019. The Banner Budget Development module and Salary Planning process is still used by departments to input their budget requests. Prior-year expense budgets are automatically rolled forward. Departments can then make changes to the proposed budget amounts based on their anticipated needs. Finance compares the total requested expenses to the projected revenues and works with divisions to better match expenses to their revenue projections.

Delaware State University is a tuition-dependent institution. Revenue projections are usually based on a flat increase over the prior year, considering tuition increases approved by the BOT and enrollment projections. Payroll makes up at least 60% of DSU’s budget. The Board of Trustees approves the University’s Operating and Capital Budget annually. They also approve the multi-year proforma for submission to the bond rating agencies.

Tuition rates have remained relatively flat since 2013. While tuition and fees has risen slightly, the cost to students has been offset by savings in the insurance costs. The Board of Trustees approved a 5% tuition rise across the board for fall 2017 and a 5.5% increase in out-of-state tuition for fall 2020. Table 8.3 shows the Tuition and Fees for undergraduate students as well as the enrollment numbers for undergraduate and graduate students.
Table 8.3
Tuition and Fees for Undergraduate Students and University Enrollment, 2013-2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Year</th>
<th>In-State</th>
<th>Out-of-State</th>
<th>Fees</th>
<th>Insurance</th>
<th>UG #</th>
<th>GR#</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2021-2022</td>
<td>$7,038</td>
<td>$16,960</td>
<td>$1,320</td>
<td>$799</td>
<td>4,848</td>
<td>801</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020-2021</td>
<td>$7,038</td>
<td>$16,960</td>
<td>$1,320</td>
<td>$780</td>
<td>4,419</td>
<td>608</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019-2020</td>
<td>$7,038</td>
<td>$16,074</td>
<td>$1,220</td>
<td>$754</td>
<td>4,602</td>
<td>452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018-2019</td>
<td>$7,038</td>
<td>$16,074</td>
<td>$830</td>
<td>$754</td>
<td>4,494</td>
<td>378</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017-2018</td>
<td>$7,038</td>
<td>$16,074</td>
<td>$830</td>
<td>$754</td>
<td>4,346</td>
<td>302</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016-2017</td>
<td>$6,702</td>
<td>$15,308</td>
<td>$830</td>
<td>$754</td>
<td>4,265</td>
<td>355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015-2016</td>
<td>$6,702</td>
<td>$15,308</td>
<td>$830</td>
<td>$1,040</td>
<td>4,215</td>
<td>345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2015</td>
<td>$6,506</td>
<td>$14,862</td>
<td>$830</td>
<td>$1,102</td>
<td>4,259</td>
<td>385</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-2014</td>
<td>$6,506</td>
<td>$14,862</td>
<td>$830</td>
<td>$1,102</td>
<td>4,061</td>
<td>444</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The University presents its Operating and Capital budget (doc. VI.04) requests to the State Office of Management and Budget nine months (October) before the start of the fiscal year. In August of 2018, Ms. Jackie Griffith was hired as the Special Assistant to the President and VP of Government and Community Relations to coordinate budget and legislative outreach at the state and federal levels. She works closely with the President, Provost, and other members of the Administrative Council to determine the areas of the University needing financial support from the State of Delaware and provides political advocacy. Ms. Griffith’s guidance with the budget request process has been invaluable to increasing funding received from the State of Delaware. The Operating Budget request seeks to align the University’s needs with the State’s priorities. The Capital Budget supports the University’s infrastructure and ongoing deferred maintenance. The State of Delaware provides 30% to 34% of the University’s operating budget. Figure 8.1 displays the State of Delaware Operating and Capital appropriations from 2013 to 2020.

Fig. 8.1 State of Delaware operating and capital appropriations, 2013-2020
Special Funding

Delaware State University has been fortunate to receive additional funding from the federal government, the State of Delaware, and private sources to support its mission and programs. A portion of this funding has supported the Aviation Program, COVID testing and relief, the Wesley Acquisition, Student Success, and the Inspire scholarship.

The Inspire Scholarship was created in 2010 and has helped over 2,500 students attend Delaware State University. More than 60% of those scholarships have gone to Black students and 65% have gone to women. The first state-funded Inspire grants were awarded in 2011. The original Inspire grant was for six semesters and capped scholarships at an amount equal to the amount available under the SEED (Student Excellence Equals Degree) scholarship available to students at Delaware Technical Community College and the University of Delaware. Like SEED, Inspire is a last-dollar scholarship, meaning state funding is only available to fill the gaps between federal aid and the full cost of tuition. This dollar limitation precluded students with financial hardships from completing their degrees when funding ran out. To celebrate its 10-year anniversary Delaware Governor John Carney signed and enacted Senate Bill 95 which expanded the Inspire Scholarship to cover full tuition for all four years. (doc. I.14)

In 2015 Delaware State University was awarded a $1.2 million grant award from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to assist the University’s work using data to support student success. The Foundation partners with institutions transforming their higher education models to improve retention and graduation rates, especially for minority, low-income, and first-generation students. Delaware State University is one of only six HBCUs in the Gates Foundation Frontier Set. The University used this grant for the development and refinement of the Individualized Development Plan (IDP) system that provides each student with a tailored advising experience to support student success. The funds were also used to support the implementation of the digital initiative and the elimination of developmental education. (doc. I.03)

In 2018, the State of Delaware provided a Higher Education Economic Development Impact Finance (HEED-IF) grant of $3.4 million to enable the DSI Aviation program to purchase new airplanes already equipped with Automatic Dependent Surveillance Broadcast (ADS-B) technology required to meet new federal regulations by January 2020. Funds from this grant enabled the purchase of 11 new planes, doubling the DSU fleet to 22 planes, and created additional time to upgrade the older aircraft with the ADS-B technology without negatively impacting student training. (doc. VI.05)

Congress passed and the President signed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act in March 2020. Delaware State received funds which benefited the students and the institution. Delaware State University used $2,782,960 in emergency student aid to assist eligible students who incurred expenses related to the disruption of campus operations due to COVID-19. Institutional CARES Act funding covered lost revenues and technology needs due to the pandemic. (doc. IV.05) New Castle County joined with Delaware State University to invest $5 million in CARES Act funding to establish a COVID-19 testing lab facility at DSU’s Kirkwood Highway site in November 2020. The establishment of the Kirkwood Highway lab provides less expensive, higher-capacity testing capabilities in New Castle County – which has
the highest COVID-19 positivity of the state’s three counties – and for partnering institutions. This site also supports Delaware State University’s campus COVID testing policy. (doc. VI.06)

When the decision was made to acquire Wesley College, President Allen stated that no existing revenue in the University’s current budget could be used for the acquisition. That meant that the university had to secure sufficient private and/or government funding to manage the acquisition. The outside funding sources included part of the $20 million gift from philanthropist MacKenzie Scott and a $1 million award from the Longwood Foundation in 2020. These and other funding supported the acquisition of Wesley College, including transition costs, personnel, a comprehensive plan for aligning the two institutions’ academic programs and culture, and the creation of DSU Downtown – home to the Wesley College of Health and Behavioral Sciences that seeks to prepare the next generation of health care professionals and practitioners.

**Fiscal Resources and Controls**

In May 2016 the AAUP Collective Bargaining Agreement (doc. II.01) was ratified and included higher minimum pay levels for all faculty positions regardless of discipline. For many faculty members this was a noticeable pay increase beginning in fall 2016. DSU’s faculty salaries continue to be higher than the average for other HBCUs as shown in Figure 8.2.

![Comparison of DSU Average Full Time Faculty Salaries to All HBCUs per IPEDS 2012 - 2019](image)

Fig. 8.2 DSU average full-time faculty salaries compared to all HBCUs per IPEDS, 2012 – 2019

**Supplemental Information Report**

In fall 2016 Delaware State University, through its Student Reconciliation Review Process of currently enrolled students, discovered some anomalies between students who were designated “In-State Residency for Tuition Purposes” and those same students’ corresponding classifications on their Federal Title IV Financial Aid Awards. The University immediately conducted an internal investigation of the irregularities and, ultimately, turned the information
over to the appropriate federal authorities. As a result of this investigation the responsible party admitted their guilt and was terminated. The Chief Operations Officer and Senior VP of Finance was then reassigned and discharged, shortly thereafter, in December 2017. The Supplemental Information Report provided to MSCHE in 2019 outlines the processes and procedures put in place to strengthen fiscal controls as a result of this problem. (doc. VI.07)

Between September 2018 and September 2019, the following changes were made to improve the University’s financial operations and fiscal control:

- Business and Finance regularized the process, training, and accountability standards for Purchase and Travel cards, while instituting a process to update approximately $12 million in Accounts Receivable utilizing a collection agency.
- Significant budget controls were put into place, with training in detailed budget reporting offered in all budgeting areas including deans and department chairpersons.
- The decision was reached by the Administrative Council to ask the Board for a one-time funding of $7.3 million from the University Endowment Fund, which was granted in June 2019, allowing the institution to finish the year with a balanced budget.
- Strict budgetary controls were recommended by the Chief Financial Officer, including significant cuts in multiple areas, and were adopted for the upcoming fiscal year on July 1, 2019.

While Mr. Schrof was the VP of Finance the Financial Reporting capabilities from Banner were enhanced to report restricted and unrestricted Changes in Net Assets on a monthly basis, allowing for greater transparency of the University’s financial position.

By fall 2017, in light of increased enrollment growth, DSU entered into a Public/Private Partnership (P3) agreement to build Tubman-Laws dormitory. Using a P3 agreement was a fiscally responsible option as a private developer would design, build, operate, and maintain the facility through a long-term ground lease. After the lease term, the University will assume full ownership, saving millions of dollars in construction and operating costs while generating significant cash flow. While construction was underway, DSU contracted with area hotels to provide additional housing as needed. The Tubman-Laws 600-bed facility was completed and opened for occupancy prior to the start of the fall 2019 academic year and provided much needed on-campus housing. Unfortunately, the spring 2020 campus closure and the very limited fall 2020 reopening because of COVID-19 resulted in a loss in auxiliary housing revenues for FY 2020-2021, while the University was still obligated to pay under the P3 agreement.

However, the University was able to maintain enrollment throughout the pandemic despite the campus closure. As with other higher education institutions, appreciably less students on campus resulted in decrease in auxiliary revenues from housing, food, and events. Unexpected costs arose related to the need for personal protection equipment (PPE) and enhanced cleaning protocols. Conversely, there were some savings because employees were working remotely and all travel was suspended. The CARES funding provided some relief to compensate institutions for the loss of auxiliary revenue and to support PPE.
Human Resources

The University’s human capital – faculty and staff – are crucial to the institution’s ability to achieve its mission and goals. Quality faculty and staff are essential to student success in teaching, research, and outreach, a fact that was amplified during the pandemic. The academic departments, Deans, and Provost direct faculty selection to meet departmental needs, relying on the Collective Bargaining Agreement (docs. II.01 & II.11), the Promotion and Tenure Handbook, (doc. II.12) and the department personnel committees. Administrators, including chairs, hire classified and non-classified employees evaluated through appointed hiring committees. Once a candidate is selected, the Office of Human Resources initiates the employment offer, subject to a mandatory pre-employment process, before the hire date is confirmed. While faculty and staff salaries and benefits may be negotiated, rates often rely on provisions of the collective bargaining agreements for union employees. The University has five collective bargaining association contracts, AAUP (American Association of University Professors), Locals 867 (Public Safety/Police), 1007 (Clerical/Technical), 1267 (Plant Maintenance) and 2888 (Public Safety/Dispatchers and Security Officers) that are renegotiated cyclically every five years.

The University conducts an annual in-service management seminar for faculty and staff. This mandatory workshop provides employees with updates on legal issues, FERPA, and Title IX requirements, management training, and other leadership topics. Mandatory onboarding meetings are held for new employees covering Public Safety, IT/Telecommunications, Fraud and Integrity, Risk Management, and Institutional Advancement. The Employee Handbook (doc. II.09) is available online through the Human Resources Policies and Procedures webpage and is in the process of being updated. Human Resources requires annual employee evaluations (doc. VI.08) by June 30th for all employees. Employees not performing to expectations are put on a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) (doc. III.06) and can be let go if the performance does not improve.

In August of 2015, then President Harry Williams put a university-wide hiring freeze into place to proactively address the expected $160 million deficit in the State of Delaware’s budget. The hiring freeze remained in effect until President Tony Allen removed it in December 2021. (doc. VI.09) During this six-and-a-half-year period a Hiring Freeze Exception Request had to be approved by the respective Vice President and sent to the Hiring Freeze Committee for consideration. The committee reviewed the request to determine if the positions were mission-critical to the University. The hiring freeze did not prevent new hires, but rather required administrators to find funds within their existing budgets to support the approved exceptions.

The decision to acquire Wesley College was a business opportunity that would allow DSU to increase enrollment, add programs to its portfolio, add additional space for growth, and expand DSU’s access to downtown Dover. As this was an acquisition, the requirements of the hiring freeze did not apply to Wesley personnel. Regardless, the University signed an MOU with the AAUP regarding the hiring of Wesley faculty because it was outside of the established hiring process. Wesley had about 150 to 160 employees and was a private institution. An agreement was negotiated that the Wesley employees would not receive a lower salary than they had earned at Wesley. In most cases that was not an issue as Delaware State had higher salaries.
Personnel needs for both faculty and staff were calculated based on the additional students from Wesley and staffing needs. Academic departments reviewed the credentials of the Wesley faculty and staff. Faculty were hired as visiting and assigned a rank based on their credentials. Human Resources sent out 88 consideration letters to Wesley employees, 85 accepted the offers, and over 60 remain employed. Delaware State union contracts immediately extended to personnel from Wesley.

Wesley College faculty participated in the onboarding process as would any new Delaware State University employee. The orientations were presented by Human Resources, the Center for Teaching and Learning, and their respective departments. The former Wesley personnel were also provided extra training to help them quickly acclimate to essential DSU systems such as Banner and Blackboard. The Office of Distance Education Learning and Technology Blackboard training was particularly important for faculty as Wesley had used a different system, Jenzabar.

Human Resources strives to be responsive to the needs of the University. With the Wesley acquisition they were able to hire one additional person. The HR Module was also implemented during the period covered in this self-study, bringing personnel reporting inside the University’s Banner system.

**Decision-Making Processes**

As noted there have been multiple top level leadership changes since the 2017 Periodic Review. These include changes in Board of Trustees membership and Board and presidential leadership. DSU transitioned from President Harry Williams to Wilma Mishoe in 2017 and to our current president, Tony Allen, in early 2020. Drs. Harry Williams and Tony Allen both served as Provost and Executive VP for Academic Affairs before assuming their position as president which played a crucial role in managing these transitions. Their depth of understanding of the Academic Affairs division permitted continuity in pursuit of our academic mission. These changes were inevitably accompanied by the restructuring of the Administrative Council to reflect the president’s vision and leadership style. The Administrative Council is the primary decision-making body and consists of the senior vice presidents and leaders of other major divisions.

During Dr. Mishoe’s tenure the Board reorganized its committees to align more closely with the PRIDE 2020 strategic goals. The Office of Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) was created to oversee Admissions, Student Accounts, Financial Aid, and the Records Office ensuring that these key operations answered to a single, accountable head. The Office of Capital Planning was consolidated with the Office of Facilities Management. A new Director of Community and Governmental Relations was hired to coordinate budget and legislative outreach at the state and federal levels. The position of the University’s General Counsel was expanded to include Enterprise Risk Management. Finally, Academic Affairs assumed supervision of Institutional Research and Project Analysis (IRPA) and folded it into the Office of Institutional Effectiveness along with the Assessment Office and the Center for Teaching and Learning.
During Mishoe’s tenure, several important goals were achieved including:

- expanding the Inspire Scholarship program to four years of capped tuition for Delaware students;
- securing the first dollar-for-dollar 1890 Land Grant research match from the State for agricultural research and community outreach efforts;
- expanding our unique downtown presence in the City of Dover with the acquisition of the Barros Building and the full ownership and continued operation of the Schwartz Center for the Arts;
- adding 11 planes to the aircraft fleet for the University’s world-class aviation program; and
- increasing the State’s commitment to addressing the University’s backlog of deferred maintenance.

In alignment with the priorities of the Gates program, the Digital Learning Initiative was introduced in 2018. Then Provost Allen determined that enhancing our students’ 21st century digital skills is essential for student success. A powerful proposal was developed by two academic department chairpersons focusing on how students learn and how best to prepare them now for the future especially regarding technology. The University chose to adopt one-to-one technology, with all faculty and incoming first-year students receiving either an Apple MacBook Pro or iPad Pro. This program is supported through a technology fee assessed to all enrolled undergraduate students. In August 2018, 1,400 devices were delivered to the University, inventoried, and then deployed to students and faculty in less than six weeks. The complete initiative involved a four-year phase-in between fall 2018 and fall 2021. The Digital Learning Initiative required extensive and ongoing training to move the University towards an integrated digital learning environment, coordinated through the ODELT and the CTL.

In September 2019 President Mishoe announced her impending retirement at the end of December 2019, and the Board announced that Provost and Executive Vice President, Tony Allen, would become President on January 1, 2020. President Allen made further refinements to his senior leadership team. (doc. VI.10) The Vice President for Institutional Advancement was appointed to head the Presidential Transition Team and given the fundraising goal to raise $1 million for the transition and a publicity goal to make 30 million media impressions for the calendar year 2020.

President Allen appointed a Chief Operating Officer (COO) to broaden oversight of essential non-academic divisions including Business & Finance, Facilities & Capital Planning, University Police, Athletics, and Information Technology. Department heads for areas under the supervision of the COO, except for University Police, maintain their seats on the Administrative Council.

Given the continued growth of the University the Office of the President was reorganized to include an Executive Assistant, a Special Assistant and Director (later Vice President) of Governmental and Community Relations, a Presidential Fellow for Executive Communications and Media Relations, and a Chief Administrative Officer (who also oversees Human Resources). These positions hold seats on the Administrative Council, except for the Executive Assistant.
Other important improvements include adding supervision of University Health Services to the Chief Administrative Officer’s division in March 2020, just as the COVID-19 pandemic required rapid decision-making and action. The Office of Student Life transferred responsibility for Facilities and Capital Planning to Operations. SEM took formal control of the Early College High School and International Programs. Academic Affairs acquired supervision of Restricted Accounting which was placed under the Office of Sponsored Programs to streamline the grant acquisition and management process.

At this point authority for most University operations rests with the four senior Vice Presidents (Operations, Administration, Academics, and Strategic Enrollment Management). These changes helped the Administrative Council evolve into an active policy-making body that serves as a clearinghouse to keep all division heads up-to-date on activities within their respective areas of responsibility. This reorganization facilitates communication across areas, reduces silos, and proved particularly beneficial during the exceptional circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic and Wesley acquisition.

The Wesley acquisition required the formation of several integration teams to focus on the diverse components of the transaction. These teams had members from across the university, providing diverse perspectives and identifying interdependencies that had to be addressed for the acquisition to be successful. Attention to the MSCHE Substantive Change requirements, with the assistance of Brangman Consultants, helped to keep the acquisition on track for the June 30, 2021 deadline.

As mentioned earlier, the Wesley acquisition addressed several key issues for the University. Not only would there be infrastructure gains and the potential enrollment jump of hundreds of Wesley students, but it offered the opportunity to form a greater tie between the University and the Greater Dover/Kent County area and to have a significant financial impact for downtown Dover. The Wesley acquisition made clear the need for a leader to be responsible for the overall operations at the DSU Downtown Campus. This resulted in the creation of the new position of Chief Administrative Officer of DSU Downtown and VP of Strategic Initiatives, currently filled by Dr. Stacy Downing. The DSU Downtown priorities will have a strong impact on Dover and Kent County while honoring and maintaining the Wesley College core traditions and the full utilization of the DSU Downtown campus facilities. This will require renovating and occupying the facilities in stages, delaying the move of the Nursing Program and the University’s Early College High School to the DSU Downtown campus until Fall 2022.

**Physical Infrastructure**

Physical and technical infrastructure remain a top concern for the university. To support the University’s planned growth, the infrastructure needs to have a solid foundation to build upon. Years of underfunding resulted in many patches to the infrastructure rather than a comprehensive repair and maintenance plan. In 2011 the University commissioned a Facilities Master Plan update. The resulting 2014 Master Plan (doc. VI.11) mission included:

- identifying opportunities for new development,
- reusing and renovating existing facilities and site enhancements,
- determining the number and size of facilities to be accommodated,
• preparing master planning options as an aid to strategic decision making, and
• examining phasing and implementation strategies for recommended improvements.

Table 8.4 details how the 2014 Master Plan grouped buildings by area and indicated their maintenance recommendations.

Table 8.4
2014 Master Plan Recommendations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th># Bldgs</th>
<th>Focus Maintenance &amp; Repair</th>
<th>Future Demolition</th>
<th>Potential Expansion</th>
<th>Relocation</th>
<th>Major Repair</th>
<th>Annual Maintenance</th>
<th>No Work Req’d</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic*</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Services</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athletics/ Phys Ed/ Recreation*</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential*</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support*</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comm. Connection</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Some building have dual recommendations

The 2014 Master Plan also indicated that in 2011 the University had on average a 3% shortfall in assignable square feet that would rise to 20% when the student population grew to 5,000. The largest shortfall is in lab space for research, teaching, and open labs, followed by academic department space and residential space. The shortage and disrepair of lab space continues to be a problem in 2021 as indicated by the Faculty Research Climate Study. (doc. VI.12)

To address some of the research space needs, the construction of the Optical Science Center for Applied Research (OSCAR) building began in November 2013 and was completed on June 1, 2015. Originally slated to be four stories, the 28,000-square-foot, three-story building provides DSU optics scientists and faculty with a facility specifically designed for optics research. As such, the laboratory side of the building sits atop a deep concrete foundation that eliminates the ground vibrations that can disrupt the accurate use of laser technology. OSCAR provides additional focused research space but has not reduced the need for upgraded lab space across the campus.

The summer of 2019 also saw the completion of the Tubman-Laws P3 (Public-Private-Partnership) residence hall project to address residential space needs. A new state-of-the-art, 200,000-square-foot dormitory with 600+ beds, Tubman-Laws replaced two smaller residential structures that had been torn down. The opening of new dormitory ended the University’s temporary reliance on leased space in Dover area hotels to accommodate the enrollment growth that continued during construction. (doc. VI.13)
The Wesley acquisition added buildings in the following categories: academic spaces, dormitories, student support area, institutional support offices, and athletic facilities. Some of the buildings serve multiple purposes. However, as with the buildings on the main campus, many of the Wesley buildings have deferred maintenance issues and are not ADA compliant. With the relocation of the Wesley College of Health and Behavioral Sciences to the downtown location, renovations continue to make the buildings functional and compliant.

Prior to the Wesley acquisition the University was expanding its presence in downtown Dover. In 2019 DSU acquired complete ownership of the Schwartz Arts Center and was gifted the Barros Office building, located on opposite ends of the same block of State Street. Plans for using these two buildings have not been finalized. In 2021 DSU was gifted the Capital One Building (doc. III.13) on the Wilmington waterfront near the train station. DSU intends to move the School of Graduate, Adult and Extended Studies to that location, leaving the Kirkwood location for the testing lab and the medical technology program.

The COVID-19 pandemic required facilities to address the need for personal protection equipment (PPE) across all locations. This includes obtaining and installing plexiglass structures for separating people, hand sanitizer stations, the sanitization of classrooms and common spaces, and the creation of new pattern flows for individuals. (doc. VI.14)

The University has commissioned a new Master Plan which is currently in development. DSU Downtown and other locations will be incorporated as part of the plan. The plan should also address needed deferred maintenance issues, renovations for ADA compliance, and research, teaching, and office space needs at all locations. The facilities Master Plan should work congruently with a Technology Master Plan.

**Technical Infrastructure**

The University ceased outsourcing management of Information Technology and hired Darrell McMillon as Chief Information Officer effective January 1, 2020. Mr. McMillon had been working with the University since 2016 as an employee of Ellucian, our service and software provider. At the 2018 BOT Retreat, Mr. McMillon was charged to develop an IT Action Plan working with the Operations and Student Success Committees. As part of the Digital Learning Initiative $2.9 million was funded through the Legislature to upgrade the technology infrastructure.

As a result of DSU’s participation in the Gates Foundation’s Frontier Set, the Ada Center (doc. VI.15) was contracted to do an assessment of DSU’s student success technologies and associated business processes in April 2019. The goal was to support DSU in determining how it can better leverage technology to support its student success efforts. The homegrown IDP Advising Model received high marks. The Ada Center report indicated that DSU had a culture of “Making Things Work” amid ongoing Wi-Fi challenges and technology gaps. They cited issues with multiple technologies isolated to a specific department that did not “speak directly” to each other. The Ada Center recommended coordinating and prioritizing software investment after consulting with faculty and staff. Developing a technology master plan for software, hardware, and IT capacity, along with suggestions for an IT Governance Committee, were other recommendations.
In September 2019 the Board approved using state appropriated funds to replace servers, expand
data capacity for the Dover and Wilmington campuses, and increase bandwidth for students. The
bandwidth upgrade from one (1) gigabyte to five (5) gigabytes was completed by March 2020.
Ellucian continues its ongoing plan to upgrade the servers and switches throughout the campus.
These upgrades were necessary to support the Digital Learning Initiative and use of Apple
products. These improvements, while still underway, were timely considering the increased use
of technology during the pandemic.

The Wesley acquisition required a plan to migrate Wesley’s student data from Jenzabar into the
DSU Banner system. Until the acquisition was complete there was a limit to the amount of data
that could be transferred to Delaware State University. The data transfer for the Wesley students
enrolled in the spring occurred early in July 2021. The transfer of all other student records was
not complete until early December 2021. The Wesley IT infrastructure was somewhat antiquated
which IT is currently working to upgrade. Technology and Wi-Fi issues continue to frustrate
those at DSU Downtown.

The ongoing need to provide some level of virtual instruction due to the pandemic has
highlighted the lack of appropriate technology in many classrooms on both the main and DSU
Downtown campuses. IT is currently outfitting the classrooms as comprehensive smart learning
spaces in consultation with the Provost and Deans. IT is working to address the Wi-Fi
connectivity issues at both campuses, especially in the dormitories. As with many other
institutions of higher education, IT infrastructure and technology challenges are ongoing at DSU.

**Independent Audit**

The Audit & ERM Committee has four members appointed by the Board Chair with the CFO,
COO, and the Internal Auditor serving as staff liaisons. The liaisons provide ongoing
information on the financial position of the University and the mitigation of any audit findings.
The recommendation of University’s auditors, based upon proposals from the Administration, is
one of the duties of the Audit & ERM Committee. The committee periodically changes the
University auditors, adhering to best accounting and audit practices. The contract of the current
auditors was extended due to COVID. This committee receives the report of the auditors, seeks
to ensure the integrity of the audit process, approves the Internal Audit plan, and reviews the
annual audit of the University’s financial reports with the CFO.

The auditors provide an opinion as to the fair presentation of the financial position of the
University as reflected in the financial statements provided by the university. Since 2012 the
University has received clean audit reports. The University was successful in mitigating the 15
audit findings in 2018 down to 8 findings in 2019, a 47% reduction in a 12-month period.
Corrective measures to address the audit findings include monthly closings, implementing year-
end procedures, leveraging Banner, documentation and staff training, purchase and travel card
restrictions, and hiring additional personnel. Software was purchased to better manage the
purchase cards. The auditors suggested the continued monitoring of our increasing accounts
receivable. Unfortunately, changes in finance personnel delayed the audit submission for Fiscal
Year Ended (FYE) June 30, 2020, but the University still received a clean audit. The University
did not adopt any new accounting policies during FYE 2020 or 2021. (docs. VI.26 & VI.17)
The Internal Auditor has laid the foundation for a strong financial controls’ culture going into FY 2022. A charter has been created, internal control assessment deployed, interviews conducted, audit workplans developed, and the webpage is updated and monitored regularly. The first internal control assessment across the University in fall 2021 included a robust sampling of all departments. The survey results informed the six-month audit plan for the remainder of the 2021-2022 fiscal year. The Board continues to push for improved financial controls and increased financial education for its members.

**Institutional Advancement/Endowment**

Goal six of PRIDE 2020, institutional and operational effectiveness, includes emphasis on increasing the endowment and fundraising campaigns using best practices. Endowments and fundraising are under the auspices of Institutional Advancement and the DSU Foundation. Dr. Vita Pickrum is the VP for Institutional Advance and President of the DSU Foundation. Having joined Delaware State University in 2008 as the Associate Vice President of Development, Dr. Pickrum has led Advancement since 2014.

One of Dr. Pickrum’s signature achievements was establishing the annual HBCU Philanthropy Symposium in 2013. The symposium began as a regional event to empower schools to effectively address challenges faced in raising philanthropy dollars. Participants discussed trends in philanthropy, how to increase annual giving, engage alumni, and strategically ask for transformational gifts to the respective universities. In 2020 the 10th HBCU Philanthropy Symposium was held virtually with over 300 attendees from 54 HBCUs along with corporate and philanthropic organizations. Dr. Pickrum was recognized as the recipient of the 2021 Commonfund College and University Foundation Award by the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE). (docs. I.18 & I.19)

For the third year in a row, the DSU Foundation has earned the GuideStar Platinum Seal of Transparency, the highest level of recognition offered by GuideStar demonstrating a commitment to transparency by giving donors and funders meaningful data to evaluate performance. The Platinum Seal indicates that the DSU Foundation shares clear and important information with the public about its goals, strategies, capabilities, and other information on the Foundations impact to the world. (doc. VI.18)

The Greater than One (GTO) campaign, ending in 2016, was at the time the greatest fundraising campaign in the University’s 125-year history. (doc. VI.19) The GTO campaign exceeded its $20 million goal four months ahead of schedule. At the close of the campaign, the University’s endowment had grown from $20.3 million in January 2011 to $27.2 million in 2016. To aid our students during the pandemic, Advancement started the COVID-19 Student Emergency Relief Fund in April 2020 with a goal of raising $1 million. In just two months they raised over $1 million and by February 2021 exceeded the target by 60%, with a large portion of the funding coming from alumni. Celebration of the 130th Anniversary of DSU during the 2020-2021 academic year included a 130th Anniversary Fund Drive that met its $1.3 million goal. Advancement has worked tirelessly to increase alumni giving, and since the acquisition, they have included the Wesley alumni in their outreach efforts.
The University Endowment Fund made a one-time gift of $7.3 million to the University in June 2019 following Board approval. The President and Board have charged Advancement to raise $100 million in the 7-year comprehensive university campaign which began in July 2017. The Longwood Foundation recently contributed $1 million to be used to support the Wesley Acquisition. The MacKenzie Scott gift of $20 million, coupled with additional contributions from Bank of America, Laffé-McHugh Foundation, Barclays, Testing for America, JP Morgan Chase and Delmarva Power/Exelon among others, indicate that the Advancement team is on their way to exceeding that goal well before the end of the campaign. (doc. VI.20) Standard VI, Chapter 6, Figure 6.1 details the annual dollar amount and number of scholarships given to students by the DSU Foundation. Figures 8.3, 8.4 and 8.5 show the trends in the annual giving, the alumni-giving rate, and the University’s endowment balance.

---

Fig. 8.3 Delaware State University annual giving, 2012 to 2022

Fig 8.4 Delaware State University alumni-giving rate, 2011 to 2020
Institutional Advancement has been extremely active in supporting the University’s mission, students, and sustainability. The division is expanding its’ fundraising requests to a greater variety of organizations and sharing their experiences with other HBCU’s.

C. Analysis

While Delaware State University has experienced multiple leadership transitions, DSU continues to grow and reach new levels of excellence. The clearly defined mission and strategic plan have guided the University in making sound strategic and operational decisions. Administrative restructuring, reflective of the strong leadership of our current president, has allowed us to manage day-to-day operations more effectively while also seeking new opportunities in programming and fundraising. Our growing enrollment, our rise to the #10 HBCU according to the US News and World Report, and our expansion into downtown Dover and Wilmington, where we can better serve the needs of the State of Delaware, attest to DSU’s potential to be a powerful contributor to the State, the nation, and the world.

The restructuring of the Board of Trustees committees and the Administrative Council, coupled with the University’s Digital Initiative, proved timely considering the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the country. The benefit of the administrative restructuring for effective communication and decision-making capacity became boldly clear in March 2020. On March 13, 2020 the President, with the support of the BOT and Administrative Council, made the decision to close the campus due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This meant sending 90% of the residential students home and transitioning the remainder of the semester to a virtual environment. This required solving the logistical issues of shutting the campus, converting over 1,400 courses to digital delivery in five short business days, addressing the needs of students with housing insecurities, managing personnel working remotely, and organizing DSU’s first virtual Commencement.

It was at this point that the President’s reorganization paid benefits in terms of quick decision-making and clear lines of authority. Rapid decisions had to be made in a variety of venues, and each member of the Administrative Council had to take immediate action to address issues.
within his or her area. Cooperation between divisions – which had been one of the President’s intended initiatives for 2020 – now took on an increasing importance.

The Digital Initiative, which started in fall 2018, was instrumental to virtual teaching and learning. The IT systems already in place to support the Digital Initiative allowed the University to swiftly transition all employees to working remotely. The use of paperless systems to share documents became the norm. Increased communication between areas greatly improved the University’s ability to respond to issues arising because of the pandemic. This is not to say that everything went perfectly, but when a problem arose, everyone worked together to address the issue and find a solution. When the students were sent home, the University realized that some students had nowhere to go, so arrangements were made to keep them in University housing. Students did not have technology or Wi-Fi connections at home so devices were sent to them to remedy the problem.

The University’s ability to maintain enrollment while working remotely is a testament to the academic units, including faculty and advisors, supported by the Enrollment Management Division. The University’s COVID testing protocols and policies (doc. III.17) have been touted as an exemplar for other institutions. DSU managed to keep the positivity rate on campus to 0.05%. The success of the COVID-19 Student Relief Fund (doc. IV.02) was a testament to Institutional Advancement’s ability to reach out to alumni and others to support our students during the pandemic. The financial support was truly appreciated by the students. Fundraising reached record amounts during the pandemic. MacKenzie Scott’s generosity, in giving an unrestricted gift of $20 million, allowed the University to dictate how best to use the funds to support continued growth. That donation helped to finance the Wesley acquisition, a portion was added to the endowment, and some was used to support other University operations.

The Inspire scholarship was expanded from three to four years and later to cover full tuition for four years. The CARES Act provided funds to help students and the institution. The University used some of the funds to clear outstanding balances for 96 graduating seniors. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation provided funding used to support the Digital Initiative, elimination of remedial courses, and the Individual Development Plan (IDP) for students.

And, in the midst of the pandemic, Delaware State University successfully acquired Wesley College, including reporting on the acquisition at the MSCHE Annual Conference. (doc. VI.20) The Wesley acquisition provides infrastructure gains with the addition of the downtown Wesley campus and the enrollment of Wesley’s students. The acquisition allows DSU the opportunity to have even more of an impact on downtown Dover.

The University acknowledges that there are still challenges to be addressed. The new Master Plan should address our physical infrastructure issues such as overall capacity; deferred maintenance for buildings, classrooms, labs, and offices; ADA compliance; and the use of open spaces. The plan will be comprehensive, including all DSU locations and projecting the needs based on expected growth in students and the University’s research status. Some renovations have already begun to facilitate the move of programs in the Wesley College of Health and Behavioral Sciences to the DSU Downtown location. However, the renovations needed for Nursing have delayed their relocation from the main campus until fall 2022. The new Associate
VP for Facilities and Capital Planning has been very responsive in addressing faculty, staff, and student concerns about repairs needed in advance of the Master Plan’s completion.

Course management and planning must expand to consider class times and more evening and weekend hours to better share the available space and accommodate a more diverse population of students. With the hiring of a new registrar the university looks forward to building a more effective classroom utilization plan that will address these concerns regarding classroom and lab space.

DSU had anticipated an increased need for IT support with the Digital Initiative, but the pandemic brought additional challenges. Reliance on IT has grown exponentially with everyone working remotely including tech support, classroom to support digital instruction, secure connections to the DSU servers, and students and employees lacking the proper equipment at home. The Wesley acquisition further identified the need to extend IT services to the DSU Downtown location, but the technology at that location requires major upgrades. A readily available, modernized, and cohesive IT plan that includes a schedule for upgrades and new equipment implementation is needed. IT has been in communication with Academic Affairs regarding implementing a university-wide standard classroom setup to accommodate hybrid learning. IT is addressing the list, provided by the Faculty Senate Teaching Effectiveness Committee, of technology that faculty need to livestream their classes. It was also suggested that IT provide a readily accessible list of the technology in every classroom to assist faculty assigned to the rooms. Lastly, as with everything else, there is the need for additional training and support staff available during all class hours to troubleshoot issues that may arise while teaching.

DSU is actively exploring additional revenue sources to reduce the reliance on tuition. Only about 30% of the Operations budget comes from the state and payroll alone is 60% of the expense budget. Tuition dependency and discounting have consequential impacts on finances. Student Accounts is part of SEM. To avoid cash flow problems for the University, SEM and Finance have been collaborating to effectively manage discounting and payment plans that may lead to increasing accounts receivables. Budgeting requests for high demand programs and support services should align with enrollment projections to ensure the continued success of students. The new purchase card system will alleviate some of the past problems with reporting and reconciling expenditures. Internal audit is implementing controls that should reduce any future audit findings.

D. Continuous Improvement and Innovation

There have been numerous successes for DSU to celebrate while it continues to grow and face new opportunities. DSU’s new strategic plan, REACH 2026 (doc. 1.22), includes Operational Effectiveness, Infrastructure, and Financial Planning as three of its four strategic pillars, signifying the importance of these areas to the University’s success and sustainability. The University is actively exploring alternative revenue sources to reduce the reliance on tuition. The VP for Government and Community Relations continues to be instrumental in assisting the University to work with the State of Delaware to provide additional funds. The President has ended the hiring freeze, but personnel requests must provide a rationale for the request supported by proposed or actual funding for the position. The University continues to grapple with the
impact of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and working through some of the complexities of
the Wesley acquisition. COVID testing protocols will remain in place until the virus is no longer
a national health threat. The Molecular Diagnostic Lab will be a source of future revenues for the
University and instrumental to support student and faculty research.

The upcoming Master Plan should address many of the deferred maintenance issues across the
University and propose methods to improve physical capacity (doc. VI.21) for the University
while addressing ADA compliance issues. IT is developing and implementing a standard
classroom set-up to support virtual learning. The University was just awarded additional funds
from the State of Delaware (doc. VI.23) of which $7.4 million will be used for IT and $2.5 for
facilities. (Internal Audit will continue to annually survey University constituents to support the
development of continuous 12-month audit plans. These plans will be put in place to mitigate
external audit findings and to ensure the University remains sustainable with robust internal
controls. As laid out in REACH 2026, forthcoming forums on the financial state of the
University may help faculty, staff, and administration better understand the financial constraints
the University faces.

The University wants to grow its research status and recognizes the necessary infrastructures to
support that growth while not losing sight of academic excellence and student success. Delaware
State University is actively working to ensure the planning processes, resources, and structures
align to support its mission and strategic goals.
Chapter 9: Standard VII: Governance, Leadership, and Administration

The institution is governed and administered in a manner that allows it to realize its stated mission and goals in a way that effectively benefits the institution, its students, and the other constituencies it serves. Even when supported by or affiliated with governmental, corporate, religious, educational system, or other unaccredited organizations, the institution has education as its primary purpose, and it operates as an academic institution with appropriate autonomy.

Delaware State University is in Compliance with Standard VII

A. Overview

The Governance Working Group, like the other working groups, was comprised of administrators, staff, faculty, students, union representatives, and a Board of Trustees (BOT) liaison. Because of its focus on leadership and governance the team included student representatives from the Student Government Association (SGA) and the Graduate Student Association (GSA). The BOT liaison is the chair of the Board’s Governance Committee.

Delaware State University’s (DSU’s) Governance, Leadership, and Administration have undergone a series of changes in the last five years, including three presidents, three provosts, three BOT chairs and vice-chairs, changes to the BOT standing committees, and numerous reconfigurations of the Administrative Council. Dr. Tony Allen was hired as Provost in June 2017. Drs. Wilma Mishoe and Devona Williams became the first female Chair and Vice-Chair of the BOT in July 2017. The 10th President, Dr. Harry Williams, left in January 2018 to become the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Thurgood Marshall College Fund (TMCF). Dr. Wilma Mishoe stepped in as Acting President and then as the 11th and first female President of DSU in July 2018. On January 1, 2020, Provost Tony Allen assumed the presidency following Dr. Wilma Mishoe’s retirement and return to the Board of Trustees.

The academic and operating units underwent restructuring while Tony Allen was Provost. By July 1, 2018 the five colleges had been reconfigured into four colleges to promote more “natural” collaborations and strengthen the academic enterprise based on recommendations from the Academic Restructuring Taskforce. (doc. VI.02) Shortly after Dr. Tony Allen became President the COVID-19 pandemic upended the world. As with other institutions of higher education, Delaware State University closed the campus and transitioned to virtual instruction with the support of the faculty, staff, students, administration, and Board of Trustees. Amidst the pandemic the University, with BOT approval, (doc. VII.01) took advantage of the opportunity to acquire Wesley College, a local liberal arts college about two miles from main campus. The acquisition required approval by MSCHE of a Complex Substantive Change (doc. VI.02) including a Teach-Out Plan. (doc. IV.04) The acquisition was completed on June 30, 2021 and the location was renamed “DSU Downtown.” The College of Health and Behavioral Sciences (CHBS) relocated from the main campus to that location. CHBS was renamed the Wesley College of Health and Behavioral Sciences (WCHBS) to honor the legacy of the former Wesley College.

The make-up of the Delaware State University’s Administrative Council changed with each new president to support that leader’s vision and goals and increase operational functionality. These
changes utilized natural synergies that supported each President’s management style while increasing student enrollment and research portfolio.

While these governance and organizational changes were occurring, the one constant was the University’s adherence to the strategic plan, PRIDE 2020, and its key performance indicators. Pride 2020 has ended, and a new strategic plan – REACH 2026 – was implemented in January 2022. Delaware State University’s organizational structure is displayed in the DSU Organizational Chart. (doc. VI.10) The following sections detail the governance, roles, and responsibilities of the Board of Trustees, the University President, and the Administrative Team. Figure 9.1 displays the current organizational structure of the University.

![CURRENT STATE ORGANIZATIONAL CHART](image-url)

Fig. 9.1 Delaware State University organizational chart

**B. Description**

**The Board of Trustees**

The Delaware State University Board of Trustees governs the business and affairs of Delaware State University pursuant to the Charter, Title 14, Chapter 65 of the Delaware Code. (doc. VII.02) The Code also defines the number and tenure of BOT members. There are 15 voting members of the BOT on staggered six-year terms, eight appointed by the Governor, and seven selected by the existing BOT members. The Governor and the University President are ex-officio members of the BOT with voting rights. There is a requirement that nine of the Trustees must reside in each of the three Delaware counties (New Castle, Kent, and Sussex), three per county,
two appointed by the Governor and one selected by the other Board members. The BOT Bylaws (doc. VII.03) set forth the powers and duties of the Board of Trustees.

The Board officers include the Chair, up to two Vice-Chairs, a Secretary, and a Treasurer who the Board members elect before July 1 each year. The Secretary and Treasurer are not required to be members of the Board. The Code of Conduct guides each member concerning ethical conduct, conflicts of interest, confidentiality, and interactions among themselves and the Administration. Annually, each Board member and officer signs the Conflict Disclosure Statement, (doc. II.08) affirming their agreement and compliance with the policy. The Governance Committee does a periodic review of conflict of interest and confidentiality. The General Counsel conducts regular trainings for the BOT on Conflict of Interest and Disclosures to inform new members and refresh returning members regarding the requirements.

The full Board conducts regular quarterly meetings that are open to the public as required by the Delaware Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Typically, personnel, legal matters, and other sensitive issues are discussed during closed executive sessions as FOIA permits. The Board webpage (docs. VII.04 & VII.05) publishes the upcoming annual schedule of Board meetings and retreats, agendas, and approved minutes from past meetings. Agendas are posted in advance of meetings, and public comments are permitted at the quarterly meetings. Once approved, meeting minutes replace the agendas on the webpage. Special meetings may be called at the Chair’s discretion or upon the request of a majority of Board members. The Board standing committees meet quarterly to prepare actions and reports in advance of the full Board meeting.

The Board holds semi-annual retreats, usually in July and December. The purpose of these retreats is to unite as a Board and establish a clear vision and priorities for the upcoming year. This includes marking progress against current action plans, addressing critical issues, and determining the future direction and priorities. The Board and Executive action plans are set at the December retreat and updated at the July retreat. The Board reviews the University’s progress on the strategic plan’s key performance indicators (KPIs) (doc. I.20) in detail at the semi-annual retreats. Some of the KPIs from PRIDE 2020, (doc. I.01) including retention, graduation, and financial measures, are factored into the new strategic plan, REACH 2026, (doc. I.22) because they are essential to the institution’s overall success.

The Board is responsible for appointing the President and assessing his/her performance. The Board’s charge is to determine and clarify the University’s mission, approve long-range plans, evaluate educational programs, ensure the financial solvency of the institution, preserve institutional independence, assess the Board’s performance, and protect and preserve the assets of the institution. The Board of Trustees responsibilities and reserved authority is identified in Article V of the BOT Bylaws. This authority includes, but is not limited to, the conferral and granting of degrees, adopting the University’s annual budget, establishing tuition and academic fees, accepting grants and gifts to the University, establishing endowments, and approving contracts of $250,000 or more. The full Board has the power to adopt and modify its Bylaws. The Board delegates authority to the President to conduct all day-to-day business of the University with some limitations in Article VI of the BOT Bylaws.
Currently there are eight standing committees of the Board:

1. Executive Leadership
2. Audit & Enterprise Risk Management (ERM)
3. Governance
4. Innovation & Sustainability
5. Academic & Student Success
6. Operations
7. Athletics
8. Student Affairs

The BOT Bylaws, Article VII, outline the membership and oversight of each standing committee. Standing committee membership is limited to Board members and other appointees approved by the Trustees. The Chair of the BOT and the President of the University are ex-officio members of all Board standing committees. In addition, University Vice Presidents serve as staff liaisons to standing committees based on their areas of oversight. The staff liaisons work with the committee chairs to develop agendas for the meetings which can include presentations from units most directly involved in matters related to the committee’s functions.

The Board Executive Leadership Committee consists of the Chair, Vice-Chair(s), chairpersons of the standing committees, and members-at-large appointed by the Chair. To ensure the welfare of the University, this committee has the authority to act on behalf of the Board with some exceptions. The Executive Leadership Team, Board Chair, and two Vice-Chairs meet with the President every month to discuss a variety of University matters and help develop productive solutions. The Board Chair and the President speak weekly on University business.

On an annual basis, the BOT approves and adopts the institution’s annual operating and capital budgets and other financial responsibilities. The Operations Committee is responsible for monitoring and safeguarding the University’s financial stability and long-term economic health. The University CFO is responsible to the Board regarding financial processes and transactions. The CFO is required to present accurate financial statements to the Board. The Audit & ERM Standing Committee recommends the appointment of the University’s auditors and approves the audit plan. All of these duties are necessary for the Board to ensure financial solvency and to protect and preserve the assets of the University.

Self-study and Wesley acquisition presentations regularly updated the appropriate standing committees and the entire Board. Trustees were appointed as liaisons to the self-study working most closely associated with their role on the Board. Private meetings between the Trustees and the MSCHE VP Liaison, Dr. Idna Corbett and the Evaluation Team Chair, Dr. Brenda Allen, occurred during their virtual visit in October 2020 and November 2021 respectively.

In March 2020, the administration chose to close the campus in response to the COVID-19 pandemic after discussions with the Board and receiving their support. Board members participated as panelists during weekly University-wide forums on the pandemic, donated to the COVID-19 Student Emergency Relief Fund and the DSU Food Pantry, and participated in the first-ever virtual Commencement in May 2020. Like the University, the Board successfully transitioned to digital meetings in 2020 amidst the pandemic resulting in a 90% to 100% participation rate for trustees and no canceled meetings or retreats. The administration’s “Together” Fall 2020 Reopening Plan (doc. VI.14) was evaluated and fully supported by the Board. This plan included a comprehensive COVID-19 testing and vaccination strategy with Testing for America, which continues to be utilized as variants to COVID-19 are discovered. The
Office of Institutional Effectiveness deployed periodic surveys of students regarding their perception of how the University is handling the pandemic. Information gleamed from the various student surveys factored into the University’s continued response to the pandemic to support students’ success and well-being.

The Board of Trustees authorized and later approved the Wesley Acquisition. The Board was involved in the Complex Substantive Change to Acquire Wesley College including the related Additional Location Substantive Change (doc. VII.06) and Teach-Out Plan. To comply with the Teach-Out Plan, the Board approved 15 new programs and certificates as part of the Wesley acquisition. In addition, the Board received regular progress updates on the Wesley acquisition from the President and administration, including requirements relative to obtaining MSCHE approval.

A succession plan for President Wilma Mishoe was developed and executed during the 2019-2020 academic year. Then Provost and Executive Vice President, Dr. Tony Allen, was named President Successor during the fall 2019 semester and began transitioning into his new role. The transition plan set expectations and required open communication between the Board and Drs. Mishoe and Allen. Dr. Mishoe returned to the Board in January 2020.

The President

The Board of Trustees Bylaws identifies the Administrative Officers in Article IV. These Administrative Officers are responsible for carrying out the Board’s policy and attending to the general administration of the University. The President, elected by the majority of Board Trustees, serves in accordance with their contract. The President is the chief executive officer of the University. The Provost is the Vice President and Chief Academic Officer of the University, responsible to the President. The other Vice Presidents that make up the Administrative Council have the authority, duties, and functions consistent with the area/division they oversee.

Dr. Tony Allen became the 12th President in January 2020. While Provost, Dr. Allen led the restructuring of the University into four academic colleges and a burgeoning graduate school under the redesign initiative. This restructuring put into motion almost 18 months of deliberations, beginning with the recommendations of the Academic Restructuring Task Force in December 2016, and ending with the redesign planning process throughout the 2017-2018 academic year, Provost Allen’s academic goals for the 2018-2019 academic year were to eliminate remedial courses, promote digital learning and technology equity, expand experiential and service-learning opportunities for students, increase faculty professional development focusing on digital and student learning, and expand the University’s research portfolio. The final decision to eliminate remedial courses was supported by the data that showed students who bypassed the remedial courses performed the same as students who took the remedial courses. The push for increased and more diverse use of technology by students and faculty was based on best practices in higher education and the need to prepare our students for careers relying on the expanded use of technology. The elimination of remedial courses and promotion of digital teaching and learning were supported by funding from the Gates Foundation.
Little did President Allen know how beneficial his focus on digital learning and technology equity would prove soon after becoming President in January 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic forced the University to send students home in mid-March 2020. Over 1,400 courses went to a virtual modality within two weeks. The partnership with Apple, which began in the fall of 2018, supplied all university freshmen with an iPad at the start of the school year. Having so many students with the same technology made the March 2020 transition to a virtual environment easier for all constituents including faculty, staff, and students.

During fall 2020 and spring 2021, President Allen worked closely with the BOT, administration, staff, and faculty to establish the university’s “Together” COVID-19 plan, a testing and vaccine protocol with Testing for America to support a complete return to campus. This plan has been touted as a national example of a campus safety strategy. (doc. VII.12) In January 2021 DSU opened a COVID-19 Testing Lab facility at its Kirkwood site. Most notably, under President Allen’s leadership, the University did not lay off any employees during the pandemic.

In July 2020 President Allen announced the University’s intention to acquire neighboring Wesley College. This acquisition required MSCHE approval of a Complex Substantive Change and Teach-Out Plan. The acquisition was finalized on June 30, 2021. The former Wesley College became “DSU Downtown” and is home to the renamed “Wesley College of Health and Behavioral Sciences.” Moving CHBS to DSU Downtown allows expansion of strategic initiatives and health services to downtown Dover. This is part of the plan to grow the University’s enrollment to 10,000 students and move to a Research Level 1 status by 2030, while expanding outreach to the community. President Allen, along with the ALO from Delaware State and Wesley and MSCHE personnel, gave a presentation on the Wesley acquisition complex substantive change process at the MSCHE Annual Conference (doc. VI.21) in December 2021.

The University currently serves over 5,000 students in the United States and abroad. President Allen, with input and support from the Board and Administrative Council, manages a $140 million budget, a $23 million research portfolio, and annual giving reaching $40 million. Contributions to DSU have increased during President Allen’s tenure including the recent donation of $20 million from McKenzie Scott and the Capital One building in downtown Wilmington.

President Biden appointed President Allen to serve on the Biden Transition Team Advisory Council and as CEO of the Presidential Inaugural Committee. Most recently President Biden appointed President Allen as Chair of the President’s Board of Advisors on Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). (doc.VII.07) Before joining the University, Dr. Allen brought a diverse background in the private and nonprofit sectors. Tony Allen was the Managing Director of Corporate Reputation at Bank of America, co-founded the Metropolitan Wilmington Urban League and Public Allies Delaware, and led Delaware’s K12 public education reform effort from 2014-2019. President Allen holds a B.A. in Political Science and a Ph.D. in Urban Affairs & Public Policy from the University of Delaware, and a Master of Public Administration from Baruch College (CUNY). He began his career as a special assistant and speechwriter to then United States Senator Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
Administrative Council

The Administrative Council, supporting the DSU President, consists of the Provost/Chief Academic Officer and the Vice Presidents of each division and other appropriate personnel. The composition of the Administrative Council has changed with the successive presidents. The current leaders on the Administrative Council are:

- Provost and Chief Academic Officer – Dr. Saundra F. DeLauder,
- Vice President of Strategic Enrollment Management and Student Affairs – Mr. Antonio Boyle,
- Special Assistant to the President & Vice President for Government & Community Relations – Ms. Jackie Griffith,
- Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) & Vice President of Human Resources – Dr. Irene Chapman-Hawkins,
- Vice President of Legal Affairs/General Counsel/Chief Enterprise Risk Officer – Ms. LaKresha Moultrie,
- University Secretary & Assistant Vice President of Enterprise Risk Management – Ms. Tamara Stoner,
- Chief Administrator DSU Downtown Campus/ Vice President of Strategic Initiatives – Dr. Stacy L. Downing,
- Chief Operating Officer (COO) and Vice President of University Operations – Mr. Cleon Cauley,
- Vice President of Finance/Chief Financial Officer (CFO) – Mr. Anas Ben Addi,
- Chief Information Officer (CIO)/Vice President of Information Technology – Mr. Darrell McMillon,
- Athletic Director – Ms. Alecia Shields-Gadson,
- Assistant Vice President for Facilities Management/Capital Planning – Mr. Bernard Pratt,
- Vice President of Institutional Advancement – Dr. Vita Pickrum.

These leaders bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to their positions and work tirelessly to support the University mission. The Human Resource Department maintains the job descriptions for all positions. After the Wesley acquisition, the Administrative Council expanded to include the Chief Administrator DSU Downtown Campus/VP of Strategic Initiatives. Each area is described in the following paragraphs.

The Divisions of Strategic Enrollment Management and Student Affairs were recently combined under one vice president, joining the two student-focused areas outside the academic division for a more cohesive operation. This unit now includes Admissions, the Registrar, Financial Aid, Student Accounts, International Affairs, Career Services, Housing, Judicial, Student Leadership and Activities, Spiritual Life, and Recreation and Wellness.

The VP for Government & Community Relations, a position established in August of 2018, manages political advocacy efforts on behalf of the University at the local, state, and federal levels, while leveraging community partnerships and contacts. This vice president serves as the University liaison to the Early College High School, helping to expand the resource base available to the high school.
The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) and VP of Human Resources is responsible for all personnel-related matters. The majority of DSU employees are covered by one of five unions, American Association of University Professors (AAUP) for faculty; 867 - Police Officers; 1007 - Clerical/Technical Staff; 1267 - Plant Maintenance; and 2888 - Dispatchers and Security Officers. Human Resources is responsible for ensuring that the University honors these contracts.

As part of the DSU’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Campus Health Services moved under the CAO/VP Human Resources and coordinates with Enterprise Risk Management. The University’s testing protocols resulted in employees’ and students’ requirements to provide medical information on COVID-19 testing and vaccinations to the University. Expanding Human Resources to include Campus Health supports this data collection effort in compliance with HIPPA. To address the increase in the need for disability resources across the University, Student Accessibility Services, formerly in the Office of Student Success, was restructured as the Center for Disability Resources and moved under the auspices of the General Counsel. The Center’s duties expanded to providing equal opportunities and access to education, employment, programs, goods and services for students, faculty, staff, and campus guests with disabilities.

The Wesley acquisition provided DSU with an additional campus in downtown Dover, just two miles south of the main campus. As part of the MSCHE Substantive Change requirement, DSU needed to identify the position responsible for that additional location. President Allen added the position of Chief Administrator DSU Downtown Campus/VP of Strategic Initiatives to manage the daily operation of the DSU Downtown campus, while providing oversight of REACH 2026. The Dean of WCHBS reports to the Provost regarding academic issues and works closely with the DSU Downtown Chief Administrator on infrastructure concerns.

The Chief Operating Officer/Vice President of University Operations has oversight over Finance, Information Technology, Facilities and Capital Planning, Police, and Athletics. Many of these administrators are members of the Administrative Council, but they report through the Chief Operating Officer. This structure supports the coordination of these critical operational functions.

The VP of Institutional Advancement is also the President of the University Foundation, the primary fundraising entity for the institution. Many of the accomplishments of this division are discussed in Standard VI, Chapter 8.

Second in command to the President is the Provost and Chief Academic Officer who oversees the largest division on campus, the Office of Academic Affairs. The primary responsibilities of the Office of Academic Affairs include academic planning and budgeting; program evaluation, assessment, and accreditation; educational policies and procedures; professional development, promotion, and tenure of faculty; and the reaffirmation process to the Middle States Commission on Higher Education.

Academic programs and oversight of the faculty fall under the Provost’s aegis. The Academic Affairs Division is organized into units. These include the following:

- College of Agriculture, Science and Technology (CAST)
- College of Humanities, Education and Social Sciences (CHESS)
- College of Business (COB)
- Wesley College of Health and Behavioral Sciences (WCHBS)
- School of Graduate, Adult & Extended Studies (SGAES) including DSU Online, the Office of Distance Education and Learning Technologies (ODELT), and Adult and Continuing Education (ACE)
- Office of Student Success (OSS) including Advising, Student Support Services, William C. Jason Library, and the Office of Undergraduate Research, Experiential Learning and Honors (URELAH)
- Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) including Assessment, Institutional Research, Planning and Analytics (IRPA), and the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL)
- Research and Sponsored Programs, including Restricted Accounting, the University Art Gallery, Title III, and Land Grant Programs.

As the academic leader, the Provost delegates her diverse responsibilities through the administrators of these units including the College Deans and Chairs who work collaboratively to support the academic disciplines, foster diverse student learning opportunities inside and outside the classroom, while also focusing on increasing retention and graduation rates. The Provost is the primary liaison to the non-academic divisions in support of the interests and goals of faculty, staff, and students.

The Faculty

Faculty first report to their academic department chair. The chairs, in turn, work with their college dean who reports to the Provost. Per Title 14, Chapter 65 of the Delaware State Code,

The faculty of the University, composed of the teachers whom the trustees shall employ, 1 of whom shall be President of the University and, ex officio, a member of the Board of Trustees, shall have the care, government and instruction of the students, subject, however, to the bylaws. They shall have authority, with the approbation of the Board, to confer degrees and grant diplomas.

The AAUP Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) (doc. II.01) addresses many areas that impact faculty, including rank, appointment, and reappointment; promotion and tenure (P&T); workload; working conditions; annual evaluations; salaries; sabbatical leave; grievances and arbitration; and severance. Because promotion and tenure expectations vary by discipline, each department has developed discipline-specific guidelines (doc. II.12) to support faculty in meeting promotion and tenure requirements. The periodic CBA renegotiation teams are made up of AAUP faculty members and administration appointees. The University and the AAUP are currently in negotiations to renew the CBA.

The Faculty Senate (docs. VII.08 & VII.09) provides the shared governance mechanism related to academic programming, curricula, and policies and serves as a communication channel between the faculty and the administration and, when appropriate, the Board of Trustees. The Board’s Academic & Student Success Committee is responsible for matters related to the faculty and the programs of teaching and research pursued by the University to ensure they reflect the institution’s mission and strategic priorities. The Faculty Senate committees work to support faculty and students. The Faculty Senate has the primary responsibility and authority to review,
discuss, and make policy recommendations in such areas as curriculum, requirements for degrees, the establishment or disestablishment of any degree, research, faculty status, honorary degrees, candidates for degrees, and student activities related to the academic life of the University.

When the COVID-19 outbreak closed the University campus, the faculty worked with the University to transition the vast majority of courses to a virtual platform in a matter of days. In response to a request by the SGA the Faculty Senate developed a Pass/Fail policy to be in effect for the remainder of the pandemic. The SharePoint Workflow paperless approval process, implemented by Faculty Senate in spring 2020, was crucial in processing the additional programs, curricula, and courses resulting from the Wesley acquisition. The Wesley faculty and staff were considered for positions at Delaware State University as part of the acquisition process. The faculty reviewed the Wesley faculty experience and curriculum vitae to determine if they would meet the needs of their departments. Departments were encouraged to consider Wesley’s faculty for needed positions outside of the normal hiring process. Twenty former Wesley faculty joined DSU as visiting faculty in fall 2021.

The Students

The Student Government Association (SGA), (doc. VII.10) for undergraduates, and the Graduate Student Association (GSA) (doc. VII.11) are both very active on campus and meet freely with various members of the Administrative Council. They have contributed to many of the University’s virtual forums that provide information to students, faculty, and staff on issues impacting the University, especially surrounding the pandemic, the Wesley acquisition, and national social justice issues. The SGA met with the President and Provost on behalf of the students on implementing a Pass/Fail grading option, student food and housing insecurities, and mental health concerns during the pandemic. Amidst the social justice unrest and Black Lives Matter protests, beginning in the summer of 2020, the University partnered with the SGA to create the “Black Lives Matter” sidewalk between the MLK Student Center and the Gymnasium.

C. Analysis

The leadership and administration at Delaware State University consistently monitor the environment looking for challenges and opportunities that may arise to benefit the institution. They react quickly to take advantage of those opportunities and lessen the impact of challenges. The restructured functional areas enhance commonalities and economies of scale in campus operations, including academics. This enhancement is apparent in the realignment of the colleges, the Administrative Council, and other functional areas.

- As part of the college realignment, the College of Health and Behavioral Sciences, now the Wesley College of Health and Behavioral Sciences, was established. WCHBS includes programs in Kinesiology, Nursing, Occupational Therapy, Psychology, Public Health, and Social Work and has an interdisciplinary approach to community engagement, education, training, research, and behavioral healthcare.
- Strategic Enrollment Management expanded to include the Office of Student Affairs to ensure that all student touch points, outside of academics, come under one umbrella. This new unit will manage the end-to-end student life cycle at the University.
The Office of Institutional Effectiveness was established to provide coordinated oversight of the offices of Institutional Research, Planning, and Analytics (IRPA), the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), and the Assessment Office, supporting data-driven systems for assessing institutional effectiveness in academic programs, administrative units, programmatic and University accreditations, and promoting faculty/staff professional development.

The Board regularly reviews and updates its bylaws to ensure the document is reflective of current realities. Since their adoption in 2007, the current bylaws have been amended eight times, with the most recent revision approved in September 2021. Changes were made to clarify language, reflect current practices, add or change titles and committees, and ensure consistency in use of terms. The Board periodically reexamines its standing committees for relevance and scope of oversight. For example, at the January 2021 BOT meeting, the Student Success Committee was split into three standing committees – Academic & Student Success, Student Affairs, and Athletics – because the scope of work became too broad for one committee.

There have been numerous changes in the Administrative Officers and reporting functions over the past ten years. Rather than continuing to amend the BOT bylaws for every change, the most recent amended bylaws define the administrative officers as the President, other President’s Administrative Council members, and other officers as designated by the president. In addition to the President’s annual evaluation by the BOT, the President annually evaluates the Administrative Council members who then evaluate their direct reports. The annual evaluations are due before June 30, the end of the academic year. The performance evaluation (doc. VI.08) forms vary depending on the position reviewed, but all explore areas of excellence and areas needing improvement. All employees work with their supervisors to identify their professional goals for the next academic year in alignment with the University’s mission, priorities, and goals. Those individuals not performing satisfactorily are placed on a Performance Improvement Plan (doc. III.06) with a timeline for reevaluation.

Adjusting to safety protocols due to the COVID-19 virus, the Board of Trustees switched all meetings, the entire Board and standing committees, to a virtual format. The online link for the Board meetings is published on the agendas posted on the Board webpage to continue to allow interested parties to attend. Standing committees’ meeting links are shared with those presenting and other invited parties. These virtual meetings have increased Board engagement to 90% - 100%, but they lack the opportunity to engage personally and more informally over the breakfasts and lunches available before and after the meetings.

The Board’s Presidential transition plan was put in place to allow then Provost and Executive Vice President, Dr. Tony Allen, more time and insight into the University operations and culture before taking over as President. The plan was fortuitous considering that just two and one-half months after President Allen took office the COVID-19 pandemic required quick and drastic responses from the University administration and community. Working closely, the Board, the President, and the Administrative Council swiftly reacted to the COVID-19 pandemic, closing the campus during Spring Break 2020 to prevent the virus’ spread on campus. Employees who were able to work from home were required to do so. Challenges to advance communication with the unions were addressed as a dire response to a global health emergency.
Student support remained at the forefront of all the University’s responses. The faculty moved courses to a virtual environment in a short period. As students faced problems because they were not allowed to return to campus after spring break to retrieve their belongings, a scheduled move-out was implemented in late April and early May 2020. This required the University to supply computer technology to students in the interim who did not have technology at home. The University discovered that many of the students were homeless and suffered from food insecurities. Arrangements were made for some students to remain on campus while following strict safety protocols. The University community continued to support the DSU Food Pantry for students and employees. The University Foundation established a “COVID-19 Student Emergency Relief Fund” to financially support students in need.

The University partnered with Testing for America to set up testing on campus. Other COVID-19 safety protocols were implemented to systematically bring students and faculty back to campus. By the fall 2021 semester the University was able to fully open for in-person learning. To accomplish this, vaccination clinics and regular testing are available on campus. COVID survey results were highly favorable of the University’s response to the pandemic. Multiple personal protective equipment (PPE) options were deployed to protect faculty, staff, and students on campus and in face-to-face classes. Anyone coming on campus is required to register through the Campus Shield application. This convenient commitment to safety has resulted in the University’s positive rate remaining at .05% or less during the pandemic.

During the 2020-2021 academic year, with only essential functions required to be on campus, the University expanded the use of paperless communication, and online meetings and presentations. Emails, MS Teams Channels, OneDrive, DocuSign, Adobe, Microsoft Flow, WebEx, and SharePoint facilitated, and in some cases improved, the successful execution of diverse job responsibilities. While many of these technologies were available before COVID-19, their presence enabled the University to rapidly transition to a remote working environment. Admittedly, as with most industries, employees became plagued with “Zoom Fatigue.” The University has instituted a series of forums and support mechanisms to help employees manage these concerns. The University went from about two forums a semester to almost weekly forums, providing information on the school’s response to the pandemic, the Wesley acquisition, and other issues. As the University returned to on-campus activities in fall 2021, many found these paperless processes and virtual meetings to be more efficient and productive, from either their on-campus offices or their dining room tables. The COVID-19 pandemic allowed the entire University community to take advantage of new ways of conducting business which do not replace face-to-face interactions but allow for flexible working options.

The BOT strongly supported the acquisition of Wesley College, realizing that it would expand the University’s presence in the State of Delaware and enable the University to create programs that can have national and international influence. The Wesley acquisition was a growth opportunity that the University could not ignore. The University had forums for faculty, staff, and students at both institutions to explain the acquisition. Numerous working groups that included Delaware State University and Wesley College personnel were established to complete the MSCHE Complex Substantive Change and Teach-Out process and integrate Wesley, its faculty, staff, and students, into DSU. Wesley faculty and staff experienced some confusion because their former President gave the impression that all employees would be hired in the
acquisition process. Given the opportunity created by the Wesley acquisition, the President and Provost emphasized that the acquisition was a unique business decision that would benefit the University in the long run.

As the University continues to address the COVID-19 pandemic and integrate former Wesley students and personnel into the DSU family, the Board and Administration also focused on the end of the PRIDE 2020 strategic plan and the beginning of the REACH 2026 strategic plan. The process slowed because of other pressing concerns, but the Board is moving forward with the development of key performance indicators to support the goals in REACH 2026. Both strategic plans have an overall focus on student success, academic excellence, and institutional and operational effectiveness. This shared lens has allowed the institution to take advantage of opportunities, such as the Wesley acquisition, and address challenges, the COVID-19 pandemic in particular, in a manner that strengthens the University.

D. Continuous Improvement and Innovation

President Allen is committed to making Delaware State University the most diverse, contemporary Historically Black College/University (HBCU) in America. The Board of Trustees will continue to monitor the University’s operational effectiveness and financial position at their quarterly meetings. The new strategic plan, REACH 2026, focuses on five pillars to prepare the University for 2026 and beyond. Those pillars are the same institutional priorities focused on in this self-study: student success, academic excellence, operational effectiveness, infrastructure, and financial planning.

The University community anecdotally expressed concern about effective communication between multiple units and divisions across the University. The restructuring of the colleges and administrative council was intended to enhance cross-unit collaboration. One of the benefits of COVID-19 and the Wesley Acquisition was the increase in virtual meetings and the ability to share work products online. The Wesley Acquisition and the COVID-19 made clear that frequent and consistent communication is necessary for the University to continue to move forward even when we cannot be together physically. The University will continue to use regular virtual forums to create opportunities for University constituents to ask questions of the administration about immediate issues of concern. Past forums were well attended and recorded and posted to the DSU website and the DESUTV YouTube channel. The success of these virtual forums made clear that effective communication requires consistency and will continue to be a method to share information. The next step will be to create a short survey for the forums to determine if the participants felt the information provided was beneficial or if there were additional concerns.

The chairs of the academic departments and college deans will continue to meet weekly to review information, learn about new initiatives, and address immediate concerns. These meetings are regularly attended by the Provost and other Academic Affairs administrators. Administrators from other areas such as Facilities, IT, or Enrollment Management will continue to be invited to attend to share information and provide updates. With the continued COVID protocols, many group meetings will continue to be held virtually. In many instances, participation in virtual meetings has surpassed attendance at face-to-face meetings.
The Faculty Senate meets the first Monday of every month at 4 p.m., and will continue to hold virtual and hybrid meetings and use paperless processes based on the noticeable increase in participation. Improved communication initiatives started by the Faculty Senate pre-pandemic provides all faculty with consistent information on critical issues and progress on initiatives. In addition, their new document flow system allows faculty to approve programs and curriculum matters in a more timely fashion. Even the 2021 Commencement ceremony was simultaneously held in person and live streamed because of limitations on attendance. Delaware State University will continue to take advantage of lessons learned in the virtual environment.

A 2021 Faculty Welfare Survey, (doc. VII.13) disseminated in May 2021, demonstrated the pandemic’s impact on faculty morale. In addition to the challenges of suddenly teaching in a virtual environment, many traditional faculty activities, such as research and travel, were negatively impacted. Among the most consistent concerns was a growing sense of division between faculty and the senior administration, especially regarding shared governance. The Faculty Senate leadership is working with the President, Provost and Administrative Council to develop a plan to strengthen shared governance. HR and University Health will continue to present forums promoting self-care for faculty, staff, and students.


Delaware State University continues to examine its governance structure at the Board of Trustees, Administration, and Faculty levels looking to improve communication and take advantage of natural synergies between areas. The goal is to have a cohesive, proactive, and mutually supportive relationship. It is apparent that the University has made changes in their governance structure to address internal and external opportunities and threats to maintain the viability of the institution. The Wesley acquisition provided the University with the opportunity to expand programs and enrollment while continuing its mission of providing access to diverse populations and producing productive leaders. While the devastation brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic negatively impacted the world, there were some positive outcomes. The University expanded its use of the available technology. The recording of meetings and classes simplified the sharing of information and reduced the misunderstandings. Processes became automated for faster approvals and more efficient document flows. These enhancements will continue to benefit Delaware State University as it continues to become the most diverse, contemporary HBCU in the nation.
Conclusion

The preparation of this self-study was based on Delaware State University’s PRIDE 2020 strategic plan developed in 2014. This self-study was prepared at the same time the University was developing its new strategic plan REACH 2026. A Standards-based approach was used to evaluate the University’s compliance with Middle State’s seven Standards of Affiliation. This document addresses the impact of the Wesley acquisition and the COVID-19 pandemic on the University, in addition to the “normal” activities of an institution of higher education.

The mission of Delaware State University defines the institution. The University offers access and opportunity to a diverse population of students. Excellence in teaching, research, and service allows the institution to prepare its students to be successful, contributing members of society and future leaders and shows a commitment to student learning and student success. A commitment to improvement is addressed by the advancement of disciplines and contribution to sustainability and economic development. The goals of both the PRIDE 2020 and REACH 2026 strategic plans are inherently tied to the mission of Delaware State University. Delaware State University complies with Standard I.

Ethics and integrity lie at the heart of how Delaware State University operates. The policies and procedures in place at the University apply to all constituents – students, employees, and the Board of Trustees. The University has made great strides in promoting diversity and inclusion at all levels. Academic freedom, civility, the fair treatment of students and employees, non-discrimination and anti-harassment are paramount to a healthy work environment. Policies and procedures are continually reviewed and updated to address changes in governmentally-mandated rules and to remain current. Delaware State University believes in honest and fair communication and ensures that these policies are easily accessible by all university constituents. DSU complies with Standard II.

Delaware State University has clearly defined programs of study, including a general education program, that prepare students for their chosen careers. The faculty at DSU are qualified to teach in their discipline and are provided with resources to embrace best practices in teaching and learning. The Digital Initiative focuses on how students learn using technology and prepares them for the future. The University’s emphasis on the use of technology was timely as the COVID-19 pandemic forced DSU to transition to virtual classes and remote work. Research opportunities for both graduate and undergraduate students, along with other experiential learning opportunities, are a priority for the University. Delaware State University is in compliance with Standard III.

Delaware State University has a robust Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) division that uses data-informed decision making to recruit and admit students who are able to succeed if given the opportunity. Once the students are enrolled the Office of Student Success (OSS) support them from enrollment to graduation. The OSS monitors retention and students’ progression to graduation and manages multiple academic support services. The newly established Office of Undergraduate Research, Experiential Learning and Honors (URELAH) coordinates the co-curricular and experiential learning opportunities for students. Student Affairs monitors student activities and events. This division was reorganized under SEM to better align
all the non-academic student support services. Delaware State University is in compliance with Standard IV.

The assessment of educational effectiveness is essential to academic excellence. Delaware State University continues to improve assessment practices within the Academic Affairs division. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness coordinates the efforts of the Assessment Office, the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) and Institutional Research, Planning, and Analytics (IRPA) to support assessment at DSU. The Assessment Summit and a variety of trainings and workshops are provided by Assessment and the CTL to support departments in preparing their program and department assessments. Working remotely has made it easier for the Assessment Office to provide focused assistance to departments. IRPA provides a wealth of granular data to support departments in analyzing their programs, including high failure rate courses and program retention rates. The Decision Support Analytics Dashboard suite allows departments to analyze low enrollment courses, faculty workloads, enrollment trends, and grade trends’ analysis at a macro level. The OIE continues to work to improve the assessment data being collected to ensure they are accurately measuring the student and program learning objectives and other items important to student success. DSU is in compliance with Standard V.

Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement are the foundation that supports student success and academic excellence at Delaware State University. The University carefully manages its revenues from tuition, fees, and state appropriation and is more actively pursuing alternative funding sources. DSU’s endowment, alumni-giving rate, and annual giving are growing steadily. The pandemic negatively impacted auxiliary revenues, but the CARES Act funds replaced those losses. No existing University funds were to be used for the Wesley acquisition, so alternative funding sources were pursued. The upcoming Master Plan will address the physical space, capacity issues, and deferred maintenance, including the recently added Wesley and Capital One locations. IT is working on a comprehensive classroom technology plan to support hybrid learning at all locations. Human Resources continues to support the University personnel. DSU complies with Standard VI.

After myriad changes among the Board of Trustees and their committees, the University President, Provost, and members of the Administrative Council in the past five years, the governance of the University is coalescing as a cohesive and collaborative unit. Communication across divisions is improving, a necessity for the University’s continued growth. The Board of Trustees was involved with both the Wesley acquisition and the University’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic, receiving regular updates at committee and full Board meetings. The roles and responsibilities of leadership are clearly defined, and the positions are filled by qualified individuals that support the mission and strategic plan of DSU. Delaware State University is in compliance with Standard VII.

The self-study process provided a thorough review of Delaware State University and demonstrates compliance with the MSCHE Standards of Accreditation.