



# 2019 MISSION FULFILLMENT & SUSTAINABILITY SELF-EVALUATION REPORT



Submitted to the NWCCU on August 23, 2019



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>INSTITUTIONAL OVERVIEW</b> .....	<b>2</b>	<b>Chapter 3: Planning and Implementation</b>	
<b>BASIC INSTITUTIONAL DATA FORM</b> .....	<b>4</b>	Standard 3.A: Institutional Planning.....	115
<b>PREFACE</b> .....	<b>12</b>	Standard 3.B: Core Theme Planning .....	123
<i>Changes since Last Report</i>		<b>Chapter 4: Effectiveness and Improvement</b>	
<i>Response to Previous NWCCU Recommendations</i>		Executive Summary of Eligibility .....	133
<b>Chapter 1: Mission and Core Themes</b>		Requirements #22 & #23	
Executive Summary of Eligibility .....	19	Standard 4.A: Assessment .....	135
Requirements #2 and #3		Standard 4.B: Improvement .....	148
Standard 1.A: Mission Statement.....	20	<b>Chapter 5: Mission Fulfillment, Adaptation, and Sustainability</b>	
<i>Acceptable Thresholds of Mission Fulfillment</i>		Executive Summary of Eligibility .....	189
Standard 1.B: Core Themes .....	24	Requirement #24	
<b>Chapter 2: Resources and Capacity</b>		Standard 5.A: Mission Fulfillment .....	190
Executive Summary of Eligibility .....	31	Standard 5.B: Adaptation and .....	206
Requirements #4 through #21		Sustainability	
Standard 2.A: Governance.....	38	<b>REFERENCES</b> .....	211
Standard 2.B: Human Resources.....	57	<b>APPENDIX A: ACRONYMS AND DEFINITIONS</b> ...	212
Standard 2.C: Education Resources .....	64		
Standard 2.D: Student Support Resources .....	76		
Standard 2.E: Library and Information Resources ....	93		
Standard 2.F: Financial Resources .....	95		
Standard 2.G: Physical and .....	102		
Technological Infrastructure			



# INSTITUTIONAL OVERVIEW

Located on a developing 500-acre campus in the foothills of Henderson, Nevada State College was established in 2002 as a new tier in the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE), positioned between the two-year colleges and the doctorate-granting research universities. The College offers over 26<sup>1</sup> baccalaureate majors and one master's degree, providing an array of pathways for individuals who seek a student-centered education, new career opportunities, and an improved quality of life. Many of our students come from diverse and under-represented backgrounds, as evidenced by our Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) status, which we achieved in 2015. As a college where teaching and student support are valued above all else, we are uniquely positioned to help Nevada thrive by expanding and diversifying its educated workforce and increasing the number of residents with the critical thinking abilities, communication skills, and civic commitment needed to be engaged participants in their communities. We strive to achieve these goals through a blend of innovation, rigorous assessment, and evidence-informed decisions, while fostering a culture where faculty and staff are united and valued in the pursuit of a common purpose.

<sup>1</sup> For this tally, degrees that have multiple concentrations under the umbrella of a larger program (e.g., Biology) are only counted as a single degree.

Nevada State College was established to increase educational attainment in Nevada, particularly in high-need areas and among populations of students who, historically, have been marginalized in higher education. Through nearly 17 years of growth and development, we believe the College is doing more than ever to deliver on the promise for which it was founded. Our main campus is now home to five buildings, including our state-of-the-art Rogers Student Center and the Nursing, Science, and Education Building (both established in 2015), and the College eagerly awaits the opening of our first-ever residential facility in Fall 2020 and our newly-approved School of Education building, which is slated for completion the following year.

As of Fall 2019, Nevada State serves 4,900 students and achieved this enrollment at a historic pace, earning recognition from the [Chronicle of Higher Education](#) as the second-fastest-growing baccalaureate institution in the U.S between 2006 and 2016. True to our mission, this growth has resulted in a student population that is diverse in every sense of the word, including a sizeable proportion of first-generation (58%) and low-income (47%) students. Historically under-represented racial and ethnic groups comprise a higher proportion of the College population than the

general population in Nevada, and our students are predominantly female, with women making up 75% of the overall student body.

Fulfilling the promise of the College is only partly reflected in our growth and demographics. Of paramount importance is student learning and degree attainment, which have steadily advanced in the wake of the recession. We have worked to improve the breadth and quality of our academic programming, and the College’s IPEDs 1-year retention rate has climbed from 62% in 2011–12, at the outset of the current accreditation cycle, to a current rate of 74% for the 2018–19 cohort (the second-largest first-year class in Nevada State’s history). Likewise, our six-year graduation rate has climbed from 16% to 21% in that same time frame, and we enjoyed our largest-ever graduating class this past year, awarding diplomas to 597 students.








The College has faced numerous challenges in the pursuit of this success. All Nevada State students currently commute to campus, and the majority (63%) attend college part-time, balancing their educational goals against a host of work, family, and

life obligations. During the recession, the College weathered a 50% decrease in state appropriations as enrollments climbed by 35%, a setback that resonated for years at an institution where many students need resource-intensive support on the path to degree attainment.

Nevada State has confronted—and often overcome—these challenges through an unwavering commitment to our mission and the students it serves. Resource investments, even during times of scarcity, have been allocated to enhance the learning experience and strengthen student support, and the College has maintained an average class size of 26 despite our historic growth, with no classroom capacities larger than 48 for any existing or planned campus buildings.

The progress Nevada State has achieved so far is just the beginning. The consensus sentiment on campus is that we can do better, especially as the College’s infrastructure, financial resources, and staffing have become more robust and our years of experimentation, assessment, and reflection have provided ever more reliable insights into how we can promote the success of our unique student population.

### Student Demographics, Fall 2017

	Hispanics of any race	<b>36.3%</b>
	White non-Hispanic	<b>27.8%</b>
	Asian	<b>11.6%</b>
	Black or African American	<b>8.1%</b>
	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	<b>1.6%</b>
	American Indian or Alaska Native	<b>0.4%</b>
	Other/Unknown	<b>14.2%</b>



# NWCCU REPORTS | BASIC INSTITUTIONAL DATA FORM

Information and data provided in the institutional self-evaluation are usually for the academic and fiscal year preceding the year of the evaluation committee visit. The purpose of this form is to provide Commissioners and evaluators with current data for the year of the visit. After the self-evaluation report has been finalized, complete this form to ensure the information is current for the time of the evaluation committee visit. Please provide a completed copy of this form with each copy of the self-evaluation report sent to the Commission office and to each evaluator. This form should be inserted into the appendix of the self-evaluation report (see the guidelines).

## Institutional Information

Name of Institution: Nevada State College

Mailing Address: 1300 Nevada State Drive  
Address 2: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: Henderson  
State/Province: NV  
Zip/Postal Code: 89002  
Main Phone Number: 702-992-2000  
Country: USA

### Chief Executive Officer

Title (Dr., Mr., Ms., etc.): Mr.  
First Name: Bart  
Last Name: Patterson  
Position (President, etc.): President  
Phone: 702-992-2350  
Fax: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: bart.patterson@nsc.edu

### Accreditation Liaison Officer

Title (Dr., Mr., Ms., etc.): Dr.  
First Name: Tony  
Last Name: Scinta  
Position (President, etc.): Executive Vice Provost  
Phone: 702-992-2626  
Fax: 702-992-2501  
Email: tony.scinta@nsc.edu

### Chief Financial Officer

Title (Dr., Mr., Ms., etc.): Mr.  
First Name: Kevin  
Last Name: Butler  
Position (President, etc.): Sr. VP, Finance & Business  
Phone: 702-992-2312  
Fax: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: kevin.butler@nsc.edu

## Institutional Demographics

### Institutional Type (Choose all that apply)

- Comprehensive
- Specialized
- Health-Centered
- Religious-Based
- Native/Tribal
- Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

### Degree Levels (Choose all that apply)

- Associate
- Baccalaureate
- Master
- Doctorate
- If part of a multi-institution system, name of system: Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE)

### Calendar Plan (Choose one that applies)

- Semester
- Quarter
- 4-1-4
- Trimester
- Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

### Institutional Control (Choose all that apply)

- City
- County
- State
- Federal
- Tribal
- Public
- Private/Independent
- Non-Profit
- For-Profit

**Students** (all locations)

**Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Enrollment** (Formula used to compute FTE: IPEDS)

Official Fall: 2018 (most recent year) FTE Student Enrollments

Classification	Current Year: <u>2018</u>	One Year Prior: <u>2017</u>	Two Years Prior: <u>2016</u>
Undergraduate	3,361	2,901	2,754
Graduate	0	0	0
Professional	0	0	0
Unclassified	0	0	0
Total all levels	3,361	2,901	2,754

**Full-Time Unduplicated Headcount Enrollment.** (Count students enrolled in credit courses only.)

Official Fall: 2018 (most recent year) Student Headcount Enrollments

Classification	Current Year: <u>2018</u>	One Year Prior: <u>2017</u>	Two Years Prior: <u>2016</u>
Undergraduate	4,915	4,214	3,758
Graduate	0	0	0
Professional	0	0	0
Unclassified	0	0	0
Total all levels	4,915	4,214	3,758

**Faculty** (all locations)

- Numbers of Full-Time and Part-Time Instructional and Research Faculty & Staff
- Numbers of Full-Time (only) Instructional and Research Faculty & Staff by Highest Degree Earned

Include only professional personnel who are primarily assigned to instruction or research.

Total Number: 78 Number of Full-Time (only) Faculty and Staff by Highest Degree Earned

Rank	Full-Time	Part-Time	Less than Associate	Associate	Bachelor	Masters	Specialist	Doctorate
Professor	5							5
Associate Professor	16							16
Assistant Professor	26					4		22
Instructor								
Lecturer and Teaching Assistant	31					26		5
Research Staff and Research Assistant								
Undesignated Rank		204						

**Faculty** (all locations)

**Mean Salaries and Mean Years of Service of Full-Time Instructional and Research Faculty and Staff.** Include only full-time personnel with professional status who are primarily assigned to instruction or research.

Rank	Mean Salary	Mean Years of Service
Professor	\$102,263.32	11
Associate Professor	\$84,466.20	9
Assistant Professor	\$75,438.81	3
Instructor		
Lecturer and Teaching Assistant	\$61,762.26	4
Research Staff and Research Assistant		
Undesignated Rank		

**Institutional Finances**

**Financial Information.** Please provide the requested information for each of the most recent completed fiscal year and the two prior completed fiscal years (three years total).

Please attach the following as separate documents submitted with the Basic Institutional Data Form

- Statement of Cash Flows
- Balance Sheet – collapsed to show main accounts only; no details
- Operating Budget
- Capital Budget
- Projections of Non-Tuition Revenue

**Balance Sheet Data (in \$1,000's)**

Assets	Last Completed FY FY18 7/1/17 - 6/30/18	One Year Prior to Last Completed FY FY17 7/1/16 - 6/30/17	Two Years Prior to Last Completed FY FY16 7/1/15 - 6/30/16
<i>Current Assets</i>			
Cash	3,956	2,517	2,676
Investments	12,046	10,824	9,525
Accounts receivable gross	1,670	744	2,197
Due from related institutions	107	–	–
Prepaid expenses and deferred charges		47	139
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	17,779	14,132	14,537
<i>Noncurrent Assets</i>			
Cash held by State Treasurer			20
Capital assets, net	68,375	68,173	71,004
<b>Total Noncurrent Assets</b>	68,375	68,173	71,024
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	86,154	82,305	85,561
<i>Deferred Outflows of Resources</i>			
Pension related	1,024	1,092	444
OPEB related	316	–	–
<b>TOTAL DEFERRED OUTFLOWS OF RESOURCES</b>	1,340	1,092	444



Liabilities	Last Completed FY FY18 7/1/17 - 6/30/18	One Year Prior to Last Completed FY FY17 7/1/16 - 6/30/17	Two Years Prior to Last Completed FY FY16 7/1/15 - 6/30/16
<i>Current Liabilities</i>			
Accounts payable	720	472	706
Accrued payroll and related liabilities	1,658	1,887	1,738
Unemployment insurance and worker's compensation	116	93	79
Compensated Absences	600	649	550
Due from related institutions	339		
Current portion of obligations under capital leases	1,045	950	3,383
Unearned revenue	1,296	1,202	1,080
Funds earned in trust of others	19	29	25
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	5,793	5,282	7,561
<i>Noncurrent Liabilities</i>			
Compensated absences	553	482	578
Obligations under capital leases	47,455	48,545	47,062
Net pension liability	5	5,509	4,446
Other noncurrent liabilities	8	647	669
<b>Total Noncurrent Liabilities</b>	4	55,183	52,755
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	5,840	60,465	60,316
<i>Deferred Inflows of Resources</i>			
Pension related	383	757	837
OPEB related	614		
<b>TOTAL DEFERRED INFLOWS OF RESOURCES</b>	997	757	837

Net Position	Last Completed FY FY18 7/1/17 - 6/30/18	One Year Prior to Last Completed FY FY17 7/1/16 - 6/30/17	Two Years Prior to Last Completed FY FY16 7/1/15 - 6/30/16
Net investment in capital assets	16,356	18,678	20,558
<i>Restricted for:</i>			
Expendable - Scholarships, research, and instruction	665	542	300
Expendable - Loans	(107)		
Expendable - Capital projects		-	33
Expendable - Debt Service	4,552	5,077	5,081
<i>Unrestricted</i>	(5,089)	(2,112)	(1,120)
<b>TOTAL NET POSITION</b>	16,377	22,175	24,852

**Revenues, Expenses, and Changes in Net Position (in \$1,000's)**

	Last Completed FY FY18 7/1/17 - 6/30/18	One Year Prior to Last Completed FY FY17 7/1/16 - 6/30/17	Two Years Prior to Last Completed FY FY16 7/1/15 - 6/30/16
<i>Operating Revenues</i>			
Tuition and fees	12,096	10,973	9,621
Federal appropriations	2,205	1,899	1,296
State appropriations	988	741	687
Local appropriations		21	10
Other grants and contracts	2	56	114
Sales and services of auxiliary enterprises	101	106	112
Sales and service of educational departments)	87	19	25
Other sources	86	422	388
<b>Total Operating Revenues</b>	<b>15,565</b>	<b>14,237</b>	<b>12,253</b>
<i>Operating Expenses</i>			
Employee compensation and benefits	(24,114)	(22,077)	(20,587)
Utilities	(510)	(439)	(482)
Supplies and services	(7,748)	(7,914)	(8,059)
Scholarships and fellowships	(3,992)	(2,975)	(2,825)
Other operating expenses	(18)	154	
Depreciation	(2,478)	(2,933)	(2,427)
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>(38,860)</b>	<b>(36,184)</b>	<b>(34,380)</b>
<b>OPERATING INCOME (LOSS)</b>	<b>(23,295)</b>	<b>(21,947)</b>	<b>(22,127)</b>
<i>Nonoperating Revenues (Expenses)</i>			
State appropriations	17,220	15,000	14,881
Transfers to/from System Administration	1,089	(352)	126
Gifts	3,034	821	513
Investment income (loss), net	664	883	53
Interest expense	(2,354)	(2,410)	(2,410)
Other nonoperating revenues	203	162	4
Federal grants and contracts	6,397	5,137	5,291
<b>Total Nonoperating Revenues</b>	<b>26,253</b>	<b>19,241</b>	<b>18,458</b>
<b>INCOME (LOSS) BEFORE OTHER REVENUE (EXPENSES)</b>	<b>2,958</b>	<b>(2,706)</b>	<b>(3,669)</b>
<i>Other Revenues (Expenses)</i>			
State appropriations restricted for capital purposes	1,000	29	178
Capital grants and gifts	140		34
<b>Total Other Revenues</b>	<b>1,140</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>212</b>
<b>INCREASE (DECREASE) IN NET POSITION</b>	<b>4,098</b>	<b>(2,677)</b>	<b>(3,457)</b>
<i>Net Position</i>			
Beginning of year	22,175	24,852	28,309
Cumulative effect of change in Accounting Principle GASB 75	(9,896)		
End of year	16,377	22,175	24,852

## Nevada State College

### Budgets for FY16, FY17 and FY18

<https://nshe.nevada.edu/administration/finance/budget/>

	<b>FY16</b>	<b>FY17</b>	<b>FY18</b>
State-Supported Operating Budget	\$21,213,680	\$21,702,835	\$24,458,550
Self-Supporting Budget	\$8,894,694	\$10,829,669	\$10,004,390
Summer Session Budget (Calendar Year Budget)	\$1,141,283	\$1,199,413	\$1,647,133
Capital Improvement Fee	\$165,000	\$176,000	\$205,000
IPEDs - Total All Revenues	\$33,333,000	\$36,269,000	\$45,311,000
Projections of Non-Tuition Revenue	\$23,712,000	\$25,296,000	\$33,215,000

\*See the accompanying notes to the [financial statements](#)

## New Degree / Certificate Programs

### Substantive Changes

Substantive changes including degree or certificate programs planned for 2019 - 2020 (YYYY-YYYY) approved by the institution's governing body. If NONE, so indicate. (Add additional pages if necessary. Please feel free to use the hyperlinked Excel spreadsheet to supplement the Basic Information Data Form and submit them together.)

*\* This listing does not substitute for a formal substantive change submission to NWCCU*

Substantive Change	Certificate/Degree Level	Program Name	Discipline or Program Area
Add new degree	B.S.	Human Health Sciences	Physical & Life Sciences

### Domestic Off-Campus Degree Programs and Academic Credit Sites

Report information for off-campus sites within the United States where degree programs and academic credit coursework is offered. (Add additional pages if necessary. Please feel free to use the hyperlinked Excel spreadsheet to supplement the Basic Information Data Form and submit them together.)

- **Degree Programs** – list the **names** of degree programs that can be completed at the site.
- **Academic Credit Courses** – report the **total number** of academic credit courses offered at the site.
- **Student Headcount** – report the **total number** (*unduplicated headcount*) of students currently enrolled in programs at the site.
- **Faculty Headcount** – report the **total number** (*unduplicated headcount*) of faculty (full-time and part-time) teaching at the site.

#### Programs and Academic Credit Offered at Off-Campus Sites within the United States

Name of Site	Physical Address	City, State/Province, Zip/Postal Code	Degree Programs	Academic Credit Courses	Student Headcount	Faculty Headcount
Truckee Meadows Community College (TMCC)	7000 Dandini Blvd.	Reno, NV 89512	BA in Visual Media	30	10	1
SouthEast Technical Academy (SECTA)	5410 Mountain Vista St	Las Vegas, NV 89120	Dual Credit Program	5	182	4
East Career and Technical Academy (ECTA)	6705 Vegas Valley Dr.	Las Vegas, NV 89142	Dual Credit Program	5	302	5
Liberty High School	3700 Liberty Heights Ave.	Henderson, NV 89052	Dual Credit Program	4	184	4
Mojave High School	5302 N. Goldfinch St.	North Las Vegas, NV 89031	Dual Credit Program	1	9	1

**Distance Education**

Degree and Certificate Programs of 30 semester or 45 quarter credits or more where at least 50% or more of the curriculum is offered by Distance Education, including ITV, online, and competency-based education. Adjust entries to category listings below as appropriate.

(Add additional pages if necessary. Please feel free to use the hyperlinked Excel spreadsheet to supplement the Basic Information Data Form and submit them together.)

*\* This listing does not substitute for a formal substantive change submission to NWCCU*

Name of Site	Physical Address	Degree/Certificate Name/Level	Program Name	Student Enrollment (Unduplicated Headcount)	On-Site Staff (Yes or No)	Co-Sponsoring Organization (if applicable)
NSC Campus	1300 Nevada State Dr., Henderson, NV 89002	Bachelor of Public Administration	Law Enforcement	57		
NSC Campus	1300 Nevada State Dr., Henderson, NV 89002	B.A.	History	68	Yes	
NSC Campus	1300 Nevada State Dr., Henderson, NV 89002	B.A.	Criminal Justice	212	Yes	
NSC Campus	1300 Nevada State Dr., Henderson, NV 89002	B.A. or B.S.	Psychology	335	Yes	
NSC Campus	1300 Nevada State Dr., Henderson, NV 89002	B.S.	Nursing	243	Yes	
NSC Campus	1300 Nevada State Dr., Henderson, NV 89002	Bachelor of Applied Science	Allied Health Sciences	17	Yes	College of Southern Nevada
NSC Campus	1300 Nevada State Dr., Henderson, NV 89002	Bachelor of Applied Science	Engineering Technology	16	Yes	College of Southern Nevada
NSC Campus	1300 Nevada State Dr., Henderson, NV 89002	B.A.	Elementary Education	69	Yes	
NSC Campus	1300 Nevada State Dr., Henderson, NV 89002	B.A.	Secondary Education-English	8	Yes	
NSC Campus	1300 Nevada State Dr., Henderson, NV 89002	B.A.	Secondary Education-History	17	Yes	
NSC Campus	1300 Nevada State Dr., Henderson, NV 89002	B.S.	Secondary Education-Biology	3	Yes	
NSC Campus	1300 Nevada State Dr., Henderson, NV 89002	B.S.	Secondary Education-Math	5	Yes	

Institution Name	Location Name	Physical Address	Degree/Certificate Name/Level	Student Enrollment (Unduplicated Headcount)	On-Site Staff (Yes or No)	Co-Sponsoring Organization (if applicable)
Nevada State College	NSC Campus	1300 Nevada State Dr., Henderson, NV 89002	BS, Secondary Education-Physical Sciences	1	Yes	
Nevada State College	NSC Campus	1300 Nevada State Dr., Henderson, NV 89002	BA, Elementary Education-Bilingual Education		Yes	
Nevada State College	NSC Campus	1300 Nevada State Dr., Henderson, NV 89002	BA, Elementary Education-Special Education	51	Yes	
Nevada State College	NSC Campus	1300 Nevada State Dr., Henderson, NV 89002	BA, Interdisciplinary Studies	23	Yes	

**Programs and Academic Courses Offered at Sites Outside the United States**

Report information for sites outside the United States where degree programs and academic credit coursework is offered, including study abroad programs and educational operations on military bases.

(Add additional pages if necessary. Please feel free to use the hyperlinked Excel spreadsheet to supplement the Basic Information Data Form and submit them together.)

- **Degree Programs** – list the *names* of degree programs that can be completed at the site.
- **Academic Credit Courses** – report the *total number* of academic credit courses offered at the site.
- **Student Headcount** – report the *total number (unduplicated headcount)* of students currently enrolled in programs at the site.
- **Faculty Headcount** – report the *total number (unduplicated headcount)* of faculty (full-time and part-time) teaching at the site.

**Programs and Academic Credit Offered at Sites outside the United States**

Name of Site	Physical Address	City, State/Province, Zip/Postal Code	Degree Programs	Academic Credit Courses	Student Headcount	Faculty Headcount
None						

# PREFACE

## CHANGES SINCE LAST REPORT

A number of changes have occurred at Nevada State College since the Year Three Resources and Capacity Evaluation Report was submitted in 2014.

### Enrollment and Graduation

In our Year Three Resources and Capacity Evaluation Report, we noted that NSC enrolled 3,395 students; today, we have 4,915, an increase of 45% in roughly five years. The number of graduates also grew significantly, from 361 in 2014–15 to 572 in 2017-18. In a similar time frame, our IPEDs six-year graduation rate has risen from 14% to 21%.

### Hispanic-Serving Institution Status

Nevada State College received formal recognition as a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI). This has opened up funding opportunities (e.g., HSI-targeted grants) and cemented our identity as a College that serves a diverse student body, reflecting the demographics of the state of Nevada.

### Organizational Structure and Personnel

A number of personnel changes in executive leadership positions have affected the College since 2014. Former Provost Dr. Erika Beck left the College in 2016; Dr. Vickie Shields joined NSC as Provost and Executive Vice President in June 2017. Dr. Russ Raker, long-time head of Advancement and advocate for NSC and its students, passed away in 2016. The Office of Advancement subsequently welcomed Erin Keller as Associate Vice President of Institutional Advancement. Buster Neel, former Senior Vice President of Finance and Administration, retired in 2014 and was succeeded by Kevin Butler, Senior Vice President of Finance and Business Operations. Presidential Chief of Staff Jennifer Haft was replaced

by Amber Lopez-Lasater in 2017. Finally, at the state level, Dr. Thom Reilly became Chancellor in 2017.

NSC has reorganized a number of divisions and added staff to ensure we are able to meet the needs of our students. In Finance and Administration, the Office of Post-Award Services was created to handle sponsored projects. In 2018, the College hired its first full-time legal counsel, no longer sharing the position with NSHE. And the newly-established position of Associate Vice President for Campus Infrastructure, which was filled in June 2019, will provide needed oversight for our expanding campus and future development plans.

The Office of the Provost created the position of Executive Vice Provost, two Vice Provost positions, and a Dean of Students position to better oversee initiatives across campus. The Vice Provost of Student Success supervises initiatives aimed at improving students' academic success (e.g., tutoring, study abroad, online learning), while the Vice Provost of Academic Initiatives focuses on campus policy development, grant and other scholarship activities, and faculty professional development. The Dean of Students is responsible for guiding student life initiatives, student conduct, and non-academic services that support student success (e.g., Student CARE Team, disability services). The Provost and Executive Vice Provost are thus able to focus on broader strategic planning and implementation efforts.

As the economic environment and, subsequently, the College's budget, improved, a number of new units and staff positions were added. The College established a Writing Center to provide writing

assistance to students and support for faculty on effectively integrating writing into their classes. We also re-opened the Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence (CTLE), which had been closed for several years due to budget cuts. The Office of College Relations was reorganized, with its functions now housed in the Office of Marketing & Events and the Office of Community Engagement and Diversity Initiatives, both of which report to the Vice President of College and Community Relations. The Office of Advancement now includes four positions and just closed the biggest fundraising year in the College's history; it has also begun to cultivate relationships with our 5,000 alumni, launching the Nevada State Alumni Network in 2018.

New full-time positions included full-time directors of the Career Services Center, Academic Success Center, Academic Advising Center, Writing Center, CTLE, and Disability Resource Center. Associate Dean positions were created in the schools of Nursing and Education to provide additional leadership in those academic units. Admissions and Records was reorganized, with the Registrar's Office reporting to the existing director and Admissions and Recruitment reporting to a newly established director position. The Office of Advancement was expanded, adding several positions in order to better engage alumni and other distinct groups of potential financial supporters. We expanded personnel in the area of Student Life; three positions now support activities in this area and are taking the lead in helping plan for additional programming to prepare for residential housing and meeting the needs of our growing traditional student population. The Academic Advising Center was restructured (including the addition of an Orientation Coordinator position) and adopted a team-based advising model, which allowed the College to introduce mandatory advising for all students as well as expanded New Student Orientation programming in the summer.

## Facilities and Infrastructure

A major change at the College has been the addition of three buildings; two newly-constructed buildings, the Rogers Student Center (RSC) and the Nursing, Science, and Education (NSE) Building, opened in Fall 2015, while the Raker Student Success (RSS) Building was purchased and renovated in 2018. This allowed the campus to consolidate, moving all administrative and student services units to the main campus rather than their previous locations in downtown Henderson, several miles away. While these buildings positively impacted the College culture and instructional facilities, due to its rapid growth the campus continues to struggle to find adequate space. In June 2019, Nevada's governor approved funding to construct an Education building on the Nevada State campus and a shared Health Sciences building on the nearby College of Southern Nevada campus; these buildings are scheduled to open in Fall 2021. Finally, through a public-private partnership, the College is constructing its first on-campus housing, opening in Fall 2020.

Opening new buildings led to the introduction of new services such as the Mt. Scorpion Café, which offers dining and catering to campus. The ballrooms and auditorium allow the campus to host larger events and external groups, expanding our reach in the community; as a result, the College served as the location for the 2018 Southern Nevada Diversity Summit as well as the 2018 Intermountain Teaching for Learning Conference.

## Instruction and Academic Programs

Nevada State College recently received approval for its first master's-level degree: the MEd in Speech-Language Pathology, which accepts its first cohort in Fall 2019. This long-anticipated program will allow the College to assist in filling the state's need for highly-qualified speech-language pathologists, particularly in the local school district.

The College also has expanded undergraduate academic programming. New four-year degrees were introduced in Allied Health Sciences, Communication, Deaf Studies, Engineering Technology, and Mathematics. NSC worked with Academic Partnerships to create a fully-online RN-to-BSN program that expanded our ability to offer four-year degrees to transfer students in nursing.

As the budget improved, the College has also invested in full-time instructional faculty to ensure we are able to provide high-quality instruction and mentoring for our students. Between Fall 2013 and Fall 2018, we added 25 full-time faculty (a 45% increase, which does not include open/unfilled positions that are currently being searched for), and an additional 22 positions were approved for the FY20 and FY21 budgets. The College also established a full-time lab manager to support natural and physical science lab courses, and the School of Liberal Arts & Sciences created the position of Adjunct Faculty Coordinator to provide outreach, support, and guidance to adjunct faculty, who continue to be essential to our academic programs.

In an effort to increase access to four-year degree programs across the state, NSC developed 3+1 degrees with the College of Southern Nevada (CSN), allowing students with associate's degrees and advanced technical coursework from CSN (including their branch campuses around the state) to transfer to NSC for their senior year to complete a four-year degree, with an online pathway to accommodate non-local students. We also created a BA in Visual Media in partnership with Truckee Meadows Community College (TMCC), in Reno; starting in the 2019-20 academic year, a full-time lecturer in Visual Media will be housed on the TMCC campus, giving students in northern Nevada the chance to pursue a baccalaureate degree from Nevada State College. In addition, NSC has developed a robust dual credit program with several area high schools,

allowing students to get college credit for coursework while completing high school. In approximately two years, the program has expanded to serve over 600 students, and additional growth is anticipated to meet the burgeoning demand in the area school district.

Based on evidence that remedial mathematics courses were a significant stumbling block for NSC's students, the math faculty completely revised the remedial and introductory college-level math sequences, introducing a co-requisite model that allows students to take a remedial course alongside college-level math. They also introduced a new curriculum for courses that meet the Core Curriculum math requirement to better support students' success, and implemented a system whereby students can improve their initial placement into Gateway math using a free online competency-based platform. As a result, the proportion of students completing college-level math in their first year has risen dramatically. Similarly, English faculty revised English composition courses and the English placement process, allowing more students to successfully finish their composition series in their first academic year. Faculty in other academic programs revised introductory courses as part of the Gardner Institute's Gateways to Completion project. These efforts, along with initiatives such as integrating peer Course Assistants into courses, have led to meaningful improvements in first-year retention, students' course completion rates, and graduation rates.

Nevada State College also has devoted significant resources to increasing the opportunities for students to take part in engaging learning opportunities outside the classroom. The College hosts an annual campus-wide Undergraduate Research and Creative Works Conference for students to present the results of their research and creative projects, and faculty and staff have made concerted efforts to increase the number of internships-for-credit and independent research projects students complete. In addition, we have



piloted study abroad opportunities, including sending small groups of students to the Salzburg Academy on Media & Global Change and assisting individual students in securing funding to study abroad in locations of their choice.

Finally, we enhanced our learning outcomes assessment process by completely restructuring the outcomes assessment format, turning assessment into an annual activity, supporting academic programs as they developed multi-year assessment schedules, and scheduling regular follow-up meetings to monitor progress toward implementing recommendations that were identified as a result of outcomes assessment.

## Grants

In 2015, NSC received its first institutional TRIO-SSS grant, which supports students who are low-income, first-generation, and/or have a disability. The College subsequently received an NSF S-STEM MARCOS grant; the grant funds scholarships, workshops, and other academic success activities for historically under-represented students in Biology and other STEM fields. In 2017, we received an HSI Title V Department of Education grant to create a Teacher Academy Pipeline Project aimed at attracting more Latinx students into Education majors. The same year we were also fortunate to receive a Department of Education CCAMPIS grant, which provides childcare funding to low-income students who have young children. Most recently, in 2018 we were awarded an NSF GEOPATHS grant, which is used to support STEM education through a partnership with the College of Southern Nevada and the Desert Research Institute. The College also successfully applied for renewals of our GEAR UP grants, through which we offer educational programming to middle school students from the local school district.

In addition, faculty have successfully applied for Nevada INBRE and NSF EPSCoR grants to support individual student research projects and research

infrastructure at NSC. These grants funded the pilot phase of our annual undergraduate research conference, STEM research equipment, and summer stipends for students to complete independent research with a faculty member.



## Response to Previous NWCCU Recommendations

NWCCU's revised response to NSC's Year 3 Resources and Capacity Evaluation included one recommendation: "The evaluation committee recommends that Nevada State College maintain a sufficient number of qualified personnel – both faculty and staff – to sustain its support and operations functions (Standard 2.B.1)."

In recent years we have prioritized actions to help ensure that our staffing levels are commensurate with the scope of our institutional goals and operations. The challenge of maintaining sufficient qualified personnel is almost entirely a function of inadequate funding, particularly in relation to our historic enrollment growth. This issue was exacerbated by the recession, which forced the College to endure substantive budget cuts while managing increased enrollments, and it was not until 2019 that funding returned to the levels we had received prior to the economic downturn. However, we believe that two over-arching efforts have helped us address this recommendation, including one that provides a mechanism to continue ameliorating the challenge in years to come.

First, as our state-appropriated funding has increased, the College has invested the vast majority of these new resources into the hiring of personnel, and these hires have been closely tied to the achievement of our core themes, as delineated in Chapter 3. NSC has not appropriated funds for common collegiate pursuits, such as the development of athletic teams, because it would have reduced the amount of funding available for our most central institutional goals.

Altogether, the College hired 88 full-time personnel between 2011 and 2017, including roughly 40 full-time instructional faculty positions.<sup>1</sup> During the

2018-19 academic year, we made an additional 83 hires, and 22 new positions have been approved for the FY20 and FY21 budgets. This does not include currently vacant positions that will be filled as well. These investments include new positions in virtually every area of the College and at all levels of operation, including significant expansions to the number of "student-facing" staff in areas ranging from advising to financial aid, the addition of coordinators, assistant directors, and managers who can help improve the functioning of growing programs and services, and the introduction of new directors, vice presidents, and vice provosts who can guide the development and implementation of comprehensive initiatives.

We also have recognized that this investment is not enough on its own, even as we anticipate its continuation. This is because the College has enjoyed an exceptional rate of growth, earning recognition from the *Chronicle of Higher Education* as the second-fastest growing public baccalaureate institution in the U.S., and simultaneously lacked a reliable mechanism for managing that growth. Consequently, the College is proposing a new admissions policy that shifts our overall high school GPA for guaranteed admission from 2.0 to 2.5, along with a provision that allows us to limit enrollment in targeted programs (e.g., "impacted" degrees such as the BSN in Nursing).

Working in concert, these two efforts, combined with our consistently high hiring standards, should help the College "maintain a sufficient number of qualified personnel – both faculty and staff – to sustain its support and operations functions."

<sup>1</sup> Source: [NSHE Institutional Research Database](#)



**Be State.**

**NS** NEVADA STATE COLLEGE  
*Be bold. Be great. Be State.*

ACCESSIBLE ROUTE

ACCESSIBLE ROUTE



# CHAPTER ONE

# 1 MISSION & CORE THEMES

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS 2 & 3)

### 2. AUTHORITY

**The institution is authorized to operate and award degrees as a higher education institution by the appropriate governmental organization, agency, or governing board as required by the jurisdiction in which it operates.**

An elected Board of Regents governs the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE). The Nevada Board of Regents authorized Nevada State College (NSC) to operate and award baccalaureate and select master's degrees.

### 3. MISSION & CORE THEMES

**The institution's mission and core themes are clearly defined and adopted by its governing board(s) consistent with its legal authorization, and are appropriate**

**to a degree-granting institution of higher education. The institution's purpose is to serve the educational interests of its students and its principal programs lead to recognized degrees. The institution devotes all, or substantially all, of its resources to support its educational mission and core themes.**

Nevada State College's mission and core themes are clearly defined and measurable. They were approved by the Nevada Board of Regents on March 2, 2012. The mission statement guides the growth and allocation of funding within the College and reflects NSC's role as a teaching-focused institution emphasizing primarily baccalaureate degrees. As a member of the Nevada System of Higher Education, NSC coordinates with other institutions throughout the state to help improve the overall scope and quality of degree attainment within Nevada.



## 1.A MISSION STATEMENT

**1.A.1 The institution has a widely published mission statement, approved by its governing board, that articulates a purpose appropriate for an institution of higher learning, gives direction for its efforts, and derives from, and is generally understood by, its community.**

“

At Nevada State College, excellence fosters opportunity. Excellence in teaching leads to innovative, technology-rich learning opportunities that promote the acquisition of interdisciplinary knowledge and skills. Quality, affordable programs open the door to career success and enhanced quality of life for a diverse population of students. Our graduates, in turn, foster the greatest opportunity—the promise of a stronger community and a better future for all of Nevada.

”



NSC’s mission reflects the College’s purpose as a teaching-focused institution that strives to improve the lives of students who are historically under-represented in higher education, including those from diverse, low-income, and/or first-generation backgrounds. The phrase “excellence fosters opportunity” reflects a core belief at the College—that we can best promote the success of our student population by achieving excellence in our every endeavor. The mission emerged from a collaborative process involving an array of institutional and community stakeholders, and is widely known and understood across campus. It is the starting point for all strategic planning and other campus initiatives, and helps drive resource allocation and campus initiatives.

**1.A.2 The institution defines mission fulfillment in the context of its purpose, characteristics, and expectations. Guided by that definition, it articulates institutional accomplishments or outcomes that represent an acceptable threshold or extent of mission fulfillment.**

Our Year One Self-Evaluation Report notes that “the mission of Nevada State College will be fulfilled when we provide objectively-validated educational opportunities to a broad population of largely underserved students who, as a result, experience career success and improved quality of life and who, along with our faculty, strengthen the state through civic contributions, shared knowledge, and the provision of a more diverse, competent workforce.”

## Acceptable Thresholds of Mission Fulfillment

To operationally define and evaluate whether the mission has been fulfilled, we identified four key elements of the mission—Excellence and Innovation in Teaching, Student Success, Educational Opportunity, and Contributions to the Community—and aligned specific measurable indicators with each element, as shown in Table 1A.<sup>1</sup> For each indicator, we established a quantitative threshold for success, and then, in conjunction with executive leadership, applied a rubric whereby 0 = “not fulfilled,” 1 = “partially fulfilled,” and 2 = “fulfilled.” This rubric yields a maximum point total of 22 for all 11 indicators, and we determined that a score of 19 or higher would define the threshold for “substantial” mission fulfillment. However, owing to the institutional context described below—and the significant challenges posed by the recession for a new and developing institution—we established three score ranges that reflect varying degrees of mission fulfillment, as illustrated in Table 1A. In Chapter 5 of this report, we analyze our institutional performance in light of our overall scores, noting areas of particular success as well as domains for improvement.

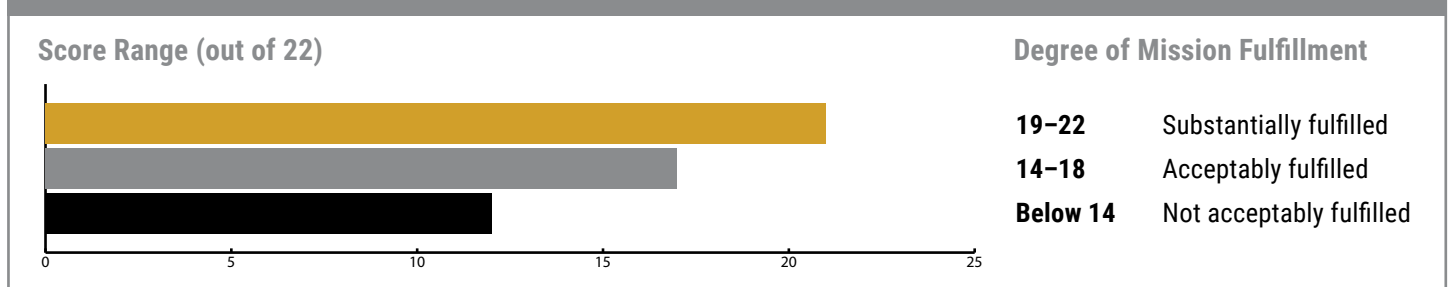
### Institutional Context

Nevada State College faces several challenges that necessarily tempered our thresholds for mission fulfillment. During the economic crisis of 2008–

2011, the College’s student population grew rapidly while the campus experienced deep budget cuts, hiring freezes, and the elimination of positions. In addition, the students served by NSC grapple with nearly every risk factor identified in the persistence literature ([Engle & Tinto, 2008](#); [Horton, 2015](#)). Many work full-time and/or have considerable family obligations, making it difficult to pursue a four-year degree and harder still to complete one. Consequently, several goals that seemed achievable in Year 1 were simply not within reach. The College’s leadership managed budget reductions with the aim of preserving the core teaching focus of the institution, with input from faculty, staff, students, and other campus stakeholders. In preparing this Year Seven Self-Study, the College updated some core themes objectives and measures in order to best reflect achievements and mission fulfillment within the context of our rapid growth after a period of severe budgetary and hiring restraints.

As the national and state economic environment improved, NSC has prioritized appropriating resources to hire full-time faculty and staff to ensure the quality of academic programs, expand and improve student services, and implement new initiatives that enhance students’ success (see Section 3.A.4 for details on resource investments). The College prioritized some outcomes over others and, while still pursuing the targets set in the

**Table 1A: Mission Fulfillment Thresholds**



<sup>1</sup> This approach follows from what we committed to in our Year One Self-Evaluation report approved by the NWCCU, which defined mission fulfillment in terms of a subset of elements from the core themes (as opposed to construing mission fulfillment as satisfying every indicator in each of the core themes).



Year 1 and Year 3 reports, some targets became aspirational goals across a longer time period than originally envisioned.

In establishing thresholds, we addressed the core elements of our mission statement: excellence and innovation in teaching, educational opportunities for a broad population of individuals, student success, and meaningful contributions to our community and the state of Nevada. As part of NSHE, the College has additional objectives

established through the [Complete College America](#) initiative. And while the economic recession led to many challenges, it also focused everyone at the institution on our core mission: promoting student success through excellent, evidence-based instruction and student services. NSC is a very different institution in 2019 than it was in the first year of this accreditation cycle, with a significantly larger student body, more academic programs, and improved student services that have led to notable improvements in student outcomes.



## Quantitative Standards

### *Excellence & Innovation in Teaching*

#### **1. Degree Program outcomes assessment:**

- By the final assessment in the accreditation cycle, observe an increase of 35 percentage points in the number of students earning a rating of “proficient” or better from lower-division courses (conducted at approximately 0-30 credits earned) to upper-division courses (conducted at approximately 90-120 credits earned)<sup>2</sup>;
- By the final degree program learning outcomes assessment in this accreditation cycle, at least 70% of student artifacts in the final assessment will be rated “proficient” or better.

#### **2. National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) items:**

- At least 80% of respondents will rate the entire educational experience as “good” or “excellent”;
- Demonstrate a statistically significant increase in the proportion of students who report participating in a high-impact practice;
- Demonstrate a statistically significant increase in the proportion of students who report that Nevada State emphasizes being an informed citizen “very much” or “quite a bit.”

### *Student Success*

1. Increase six-year graduation numbers by an average of 1% annually, including those of key under-represented groups.
2. Increase proportion of students completing their college-level math and English requirements by the end of their first year in college.

### *Educational Opportunity*

1. Continue to offer the most affordable 4-year degree programs among the primarily-baccalaureate institutions in NSHE.<sup>4</sup>
2. Increase enrollment of under-represented groups, equaling or eclipsing percentages in the Nevada population by the end of the accreditation cycle.

### *Contributions to the Community*

1. Maintain a high percentage of graduates who remain employed in Nevada<sup>3</sup>.
2. Receive a mean rating of “successful” or better on NSC Community Partner Survey question about “collaborating with the community to support economic development.”

<sup>2</sup> We adjusted the timeframes originally established in our Year One report. They defined the initial assessment as being conducted at roughly 60 credits earned, which we later realized would be too late in the student experience for a “baseline” assessment, and defined the final assessment as “roughly 120 credits earned,” which was changed to “90–120 credits” to provide more flexibility in using appropriate assessments that nevertheless come from senior-level students. Moreover, owing to the small sample size for this indicator, we replaced “statistical significance” with a substantive increase, defined here as 35 percentage points.

<sup>3</sup> This indicator initially called for a comparison to other NSHE institutions; however, we were unable to reliably gather information on the location of other institutions’ graduates. As a result, this indicator was adjusted to focus solely on our own graduates.

<sup>4</sup> As the community colleges in the System began offering a greater number of 4-year degrees, we adjusted this language to more directly compare NSC against similar institutions.

## 1.B CORE THEMES

**1.B.1 The institution identifies core themes that individually manifest essential elements of its mission and collectively encompass its mission.**

**1.B.2 The institution establishes objectives for each of its core themes and identifies meaningful, assessable, and verifiable indicators of achievement that form the basis for evaluating accomplishment of the objectives of its core themes.**

NSC’s themes were developed alongside our mission statement as part of a collaborative, college-wide effort in 2011. Guided by the institutional purpose for which Nevada State College was founded, an accreditation task force worked with representatives from across campus—as well as external stakeholders—to develop and refine potential themes. Through an iterative process of soliciting input and fine-tuning multiple drafts, the following core themes emerged:

- **Core Theme 1: Promote Student Success**
- **Core Theme 2: Foster Educational Opportunity**
- **Core Theme 3: Strengthen the Community**

Collectively, the core themes define the goals we hope to achieve and reflect the very reason the institution was founded. Our ultimate aspiration is to “strengthen the community” in Nevada, a state that is home to a promising population of individuals who have nevertheless struggled with higher education attainment. To reach this goal, we must “foster educational opportunity” for all Nevadans, particularly individuals who have been marginalized in higher education. Finally, to ensure that the community is strengthened, and opportunity realized, we must help students acquire meaningful knowledge, skills, and experiences, as embodied by the theme “Promote Student Success.”

Following from the completion of these core themes, we developed discrete objectives that reflect the essential elements of each theme. To evaluate the achievement of these objectives—and ultimately interpret the fulfillment of our mission—we carefully selected an array of relevant and measurable indicators, which we describe in more detail in the section below.

For the current accreditation cycle, 2011–12 serves as the baseline year for measuring progress, while the 2018–19 academic year is the final year under review.



**Promote Student Success**



**Foster Educational Opportunity**



**Strengthen the Community**

## Core Theme 1: Promote Student Success

Nevada State College faculty, staff and administrators are united by an unwavering commitment to the success of our students.

Table 1B-1: Core Theme 1 Indicators and Achievement Thresholds		
Objectives	Indicators	Acceptable Thresholds of Achievement
<p><b>1. Develop effective critical thinkers and communicators</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Core Curriculum outcomes assessment</li> <li>b. Assessment Technologies Institution (ATI) Testing</li> <li>c. Educational Benchmark, Inc. (EBI) Exit Survey items about teamwork and collaboration</li> <li>d. National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) items about overall educational experience, integrating concepts, analysis, judgment and decision-making, applying concepts and theories, and communication skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. By the final assessment in the accreditation cycle, at least 70% of student artifacts will be rated "proficient" or better</li> <li>b. By the end of the accreditation cycle, observe a 25% increase in proportion of students scoring at the proficient level or higher at exit assessment compared to entry assessment</li> <li>c. Achieve a mean rating of 75% or higher on each item</li> <li>d1. At least 80% of NSSE respondents will rate the entire educational experience as "good" or "excellent"</li> <li>d2. Demonstrate statistically significant improvement for other NSSE indicators</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Foster integrity and positive citizenship</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. NSSE items about academic experience with diverse perspectives, participation in community-based learning, conversations with members of another group, understanding alternative viewpoints, working with others, developing values and ethics, and being an informed citizen</li> <li>b. Core Curriculum assessment of Citizenship outcome</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a1. At least 80% of NSSE participants will respond "very much/quite a bit" or "often/very often" to these items</li> <li>a2. At least 20% of NSSE participants will report that they completed community-based projects in "some," "most," or "all" courses</li> <li>b. By the final assessment in the accreditation cycle, at least 70% of student artifacts will be rated "proficient" or better</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Instill discipline-specific expertise</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Licensure pass rates (NCLEX, Praxis II)</li> <li>b. Degree program outcomes assessment</li> <li>c. NSSE item about acquisition of job or work-related knowledge and skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a1. Maintain a 90% NCLEX pass rate among graduates</li> <li>a2. By the end of the accreditation cycle, NSC students will have a 90% Praxis II pass rate</li> <li>b1. By the final assessment in the accreditation cycle, at least 70% of student artifacts from upper-division courses will be rated "proficient" or better</li> <li>b2. Observe an increase in student performance in upper-division courses relative to lower-division courses</li> <li>c. At least 80% of NSSE respondents will report that the College contributed "quite a bit" or "very much" in this area</li> </ul>
<p><b>4. Cultivate learning experiences characterized by innovative engagement</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. NSSE items about class discussions, class presentations, learning communities, and solving real-world problems</li> <li>b. Student course evaluation items about instructional innovation and effectiveness</li> <li>c. EBI questions regarding instructional methods</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. At least 80% of NSSE participants will respond "often/very often" and "quite a bit/very much" to these items</li> <li>b. At least 80% of students will respond "agree" or "strongly agree" to indicator questions</li> <li>c. Achieve a mean rating of 75% or higher on each item</li> </ul>

## Core Theme 2: Foster Educational Opportunity

Nevada State College is founded on the belief that all students deserve an opportunity to succeed at the highest level. As noted in the narrative for Core Theme 1, this opportunity is construed as the opportunity to earn a degree—not merely the opportunity to enter college—and therefore this theme encapsulates the entire pathway to attainment, from recruitment to degree completion. As such, the theme is broken into three essential objectives that deal with recruitment and support, retention and timely degree completion, and graduation. Furthermore, each of these objectives targets a diverse population of students in accordance with our mission.

**Table 1B-2: Core Theme 2 Indicators and Achievement Thresholds**

Objectives	Indicators	Acceptable Thresholds of Achievement
<b>1. Recruit &amp; support a diverse array of students</b>	<p><i>Where possible, data will be disaggregated by gender, Pell grant eligibility, ethnicity, and 1st-generation status.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Headcounts &amp; FTE (proportional representation to Nevada state-wide demographics)</li> <li>b. Number of financial aid applications and awards</li> <li>c. Cost of degrees relative to other 4-year programs in Nevada</li> <li>d. Student Satisfaction Survey items about student services</li> <li>e. Use of student support services (new indicator)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a1. Increase headcounts by an average of 5% annually while equaling or eclipsing the percentages of under-represented groups in the greater Nevada population</li> <li>a2. Increase FTE by an average of 5% annually</li> <li>b1. Increase number of students receiving financial aid over the accreditation cycle</li> <li>b2. Percentage of IPEDs cohort receiving grants will match or surpass percentage at comparison institutions</li> <li>c. Maintain the lowest-cost 4-year degrees among public baccalaureate institutions in Nevada</li> <li>d. By the final assessment of the accreditation cycle, 80% of students will indicate they are “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with advising, tutoring, career services, disability services, and the library</li> <li>e. Increase proportion of students who use student support services (e.g., tutoring, advising) by an average of 2% each year</li> </ul>
<b>2. Improve student retention/timely degree progression</b>	<p><i>Each indicator below will be evaluated in terms of the official IPEDs cohort and non-IPEDs cohort students.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. First-year to second-year retention rates</li> <li>b. Six-year graduation rate for IPEDs &amp; all students</li> <li>c. Course completion rates (ratio of passed/attempted)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Increase first-year to second-year retention rates by an average of 1% annually</li> <li>b. Increase IPEDs graduation rates by an average of 1% annually</li> <li>c. Reduce DFWI rates by 1% annually</li> </ul>
<b>3. Graduate a diverse population of students in a variety of fields</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Number of graduates disaggregated by key demographics</li> <li>b. Number of graduates disaggregated by discipline</li> <li>c. Number of graduates accepted into graduate/professional programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Increase overall number of degree completers and number of completers from under-represented groups by an average of 3% each year</li> <li>b. Increase number of graduates in each discipline by at least 3% annually</li> <li>c. Increase number of graduates entering graduate/professional programs by 1% annually</li> </ul>

## Core Theme 3: Strengthen the Community

As a public institution, Nevada State College is determined to provide returns on the investment made by the state and its citizens. Core Theme 3 reflects this goal and manifests through three objectives. These objectives examine institutional partnerships with the community and student contributions to the community, mainly in terms of employment, particularly within Nevada.

**Table 1B-3: Core Theme 3 Indicators and Achievement Thresholds**

Objectives	Indicators	Acceptable Thresholds of Achievement
<b>1. Foster Community Partnerships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Outbound community partnerships</li> <li>b. Inbound community partnerships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. By the final assessment year of the accreditation cycle, 25% of faculty and staff will report engaging in at least 1 outbound partnership</li> <li>b. By the final assessment year of the accreditation cycle, 25% of faculty and staff will report engaging in at least 1 inbound partnership</li> </ul>
<b>2. Promote Student Contributions to the Community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Alumni employment surveys</li> <li>b. Number of graduates produced in high-demand fields as determined by strategic directives of NSHE</li> <li>c. Proportion of graduates whose first-destination job is in Nevada</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Increase number of alumni completing survey by 10% per year</li> <li>b. Increase number of graduates in high-demand fields by 3% annually</li> <li>c. Maintain higher percentage of graduates who remain employed in Nevada relative to NSHE four-year institutions (across five-year rolling average)</li> </ul>
<b>3. Promote Faculty/ Staff Contributions to the Community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Average number of hours of engagement with the community</li> <li>b. NSC Community Survey about perceptions of faculty and/or staff impact</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Establish benchmark for annual hours of engagement</li> <li>b. By the final assessment year of the accreditation cycle, 80% of community partners will rate NSC's impact as "moderately impactful" or "very impactful"</li> </ul>



## Rationale for Core Theme 1 Indicators

The indicators for Core Theme 1 rely on quantifiable observations. Where possible, we relied on direct measures of the underlying construct (e.g., outcomes assessment); where direct measures were less tenable, we aimed to use standardized or otherwise well-validated indirect methods. The assessment of learning outcomes, at both the general education and degree program levels, is an ongoing and systematic process that provides direct insights into student learning and furnishes recommendations for improvement. The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) is validated by an independent arbiter and administered at over 700 institutions. The ATI and EBI instruments provide valid, standardized measurements of student skills, while the Praxis exam is broadly accepted as an important measure within the field of education. Likewise, the NCLEX exam is a standardized measure of student performance in nursing. Objective 4 relies partly on student evaluations of the course and instructor, a measure that is neither direct nor standardized, but it provides insight into teaching quality from the perspective of our students.

## Rationale for Core Theme 2 Indicators

The indicators for Core Theme 2 rely on relevant quantitative data that are routinely collected by the College – often updated on a daily basis – and made publicly available via reports and our Tableau dashboards. Headcounts and FTE data allow us to examine the number of students entering the college on an annual basis, and disaggregating this information according to key demographic variables (e.g., income, ethnicity) allows us to determine whether we are providing educational opportunities to a diverse array of students. “Support” for these students is assessed via indicators that reflect how well we address financial needs (mainly, costs relative to aid), which our data have shown is one of the most significant barriers to completion, and provide quality student services support, which is essential for a

largely first-generation, low-income, and/or diverse student population. Retention, course completion, and graduation rates are used as relatively straightforward markers of degree progression and completion, and we determined that 6-year graduation rates would be the most appropriate metric for a largely open-access baccalaureate college that serves students who balance a variety of obligations against their educational pursuits. Similarly, the objective to graduate a diverse population of students in a variety of fields is directly indicated by the metrics for graduation headcounts (disaggregated by major/discipline) and career and graduate/professional school placement. Student satisfaction with support services is the only Core Theme 2 indicator based on self-report data, but it was deemed to be an important measure of how well we are connecting with our student population; however, since the publication of the Year One Self-Evaluation Report, we have supplemented this metric with a direct assessment of the number of students who utilize support services.

## Rationale for Core Theme 3 Indicators

The indicators for Objective 3.1 directly reflect our efforts to integrate the campus with the community. The indicators for Objective 3.2 rely on data that are readily collected and quantified. These indicators assess what is arguably the most important student contribution to the community—the provision of a capable workforce that promises to support and diversify Nevada’s economy. The indicators for Objective 3.3 are quantifiable and assess the extent to which our faculty, staff, and the College are addressing the needs of the community.





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Liberal Arts & Sciences Bldg

# CHAPTER TWO



# 2 RESOURCES & CAPACITY

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS 4 THROUGH 21)

### 4. Operational Focus and Independence

**The institution’s programs and services are predominantly concerned with higher education. The institution has sufficient organizational and operational independence to be held accountable and responsible for meeting the Commission’s Standards and Eligibility Requirements.**

The College’s programs and services are wholly dedicated to providing “quality, affordable programs [that] open the door to career success and enhanced quality of life for a diverse population of students.” The College, a member of the Nevada System of Higher Education, is governed by an elected Board of Regents, which appoints and evaluates the president. The president is formally evaluated at least once in each contract term, and also submits [evaluative performance metrics](#) to the Board twice per year. As described in Section 2.A.7, the president is entrusted to implement and administer Board-approved policies related to the operation of the institution to ensure that Nevada State College meets the Commission’s Standards and Eligibility Requirements.

### 5. Nondiscrimination

**The institution is governed and administered with respect for the individual in a nondiscriminatory manner while responding to the educational needs and legitimate claims of the constituencies it serves as determined by its charter, its mission, and its core themes.**

[The College adheres](#) to NSHE’s [Policy against Discrimination and Sexual Harassment](#), which includes a commitment to “providing a place of work and learning free of discrimination” based on categories identified in the NSHE Board of Regents Handbook (4.8.13). The College is dedicated to responding to the educational needs and legitimate claims of the constituencies it serves in accordance with its charter, mission, and core themes, as described in Sections 2.A.22, 2.A.27, and 2.A.28.

### 6. Institutional Integrity

**The institution establishes and adheres to ethical standards in all of its operations and relationships.**

Nevada State College advocates and adheres to high ethical standards in all its operations and has established value statements, policies, and procedures governing the professional, fair, and ethical treatment of students, employees, and other constituents. The governing documents, State statutes, and policies that undergird this commitment are delineated in Section 2.A.22.

### 7. Governing Board

**The institution has a functioning governing board responsible for the quality and integrity of the institution and for each unit within a multiple-unit institution to ensure that the institution’s mission and core themes are being achieved. The governing board has at least five voting members, a majority of whom have no contractual**

**or employment relationship or personal financial interest with the institution.**

The 13-member Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) Board of Regents serves as the authority for public higher education in Nevada. The division of authority and explanation of responsibilities and relationships among the Board of Regents, administrators, faculty, staff, and students are clearly articulated in the [NSHE Handbook 1.2](#). The Regents do not have a contractual or employment relationship with or personal financial interest in Nevada State College.

### 8. Chief Executive Officer

**The institution employs a chief executive officer who is appointed by the governing board and whose full-time responsibility is to the institution. Neither the chief executive officer nor an executive officer of the institution chairs the institution’s governing board.**

The President is appointed by and serves at the pleasure of the Board of Regents. President Patterson’s full-time responsibility is to Nevada State College and neither he, nor any executive officer of the institution, serves on the NSHE Board of Regents in any capacity.



### 9. Administration

**In addition to a chief executive officer, the institution employs a sufficient number of qualified administrators who provide effective leadership and management for the institution’s major support and operational functions and work collaboratively across institutional functions and units to foster fulfillment of the institution’s mission and achievement of its core themes.**

NSC’s highly-qualified administrators provide effective educational leadership and management. Three vice presidents report directly to the President and provide leadership over their respective areas. These administrators, as well as the President’s Chief of Staff and the Executive Vice Provost, make up the Executive Leadership Team. The Executive Leadership Team meets weekly and works collaboratively with the President and the broader campus community to foster the fulfillment of NSC’s mission and the achievement of our core themes.

The Campus Leadership Team includes all members of the President’s Executive Team, as well as other campus leadership (e.g., academic deans, Faculty Senate chair, student government representative). The Campus Leadership Team meets once per month to promote shared governance and communication among units.

Section 2.A.11 provides more information about campus administration.

### 10. Faculty

**Consistent with its mission and core themes, the institution employs and regularly evaluates the performance of appropriately qualified faculty sufficient in number to achieve its educational objectives, establish and oversee academic policies, and ensure the integrity and continuity of its academic programs wherever offered and however delivered.**



**78** FULL-TIME FACULTY MEMBERS\* + **3** NON-INSTRUCTIONAL ACADEMIC FACULTY IN THE LIBRARY

**62%** ARE TENURE-TRACK OR TENURED

**100%** OF TENURE-TRACK FACULTY MUST HAVE TERMINAL DEGREES IN THEIR DISCIPLINES

*\*As of 2018–19*

The NSC faculty includes accomplished teacher-scholars who regularly bring their scholarship into the classroom while mentoring undergraduates in research projects and the development of creative works. As the College’s financial outlook improved after the end of the 2008–2011 recession, the administration prioritized full-time faculty positions in the budgeting process. The growth in the number of faculty has ensured that the institution can fulfill our mission and provide a high-quality teaching experience. As of 2018–19, NSC employed 81 full-time faculty members (including three non-instructional academic faculty in the library); of these, 50 (62%) are tenure-track or tenured, all of whom are required to possess terminal degrees in their disciplines.

Section 2.B.4 provides greater detail regarding the qualifications of the academic faculty, while Section 2.B.6 discusses the evaluation of academic faculty.

### 11. Educational Program

**The institution provides one or more educational programs which include appropriate content and rigor consistent with its mission and core themes. The educational program(s) culminate in achievement of clearly identified student**

**learning outcomes, and lead to collegiate-level degree(s) with degree designation consistent with program content in recognized fields of study.**

Nevada State College offers over 20 baccalaureate programs in diverse fields of study; in Fall 2019, the College will introduce its first master’s degree. Our mission is to provide affordable programs that open doors to “career success and enhanced quality of life for a diverse population of students.” The institution offers programs that address high-need areas such as nursing, math education, and business, as well as programs that target anticipated growth, including Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL), biology, and criminal justice. All degree programs have clearly-identified student learning outcomes that are widely disseminated to our student body. Our Outcomes Assessment and Program Review processes ensure that our degrees are consistent with program content in recognized fields of study. Our well-qualified faculty help enforce a high level of academic rigor and work to adapt programs to maintain a strong connection to the fields of study and high relevance to future career and educational paths. Sections 2.C.1 and 2.C.4 contain additional details regarding the content and rigor of our academic degree programs.

## 12. General Education and Related Instruction

**The institution's baccalaureate degree programs and/or academic or transfer associate degree programs require a substantial and coherent component of General Education as a prerequisite to or an essential element of the programs offered. All other associate degree programs (e.g., applied, specialized, or technical) and programs of study of either 30 semester or 45 quarter credits or more for which certificates are granted contain a recognizable core of related instruction or General Education with identified outcomes in the areas of communication, computation, and human relations that align with and support program goals or intended outcomes. Bachelor and graduate degree programs also require a planned program of major specialization or concentration.**

Each baccalaureate degree program offered by Nevada State College requires a substantial and coherent component of general education (referred to as the College Core Curriculum) with appropriate depth, breadth, and academic rigor. Students complete 31–48 credits in the College Core. The Core Curriculum requires students to complete coursework in English Composition, math, natural sciences (including a lab component), the U.S. and Nevada Constitutions, humanities, fine arts, social sciences, cultural diversity, and a college success/study skills course.

The Core Curriculum exposes students to knowledge and methods of inquiry outside their major area of study and promotes the achievement of general education outcomes that reflect the ability to 1) understand, evaluate, and solve challenging problems, 2) express oneself effectively through written and oral communication, and 3) make meaningful contributions to the community and

society as a whole. These three areas of emphasis refer to Core learning outcomes in Critical Thinking, Communication, and Citizenship, respectively. Every degree program requires a planned program of major specialization that is clearly delineated in the College Catalog and on the College website.

Sections 2.C.9 and 2.C.10 provide additional information regarding the Core Curriculum, while information regarding degree program specialization is found in Section 2.C.4.

## 13. Library and Information Resources

**Consistent with its mission and core themes, the institution maintains and/or provides access to library and information resources with an appropriate level of currency, depth, and breadth to support the institution's programs and services wherever offered and however delivered.**

Library and information resources at Nevada State College make critical contributions to the fulfillment of our mission. The library is dedicated to “leveraging technology and evidence-based practices to create exemplary learning experiences,” which supports the College’s emphasis on “excellence in teaching,” our commitment to “technology-rich learning opportunities,” and our goal of empowering a diverse population of students to improve their lives and the future of Nevada. The Library ensures that services and resources have the currency, depth, and breadth necessary to effectively support our mission. These resources include an extensive digital collection of over 100,000 journals and 1.5 million eBooks that can be accessed remotely, tutorial videos, research guides tailored to specific disciplines, and instructional support services.

Sections 2.A.13, 2.C.6, and 2.E 1–4 provide additional information regarding library and information resources.

#### 14. Physical and Technological Infrastructure

**The institution provides the physical and technological infrastructure necessary to achieve its mission and core themes.**

Nevada State College has a total of 233,396 gross feet<sup>2</sup> of institutional space, split among the 512-acre main campus and the Shadow Lane location of the Nevada System of Higher Education Health Science Center (per an MOU, NSC is allotted 11,025 feet<sup>2</sup> of space at Shadow Lane). The campus is in the process of constructing its first residential housing facility through a private-public partnership, and recently secured legislative approval to construct a dedicated building for the School of Education. All of NSC's facilities are accessible, safe, and secure and create a physical environment consistent with our teaching and learning mission. The Office of Information & Technology Services (ITS) provides the computing, telecommunication, network, and server infrastructure needed to properly support teaching, learning, and scholarly achievement.

In Section 2.G we include additional information regarding our physical and technological infrastructure.

#### 15. Academic Freedom

**The institution maintains an atmosphere in which intellectual freedom and independence exist. Faculty and students are free to examine and test all knowledge appropriate to their discipline or area of major study as judged by the academic/ educational community in general.**

Nevada State College's commitment to fostering an environment of free thought is apparent in its institution and school missions, its values, and its core themes. As per our academic freedom policy, "A member of the faculty has freedom and an obligation, in the classroom or in research, to discuss and pursue the faculty member's subject with candor and integrity, even when the subject requires consideration of topics which may be politically, socially or scientifically controversial."

Sections 2.A.27, 2.A.28, and 2.A.29 contain additional information regarding academic freedom.

*Rendering courtesy of Carpenter Sellers Del Gatto Architects*





## 16. Admissions

**The institution publishes its student admission policy which specifies the characteristics and qualifications appropriate for its programs, and it adheres to that policy in its admissions procedures and practices.**

NSC admissions policies are codified in the [NSHE Handbook 4.16.26](#) and described in the College Catalog. The College adheres to those requirements in its admissions procedures and practices. Sections 2.A.16 and 2.C.4 include additional details regarding the admissions policies and procedures at NSC.

## 17. Public Information

**The institution publishes in a catalog and/or on a website current and accurate information regarding: its mission and core themes; admission requirements and procedures; grading policy; information on academic programs and courses; names, titles and academic credentials of administrators and faculty; rules and regulations for student conduct; rights and responsibilities of students; tuition, fees, and other program costs; refund policies and procedures; opportunities and requirements for financial aid; and the academic calendar.**

Nevada State College publishes in the College Catalog and/or on the College website current and accurate information regarding its mission and core themes; admission requirements and procedures; grading policy; information on academic programs and courses; names, titles, and academic credentials of administrators and faculty; rules and regulations for student conduct; rights and responsibilities of students; tuition, fees, and other program costs; refund policies and procedures; opportunities and requirements for financial aid; and the academic calendar.

## 18. Financial Resources

**The institution demonstrates financial stability with sufficient cash flow and, as appropriate, reserves to support its programs and services. Financial planning reflects available funds, realistic development of financial resources, and appropriate risk management to ensure short-term solvency and long-term financial sustainability.**

Financial planning at the College is driven by NSHE policy and reflects available funds, realistic development of financial resources, and appropriate risk management to ensure short-term solvency and long-term financial sustainability. College planning is data-driven and supported by an Institutional

Research office capable of creating, interpreting, and delivering complex data analyses. Section 2.F.1 provides additional information regarding the College's financial funding, stability, and planning.

### 19. Financial Accountability

**For each year of operation, the institution undergoes an external financial audit, in a reasonable timeframe, by professionally qualified personnel in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards. Results from the audit, including findings and management letter recommendations, are considered in a timely, appropriate, and comprehensive manner by the administration and governing board.**

As mandated by the Nevada Board of Regents and its [Audit, Compliance, and Title IX Committee](#), Nevada State College undergoes an annual external financial audit by independent, professionally qualified personnel in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards. The College also is subject to both interim and post-close field audits.

The results of the annual audit are reported to the Board of Regents. The College is required to respond to any findings or management recommendations noted by the external auditors. Upon the recommendation of the Audit, Compliance, and Title IX Committee, the full Board approves audit reports, ensures that any deficiencies are noted and subsequently remediated, and publishes the reports as well as the College's responses.

Section 2.F.7 describes the annual audit process.

### 20. Disclosure

**The institution accurately discloses to the Commission all information the Commission may require to carry out its evaluation and accreditation functions.**

Nevada State College accurately discloses to the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities any and all information relevant to the accreditation process.

### 21. Relationship with the Accreditation Commission

**The institution accepts the Standards and related policies of the Commission and agrees to comply with these Standards and policies as currently stated or as modified in accordance with Commission policy. Further, the institution agrees that the Commission may, at its discretion, make known the nature of any action, positive or negative, regarding the institution's status with the Commission to any agency or members of the public requesting such information.**

Nevada State College accepts the standards and related policies of the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities and agrees to comply with these standards and policies as currently stated or as modified in accordance with commission policy. NSC agrees that NWCCU may make known the nature of any action, positive or negative, regarding its status with the Commission to any agency or members of the public that may request such information.





## **2.A GOVERNANCE**

**2.A.1 The institution demonstrates an effective and widely understood system of governance with clearly defined authority, roles, and responsibilities. Its decision-making structures and processes make provision for the consideration of the views of faculty, staff, administrators, and students on matters in which they have a direct and reasonable interest.**

**2.A.2 In a multi-unit governance system, the division of authority and responsibility between the system and the institution is clearly delineated. System policies, regulations, and procedures concerning the institution are clearly defined and equitably administered.**

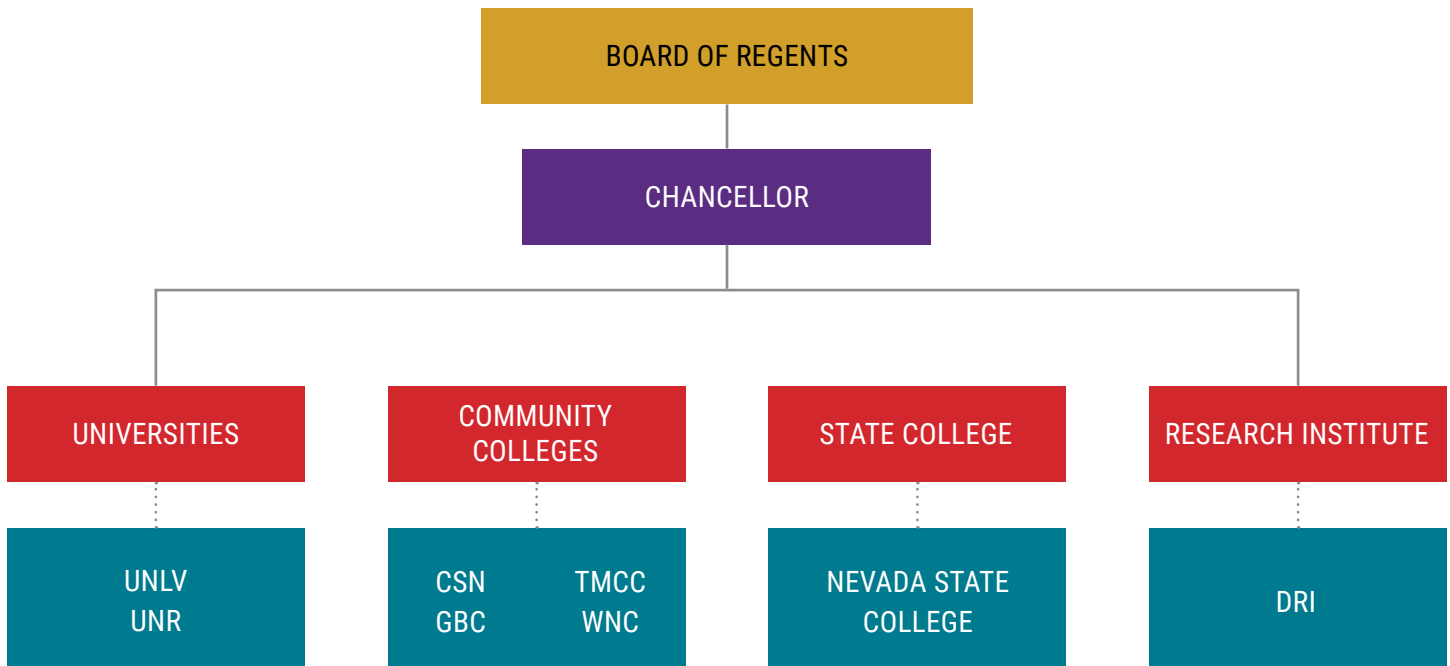
The Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) serves as the statewide authority for public higher education in the state of Nevada. The control and management of the NSHE is vested to the elected Nevada Board of Regents (BoR) as established in the Nevada Constitution.

The division of authority, responsibilities and relationships among and between the BoR, System personnel, administrators, faculty, staff, and students is clearly articulated in the [NSHE Handbook 2.1, Sections 1.1 and 1.2](#). The roles of the Regents are clearly delineated in Articles III and IV of the [NSHE Bylaws of the Board of Regents](#).

The [NSHE Procedures and Guidelines Manual](#) articulates policies and procedures governing each NSHE institution. The [NSHE Handbook \(Title 2 Chapters 2–9\)](#) provides statements on academic freedom and responsibility, guidelines for tenure, personnel policies, and disciplinary procedures for academic faculty. Professional staff, classified staff, and student roles are outlined in [Title 2, Chapter 1](#) and [Title 4](#) of the NSHE Handbook. Policies, regulations, and procedures are equitably administered under the umbrella of open meeting laws governing the state of Nevada.



**Figure 2A: NSHE Organizational Chart**



**2.A.3 The institution monitors its compliance with the Commission’s Standards for Accreditation, including the impact of collective bargaining agreements, legislative actions, and external mandates.**

Nevada State College’s Executive Vice Provost, Dr. Tony Scinta, serves as the Accreditation Liaison Officer for the NWCCU. The Office of the Provost produces all NWCCU reports and ensures that the president is briefed with regard to all matters pertaining to the Commission’s Standards for Accreditation. Dr. Scinta regularly attends NWCCU meetings to maintain currency in the Commission’s Standards, consults with our commission liaison, Dr. Mac Powell, and monitors correspondence from President Ramaswamy.

NSC’s employees are not covered by collective bargaining agreements. Legislative action involving NSHE is coordinated centrally through

[Chapter 4, Section 3](#) of the NSHE Procedures & Guidelines Manual. These actions are communicated to campus presidents from the Office of the Chancellor. External mandates, with the exception of program accreditation or licensure requirements, are likewise communicated centrally from the Chancellor’s Office to campus presidents.

**2.A.4 The institution has a functioning governing board consisting of at least five voting members, a majority of whom have no contractual, employment, or financial interest in the institution. If the institution is governed by a hierarchical structure of multiple boards, the roles, responsibilities, and authority of each board, as they relate to the institution, are clearly defined, widely communicated, and broadly understood.**

The Nevada Board of Regents is the sole governing board for the Nevada System of Higher Education

(NSHE). The 13 Regents are elected to represent defined districts; each Regent serves a 6-year term. Regents are subject to [Nevada Revised Statutes \(NRS\) 396.122](#), which states, “A member of the Board of Regents shall not be interested, directly or indirectly, as principal, partner, agent or otherwise, in any contract or expenditure created by the Board of Regents, or in the profits or results thereof.” Further regulations prohibiting Regents from holding a financial interest in the institutions can be found in the [NSHE Handbook 4.1.3](#).

The officers of the Nevada Board of Regents include a chair, vice chair, and administrative officer. The chair and vice chair are elected from the membership of the Board at its last meeting of the fiscal year. Officers serve a one-year term, to commence the following July 1st. The chair may not serve more than two consecutive terms. All Board meetings are broadcast live online and meeting agendas are subject to open meeting laws.

**2.A.5 The board acts only as a committee of the whole; no member or subcommittee of the board acts on behalf of the board except by formal delegation of authority by the governing board as a whole.**

As per the [NSHE Handbook 4.1.8](#), “It shall be the policy of the Board of Regents to act as a unit... the individual members have no authority singly.” The only exception occurs during legislative years where, upon an affirmative majority vote of the entire board, the chair may be delegated authority to represent the Board’s position to the legislature. Neither standing nor established committees are permitted to act independently according to [NSHE Handbook 1.6.1](#).

**2.A.6 The board establishes, reviews regularly, revises as necessary, and exercises broad oversight of institutional policies, including those regarding its own organization and operation.**

The governing bylaws and policies to which the Nevada Board of Regents, the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE), and its institutions adhere are detailed in the NSHE Handbook. The bylaws of the Board of Regents are covered in the [NSHE Handbook Title 1](#), which establishes the authority of the Board and the organizational structure of NSHE. The Nevada Board of Regents reviews and revises policies as a regular course of action in Board meetings. The Board meets four times per year and calls special meetings as needed.

As per Board policy, any regent, chancellor, president, or faculty senate may request amendments to the NSHE Handbook by requesting the consideration of the Board. Amendments occur upon an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the board members; updates are immediately posted to the NSHE website and communicated back to the campuses.





**2.A.7 The board selects and evaluates regularly a chief executive officer who is accountable for the operation of the institution. It delegates authority and responsibility to the CEO to implement and administer board-approved policies related to the operation of the institution.**

As outlined in the [NSHE Handbook 1.7.4](#), the president of the College is appointed by the Nevada Board of Regents and reports to the chancellor. The president has the authority to implement and administer Board-approved policies.

The chancellor evaluates the performance of the president annually. The process and standards for evaluations are described in the [NSHE Handbook 1.7.4](#).

**2.A.8 The board regularly evaluates its performance to ensure its duties and responsibilities are fulfilled in an effective and efficient manner.**

The Nevada Board of Regents, through its Efficiency and Effectiveness Initiative, regularly reviews its own operations and policies. The Initiative resulted in a number of revisions, including changes to meeting schedules and a reduction in the number of approvals required by the Board. The Initiative also led to changes in Human Resources, Payroll, and Purchasing operations. In addition, the Board's Project iNtegrate led to improvements in the Student Information System and migration to a modern Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) solution.

## Leadership & Management

### **2.A.9 The institution has an effective system of leadership, staffed by qualified administrators, with appropriate levels of responsibility and accountability, who are charged with planning, organizing, and managing the institution and assessing its achievements and effectiveness.**

NSC is led by a president, who is its chief executive officer. The president's responsibilities are established in the [NSHE Handbook 1.7.4](#). The president's duties include ensuring appropriate planning, organizing, and management of the institution as well as assessment.

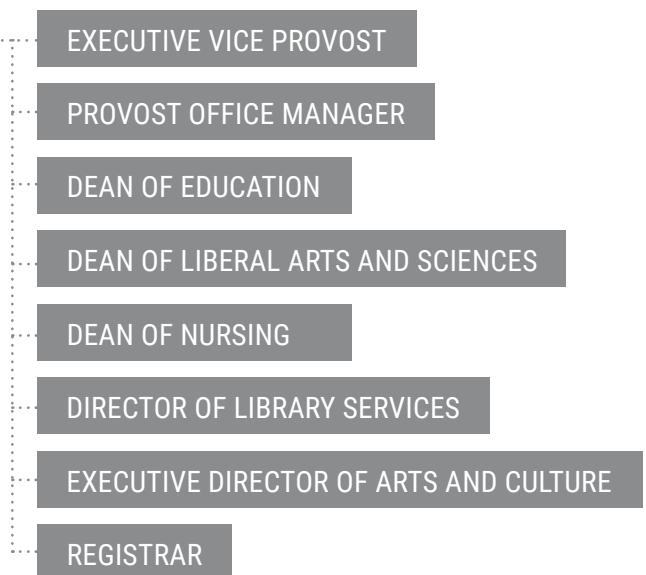
The Provost/Executive Vice President serves as the chief academic officer. Nevada State College also has a Faculty Senate, Classified Employees Council, student government (Nevada State Student Alliance), and Nevada Faculty Alliance chapter, all of which participate in shared governance.

The leadership of each unit is charged with overseeing planning, operations, and assessment to ensure the unit is meeting its goals. The Office of the Provost provides campus-wide support and direction for assessment activities, as well as analysis of the overall results to provide a broader picture of the College's achievements and areas for improvement.

#### ***The following positions report directly to the president:***



#### ***The following positions report directly to the Provost:***



**2.A.10 The institution employs an appropriately qualified chief executive officer with full-time responsibility to the institution. The chief executive officer may serve as an ex officio member of the governing board, but may not serve as its chair.**

President Patterson’s full-time responsibility is to Nevada State College; he does not serve on the Nevada Board of Regents in any capacity. President Patterson earned a bachelor’s degree in political science from Utah State University in 1984 and a juris doctor (with honors) from the Duke University School of Law in 1987.

Prior to assuming the role of Chief Executive Officer at NSC, President Patterson served as the Vice Chancellor of Administrative & Legal Affairs for the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE). He had responsibility for human resources, purchasing, and legal operations statewide, and managed the Las Vegas System Office. President Patterson also had responsibility for the Board of Regents Efficiency and Effectiveness Initiative. He served NSHE as deputy general counsel, assistant general counsel, and as general counsel for the Community College of Southern Nevada and Nevada State College.

**2.A.11 The institution employs a sufficient number of qualified administrators who provide effective leadership and management for the institution’s major support and operational functions and work collaboratively across institutional functions and units to foster fulfillment of the institution’s mission and accomplishment of its core theme objectives.**

NSC’s administrative structure is described in detail in Section 2.A.9. The College has created a number of leadership teams and councils that ensure information is widely shared across units and that leaders collaborate on campus initiatives.

The Executive Leadership Team consists of the President, all vice presidents, the Executive Vice Provost, and the President’s Chief of Staff. The Executive Leadership Team meets weekly to advise the President on matters ranging from budget development to the implementation of strategic initiatives.

The College Leadership Team promotes shared governance and the widespread dissemination of important information across campus. The group

***The Leadership Team is comprised of all members of the Executive Leadership Team as well as the following:***



- Associate Vice President of Institutional Advancement
- Senior Advisor for Government Relations & Community Affairs
- Faculty Senate Chair
- Nevada Faculty Alliance President
- Classified Employees Council Chair
- President of Nevada State Student Alliance
- All academic deans
- Director of Library Services
- Executive Director of Arts, Culture, & Advancement
- Director of Human Resources
- Director of Information & Technology Services
- Director of Marketing & Events
- General Counsel



meets once per month and all representatives are involved in decision-making processes.

Each academic unit has a dean. Deans hold terminal degrees in their fields and possess extensive administrative experience and disciplinary expertise. The deans participate on the president's College Leadership Team, the Provost Council, and the Deans Council to promote effective collaboration across units of the campus.

Collaboration among leadership is key to the success of NSC's students. The following representative examples demonstrate the spirit of collaboration at NSC:

- The Schools of Education and Liberal Arts & Sciences co-developed streamlined dual-major pathways (e.g., a BA in History along with a BA in Secondary Education with an emphasis in History).
- The Schools of Nursing and Liberal Arts & Sciences worked together to make curricular adjustments to facilitate the introduction of a fully-online RN-to-BSN program.
- The School of Liberal Arts & Sciences, the Director of Institutional Research, Admissions & Recruitment, and the Academic Advising Center collaborated to increase the proportion of incoming students completing gateway English and math courses in their first year.
- The Office of the Provost and the School of Education cooperated on an institutional Title V Department of Education grant that aims to increase the number of Latinx students pursuing an education major.
- The Office of Institutional Advancement, the Office of the Provost, and the School of Liberal Arts & Sciences combined efforts to secure sufficient grant and donor funding to provide free daycare for up to 40 children per semester, giving NSC's adult students an option for safe, reliable childcare.

## Policies & Procedures

**2.A.12 Academic policies, including those related to teaching, service, scholarship, research, and artistic creation, are clearly communicated to students and faculty and to administrators and staff with responsibilities related to these areas.**

Academic policies, including those related to teaching, service, scholarship, and artistic creation, are posted in the [policy library](#). Academic policies are assigned a unique number, with the code “AA” designating it as an Academic Affairs policy. Policies specific to individual schools are included in faculty handbooks and syllabi templates developed by each school and discussed at school-specific faculty development days during the fall and spring semesters.

All policies are approved via a process involving relevant stakeholders and opportunities for a productive dialogue about the proposal, as detailed in our [policy flowchart](#). Academic policies are sent to the Faculty Senate for input and recommendations. Draft policies are posted to the Faculty Senate website in advance of each meeting for review by the campus community, who can forward any concerns or suggestions to their Senate representative. Once approved by Senate, draft policies are routed to the Provost’s Office for review and approval, to legal counsel for final review, and to the President, who has ultimate authority to approve or deny all policies. The Provost’s Office is responsible for posting an ADA-compliant version of the policy in the policy library. New academic policies are also emailed to the Faculty Senate leadership, deans, and other key parties, and announced in the weekly campus-wide announcements digest.

## STUDENT POLICIES

Student affairs policies are also posted in the policy library on NSC portal; key policies, including those related to student conduct, academic integrity, and grade appeals, also are published in the [College Catalog](#). The College Catalog is updated annually by the Office of the Registrar. Students also learn about policies at New Student Orientation, in advising sessions, and in course syllabi.

## INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD POLICIES

Policies related to the IRB are posted in the policy library as well as the [IRB website](#). The [IRB Policy \(RE 1\)](#) provides information on the functioning and responsibilities of the IRB; the [IRB Handbook](#) gives more detailed guidance about Principal Investigators’ responsibilities, resources, and various application processes and deadlines. The Handbook is updated as needed to reflect changing federal regulations, particularly concerning implementation of the Revised Common Rule.

## SYSTEM POLICIES

NSHE policies are posted online, include the [NSHE Handbook](#) and the [Procedures and Guidelines Manual](#). Individuals may sign up to receive email alerts about any updates to these documents. The searchable [Policy Central](#) database lists all changes to the NSHE Handbook.



**2.A.13 Policies regarding access to and use of library and information resources, regardless of format, location, and delivery method, are documented, published, and enforced.**

Policies on access and appropriate use of library and information resources are posted on the [Library's website](#). Library users receive context-specific information about policies in email notices about overdue and nearly-due library materials. Enforcement of policies is provided with assistance from the Office of Information and Technology Services to centrally authenticate and authorize users, verify enrollment, and update library records regularly. The library database is automatically updated daily to ensure current affiliation of authenticated users. Staff members in the Library and ITS coordinate appropriate access through a request and documentation process for users unable to gain access automatically. All library policies adhere with the [NSHE Computing Resources Policy](#) (NSHE Handbook 4.1.23).

**2.A.14 The institution develops, publishes widely, and follows an effective and clearly stated transfer-of-credit policy that maintains the integrity of its programs while facilitating efficient mobility of students between institutions in completing their educational programs.**

NSC adheres to NSHE's policies regarding transfer rights, delineated in [NSHE Handbook 4.14](#), Sections 14–17. System policies are further explained on the [NSHE website](#).

The NSC College Catalog contains information about [transfer admissions](#), [credit evaluation](#), and specific credit transfers for 3+1 programs that are offered in partnership with community colleges. [Materials for 3+1 programs](#) clarify which credits will transfer, how residency requirements are met, and which prerequisite courses students should complete before transferring to NSC.



Each year, NSC prepares [articulation agreements](#) with two-year colleges in NSHE to guide students who hope to transfer to NSC after completing an associate's degree, and in the past two years all NSHE institutions underwent a transfer audit to assess and refine our articulation agreements. When developing new degree programs, NSC faculty and staff take into consideration relevant feeder programs at two-year schools and make every effort to accommodate the courses students complete in those programs. This helps ensure efficient transfers are built into the curriculum from the start.

NSC's courses are part of NSHE's [Common Course Numbering system](#), which requires consistent numbers and titles for the same courses at all NSHE institutions to facilitate efficient transfers.

**2.A.15 Policies and procedures regarding students' rights and responsibilities, including academic honesty, appeals, grievances, and accommodations for persons with disabilities, are clearly stated, readily available, and administered in a fair and consistent manner.**

Policies and procedures related to student rights and responsibilities are published in the College Catalog and policy library. These include the [NSC](#)



[Student Code of Conduct](#); policies on [academic integrity](#) and [grade appeals](#); and information about [eligibility for disability accommodations](#). The NSC website contains more detailed information about [disability resources](#). [Policy HR 1: Title IX Compliance and Policy Against Discrimination and Sexual Harassment](#) outlines procedures for handling complaints and investigations related to discrimination and/or sexual harassment and provides contact information for the Title IX Coordinator.

Article III of the Student Code of Conduct outlines disciplinary procedures and sanctions. It is discussed at New Student Orientation. Allegations of misconduct are investigated by the Student Conduct Officer.

All students admitted to the pre- or post-licensure Nursing programs and candidates for the Education and Speech-Language Pathology programs are held to professional behavior standards as well as remediation processes for breaches of conduct as outlined in their respective handbook(s). Additionally, student grievances and grade appeals are handled within the program as outlined in the respective handbook(s); if no resolution is reached at the program level, the student is encouraged to proceed to the College-wide policy and procedure for grievances and/or appeals.

Student grievances that are not academic in nature and are not covered by existing policy (e.g., procedures for appealing financial aid decisions) are addressed in the [Student Complaint Policy](#) (SA 2).

**2.A.16 The institution adopts and adheres to admission and placement policies that guide the enrollment of students in courses and programs through an evaluation of prerequisite knowledge, skills, and abilities to assure a reasonable probability of student success at a level commensurate with the institution's expectations. Its policy**

**regarding continuation in and termination from its educational programs, including its appeals process and readmission policy, are clearly defined, widely published, and administered in a fair and timely manner.**

Nevada State College's admissions policies are consistent with its mission, and it adheres to those policies in its admissions practices. The policies are codified in the [NSHE Handbook 4.16.27, and 4.16.28](#) and described in the [College Catalog](#). The College provides comprehensive information regarding admission & placement policies and guidelines for new first-year, returning/readmitted, and transfer undergraduate students. All policies related to admissions and placement are applied in a fair and timely manner. The Office of Admissions and Recruitment and the Office of the Registrar conduct annual program assessments that include reviews of the amount of time required to process transcripts and complete other stages in the admissions process.



First-year applicants must provide an official transcript confirming they: a) earned a standard or advanced high school diploma with a minimum unweighted overall grade-point average (GPA) of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale and b) have **met all subject requirements**.

Transfer applicants must meet the [following requirements](#): a) be in good standing and eligible to return to the educational institution last attended and b) provide an official transcript showing a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0 on all transferred college-level credits. If the transfer applicant has fewer than 12 transferable college credits, first-year student admissions requirements must also be satisfied.

Students who are denied admission may appeal online within 10 days of receiving their denial letter; the letter includes instructions on how to appeal.

As of Fall 2020, new admissions standards will be implemented for incoming freshman. The minimum unweighted high school GPA for first-year applicants will be raised to 2.5. Students with lower GPAs will be required to submit additional materials for review, including a personal essay and recommendation letter; if admitted, these students may be required to participate in College-sanctioned programs designed to strengthen academic preparedness.

The Office of the Registrar oversees terminations for unsatisfactory academic progress. The Academic Standing Policy (AE 10), also published in the [College Catalog](#), explains the series of steps that may lead to an academic suspension or permanent dismissal, as well as the process for appealing a decision or applying for reinstatement.



## MATH AND ENGLISH PLACEMENT

Math and English placement exams are used to determine the appropriate course level for entering first-time students, as well as transfer students with fewer than 12 transferable credits. Placement standards are clearly delineated in the [Core Curriculum](#) section of the catalog. Students may submit ACT/SAT scores or take the Accuplacer exam at NSC for placement purposes. To ensure that students are not under-placed and to facilitate more timely completion of core math requirements, students also can use the EdReady platform—at no cost—to improve their math placement score. Students are informed about the placement procedures in the initial admissions packet, New Student Orientation materials, emails, the catalog, and via the [NSC website](#). The Student Information System (PeopleSoft) automatically prevents students from registering into courses for which they do not have appropriate placement scores or pre-requisite coursework.





**2.A.17 The institution maintains and publishes policies that clearly state its relationship to co-curricular activities and the roles and responsibilities of students and the institution for those activities, including student publications and other student media, if offered.**

All enrolled students are automatically members of the Nevada State Student Alliance (NSSA), the student government organization. [Nevada Revised Statutes 396.547](#) vests the power to create student governments to the Nevada Board of Regents. [NSHE Handbook 4.20.B](#) lists policies and procedures under which student government must function. The [NSSA Constitution](#) recognizes that NSSA operates under appropriate sections of the NSHE Handbook.

The [Student Life page](#) on the Nevada State website provides information on NSSA and student clubs and organizations. The chartering of student clubs is described in the [NSSA Clubs and Organizations Committee bylaws](#). Clubs must adhere to state law, the NSHE Handbook, Nevada State College policies and procedures, and NSSA's [Constitution](#) and [bylaws](#). Clubs must submit periodic reports of meetings, activities, and financial activity. All purchasing requires a club vote, signed approval by a club executive office and faculty or staff advisor, and the creation of an itemized budget of items. A Student Life staff member then completes purchases. A club charter can be revoked by the NSSA with approval by the majority of the Student Organization Board.

Currently, Nevada State College does not sponsor any sports or student media.

## Human Resources

### **2.A.18 The institution maintains and publishes its human resources policies and procedures and regularly reviews them to ensure they are consistent, fair, and equitably applied to its employees and students.**

The majority of the human resource policies that govern employment (academic and administrative) in NSHE are established, reviewed, and published in the NSHE Handbook. Policies for Classified Staff are governed by the Nevada Personnel Commission and documented in the [Nevada Administrative Code, Chapter 284](#).

NSHE employment policies are regularly reviewed and updated by the Board and are widely available on the [NSHE website](#). Relevant sections include [NSHE Handbook 2.6](#) (Rules and Disciplinary Procedures for Faculty Except DRI and Degree Revocations), [2.7](#) (Tenure for State college Faculty), [4.3](#) (Professional Staff), and [4.6](#) (Classified Staff).

Nevada State College's internal human resources policies are published in the policy library on our website. The Director of Human Resources reviews policies regularly to ensure they comply with federal, state, and local laws and NSHE policy. This review also ensures that our policies and procedures are consistent, fair, and equitably applied to NSC employees.

### **2.A.19 Employees are apprised of their conditions of employment, work assignments, rights and responsibilities, and criteria and procedures for evaluation, retention, promotion, and termination.**

Nevada State employs individuals in multiple categories. All employees complete new hire documents that include policies and procedures governing conditions of employment; conditions

of employment are also detailed in the [Regents Handbook](#), [NSHE Policies and Guidelines](#), the [Nevada Administrative Code](#), and internal policies published on the publicly-available policy library. The policy library also contains copies of policies that apply specifically to academic faculty. Each School is responsible for distributing their Standards of Academic, Tenure Guidelines, and other academic policies to faculty; these documents clearly state responsibilities and performance expectations.

The Office of Human Resources verifies the completion of new hire documents to ensure that all required documentation, including acknowledgments of policies, is complete. All employees receive information regarding Nevada workplace safety, worker compensation, and general safety information. Posters describing federal and state employment laws, as well as employees' rights and responsibilities, are available outside the Office of Human Resources office.

Formal offer letters for faculty positions include the position title, salary, FTE, start date, location, contract type, promotion and tenure status, basic benefit enrollment information, background check information (where applicable), and conditions of employment.

Academic and administrative faculty are governed by the [NSHE Handbook](#) and Classified Staff are governed by the [Nevada Administrative Code](#) (NAC). A Position Description Questionnaire (PDQ) outlining the scope of responsibility is developed for all new staff positions. For existing staff, PDQs are updated periodically by department managers and submitted to Human Resources and the affected employee for review. Direct supervisors are expected to communicate performance expectations and provide feedback throughout the year. As required by NSHE, managers conduct annual performance evaluations of all employees.

See Sections 2.B.2, 2.B.5, and 2.B.6 for more information on employee evaluation criteria and procedures.

**2.A.20 The institution ensures the security and appropriate confidentiality of human resources records.**

Confidential human resource records are defined in [NSHE Handbook 2.5.6.2](#) and the [Nevada Administrative Code, Chapter 284](#); [NSHE Handbook 4.21.2](#) further clarifies NSHE requirements for handling confidential information. The NSHE Procedures and Guidelines Manual ([Chapter 13](#)) includes a policy on identity theft prevention that complies with FTC Red Flag Rule requirements.

The Director of Human Resources acts as custodian for all human resources records. Hard-copy files are stored in an electronically secured room within the Office of Human Resources that can only be accessed by employees of the Office of Human Resources, the Director of Facilities (in the role of locksmith for the College), the Senior Vice President of Finance and Business Operations, campus police, the Director of Information and Technology Services, and the administrative assistant for the Director of ITS (in the role of administrators of the electronic access control system for the College). Electronic files are secured on the institutional data storage network and within Workday and are accessible only by authorized users. To access these files, users must be given explicit security rights/roles determined by the Director of Human Resources and applied by system administrators within the Office of Information & Technology Services. Backups of files are transported daily to an offsite location using secure encrypted channels and are stored using 256-bit encryption.





## Institutional Integrity

**2.A.21 The institution represents itself clearly, accurately, and consistently through its announcements, statements, and publications. It communicates its academic intentions, programs, and services to students and to the public and demonstrates that its academic programs can be completed in a timely fashion. It regularly reviews its publications to assure integrity in all representations about its mission, programs, and services.**

The College establishes and maintains high standards in its communications to ensure clear, accurate, and consistent messaging to its various audiences, including prospective and current students, faculty and staff, specific constituents, and the general public. The Office of Marketing and Events is responsible for all marketing, including branding, advertising, web and digital communication, print and electronic communication, social media, and [events](#). The website was designed to increase awareness about the College and provide accurate information on degrees, programs, and services to students and the public. The Office of Marketing and Events produces

or assists in the production of brochures, flyers, specialty publications, special events programs, and an annual magazine. It also produces digital announcements and an online weekly digest to communicate with faculty, staff, and students.

The College website includes program information and [degree sheets](#) for every program that clarify all requirements, including prerequisites, residency requirements, and other necessary credits. The degree sheets also clearly state that all NSC programs can be completed in 120 credits (with the exception of select 3+1 programs created in collaboration with the College of Southern Nevada).

Other academic and administrative units provide targeted communication materials for specific audiences. The Office of the Registrar produces the [online College Catalog](#) and [academic calendar](#). The catalog clearly and accurately communicates the requirements and learning objectives of degree programs, as well as relevant student policies and guidelines. The Office of Admissions and Recruitment works with Marketing and Events to design and print the Nevada State College viewbook and transfer guide, which document the admissions and transfer processes. Several offices, including Admissions & Recruitment, Financial Aid, Advising,

the Registrar, and Cashiering, send targeted communications to students to provide information and encourage success-oriented behaviors.

The Office of the President and the Office of the Provost have the authority to send email announcements to all faculty, staff, and students. The Office of Information and Technology Services manages the emergency messaging system for faculty, staff, and students to send an email and/or text to advise of any emergency affecting the College. The portal and Marketing Digest are used for non-emergency announcements. Marketing and Events manages the posting of announcements, which can be submitted by any campus unit.

**2.A.22 The institution advocates, subscribes to, and exemplifies high ethical standards in managing and operating the institution, including its dealings with the public, the Commission, and external organizations, and in the fair and equitable treatment of students, faculty, administrators, staff, and other constituencies. It ensures complaints and grievances are addressed in a fair and timely manner.**

The Nevada Board of Regents, the Nevada System of Higher Education, and Nevada State College have mission statements, value statements, policies, and procedures governing the professional, fair, and ethical treatment of students, employees, and other constituents. The administration, faculty, staff, and students adhere to the [Nevada Revised Statutes 281A.500, “Code of Ethical Standards,”](#) and [NSHE Handbook 2.2](#) (Academic Freedom and Responsibility), [2.6](#) (Rules and Disciplinary Procedures for Faculty and Degree Revocations), and [2.10](#) (Rules of Conduct and Procedures for Students of the Nevada System of Higher Education). The [NSHE Legal Affairs Office](#) responds to questions about interpreting the NSHE Handbook, and appeals may be made through the campus president and the chancellor.

Nevada State’s policies and procedures ensure high ethical standards. These include the [NSC IRB policy](#), employee grievance procedures listed in the [NSC bylaws](#), the [Student Code of Conduct](#), policies on [academic standards and integrity](#), [standards of conduct for using campus computers](#), the [policy on financial aid fraud prevention \(SA 1\)](#), and relevant HR policies. The campus statement on academic integrity is included in all course websites on the learning management system.

Procedures for students to [file grade appeals](#) are published in the Nevada State Catalog and the policy library. Title IX or Civil Rights complaints are filed with the Office of Human Resources. The [Student Complaint Policy \(SA 2\)](#) sets out procedures for students to file general complaints that are not specifically covered by other appeals or grievance policies.

Policies related to student complaints and employee grievances contain timelines for each stage in the complaint review process to ensure timely handling and responses.



**2.A.23 The institution adheres to a clearly defined policy that prohibits conflict of interest on the part of members of the governing board, administration, faculty, and staff. Even when supported by or affiliated with social, political, corporate, or religious organizations, the institution has education as its primary purpose and operates as an academic institution with appropriate autonomy. If it requires its constituencies to conform to specific codes of conduct or seeks to instill specific beliefs or world views, it gives clear prior notice of such codes and/or policies in its publications.**

[Nevada Revised Statutes 281A.400 – 281A.480](#) and [NSHE Handbook 4.3.7, 4.3.8, and 4.3.9](#) regulate potential conflicts of interest. The NSHE Handbook delineates rules regarding conflicts of interest, nepotism, and compensated outside services. NSC’s Office of Human Resources is developing procedures to formalize the process of reporting any outside consulting or other compensated services to ensure there is proper approval of such consulting.

Board of Regents members are subject to additional conflict of interest provisions contained in the [Nevada Revised Statutes](#).

Nevada State College operates as an academic institution with appropriate autonomy and has no official social, political, or religious affiliations and does not require its constituencies to conform to specific beliefs or worldviews.

**2.A.24 The institution maintains clearly defined policies with respect to ownership, copyright, control, compensation, and revenue derived from the creation and production of intellectual property.**

[NSHE Handbook 4.12](#) outlines policies with respect to ownership, copyright, control, compensation, and revenue derived from the creation and production of intellectual property. This includes provisions for inventions, copyrightable works, distribution of income, and research and entrepreneurial activity. NSHE has directed all public institutions in Nevada to develop campus-level policies, which NSC will complete during the 2019–20 academic year.

**2.A.25 The institution accurately represents its current accreditation status and avoids speculation on future accreditation actions or status. It uses the terms “Accreditation” and “Candidacy” (and related terms) only when such status is conferred by an accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.**

Nevada State College accurately represents its current accreditation status and does not speculate about future actions or status. The College uses the terms “Accreditation” and “Candidacy” only when appropriately conferred by a U.S. Department of Education-recognized accrediting agency.





**2.A.26 If the institution enters into contractual agreements with external entities for products or services performed on its behalf, the scope of work for those products or services, with clearly defined roles and responsibilities, is stipulated in a written and approved agreement that contains provisions to maintain the integrity of the institution. In such cases, the institution ensures the scope of the agreement is consistent with the mission and goals of the institution, adheres to institutional policies and procedures, and complies with the Commission’s Standards for Accreditation.**

The contract administration for Nevada State College is governed by the [NSHE Procedures and Guidelines Manual, Chapter 5, Section 3](#). Only the President (or designees) are authorized by the Board of Regents to execute agreements on behalf of the institution. NSC’s Purchase Contract Review Policy (FB 2) requires units to submit all contracts for legal review and approval; review ensures the contract is appropriate for the mission of the College and complies with all applicable regulations. All signed agreements are appropriately archived, maintained, and managed.

**2.A.27 The institution publishes and adheres to policies, approved by its governing board, regarding academic freedom and responsibility that protect its constituencies from inappropriate internal and external influences, pressures, and harassment.**

The [NSHE Handbook 2.2.1](#) (Academic Freedom and Responsibility) states, “institutions of higher education are conducted for the common good and not to further the interest of either the individual member of the faculty or the institution. The continued existence of the common good depends upon the free search for truth and knowledge and their free exposition.” Both NSHE and NSC protect academic freedom in teaching and research.

As described in the [NSC Bylaws 6.1](#), academic freedom is essential to higher education. Faculty members have the freedom and the obligation to discuss and pursue subject matter with candor and integrity, even when the subject requires consideration of topics that may be politically, socially, or scientifically controversial. The NSC Bylaws explicitly protect academic freedom while also describing faculty members’ responsibilities.

**2.A.28 Within the context of its mission, core themes, and values, the institution defines and actively promotes an environment that supports independent thought in the pursuit and dissemination of knowledge. It affirms the freedom of faculty, staff, administrators, and students to share their scholarship and reasoned conclusions with others. While the institution and individuals within the institution may hold to a particular personal, social, or religious philosophy, its constituencies are intellectually free to examine thought, reason, and perspectives of truth. Moreover, they allow others the freedom to do the same.**

Nevada State College actively supports intellectual curiosity, independent thought, and the dissemination of knowledge. The [NSC Bylaws 6.1](#) state that faculty are “entitled to full freedom in research and in the publication of the results, subject to the adequate performance of their other academic duties” (p. 8). Such activities are also protected by [NSHE Handbook 2.2](#). The expectation of free, independent thought in the pursuit of knowledge also is promoted in the mission statements of NSC’s individual schools.

Tenure-track faculty are expected to complete and share scholarship or creative work outside the institution; peer-reviewed publications (or creative works equivalents) are required for tenure, as described in the campus [Promotion & Tenure policy \(AA 5\)](#).

**2.A.29 Individuals with teaching responsibilities present scholarship fairly, accurately, and objectively. Derivative scholarship acknowledges the source of intellectual property, and personal views, beliefs, and opinions are identified as such.**

The [NSHE Handbook 2.3.5](#) states that “a faculty member should at all times be accurate, should exercise appropriate restraint, should show respect for the opinions of others and should indicate clearly that the faculty member is not an institutional spokesperson. By understanding and utilizing both of these principles, our faculty explore challenging topics and present them in a professional and responsible manner. Furthermore, [NSHE Handbook 2.6.2.1\(y\)](#) prohibits all faculty from engaging in “acts of academic dishonesty, including but not limited to cheating, plagiarism, falsifying research data or results, or assisting others to do the same.”



**2.A.30 The institution has clearly defined policies, approved by its governing board, regarding oversight and management of financial resources, including financial planning, board approval and monitoring of operating and capital budgets, reserves, investments, fundraising, cash management, debt management, and transfers and borrowings between funds.**

The Nevada Board of Regents established a comprehensive suite of policies regarding the budget as well as the management and oversight of financial resources ([NSHE Handbook 4.9](#)). The Board approves annual and biennial state and self-supporting budgets through prescribed procedures. Capital project budgets are requested by the College and prioritized by the Board as part of the biennial budget process. As required by [NSHE Handbook 4.9.C.2.2](#), NSC submits quarterly reports regarding cash management, budget-to-actual comparisons, extraordinary transfers between funds, and budget adjustments within specified parameters.

[The Board of Regents Audit, Compliance, and Title IX Committee](#) conducts audits throughout NSHE and reviews findings presented by internal audit staff at regularly scheduled Board meetings. The Board also recommends investment strategies and allocation of any proceeds through its [Investment Committee](#). Fundraising activities of the College are monitored by the NSC Foundation Board, which is required to report on its activities to the Nevada Board of Regents annually.



## 2.B HUMAN RESOURCES

### 2.B.1 The institution employs a sufficient number of qualified personnel to maintain its support and operations functions. Criteria, qualifications, and procedures for selection of personnel are clearly and publicly stated. Job descriptions accurately reflect duties, responsibilities, and authority of the position.

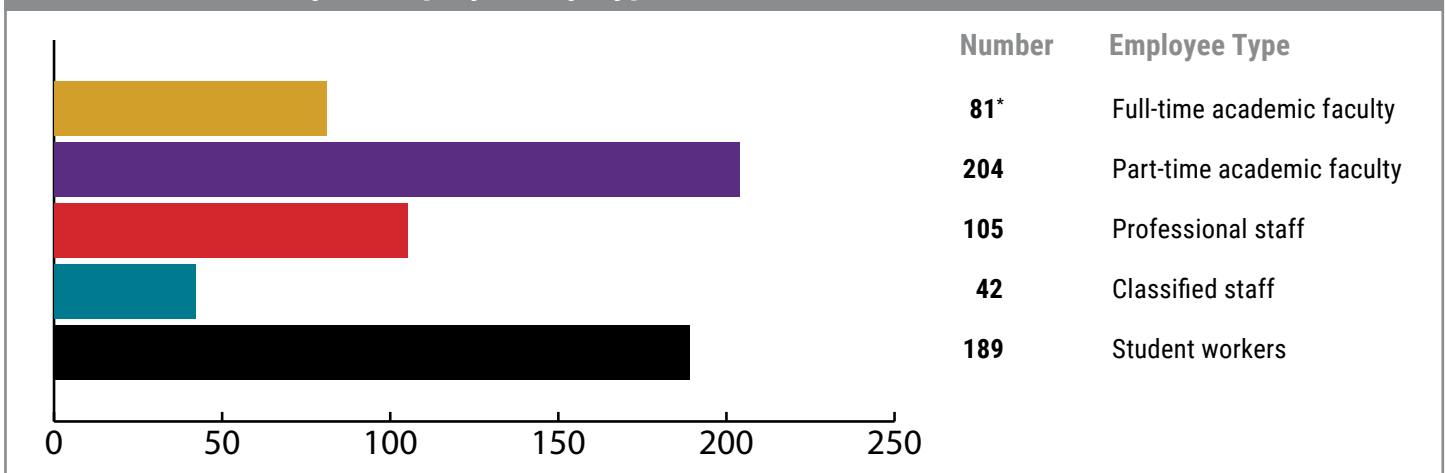
In the service of our mission the College has invested heavily in the employment of qualified personnel, particularly in the face of funding levels that were roundly eclipsed by the resources availed to comparable institutions ([NSHE Budget Presentation, 2017](#)). This investment reflects a commitment to high-quality instruction and student support that generally has eschewed ancillary considerations such as athletic programs. The resulting employee numbers are listed in Table 2B.

The Office of Human Resources coordinates the recruitment and hiring system (via Workday). The hiring manager consults with HR to develop and post position advertisements based on detailed job descriptions. All new position announcements, including duties, responsibilities, and authority of the position, are available at the [NSC jobs website](#).

All employees must receive training from HR before sitting on a search committee that covers effective methods of conducting a search and methods to avoid introducing bias into the process. The [NSC Academic Faculty Search Committee Handbook](#) is widely distributed across campus; the handbook, developed by the Subcommittee on Attracting and Retaining Diverse Faculty and Staff, provides detailed guidelines for the search process, best practices for avoiding bias in hiring, and evidence-based recommendations for attracting diverse candidates. [Nevada Administrative Code 284](#) outlines policies for recruiting and hiring classified employees.

Recruiting, evaluation, and hiring processes for candidates are handled digitally within the Workday system. To move forward in the review process, candidates must meet all minimum educational and experience requirements listed for the job position. The Office of Human Resources reviews employment documents for accuracy and verifies the credentials of new employees. At the end of a search, all materials are given to HR and retained for three years.

**Table 2B: Summary of Employees by Type**



\* This total does not include the 22 full-time faculty who were approved for FY20 and FY21.

Annual evaluations provide an opportunity to review Position Description Questionnaires (PDQs) to ensure that job descriptions continue to be an accurate reflection of positions. Personnel files contain PDQs, compensation history, and other relevant information. Faculty responsibilities are specifically addressed in each school's Standards of Academe.

Nevada State College is committed to the concepts of equal employment opportunity (EEO) and affirmative action.

### **2.B.2 Administrators and staff are evaluated regularly with regard to performance of work duties and responsibilities.**

As per the NSHE Handbook, Nevada Administrative Code, and [Nevada State College Bylaws](#) (Chapter 6, Section 7), all executives, academic faculty, professional staff, and classified staff receive an annual performance evaluation.

The [Nevada Administrative Code \(NAC\) 284](#) governs the process for evaluating classified employees. Academic faculty are evaluated according to the Standards of Academe adopted by their school. Human Resources distributes standardized evaluation forms each year and sets deadlines for their completion.

According to [NSHE Handbook 1.7.3.e\(12\)](#), it is the chancellor's responsibility to evaluate the performance of the president. The format and criteria for these reviews are listed in the [NSHE Procedures and Guidelines Manual 2.2](#). In addition to annual reviews, a committee conducts a periodic evaluation of each president no later than the year prior to the end of each contract, and the president provides performance metrics—including those relating to mission achievement—in [detailed reports](#) twice per year.

### **2.B.3 The institution provides faculty, staff, administrators, and other employees with appropriate opportunities and support for professional growth and development to enhance their effectiveness in fulfilling their roles, duties, and responsibilities.**

#### Institutional Professional Development

At Nevada State College, we recognize the importance of an effective and professionally fulfilled team of faculty, staff, and administrators. The College provides and supports a variety of opportunities for professional growth and development. Campus-wide professional development days organized by the Office of the Provost are offered each fall and spring semester. The importance of this development was underscored by the creation of a vice provost position in 2014 that assumed responsibility for creating and assessing these sessions (among other responsibilities). The development efforts include invited speakers on topics relevant to the campus (e.g., supporting multilingual learners) and break-out sessions with practical tools and advice on a host of issues. Recent session topics have included LMS tools for improving ADA compliance; effective workplace communication; backward course design; transparent assignment design; formative assessment techniques; productivity tools; addressing plagiarism; and using public dashboards created by the Office of Institutional Research. All faculty and staff, including part-time instructors, are invited to these events. The Office of Community Engagement and Diversity Initiatives also organizes a half-day summer professional development program focused specifically on classified and professional staff. The annual Southern Nevada Diversity Summit, a collaboration among NSHE institutions that is open to faculty, staff, and students, offers workshops and talks on diversity issues as they relate to higher education.

In 2016, the College strengthened its commitment to exemplary instruction and professional development by re-establishing the Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence (CTLE), which had undergone a period of hiatus during the recession. The CTLE provides ongoing faculty development, offering or organizing [Faculty Learning Communities](#), peer teaching observations (Teaching Circles), one-on-one consultations, annual trainings about creating effective academic portfolios for third-year review and tenure applications, and workshops and speakers on a variety of topics that encourage faculty to incorporate cutting-edge technology and effective teaching strategies. In 2017–2018, over 86% of full-time faculty participated in at least one CTLE professional development activity and 43% of full-time faculty participated in a Faculty Learning Community.

The CTLE and the Office of Information and Technology Services (ITS) have collaborated to create online professional development courses for faculty, such as a self-paced introductory course on online teaching. The CTLE Canvas page provides additional resources for faculty. The CTLE also designed and offers a structured professional development opportunity called the Teaching Academy Certificate, encouraging both full and part-time faculty to attend workshops, participate in Faculty Learning Communities, experience Teaching Circles, and reflect on their teaching practices.

The College appropriates funds to send staff members to relevant workshops and conferences. For example, the College provides funding each year for NSC advisors to attend the annual meetings of the National Academic Advising Association ([NACADA](#)), members of the Office of the Registrar and the Office of Admissions and Recruitment to attend the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers ([AACRAO](#)), and Financial Aid personnel to attend the National Association of Student Financial Aid

Administrators ([NASFAA](#)). Several members of the executive team and Provost's Office have taken part in the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) [Western Academic Leadership Academy](#), an intensive, competitive professional development program for administrators at the level of dean or higher. A number of faculty, staff, and administrators have also participated in the [Leadership Henderson](#) program, which cultivates community leaders.

The Office of Human Resources provides trainings on preventing sexual harassment, avoiding bias on search committees, and other issues, as required by state and federal laws. The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) offers online training on a variety of topics including work/life balance and stress reduction. The Office of Community Engagement and Diversity Initiatives (CEDI) organizes wellness-related talks and events as part of its #BeWell campaign.

NSHE offers generous grant-in-aid benefits to faculty and staff ([NSHE Handbook 4.3.11–13](#)). Professional employees can enroll in classes (including graduate courses) at any institution in NSHE and the College pays 80% of the tuition. For classified employees 100% of tuition costs are waived as long as minimum requirements are met.



## SPOTLIGHT ON FACULTY AND STAFF SUPPORT INITIATIVES

*Several campus-level initiatives promote faculty and staff engagement with important developments in higher education:*

- As described in the College's [Sabbatical Leave Policy \(AA 1\)](#), after six full years of service, full-time academic faculty may apply for sabbatical. Faculty may apply for a sabbatical leave of one semester (at full pay) or a full year (at half pay).
- The Provost's Speaker Series invites distinguished lecturers to campus once per semester to discuss timely and important issues in higher education.
- The Teaching Fellows Institute (TFI), offered each summer, provides a stipend to faculty – selected through a competitive application process – to develop innovative teaching and student support materials. Representative recent projects include the development of an online course about best practices in online instruction; development of a writing-intensive course program with instructional resources and guides for faculty; and the design of co-taught, linked sociology and communication courses around a shared theme.
- The Summer Scholarship Institute (SSI) supports faculty and staff as they design or complete research projects. Applicants who are accepted receive a stipend to attend a series of structured workshops in which they receive individualized feedback and support, including training on survey design and use of Qualtrics, help with basic statistical analyses, and other methodological guidance as needed. Tenure-track applicants are prioritized.
- An Active Learning Retreat is offered by the CTLE each summer as an intensive three-day workshop for both full-time faculty and part-time instructors. Participants receive a stipend and support in designing engaging, innovative learning activities.
- The Provost's Office provides Seed Grants of up to \$2,000 to support research projects for faculty and staff. A committee of faculty members and the Vice Provost for Academic Initiatives selects which projects will be funded; priority goes to projects that seem likely to lead to a publication, a teaching improvement, or external funding opportunities.
- The Provost's Office provides funding for several faculty and staff members to attend the annual [InstructureCon](#) conference, organized by the developers of Canvas, our learning management system (LMS). This provides an opportunity to learn about the best way to use new features of the LMS and attend presentations on active learning techniques.





## School Faculty Development and Support

Each school also offers faculty development workshops focusing on information, approaches, and/or solutions relevant to the school (e.g., school-level policies, syllabus design, program-level accreditation and assessment issues). School-specific faculty development days occur during the week before the start of the fall and spring semesters.

Each school's operating budget includes \$1,500 for each full-time faculty member to travel to conferences or to conduct research (e.g., fieldwork, to visit archives). When budgets allow, the deans also approve conference funding for part-time instructors to attend local teaching-oriented conferences, such as the 2018 [Intermountain Teaching for Learning Conference](#), which was held on the NSC campus.

**2.B.4 Consistent with its mission, core themes, programs, services, and characteristics, the institution employs appropriately qualified faculty sufficient in number to achieve its educational objectives, establish and oversee academic policies, and assure the integrity and continuity of its academic programs, wherever offered and however delivered.**

With 75 full-time and 191 part-time instructional faculty in Fall 2017 (the last year for which IPEDs data are available), NSC's full-time equivalent student-to-faculty ratio was 18:1. Full-time faculty made up 28% of all instructional faculty.

As of 2018–19, the number of full-time faculty members increased to 81 (including three non-instructional academic faculty in the library); of these, 50 (62%) were tenure-track or tenured. All tenure-track and tenured instructional faculty at NSC hold a doctoral degree, with the exception of one position in Visual Media, where an MFA is the terminal degree in some specializations.

With increased state appropriations anticipated for the 2019–2021 biennium, NSC has prioritized hiring more full-time faculty to ensure programs have enough faculty to ensure the integrity of programs, availability of faculty advising, and other core functions. Twenty-two new instructional faculty positions were approved for FY20 and FY21. However, given rapid student enrollment growth and no mechanism afforded by the NSHE to limit growth, improving the ratio of full-time to part-time faculty continues to be a challenge.

**2.B.5 Faculty responsibilities and workloads are commensurate with the institution's expectations for teaching, service, scholarship, research, and/or artistic creation.**

NSC's [Faculty Workload Policy \(AA 3.1\)](#) sets out expectations for faculty workloads. Reflecting NSC's mission as a teaching-focused state institution, full-time faculty on nine-month contracts have a teaching load of 24 credits per academic year. Instructional faculty on 12-month contracts have a teaching load of 30 credits per academic year. Faculty also complete a significant amount of service work aimed at developing the college and providing a range of opportunities for students. While tenure-track faculty are expected to be engaged scholars, the publication requirement to be considered for tenure is relatively low. The emphasis placed on teaching, service, and scholarship used in the Standards of Academic to guide annual reviews and the [NSC Promotion & Tenure Policy \(AA 5\)](#) reflects the importance placed on each of these contributions: to receive tenure, faculty must earn a rating of Excellent in teaching and a Satisfactory rating in both service and scholarship.

**2.B.6 All faculty are evaluated in a regular, systematic, substantive, and collegial manner at least once within every five-year period of service. The evaluation process specifies the timeline and criteria by which faculty are evaluated; utilizes multiple indices of effectiveness, each of which is directly related to the faculty member's roles and responsibilities, including evidence of teaching effectiveness for faculty with teaching responsibilities; contains a provision to address concerns that may emerge between regularly scheduled evaluations; and provides for administrative access to all primary evaluation data. Where areas for improvement are identified, the institution works with the faculty member to develop and implement a plan to address identified areas of concern.**

All full-time faculty, including tenured faculty, are formally evaluated each year by their department chair, dean, or director. Evaluation criteria and timelines are clearly established in the Standards of Academe for each school or unit. Faculty are evaluated using multiple measures of effectiveness, and the Standards of Academe delineate required as well as optional forms of evidence in teaching, scholarship, and service. For example, lines of evidence related to teaching include syllabi, student evaluations, samples of student submissions, examples of formative and/or summative feedback given to students, peer observations, and assignment instructions. As described in the NSC Bylaws, the chief purpose of annual reviews is to “provide constructive, developmental feedback to the faculty member.” Examples of portfolios, and copies of the Standards of Academe, are shared with faculty in advance to ensure that expectations are clear. Faculty are rated as Unsatisfactory, Satisfactory, Commendable, or Excellent in teaching, scholarship, and service.

As part of the evaluation process, faculty submit a set of goals for the following academic year. These are revised in collaboration with the evaluator to address any areas for improvement identified in the annual review. The evaluator includes formal recommendations for improvement and, where appropriate, directs the faculty member to resources such as the Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence (CTLE), regional and national teaching-oriented conferences, evidence-based teaching practices, the Summer Scholarship Institute (for support with research), and similar internal and external programs. In each annual review portfolio, the faculty member assesses the degree to which they met the previous year's goals and addressed any items identified as in need of improvement.

Chairs, deans, and other administrators have access to student evaluation data and other annual review materials; all annual reviews are kept on file by Human Resources. If any concerns emerge between annual review periods, the supervisor may impose disciplinary sanctions as outlined in [NSHE Handbook 2.6](#). Before issuing a warning or reprimand, the supervising authority shall notify the faculty member in writing, including all materials and documentation, clearly identify the relevant section of the NSHE Handbook, and schedule a meeting to discuss the situation. The faculty member may request mediation, directly respond to the warning or reprimand, or file a grievance. NSC's Bylaws outline the grievance process. A faculty member who earns a rating of Unsatisfactory that is not overturned must agree with the supervisor on a plan for improvement.

Part-time faculty are evaluated regularly by deans, chairs, full-time faculty in their discipline, and/or an adjunct faculty coordinator. Evaluations include early semester student feedback to identify any areas of concern, audits of course shells and syllabi to ensure required items are included, and in-class or online observations of instruction.



the wine talk! Hope all i  
-Sadie M  
regards  
Evelyn  
Carranza  
for giving me  
get "hac" quicker. 😊  
-Justine  
have made it without y  
You inspired me and all  
me to know i can follo  
my dreams! Love Always  
Thank You!  
-Melissa

everything!  
making me  
an.

#GradGrati+  
NEVADA STATE COLLEGE  
Be bold. Be great. Be State.  
#GradGratitude  
Thank you to the  
amazing professors that have  
helped us nursing students get  
through the most difficult times!  
for all  
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#GradGratitude  
Professor  
Thank y  
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for havi  
humor,  
our classes more  
Thanks ag  
Samantha

Davis - Ab  
Thank you for be  
caring, genero  
mentor. You got  
my last semester  
Thank you always!  
ndra C.

Dr. Kebede  
My whole career  
started by taking  
Anatomy & Physiology 223-224  
from you  
John Herrera

My man Sebern!  
Thank you for your  
Support! You have be  
mentor. I appreciate  
taught me, and  
appreciate your kindness  
Support, and guidance.  
yours,  
Kyle Mat

NEVADA STATE COLLEGE  
Be bold. Be great. Be State.  
Phyllam  
#GradGrati  
Thank you for all



## 2.C EDUCATION RESOURCES

**2.C.1 The institution provides programs, wherever offered and however delivered, with appropriate content and rigor that are consistent with its mission; culminate in achievement of clearly identified student learning outcomes; and lead to collegiate-level degrees or certificates with designators consistent with program content in recognized fields of study.**

NSC's mission is to provide affordable degree programs that open doors to "career success and enhanced quality of life for a diverse population of students." The College offers programs that address high-need areas such as Nursing, Education, and Business, as well as programs that target anticipated growth, including Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL), Deaf Studies, and Criminal Justice. In support of our mission, every program at NSC is marked by an effort to provide superb learning opportunities that enhance the success of our students.

To help ensure the quality, relevance, and academic rigor of these learning opportunities, tenure-track faculty at NSC are required to have terminal degrees in their fields. Faculty rely on their discipline-relevant experience and expertise to develop our academic programs and associated learning outcomes, and are encouraged to examine outcomes at peer institutions and guidelines provided by professional organizations or accrediting bodies within the field. All programs lead to collegiate-level degrees or post-baccalaureate certificates, as published in the College Catalog. To enforce appropriate rigor, all academic programs must be approved through the internal curriculum review process, which involves review and oversight by Faculty Senate, academic deans, and the Executive Vice Provost. Proposals to add or delete degree programs must be reviewed and approved by the Board of Regents.

Thorough and consistent assessment of learning outcomes is endemic to our academic culture at

Nevada State College. Program-level learning outcomes are directly evaluated by faculty committees every other year through our outcomes assessment process. Comprehensive program reviews must be conducted and submitted to NSHE a minimum of once every 10 years ([NSHE Handbook 4.14.5](#)), and shorter reviews are submitted at the end of the first, third, and fifth years of a new program's existence.

**2.C.2 The institution identifies and publishes expected course, program, and degree learning outcomes. Expected student learning outcomes for courses, wherever offered and however delivered, are provided in written form to enrolled students.**

Program and degree learning outcomes are published in the NSC catalog and website. Learning outcomes for each course are included in the course syllabus; the standard course template includes a section on course outcomes. Syllabi are provided to students on the first day of class via the learning management system. Faculty include syllabus audits as part of the program assessment process to help ensure course outcomes are present, appropriate for the course, and aligned with program outcomes.

**2.C.3 Credit and degrees, wherever offered and however delivered, are based on documented student achievement and awarded in a manner consistent with institutional policies that reflect generally accepted learning outcomes, norms, or equivalencies in higher education.**

The unit of academic credit at NSC is the semester credit hour. NSC's [definition of the credit hour](#) complies with the [NWCCU Credit Hour Policy](#) and is published in the [College Catalog](#).

Degree requirements, including specific courses required, residency requirements, minimum GPA, and other program or institutional requirements, are published in the College Catalog. Students may

access an unofficial degree audit at any time via the myNSC portal. The unofficial degree audit tracks their progress toward graduation and clearly lists remaining requirements. Faculty and staff with the appropriate security permissions also may access these reports to effectively advise students.

Instructors determine the extent to which a student has met course learning objectives, as reflected in the grade awarded for their performance. Students receive credit for a passing grade (D- or higher) in Core Curriculum and elective courses, and for a grade of C- or higher in courses that meet specific major requirements. In their penultimate semester students apply for graduation. The Office of the Registrar then reviews students' transcripts and indicates any remaining courses or other requirements that must be completed during the graduation year. Ultimately, a degree is awarded based on a student's successful completion of all course requirements and college graduation requirements (e.g., a minimum 2.0 cumulative GPA, NSC residency requirement).

**2.C.4 Degree programs, wherever offered and however delivered, demonstrate a coherent design with appropriate breadth, depth, sequencing of courses, and synthesis of learning. Admission and graduation requirements are clearly defined and widely published.**

Nevada State College's degree programs are consistent with NSHE in terms of Core Curriculum requirements, major requirements, upper-division electives, and common course numbering. The College is aligned with system-wide standards related to the appropriate breadth, depth, and sequencing of courses needed to guide students progressively through degree programs. The content and corresponding learning outcomes for programs are created by faculty with expertise in the discipline. The sequencing of the courses in each

program is designed to allow students to master program learning outcomes in a sequential fashion.

Clearly defined admissions and graduation requirements are readily available via the College Catalog, the NSC website, materials provided by the Academic Advising Center, and unofficial degree audits available in the myNSC portal.

**2.C.5 Faculty, through well-defined structures and processes with clearly defined authority and responsibilities, exercise a major role in the design, approval, implementation, and revision of the curriculum, and have an active role in the selection of new faculty. Faculty with teaching responsibilities take collective responsibility for fostering and assessing student achievement of clearly identified learning outcomes.**

### Curriculum Design & Approval

As delineated in our [curriculum guidelines](#), NSC has a clearly defined process for the design, approval, and revision of the curriculum that places faculty in a central role. Each school maintains a curriculum committee consisting of faculty members. All curriculum proposals must be submitted to the academic dean and curriculum committee of the school in which the program or course is housed. Proposals are then forwarded to the campus-level Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee (FSCC), which consists of faculty members from each school as well as representatives from the Office of the Registrar and the Library. Committee chairs are elected annually by the Faculty Senate.

Proposals related to degree programs or the Core Curriculum must also be approved by the Provost. The FSCC serves as a recommending body for these proposals and forwards a recommendation, derived from a majority vote of FSCC voting members, to the Provost. Proposals that require Board of Regents approval are then submitted to the Academic Affairs

Council for review and a vote, followed by a final vote by the BoR Academic Research and Student Affairs (ARSA) subcommittee. Approved proposals that require accreditation review are subsequently submitted to the appropriate organization before being incorporated into the College Catalog.

### Selection of New Faculty

Faculty members assist in developing job descriptions and advertisements for faculty positions, and may attend discipline-specific faculty recruiting events. Academic faculty search committee members, including committee chairs, are appointed by the appropriate academic dean or director. Search committees review candidates and oversee the interview process; the committee then submits a hiring recommendation to the appropriate academic dean or director.

### Outcomes Assessment

Teaching faculty members take collective responsibility for assessing students' mastery of learning outcomes (described in Section 4.A.2). Committees made up of faculty directly assess student learning through a rigorous process whereby outcomes are evaluated biannually, and program improvements and adjustments are addressed in the intervening period. Teaching faculty also serve on the Core Curriculum assessment committee.

**2.C.6 Faculty with teaching responsibilities, in partnership with library and information resources personnel, ensure that the use of library and information resources is integrated into the learning process.**

The NSC Library emphasizes meaningful collaboration with instructional faculty in all disciplines. The Library's instruction program mission, published on the [Library website](#), outlines the Library's role in the learning process: "Through collaboration and evidence-based design, we advance student success with sustainable and

scaffolded information literacy instruction. We promote research across campus to foster lifelong learning and support NSC’s commitment to educating students for success in the real world.”

The Library partners with teaching faculty in the following services, processes, and initiatives.

### **ONLINE LEARNING OBJECTS**

Librarians have developed online library guides, discipline-specific research guides that support the research needs of our students. In addition to being scalable, sustainable, and measurable, integrating within the LMS allows for more meaningful interactions between students and librarians.

### **ASSIGNMENT DESIGN SERVICES**

Collaborating with instructors on assignment design and research course development facilitates the integration of information literacy into the curriculum. Additionally, the research literature demonstrates the importance of setting clear expectations for improving student outcomes, such as those provided in the Transparency in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education (TILT) framework ([Winkelmes et al., 2016](#)). The Library hosts regular workshops on information literacy assignment design using the TILT framework. Librarians also meet individually with instructors to discuss research assignment design.



## OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

The Library partners with instructors to reduce the cost of required course materials. As of Fall 2018, these initiatives had resulted in total student savings of approximately \$250,000 per year.

*RN-to-BSN Course Materials:* Library-purchased textbooks are used in all seven courses of the School of Nursing's RN-to-BSN degree. This brings the estimated textbook costs for the program down from \$1,068 per student to \$628, a 41% savings.



### *No-Cost Textbook Core Curriculum Pathway:*

In 2018, the Library led the inaugural No-Cost Textbook Summer Institute, which supports projects that help instructional faculty reduce textbook costs in Core Curriculum courses and other high-enrollment courses. The 2018 Institute included eight faculty participants and resulted in an annual estimated savings of \$132,000 for NSC students.

**2.C.7 Credit for prior experiential learning, if granted, is: a) guided by approved policies and procedures; b) awarded only at the undergraduate level to enrolled students; c) limited to a maximum of 25% of the credits**

**needed for a degree; d) awarded only for documented student achievement equivalent to expected learning achievement for courses within the institution's regular curricular offerings; and e) granted only upon the recommendation of appropriately qualified teaching faculty. Credit granted for prior experiential learning is so identified on students' transcripts and may not duplicate other credit awarded to the student in fulfillment of degree requirements. The institution makes no assurances regarding the number of credits to be awarded prior to the completion of the institution's review process.**

Nevada State College does not grant credit for prior experiential learning by portfolio, but does allow undergraduate students to earn credit for prior learning if they earn an [appropriate score](#) on College Level Examination Program (CLEP), DANTES Subject Standardized Test (DSST), or Excelsior College examinations.



**2.C.8 The final judgment in accepting transfer credit is the responsibility of the receiving institution. Transfer credit is accepted according to procedures which provide adequate safeguards to ensure high academic quality, relevance to the students' programs, and integrity of the receiving institution's degrees. In accepting transfer credit, the receiving institution ensures that the credit accepted is appropriate for its programs and comparable in nature, content, academic quality, and level to credit it offers. Where patterns of student enrollment between institutions are identified, the institution develops articulation agreements between the institutions.**

Nevada State College clearly outlines our procedures for the transfer and acceptance of credit from other institutions. Policies related to transfer credit evaluation are published annually in the [College Catalog](#). The following factors are considered when evaluating transfer courses and admitting transfer students:

- *Accreditation status of the transferring institution:* The institution must be accredited by one of the regional accrediting associations listed in our College Catalog. Credits from nationally-accredited institutions generally are not accepted at Nevada State, but students can petition for approval of specific credits.
- *Level of course:* Baccalaureate-level courses are transferable. Remedial courses do not transfer.
- *Comparability of courses and credits earned:* Courses need not have an NSC equivalent to be considered transferable.
- *Type of course:* Work experience or experiential learning credits are not transferable. Vocational/technical courses are not transferable unless part of a Bachelor of Applied Sciences (BAS) agreement. Practicum,

internship, independent study, or workshop courses from a 2-year institution are not transferable unless approval is granted from the relevant dean. Courses in religion that advocate espousal of a specific faith are not transferable. Physical education courses may not transfer for full credit.

- *Applicability:* If an articulation agreement or decision rule is not in place for a course, a transfer coordinator reviews the course description for equivalency with courses offered at NSC. If the transfer coordinator judges that a course is not equivalent to any offered at NSC, the student may submit a curriculum substitution petition to the relevant academic department to apply the course to their major requirements.
- *Grades:* Student GPA and grade earned in the course.

The [Common Course Numbering \(CCN\) system](#) clarifies course equivalencies and facilitates the transfer of credits within NSHE. Common courses share the same prefix, number, and title and are fully articulated throughout the system. Before a new course can be added to the CCN database, it must be reviewed by the other institutions.

The NSC website includes a [Transfer Student section](#) that provides information on transferability of coursework as well as copies of articulation agreements. NSC has developed articulation agreements with each community college in Nevada, including year-by-year course sequence maps, and updates these agreements annually.

**2.C.9 The General Education component of undergraduate programs demonstrates an integrated course of study that helps students develop the breadth and depth of intellect to become more effective learners and to prepare them for a productive life of work, citizenship, and personal fulfillment.**

**Baccalaureate degree programs and transfer associate degree programs include a recognizable core of general education that represents an integration of basic knowledge and methodology of the humanities and fine arts, mathematical and natural sciences, and social sciences. Applied undergraduate degree and certificate programs of thirty (30) semester credits or forty-five (45) quarter credits in length contain a recognizable core of related instruction or general education with identified outcomes in the areas of communication, computation, and human relations that align with and support program goals or intended outcomes.**

NSC’s General Education requirement is referred to as the [College Core Curriculum](#). The Core Curriculum provides students with a broad-based foundation in the liberal arts and sciences. In doing so, the Core is designed to ensure that students meet the campus-wide general education outcomes of Critical Thinking, Communication, and Effective Citizenship.

Transfer students who have completed at least 30 credits are not required to complete the Study & Technology Skills Core requirement. Those who earned an Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, or Associate of Business degree from an NSHE community college are considered to have










completed any Core Curriculum requirements, as per [NSHE Handbook 4.14.15.1\(a\)](#).

During the 2019–20 academic year, a committee of faculty from various disciplines will lead an effort to revise the Core Curriculum to ensure it continues to reflect the skills, values, and knowledge that we wish to impart to students.

**2.C.10 The institution demonstrates that the General Education components of its baccalaureate degree programs (if offered) and transfer associate degree programs (if offered) have identifiable and assessable learning outcomes that are stated in relation to the institution’s mission and learning outcomes for those programs.**

The Core Curriculum at Nevada State College is built around three learning outcomes, which are published in the [College Catalog](#). The outcomes are assessed following the Nichols model (Nichols & Nichols, 2005), as described in 2.C.5 and 4.A regarding degree outcomes assessment. In the 2017–18 round of assessment, the assessment committee identified several difficulties in operationalizing and assessing the outcomes, which resulted in recommended revisions to ensure that our learning outcomes can be assessed in a clear and reliable manner.

**The NSC Core Curriculum consists of a total of 31 to 45 credits in the following areas:**

 <b>3–8 credits</b>   English	 <b>7–8 credits</b>   Natural Sciences (including at least 1 lab course)	 <b>6 credits</b>   Humanities
 <b>0–3 credits</b>   Study & Technology Skills	 <b>3 credits</b>   Social Sciences	 <b>3–6 credits</b>   Constitution
 <b>3–5 credits</b>   Mathematics	 <b>3 credits</b>   Fine Arts	 <b>3 credits</b>   Cultural Diversity



In Summer 2018, a committee of faculty attended the [American Association of Colleges & Universities Institute on General Education and Assessment](#); the workshop focused on the [AAC&U LEAP model](#) of core curriculum development and assessment. The faculty committee recommended adoption of the LEAP model at NSC. The committee also recommended that NSC join the [WICHE Interstate Passport](#), a nationwide network dedicated to the block transfer of general education attainment based on learning outcomes mapped to the LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes. The NSC Strategic Plan includes a timeline for evaluating the existing core and making any necessary revisions in accordance with our commitment to student success.

**2.C.11 The related instruction components of applied degree and certificate programs (if offered) have identifiable and assessable learning outcomes that align with and support program goals or intended outcomes. Related instruction components may be embedded within program curricula or taught in blocks of specialized instruction, but each approach must have clearly identified content and be taught or monitored by teaching faculty who are appropriately qualified in those areas.**

Nevada State College does not offer related instruction for applied degree or certificate programs. The only programs with applied components are the Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) degrees in Management, Engineering Technology, and Applied Sciences. The applied elements of these programs are completed at the community college level; no applied coursework is offered at or by NSC.



**2.C.12 Graduate programs are consistent with the institution’s mission; are in keeping with the expectations of their respective disciplines and professions; and are described through nomenclature that is appropriate to the levels of graduate and professional degrees offered. They differ from undergraduate programs by requiring greater depth of study and increased demands on student intellectual or creative capacities; knowledge of the literature of the field; and ongoing student engagement in research, scholarship, creative expression, and/or appropriate high-level professional practice.**

An important component of Nevada State College’s mission is to offer selected master’s programs in high-need fields. As of Fall 2019, the College will offer one degree in support of this mission, a [Master of Education \(MEd\) in Speech-Language Pathology](#). It is the only master’s program in speech-language pathology in southern Nevada and plays an important role in helping speech-language pathologists improve their professional skills, provide a crucial service to Nevada’s schools, and achieve the credentialing that is the national standard in this field.

NSC designed the degree to meet all standards established by the [Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology](#) (CAA) of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA), and with input and support from recognized experts in Nevada (including the Director of Nevada’s Office of Special Education and the Director of Speech-Language Therapy and Audiology Services for the Clark County School District). The CAA ensures that programs it accredits meet a series of benchmarks in administrative structure and governance, faculty qualifications, curricular content, student standards, assessment practices, and program resources. After a successful site visit in February 2019, the CAA

designated the MEd in Speech-Language Pathology as an Accreditation Candidate, allowing NSC to pursue full accreditation by 2021.

The [Masters of Education in Speech-Language Pathology Graduate Handbook](#) outlines additional demands on students compared to undergraduate programs. These include increased academic expectations; higher levels of complexity, critical thinking, and problem solving; and increased requirements for engagement with advanced research. A minimum 3.0 GPA is required for admission to NSC graduate programs; a 2.0 GPA is required for undergraduate programs. While undergraduates must earn a C- or higher in any course that fulfills a major requirement, graduate students must earn a B or higher.

**2.C.13 Graduate admission and retention policies ensure that student qualifications and expectations are compatible with the institution’s mission and the program’s requirements. Transfer of credit is evaluated according to clearly defined policies by faculty with a major commitment to graduate education or by a representative body of faculty responsible for the degree program at the receiving institution.**

The admission requirements for the MEd in Speech-Language Pathology are listed on the [application website](#). Graduate admissions requirements are higher than those for our undergraduate programs, but comparable to similar graduate programs such as the MA in Speech Pathology at the University of Nevada, Reno.

All transfer credits are evaluated by a transfer specialist in the Office of the Registrar. When additional expertise is needed, a course is forwarded to the graduate admissions committee. This committee consists of the Program Director of the MEd in Speech-Language Pathology and at least two other full-time faculty in the program.



**2.C.14 Graduate credit may be granted for internships, field experiences, and clinical practices that are an integral part of the graduate degree program. Credit toward graduate degrees may not be granted for experiential learning that occurred prior to matriculation into the graduate degree program. Unless the institution structures the graduate learning experience, monitors that learning, and assesses learning achievements, graduate credit is not granted for learning experiences external to the students’ formal graduate programs.**

Nevada State College offers graduate credit for internships, field experiences, and clinical practicums when those courses are approved through our curriculum review process, added to our College Catalog, and accepted as fulfilling a graduate degree requirement or elective. These courses are guided by qualified faculty and have clear learning objectives. The College does not offer any graduate credit for prior experiential learning.

**2.C.15 Graduate programs intended to prepare students for research, professional practice, scholarship, or artistic creation are characterized by a high level of expertise, originality, and critical analysis. Programs intended to prepare students for artistic creation are directed toward developing personal expressions of original concepts, interpretations, imagination, thoughts, or feelings. Graduate programs intended to prepare students for research or scholarship are directed toward advancing the frontiers of knowledge by constructing and/or revising theories and creating or applying knowledge. Graduate programs intended to prepare students for professional practice are directed toward developing high levels of knowledge and performance skills directly related to effective practice within the profession.**

Highly-qualified faculty manage and teach courses in the MEd in Speech-Language Pathology. The full-time faculty in this area have PhDs in Speech-Language Pathology, [Certificates of Clinical Competence as Speech-Language Pathologists](#) (CCC-SLPs) from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, and several years of experience as practitioners and instructors. The program is led by a director, who evaluates faculty annually to ensure they are meeting requirements established in the [School of Education Standards of Academic](#).

The [Masters of Education in Speech-Language Pathology Graduate Handbook](#) outlines the program's learning objectives, grading structure, and requirements for satisfactory academic progress. The program prepares students to take the Praxis examination required to apply to receive a CCC-SLP and for licensure as a practicing speech-language pathologist in Nevada.





**2.C.16 Credit and non-credit continuing education programs and other special programs are compatible with the institution’s mission and goals.**

Nevada State College offers post-baccalaureate credit-bearing programs leading to [licensure](#) or [endorsements](#) by the Nevada Department of Education (NV DOE). These programs consist of standard undergraduate coursework approved by the NV DOE. Preparing new teachers is directly aligned with the mission and goals of the College, as it serves the local school district and promotes the success of students by preparing them for new career opportunities.

**2.C.17 The institution maintains direct and sole responsibility for the academic quality of all aspects of its continuing education and special learning programs and courses. Continuing education and/or special learning activities, programs, or courses offered for academic credit are approved by the appropriate institutional body, monitored through established procedures with clearly defined roles and responsibilities, and assessed with regard to student achievement. Faculty representing the disciplines and fields of work are appropriately involved in the planning and evaluation of the institution’s continuing education and special learning activities.**

Post-baccalaureate programs are housed within the School of Education. These programs are designed by instructional faculty and go through the same internal curriculum review process as other degree programs. They consist of undergraduate courses offered for other degree programs at NSC and are taught by instructional faculty who teach and assess other courses in those units. There is no difference in the coursework, assessment, or learning experience with the exception that students in the program have already earned a baccalaureate degree.

**2.C.18 The granting of credit or Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for continuing education courses and special learning activities is: a) guided by generally accepted norms; b) based on institutional mission and policy; c) consistent across the institution, wherever offered and however delivered; d) appropriate to the objectives of the course; and e) determined by student achievement of identified learning outcomes.**

Nevada State College does not offer Continuing Education Units (CEUs).

**2.C.19 The institution maintains records which describe the number of courses and nature of learning provided through non-credit instruction.**

Nevada State College does not offer non-credit instruction.



Nevada State College

## 2.D STUDENT SUPPORT RESOURCES

**2.D.1 Consistent with the nature of its educational programs and methods of delivery, the institution creates effective learning environments with appropriate programs and services to support student learning needs.**

Faculty and staff at Nevada State are dedicated to promoting the success of our unique student population. Both Student Affairs and Academic Affairs report to the Office of the Provost, which facilitates the integration of these divisions and their associated programs and services.

The Raker Student Success Building, which opened in Fall 2018, serves as a one-stop-shop for many services. Housing all of these resources in the same building makes it easier for students to access services and complete tasks that are essential to their success at NSC.



### ONE-STOP-SHOP

- Cashier's Office
- Financial Aid
- Veteran's Benefits
- Office of the Registrar
- Admissions and Recruitment
- Academic Advising Center (AAC)



## Academic Advising

Since 2013, the [Academic Advising Center](#) has nearly tripled its number of professional advisors from three to eight, restructured the center to establish a Director of Advising, and hired two coordinators to advance student success initiatives. Equipped with these resources, the AAC has been integral to the implementation of several NSHE projects (e.g., 15-to-Finish; continuous enrollment in gateway math and English) and has enforced semester-by-semester mandatory advising for all-incoming students with fewer than 60 credits and pre-education students who have not yet been admitted to the School of Education. Our academic advising services are described in more detail in Section 2.D.10.

## Academic Success Center

The Academic Success Center (ASC) provides academic guidance and enhanced learning skills through peer-to-peer support and evidence-based initiatives, while leading students toward independent learning. The ASC provides free in-person and online tutoring services to all enrolled students. Online tutoring services are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and through a concerted marketing effort, usage of these services has increased substantially. The ASC works with faculty to ensure tutors have access to key course materials (syllabi, lecture slides, etc.) that assist tutors in designing tutoring sessions and ensure consistency in the information students receive. The ASC also provides embedded peer-led Supplemental Instruction and conducts metacognition and learning strategy workshops for College Success courses.

## College Success Course

NSC has three full-time lecturers focused on the First-Year Experience. These lecturers spent several weeks in Summer 2017 designing ALS 101: *College Success* around evidence-based best practices. The

course introduces students to NSC and college life while also integrating activities and content aimed at fostering a growth mindset, academic success practices (e.g., active reading and notetaking, effective study strategies), and a sense of belonging.

## Foundational and Gateway Courses

### GATEWAYS TO COMPLETION

In 2013, NSC was selected as one of the 13 founding institutions in the [Gateways to Completion](#) (G2C) program offered by the John N. Gardner Institute. The College focused on comprehensive improvements to five gateway courses, selected based on high enrollments and a large proportion of D, F, and W grades, which were redesigned by committees of faculty in summer 2014 and introduced throughout 2014–15. The project significantly reduced DFW rates in these courses and introduced practices, such as our Course Assistant model, that were later successfully implemented in other courses.

### FOUNDATIONAL MATH REDESIGN

The redesign of foundational math is a representative illustration of our effort to continually improve the curriculum and facilitate better student outcomes. The remedial math curriculum delivers content in three-week units that are mastery-based; if students do not pass a unit, they immediately re-start that unit rather than wait until the next term to begin the entire class over. NSC also introduced a co-requisite model that allows students who otherwise would have been placed in traditional remediation to take remedial math (MATH 96) alongside a college-level math course (MATH 120 or 126) that fulfills the Core Curriculum requirement. MATH 120, in turn, was significantly revamped to emphasize useful math skills (e.g., statistics; probability) while retaining the rigor of a college course, and has replaced *College Algebra* as the de facto college math course for non-STEM students, a move that aligns with recommended practices in the field. Finally, the College provides students with a free opportunity

to improve their placement from remedial math to a co-requisite or higher college math course using a self-paced platform called EdReady.

### FOUNDATIONAL ENGLISH

NSC offers a five-credit stretch English composition course (ENG 100) that embeds developmental writing content into a college-level composition course. This model helps students develop foundational skills but does not require them to enroll in a remedial writing course.

### Nepantla Program

Nepantla promotes the success of low-income, under-served, first-generation students entering NSC as first-year students. The program approaches historically under-represented students with an aspirational mindset, acclimates them to college-level work, and helps them meet important requirements before their first full semester even begins. Nepantla uses a cohort model that fosters peer-to-peer support and forges a strong connection between students and NSC faculty and staff, and continues providing mentorship throughout the undergraduate experience.



### Disabilities Resource Center

The Disabilities Resource Center (DRC) provides eligible students with accommodations and services. The DRC recently implemented an online case management program that allows for more efficient and easier tracking of all DRC notifications and documentation. The DRC Director has also increased students' access to assistive technologies such as [Read & Write](#), which is available to all NSC students for free. DRC staff train DRC students on how to use these assistive technologies, which can greatly enhance their academic success.

### TRiO Student Support Services (SSS)

The TRiO-SSS program provides extensive support to low-income and first-generation students at NSC. The program is guided by a director and a student success coordinator who directly advise students and incorporate elements that include workshops on topics ranging from financial literacy to study skills; advising sessions that address academic planning and success-oriented behaviors; academic and cultural enrichment activities (e.g., guest speakers, museum tours); and resources such as loaner laptops and need-based grants.

### Course Assistant Program

Peer Course Assistants (CAs) are integrated into key gateway courses, as well as other courses that can be especially challenging for students. The CAs receive in-depth training about non-cognitive elements of student success before each semester begins. NSC's Course Assistant program was highlighted in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* ([Field, 2018](#)) and has resulted in two academic publications ([Dvorak & Tucker, 2017](#); Tucker et al., forthcoming).

### Scorpion RISE Peer Mentor Program

Slated to launch in Fall 2019, the RISE Peer Mentor Program borrows principles from highly-effective initiatives at Nevada State College, such as our Course Assistant program, and aims to promote



the success of incoming students in the first year of college and beyond. The program strives to promote a sense of belonging and inclusion among students, increase successful behaviors, and foster self-efficacy and the ability to succeed independently.



### Peer Support Training

Virtually all student workers who provide peer support—including tutors, writing specialists, peer mentors, and Course Assistants—participate in an extensive 4-day training regimen that provides theory and hands-on training in how to best support our unique student population.

### Student CARE Team and Counseling Services

The Student Concern, Assessment, Referral, and Education (CARE) Team promotes students' well-being and success. The CARE Team consists of a full-time case manager, faculty representatives from each school, and staff members from key units (e.g., Financial Aid, the Academic Advising Center).

Faculty and staff may refer any student who is in distress or otherwise poses a concern, and students may also self-refer. The CARE Team connects students with resources such as advising and tutoring; it also manages a food pantry and donated funds that can be used to cover emergency costs, psychological or disability assessments, or other needs.

The College contracts with a private mental health provider to offer free on-campus mental health services. Students receive several free sessions, and if longer-term therapy or other services are required, the case manager works with the student and recommendations from the therapists to connect the student with providers in the community who are covered by their insurance or accept sliding-scale fees.

### Other Programs

- The Office of Community Engagement and Diversity Initiatives oversees programming relevant to specific student populations, including students who are undocumented, LGBTQ+, Latinx, or African American.
- The Scorpion Vets student club provides peer assistance and support to student veterans.
- The Career Services Center (CSC) organizes career fairs, mock and real interviews, resumé reviews, and other workshops that help students prepare for the job market. The CSC also offers students the opportunity to search for jobs through [Handshake](#).



**2.D.2 The institution makes adequate provision for the safety and security of its students and their property at all locations where it offers programs and services. Crime statistics, campus security policies, and other disclosures required under federal and state regulations are made available in accordance with those regulations.**

Nevada State College’s primary concern is the safety and security of all students and employees. The College partners with the University of Nevada Las Vegas Police Department (UNLVPD) to provide POST-certified officers who have complete legal authority to protect the campus, students, employees, and constituents in an appropriate manner. Services include community policing, public safety training, detective services, bomb detection, and canine services. UNLVPD also assists in the formation and submittal of all reporting required by state and federal regulations, including the Clery Act.

NSC contracts with private security to patrol campus during overnight hours and holidays. In 2018–19, the College replaced and expanded its video surveillance system to improve crime deterrence as well as the ability to investigate crimes. The NSC Student CARE Team runs a standard threat assessment protocol on students of concern reported by members of the campus community, and collaborates with UNLVPD or campus mental health services as appropriate when an initial threat assessment indicates a heightened risk of harm to self or others.

Nevada State partners with the University of Nevada Las Vegas Risk Management Services (UNLVRMS) to ensure that the College complies with risk management and safety requirements in Chapter 10 of the NSHE Procedures and Guidelines. UNLVRMS regularly inspects the campus for fire and safety concerns and the effective handling of hazardous materials and provides a variety of relevant trainings.

The College has an active Safety Committee with representation from all areas, including Public Safety and Risk Management. Tasked with recommending policy and action to mitigate safety concerns, the committee posts its agendas on the campus portal in advance of meetings to facilitate widespread input from across campus.

Nevada State maintains a current emergency action plan and emergency evacuation plans, which are integral components of the College’s emergency preparedness. Employees with key roles in the action plan have undergone online training from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and actively participate in table-top exercises and drills.

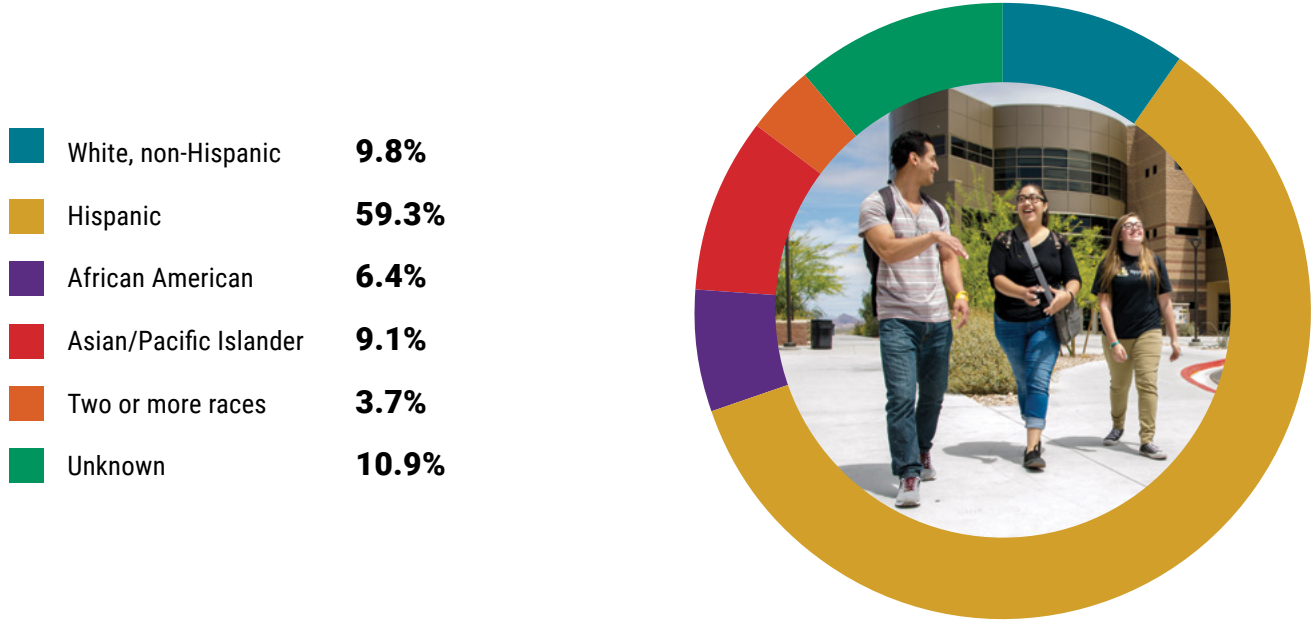
**2.D.3 Consistent with its mission, core themes, and characteristics, the institution recruits and admits students with the potential to benefit from its educational offerings. It orients students to ensure they understand the requirements related to their programs of study and receive timely, useful, and accurate information and advising about relevant academic requirements, including graduation and transfer policies.**

Nevada State College was founded on the belief that all students should be given the opportunity to succeed at the highest level. The vast majority of NSC’s students are Nevada residents, and most take jobs in the state after graduation. Educating this population helps fulfill our mission to foster “a stronger community and a better future for all of Nevada.”

The College continues to admit a student body that is consistent with the institution’s mission and status as a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) and Minority-Serving Institution (MSI), as shown in Figure 2D.

The campus routinely evaluates data on student success to ensure we are providing pathways to quality degree programs for a diverse student

**Figure 2D: Race/Ethnicity of Fall 2018 First-Year Cohort (%)**



body, including largely under-served, first-generation, and returning students. In 2017, NSC began a thorough evaluation of data on student persistence and graduation and their implications for admissions requirements. Through this process, the College identified clear patterns: students who enter NSC with a GPA below 2.5 have uncommonly low graduation rates. Based on these data, and an awareness of our position as a “middle tier” in a three-tier state system, NSC administrators advised revising admissions requirements for students with GPAs below 2.5. This process involved repeated and ongoing discussions with campus constituents and community stakeholders as the campus balanced the advantages and potential downsides (including unintended consequences) of raising admissions standards. Starting Fall 2020, NSC students with GPAs below 2.5 will be required to submit additional materials for evaluation. Students who are not admitted will be encouraged to enroll in Nevada’s community colleges, which offer students lower costs, greater selection of courses, and often a more convenient location. They may then transfer to NSC,

a process facilitated by the detailed articulation agreements the College builds with NSHE’s two-year institutions. To further enhance the likelihood of success for these students, we are working with the College of Southern Nevada on a joint admissions program that is modeled after effective like-minded initiatives (e.g. the “2NAU” program at Northern Arizona University).

Admission requirements for undergraduate, graduate, and other categories of students, including non-degree-seeking students, are prominently published on the [College’s website](#) and in the [College Catalog](#). The myNSC online portal houses resources students need to be successful. Once a student is admitted, the student receives login information for the portal, which provides access to their own class schedule, the campus class schedule and enrollment dates, the catalog, their financial aid information, links to advising and self-service advising tools such as unofficial degree audits, notifications and messages about important documentation and deadlines the student needs to attend to, and announcements about campus life.

## New Student Orientation

All newly-admitted first-year students are required to attend New Student Orientation. Orientation provides students with information about academic program requirements, financial aid, graduation requirements, and transfer policies, as well as hands-on assistance with course registration, and begins to imbue them with a sense of community, efficacy, and inclusion. All students receive an orientation packet that includes a degree sheet, which lists all program requirements. Advisors review this information in detail with students and the academic deans from each school provide information about individual degree programs.

Newly-admitted transfer students are given the opportunity to meet with an advisor to discuss remaining requirements. All Pre-Education and Pre-Speech-Language Pathology students are required to meet with an advisor prior to enrolling to ensure they receive accurate information regarding state testing mandates.

More information about academic advising and the distribution of program requirements is provided in Sections 2.C.2, 2.D.1, 2.D.5, and 2.D.10.

### **2.D.4 In the event of program elimination or significant change in requirements, the institution makes appropriate arrangements to ensure that students enrolled in the program have an opportunity to complete their program in a timely manner with a minimum of disruption.**

Nevada State College must seek NSHE approval before eliminating a degree program. The [Program Elimination/Deactivation Form](#) requires the College to explain the reason for eliminating the degree, the phase-out plan (including how the needs of enrolled students will be met), and the impact of deleting the program on faculty, staff, and other academic programs.



When significant changes are made to a program, precautions are taken to minimize disruption to already-enrolled students. Students may continue to pursue the degree under the requirements that were listed in the catalog in the year they started the program or may update to the requirements in the catalog year they will graduate. Where possible, courses required under older catalog years continue to be offered for a reasonable amount of time to guarantee that students on previous catalogs can progress toward graduation in a timely manner; when it is not possible to offer such courses, appropriate substitutions are identified and communicated to relevant students.

**2.D.5 The institution publishes in a catalog, or provides in a manner reasonably available to students and other stakeholders, current and accurate information that includes:**

**Institutional mission and core themes; Entrance requirements and procedures; Grading policy; Information on academic programs and courses, including degree and program completion requirements, expected learning outcomes, required course sequences, and projected timelines to completion based on normal student progress and the frequency of course offerings; Names, titles, degrees held, and conferring institutions for administrators and full-time faculty; Rules, regulations for conduct, rights, and responsibilities; Tuition, fees, and other program costs; Refund policies and procedures for students who withdraw from enrollment; Opportunities and requirements for financial aid; and Academic calendar.**

The Office of the Registrar annually publishes an electronic [College Catalog](#). The Registrar works carefully with each unit in the College to ensure that information in the catalog is accurate. The catalog is published on a timeline set by NSHE to ensure sufficient time to update relevant articulation agreements. The catalog contains the following:

- [Institutional mission](#) and [core themes](#);
- [Entrance requirements](#) and procedures for [first-time](#) and [transfer](#) students;
- The [NSC grading policy](#) (course-specific grading policies are included in individual syllabi posted in the learning management system);
- Information on academic programs and courses, [including degree requirements, learning outcomes, course descriptions, general graduation requirements](#), required course sequences, and projected timelines to completion;
- Names, titles, degrees held, and conferring institutions for [administrators and full-time faculty](#);
- [Student rules, regulations for conduct, rights, and responsibilities](#), including those that apply to [student records](#);
- [Tuition, fees, and other program costs](#);
- [Refund policies](#) and [procedures for withdrawing](#);
- Opportunities and requirements for [financial aid](#);
- The [academic calendar](#).

Additional information about academic programs is available on the NSC website, including information about programs [offered by each School](#), [financial aid](#) eligibility and opportunities, [tuition and fees](#),



important [forms and deadlines](#), detailed [degree sheets](#) listing all course and pre-req requirements, campus policies, and assistance with degree planning available from the [Academic Advising Center](#).

#### **2.D.6 Publications describing educational programs include accurate information on:**

**National and/or state legal eligibility requirements for licensure or entry into an occupation or profession for which education and training are offered; Descriptions of unique requirements for employment and advancement in the occupation or profession.**

Nevada State College provides prospective and admitted students with accurate information on state and national licensure requirements relevant to specific programs. This information is available on the [School websites](#), in program [student handbooks](#), and from academic advisors. Upon admission to the School of Nursing or the School of Education, each student is assigned a faculty advisor who is able to assist students with understanding eligibility requirements for licensure and with any unique requirements for employment and advancement in the profession. The Career Services Center also assists students with this information, and the Academic Success Center offers workshops to help students prepare for the Praxis I and II (Teacher Preparation) and NCLEX (Nursing) examinations.

#### **2.D.7 The institution adopts and adheres to policies and procedures regarding the secure retention of student records, including provision for reliable and retrievable backup of those records, regardless of their form. The institution publishes and follows established policies for confidentiality and release of student records.**

##### Record Retention & Security

The Office of the Registrar, in collaboration with the Office of Information & Technology Services, assures the security and reliable backup of student records. Nevada State's document imaging and management system provides a secure repository of all documents processed and retained by the institution, including students' academic records. The records are housed in a hosted cloud-based solution provided by Hyland Software. To access these records, users must authenticate to the application and be given explicit data security rights. To ensure the reliability and security of the stored information, records reside in highly secure data centers that offer built-in redundancy and data replication. All data are transmitted using encrypted channels and stored in an encrypted format on the servers.

Over 90% of all student files have been converted to an electronic format; the remaining physical files are for inactive students and are converted to electronic files as needed. These remaining physical copies are housed in fireproof cabinets.

Permanent academic records are retained indefinitely. All other records and documents are stored based on the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers' [AACRAO's Student Records Management: Retention, Disposal and Archive of Student Records](#), as well as the [NSHE Records Retention and Disposition Schedule](#).





### Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

Nevada State College strictly adheres to FERPA requirements. The College does not release the private records of individual students without the student's prior written consent. Students may opt out of the release of directory information through their myNSC student account or in-person with the Office of the Registrar. Students are made aware of their rights under FERPA in their myNSC account and the [Notice of Confidentiality and Release of Information](#) in the College Catalog. FERPA training is required for all new NSC personnel who require access to student records. These sessions occur in person through faculty development sessions and via an [online course](#).

**2.D.8 The institution provides an effective and accountable program of financial aid consistent with its mission, student needs, and institutional resources. Information regarding the categories of financial assistance (such as scholarships, grants, and loans) is published and made available to prospective and enrolled students.**

The financial aid programs at Nevada State College are directly aligned with our mission to provide “quality, affordable four-year degree programs

[that] open the door to career success and enhanced quality of life for a diverse population of students.” In 2014–15, we revised our methodology for awarding financial aid, which accounts for a student's expected family contribution, enrollment level, and receipt of Pell grant funding, to ensure that students in the mid-range of financial need, as well as those who are studying less than full-time, are awarded equitably in relation to full-time students with the highest need. The net result is the ability to award the needed amount of aid to a larger number of students, as opposed to over-awarding a smaller proportion of the entire population.

Information about available financial aid programs is published on the [NSC website](#) and is discussed extensively at New Student Orientation. In addition to face-to-face and phone counseling, the Office of Financial Aid engages in extensive outreach to campus promoting financial aid and scholarship opportunities, and periodically conducts workshops on financial management and minimizing indebtedness. NSC provides each student with a membership to [Financial Awareness Basics](#), an online, interactive financial literacy program maintained by the Educational Credit Management Corporation (ECMC). A library of topical videos and a chatbot also are available through [Financial Aid TV](#) (FATV) on the NSC website.

**2.D.9 Students receiving financial assistance are informed of any repayment obligations. The institution regularly monitors its student loan programs and the institution’s loan default rate.**

The Office of Financial Aid monitors annual default rates as published by the U.S. Department of Education. The Office likewise monitors monthly delinquency reports and follows up with borrowers at risk of default. NSC’s 3-year cohort default rate for Fiscal Year ‘15 was 11.4%. The College works with ECMC to provide counseling during students’ grace period prior to repayment, as well as to students who are delinquent. Borrowers may use the services at no cost for assistance with payment plans, including requesting deferment or forbearance.

The Office of Financial Aid provides students with loan counseling and repayment obligations prior to borrowing. All first-time borrowers are required to participate in online Federal Direct Loan Entrance Counseling prior to the disbursement of funds. Borrowers are notified of each loan disbursement made to their student account, along with their rights to cancel the loan within a federally-prescribed timeframe. Students also are provided with policies regarding Title IV refunds and return of funds.

Financial Awareness Basics also allows students to review their borrowing history and estimate repayment obligations. The Financial Aid Office conducts annual loan repayment workshops. Students who do not re-enroll or fall below half-time status are reminded of their repayment obligations. Additional information is widely available to students in the Office of Financial Aid, the Academic Advising Center, and on the [Office of Financial Aid website](#).

**2.D.10 The institution designs, maintains, and evaluates a systematic and effective program of academic advisement to support student development and success.**

**Personnel responsible for advising students are knowledgeable of the curriculum, program requirements, and graduation requirements and are adequately prepared to successfully fulfill their responsibilities. Advising requirements and responsibilities are defined, published, and made available to students.**

As noted in Section 2.D.1, since 2013 the Academic Advising Center (AAC) has increased from three to eight professional advisors, added a dedicated director position, and introduced two coordinator roles to help develop and implement key initiatives. This substantive investment in a comprehensive model of advising reflects both our commitment to student success and our belief that close guidance and mentorship can help our students achieve their highest potential. Owing to this expansion in capacity, the AAC assumed a number of key responsibilities, including integral roles in guiding New Student Orientation, our 15-to-Finish campaign, and continuous enrollment in college math and English. Moreover, to increase the probability of student success, mandatory advising is applied to specific populations and enforced through registration holds, which prevent students from registering for classes without seeing an advisor until they have earned 60 credits or, in the instance of Pre-Education and Pre-Speech Pathology, have been formally admitted into their professional program. The presence of a hold and the need to meet with an advisor are communicated to students via email and through a notification in PeopleSoft.





The AAC has established a team model where advisors serve on one of three advising teams: Liberal Arts, STEM (including Pre-Nursing), and Education/Pre-Education/Pre-Speech Pathology. The team model allows students to receive timely advising appointments. Each advisor is responsible for advising students on matters related to their academic success, including academic standing, Satisfactory Academic Progress for financial aid recipients, and adherence to NSHE policies related to remedial math (see [NSHE Handbook 4.16.1](#)). Advisors at all levels understand that a high proportion of our students come from non-traditional, first-generation backgrounds, and they remain vigilant in directing students to resources and experiences that may be unfamiliar to our students (e.g., supplemental instruction; the importance of research experience for those planning to apply to graduate school).

Nevada State operates under a split-model for academic advising services. Students who have earned between 0–60 credits and all Pre-Nursing, Pre-Education, and Pre-Speech Pathology students are advised within the Academic Advising Center (AAC). These students must meet with an advisor each semester prior to registration. Students who have earned more than 60 credits, or gained program admission to Education or Nursing, are advised until graduation by faculty advisors within their respective departments.

### Advising Materials and Resources

PeopleSoft, NSC's Student Information System (SIS), is the primary tool that advisors use in assessing students' degree progress. The degree audit tool provides quick and accurate information about which degree requirements have been completed, which requirements have yet to be fulfilled, and which courses can be taken to meet outstanding requirements. In many instances, advisors use a degree audit to show students how to complete their own degree worksheets, which present the same information in a simplified fashion.



Faculty advisors have access to the same advising resources (e.g., PeopleSoft, degree worksheets) as professional advisors. In faculty development sessions, new faculty are trained in the use of these resources by the academic advising personnel and the academic deans.

In Fall 2019, the AAC will orchestrate a soft launch of the Starfish student success platform to facilitate more robust proactive advising, improved early-alert campaigns, enhanced case management, and a more effective system for referring students to needed resources.

### Advising Requirements and Responsibilities

The AAC developed an [Advising Syllabus](#) which explains the AAC's Student Learning Outcomes, the AAC Mission and Vision, and advisor/advisee responsibilities. The document distills student responsibilities into a small number of memorable and essential principles. It also fosters a welcoming relationship between advisors and students that encourages the high level of personal accountability needed to succeed in college. This syllabus is made available to students via the [advising webpage](#), in advising meetings, and in the AAC office.

## Knowledgeable Personnel

Professional advisors in the AAC undergo an extensive three-part training, which also is made available to the entire NSC campus. This training introduces the [three core components recognized by NACADA](#): informational, relational, and conceptual. New advisors complete a 3 to 6 week shadow period in which they train within their advising team and cross-train with all AAC advising teams to develop a sound understanding of the curricula and graduation requirements of every program. Advisors are encouraged to participate in ongoing professional development to keep up-to-date on relevant trends and practices within the advising profession. Weekly staff meetings keep advising staff apprised of curricular changes and address questions or concerns.

Each advisor undergoes an annual performance evaluation by the Director of Advising, and the Director is reviewed by the Dean of Students.

## Evaluation of Services

The AAC uses post-appointment student satisfaction surveys to solicit student feedback about the quality of their work and guide improvement initiatives. Additionally, the AAC administers pre- and post-appointment assessment surveys and a student mastery rubric completed by advisors to assess the AAC's student learning outcomes. These components help advisors and administrators understand which facets of their work need to improve—or be emphasized—to enhance student satisfaction and success.

### **2.D.11 Co-curricular activities are consistent with the institution's mission, core themes, programs, and services and are governed appropriately.**

Co-curricular programming at NSC includes student clubs and organizations as well as programs offered by the Nevada State Student Alliance (student

government), the Office of the Provost (via the Dean of Students), and the Office for Community Engagement and Diversity Initiatives. These activities foster students' intellectual and personal development and are consistent with the College's mission and two of our core themes: "promote student success" and "strengthen the community." While severe budget shortages limited co-curricular activities in the years immediately after the recession of 2008–2011, NSC has substantially expanded co-curricular programming as the funding situation has improved. Co-curricular programming and student life will expand further as the College opens residential housing in 2020–21.



Most co-curricular activities are [student-led clubs](#). Policies governing student government and student clubs are described in Section 2.A.17. Student clubs span a wide range of academic and social interests and all must have a full-time faculty or staff advisor. Academic-oriented clubs include Psi Chi (psychology honor society), the American Sign Language (ASL) Club, Kappa Delta Pi (education honor society), the Student Nurses Association, and the Visual Media Club. Other clubs support diverse student populations and/or foster a sense of belonging on campus, including the Black Student Organization, Scorpion Vets, Academic Queers, Scorpion Dreamers (for undocumented students), and Latino Scorpions. Finally, some student clubs have a largely service-oriented focus, such as the NSC Sociology Club and the Criminal Justice Club.

The NSSA business manager and Dean of Students provide resources and leadership development for student organizations and actively encourage students to get involved. NSSA funds and organizes the annual Scorpions Calling social event, a fall kick-off with games and activities appropriate for students and their families (and with a popular opportunity to dunk campus administrators in a dunk tank).

### Institutional Programs

In addition to student clubs, the College offers programs to enhance the college experience. Examples include the Provost Speaker Series; the Nepantla program, which includes a number of co-curricular activities and events for enrolled students; Welcome Back Week in fall and spring, with welcome desks around campus staffed by NSC employees; Spirit Week, organized by Marketing and Events and Student Life each fall to include games, competitions, a night of free bowling with the president, and academic speakers, workshops, and activities (including a well-received Tunnel of Awareness that highlights diversity issues); Trick or Treat night; a Día de los Muertos altar competition; a flag-folding ceremony for student veterans; the Long Night against Procrastination (when the entire campus is open all night and faculty and staff offer workshops, tutoring/writing feedback, and wellness sessions); and Finals Week “Study Breakers” (with free food and therapy dogs).

The Office of the Provost and the Office of Community Engagement and Diversity Initiatives both provide programming opportunities to support our diverse student population, such as trainings and workshops for faculty and staff on supporting first-generation students, suicide prevention, issues for LGBTQ+ students, and other relevant topics.

**2.D.12 If the institution operates auxiliary services (such as student housing, food service, and bookstore), they support the institution’s mission, contribute to the intellectual climate of the campus community, and enhance the quality of the learning environment. Students, faculty, staff, and administrators have opportunities for input regarding these services.**

Nevada State College currently operates a college bookstore, food services, and printing and photocopy services as auxiliary units. The [bookstore](#) is contracted to a third-party provider and offers a convenient and consistent source of course material to students. When possible, the bookstore provides students with lower-cost textbook options, including e-books and book rentals. Given the financial constraints often faced by our student body, reducing costs is key to enhancing student success. In addition to course materials, the bookstore provides relevant course-related supplies as well as novelties and apparel. A committee of staff and faculty members participate in the process of bookstore contractor selection.

NSC began offering on-campus food services in the fall of 2015. Before its implementation, the campus community, including students, faculty, and staff, was asked to provide input via surveys and in-person focus groups to help identify food needs and preferences. The [Mt. Scorpion Café](#) offers a coffee bar, grill items, an entrée line, salad bar, and homemade soups. Vegetarian and/or vegan options are offered daily. Food services is outsourced to a



third party that is able to provide a focused approach for its services. The Café is a gathering point for students to study and socialize. Our food services program also provides catering for campus events.



Printing and photocopy services allow students to print and compile academic assignments and other course materials on campus. This facilitates group work, on-campus studying, and completion of coursework. These services are supported by the Scorpion Card, which allows students, faculty, and staff to load money onto a campus card for convenient use of campus services.

The College is in the final stages of planning its first residence project. Slated to open in the fall of 2020, Campus Village will be comprised of seven residential buildings supported by an administrative complex containing a study area and recreational amenities. It will house 342 beds and offer family housing options. Campus housing provides an opportunity for Nevada State to better serve students, as the College's location can be a challenge for students and can deter potential students from attending. Our campus housing also will create an opportunity for living-learning communities, which research indicates are effective methods of supporting student success. Finally, student housing will allow us to integrate more cultural experiences into student life.

Committees of faculty and student services staff, under the leadership of the Dean of Students, developed a number of white papers that address different facets of student life in response to our growing traditional student population and the coming advent of residence halls. The papers summarize research on best practices, identify necessary resources, and offer recommendations for the build-out of student life and residential programming and services (an [executive summary](#) illustrates the core elements of this work).

**2.D.13 Intercollegiate athletic and other co-curricular programs (if offered) and related financial operations are consistent with the institution's mission and conducted with appropriate institutional oversight. Admission requirements and procedures, academic standards, degree requirements, and financial aid awards for students participating in co-curricular programs are consistent with those for other students.**

The College currently does not offer any intercollegiate athletic or related co-curricular programs that involve financial aid, scholarships, or other program-specific arrangements.

**2.D.14 The institution maintains an effective identity verification process for students enrolled in distance education courses and programs to establish that the student enrolled in the distance education course or program is the same person whose achievements are evaluated and credentialed. The institution ensures the identity verification process for distance education students protects student privacy and that students are informed, in writing at the time of enrollment, of current and projected charges associated with the identity verification process.**



## Identity Verification

Nevada State College utilizes a Security Assertion Markup Language (SAML)-based identity management platform to authenticate all students entering the WebCampus learning management system against the institution's active directory, the College's single source for authentication and authorization. Authentication consists of a unique 10-digit ID number (NSHE ID) and complex password generated upon admission.

The College piloted the online proctoring system ProctorTrack. Based on this pilot, we learned that one obstacle to be addressed in full implementation is the need for webcams. Some students did not have functional webcams at home, where they typically completed their online exams. Faculty need to specify in course syllabi that access to a working webcam is required, and include a webcam as a required item when submitting course material orders to the bookstore. Identifying remote proctoring locations available to students (e.g., public libraries), particularly those that offer such services at no cost, will provide additional proctoring options for students.

NSHE negotiated a system-wide agreement with [ProctorU](#), so NSC did not pursue ProctorTrack beyond the pilot phase. For exams administered through ProctorU, a live proctor verifies the student's identity using a webcam and government-issued photo ID. The student must then answer security questions from the Acxiom verification and authentication system, which produces randomly-generated questions based on personal data collected from public records, commercial entities, and government agencies. We anticipate that the lessons learned from the ProctorTrack pilot will provide useful guidance for implementing ProctorU.

## Computing Policies

All students are required to adhere to the [NSHE Computing Resources Policy](#), which is available on the login page of the NSC Portal, as well as NSC's Standards of Conduct for the Use of Computers in NSC-Related Activities. NSHE's policy states that an NSHE account given to students, faculty, or staff is for use only by that individual and provides information on the protection of student privacy. Online courses abide by the same FERPA regulations and protections enforced at NSC more broadly.



## 2.E LIBRARY & INFORMATION RESOURCES

**2.E.1 Consistent with its mission and core themes, the institution holds or provides access to library and information resources with an appropriate level of currency, depth, and breadth to support the institution’s mission, core themes, programs, and services, wherever offered and however delivered.**

The [Marydean Martin Library’s mission](#) is to serve as a network of “services, spaces, and expertise dedicated to leveraging technology and evidence-based practices to create exemplary learning experiences.” The Library is a one-floor, 8,000 foot<sup>2</sup> facility in the Rogers Student Center that provides 16 desktop computers (with additional laptops available for loan), seating for 174 students, 14 collaborative work spaces, and in-person assistance with research and technology questions.

The Library supports the teaching, learning, and research needs of the campus by providing access to a wide range of digital information. The Library’s collections model emphasizes easy discovery and retrieval of materials in a wide variety of formats. A large percentage of these materials are accessible through a single search platform, Primo, and the Library provides remote access to all online resources.

***The Library provides access to approximately:***

 **100,000** journals and serials

 **1.5 million** e-books

 **10,000** streaming video and audio materials

**2.E.2 Planning for library and information resources is guided by data that include feedback from affected users and appropriate library and information resources faculty, staff, and administrators.**

The NSC Library relies on quantitative and qualitative data to guide planning for information resources and services.

Planning for library collections is an ongoing process conducted by the Assistant Director and Library Director in consultation with instructional faculty regarding their research and teaching needs. The Assistant Director makes decisions about ongoing subscription purchases in consultation with library faculty, staff, and student workers. This ensures that collections decisions represent the various needs of faculty and students in the College’s three schools. As is true in all academic libraries, budget constraints do not permit the purchase of all desired or requested resources, but instructional faculty are consulted when compromises must be made and are invited to try new products and resources being considered for purchase.

Library staff regularly monitor statistics on the use of online information resources, including cost effectiveness and patterns of use. Periodically, subscriptions are cancelled or added in order to adjust to the addition or growth of programs and to the research and teaching needs of new faculty. Interlibrary Loan data are regularly examined to determine the items that are most frequently requested and to make purchasing decisions accordingly.

Librarians are active in all areas of campus life that impact library resources and services. The Library Director and Assistant Director regularly meet with deans and department chairs, allowing them to monitor curricular developments to ensure that

the collections appropriately serve the educational needs of all degree programs. The Library Director is a member of the College Leadership Team. The Assistant Director of Library Services is an active member of the Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee, which reviews all curriculum proposals. The NSC Library also relies on feedback from Faculty Senate's Library Advisory Committee.

**2.E.3 Consistent with its mission and core themes, the institution provides appropriate instruction and support for students, faculty, staff, administrators, and others (as appropriate) to enhance their efficiency and effectiveness in obtaining, evaluating, and using library and information resources that support its programs and services, wherever offered and however delivered.**

The NSC Library has several initiatives in place that help its constituents effectively obtain, evaluate, and utilize library resources.

### Information Literacy Instruction Program

Librarians regularly conduct information literacy sessions for courses. Librarians also consult with instructional faculty in the development of research assignments and routinely create supporting handouts, course web pages, video tutorials, and other materials. Librarians consult individually with students and faculty about recently purchased resources, to assist with effective research strategies, and to provide customized instruction and research help.

### Research Services

Librarians and library staff provide research assistance in a variety of modes. In addition to staffing the research help desk for 70.5 hours per week, peer research consultants provide chat, phone, and email assistance to College users and the community at large. To promote and facilitate the best use of appropriate information resources, librarians have

worked with the administrators of the campus LMS to embed links to library research guides within every online course site. Through this system, students are guided to the best subject-specific journals, databases, tutorials, and assistance directly from the navigation menu of their online course.

### All-Digital Collection

The predominantly digital collection allows for easy remote access to the majority of the library collection. Within Canvas (the campus LMS), instructors can easily link to appropriate library resources.

**2.E.4 The institution regularly and systematically evaluates the quality, adequacy, utilization, and security of library and information resources and services, including those provided through cooperative arrangements, wherever offered and however delivered.**

The Library is committed to regular assessment of activities related to student learning, public services, collections, physical spaces, and online resources. The Library regularly participates in a campus-wide assessment to measure student satisfaction with library resources and services.

The Library periodically engages in evaluations of key areas. Some recent assessment projects include:

- Library Space Assessment
- Use of Library Information Literacy Modules
- Assessment of Collection Use







## 2.F FINANCIAL RESOURCES

**2.F.1 The institution demonstrates financial stability with sufficient cash flow and reserves to support its programs and services. Financial planning reflects available funds, realistic development of financial resources, and appropriate risk management to ensure short-term solvency and anticipate long-term obligations, including payment of future liabilities.**

[NSHE Handbook 4.9](#) requires the Board of Regents, through its Business, Finance and Facilities Committee, to review and approve annual and biennial budgets, including all key funding components. The procedures governing financial planning and budgeting are detailed in the Board of Regents [Procedures & Guidelines Manual, Chapter 5](#). NSC's Senior Vice President of Finance and Business Operations is responsible for primary functions of resource planning.

As a young and growing institution, NSC has demonstrated financial stability with sufficient cash flow and reserves to support its programs and services despite significant challenges. For instance, during the years immediately following the 2007 economic downturn, the institution experienced a 50% reduction in state appropriations. At the same time, student enrollment increased by 35%. Given the lack of state support, the college self-financed 130,000 feet<sup>2</sup> of much-needed new campus facilities, which opened in Fall 2015.

NSC's annual budget planning process is inclusive and based on conservative budgeting principles. Individual budget units within the College must request budget allocations for the upcoming year. These requests are assessed based on prior expenditures and agreed-upon modifications. Budget units may also request funds for strategic investments, either one-time or ongoing, for personnel, operations, and/or equipment. The Senior Vice President of Finance and Business Operations, in conjunction with the Office of Institutional Research, creates reasonable revenue projections to estimate state appropriations and tuition and fee revenue. To ensure that the College is able to meet its long-term obligations, the College prepared a 15-year cash-flow projection of key revenue sources, which it uses in the budgeting process.

Once revenue is projected, core institutional commitments, such as debt service, insurances, and utility and software increases are combined with funding requests to assess the College's initial budget position. Strategic investments, which may include funding for new programs or increases in critical faculty and staff, are then prioritized by the Executive Budget Committee and either included, declined, or delayed in the resulting budget. The budget process also allocates contingency funds to ensure ongoing operations and the ability to make mid-year funding decisions.

In 2012, NSHE approved [a new funding formula](#) based on semester completions. As a result, state appropriations for NSC in the next biennium will reach an all-time high, increasing more than 30% over current funding. Given significant and sustained enrollment growth, the College expects to receive continued increases in state appropriations.

Tuition and fees revenues also have increased. Over the past four years, the Board of Regents approved annual increases of 3.5%, 2.5%, 2.5%, and 2.5%, and recently approved a 4% increase in tuition and fee rates for each of the next two years. The new Predictable Pricing Program will increase tuition and registration fees based upon the Higher Education Price Index (HEPI) in the future.

As part of the biennial legislative budgeting process, the Board of Regents also proposes funding for system-wide initiatives and new capital projects.

## NEW CAMPUS INFRASTRUCTURE

In June 2019, Nevada Governor Steve Sisolak approved \$55.9 million to construct a new 65,000 ft<sup>2</sup> Education Building; construction will begin by the end of 2019, and the completed building will house the School of Education, classrooms, and a Speech Pathology Lab. Governor Sisolak also approved \$70.7 million for a 70,000 ft<sup>2</sup> health sciences building on the College of Southern Nevada's Henderson campus for joint use by CSN and NSC. NSC will use roughly 25% of the building, which will include a clinical nursing simulation lab.



## 2.F.2 Resource planning and development include realistic budgeting, enrollment management, and responsible projections of grants, donations, and other non-tuition revenue sources.

The core sources of funding for Nevada State College are 1) a legislatively-approved funding formula for higher education, 2) registration fees and tuition, and 3) course and special student fees. The College diligently tracks trends in enrollments that impact state appropriations, tuition, and fees and uses conservative projections for enrollment growth and corresponding revenue. The College's resource planning is a data-driven collaboration supported by an Institutional Research Office capable of creating, interpreting, and delivering complex data analyses.

State appropriations for each biennium are allocated through a funding formula based on the number of student credit hours completed each term. Each credit hour is adjusted according to weighting levels assigned to each discipline. The resulting Weighted Student Credit Hours (WSCH) are funded at an established rate. The "count year" for the formula is the year completed immediately prior to the legislative session and applies to both years of the biennium. This formula rewards growing institutions that retain students throughout the term. However, funding may lag two to three years behind growing enrollment. Nevada State College is currently one of the fastest-growing institutions in the nation, experiencing an 8% increase in WSCH for the first two biennia of the new formula and a 24% increase in WSCH during the 2018 count year, which will fund the 2019–2021 biennium.

The College's enrollment growth also translates into increases in student tuition, registration fees, and course and special student fees. The Board of Regents also proactively adjusts tuition and fee rates. All of these factors are considered fully as the College plans to allocate resources.

The College has been effective in supplementing core revenues with institutional grants. In 2015, NSC received a TRiO-SSS grant of \$1.1 million over five years. And in 2017, the College became the first institution in the state to receive a Title V Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) award. This \$2.7 million, five-year grant supports a program to increase the number of Latinx students pursuing Education degrees. Other current grants include a \$650,000 NSF S-STEM MARCOS grant aimed at students in the natural and life sciences, a \$440,000 National Institutes of Health INBRE grant that supports undergraduate research, and a \$200,000 Department of Education CCAMPIS grant that covers the cost of childcare for the children of NSC students. The Nevada State College Foundation also pursues strategic gifts for scholarships, new programs, operations, and infrastructure.

The College has policies and procedures to ensure payment of student accounts. When accounts become delinquent (usually as a result of Return to Title IV calculations or default on payment plans), the College takes into account the success rate and timing of collections. The College also works with the NSC Foundation to accurately assess the reasonableness of pledges and funds.

### **2.F.3 The institution clearly defines and follows its policies, guidelines, and processes for financial planning and budget development that include appropriate opportunities for participation by its constituencies.**

The College follows an open and collaborative budget and planning process by involving the budget managers of all units and using an Executive Budget Committee (EBC) as a governing body. The Committee serves as an advisory and recommending body to the President on matters pertaining to the institutional operating budget. It is chaired by the Provost and Senior Vice President of Finance and Business Operations and includes representatives from the President's Office, Deans Council, Faculty Senate, Nevada State Student Alliance, administrative faculty, Classified Employee Council, and five ex-officio members. The EBC helps develop and oversee budget policies and procedures and ensures that financial resources are allocated in a manner that supports programs and services consistent with the institution's vision, goals, and core themes. The Committee participates in institutional budget hearings and meetings related to the development of annual and biennial budgets,



the internal allocation and/or reallocation of funds, and any mandated budget reductions.

The budget planning process for each fiscal year begins the previous fall. Collaborating with the President's Executive Leadership Team, the Senior Vice President of Finance and Business Operations assesses the current and projected future financial environment and establishes reasonable financial assumptions to guide the budgeting process. A budgeting calendar is developed with key deadlines for various steps. A detailed presentation of financial assumptions and deadlines is made to all budget managers to provide a shared direction and ensure that everyone understands the overall process and timeline.

**2.F.4 The institution ensures timely and accurate financial information through its use of an appropriate accounting system that follows generally accepted accounting principles and through its reliance on an effective system of internal controls.**

Nevada State College follows generally accepted accounting principles. All expenditures and income (regardless of source), including the administration of scholarships, grants-in-aid, and student employment, are controlled by the College and included in regular planning, budgeting, accounting, and auditing procedures. Financial statements are audited annually by a qualified external auditor. Nevada State frequently uses the [NSHE internal audit team](#) to review the activities and internal controls of College units, ensuring adherence to documented policies and procedures as well as current laws and regulations.

As part of the Board of Regents Efficiency and Effectiveness Initiative, the Board tasked all NSHE institutions with updating the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system to standardize business processes. As a result, in 2017 NSHE implemented Workday. Workday provides a wide array of financial

reporting that is fully integrated with human resources and student financial data. The system contains a robust security solution based on assigned roles and role management, resulting in appropriate internal controls and adequate segregation of duties. This ensures proper access to data and facilitates effective and efficient workflow for online business processes. As needed, the system may be modified to comply with changes in cost accounting standards or reporting standards from the [Governmental Accounting Standards Board](#) (GASB).



**2.F.5 Capital budgets reflect the institution's mission and core theme objectives and relate to its plans for physical facilities and acquisition of equipment. Long-range capital plans support the institution's mission and goals and reflect projections of the total cost of ownership, equipment, furnishing, and operation of new or renovated facilities. Debt for capital outlay purposes is periodically reviewed, carefully controlled, and justified, so as not to create an unreasonable drain on resources available for educational purposes.**

Nevada State College is committed to providing high-quality, affordable learning opportunities. Striking a balance between campus investment and affordability, the College's annual budgeting process involves full vetting and prioritization of instructional and student support capital assets and campus improvement projects. Requests for capital initiatives contain the full estimated cost of the project (e.g., demolition, construction, furniture, fixtures, equipment) as well as an assessment of funds required for ongoing maintenance. Capital budgets are focused on supporting the learning environment and infrastructure needed for student access and success. Examples of recently approved capital items include renovated spaces, nursing simulation labs, smart classroom technologies, energy-efficient HVAC systems, and improved fire safety systems. The College allocates funds to a capital improvement account to ensure that projects are not funded from resources required for instruction.

Long-range planning includes a [campus master plan](#), which is updated every 10 years as required by the Regents, and strategies to fund the various segments of the plan. In 2015, NSC constructed the Nursing, Science and Education building and Rogers Student Center; both directly support student access and success. These buildings were self-financed via a lease-purchase arrangement. The lease-purchase debt is financed primarily by reallocated funds that were previously used to lease off-campus properties replaced by the new buildings, as well as a dedicated student fee. The financing plan was approved at various stages by the Board of Regents and both the Interim Finance Committee and the Board of Examiners of the State of Nevada. Planning for any debt issuance is performed with the assistance of a financial advisor, who also helps monitor debt and recommends strategies for improved cost of capital.



**2.F.6 The institution defines the financial relationship between its general operations and its auxiliary enterprises, including any use of general operations funds to support auxiliary enterprises or the use of funds from auxiliary services to support general operations.**

Nevada State College effectively employs governmental fund accounting principles and a well-designed accounting system to segregate general fund activities from auxiliary enterprises. The College has few auxiliary enterprises; the largest are the [bookstore](#) and food services. Both have been outsourced to third-party contractors. The Nevada State Student Alliance (student government) and student clubs are also accounted for in the auxiliary fund, as they are generally self-supporting and intended to break even over time. Surpluses from auxiliary activities are used to cover shortfalls among other auxiliary activities. Occasionally, particularly in areas such as photocopy services, a transfer from general funds is necessary until revised rates can be implemented to cover the full cost of operations. Any inter-fund transfers, which are allowed under [NSHE Handbook 4.9](#), are appropriately documented, as are decisions and sustainability analyses regarding such transfers.

**2.F.7 For each year of operation, the institution undergoes an annual external financial audit by professionally qualified personnel in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards. The audit is to be completed no later than nine months after the end of the fiscal year. Results from the audit, including findings and management letter recommendations, are considered annually in an appropriate and comprehensive manner by the administration and the governing board.**

Nevada State College's financial audit is coordinated by NSHE, which compiles the System's annual financial reports based upon reports submitted by each member institution. The annual audit is conducted by an independent, external audit firm. NSC is subject to both interim and post-close field audits. The College must respond to any reportable conditions or recommendations made by external auditors. All findings and recommendations are communicated to NSC's administration and reported to NSHE in a timely and consistent format.

NSHE publishes annual audit reports and audit findings with institutional responses. All audit reports are reviewed and approved by the Board of Regents [Audit, Compliance, and Title IX Committee](#) pursuant to [NSHE Handbook 1.6.3.a](#). Upon recommendation by the Audit, Compliance, and Title IX Committee, the full Board of Regents approves audit reports and directs the correction of deficiencies in management practices, if any. NSC's Senior Vice President of Finance and Business Operations represents the College at Audit, Compliance, and Title IX Committee meetings.

**2.F.8 All institutional fundraising activities are conducted in a professional and ethical manner and comply with governmental requirements. If the institution has a relationship with a fundraising organization that bears its name and whose major purpose is to raise funds to support its mission, the institution has a written agreement that clearly defines its relationship with that organization.**



The Associate Vice President for Institutional Advancement, who reports to the President, coordinates fundraising activities at Nevada State College. These fundraising activities occur through the NSC Foundation.

### Nevada State College Foundation

The Nevada State College Foundation is a component unit, nonprofit 501(c)(3) corporation with the sole purpose of supporting the mission and goals of the College. The Foundation's primary focus is managing funds held for the College and enabling advancement opportunities that promote the success of the institution and its students. [NSHE Handbook 4.10.10](#) clearly defines the relationship between NSC and the NSC Foundation.

[Nevada Revised Statute 396.405](#) and the Board of Regents authorized the establishment of the Foundation; the Board of Regents serves as its primary governing board. The Foundation is required to comply with NSHE financial accounting and management policies, state law, and the Internal Revenue Code. The Foundation and its financial records are audited annually by a fully certified and accredited accounting firm, and those [audits](#) are submitted to the Board of Regents.

The Foundation Board is composed of up to 30 members, emeritus members, and the college President, who serves as an ex-officio member. Oversight of ethical procedures and operations rests with the full Foundation Board and its three standing committees: the Executive Committee, the Committee on Trusteeship, and the Finance & Audit Committee. The standing committees of the Foundation Board develop and oversee strategic fundraising plans and initiatives and develop appropriate policies governing ethical operations, audits, investments, donor recognition, and stewardship.



The Foundation's [Articles of Incorporation](#) and [bylaws](#) require the Foundation to operate in a professional and ethical manner complying with federal IRS regulations, Nevada statutes and regulations, and Sarbanes-Oxley Act (SOA) regulations. The Foundation also abides by the [Statement of Ethics](#) and the [Donor Bill of Rights](#) created by the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE), Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP), and the Association for Healthcare Philanthropy (AHP).



## \$26.9 million

Raised by the NSC Foundation as of Fall 2018 in support of the educational mission of the College

*The College campus currently includes:*

---

23

instructional classrooms

---

5

computer labs

---

8

science labs

---

3

specialized spaces dedicated to visual media and art courses

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## 2.G PHYSICAL & TECHNOLOGICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

**2.G.1 Consistent with its mission, core themes, and characteristics, the institution creates and maintains physical facilities that are accessible, safe, secure, and sufficient in quantity and quality to ensure healthful learning and working environments that support the institution’s mission, programs, and services.**

### Physical Facilities

Nevada State College’s main campus consists of 512 acres at the southeastern edge of the Las Vegas Valley. With the construction of the Rogers Student Center and Nursing, Science, and Education (NSE) building, both of which opened in Fall 2015, the campus was able to consolidate instruction, student affairs, and administration on the main campus and no longer houses any services in the former downtown Henderson location.





## THE COLLEGE OPERATES A TOTAL OF 233,396 FT<sup>2</sup> OF INSTITUTIONAL SPACE:

- **The Liberal Arts and Sciences building** (42,587 ft<sup>2</sup>) is home to the School of Liberal Arts and Sciences. It provides classroom space, including numerous biology and chemistry labs. The Writing Center and the Nepantla program are also located in this building.
- **The Nursing, Science, and Education building** (63,305 ft<sup>2</sup>) houses the School of Nursing, specialized classrooms for the School of Education, two cadaver labs, the finance lab, instructional computer labs, classrooms, an auditorium used for campus events, and a rooftop observation space with telescopes.
- **The leased Dawson building** (34,120 ft<sup>2</sup>) is used for classroom and office space (including instructional space appropriate for art and visual media courses) and houses the mental health counseling office. The School of Education is currently located in Dawson, pending construction of a dedicated Education building.
- **The James E. and Beverly Rogers Student Center** (61,793 ft<sup>2</sup>) houses numerous units, including the campus café, bookstore, student government, the Disability Resource Center, the Career Success Center, the Library, production space and equipment storage for the Visual Media program, an open computer lab for students' use, a veterans' lounge, the Academic Success Center, Information Technology staff, the Office of the President, the Office of the Provost, and units that report to the Provost or President (such as Marketing and Events). The building has a large ballroom used for campus events such as Convocation; it may be [rented by community groups as well](#). The central plant is adjacent to the RSC building. It currently provides service to the Nursing, Science, and Education Building and the Rogers Student Center and has sufficient capacity to service additional buildings as they are constructed.
- **The Raker Student Success Building** (20,566 ft<sup>2</sup>), which was purchased and fully renovated in 2018, is a one-stop shop for a variety of student services. This includes Financial Aid, the Academic Advising Center, the Registrar, the Cashier's Office, Admissions & Recruiting, and a placement testing center.
- Through an MOU, the College has 11,025 ft<sup>2</sup> of space at the Shadow Lane health sciences facility operated by NSHE. The Shadow Lane campus is home to the Simulation and Clinical Skills Center, a state-of-the-art instructional center for nursing, medical, and other health-related programs.





## Adequacy of Physical Facilities

While NSC has expanded its physical facilities significantly during this accreditation cycle, securing sufficient space continues to be a challenge, given the College's rapid growth. Current facilities are marginally adequate to meet all current demands for instructional space, employee offices, and other uses. Though the College's facilities are in excellent condition and include state-of-the-art classrooms, the College is in need of additional space for classrooms, science labs, undergraduate research (including equipment and materials storage), employee offices, expanded student affairs units, and open spaces for studying and student activity. The College makes every effort to use existing space wisely, including developing a campus-wide standard schedule for courses adopted in 2018 to assign classroom space more efficiently, but nevertheless is exploring ways to expand our physical facilities.

## Safety, Accessibility, and Risk Management

Despite space constraints, NSC continues to provide the quality, accessibility, and safety necessary to support academic programs and support services. College facilities comply with ADA requirements and staff routinely measure and inspect equipment and accommodation devices to ensure they function properly. Nevada State has an established Safety Committee that includes representation from risk management, facilities management, police services, administration, Faculty Senate, and lab managers. The committee works to identify areas for improving campus safety.

NSC is highly concerned about creating and maintaining safe and accessible facilities. The College works closely with UNLV Risk Management Services (RMS) and closely follows their established standards. RMS regularly inspects all NSC facilities and notifies administrators of any deficiencies associated with occupational safety and health as well as fire and life safety. NSC quickly addresses any concerns.

The College has entered into a public-private partnership to construct its first residence halls, which are anticipated to open in Fall 2020. The housing project will initially serve 342 occupants.

In June 2019, Governor Sisolak approved \$55.9 million to fund construction of an Education Building (approx. 65,000 ft<sup>2</sup>) after the College secured donations, pledges, and other funds to meet the \$6 million required match. The School of Education will be housed in the new building, providing critical space for new and expanding programs. In addition, the Education Building will be home to an early childhood education lab and a speech pathology clinic.

Governor Sisolak also approved \$70.7 million for a health sciences building on the Henderson campus of the College of Southern Nevada, located roughly four miles from NSC. Nevada State College will use approximately 25% of the space for our nursing program, providing access to a clinical simulation lab that is much closer to campus than the Shadow Lane facility currently in use.

NSC utilizes UNLV Police Services for campus safety. The POST-certified officers practice community policing and ensure adequate law enforcement to protect the students, employees, and the greater campus community. Police services are enhanced by video surveillance. NSC uses [e2Campus](#) to provide text alerts and audio broadcasting as necessary to alert the campus community of emergency conditions. The College has a fully-functioning mobile app that includes an instant connection to police dispatch. Emergency phone towers in the parking lots also provide immediate contact with police services.

To secure the campus, NSC uses electronic access controls on all exterior and classroom spaces. Access is provided by the Office of Information & Technology Services based on each employee's role and office location. Any space can be immediately locked down in an emergency situation.

NSC is partnering with the UNLV Police Services Emergency Manager to refine its Emergency Operations Plan, as described in detail in Section 3.A.5.

### **2.G.2 The institution adopts, publishes, reviews regularly, and adheres to policies and procedures regarding the safe use, storage, and disposal of hazardous or toxic materials.**

UNLV's Risk Management and Safety Department supports the handling of hazardous or toxic materials for NSC. UNLV Risk Management and Safety conducts regular training and disseminates technical bulletins and literature to NCS faculty, staff, and students who work with hazardous or toxic materials. UNLV Risk Management and Safety uses a comprehensive chemical inventory management and reporting application, [CHIMERA](#), to view inventory data, material data safety sheets, and hazards. All NSC lab managers and the Director of Maintenance are trained to use CHIMERA for managing chemicals and hazardous materials.

NSC has secured locations for, and clearly marks, biohazard containers. The College contracts with an approved, licensed biohazard collection facility to remove hazardous waste. NSC's Safety Committee includes a representative from UNLV Risk Management and Safety. The committee meets regularly to draft, publish, and review [applicable policies](#) and procedures and best ways to communicate them.

### **2.G.3 The institution develops, implements, and reviews regularly a master plan for its physical development that is consistent with its mission, core themes, and long-range educational and financial plans.**

NSC's Campus Master Plan was created with input from faculty, staff, students, and stakeholders from the local community and the City of Henderson. The College has more than 512 acres of developable land. Three additional acres adjacent to campus were recently purchased and the 20,000 ft<sup>2</sup> building on that property was renovated to serve as a one-stop shop housing Recruitment, Admissions, Advising, the Registrar, Financial Aid, and the Bursar's Office in one facility.

The College prioritizes new facilities based on its mission and needs. The College requested a new education building to help the School of Education grow into the largest producer of K-12 educators in the state. This building received planning funds in the 2017 legislative session and funding for full construction was approved by the legislature and governor in summer 2019. The building will open for the Fall 2021 semester. In addition to much-needed office and classroom space, the Education building will contain a speech pathology clinic and an early childhood education lab, both of which address immediate and growing needs among our students and the local community. The College also is in partnership with a private developer to build and operate the campus's first student housing project, scheduled to open in Fall 2020.

The College regularly refers to the master plan when considering where to locate new facilities and how to maintain campus design standards. While the master plan is the primary basis for the campus build-out, it is not intended to be an exact roadmap. The phenomenal growth of the College has necessitated slight variances to the plan. For example, until a water tank is built on campus, new construction must be located in areas served by sufficient water pressure, which has led to some changes to expected building locations. A thorough review and update of the Campus Master Plan has been identified as an important initiative for the 2020–2025 Academic Strategic Plan.

**2.G.4 Equipment is sufficient in quantity and quality and managed appropriately to support institutional functions and fulfillment of the institution’s mission, accomplishment of core theme objectives, and achievement of goals or intended outcomes of its programs and services.**

Nevada State College strives to provide faculty, staff, and students with access to relevant, up-to-date, and well-maintained equipment that supports our mission and promotes the achievement of our core themes and programmatic objectives.

**Classroom Equipment**

Every classroom at Nevada State College is configured as a Smart Classroom with instructor workstations, projection systems, wireless connectivity, document cameras, and interactive touch devices that permit instructors to write digitally on a board or computer monitor. Over 40% of classrooms have lecture capture systems that allow instructors to digitally capture lectures, demonstrations, and clinical simulations.

**Student Computing Equipment**

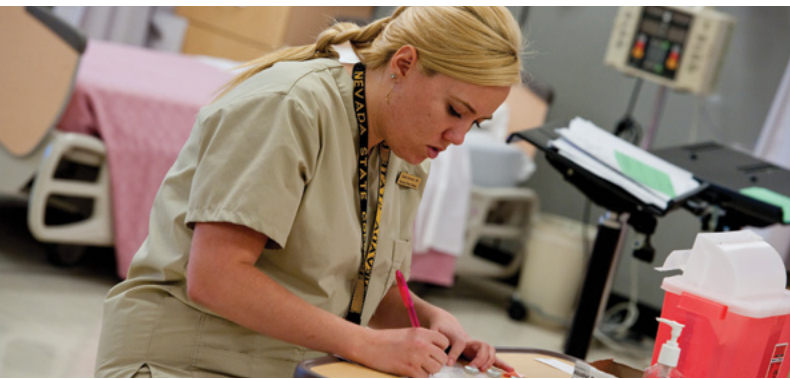
The Office of Information & Technology Services (ITS) maintains and supports computer labs, general-use workstations, and kiosks. NSC provides approximately 335 student workstations that offer access to the internet, printing, Microsoft Office, and specialized software such as SPSS and Adobe Creative Suite. Additional equipment is available for checkout at the library, including Chromebooks, iPads, Kindle readers, and video cameras.

**Faculty and Staff Computing Equipment**

Each full-time employee is provided with at least one desktop workstation or laptop, a telephone, and access to resources such as the internet, network file storage, printing, Microsoft Office, and, as needed, specialized software such as Camtasia, SPSS, or



the Adobe Creative Suite. Laptops, tablets, digital cameras, video cameras, and projectors are available for checkout. All campus workstations, including those in open computer labs and spaces, are available for use by NSC faculty and staff members, and part-time instructor workstations are housed in each of NSC's three schools.



### Laboratory and Research Equipment

Nevada State College provides laboratory equipment that makes learning relevant to current industrial standards as well as future trends. Biology lab spaces are outfitted with equipment such as table-top refrigerated centrifuges, heated incubators, a deionized water station, and multiple classroom sets of high-end Motic digital microscopes with the capability to function with cameras. The College has two fluorescent microscopes, including one compound and one inverted microscope. Chemistry labs have eight dual-sided fume hoods with workstations that allow 32 students at a time to work safely. For lab preparation, two autoclaves, a large industrial dishwasher, two -80°C freezers, three -20°C freezers, and three 4°C refrigerators are available.

NSC has invested in state-of-the-art pieces of equipment that are complementary to, but do not overlap with, other equipment in the region. NSC stands apart from the vast majority of comprehensive baccalaureate institutions by

providing undergraduate students with hands-on training in the use of this equipment. For example, NSC has four Beckman Coulter PA800 capillary electrophoresis machines used by all modern pharmaceutical companies. Additionally, the College owns an Amnis imaging flow cytometer that performs high-throughput cellular microscopy and standard flow cytometric spectral analysis of cells, as well as a high-capacity Sorval Legend XTR centrifuge capable of spinning flow cytometry tubes. Molecular research uses both a Nanodrop spectrophotometer and a Qubit system for nucleic acid quantification, as well as multiple centrifuges, gel-rigs, and transilluminators for nucleic acid extraction, amplification, and visualization, including a LiCor imaging system. A Bio-Rad CFX96 Real-time System is available for quantitative PCR reactions. A COY anaerobic chamber is used for culturing and measurements taken under anoxic conditions. Similar investments have been made for chemistry; NSC owns powerful high-performance liquid chromatography (HPLC) and gas chromatography (GC) instrumentation, a mass-spectrometer, ultraviolet-visible (UV-Vis) spectrophotometers, a Horiba FluoroMax 4 scanning fluorometer, an infrared (IR) spectrophotometer, and a PicoSpin nuclear magnet resonance (NMR). The College maintains two biological biosafety hoods and has a designated BSL2 laboratory.

Field instrumentation includes a YSI sondes, YSI Pro ODO meter, HACH HQ11D conductivity/pH probes, HACH DR1900 field spectrophotometer, and a Marsh McBirney Flo-Mate 2000. Field collection methods include 2 Malaise traps, a field-spotting scope, 30 pairs of binoculars, a soil auger, a soil hydrometer, a portable weather station, soil temperature probes, and handheld GPS devices. Two portable heat sensors and bat-call detection devices are used with phone apps for data collection. Faculty also have access through collaboration with the Desert Research Institute to a FieldSpec® 3 Spectroradiometer for field measurements of object spectra.



## Visual Media Equipment

Students in the Visual Media program have access to computers and gear for filmmaking, animation, and photography. About 20 DSLR cameras and 10 DMC cameras are available for checkout, in addition to video and photographic tripods, cinema and softbox lighting kits, and related implements, including C-stands, stingers, reflectors, flags, and sandbags. Cameras come with two kit lenses each, and intermediate and advanced students can check out one of two prime cine lens kits.

Audio equipment includes four kits, each with one or two shotgun microphones, mounts, digital recorders, headphones, and boom poles; six additional recorders are available as well. Windscreen blimps and hairy covers are available for outdoor shooting. Specialty equipment includes a professional modular cinema camera with full support system, a doorway dolly, a stabilization rig, two sliders, and a jib.

Dedicated rooms house specialized equipment. The visual media computer lab includes 20 student stations and an instructor station, all equipped with software for audio, video, and effects production, image editing, and animation. The black-box studio includes a white cyclorama wall, LED grid lighting, and a 25-inch monitor; the control room has two

high-end editing computers, a 55-inch stereoscopic display, a professional audio monitoring system, a mixer, and an instrument interface. The control room connects to an acoustically-treated sound booth with a studio microphone and Foley boxes. The program also features three small suites: the music composition suite includes a computer with MIDI keyboard and pad array, monitor speakers, instrument interface, and music composition software; the animation suite includes a copy stand with mounted camera, a computer, and stop-motion animation software for under-camera animation; and the analog editing suite features a Steenbeck flatbed editor for editing film and audio. A converted classroom is used as a set; it is equipped with power tools, carpentry equipment, and prop-making tools for set- and prop-building.

## Equipment Management

Equipment is maintained in proper operating condition, is inventoried and controlled, and is replaced or upgraded as needed. Appropriate maintenance agreements are in place, and a system-wide effort is currently underway to enhance this coverage at a more reasonable cost to each NSHE institution. Other outsourcing agreements cover maintenance and service on equipment such as chilling stations, electrical distribution stations, mechanical distribution stations, and related

areas. NSC is compliant with the Board of Regents equipment inventory procedure, as outlined in the NSHE Procedures and Guidelines Manual ([Chapter 1, Section 2.9](#)), with no findings in two audits by the Nevada System of Higher Education.

Inventory control is maintained on an ongoing basis. Information & Technology Services provides asset management for all technology-related equipment while the Office of Facilities Management and Planning provides asset management for all other tracked items. Both offices work with the Office of the Controller to verify and track fixed assets annually. The [State Administrative Manual \(SAM\) section 1544](#) requires public institutions to inventory equipment valued at \$5,000 or more, with the exception of items consumed in use and permanent fixtures. The [NSHE Policies & Procedures Manual 1.2.9](#) further requires that all computers and firearms must be inventoried, regardless of value. These items are tracked in Workday. Accounting Services and the Office of ITS collaborate to maintain equipment inventory records.

**2.G.5 Consistent with its mission, core themes, and characteristics, the institution has appropriate and adequate technology systems and infrastructure to support its management and operational functions, academic programs, and support services, wherever offered and however delivered.**

The Office of Information & Technology Services (ITS) provides the computing, telecommunication, network, and server infrastructure necessary for teaching, learning, and scholarly achievement, as well as college administrative and support functions. Most importantly, our technology systems and infrastructure support our ability to offer “exceptional” and “innovative” learning experiences to a population of students who often face resource and logistical constraints in pursuing a baccalaureate degree. The infrastructure, which includes equipment and systems located on campus

as well as externally-hosted solutions, generally is an invisible component of the academic experience, but is integral to the provision of essential capabilities, including electronic communication, technology support services, and the operation of the learning management system. Each component of this infrastructure is maintained and upgraded to keep pace with changing technological needs and requirements.

ITS maintains a wide area network in all buildings across the main campus. The internal core network runs at 10Gb/s with 1Gb/s connectivity to end devices. In addition to the wired network, both a guest and secured wireless connection is available at all facilities to provide connectivity for mobile devices. Internet connectivity for the campus is provided by the Nevada System of Higher Education’s statewide network, NevadaNet. NSC’s primary internet connection runs at 1Gb/s with plans to upgrade to 10Gb/s in the near future.

Campus telecommunications utilize voice over IP (VoIP) technology that minimizes wiring infrastructure needs and allows easy expansion to additional sites in the future. Video conferencing is available campus-wide through the use of dedicated Polycom collaboration systems and through online conferencing tools such as BlueJeans, Skype for Business, and Zoom.

NSC’s data center infrastructure consists of three virtual server clusters running on Nutanix and VMWare vSphere. This infrastructure supports over 70 virtual machines running on 12 physical hosts with over 100 terabytes of disk storage. Server infrastructure equipment is configured with multiple layers of redundancy and is housed between two campus data centers.

NSC takes a cloud-first approach in enterprise applications in order to reduce staffing needs and eliminate the costs for acquiring, maintaining, and upgrading hardware and software.

**Applications provided through hosted/cloud-based solutions include:**

- Analytics Platform
- Appointment Scheduling
- Campus Portal
- Career Services System
- Catalog Management
- Classroom and Event Scheduling
- Course Evaluation System
- Customer Relationship Management
- Data Backup
- DNS Services
- Document Management
- E-mail
- Emergency Notification System
- ERP System (Student, Finance, and Human Resources)
- Learning Management System
- Lecture Capture and Video Streaming Services
- Mobile Application
- Online Conferencing and Collaboration
- Online Tutoring Services
- Remote Access Services
- Survey Platform
- Text Messaging System
- Website and Content Management



Through a single sign-on online campus portal, NSC's enterprise applications are accessible 24/7 from anywhere in the world. This provides faculty, staff, and students with access to electronic resources to support management and operational functions, academic programs, and support services, wherever offered and however delivered.

**2.G.6 The institution provides appropriate instruction and support for faculty, staff, students, and administrators in the effective use of technology and technology systems related to its programs, services, and institutional operations.**

Nevada State College offers its faculty, staff, and students a number of accessible, high-quality resources to support the effective use of campus technology.

**Centralized Helpdesk**

Information & Technology Services maintains a centralized helpdesk that provides primary assistance for all supported applications, hardware, software, and technology systems. Support is provided via phone, online, by email, or in-person. While in-house technology support is available during regular business hours, NSC contracts with its learning management system vendor to offer 24/7 technical support for online courses and with another third-party vendor for general technology support.







## Instructional Support and Training

Nevada State College's Office of Instructional Technology has invested in the development of in-person training opportunities and online technology workshops and real-time instructional resources. The availability of in-person and online training ensures that faculty can receive the type of training that best fits their preferences and skills, and the web-accessible resources ensure that course design and development assistance is available wherever and whenever faculty need it. Instructional Technology staff offer 1-on-1 consultations on course development, instructional design strategies, assessment methods, course communication, online course management, and the use of media and live lecture materials.

With their first teaching assignment, all instructors are enrolled in NSC's WebCampus ASAP or WebCampus DIY orientation sites. These sites provide 24/7 access to animated demos, guides, manuals, tip sheets, and video tutorials for teaching technologies. In addition, instructors have access to online text and video guides, community forums, a feature request forum, and product release notes, all of which connect them to the larger national community of e-learning instructors and course designers. Instructors have access to bi-weekly in-person workshops that engage faculty in hands-on training using models developed by their colleagues. Instructors also receive access to development

sites where they can design and build assignments, assessments, graded discussions, course materials, and media (e.g., lecture videos).

## Student Support

Every admitted student is automatically enrolled in an online course called WebCampus Orientation. WebCampus Orientation links students to the Canvas Student Guide (a standard resource provided by the vendor) and covers such topics as attaching files to messages, communicating with instructors/peers, and keeping track of assignment deadlines. In addition, every course website contains a link to an online tutoring service, the NSC Library, and other academic resources.

### **2.G.7 Technological infrastructure planning provides opportunities for input from its technology support staff and constituencies who rely on technology for institutional operations, programs, and services.**

Nevada State College is committed to providing exceptional technology services that advance our mission and core themes, maximize our resources, and address the needs of constituencies who rely on technology for institutional operations, programs, and services. Technology planning includes feedback from those who use technology and from those who support and maintain it.

Faculty, staff, and students provide direct input into the planning and selection of technology infrastructure and services. The director and other members of Information & Technology Services meet regularly with campus schools, departments, and student organizations to identify issues, understand and discuss needs, and determine if new or existing technologies can positively impact goals or outcomes. ITS regularly evaluates the quality and adequacy of technology resources through [campus surveys](#) and [online feedback mechanisms](#) after service requests are completed.

In its infrastructure planning, ITS works to ensure that solutions are sustainable and can integrate seamlessly with existing systems. Members of ITS meet weekly to discuss feedback received from campus constituents, provide input, voice concerns, and develop solutions that are feasible to implement, manage, and support. The effectiveness and reception of these solutions often hinges on an open dialogue among campus constituents that culminates in consensus decision-making. The NSC Technology Advisory Committee (TAC), consisting of members from across campus, was formed to gather and review proposals related to campus-wide technology issues and initiatives; identify and advise upon policy, procedures, and standards regarding campus technologies; and provide a forum to discuss technology trends, requests, and related support services.



### **2.G.8 The institution develops, implements, and reviews regularly a technology update and replacement plan to ensure its technological infrastructure is adequate to support its operations, programs, and services.**

Nevada State College developed and implemented a technology update and replacement plan to ensure that our technological infrastructure is adequate to support institutional operations, programs, and services. There are three significant cycles of annual technology review that include planned equipment and infrastructure replacement:

- A student technology fee is allocated annually to support a 5-year replacement plan for all classroom, lab, and general-use student workstations. Though equipment may be replaced at any time, as dictated by need and available resources, the replacement plan ensures that student workstations are never more than 5 years old. The technology fee also supports upgrades to classroom audio/visual systems, software, and infrastructure.
- Funds are allocated annually to support a 5-year replacement plan for all faculty and staff workstations. Peripherals and software are upgraded on an as-needed basis and are funded by each school or department.
- Data center, core network, and telecommunication infrastructure is refreshed on a 10-year replacement cycle. Unless the replaced equipment is no longer supported, cannot be covered under a maintenance agreement, is not economically feasible to maintain, or is no longer functioning, it is then used for less critical operations such as backup or development environments.





# CHAPTER THREE

# 3 PLANNING & IMPLEMENTATION

## 3.A INSTITUTIONAL PLANNING

**3.A.1 The institution engages in ongoing, purposeful, systematic, integrated, and comprehensive planning that leads to fulfillment of its mission. Its plans are implemented and made available to appropriate constituencies.**

**3.A.2 The institution’s comprehensive planning process is broad-based and offers opportunities for input by appropriate constituencies.**

Institutional strategic planning is comprehensive, purposeful, and conducted largely by our faculty, staff, and academic leadership, albeit with input from external stakeholders and expert consultants (as needed). Board of Regents policy also integrates our strategic planning with the structure and goals of the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE). The System routinely requires the College to submit [Academic Planning Reports](#) in an effort to ensure that, collectively, the state institutions are minimizing redundancy and maximizing student opportunities in accordance with their missions. NSHE Handbook [14.3.2](#) also notes that institutional strategic plans “shall be presented for consideration to the Board of Regents at least every seven years and will cover a planning period of up to seven years” (p. 3).

The internal process of institutional planning at Nevada State College is overseen by the Offices of the President and the Provost/Executive Vice President, in collaboration with the Faculty Senate and units and programs across campus. In this

section we describe both the 2015–2020 Academic Strategic plan, which followed from the Year One Accreditation Report, and the developing 2020–2025 Institutional Strategic Plan. These plans reflect our adaptation to different institutional circumstances, but are united by: 1) an emphasis on the success of our particular student population, which is of paramount importance; 2) the effort to merge innovation with evidence-based practices and rigorous assessment; and 3) a commitment to integrating the work of academic and student affairs.

### 2015–2020 Academic Strategic Plan

The [2015–2020 Academic Strategic Plan](#) was developed under the guidance of President Bart Patterson and Provost Erika Beck. A campus-level Academic Strategic Planning Committee, comprised of representatives from across campus, was selected to generate ideas, provide feedback, and serve as liaisons with other campus constituents. As part of the planning process, the committee and academic leaders solicited ideas from College employees and external stakeholders (e.g., community members; the College Foundation Board) and apprised them of progress on the core planning document. The committee identified areas where capacity needed to expand, as well as potential new programs and services that fit with our mission. When evaluating possible new academic programs, committee members and administrators reviewed relevant data, including employment projections, student enrollment data, and customized market research analyses.

The resulting plan was anchored by three overarching strategic goals: Opportunity, Enrichment, and Impact. As described more fully in Sections 3.B.1 and 3.B.2, each of these strategic goals mapped onto a corresponding core theme from our Year One Self-Evaluation Report.

As noted in the 2015–2020 plan, each strategic goal is supported by measurable initiatives that serve as “a focused, evidence-based, and concise outline of the goals, core themes, and principles that will guide us in the decision-making process as the College grows” (p. 1). Achievement of the initiatives serves as a specific accomplishment related to each strategic goal and, ultimately, to the accomplishment of core theme objectives and the fulfillment of our mission (as described in Section 3.B). The plan was formally presented to the Board of Regents at the December 2014 meeting, and has been made available to the campus in physical and electronic forms.

Oversight and review of the strategic plan resides with the Office of the Provost. Units from across campus developed Action Plans that specified the initiatives, services, programs, and performance metrics they would implement in the service of the institutional strategic plan. Implementation of the plan is still underway, and ample work remains before some initiatives can be achieved. However, as you can see in the [strategic plan progress summary](#), the

College already has achieved many of the initiatives established in the 2015–2020 Strategic Plan despite significant leadership changes in the Office of the Provost and the challenges of addressing our recent, unprecedented enrollment growth. Perhaps most importantly, the implementation of the strategic plan has helped us achieve all-important increases in retention and graduation rates, and has facilitated the accomplishment of our core theme objectives.

### 2020–2025 Strategic Plan

During the 2018–19 academic year, the College began development of a new strategic plan, titled *Delivering on the Promise*. Provost Vickie Shields organized the process of developing the new plan, which serves as the primary academic planning document for the College through 2025. Ideally, this plan would have followed our October 2019 mission fulfillment visit, and thereby would have allowed the College to incorporate feedback from the NWCCU, but this would not have permitted sufficient time for us to solicit governing board approval for a comprehensive plan before the expiration of our existing plan in Fall 2020. However, the 2020–2025 plan will be a living document that, while providing a strong strategic vision and foundational goals to the campus, can be adapted to evolving circumstances—including accreditation feedback—in the pursuit of institutional success.



The [2020–2025 Strategic Plan](#) was developed through an open process that sought input from a wide array of campus constituencies. During the spring and summer of 2018, the Provost and administrative leaders (including representatives from Faculty Senate and student government) met with an external consultant to organize the process for developing a strategic plan. These planning sessions involved discussions about the purpose of a strategic plan, best practices for organizing a plan into initiatives and projects, and the identification of over-arching strategic themes that reflect the College’s mission and core themes.



## 2020–2025 STRATEGIC PLAN

### *Guiding Themes*

- Students
- Curriculum & Instruction
- Organizational Culture
- Growth & Capacity Building
- Community Engagement & Economic Development

The campus-wide Fall 2018 Convocation focused on strategic planning. The strategic planning process and its purpose were introduced to the campus community, and afternoon sessions allowed faculty and staff to give feedback and recommend initiatives and projects that contribute to the fulfillment of the goals attached to each strategic theme.

Provost Shields appointed committees for each guiding theme that included representatives from faculty, administration, staff, and students. The committees discussed the input from Convocation and scheduled additional feedback forums in the fall for faculty, staff, and students to suggest initiatives,

express questions and concerns, and otherwise contribute to the planning process. To ensure students had sufficient opportunities to provide input into the campus planning process, several sessions were scheduled only for students, and all sessions allowed for face-to-face feedback with a session facilitator as well as anonymous input via feedback forms. Each committee then drafted a plan for each strategic theme comprised of initiatives and the specific projects that support them, as well as recommended timelines for implementation and anticipated resource needs.

The Strategic Planning Council reviewed these drafts, identified missing elements, and furnished recommendations for additions or revisions. The Provost worked with key stakeholders to finalize the initiatives and projects to be included in the plan. The Strategic Plan Writing Group, led by the Vice Provost for Student Success, turned the finalized content into a coherent document for dissemination. The full Strategic Plan will be distributed to the campus community in August 2019 and will be presented to the Board of Regents for final approval at the September 2019 Regents meeting.

## Campus Master Plan

NSC's current [Campus Master Plan](#) was released in 2010. The Master Plan was developed to guide the physical build-out of campus infrastructure. NSC students, faculty, staff, and administrators had opportunities to provide input and to work with City of Henderson leaders, members of the community, local residents, and [BMS Design Group](#) (a consulting firm that specialized in campus/urban design) to provide a long-term plan for physical infrastructure. The planning process included campus and local community meetings that provided opportunities for constituents to offer feedback and express concerns. The intent of the planning process was “to ensure that the physical facilities of the campus match the academic mission of the institution.” The plan guides the growth of the College as we expand throughout the more than 500 acres of our physical campus.

The Campus Master Plan includes enrollment projections through Fall 2015, and actual enrollments approximated these projections. However, due to the lack of state funding resulting from the economic crisis from 2008 to 2012, the construction of buildings has lagged behind targets set in the plan. As a result, the College recognizes the need for an updated master plan to guide further development of the physical campus. This plan will complement the 2020–2025 Strategic Plan, particularly the guiding theme of Growth and Capacity Building, but will provide substantially more detail to appropriately inform the development of our infrastructure. In Spring 2019, NSC created a new position, Assistant Vice President of Campus Infrastructure, and made a successful hire in June 2019. This position is responsible for leading the planning process to develop a new Campus Master Plan based on the current state of the campus and realistic forecasts of future state funding for construction projects.

### **3.A.3 The institution's comprehensive planning process is informed by the collection of appropriately defined data that are analyzed and used to evaluate fulfillment of its mission.**

#### The Central Role of Data & Analysis

One of our foremost institutional values is to ensure that our planning and decision-making are informed by relevant data and analyses, and this commitment was a developmental cornerstone of our 2015–2020 and 2020–2025 strategic plans. Importantly, we rely on different types of data—including qualitative and quantitative metrics, as well as direct and indirect measures—in the belief that their complementary strengths provide optimal information about institutional progress and improvement. Likewise, the College relies on both internal data and externally-collected evidence—ranging from reports furnished by an independent research firm to national data from Complete College America—to help optimize institutional planning and decision-making. To this end, the 2015–2020 Strategic Plan notes that for each program under consideration, “the [strategic planning] committee gathered relevant data (including employment outlook information, student enrollment data, and student surveys) and carefully evaluated each program's potential for success in accordance with our mission” (p. 1). Further, the development of the plan and pursuit of established goals was guided by five overarching principles, one of which identified “a reliance on assessment and evidence to drive institutional improvement and innovation” (p. 2).

Similarly, our 2020–2025 plan is anchored by five guiding themes that evolved from “statewide goals established by NSHE [the Nevada System of Higher Education], our mission, core themes, and collective aspirations, and years of analysis and collected evidence that highlight the most important areas in which to invest our time and resources” (p. 6). Moreover, the plan notes that we aim to deliver on

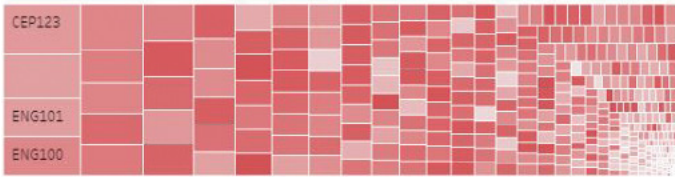


## Example Institutional Research Dashboard

Total Class Enrollment



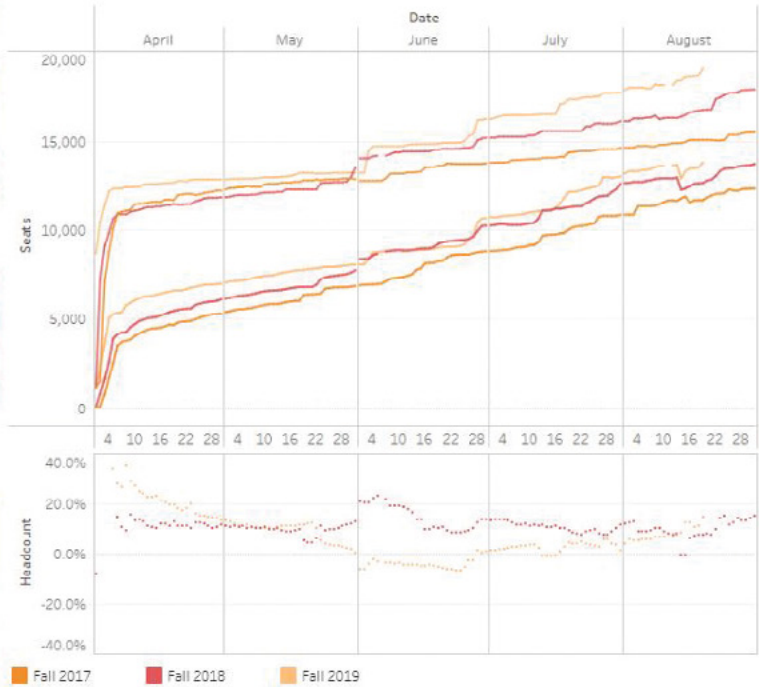
Enrollment/Capacity



Total Program Enrollment



Class Enrollment Trend



the promise of the College by infusing “rigorous assessment and evidence-based decision-making into every institutional endeavor, including our student support efforts, assessment processes, and various elements of the curriculum, leveraging the strength of data dashboards that unify disparate collections of data and make them accessible for internal and external use” (p. 15). Accordingly, much of what emerged in the 2020–2025 plan—from a project that improves degree-planning and progression, to an effort to revamp the Core Curriculum—was inspired by collected evidence and the rigorous evaluation of our work.

Ongoing assessment and data analysis also have helped us adapt key elements of our plans to best fulfill our mission as the institution grows and evolves (e.g., a larger investment in student life and student activities as the growth of “traditional” students exceeded our original forecasts). This commitment to informed decisions has existed since the early days of

the College, and it was punctuated by the economic recession, which coupled increased enrollments with declining state appropriations. Arguably, no other set of circumstances could have better crystallized the importance of merging innovation with evidence-based practices that, taken together, try to maximize the returns on our institutional investments. As NSC’s budget has improved, this approach continues to guide decisions regarding physical and human resources toward the achievement of positive student outcomes.



## Data Sources & Infrastructure

We have bolstered our ability to use evidence in institutional planning and evaluation through a host of initiatives that garner internal data and external evidence (e.g., findings in the latest literature). Qualitative data are provided in numerous forms, from long-standing sources such as the [National Survey of Student Engagement](#) and our student [evaluations of instruction](#), to more recently developed measures that include our [Climate Survey](#), which provides insight into the work environment and personnel considerations of our staff, as well as a [Student Life Survey](#) that examines an array of variables related to student outcomes.

The lynchpin for the collection and analysis of data is our Office of Institutional Research (OIR), which has established nationally-recognized [data dashboards](#) that permit access to virtually every piece of information collected by the College, including those related to enrollment and growth, student success metrics, and the utilization of student-oriented resources. Further, all of these data are updated nightly, are available to a host of end users, and can be disaggregated according to mission-specific variables such as ethnicity, Pell eligibility, gender, and first-generation status. To increase the likelihood of dashboard utilization by campus stakeholders, the Director of Institutional Research formed an advisory committee that met regularly and provided feedback on how to make the dashboards more user-friendly.

In 2016 the College established a senior analyst position that is tasked with advanced analyses that answer key questions and often try to unearth causal patterns from correlational data, and thereby better direct our resource investments toward the factors that are mostly likely to increase student success. Ultimately, these dashboards and subsequent institutional research analyses help inform campus decisions and actions in areas ranging from our scholarship structure, to

gateway course redesign, to retention-based student outreach. Specific examples are detailed in Sections 4.A.4 and 4.A.5 of this report.

Outcomes assessment serves as another source of data that informs planning. Both academic programs and student services units complete annual outcomes assessments (discussed in detail in Section 4.A.2). Assessment reports include recommendations based on the assessment results, and assessment chairs for each program or unit lead efforts to implement concrete changes based on those recommendations. These recommendations can then be used by academic programs and units when developing budget requests for new positions or other strategic initiatives.

Finally, the institution remains closely attuned to relevant external sources of evidence. In recent years well-validated findings from organizations such as the Gardner Institute, Complete College America, and AACSB have informed campus-wide initiatives, and the campus has partnered with Hanover Research to curate tailored reports on key topics (e.g., our planned data science degree) and to gain access to their comprehensive higher education database.

### **3.A.4 The institution's comprehensive plan articulates priorities and guides decisions on resource allocation and application of institutional capacity.**

NSC's 2015–2020 Strategic Plan reflects our institutional commitment to offer opportunities to a diverse array of students, provide enriching learning opportunities, and exert a positive impact on the surrounding community. This commitment, in turn, shapes institutional priorities and guides decisions on resource allocation and the application of institutional capacity. This influence manifests most clearly – and impactfully – in our institutional budgeting process (described in more detail in Section 2.F.1). This process is comprehensive, data-driven, and collaborative, and it is imbued with a

consideration of our mission and strategic goals. As detailed more thoroughly in Sections 4A and 4B, the process also is integral to the accomplishment of our core theme objectives.

At the outset of the budgeting process, the Provost's Office provides deans and directors with a [strategic initiative request form](#) that requires proposals to outline a rationale for new faculty positions. This rationale explains why the position is needed, including information regarding "student demand, and how [the request] ties to NSC strategic initiatives and accreditation requirements." Additionally, the form includes specific questions on how the request relates to:

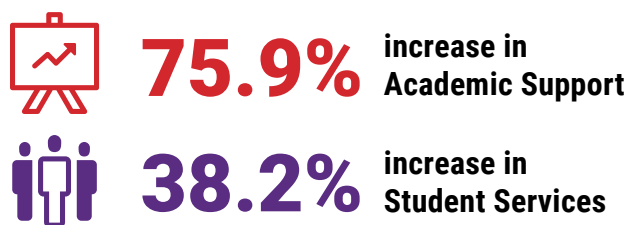
- "Strategic initiatives, including support for department, college, and university goals."
- "Compliance with accreditation standards (including recommendations from outcomes assessment)."

The Provost's leadership team, in consultation with deans, directors, and relevant division leaders, ranks the requests on the strength of their responses to these and other items. Other divisions outside of the Provost's Office rely on a [different form](#) that also requires them to provide "supporting details" for strategic initiative requests, which are then ranked in consultation with the division supervisors and pertinent stakeholders. Finally, the ranked strategic initiatives and supporting rationales are reviewed by the Executive Budget Committee and eventually the President's Executive Leadership Team for alignment with our mission and strategic goals, along with the overall extent of need in relation to existing or desired capacity.

Generally, requests that better align with our mission and strategic goals are more likely to be supported. The best evidence for this approach is our actual allocation of funds, which is delineated in Sections 4.A.4 and 4.A.5. As those narratives

indicate, we have consistently invested funds in people, programs, and projects that promote the achievement of the goals outlined in our strategic plan. Our largest funding increases have been in the areas of Instruction, Academic Support, and Student Services. Proportionately, we invested most substantially in the areas of Academic Support (75.9% increase) and Student Services (38.2% increase), which most readily support our strategic goal of fostering Opportunity, as reflected in "the supportive services and inclusive practices that open doors to a diverse and largely under-served student population" (p. 2). The largest raw increase was in the area of Instruction, which is integral to all of our strategic goals, most notably the intent to provide educational "enrichment" to our students.

#### **Allocation of funds:**



Finally, though this budget process has yielded results that are commensurate with our mission, it is routinely re-evaluated, with input from faculty and staff, by the President, Provost, and Senior Vice President of Finance and Business Operations.

#### **3.A.5 The institution's planning includes emergency preparedness and contingency planning for continuity and recovery of operations should catastrophic events significantly interrupt normal institutional operations.**

Nevada State College (NSC) is in the process of finalizing its Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). The EOP was prepared by NSC, in collaboration with the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) Office of

Emergency Management (OEM), to establish how NSC will prepare for, respond to, and recover from natural and man-made emergencies and disasters. The EOP was crafted within an all-hazards context and uses the National Incident Management System (NIMS) Incident Command System (ICS) as the basis for consistent, effective, and efficient management of response and recovery efforts. The plan describes the roles and responsibilities of personnel during emergency situations. Staff assignments to roles are currently being finalized.

The President, Executive Vice President and Provost, Senior Vice President of Finance and Business Operations, and other employees from their offices have all completed the recommended online FEMA training:

- **IS-100.b (ICS 100)** - Introduction to Incident Command System
- **IS-200.b (ICS 200)** - ICS for Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents
- **IS-700.a (ICS 700)** - National Incident Management System (NIMS): An Introduction

- **IS-800.c (ICS 800)** - National Response Framework: An Introduction

In the last year, 17 of the College’s leaders from various units across campus participated in and completed the Incident Command System (ICS) Overview for Executives/Senior Officials in-person training. This training was conducted by the UNLV Emergency Manager and the Emergency Manager from the City of Henderson Fire Department. To date, the training has included two tabletop exercises focused on real-world emergency scenarios.

In the event of an emergency, the following modes of campus-wide communication can be used, as appropriate: texts, email, voicemail, emergency sirens, building-wide intercoms, and emergency messages on the College’s internal screens and website. NSC participated in the Great Shake Out earthquake drill in October 2018, which allowed the College to successfully test the emergency communication system.

The Senior Vice President of Finance and Business Operations and the Chief of Staff also completed an active shooter training conducted by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.



### 3.B CORE THEME PLANNING

**3.B.1 Planning for each core theme is consistent with the institution’s comprehensive plan and guides the selection of programs and services to ensure they are aligned with and contribute to accomplishment of the core theme’s objectives.**

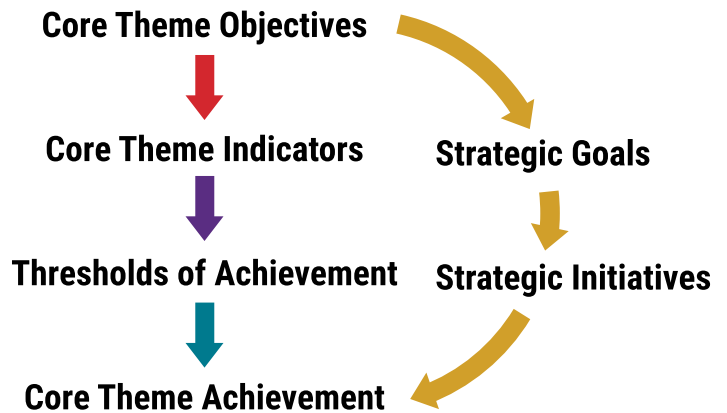
**3.B.2 Planning for core theme programs and services guides the selection of contributing components of those programs and services to ensure they are aligned with and contribute to achievement of the goals or intended outcomes of the respective programs and services.**

#### Alignment of Core Themes & Institutional Strategic Plan

The accomplishment of our core theme objectives is rooted in a strong connection between the core themes and our institution’s comprehensive plan (referred to here, as elsewhere, as our strategic plan). As illustrated in Figure 3B-1, and described in more detail below, the core themes informed the development of our strategic goals. Each of these goals are supported by an array of strategic initiatives, and these initiatives help guide our selection of programs and services to promote the accomplishment of our core theme objectives.

Institutional decisions are ultimately rendered by deans and campus executive leadership, but are typically arrived at with extensive input from NSC’s faculty and staff. The most important and representative example is our annual budgeting process, which is collaborative, representative, and grounded in a consideration of our strategic goals and initiatives (as indicated in the [strategic initiative request form](#) that acts as the starting point for most personnel and initiative requests). Section 3.A provides additional information on NSC’s budget process.

Figure 3B-1



For our currently implemented strategic plan, covering years 2015–2020, the alignment between our strategic goals and core themes began with an explicit directive from the Provost/Executive Vice President. The Provost empowered the strategic planning committee with the freedom to develop strategic goals that best facilitate positive outcomes for our students, but directed the members to adhere to our mission and build upon the core themes established in our Year One report. This philosophy emerged repeatedly in campus discussions as various iterations of the plan moved toward completion.

The final strategic plan reflected a consensus among executive leadership, faculty, students, community stakeholders, and the College Foundation Board about the vision for the campus through 2020. This vision was encapsulated in three over-arching strategic goals: Opportunity, Enrichment, and Impact. Though these goals were adapted into aspirational, single-word slogans for the purposes of the strategic plan, they map onto the core themes presented in our Year One Report (Table 3B-1). “Foster Educational Opportunity” was distilled into “Opportunity,” which reflects our commitment to the “supportive services and inclusive practices that open doors to a diverse and largely under-served student population” (p. 2). Consistent with



**Core Theme Planning:  
Alignment with Services & Programs**

The alignment of the core themes and our central strategic goals forms the mechanism by which we accomplish our core theme objectives. The practical influence of this mechanism manifests through the initiatives that were developed to support each strategic goal and inform institutional decisions and resource investments. However, it bears noting that the alignment between our programs/services and core themes does not always stem from an explicit consultation of our strategic plan as a blueprint for institutional decisions. Rather, the alignment is a function of how the core themes—and subsequent strategic goals—came to fruition. As detailed in Section 1.B, the core themes resulted from a collaborative, campus-wide process that effectively captured our foremost institutional priorities. These priorities, in turn, guide our selection of programs and services, and they do so even when we do not explicitly consult our planning documents.

However, it should be noted that although Nevada State’s progress toward critical objectives is encouraging, we recognize that the College can more systematically reference the core themes and strategic goals when rendering institutional decisions and allocating budgetary funds. This issue—and potential improvements—are discussed in more detail in Chapter 5.

our Year One Self-Evaluation Report, we defined “opportunity” in terms of the full pathway to degree attainment, not merely the opportunity to access higher education. “Promote Student Success” evolved into “Enrichment,” which attempts to capture the full spectrum of what success means for students at Nevada State College, including both personal and professional growth. As with the College’s definition of “Student Success” in the Year One Self-Evaluation Report, “Enrichment” manifests largely through the quality of learning experiences offered to our students. Finally, “Strengthen the Community” was represented by “Impact” to signal the effect our graduates will have on the surrounding region, particularly as “catalysts for social, civic and economic progress” (p.2).

**Table 3A-1: Core Themes and Strategic Goals**

Accreditation Core Theme	2015–2020 Strategic Goal
<b>Foster educational opportunity</b>	<b>Opportunity</b>
<b>Promote student success</b>	<b>Enrichment</b>
<b>Strengthen the community</b>	<b>Impact</b>

## Programs & Services Contributing to Core Theme Objectives

### Core Theme 1

In our Year One Self-Evaluation Report, Core Theme 1 and its corresponding objectives were defined as follows:

#### CORE THEME 1: PROMOTE STUDENT SUCCESS

- **Objective 1:** Develop effective critical thinkers and communicators
- **Objective 2:** Foster integrity and positive citizenship
- **Objective 3:** Instill discipline-specific expertise
- **Objective 4:** Cultivate learning experiences characterized by innovative engagement

Through the development of our strategic plan and targeted initiatives, Core Theme 1 led to the implementation of a number of programs, services, and initiatives that contributed to the achievement of the Core Theme 1 objectives. Table 3.B-2 illustrates the alignment among core theme objectives, strategic initiatives, and the programs and services that contribute to the accomplishment of each. The pursuit of Core Theme 1 objectives is most prominently displayed through the hiring of full-time faculty after several years of hiring freezes. Since our Year 1 report, we have hired 45 additional full-time faculty; another 22 new positions were approved for the FY20 and FY21 budgets as our funding levels improved substantially. Additional full-time faculty are essential to ensure the quality of academic programs, complete regular outcomes assessment, and introduce new programs to meet Nevada's workforce needs, and their contributions

have impacted all four of the objectives for Core Theme 1. Our planning for Core Theme 1, and Objective 4 in particular, guided the decision to re-introduce a Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence (CTLE); this unit now has three full-time staff members (with a fourth approved for the 2020 fiscal year) who focus on supporting faculty and providing resources to help build effective, accessible courses that offer students exceptional and engaging educational experiences. Objective 4 also is linked to our Teaching Fellows Institute, which encourages the development of innovative and exemplary instruction, and our Gateways to Completion Project, which revamped the curriculum of high-enrollment gateway courses.

Objectives 1 and 3 influenced the decision to establish a Writing Center, which now is staffed by a Director and an Assistant Director, along with dozens of Writing Specialists, and to expand our Academic Success Center, which provides tutoring support in all other disciplines and Supplemental Instruction for select areas. Objective 3 also is connected to the expansion of our internship programs, experiential curriculum, and undergraduate research opportunities—including the decision to establish a Vice Provost of Academic Initiatives who provides guidance in these areas. Our commitment to Objective 2 is reflected in the Core Curriculum, where “Citizenship” is one of the principal learning outcomes, and our expansion of the Division of College and Community Engagement, which has informed campus policy and practices oriented around integrity, citizenship, and inclusion.



**Table 3.B-1: Example Programs and Investments for Core Theme 1 Objectives**

Objectives	Associated Programs & Services Investments	Strategic Initiatives
<b>1. Develop effective critical thinkers and communicators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 45 new full-time faculty positions</li> <li>• Establishment of Writing Center</li> <li>• Expansion of Academic Success Center (tutoring)</li> <li>• Development of Supplemental Instruction and Course Assistant programs</li> </ul>	3.1, 3.2, 3.6, 3.7, 4.3
<b>2. Foster integrity and positive citizenship</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expansion of Office of Community Engagement and Diversity Initiatives (CEDI)</li> <li>• Emphasis on Citizenship in Core Curriculum</li> <li>• Developed Provost’s Speaker Series focused on democracy and citizenship</li> <li>• Launched Social Justice Documentary series</li> </ul>	3.12, 3.13, 3.14, 4.2
<b>3. Instill discipline-specific expertise</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 45 new full-time faculty positions</li> <li>• Expansion of internships, experiential learning opportunities, and undergraduate research opportunities</li> <li>• Creation of Vice Provost of Scholarship &amp; Experiential Learning position</li> </ul>	3.2, 4.1, 4.2, 4.5, 4.7
<b>4. Cultivate learning experiences characterized by innovative engagement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 45 new full-time faculty positions</li> <li>• Relaunch of Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence (CTLE)</li> <li>• Development of Teaching Fellows Institute</li> <li>• Gateways to Completion project</li> </ul>	1.4, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.8, 3.9, 3.10, 3.11

**Core Theme 2**

In our Year One Self-Evaluation Report, Core Theme 2 is defined as:

**CORE THEME 2:  
FOSTER EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY**

- **Objective 1:** Recruit and support a diverse array of students
- **Objective 2:** Improve student retention and timely degree progression
- **Objective 3:** Graduate a diverse population of students in diverse fields

The College’s strategic planning around Core Theme 2 focused on expanding student services across campus, particularly in the wake of recession-era budget cuts that truncated many student services and delayed planned programming. For example, Objective 1 contributed to several initiatives, including the separation of the Office of Admissions & Recruitment from the Office of the Registrar, yielding a new division with distinct leadership and expanded staffing, and an increase in our scholarship offerings and need-based financial aid. Core Theme 2 also led to the expansion of existing services and the creation of new ones. Objective 1 contributed to the expansion of the [Academic Success Center](#) and the creation of our first [Writing Center](#), and Objective 3 was an impetus for the establishment of a [Career Services Center](#).



Planning related to Objectives 1 and 2 also influenced decisions about new positions and comprehensive initiatives. Regarding the former, in 2014 NSC established a Vice Provost for Academic Innovation & Student Success to develop and launch initiatives that improve student outcomes, and hired its first Dean of Students, providing leadership for initiatives related to student success and campus life. Likewise, in the last several years the Academic Advising Center has significantly increased its level of staffing and implemented a team model to reduce students' wait time for appointments. Regarding more comprehensive initiatives, NSC is partnering with Complete College America as one of just three higher education systems to implement the Metro Momentum Pathways Project, which includes efforts to provide academic maps and clear degree pathways for students.

The College also has developed infrastructure related to all three objectives for Core Theme 2. For instance, the NSHE Vice Chancellor recently commended NSC for establishing the cleanest [transfer model](#) (including online resources, clear articulation guides, and academic advisors housed at partner community colleges) in the entire system. Guided by evidence that supports the positive impact of housing different student services divisions under the same roof, in Fall 2018 we opened the Raker Student Success Building as a “one-stop shop” that allows students to visit offices such as Financial Aid, the Registrar, the Cashier, and Advising all within one building. Table 3.B-3 summarizes some of the critical programs and services that contribute to the achievement of Core Theme 2 objectives and related strategic initiatives.



**Table 3.B-2: Example Programs and Investments for Core Theme 2 Objectives**

Objectives	Associated Programs & Services Investments	Strategic Initiatives
<b>1. Recruit &amp; support a diverse array of students</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of separate, fully-staffed Office of Admissions &amp; Recruitment</li> <li>• Expansion of scholarship and financial aid offerings</li> <li>• Development of recruitment plan that targets under-served students</li> </ul>	1.1, 1.2, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9, 1.11, 1.12, 1.13, 1.15, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 2.8, 2.9, 2.10, 2.11
<b>2. Improve student retention/timely degree progression</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of “one-stop shop” in new Raker Student Success Building</li> <li>• Restructuring and expansion of Academic Advising Center</li> <li>• Creation of Vice Provost and Dean of Students positions</li> <li>• Implementation and expansion of student success programs (e.g., Writing Center, TRiO-SSS, Nepantla program)</li> <li>• Implementation of Metro Momentum Pathways Project with Complete College America</li> </ul>	1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.9, 1.10, 1.13, 1.16, 2.1, 2.2
<b>3. Graduate a diverse population of students in diverse fields</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of Career Services Center</li> <li>• Development of new baccalaureate programs in Criminal Justice, Communication, Deaf Studies, Allied Health, and Engineering Technology</li> <li>• Increased capacity of nursing BSN and RN-to-BSN programs</li> <li>• Development of master’s degree in Speech Language Pathology</li> </ul>	3.2, 4.1, 4.2, 4.5, 4.7

### Core Theme 3

In our Year One Self-Evaluation Report, Core Theme 3 is defined as:

#### CORE THEME 3: STRENGTHEN THE COMMUNITY

- **Objective 1:** Foster community partnerships
- **Objective 2:** Promote student contributions to the community
- **Objective 3:** Promote faculty and staff contributions to the community

Following the recession, the College placed a concerted emphasis on expanding programs and services related to Core Themes 1 and 2, which represent our commitment to student success.

Comparatively fewer resources were allocated for the achievement of Core Theme 3 objectives, but it nevertheless has been a critical growth area for the institution. One of the most significant investments in support of achieving our Core Theme 3 objectives was the establishment of the Division of College and Community Engagement, which provides centralized oversight of community outreach and [partnership initiatives](#). As a result, the campus hosted the [2018 NSHE Southern Nevada Diversity Summit](#) (focused on gender) and has developed a strong relationship with the [Latin Chamber of Commerce](#), hosting business networking luncheons and other events. The Director of the Career Services Center reports to the Vice President of College and Community Engagement, ensuring that these partnerships and community outreach are also connected to and incorporate networking and professional development opportunities for our students, in alignment with Objective 1.

Strategic planning for Objective 1 also contributed, in part, to the decision to greatly expand our internship offerings and increase the scope of our Office of Advancement, which evolved from a single employee to three full-time employees in 2018. Both initiatives are expected to foster community partnerships that otherwise may not have been possible. In the service of Objectives 2 and 3, we increased the resources and personnel for our Marketing and Events division, which engages in a variety of public relations,

website, and social media endeavors to highlight our contributions to the community. Overall, fewer services and programs have been developed in association with Objectives 2 and 3, mainly because the College has focused less on promoting student, faculty, and staff contributions, and more on cultivating the underlying institutional structures that engender those contributions. Table 3.B-4 summarizes the services and programs associated with the objectives of Core Theme 3.

**Table 3.B-3: Example Programs and Investments for Core Theme 3 Objectives**

Objectives	Associated Programs & Services Investments	Strategic Initiatives
<p><b>1. Foster community partnerships</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of Office of Community Engagement &amp; Diversity Initiatives (CEDI)</li> <li>• Expansion of internship opportunities with community businesses and organizations</li> <li>• Creation of Career Services Center</li> <li>• Expansion of the Office of Advancement</li> </ul>	<p>4.11, 4.12, 4.13</p>
<p><b>2. Promote student contributions to the community</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expansion of marketing division</li> <li>• Development of social media, NSC website, and public relations stories and campaigns</li> <li>• Campus-wide United Way Volunteer Day participation</li> <li>• Student clubs focused on service work (e.g., Criminal Justice Club, Sociology Club)</li> </ul>	<p>3.9, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8, 4.9, 4.10</p>
<p><b>3. Promote faculty/ staff contributions to the community</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Average number of hours of engagement with the community</li> <li>• NSC Community Survey about perceptions of faculty and/or staff impact</li> </ul>	<p>3.13</p>



## Other Programs and Services

The College's strategic planning related to our core themes also is demonstrated in our pursuit of grants and other sponsored projects. NSC has expanded our ability to obtain and manage sponsored projects; the Office of the Provost now provides pre-award support, while the Office of Post-Award Administration ensures grant expenditures comply with federal, state, and local regulations as well as NSC policies. However, the College is circumspect about which grants to pursue, given our resources and teaching-focused mission. The Office of the Provost prioritizes institutional grants that support our mission by enhancing the services we are able to provide to students. Examples of successful grant applications include a TRiO-SSS grant (which funds support services for low-income and first-generation students and ties most closely to Core Theme 2), NSF MARCOS grant (which funds scholarships, advising, and other academic supports for talented students of color in STEM fields and is connected to Core Themes 1 and 2), and a Department of Education Title V Developing HSI grant (which funds a project aimed primarily at increasing the number of Latinx students pursuing degrees in Education and was influenced by all three core themes). The College also supports individual faculty who apply for grants to fund undergraduate student research or curriculum design and expansion activities. Through these types of sponsored projects, we have been able to provide students with paid research opportunities that make them more competitive when applying to graduate/professional programs and for jobs, and even have led to [co-authored peer-reviewed publications](#). A Nevada INBRE grant also provided several years of funding to pilot an annual [Undergraduate Research and Creative Works Conference](#) (URCWC), which gives students an opportunity to present a poster, research presentation, or creative work (e.g., photography, film, poem, ceramic piece) in a professional academic environment. Due to the

success of the URCWC, as of 2019–20 the College will institutionalize funding to ensure the long-term sustainability of the conference.



**3.B.3 Core theme planning is informed by the collection of appropriately defined data that are analyzed and used to evaluate accomplishment of core theme objectives. Planning for programs and services is informed by the collection of appropriately defined data that are used to evaluate achievement of the goals or intended outcomes of those programs and services.**

As described in Section 1.B.1 earlier in this report, the College established clear targets and metrics to measure the accomplishment of each core theme. Responsibility for these metrics is widely distributed across campus. The Provost's Office works with college divisions to periodically evaluate these metrics and make revisions as needed to ensure that we accurately measure core theme fulfillment. The Provost's Office also provides guidance and support in the completion of summary reports related to accreditation metrics. Data collected as part of our assessment of progress toward achieving our core theme goals include the following:

### Key Data Sources for Core Theme 1: Promote Student Success

- Core Curriculum outcomes assessment
- Degree program academic outcomes assessment
- Student services outcomes assessment
- [Assessment Technologies Institute \(ATI\)](#) test
- [Benchworks](#) (formerly Educational Benchmark, Inc. [EBI]) exit survey
- [National Survey of Student Engagement \(NSSE\)](#) data
- [Praxis II](#) licensure pass rates for Education graduates
- [NCLEX](#) licensure pass rates for pre-licensure Nursing graduates
- Student course evaluation ratings

### Key Data Sources for Core Theme 2: Foster Educational Opportunity

- Student headcounts and FTE (disaggregated by key demographics)
- Nevada state population demographics for comparison
- Number of financial aid applications and awards
- Cost of degrees for NSC and other 4-year programs in NSHE
- Student Satisfaction Survey
- Student retention rates
- Six-year graduation rates (all students and first-time full-time only; disaggregated by key demographics and discipline)
- Course completion rates
- Students accepted into graduate/professional programs

### Key Data Sources for Core Theme 3: Strengthen the Community

- Survey of inbound and outbound community partnerships
- Student employment surveys (disaggregated by School), including first-destination job location and field
- NSC Community Survey of community partners

These data allow the College to holistically assess our achievement of core theme goals and outcomes. Faculty, staff, and administrators review the data to identify areas in which the College has improved, programs and services that show evidence of effectiveness, and areas that lag behind our target metrics.



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# CHAPTER FOUR

# 4 EFFECTIVENESS & IMPROVEMENT

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS 22 & 23)

### 22. Student Achievement

**The institution identifies and publishes the expected learning outcomes for each of its degree and certificate programs. The institution engages in regular and ongoing assessment to validate student achievement of these learning outcomes.**

Nevada State College publishes the learning outcomes for every degree program in the College Catalog and on the website. Expected learning outcomes for the Core Curriculum are also published in the College Catalog.

NSC engages in the annual assessment of academic programs and the library, alternating between learning outcomes assessment in even years and program assessment in odd years. Student learning outcomes assessment follows the Nichols model (Nichols & Nichols, 2005), evaluating randomly-selected student artifacts and rating students' mastery of learning outcomes (the School of Education is the one exception, following assessment methodologies required by the Nevada Department of Education). Outcomes assessment is conducted by committees of faculty with expertise in the discipline, under the direction of the Office of the Provost. Program assessment takes a broader view of academic programs to identify potential areas for improvement. Faculty committees select relevant aspects of the program to evaluate (e.g., alumni surveys, syllabus consistency, evaluation of assignment instructions). Both outcomes assessment and program assessment are followed

by a final report submitted to the Provost's Office summarizing key findings and recommendations for improvement. Follow-up meetings with Provost's Office administrators, held at least once per semester, provide an opportunity to review progress toward implementing the recommendations, as well as challenges faculty may have encountered.

Section 4.A.3 discusses outcomes assessment and program assessment in more detail, while Section 4.A.2 provides details on other forms of assessment of academic programs. In 4.A.6, we describe our efforts to improve the assessment process for academic programs and student services.

### 23. Institutional Effectiveness

**The institution systematically applies clearly defined evaluation and planning procedures, assesses the extent to which it achieves its mission and core themes, uses the results of assessment to effect institutional improvement, and periodically publishes the results to its constituencies. Through these processes it regularly monitors its internal and external environments to determine how and to what degree changing circumstances may impact the institution and its ability to ensure its viability and sustainability.**

Nevada State College has a systematic and effective evaluation and planning process. Chapter 3 provides detailed information about the planning and resource allocation process at NSC. Sections 4.A.1-3 describe assessment processes across

campus, as well as those required by the Nevada System of Higher Education. Sections 4.A.4 explains how the College holistically evaluations the alignment of programs and services and encourages coordination and cooperation between units to ensure achievement of our core themes. In Section 4.B, we present the results of assessment regarding

each indicator for our core themes, analyze our degree of core theme achievement, and discuss how the assessment results have been used for program improvement.

Standard 5 addresses our overall mission fulfillment and institutional sustainability.







## 4.A ASSESSMENT

### **4.A.1 The institution engages in ongoing systematic collection and analysis of meaningful, assessable, and verifiable data, quantitative and/or qualitative, as appropriate to its indicators of achievement, as the basis for evaluating the accomplishment of its core theme objectives.**

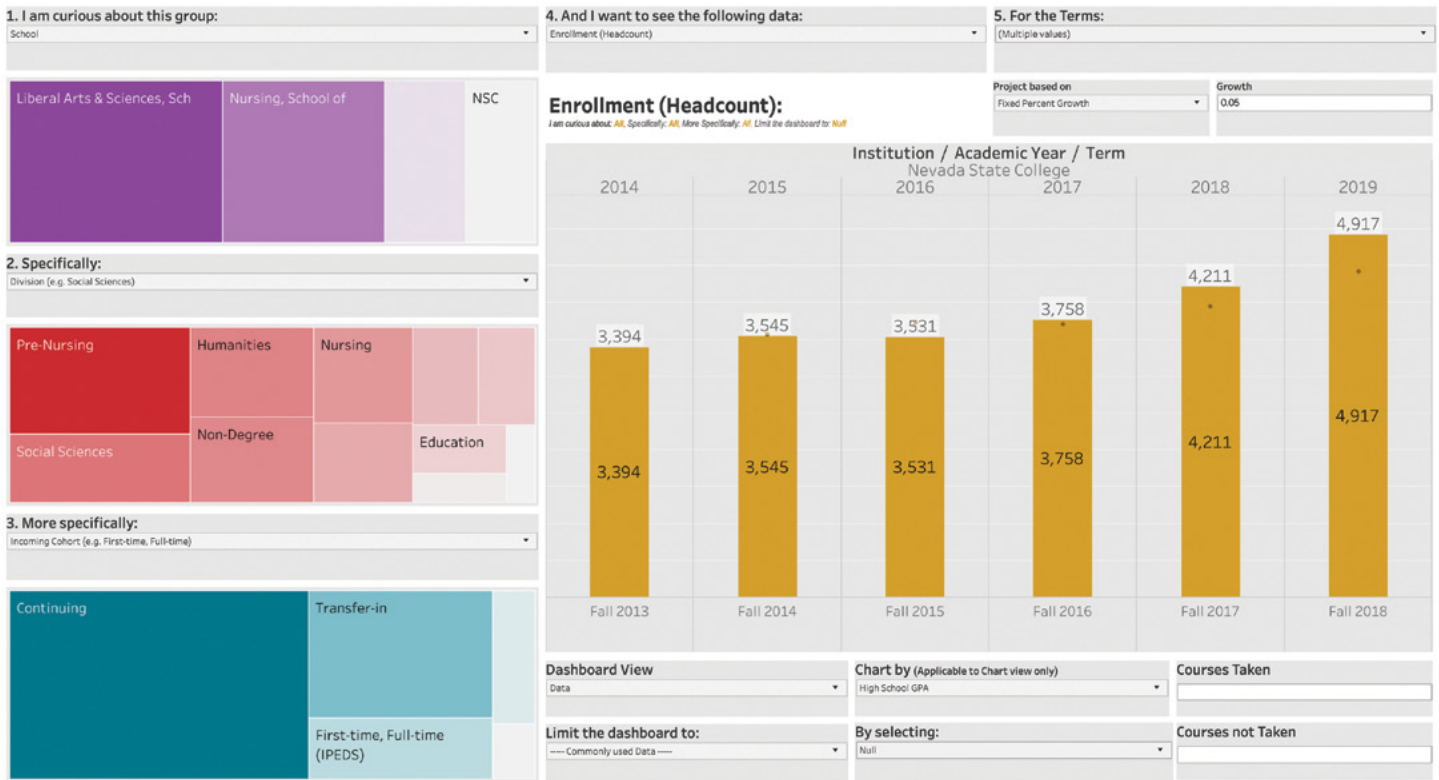
As discussed in detail in Section 3.A.1, Nevada State College collects meaningful, assessable, and verifiable data and uses this information to track progress on the metrics identified for each core theme. The College also collects data on other key outcomes that are related to the core themes and relevant performance indicators.

Because the core theme metrics directly relate to the performance of so many areas of the campus, responsibility for data collection is widely distributed. The Director of Institutional Research, housed in the Office of the Provost, collects and analyzes the most comprehensive collection of data. These data include campus-level information such as headcounts, graduation/retention rates,

and course completion metrics, all of which can be disaggregated by demographic variables, and self-report data such as student course evaluations and NSSE responses. Much of this information is available on [Tableau dashboards](#), which any campus stakeholder can access (though some dashboards are secured with passwords because they contain sensitive student or course information that is only available to authorized faculty and staff). The Director of Institutional Research also includes summaries of data related to core theme metrics and other initiatives in the [bi-weekly newsletter](#) distributed to campus by the Office of the Provost.

Other data are collected and analyzed by relevant units. For example, the Division of College and Community Engagement manages the Campus Climate survey and surveys related to community partnerships, including analyzing results and providing summary reports to campus. The Career Services Center gathers data on NSC graduates' first-destination jobs, while the Dean of Students oversees surveys on relevant topics such as student wellness and satisfaction with campus life.

# Primary Institutional Research Dashboard



Core Theme	Analysis
<b>1. Promote Student Success</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Final reports on program outcomes assessments</li> <li>Student self-reports (e.g., NSSE)</li> <li>External assessments (e.g., ATI)</li> <li>Licensure pass rates</li> <li>Mean student evaluation ratings</li> </ul>
<b>2. Foster Educational Opportunity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tableau data dashboards (e.g., retention, graduation)</li> <li>U.S. Census data on Nevada</li> <li>Financial Aid data on aid packages disbursed</li> <li>NSHE website</li> <li>National Student Clearinghouse</li> <li>Student self-reports (e.g., Career Services Center tracking)</li> </ul>
<b>3. Strengthen the Community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Faculty and staff self-reports (e.g., survey of community engagement)</li> <li>Community partner survey responses</li> <li>Student self-reports (e.g., Career Services Center tracking)</li> </ul>

As part of the assessment of academic programs, the College completes program reviews mandated by NSHE in the 1st, 3rd, and 5th years of all new programs, and all majors go through an extensive review every 10 years, with both internal and external evaluators. In addition, individual academic programs and student services units provide data on student learning outcomes mastery as part of outcomes assessment (described in Sections 4.A.2 and 4.A.3 below). The Office of the Provost produces [summary reports](#) of overall results from academic outcomes assessment and shares these with the assessment chair from each academic program.

**4.A.2 The institution engages in an effective system of evaluation of its programs and services, wherever offered and however delivered, to evaluate achievement of clearly identified program goals or intended outcomes. Faculty have a primary role in the evaluation of educational programs and services.**

## Evaluation of Academic Programs

### CURRICULUM REVIEW PROCESS

NSC thoroughly evaluates the effectiveness of its academic programs, and the evaluation begins before a program is established. The curriculum approval process involves multiple stages of review, starting at the individual School level, where a curriculum committee made up of instructional faculty reviews proposals to establish, discontinue, or change any academic program in their area. All proposals must clearly identify the mission and measurable learning outcomes for the program, as well as how the program aligns with the institutional mission. Proposals then continue on to the academic dean for the School. If approved at the School level, proposals are considered by the Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee, a committee consisting of academic faculty from each School and the Library; the Registrar serves as a non-voting member. Proposals to establish or significantly change

programs also must be considered and voted on by the full Faculty Senate before being referred to the Provost for final internal review. As the chief academic officer of the College, the Provost has final approval authority over all curriculum proposals. If approved internally, new programs are forwarded for review by NSHE's Academic Affairs Council and, finally, by the full Board of Regents. Once all of these approvals are received, the program is submitted to the NWCCU for approval.

The purpose of this review process is to ensure that academic programs have appropriate rigor, content, and learning outcomes, and that they support NSC's mission. The campus [proposal form](#) includes sections to provide a rationale for the program, explain impacts on existing units or programs, and describe required resources. All proposals must include a degree sheet that clearly defines all required coursework, including Core Curriculum requirements. The [NSHE proposal form](#) requires the College to describe the assessment process that will be used to evaluate student learning outcomes and to explain how the program fits into NSHE's Strategic Goals (Access, Success, Close the Achievement Gap, Workforce, and Research). The proposal also includes a detailed analysis of the need for the program, the student population to be served, evidence of employment opportunities for graduates, student services needed, and a resource analysis projecting the program's budget for the first five years after implementation.

### EXISTING PROGRAM REVIEWS

Once a program has been approved and implemented, the Nevada System of Higher Education requires institutions to conduct short assessment reports in the first, third, and fifth years of its existence, measuring whether the program is meeting its enrollment and budget projections. A much more holistic [Existing Program Review](#) is required in the 10th year after a program's establishment and on a 10-year cycle thereafter (NSHE Handbook [4.14.5](#)).

NSC’s Program Review Committees consist of instructional faculty in the academic program under review. The program review process is extremely thorough and uses dashboards created by the Office of Institutional Research to evaluate metrics such as enrollment and retention. The full program review involves several types of assessment and analysis, as shown in Table 4A-2.

Once the internal report is submitted, the dean solicits external evaluations from qualified experts

who can provide an independent analysis of the strengths of the program as well as any areas of concern or needed improvements.

The program review submitted to NSHE includes key recommendations aimed at addressing any challenges identified as a result of the review. The 10-year review of our [Bachelor of Arts in Speech Language Pathology](#) provides a recent and representative example of the outcome of this process.

**Table 4A-2: Program Review Assessment Elements**

- How the program’s mission statement aligns with NSC’s mission and any needed adjustments;
- Standard success metrics (e.g., data on the program’s retention and graduation rates overall and disaggregated by key demographics) and evidence of trends or patterns related to those metrics;
- Comparisons with other relevant programs, whether within or outside NSC;
- Impacts of growth or declines in student enrollment on NSC’s mission fulfillment;
- Profiles of instructional faculty in the program;
- Indicators of teaching and advising quality (e.g., innovative features of the program, teaching accomplishments or awards, scholarly publications by faculty related to pedagogy, summaries of student course evaluations for the program as a whole);
- Student profile summaries (e.g., GPA averages in required major courses, average number of credits earned at graduation);
- Any available evidence of post-graduate success (e.g., acceptance into post-baccalaureate programs, number of graduates employed in jobs related to the field);
- Summary of results of student learning outcomes assessment;
- Explanation of how outcomes assessment results are used to drive program improvements;
- Evidence related to curricular strengths or weaknesses (e.g., pass rates on certification/licensure exams, results of exit exams, student awards and honors, results of student satisfaction surveys);
- Description of course sequencing and rotations;
- Analysis of barriers to success in the program (e.g., insufficient course offerings or staffing);
- Appropriateness of library and computer/technology resources;
- Adequacy of facilities and instructional equipment to support the program.



## COURSE OBSERVATIONS & EVALUATIONS

The appropriate dean or department chair conducts at least one class observation of each full-time faculty member each academic year (usually in the fall). Adjunct faculty may be observed by a dean, department chair, full-time faculty member, or the Adjunct Faculty Coordinator. Course observations provide supervisors with an opportunity to view how the faculty member designs and runs a class, responds to student questions, and engages the class in activities; the observation may be of an in-person or online course. The observation is followed by a formal written report [using a standard rubric](#) that identifies strengths, areas for improvement, and recommended changes.

Student course evaluations are completed online at the end of the term. A new set of student evaluation questions were adopted campus-wide in Fall 2013 that include a standard group of questions as well as questions customized to the needs of individual Schools. The questions are grouped into eight standard categories: Assessment, Concern, Critical Thinking, Expectations, Feedback, Relevance, Teaching/Learning, and Technology. In addition, students are asked to provide open-ended feedback on the factors that were most valuable to their learning experience as well as aspects of the course they believe could be improved.

EvalKit, the system that administers the student evaluations, provides an auto-generated report to each instructor showing the frequency of responses, the overall mean of quantitative scores (excluding all demographic questions), and comments. These

reports are posted in the course website in Canvas and relevant administrators (e.g., deans) are able to access all evaluations in their areas through their EvalKit account.

## ONLINE QUALITY ASSURANCE INITIATIVE

In Fall 2018, the College introduced an initiative to improve the quality of online teaching and learning. A faculty working group comprised of five academic faculty and three staff members from the Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence (CTLE) designed and tested a [rubric](#) for evaluating online courses.

In Spring 2019, under the guidance of the CTLE director, the Center implemented the CTLE implemented the program as a pilot, [training faculty to use the rubric](#). Teams of faculty then served as peer reviewers, evaluating online courses taught by faculty who volunteered their courses for the pilot.

## SCHOLARSHIP OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

Faculty and staff are encouraged to gather data on the effectiveness of their teaching efforts and student services and to pursue opportunities to present or publish the results. The College's standards for promotion and tenure explicitly state that such publications are valued as a form of scholarship. Over 30 [peer-reviewed articles on teaching and learning](#) written by NSC employees were published during this accreditation cycle.



## Evaluation of Other Programs & Services

The College's emphasis on data-driven evaluation extends to an array of programs and services. The Office of Information and Technology Services automatically distributes customer satisfaction surveys to each person who submits a help request. Student support areas, including the Academic Success Center, the Advising Center, the NSC Library, and the Course Assistant program, routinely rely on the data dashboards furnished by Institutional Research to evaluate key objectives, including metrics related to numbers of students served and impact on retention rates. Likewise, the Office of Admissions & Recruitment relies on the data dashboards to assess the effectiveness of recruitment initiatives, outreach campaigns, and scholarship packages. Campus Police Services regularly conducts surveys of satisfaction with police and safety efforts, and the Office of Student Life collects data on student participation in campus activities and events, which can later be connected to student success variables such as academic performance and retention. Overall, most programs and services have a mechanism by which to evaluate their impact, and these efforts are often complemented by the systematic assessment of learning outcomes, as described in 4.A.3.

**4.A.3 The institution documents, through an effective, regular, and comprehensive system of assessment of student achievement, that students who complete its educational courses, programs, and degrees, wherever offered and however delivered, achieve identified course, program, and degree learning outcomes. Faculty with teaching responsibilities are responsible for evaluating student achievement of clearly identified learning outcomes.**

## Academic Program and Student Learning Outcomes Assessment

Nevada State College relies on a student learning outcomes assessment process that is guided by recommended practices and overseen by the Executive Vice Provost/Accreditation Liaison and the Vice Provost for Academic Initiatives. Described in NSC's [Program of Assessment](#), our approach incorporates two primary modes of assessment, with one emphasizing a deeper analysis of student learning (the Nichols method) and the other complementing this approach with a broader look at program elements. The former method is referred to as "learning outcomes assessment" (formerly referred to as "even-year assessment"), and the latter is identified as "program assessment" (initially termed "odd-year assessment"). In this new format, assessment occurs every year, with outcomes assessment alternating with program assessment. The catalyst for this assessment is an all-day retreat that has improved the efficiency of the process and yields more time to respond to the assessment results, which had been identified as a challenge in the past.

Learning outcomes assessment is conducted in even years and continues to rely on the Nichols model (Nichols & Nichols, 2005) to evaluate student artifacts for all programs in the School of Liberal Arts & Sciences, School of Nursing, and the Library (the School of Education follows assessment practices mandated by the state Department of Education). A number of essential methodological elements enhance the quality and consistency of this process. These elements include measurable outcomes, sound evaluative techniques, clear rubrics, the random sampling of student artifacts, inter-rater reliability, an emphasis on "value-added," and a philosophy that recognizes the iterative nature of good assessment.

The process begins with academic faculty within a program selecting the outcome that will be assessed by a committee consisting of three academic faculty per program (primarily full-time instructional faculty, though adjunct instructional faculty are included on some committees). Assessment chairs, in consultation with faculty in the program, then identify appropriate assignments for evaluating the outcome scheduled for assessment, and the associate dean randomly selects student submissions for each assignment and removes all identifying information (to the degree possible). The assessment committee convenes at a one-day retreat conducted by the Office of the Provost to rate the student artifacts, discuss patterns, and draft recommendations for program improvements. Assessment chairs are responsible for [submitting final assessment reports](#) to the Provost's Office. The Executive Vice Provost calculates key metrics for each program (e.g., improvement between lower- and upper-division courses within a program and the proficiency index for upper-division courses) and discusses these with each assessment chair. A committee of full-time academic faculty assesses the Core Curriculum using the same model.

Program assessment occurs in odd years and was first introduced in fall 2017. This method, also conducted by faculty committees, examines the program from a wider perspective and aims to evaluate aspects of the program that may be broader in scope or more qualitative in nature. Many programs use this opportunity to look at other elements relevant to program evaluation and improvement, including audits of assignment quality (using a rubric based on best practices for scaffolding and/or [transparent design](#)), student surveys, alumni surveys, syllabus consistency, and metrics that may be unique to a particular discipline (e.g., [Visual Media students' submissions](#), acceptances, and awards at film festivals and barriers to festival entry). These assessments also are followed by a final report submitted to the Provost's Office.

## FOLLOW-UP RECOMMENDATIONS

To ensure that assessment results are translated into actions aimed at program improvement, the Office of the Provost schedules periodic update meetings with assessment chairs throughout the year (with at least one meeting each fall and spring semester). Assessment chairs submit standardized [assessment update reports](#) in advance, and the meetings are used to discuss the updates as well as any challenges faculty are facing in their efforts to address recommendations from earlier assessments.

## EDUCATION AND NURSING ASSESSMENTS

The School of Education (SOE) uses [assessment methodologies](#) dictated by its specific accrediting bodies. A faculty committee participates in the one-day assessment retreats (and was included in the campus-wide assessment planning summer institute), but follows a discipline-specific assessment plan that includes evaluation of every student artifact in each course under review, rather than a randomly-selected sample. Their assessment focuses on course alignment with, and student mastery of, INTASC Standards by rating





## HIGHLIGHT ON OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT: CRIMINAL JUSTICE

In 2018, faculty in Criminal Justice assessed their program learning outcome focused on students' ability to "understand and apply basic research methods and statistical techniques used in criminal justice and criminology." They assessed randomly-selected student artifacts from CRJ 301 (*Research Methods*) and CRJ 302 (*Quantitative Applications*), the two courses in the major that directly address this outcome. The assessment committee rated 85% of student artifacts "proficient" or better on this outcome, indicating that the program is succeeding at helping students learn to effectively use common statistical analyses and research methods relevant to the field of criminal justice.

While the Criminal Justice assessment committee was satisfied with students' performance, it identified some areas for continued improvement. Among these was the need to provide more examples of high-quality assignment submissions in *Research Methods* to help students understand the instructor's expectations; improved scaffolding to allow students to develop a larger final project in smaller steps; and additional instructional media and peer-to-peer support in *Quantitative Applications*.

Accordingly, in Fall 2018 and Spring 2019, the faculty implemented several improvements, including the provision of example student

assignments (supported by illustrative in-class discussions), the redesign of a semester-long research project to incorporate scaffolding in *Research Methods*, and the introduction of supplemental instruction (SI) to the challenging *Quantitative Applications* course. Though the latter initiative is still in the pilot phase, students who regularly attended SI sessions earned a mean grade of 92.7%, while students who rarely or never attended earned a mean grade of 81.7%. Other enhancements included the provision of at least one supplemental video within the Canvas module for each chapter as a learning aid and an increase in the number of tests from three to four, covering less material on each exam and balancing material more evenly throughout the course.

Moving forward, the Criminal Justice assessment committee identified several next steps. A key goal is to increase the number of sections of CRJ 301 and 302 each year to ensure that students can make timely progress toward degree completion, which will be facilitated by the addition of two new tenure-track faculty in Fall 2019. The program also will pilot and assess an online offering of *Research Methods* in Summer 2019, and the faculty are exploring the installation of lecture capture technology in at least one computer lab on campus to enhance the statistics and methods courses typically taught in these rooms.



course syllabi and student artifacts. In addition, the SOE leadership and faculty review Praxis Core and Praxis II pass rates, student GPAs, graduation rates, program completer survey data, surveys of student teaching placement supervisors, alumni employment outcomes, and curriculum mapping (to identify curricular alignment with INTASC standards). This information is analyzed annually via monthly data talks that address specific topics or datasets each time. Courses are adjusted as needed based on the results of the student artifacts assessment and curriculum mapping.

Similarly, the School of Nursing has historically used discipline-relevant assessment methods, focused on detailed analyses of ATI testing to measure improvements in students' learning and mastery among students in particular classes. NCLEX pass rates among our graduates also served as a measure of learning outcome mastery.

Starting with the 2019–20 academic year, both Nursing and Education also will use the Nichols assessment model as an additional source of information on their students' success.

### Student Services Outcomes Assessment

Until 2016, NSC conducted limited outcomes assessment in student services areas. This was partly attributable to a lack of resources, but it also was a function of the tenuous foothold that learning outcomes assessment had established in these fields. Given the College's emphasis on evidence-based practices, and the value elicited from our academic outcomes assessment data, NSC seeks to become a leader in the development and assessment of learning outcomes in student services divisions. In fact, in 2019 three of NSC's student services directors were invited to give a sponsored talk titled "[Examining the Congruence between Student Perception of Learning and Their Actual Abilities: A Comparison of Direct and Indirect Measures in Student Learning Outcomes Assessment](#)" at the annual NASPA conference based

on their efforts to engage in evidence-based outcomes assessment that moves beyond students' self-reports.

Each unit that directly serves students has developed outcomes, metrics for measurement, and an assessment schedule. This includes the Academic Advising Center, Disability Resource Center, Career Services Center, Academic Success Center, Admissions & Recruiting, Office of the Registrar, Office of Financial Aid, Office of Community Engagement and Diversity Initiatives, Office of Information and Technology Services, Office of Institutional Research, Student Life, and the Library (which conducts both academic and student services assessments).

The director of each unit submits an [annual report](#) to the Provost's Office noting progress toward meeting goals and suggestions for improvement. Where possible, student services areas use direct measures of improvement, rather than student self-reports. For instance, the Academic Success Center developed rubrics that tutors use to evaluate whether students demonstrate mastery of Outcome 2, "Allow students to demonstrate understanding of course content during tutoring sessions" by rating their ability to work through problems independently.

### Additional Assessment Data

The College also uses key metrics from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), student exit surveys (to identify job placements), surveys of community partners, Praxis and NCLEX exam pass rates (for students in Education and Nursing,



respectively), a Student Satisfaction Survey conducted by an independent research firm, National Student Clearinghouse data (e.g., students enrolling in graduate or professional programs), and other internal surveys such as the 2016 NSC Student Life Survey and the Campus Climate Survey (distributed to all employees every other year).

Program directors compile regular reports on the effectiveness of sponsored projects (e.g., grant- and donor-funded activities), analyzing data to evaluate whether the projects are meeting program-specific goals. For example, program reports for [Nepantla](#), which offers a summer bridge program and multi-year support to first-generation, low-income students, include evaluations of retention and graduation rates of participants, utilization rates of student support services, and students' engagement in enriching learning experiences (e.g., presenting at academic conferences.)

These diverse sources of data allow the College to holistically assess our progress toward meeting desired outcomes and fulfilling our mission.

#### NSHE Data and Reports

NSHE makes data on key metrics for all public institutions in the state easily available online, including [graduation rates](#), [enrollment by term](#), [financial aid disbursements](#), [tuition and fees](#), and [enrollment and graduation rates by race/ethnicity](#). NSHE also compiles annual and ad hoc reports on topics such as [faculty workload](#), [planning reports](#), and [enrollment of veterans](#). The Office of the Provost produces data analyses and reports as requested by NSHE to support these larger System-wide evaluations and accountability efforts.

**4.A.4 The institution evaluates holistically the alignment, correlation, and integration of programs and services with respect to accomplishment of core theme objectives.**

**4.A.5 The institution evaluates holistically the alignment, correlation, and integration of planning, resources, capacity, practices, and assessment with respect to achievement of the goals or intended outcomes of its programs or services, wherever offered and however delivered.**

The College is in a continual state of communication and evaluation across different divisions – or division leaders – about our progress toward critical campus goals. This circumstance has less to do with a formal and concerted effort to holistically evaluate the alignment, correlation, and integration of programs and services, as stated in Standards 4.A.4 and 4.A.5, and more to do with a consensus understanding of our most important institutional goals and the recognition that the effective alignment and integration of campus elements is essential to their achievement.

Much of this integration and alignment is a consequence of how the Office of the Provost is intentionally structured. As indicated in our [organizational chart](#), the Provost's Office deliberately interweaves areas of academic and student affairs that are not always closely integrated in more traditional higher education structures. At NSC, everything from academic programs, to admissions and recruitment, to student life and supporting services (e.g., advising, disability resources) are united under the umbrella of the Provost's Office. The shared responsibility for these programs ensures awareness of their alignment and integration, and it both facilitates and motivates efforts to increase the effectiveness of these areas in relation to one another. Put in practical terms, it can be comparatively straightforward to align the efforts of staff and directors in areas such as admissions, advising, student life, and tutoring because they all ultimately report to the same individual.

Institutional processes and standing committees also help the College evaluate the integration and alignment of core programs and services. Of critical importance in this regard is the President's Executive Leadership Team, which meets on a weekly basis and assembles high-level campus leaders to discuss decisions and ongoing developments, many of which are tied to core theme objectives. Importantly, this group fosters a steady dialogue between the Provost and the Senior Vice President of Finance and Business Operations, who together oversee the majority of programs and services at Nevada State College. Other key institutional groups that help us align and integrate our efforts include the College Leadership Team, which meets on a monthly basis and brings together representative leaders from across the campus, and the Council of Directors, which regularly assembles most of the student academic and support services directors to discuss their work toward campus objectives.

Finally, in many instances, owing in large part to the structure and responsibility of the office, members of the Provost's team have encouraged collaboration among key groups to ensure the proper integration of different divisions in the pursuit of College goals. Representative examples include a leadership group referred to as "P4," which meets once per month to develop and refine student services policies. The group, which includes the Vice Provost of Academic Initiatives, the Registrar, and the directors of Financial Aid, the Academic Advising Center, and Admissions and Recruitment, has recently established new or improved policies in areas such as enrollment cancellation for non-attendance, student medical leaves of absence, student military leave, and animals on campus. The existence of the group helps NSC account for inter-division considerations in the development of policies that could impact student success. Another illustrative example is a communication and outreach group consisting

of the Registrar, the Director of Admissions & Recruitment, the Director of Advising, and the Vice Provost of Student Success. This group was charged with refining a [communication/outreach plan](#) that guides students through critical milestones in their academic careers, and, in so doing, rectifies gaps and inconsistencies in the messaging that was formerly conveyed by each office.

These structures and processes have helped cultivate an evaluation of the alignment of critical programs and services, but the accreditation process has helped the College realize that additional efforts in this regard could improve our achievement of institutional goals. To this end, the Office of the Provost will work with campus divisions to develop "action plans" that both contribute to the goals in the overall 2020–2025 strategic plan (which will align with core theme objectives) and to formally document and enhance the integration of different programs and services.

#### **4.A.6 The institution regularly reviews its assessment processes to ensure they appraise authentic achievements and yield meaningful results that lead to improvement.**

##### Improving Academic and Student Services Assessment

In 2016, the Provost's Office led a summer institute focused on overhauling the outcomes assessment process.<sup>1</sup> Faculty assessment chairs received a stipend to participate in the 6-week institute, which involved attending twice-weekly meetings with key administrators and completing work outside of the meetings, such as discussing challenges and improvements with other faculty in their disciplines. The final result of the institute was a set of documents to guide assessment long-term, including:

- [Outcomes maps](#) clarifying which program-level outcomes are addressed in which courses;

<sup>1</sup> See [evidence folder](#) for relevant documentation.

- [Assessment schedules](#) identifying which outcome or other element of the program would be assessed through 2021, along with the artifacts to be used in each year's assessment;
- [Drafts of program standards](#) aimed at providing guidance to faculty about minimum technical requirements, sample assignments, and learning goals for lower- and upper-division courses in the program.

The institute culled input from faculty on how to improve our overall assessment process, establish a more robust “culture of assessment,” and develop high-quality assignments. As a result of this process, some programs recognized the need to update or consolidate program learning outcomes and submitted curriculum revision proposals to do so in the following academic year. The institute also led to the determination that assessment should occur annually, rather than every other year, which led to the current model of “learning outcomes assessment” (in even years) and “program assessment” (in odd years), described in section 4.A.3.

Finally, in summer 2017, the Provost's Office provided structured support, including a half-day retreat, for student services areas to complete assessment planning. Directors of student services units used the CAS Professional Standards for Higher Education (Wells, 2015) to consider the mission and goals of their units as they relate to the larger campus mission and undergraduate learning and development. Each unit [developed clear outcomes](#), identified metrics for measuring them, and set goals.

Student services directors now submit annual reports summarizing their assessment of outcomes.

### Improved Course Evaluation System

In Fall 2013, the College revised the student course evaluation surveys used for every class offered at NSC. The revisions were based on the course evaluation literature, internal discussions with a range of stakeholders (including faculty with survey construction expertise), and focus groups with students to examine whether wording changes were needed to improve their understanding of the questions. One of the foremost goals of the endeavor was to emphasize aspects of the course a student can more accurately assess (e.g., specific “best practice” behaviors by the instructor), while minimizing the role of questions that are more susceptible to bias, including those framed around the enjoyment derived from the class.

An ongoing challenge with course evaluations was low response rates. In Spring 2016, the College shifted the administration of all evaluations, including those for in-person courses, to the online EvalKit program. This streamlined the process and allowed NSC to introduce new measures, based on standard practices for disseminating online evaluations, that further increased participation. Response rates on student evaluations are consistently much higher than before the move to the online system, in many cases rising to 90% or higher, even for online evaluations (which formerly exhibited response rates ranging from 20% to 40%).

The new system also allows individual faculty members, chairs, and deans to quickly receive final results, as there is no longer any need for laborious input of data from paper evaluations. The Office of Institutional Research introduced improved methods for providing aggregate quantitative data, developing systems that automatically sync with EvalKit and other data sources. Deans have access to sophisticated datasets that allow them to plot quantitative scores for any faculty member(s) with comparisons to average scores in their discipline/department, School, or across the entire College.





### Other Campus Assessment Efforts

The College routinely evaluates metrics used to assess the core themes of the accreditation process. In some cases this has led to adjustments in the means of assessment. For instance, the Career Services Center transitioned to a new survey system for collecting job placement data in order to ensure that NSC is able to collect reliable and valid data for assessing Core Theme 1 (Promote Student Success).

Other assessment efforts attempt to identify needs in specific areas, including:

- The School of Liberal Arts & Sciences, which has the largest number of adjunct faculty, has distributed several surveys to identify the highest-priority needs among adjuncts;
- The College surveyed the student body about mental health needs to assess the level of need before introducing mental health services;
- Our mental health provider routinely provides the Provost's Office with data on overall use, demographics, outcomes, and client satisfaction with their services, and this information is included with other data in an annual report by the Student CARE Team.

- The College periodically conducts a Campus Climate Survey of employees, with results and relevant statistical analyses distributed widely across campus and discussed at campus events such as Convocation;
- Attendees at Convocation and other professional development days are asked to complete feedback surveys about the programming and to suggest future topics;
- The CTLE asked faculty to self-assess their progress in each of the CTLE's four faculty learning outcomes.

### Future Assessment Planning

Assessment efforts at NSC have improved in recent years as stakeholders campus-wide have invested in stating clear objectives, identifying metrics, and conducting regular assessments. Both academic programs and student services engage in annual assessment, and the College also undertakes assessment of metrics specific to our accreditation Core Themes. Nevertheless, the College is aware of challenges and areas for meaningful improvement, and these are discussed in more detail in Chapter 5.

## 4.B IMPROVEMENT

**4.B.1 Results of core theme assessments and results of assessments of programs and services are: a) based on meaningful institutionally identified indicators of achievement; b) used for improvement by informing planning, decision making, and allocation of resources and capacity; and c) made available to appropriate constituencies in a timely manner.**

**4.B.2 The institution uses the results of its assessment of student learning to inform academic and learning-support planning and practices that lead to enhancement of student learning achievements. Results of student learning assessments are made available to appropriate constituencies in a timely manner.**

### Summary Statement

Our self-evaluation indicates that Nevada State College relies on meaningful indicators of achievement, uses assessment data to improve the institution through planning, decision-making, and resource allocation, and has mechanisms to apprise appropriate constituencies of our progress.<sup>1</sup> However, improvements are essential in key areas, particularly regarding the Core Curriculum and the extent to which the College draws a clear connection between our ongoing endeavors and overall institutional goals.

The indicators used by Nevada State College are a mix of direct assessments, typically of student learning, and indirect measures, often in the form of surveys and institutional research data. The rich information provided by the former is complemented by the comprehensive scope of the latter, and taken together they provide us with a fuller picture of institutional achievement and areas for improvement. For example, the need to improve the transparency of assignment instructions emerged from faculty assessment data, but it also surfaced in the student evaluation surveys that are administered to all classes every term, strengthening the impetus and understanding of the necessary change.

### ENHANCED TEACHING & LEARNING

Some of the most noteworthy accomplishments of our assessment efforts have been in the realm of student learning. As detailed more fully in the 2018 [Outcomes Assessment Summary Report](#), our program of assessment, coupled with student evaluation feedback, has contributed to a variety of meaningful improvements to the quality of teaching and learning at NSC. Selected improvements are illustrated in Table 4B-1 and include the development of instructor resource repositories in our Canvas LMS (History), the introduction of a scaffolded approach to assignments (Criminal Justice), the overhaul of student learning outcomes (English), and an emphasis on knowledge and skill acquisition that reflects current trends in respective disciplines (e.g., computational abilities in the Math program; applied research in Biology). Looking forward, the 2018 assessment cycle suggested several future improvements that can be loosely oriented around three primary themes: 1) improve assignment transparency and alignment with programmatic outcomes; 2) encourage a better application of sound theory and evidence; and 3) increase the emphasis on practical/applied skills. These topics have been a focus of conversation in meetings with assessment chairs and will be addressed in correspondence with the larger body of faculty at the College.



<sup>1</sup> In most cases, the most recent year of analysis is 2017-18, as this is the latest year for which IPEDs data has been released. In some cases provisional 2018-19 internal data are included to provide additional context.

**Table 4B-1: Selected Assessment-Driven Program Improvements**

Degree Program	Selected Areas of Improvement
<b>English, B.A.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Required use of MLA format in all English courses</li> <li>• Revised student learning outcomes for the major to enable multiple improvements, including increased student engagement with scholarly research</li> <li>• Revised the degree to add more depth, breadth, and writing studies to the major</li> <li>• Planning development workshops to improve delivery of learning outcomes by both full- and part-time faculty</li> </ul>
<b>Criminal Justice, B.A.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developed and offered online section of <i>Research Methods</i></li> <li>• Provided more examples of student work – at differing performance levels—to better illustrate expectations</li> <li>• Implemented scaffolded approach to assignments, along with the ability to resubmit assignments in accordance with recommended practices</li> <li>• Introduced Supplemental Instruction to CRJ 302 (<i>Quantitative Analysis</i>) in collaboration with Academic Success Center</li> <li>• Implemented recommended practices in CRJ 302, including supplemental video content for each chapter and additional assessments</li> </ul>
<b>Environmental &amp; Resource Sciences, B.S.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developed high-quality assessment tools for use in future program assessment efforts</li> <li>• Incorporated new assignment requiring students to upload a 5-minute presentation of a research paper to give them experience doing oral presentations</li> </ul>
<b>History, B.A.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Created <a href="#">History Instructor’s Resource shell</a> in Canvas that includes resources such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Guidelines for text and papers</li> <li>◦ Materials related to strengthening course objectives (e.g., Bloom’s Taxonomy)</li> <li>◦ Guidelines for meeting curricular requirements regarding the State of Nevada and U.S. Constitutions</li> <li>◦ Tips to help instructors assist students in building success-oriented skills (e.g., notetaking, library research)</li> <li>◦ All student learning outcomes for the History program</li> <li>◦ Plans to bolster resource shell with exemplary assignments, annotated syllabus that illustrates best practices, and further guidance regarding how history SLOs can be emphasized in assignments and class sessions</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Math, B.S.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heavy investment to improve MATH 120, Nevada State’s de facto “gateway college math” course</li> <li>• Introduced a more computational approach to several courses that is more consistent with the demands and capabilities of current technology</li> <li>• Required students to do more technical writing in targeted courses</li> <li>• Hosted a math conference for high school students to foster interest in the major and hopefully expand the pipeline of incoming students</li> </ul>
<b>Psychology, B.A./B.S.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Created infographic with step-by-step instructions for the application of course content and distributed it to all part-time and full-time psychology faculty</li> <li>• Full-time faculty will be more involved in hiring and preparing part-time faculty</li> </ul>

Importantly, the College also has made significant resource investments to enable systemic improvements to our quality of teaching and learning. Foremost among these is the launch of our Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence (CTLE). The [mission](#) of the CTLE is to provide “professional development opportunities for all full-time and part-time faculty at Nevada State College in order to improve student learning outcomes and support the College’s academic mission.” In service of this mission, the CTLE has promoted best practices in teaching through efforts such as Faculty Learning Communities, an in-house Teaching Certificate program, a campus-wide summer Active Learning Retreat, and an “online course renovation collaborative” designed specifically to enhance online instruction. The CTLE is partly a response to general assessment findings that call for enhanced teaching in the service of student learning outcomes, but its incorporation of part-time faculty into many development efforts specifically addresses one of the most common recommendations from our assessment data, which is that our adjunct faculty, while often exceptional, can benefit from additional teaching support and guidance. To this end, the College also has introduced an Adjunct Faculty Coordinator in the School of Liberal Arts & Sciences, which features our largest number of adjunct instructors. The Adjunct Faculty Coordinator assists with the development and performance of adjunct faculty by providing onboarding support, conducting teaching observations that lead to recommendations for improvement, and addressing a variety of needs that help instructors focus on quality instruction.

## CHALLENGES

As indicated by these observations, as well as those detailed in Section 3B, the institution consistently and effectively uses assessment data—and other evaluative evidence—to inform institutional improvements. The principle challenge regarding the College’s program of assessment, including our ability to implement recommended improvements,

arguably rests with a comparative lack of personnel. As a new institution, for many years Nevada State lacked the financial resources to have more than two faculty guide each of its degree programs, yet the goals of assessment are the same whether the burden of work is spread across two faculty or twenty. The College has made strides to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our assessment work, as described in Section 4.A.6, and has made investments that broaden the scope and quality of faculty contributions, as with the CTLE, but no amount of strategy can properly compensate for having an inadequate number of people to do the work. Fortunately, the recent availability of more robust formula funding dollars is giving NSC an opportunity to expand our faculty ranks, as seen with the 22 faculty lines approved for FY20 and FY21.

Another identified shortcoming is the extent to which the College consistently and conspicuously appraises the campus of our progress in the assessment of critical institutional goals. Information is made available to stakeholders via dashboards and summary reports, but improving the communication of our progress is a targeted area for improvement.

In the section that follows, we detail the institution’s performance according to key metrics for each core theme, identifying both the results of our assessments and any corresponding analyses and recommendations.







## Core Theme 1: Promote Student Success

Overall, we observed meaningful progress toward the achievement of our objectives for Core Theme 1, but fell short of our targeted thresholds in multiple areas. In some cases, this result reflects a need for continued improvement. For example, the decision to revamp our Core Curriculum manifested from the shortcomings identified in our recent assessment of the Core learning outcomes. Similarly, the assessment of degree program learning outcomes suggested several improvements, including a tighter alignment between key assignments and programmatic goals and a better integration of applied knowledge and skills into the curriculum.

However, the analysis also indicated that the College is promoting student success in a variety of ways, and that NSC harbors a fairly aspirational perspective on what it means to be “successful.” For instance, 62.9% of students achieved a rating of “proficient” or higher in their assessed mastery of major learning outcomes, a 13% jump from

the prior assessment and a score that is just shy of a threshold that, at 70%, is ambitious for an essentially open-access college. Likewise, many of our NSSE scores did not reach our identified achievement threshold, but 15 of the 16 survey items we examined surpassed the average scores attained by our collective comparison institutions (Far West Public and Carnegie Class), suggesting that the College established an unusually high threshold for success with this indicator.

Ultimately, our achievement of Core Theme 1 objectives is evaluated as partially achieved, based on the findings shown in Table 4B-2, which rated each supporting indicator on a scale where 0 = “not achieved,” 1 = “partially achieved,” and 2 = “achieved.” According to this rubric, the College earned 18 out of 26 possible points toward the achievement of the Core Theme 1 objectives, and either fully or partially achieved all but one of the thresholds for our indicators. In the section following the table, we provide more insight into the results and associated recommendations for future improvements.

## 4B-2: Core Theme 1 Achievement Summary

Objective	Indicator	Results	Achievement Score (out of 2)
1.1	Core Curriculum Learning Outcomes Assessment	<p><i>Achievement Threshold</i> – At least 70% of students will achieve a rating of “proficient” or better</p> <p><i>Result</i> – Threshold not achieved for either critical thinking (51% proficient) or communication (48% proficient)</p>	1
	ATI Critical Thinking Assessment	<p><i>Achievement Threshold</i> – 25% improvement from entrance assessment to exit assessment</p> <p><i>Result</i> – Threshold achieved in all but one year of the accreditation cycle</p>	2
	EBI Scores	<p><i>Achievement Threshold</i> – EBI ratings of 75% or higher for assessed items</p> <p><i>Result</i> – Threshold achieved in 4 of 5 years for students ability to work in teams, and in most recent 3 of 5 years for working with colleagues to support learning</p>	2
	NSSE Items	<p><i>Achievement Threshold</i> – More than 80% of respondents will rate the College as “good” or “excellent” on each item assessed</p> <p><i>Result</i> – Threshold generally not achieved, but NSC equaled or surpassed NSSE peer institutions on every item</p>	1
1.2	NSSE Items	<p><i>Achievement Threshold</i> – More than 80% of respondents will: a) say NSC has contributed “quite a bit” or “very much” to their learning and/or b) report that they “often” or “very often” had experiences as indicated on the item; at least 20% of respondents will report that “some,” “most,” or “all” courses included a community-based or service-learning project</p> <p><i>Result</i> – Threshold achieved only for community-based learning question; however, responses roundly surpassed those for NSSE peer institutions</p>	1
	Core Curriculum Learning Outcomes Assessment	<p><i>Achievement Threshold</i> – At least 70% of students will achieve a rating of “proficient” or better for citizenship outcome</p> <p><i>Result</i> – Threshold not achieved, with 50% of artifacts achieving “proficient” or better</p>	1
1.3	NCLEX Pass Rates	<p><i>Achievement Threshold</i> – Maintain acceptably high pass rates</p> <p><i>Result</i> – Threshold achieved, with a pass rate of 90% or higher in every year under review</p>	2
	Praxis Pass Rates	<p><i>Achievement Threshold</i> – Maintain acceptably high pass rates</p> <p><i>Result</i> – Threshold achieved, with a pass rate of roughly 90% in every year under review</p>	2
	Degree Program Learning Outcomes Assessment	<p><i>Achievement Threshold</i> – At least 70% of students will achieve a rating of “proficient” or better for degree outcome under review</p> <p><i>Result</i> – Threshold approached but not fully achieved (62.9% proficiency across all programs); 3 of 12 programs eclipsed the threshold, an additional 5 were at 60% or higher, 1 just surpassed 50%, and 3 programs were more than 20 points below the targeted threshold</p>	1
	NSSE Items	<p><i>Achievement Threshold</i> – At least 80% of students will indicate that the College contributed “quite a bit” or “very much” to the acquisition of work-related skills</p> <p><i>Result</i> – Threshold not achieved, but NSC again outperformed NSSE peers</p>	1

**Table 4B-2 CONTINUED**

Objective	Indicator	Results	Achievement Score (out of 2)
1.4	NSSE Items	<i>Achievement Threshold</i> – At least 80% of students will respond “quite a bit/very much” or “often/very often” regarding items about learning engagement  <i>Result</i> – Threshold not achieved, and NSC did not consistently surpass NSSE peers	0
	Student Course Evaluation Ratings	<i>Achievement Threshold</i> – Mean overall rating of 4.25 or higher for NSC courses  <i>Result</i> – Threshold achieved, with mean rating consistently above 4.3	2
	EBI Scores	<i>Achievement Threshold</i> – NSC will receive scores higher than 75% for items relating to quality of instruction and quality of learning experience  <i>Result</i> – Threshold achieved, with ratings consistently above 75% for both measures	2

**OVERALL: 18 out of 26**

### Objective 1.1: Develop effective critical thinkers and communicators

#### Indicator #1: Core Curriculum Learning Outcomes Assessment

##### RESULTS

Direct evaluation of student learning through the assessment of Core Curriculum learning outcomes is a key indicator of our success in fulfilling Objective 1.1. The achievement threshold for this indicator is for at least 70% of artifacts to be rated “proficient” or better on the Critical Thinking and Communication core learning outcomes by the final assessment of the accreditation cycle (which took place in Fall 2017).

The results indicate that NSC did not meet the threshold of achievement for either learning outcome (Table 4B-3). While the vast majority of artifacts were rated “satisfactory” or better, only 51% were rated “proficient” or better on Critical Thinking, and 48% on Communication.

##### ANALYSIS/RECOMMENDATIONS

Our evaluation of the results indicate that a number of factors contributed to our inability to meet our goals for this indicator. A significant issue is the difficulty

of aligning assignments in Core courses with the Core Curriculum learning outcomes. Courses that fulfill Core Curriculum requirements come from virtually every discipline on campus, and faculty designing and teaching those courses are often more aware of and focused on aligning assignments with the learning outcomes for their specific academic programs than with Core Curriculum learning outcomes. As a result, assignment instructions in these courses often target some, but not all, of the elements of the Core learning outcome, making it difficult to fully assess a student’s mastery of a Core outcome when the assignment did not ask them to address some aspects of it. One of our goals moving forward is to ensure that courses fulfilling Core Curriculum requirements align with the Core learning outcomes as well as the learning outcomes for the degree program in which the course is situated (for courses that meet both Core and major requirements).

In the 2017 assessment, the committee (consisting of instructional faculty) also reported difficulty operationalizing the outcomes, an issue that had arisen in past assessments. All [Core Curriculum learning outcomes](#) include four levels, and within each level are several sub-outcomes. For instance, Table 4B-4 presents the four levels of Communication and their sub-outcomes.

**Table 4B-3: 2017 Core Curriculum Threshold and Assessment Results**

Learning Outcome	Active Threshold	Assessment Results
<b>Critical Thinking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>70% of artifacts rated proficient or better</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>83% of artifacts rated satisfactory or better</li> <li>51% of artifacts rated proficient or better</li> </ul>
<b>Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>70% of artifacts rated proficient or better</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>87% of artifacts rated satisfactory or better</li> <li>48% of artifacts rated proficient or better</li> </ul>

**Table 4B-4: Details of Communication Core Learning Outcome**

Level	Sub-outcomes
<b>1: Clarity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State position orally and in written form</li> <li>Include the main idea(s) and purpose</li> <li>Write multiple drafts</li> </ul>
<b>2: Structure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a structured argument</li> <li>Substantiate argument with supporting research</li> <li>Establish clear transitions between introduction, ideas, and conclusion</li> <li>Make revisions</li> </ul>
<b>3: Tone and Audience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adopt appropriate voice, tone, and level of formality for intended audience</li> <li>Ensure unity, clarity, and coherence in paragraphs</li> <li>Anticipate counter-arguments</li> <li>Accepts and profit from criticism</li> </ul>
<b>4: Persuasion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employ emotional and rational persuasion</li> <li>Incorporate a variety of technologies</li> <li>Explore novel means of presentation</li> <li>Understand the social impact of communication</li> <li>Critique own work</li> </ul>

This structure, while well-intentioned from a student learning standpoint, is not ideally suited to operationalizing the outcomes for assessment. Committees may struggle with artifacts that, for instance, demonstrate “proficient” mastery of three of the four sub-outcomes under “Structure” but do not show mastery of making revisions, mainly because the assignment was not written to include drafts or revisions.

Based on these challenges, as well as an interest in joining the [WICHE Interstate Passport](#) to facilitate students’ transfer of general education credits, the College has included an overhaul of the Core Curriculum as part of the 2020–2025 Strategic Plan. The intent is to revise our Core Curriculum to align with the [LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes](#), which are effectively implemented at many institutions,

and then make desired modifications based on the unique learning goals of the College. A committee of instructional faculty will lead the Core Curriculum improvement initiative, which will include revising Core Curriculum categories as needed, re-populating the revised Core categories with appropriate courses, developing standards for evaluating proposals to add courses to the Core in the future, and developing a learning outcomes assessment plan.

While we take all of those issues into account, we also recognize that more attention is needed to our Core Curriculum as a coherent whole. Whereas individual programs fall under the purview of deans and/or department chairs, the responsibility for the Core Curriculum is not clearly attributed to a specific person (or people), which we will address in the redesign of the Core.

**Indicator #2: ATI Critical Thinking Assessment**

**RESULTS**

The ATI assessment of critical thinking measures Nursing students’ critical thinking skills at the beginning and end of their time in the program. This provides an external, nationally-recognized measure of the degree to which NSC’s Nursing program contributes to students’ gains in critical thinking. NSC set a goal of increasing the proportion of students scoring at the “proficient” level or higher by 25% between the entrance and exit assessments by 2017–18.

A score of 70 was set as the baseline (ATI Level 1) proficiency score. In all but the first year of this accreditation cycle, a higher percentage of students met the Level 1 score at their exit assessment than at the entry-point assessment (Figure 4B-1). These results suggest that Nursing students’ critical thinking skills improve during their time in the program, and the percentage increase each year is substantial. Moreover, the College met our goal of seeing a 25% improvement between entrance and exit assessments by the end of the accreditation cycle.

**ANALYSIS/RECOMMENDATIONS**

The College does take note that in 2017–18, though students showed gains in critical thinking,

fewer than 70% met the proficiency threshold on their exit assessment. As the School of Nursing continues to accept larger cohorts and implement a revised curriculum, ATI exit scores bear monitoring to determine whether the 2017–18 results represent a longer-term pattern. We also will consider whether this is a useful metric for our core themes, as results on the ATI exam do not correlate well with the NCLEX pass rates of our nursing graduates, which have remained above 90% even as the ATI results have varied.

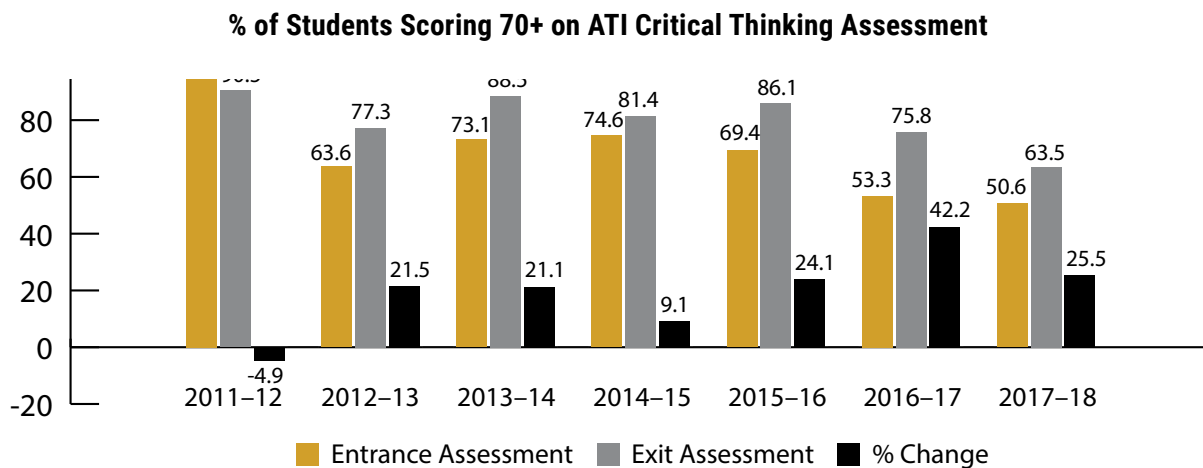
**Indicator #3: EBI Scores**

**RESULTS**

The EBI survey was administered to Education students through the 2016–17 academic year (with the exception of 2015–16, when the College did not participate). We identified a mean score of 75% as our achievement threshold based on recommended EBI benchmarks. NSC focused on two specific EBI items that are relevant for Core Theme Goal 1: one that asked students to rate their satisfaction with other Education students’ ability to work in teams and one that asked students to rate their confidence in their ability to work collaboratively with colleagues to support student learning.

NSC received ratings of 75% or higher on the EBI item related to teamwork in every year except

**Figure 4B-1: ATI Assessment Results**





2016–17, when the average score on this item dipped to 73%. For the item regarding Education students’ confidence in their ability to work with colleagues, scores increased substantially over the course of the accreditation cycle. Though the average scores were below the acceptable threshold and the national average in 2011–12 and 2012–13, they were much higher, and slightly above mean scores for comparable institutions, from 2013–14 through 2016–17.

**ANALYSIS/RECOMMENDATIONS**

As new leadership in the School of Education evaluated, revamped, and expanded the outcomes assessment process, the School discontinued use of EBI after 2016–17, as they did not believe it added sufficient value as an indicator of whether Education is achieving its objectives. As such, we are not analyzing these data further.

**Table 4B-5: Results for Select NSSE Indicator Questions\***

	2012-13	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Far West Public	Carnegie
<b>Overall Satisfaction with Educational Experience</b>	91%	88%	89%	90%	90%	82%	82%
<b>Gained: Analysis Skills</b>	61%	59%	65%	64%	66%	52%	57%
<b>Gained: Speaking Skills</b>	66%	67%	66%	74%	72%	66%	66%
<b>Gained: Writing Skills</b>	75%	69%	68%	67%	78%	71%	72%
<b>Combined Ideas from Different Courses</b>	67%	69%	67%	66%	70%	65%	60%
<b>Courses Applied Theories or Methods</b>	79%	83%	80%	83%	81%	75%	74%

\*NSC did not administer NSSE in 2013–14.

## Indicator #4: NSSE Data

### RESULTS

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) includes a number of items that relate to Core Theme 1. We selected four items that closely align with critical thinking and communication and set two thresholds of achievement:

- 80% of more of NSSE respondents will rate their entire educational experience as “good” or “excellent”
- Demonstrate statistically significant improvements in the ratings on other NSSE indicators

As Table 4B-5 shows, NSC surpassed the threshold for acceptable achievement regarding students’ satisfaction with their overall educational experience, with roughly 90% of NSSE respondents giving the College a rating of “good” or “excellent” on this item in each year of the accreditation cycle.

Regarding the second threshold of achievement, we observed improvements on the other NSSE items examined for this indicator, but the increases were not statistically significant.

### ANALYSIS/RECOMMENDATIONS

Though our institutional inclination is to set very aspirational goals, when viewed in the context of comparable institutions, it may be that we defined unrealistic goals for this metric at a time when our NSSE performance was not well understood. To this point, the last two columns of Table 4B-6 show the 2017–18 NSSE results for our comparison institutions in the Far West Public region and our Carnegie Class. For every NSSE item, NSC scored higher than the two comparison groups. Consequently, our recommendation for future accreditation cycles is to establish goals that remain aspirational but are grounded in the more realistic context established by our peer institutions.

Objective 1.2: Foster integrity and positive citizenship

## Indicator #1: NSSE Data

### RESULTS

The College relied on several NSSE items that relate to integrity and citizenship and defined the following acceptable thresholds of achievement:

- At least 80% of respondents will report that NSC contributed “quite a bit” or “very much” to their knowledge, skills, and personal development in:
  - understanding people from other backgrounds
  - working effectively with others
  - developing a personal code of values and ethics
- At least 80% of respondents will report that they “often” or “very often” had discussions with people from different races/ethnicities, religious groups, political perspectives, and economic backgrounds; “often” or “very often” connected their learning to societal problems; and that their classes “often” or “very often” included diverse perspectives.
- At least 20% of respondents will report that “some,” “most,” or “all” of their courses included a community-based or service-learning project.

Table 4B-6 summarizes NSSE responses for these items, which, with the exception of the item about completing community-based projects, did not meet our established achievement thresholds. In 2017–18, three items approached the 80% target, and the majority were above 70%. While some showed improvements across the accreditation cycle, others showed declines or no clear pattern.

**Table 4B-6: Results for Select NSSE Indicator Questions\***

	2012-13	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Far West Public	Carnegie
<b>Gained: Understanding Diverse Backgrounds</b>	69%	68%	68%	75%	72%	67%	63%
<b>Gained: Work Effectively with Others</b>	70%	69%	71%	76%	77%	72%	73%
<b>Gained: Personal Values and Ethics</b>	62%	62%	65%	72%	69%	62%	69%
<b>Diverse Discussions: Different Race</b>	81%	80%	84%	81%	77%	76%	67%
<b>Diverse Discussions: Different Religion</b>	72%	73%	80%	77%	70%	70%	56%
<b>Diverse Discussions: Political Viewpoints</b>	72%	71%	77%	75%	70%	62%	67%
<b>Diverse Discussions: Economic Differences</b>	76%	83%	78%	74%	76%	74%	71%
<b>Connected Learning to Societal Issues</b>	66%	71%	70%	67%	69%	60%	57%
<b>Courses Included Diverse Perspectives</b>	59%	66%	64%	63%	58%	55%	53%
<b>Completed Community-Based Projects</b>	50%	51%	52%	58%	58%	12%	14%

\*NSC did not administer NSSE in 2013-14.

### ANALYSIS/RECOMMENDATIONS

A closer examination of the data indicated increasing scores across the accreditation cycle for the items relating to understanding diverse backgrounds (+3%), working effectively with others (+7%), and personal values and ethics (+7%), but decreases for items associated with diverse discussions about race (-4%), religion (-2%), and political viewpoints (-2%). There are no data that speak directly to this dichotomy, but during the accreditation cycle the student body as a whole became significantly more diverse at Nevada State, and these students may have held higher expectations regarding diverse discussions, resulting

in lower overall self-report ratings of these items. These issues are integral to our mission and core values, and will be a focus of future endeavors, including the revision of the Core Curriculum.

To establish additional context regarding our NSSE indicators for Objective 1.2, we compared our results to relevant peer institutions (see the final two columns in Table 4B-6). We were again encouraged to see that, for every item under consideration, NSC scores were equivalent to or higher than the scores for other Far West Public Institutions and our Carnegie Class (for the most recent year data are available).



**Table 4B-7: Core Curriculum Threshold and Assessment Results**

Learning Outcome	Achievement Threshold	2017 Assessment Results
<b>Citizenship</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>70% of artifacts rated Proficient or better</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>98% of artifacts rated Satisfactory or better</li> <li>50% of artifacts rated Proficient or better</li> </ul>

## Indicator #2: Core Curriculum Outcomes Assessment

### RESULTS

Another key indicator for our objective to foster integrity and positive citizenship was the assessment of the Citizenship learning outcome in our Core Curriculum. The achievement threshold for this indicator is that by the final assessment of the accreditation cycle (which took place in Fall 2017), 70% or more of artifacts would be rated “proficient” or better by the assessment committee. We did not reach this goal (Table 4B-7), but nearly every artifact assessed achieved at least a “satisfactory” performance.

### ANALYSIS/RECOMMENDATIONS

The challenges in assessing the Core Curriculum, described in relation to Core Theme 1 (Objective 1.1, Indicator #1), apply to this Core Theme 2 indicator as well. Given that the described methodological limitations inhibit our ability to draw firm conclusions about the specific ways in which students might improve, our chief recommendation is to carry out the planned redesign of the Core Curriculum and associated learning outcomes.

## Objective 1.3: Instill discipline-specific expertise

### Indicators #1 and #2: NCLEX Pass Rates and Praxis II Pass Rates

#### NCLEX RESULTS

For both the NCLEX and Praxis II the College aims to achieve the highest possible pass rates, but set minimum achievement thresholds of 90%. The NCLEX exam provides the most direct measure of our ability to instill nursing-specific expertise in our nursing graduates. NCLEX pass rates are reported on a calendar-year basis by the [Nevada State Board of Nursing](#), and our students’ success passing the NCLEX indicates that the School of Nursing curriculum and training excels at developing future nurses. With the exception of 2011, our pass rates have remained above 90%, even as NSC has expanded the size of our nursing cohorts to better meet Nevada’s growing need for qualified health professionals (Table 4B-8).

#### NCLEX ANALYSIS/RECOMMENDATIONS

The Bachelor of Science in Nursing is Nevada State’s most high-profile program, and the success of its alumni—who comprise approximately one-third of all recent BSN graduates in the state—has created an exceptionally competitive program. For its part, the School of Nursing has maintained a commitment to the highest standards, and the College has continued to invest resources into the program to ensure positive outcomes for our student population (made possible, in part, by the introduction of differential tuition for nursing courses).

**Table 4B-8: NCLEX Pass Rates**

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
<b>Pass Rate</b>	81.4	92.8	100	97.1	97.8	90.2	97.3	92

## PRAXIS II RESULTS

Students in the School of Education must pass the Praxis II exam before they can be licensed as a teacher in the state of Nevada. Thus, it serves as a direct measure of how well our Education programs instill appropriate discipline-specific knowledge needed to practice in the field of K-12 education.

NSC began tracking Praxis II data as of 2016, when we first graduated students for whom the exam was a requirement (students are not allowed to fulfill the student-teaching requirement until they pass Praxis II). Our data indicate that the threshold for achievement has been reached in each of the two most recent years, with pass rates of 91% and 90% in 2017 and 2018, respectively, and it was nearly attained in 2016, with a pass rate of 88%.

## ANALYSIS/RECOMMENDATIONS

As with the nursing program, our suite of degrees in the School of Education are highly regarded for their commitment to excellent learning experiences in rich teaching environments. The Praxis results are one of the net results of this commitment to quality in our Education programs.

### Indicator #3: Student Learning Outcomes Assessment

#### RESULTS

A key method of measuring whether the College is succeeding in instilling discipline-specific expertise is a thorough, direct assessment of students' mastery

of the learning outcomes for their majors. The most recent assessment of program-specific learning outcomes occurred in Fall 2018 using the method described in the [NSC Program of Assessment](#). After rating individual student artifacts, the analysis focused on two indices of student achievement:

1. A “proficiency index” – the percentage of student artifacts in upper-division courses rated “proficient” or higher by the assessment committee
2. An “improvement index” – a measure of “value-added,” as indicated by the degree to which artifacts in upper-division courses are rated more highly than those from lower-division courses within a major.

The threshold established in our Year One Self-Evaluation Report is to have 70% of upper-division artifacts receive a rating of “proficient” or better (i.e., a “proficiency index” of 70%). For the improvement index, the achievement threshold was to observe a substantive change. We defined this as an increase of 35 percentage points in the number of students earning a rating of “proficient” or better from lower-division courses to upper division courses.

The Executive Vice Provost completes a summary analysis of outcomes assessment results, which is then distributed to key stakeholders. Table 4B-9 summarizes the results of the Fall 2018 student learning outcomes assessment.<sup>1</sup> The

**Table 4B-9: Summary Results for Academic Outcomes Assessment**

	2018 Assessment Results
<b>Median Proficiency Rating</b>	62.9%
<b>Median Improvement Rating</b>	30%

<sup>1</sup> Because School of Education assessment activities occur throughout the year (as described in 4.A.3), the final SOE 2018-19 assessment report was not available at the time of writing and SOE data are not included in this summary of 2018 results. Similarly, School of Nursing followed a separate assessment protocol through 2018-19, but has adopted the Nichols model for future assessments. The Deaf Studies, Engineering Technology, and Allied Health Sciences majors, introduced recently, did not yet have enough students in advanced classes to conduct meaningful assessments; however, they will be included in future assessments and summaries.

median proficiency index across all programs was 62.9%, falling below our target of 70% for upper-division artifacts. The median improvement, or improvement index, was calculated as the median difference, across all programs, between the percentage of students who achieved proficiency at the lower-division level and the percentage who achieved proficiency in upper-division courses. The improvement index for the Fall 2018 assessment was 30%, suggesting that student performance did increase in the transition from lower-division to upper-division coursework.

Examining the data at the program level shows that three of the 12 academic programs under review achieved a proficiency index of 70%, an additional five were at 60% or higher, one just surpassed 50%, and three programs were more than 20 percentage points below the threshold (Table 4B-10). Likewise,

seven of the nine programs with usable data exhibited positive improvement indices, including substantive increases of over 40% for four of those programs. Two programs actually exhibited decreases in performance from lower-division to upper-division courses, and another three did not have usable lower division data for this particular assessment.

#### ANALYSIS/RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall, student achievement was strong, and eclipsed or nearly reached our aspirational threshold for a number of programs, but it also revealed areas for further improvement. To better chart our progress, we examined the student achievement scores for this assessment against the student performance observed in the prior assessment cycle. Even though a different learning outcome was under review, we observed an encouraging degree of improvement over time, as displayed in Table 4B-11.

**Table 4B-10: Program-Level Results for Outcomes Assessment\***

Program	Proficiency Index	Improvement Index
<b>Biology</b>	100% (54.2%)	50% (-12.5%)
<b>Business Administration &amp; Management</b>	63.3% (59.4%)	-11.7% (34.4%)
<b>Communication</b>	80% (48.1%)	30% (10.0%)
<b>Criminal Justice</b>	85% (66.7%)	N/A (-2.0%)
<b>English</b>	51.3% (38.9%)	41.3% (-16.1%)
<b>Environmental Science</b>	62.5% (43.3%)	12.5% (-26.7%)
<b>History</b>	66.7% (50.0%)	6.7% (4.2%)
<b>Interdisciplinary Studies</b>	10% (45.8%)	N/A (12.5%)
<b>Law Enforcement</b>	40% (N/A) <sup>2</sup>	N/A (N/A)
<b>Mathematics</b>	66.7% (86.7%)	43.3% (12.8%)
<b>Psychology</b>	20% (15.0%)	-18.9% (11.4%)
<b>Visual Media</b>	60% (91.7%)	56.7% (100.0%)

\*Percentages from the 2016 assessment are provided in parentheses next to the percentages from 2018.

<sup>2</sup> The Law Enforcement major was not included in the 2016 assessment, as the associated faculty served on the 2016 Criminal Justice assessment committee. As of 2017, the Law Enforcement major moved to the standard assessment schedule for all academic programs.

**Table 4B-11: Improvement since Last Assessment Cycle**

	2016 Assessment	2018 Assessment	Improvement (2016 to 2018)
<b>Median Proficiency*</b>	50%	62.9%	+12.9%
<b>Median Improvement</b>	8.3%	30%	+21.7%

\*Median score across all programs.

Taken as a whole, seven of the 12 programs achieved higher proficiency index scores in this assessment cycle relative to the prior one, with particularly noteworthy gains for Biology, Communication, Criminal Justice, and English. Based on an examination of the various program-level reports and conversations with the faculty assessment chairs, we believe this is largely due to continuous efforts among faculty to improve their teaching and curricula, and partly a consequence of methodological refinements that were guided by observations from our 2016 assessment. For the transition between the 2016 and 2018 assessments, the foremost refinements stemming from this process included rubrics with more measurable operational definitions, better alignment between selected assignments and the targeted learning outcome, and more time allocated to the development of assessment tools for our annual retreat.

The progress and improvements associated with our program of assessment suggest that the College has a viable process in place. This information is described more fully at the beginning of Section 4B, in the [2018 Outcomes Assessment Summary](#), and in the individual degree program [assessment reports](#) and [progress reports](#). However, several areas of further improvement have been noted, including the need to ensure that baseline, lower-division artifacts are assessable for all programs (in 2018, two programs did not have lower-division coursework that aligned with the SLO under review) and the desire to refine our improvement index. The current index is an improvement in its own right, given that the measure

did not exist prior to 2016, when mainly upper-division courses were assessed and improvement was simply assumed, but it remains a less-than-perfect measure of value-added. Finally, in addition to the specific improvements identified in the progress reports for each degree, we hope to continue strengthening our culture of assessment at Nevada State while improving the alignment among program SLOs, course goals, and assignment objectives.

#### **Indicator #4: NSSE Data**

##### **RESULTS**

Responses to the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) provide insight into whether students believe they have gained work-related skills during their time at NSC. For each year from 2012 to 2018 (with the exception of 2013–14, when the College did not administer NSSE), we examined the percentage of respondents who indicated that the College contributed “quite a bit” or “very much” to their acquisition of job- or work-related knowledge and skills. The results indicate that the College fell short of the targeted threshold of 80% for every year under review, with a minimum percentage of 63% in 2015-16 and a maximum of 69% in 2016–17.

Once again, while we did not meet our targets for this NSSE item, we received higher ratings than key comparison groups (Table 4B-12). Our 2017–18 score of 68% is roughly 13% higher than the score achieved by Far West Public Institutions, and approximately 10% higher than schools in our Carnegie class.

**Table 4B-12: Comparison of 2017–18 NSSE Results**

	NSC	Far West Publication Institutions	Carnegie Class
<b>Gained: Work-Related Knowledge and Skills</b>	68%	59%	61%

## ANALYSIS/RECOMMENDATIONS

Despite a superior performance relative to peer institutions, Nevada State will continue to incorporate work-related knowledge and skills into the student learning experience. In fact, this consideration surfaced as one of the most common faculty recommendations in the 2018 assessment cycle, which called for an increased programmatic emphasis on practical and applied skills. This attention to career-oriented knowledge and skills will likely manifest in a number of ways, including:

- In terms of both the concrete skills required for specific programs and the soft skills (e.g., problem-solving, teamwork) that are sought—and often not found—by a host of employers (see [Bloomberg](#); [Forbes](#));
- As a critical consideration in the planned redesign of the Core Curriculum;
- As a determinant of new academic program development (a consideration of workforce connections has already contributed to the decision to invest in new programs, including our Deaf Studies, Speech-Language Pathology, Communication, and Data Science degrees).

Objective 1.4: Cultivate learning experiences characterized by innovative engagement

### Indicator #1: NSSE Data

## RESULTS

Indicator #1 includes a number of NSSE items asking students about their engagement in classes and with classmates outside of class. Acceptable achievement thresholds for this indicator include:

- At least 80% of respondents will report that NSC contributed “quite a bit” or “very much” to their ability to solve complex real-world problems
- At least 80% of respondents will report that they “often” or “very often” asked questions or

participated in class discussions, gave a course presentation, asked a classmate for help, explained course materials to a classmate, studied for an exam with another student, or worked on a project with a classmate

In two areas (Asked Questions/Participated in Discussions; Gave a Presentation), we met or exceeded the target threshold by the end of the accreditation cycle (Table 4B-13). The responses for other items fell short of our targets.

## ANALYSIS/RECOMMENDATIONS

When evaluating these results alongside those of relevant comparison groups, we continue to observe that NSC scored higher than other institutions on several items (Table 4B-13). However, the College scored lower than the comparison groups on items related to students’ reliance on peers for academic support, and slightly lower on the item about giving presentations in class.

To some degree, this may reflect our commuter population. Students who do not live on campus, where they may get to know one another, and who often have significant family and work obligations, may be less likely to make the connections that would lead to studying with and otherwise relying on peers for help.

This is an area we are attempting to address, as peer support can play a key role in fostering student success. With the opening of residential housing on campus, we will for the first time be able to introduce living-learning communities that bring students together in cohorts that interact both in class and through other activities. We are also re-launching linked First-Year Experience (FYE) courses, an initiative that showed promise in the past but was discontinued during the economic recession. In Fall 2019, two sets of linked courses designed by our FYE Lecturers will be offered for students, with an emphasis on peer support and shared experiences that should enhance student engagement.

**Table 4B-13: Results for Select NSSE Indicator Questions\***

	2012-13	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Far West Public	Carnegie
<b>Gained: Solving Real-World Problems</b>	64%	64%	65%	71%	69%	59%	61%
<b>Asked Questions/Participated in Discussions</b>	98%	98%	92%	97%	97%	61%	73%
<b>Gave a Presentation</b>	79%	81%	56%	88%	82%	56%	51%
<b>Asked a Student for Help</b>	31%	38%	46%	44%	44%	52%	48%
<b>Explained Material to a Classmate</b>	48%	50%	37%	54%	54%	61%	59%
<b>Studied for Exam with Classmates</b>	39%	41%	49%	48%	48%	51%	49%
<b>Worked on Project with Classmates</b>	50%	53%	44%	80%	59%	66%	59%

\*NSC did not administer NSSE in 2013-14.

## Indicator #2: Student Course Evaluation Data

### RESULTS

In Fall 2013, NSC introduced revised student course evaluations that include questions about the learning environment. The achievement threshold is a mean rating of 4.25 (on a 5-point scale) for these items, which corresponds to a “commendable” rating in our Standards of Academe.

The mean ratings, calculated for all instructors who taught at NSC between 2013 and 2019, show that students consistently rate the quality of their learning environment very highly (Table 4B-14). Every item received a mean score of 4.3 or higher for each year of the accreditation cycle, and most were rated 4.4 or above.

### ANALYSIS/RECOMMENDATIONS

A commitment to exemplary instruction is a cornerstone of NSC’s mission and guiding determinant of institutional decisions and resource investments, from the faculty we hire—where exceptional teaching is paramount—to the development of resources such as the Center for Teaching & Learning Excellence. The evaluation scores observed here, while not a direct measure of great teaching, are a reflection of this commitment.

## Indicator #3: EBI Scores

### RESULTS

Nevada State focused on two specific EBI items that are relevant for Core Theme Goal 2: one that asked students to rate the quality of instruction and one in which they rated the quality of the learning experience in their student teaching placement. According to EBI benchmarks, an acceptable mean score is 75% or higher, which is where we set our achievement threshold.

NSC students have consistently given the College scores well above the 75% mark on both items, and NSC’s mean scores are similar to the mean scores of institutions identified by EBI as a comparison group (Table 4B-15).

### ANALYSIS/RECOMMENDATIONS

As new leadership in the School of Education evaluated, revised, and expanded the outcomes assessment process, the School discontinued use of EBI after 2016-17.

**Table 4B-14: Mean Ratings on Select Course Evaluation Items**

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
<b>Used a variety of teaching approaches to help me meet course learning objectives</b>	4.4	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.4	4.4
<b>Encourages students to share their knowledge, opinions, and experiences</b>	4.5	4.3	4.5	4.3	4.4	4.4
<b>Provided opportunities for me to learn and practice effective teaching, assessment, and/or classroom management strategies in the classroom and/or in field-based settings</b>	4.6	4.3	4.4	4.5	4.5	4.5
<b>Used technology to enrich the learning experience</b>	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.5

\*NSC introduced new student evaluation questions in Fall 2013. As a result, data prior to 2013 is not comparable to the data presented here, and were omitted.

**Table 4B-15: EBI Ratings of Instruction and Learning**

	NSC					COMPARISON GROUP				
	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2016-17	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2016-17
<b>Quality of Instruction Ratings</b>	82.2	81.7	80.7	79.3	81.3	80.5	79	83.2	82.5	78
<b>Quality of Learning Experience Ratings</b>	89.2	87	82.8	86.8	83.3	89.8	88.5	88.7	87.7	85.2





## Core Theme 2: Foster Educational Opportunity

The College made significant strides toward the achievement of Core Theme 2 and its underlying objectives. As shown in Table 4B-16, every achievement threshold for the core theme indicators was either fully or partially achieved, and overall the College earned 17 of the 20 possible points using the rubric devised for this evaluation. The result is best understood in context: faced with unacceptably low retention and graduation rates, and a mission that pledged to provide opportunity to a diverse array of students—a premise on which the institution was founded—Nevada State arguably placed an unmatched emphasis on Core Theme 2 in this accreditation cycle.

Accordingly, NSC’s enrollment grew at a historic pace, particularly among students from under-represented racial/ethnic backgrounds (62% headcount growth) and first-generation college-going families (27% growth), and we observed 8 percentage point and 5 percentage point increases in IPEDs one-year retention and six-year graduation

rates, respectively. The College is on track to have its best ever one-year retention rate for the Fall 2018 IPEDs cohort, and our most recent 6-year graduation rate of 21% is seven percentage points higher than the rate from 2014-15, marking a 50% improvement in just four years.

The progress is attributable to a multitude of factors, some of which are reflected in our Core Theme 2 indicators, including low costs of attendance, financial aid that reaches a higher proportion of students, and impactful support services that are used by progressively larger numbers of students.

Moving forward, Nevada State College will continue to improve and expand what has worked well—including an affordable cost of attendance and the development of high-demand programs—while endeavoring to break down existing barriers to graduation. In this latter regard, efforts to instill more proactive advising and wider, more reliable degree pathways, such as through the Metro Momentum Pathways Project with Complete College America, are expected to yield even better graduation rates for our entire student population.



**Table 4B-16: Core Theme 2 Achievement Summary**

Objective	Indicator	Results	Achievement Score (out of 2)
2.1	Recruit/Support Diverse Array of Students	<i>Achievement Threshold</i> – Average annual headcount growth of 5% <i>Result</i> – Threshold achieved, with total headcount growth of 32% and FTE growth of 35% from 2012 to 2018	2
	Financial Aid Awards	<i>Achievement Threshold</i> – None established <i>Result</i> – Achievement cannot be measured in the absence of a threshold, but the number of students receiving an aid package increased by 37.5% between 2011–12 and 2017–18	N/A
	Cost Comparison	<i>Achievement Threshold</i> – Maintain the lowest costs among the primarily-baccalaureate institutions in NSHE <i>Result</i> – Threshold achieved, with per-credit rate roughly 30% below the comparable rates at UNLV and UNR	2
	Satisfaction with Student Support Services	<i>Achievement Threshold</i> – 80% of students will indicate they are “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with NSC support services <i>Result</i> – Threshold almost entirely achieved, with 5 of 6 support divisions receiving scores above 80%	2
	Use of Academic Support Services	<i>Achievement Threshold</i> – Increase proportion of students who use student support services by an average of 2% annually <i>Result</i> – Threshold achieved; utilization increased from 6% of students to 56% of students over accreditation cycle, with new support services introduced	2
2.2	One-Year Retention Rate (IPEDs)	<i>Achievement Threshold</i> – Annual average increase of 1% annually for IPEDs cohort <i>Result</i> – Threshold nearly achieved; overall retention rate climbed by 8%, but most of the gains were early in the accreditation cycle	1
	Six-Year Graduation Rates (IPEDs)	<i>Achievement Threshold</i> – Annual average increase of 1% annually for IPEDs cohort <i>Result</i> – Threshold partially achieved, with overall increase of 5% across 8 years (but with a 7% increase since 2014–15)	1
	Course Completion Rates	<i>Achievement Threshold</i> – Overall improvement in course completion rates <i>Result</i> – Threshold achieved, with 5% increase in pass rates for IPEDs cohort and all students	2
2.3	Graduates by Key Demographics	<i>Achievement Threshold</i> – Increase number of degree completers from under-represented groups by 3% annually <i>Result</i> – Threshold achieved, with 162% increase in graduates from under-represented racial/ethnic groups and 118% increase in first-generation graduates	2
	Graduates by Gender	<i>Achievement Threshold</i> – No specific goal was established for this indicator <i>Result</i> – Proportion of female graduates continues to be commensurate with proportion of females enrolled	N/A
	Graduates by Major	<i>Achievement Threshold</i> – Increase number of graduates in each NSC degree program by 3% annually <i>Result</i> – Threshold partially achieved, with 11 of 17 programs surpassing the target metric, and increases for all but three programs	1
	Post-Baccalaureate Education	<i>Achievement Threshold</i> – Increase number of alumni who enter graduate or professional programs by 1% annually <i>Result</i> – Threshold achieved, with an increase of 347% in the number of alumni pursuing education beyond the baccalaureate degree	2

**OVERALL: 17 out of 20**

Objective 2.1: Recruit and support a diverse array of students

**Indicator #1: Student Enrollment Data**

**RESULTS**

Student enrollment at Nevada State College has continued to increase substantially during this accreditation cycle (Figure 4B-2); the Chronicle of Higher Education identifies it as the [second-fastest-growing baccalaureate institution](#) in the U.S between 2006 and 2016.

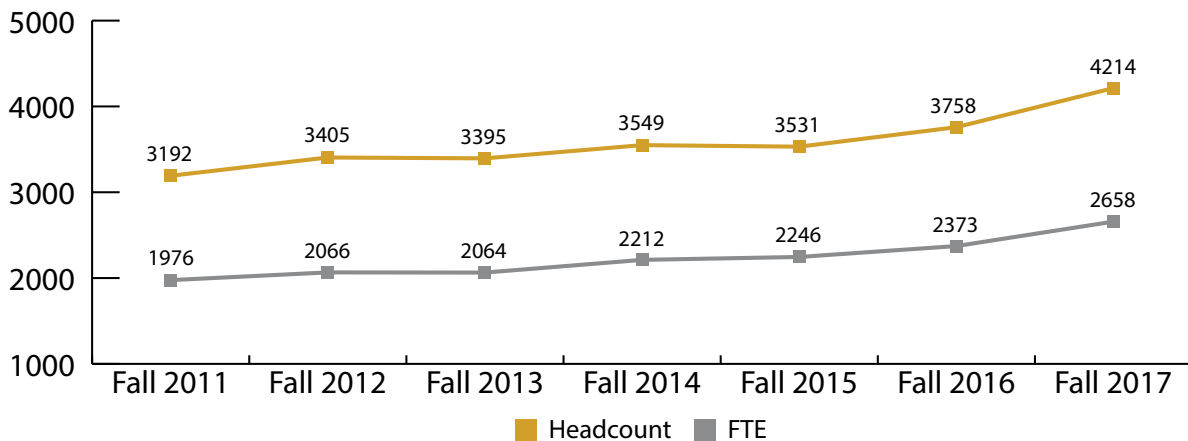
The College set a threshold of an average of 5% annual growth in headcount and FTE over the course of the accreditation cycle. Aside from modest decreases at two points early in the accreditation cycle, the College achieved these goals for both metrics (Table 4B-17). Between 2011–12 and 2017–18, total headcount grew by 32% while FTE increased by 35%.

**ANALYSIS/RECOMMENDATIONS**

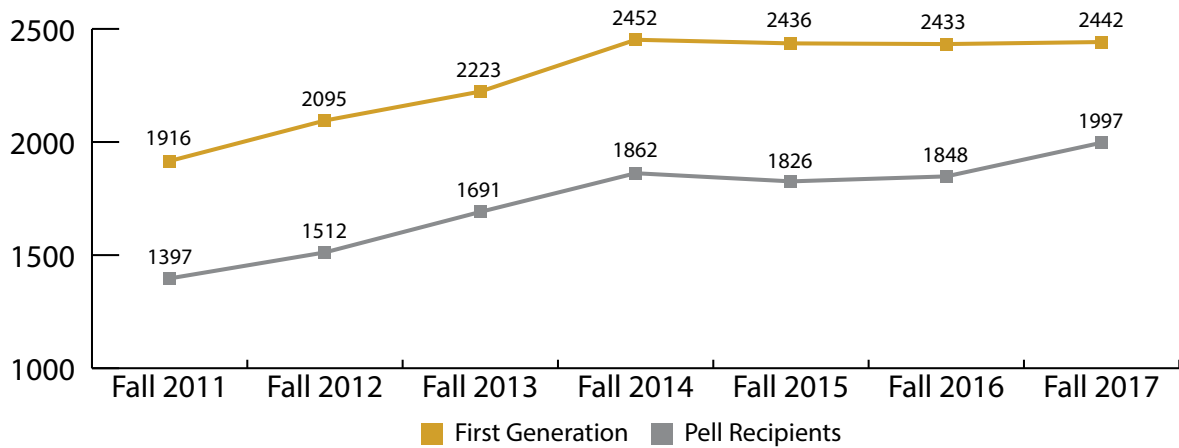
Overall, it is methodologically difficult to pinpoint the reasons for Nevada State’s tremendous enrollment growth during this assessment cycle, but several factors appear to have played contributing roles, particularly in relation to the steep increases since 2016. As a new institution, Nevada State College continues to earn increased recognition in the surrounding community, and several high-profile developments likely have contributed to this development, including the opening of two new buildings on our campus, our campaign to address widely-acknowledged K-12 teacher and nursing shortages in the region, and media spotlights on facets of the College ranging from the Nepantla program to the state’s first-ever funded Title V grant in 2017. Another likely contributor is the College’s intensive marketing/recruitment campaign, which has forged ever-stronger relationships with stakeholders in area high schools and the College of Southern Nevada and coupled stronger “brand awareness” with aggressive scholarship and financial aid packages.

	2012–13	2013–14	2014–15	2015–16	2016–17	2017–18
<b>Headcount</b>	6.7	-0.3	4.5	-0.5	6.4	12.1
<b>FTE</b>	4.6	-0.1	7.2	1.5	5.7	12

**Figure 4B-2: Total Headcount and FTE**



**Figure 4B-3: Headcount of First-Generation and Pell-Recipient Students**



Our FTE increased slightly more than headcount. This likely reflects initiatives such as “15-to-Finish” and improved advising. While we anticipate that the proportion of students who enroll full-time—and thus our FTE—will increase once residential housing opens on campus, the College’s mission to offer accessible degrees to a diverse student body means we will also continue to serve a substantial number of part-time students (63% of all students in Fall 2018).

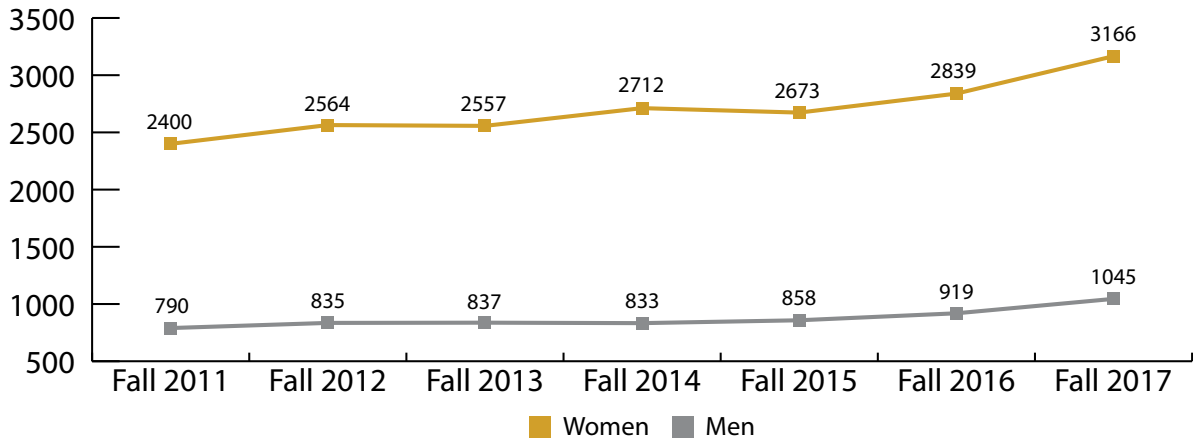
Though it was not established as a threshold of achievement in our Year One Report, the commitment to support a “diverse array of students” led the College to examine several relevant demographic variables, including first-generation status, percentage of Pell-receiving students, gender, and race/ethnicity. As the figures that follow illustrate, Nevada State College is home to

a population that is diverse in nearly every sense of the word. In some cases this is a longstanding circumstance, such as the 75% of NSC students who are female (Figure 4B-4), which is partly attributable to NSC’s emphasis on K-12 education and nursing, two professions that disproportionately attract and employ women. However, in other cases we observe a trend toward increasing diversity, such as with the proportion of students who come to NSC from historically under-represented racial and ethnic groups (Figures 4B-5 and 4B-6).

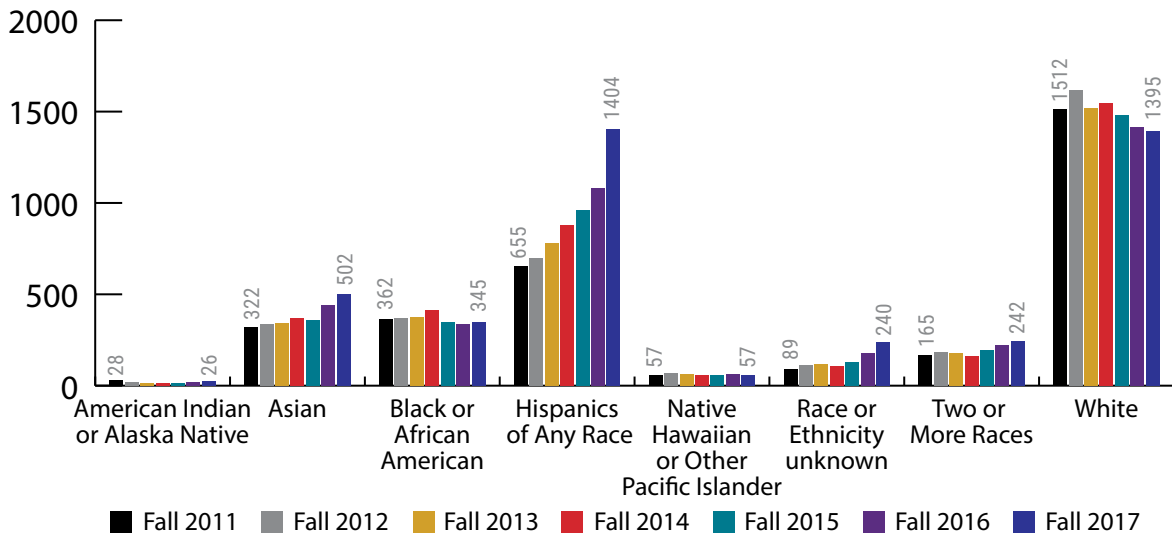
During this accreditation cycle, NSC was recognized as a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI), and the number and proportion of Hispanic students have increased substantially, from roughly 655 students in 2011–12 to 1,404 Hispanic students in 2017–18 (Figure 4B-5). The population of Asian or Asian American students also has grown, while the number of African American students has decreased slightly. Compared to the Nevada population as a whole (Figure 4B-6), NSC’s student body has a higher proportion of Hispanics and Asians/Asian Americans, but in recent years our students are much less likely than the typical Nevadan to be White/non-Hispanic. African Americans are slightly under-represented at NSC compared to the state population as a whole, and the College is prioritizing outreach, recruiting, student services, and student life programming to attract, retain, and support the success of this student population.



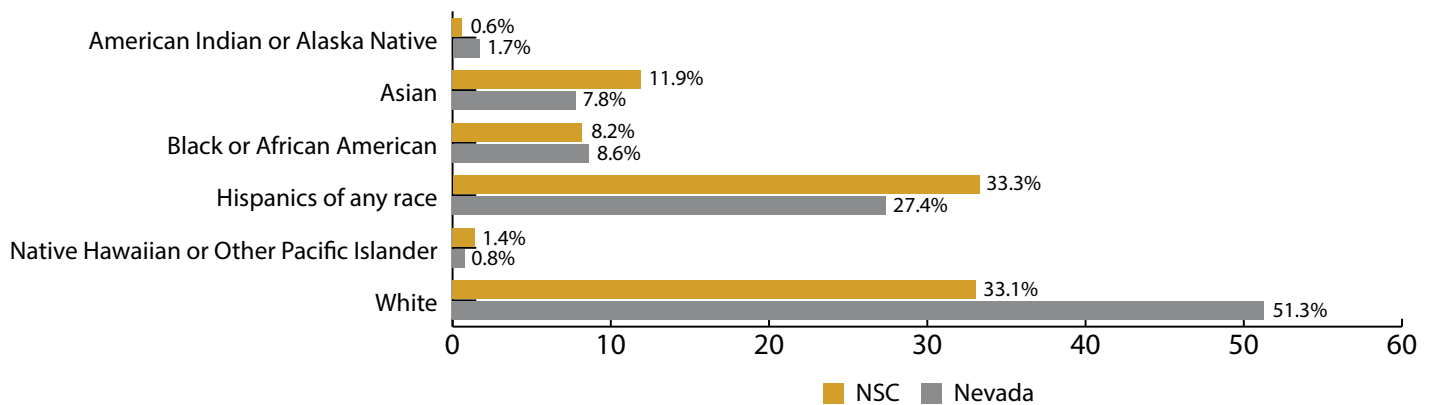
**Figure 4B-4: Student Headcount by Gender**



**Figure 4B-5: Student Headcount by Race/Ethnicity**



**Figure 4B-6: Racial/Ethnic Comparison of NSC Students and Nevada Population**



## Indicator #2: Financial Aid Awards

No specific threshold of achievement was established for this indicator. Rather, the College continues striving to keep costs low while providing balanced financial aid packages that support as many students in need as possible.

### RESULTS

Given the proportion of NSC students who are low-income, offering a robust set of financial aid options is essential to supporting our students' success. The College has invested in increased financial support for our students, expanding the number of institutional grants available. The number of students receiving an aid package increased 37.5% between 2011–12 and 2017–18, from 2312 to 3142. Likewise, the number of students applying for aid climbed from 2389 to 3296, an increase of 38%.

### ANALYSIS/RECOMMENDATIONS

Generally, the number of aid packages has kept pace with our enrollment growth. Additional insight comes from an examination of the aid granted to IPEDs students, which can be compared to the data for our peer institutions. These data show that, starting in 2012–13, a greater proportion of NSC's first-year full-time students have received grants than those students at our comparison institutions (Figure 4B-7), with over 80% of our incoming IPEDs cohort receiving

grant aid in every year of this accreditation cycle.

While DACA/undocumented students are not eligible for federal financial aid, they do qualify for some state and institutional scholarships if they graduated from a high school or community college in Nevada. NSC also partners with [TheDream.US](http://TheDream.US) to provide scholarships to undocumented students.

## Indicator #3: Cost Comparison

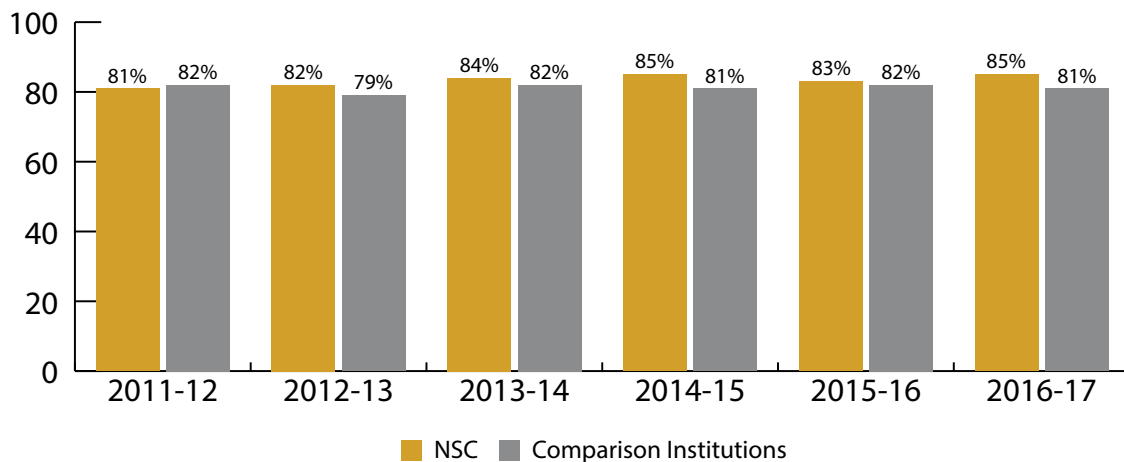
The mission of Nevada State College is to provide “quality, affordable four-year degree programs” to a diverse population of students. College leaders are acutely aware of the financial obstacles many students face and have carefully considered any increases in tuition or fees.

For this indicator, the College simply aspired to maintain the lowest costs among the primarily-baccalaureate institutions in NSHE.

### RESULTS

Nevada State College continues to offer the lowest-cost opportunity to pursue a four-year degree program in the Nevada System of Higher Education. The Fall 2018 per-credit rate for residents was 30% lower than the rate at UNLV and UNR, the other public institutions in Nevada that offer an array of baccalaureate degrees (Table 4B-18).

Figure 4B-7: Comparison of IPEDs Cohort Aid



**Table 4B-18: Cost Comparison of NSC and UNLV/UNR**

	Nevada State College		University of Nevada Las Vegas and University of Nevada Reno	
	RESIDENT PER CREDIT	NON-RESIDENT TUITION	RESIDENT PER CREDIT	NON-RESIDENT TUITION
<b>Fall 2018</b>	\$157.00	\$12,020.00	\$224.00	\$14,472.00

**ANALYSIS/RECOMMENDATIONS**

An affordable education is integral to the achievement of our institutional mission, and NSC consistently strives to offer competitive financial aid and scholarship packages while limiting student costs. For example, in the face of a tuition increase mandated by the Nevada System of Higher Education, President Patterson reduced our student success fee to help students weather the added expense. In addition to keeping tuition and fee costs low, NSC is attentive to other expenses students face. The College funds an annual No-Cost Textbook Institute, led by faculty from the Library. Faculty teaching classes in the Core Curriculum receive a stipend to spend several weeks over the summer evaluating free open-access academic resources and redesigning a course around a chosen textbook. The 2018 Institute resulted in an annual estimated savings of \$132,000 for NSC students. Similarly, the RN-to-BSN program in the School of Nursing partnered with the Library to provide textbooks, bringing the estimated textbook costs for the program down from \$1,068 per student to \$628—a decrease of 41%.

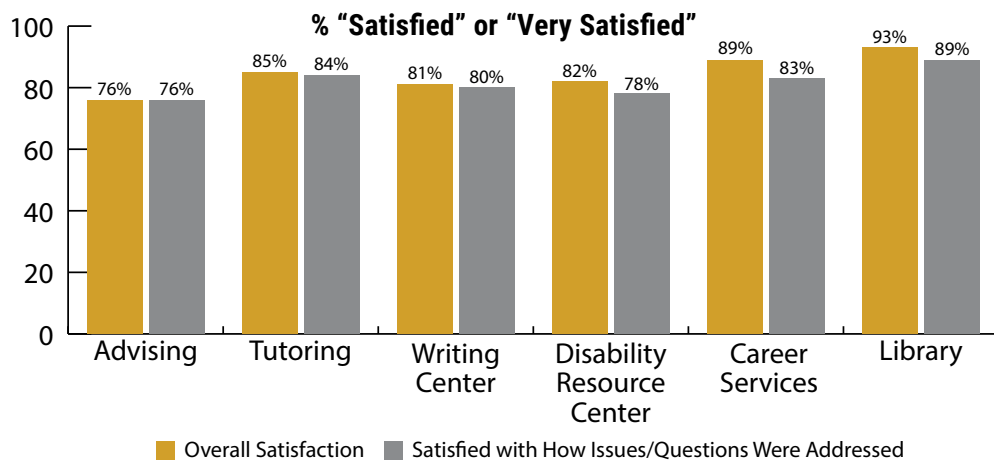
**Indicator #4: Satisfaction with Student Support Services**

**RESULTS**

The 2017 Student Satisfaction Survey, conducted by [Hanover Research](#), asked NSC students about their satisfaction with the College’s academic support services. The results, presented in Figure 4B-8, indicate that students are quite satisfied with the support services available to them. Over 80% of students reported they were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with each academic support division except the Academic Advising Center, which was slightly below our achievement threshold.

The Student Satisfaction Survey also included more detailed questions about satisfaction with specific elements of each support service. The results of these metrics consistently reflected the overall satisfaction ratings reported here.

**Figure 4B-8: Satisfaction Ratings for Academic Support Services**



## ANALYSIS/RECOMMENDATIONS

In the past two years, the Academic Advising Center (AAC) has made a number of changes aimed at improving students' experiences with advising and their satisfaction with the advising they receive. The current Director of Advising, hired in 2017, introduced a new team-based model in which a team of advisors are assigned to majors; students within the major can see any member of the team. This has reduced the amount of time students wait to see an advisor compared to the previous model, in which students were assigned to one specific advisor and had to wait for an appointment if that advisor was out of the office or fully booked. The AAC also has introduced improved training for advisors, including sending them to professional development opportunities such as NACADA conferences. In Fall 2019, the AAC will take the lead in implementing [Starfish](#), a software program that facilitates early-alert campaigns and provides a number of services aimed at tracking and improving student success.

### Indicator #5: Use of Academic Support Services

The achievement threshold for this indicator is to increase the proportion of students who use academic support services by an average of 2% annually. At the beginning of this accreditation cycle, the College offered relatively few academic services, the result of staffing and operational cutbacks during the recession. As the budget improved, we invested heavily in student support, opening a Writing Center and Career Services Center, both with full-time directors, and expanding staffing and programming in areas such as advising and tutoring.

## RESULTS

Table 4B-19 presents data on the percentage of students using any of the following services: advising, tutoring, the Writing Center, Career Services, and the library. Reliable utilization data for all units are available from Fall 2015 forward. In that period, documented usage has increased substantially, from 71% of students in Fall 2015 to 80% in Fall 2018. This surpassed our goal of 2% annual growth for this three-year period.

## ANALYSIS/RECOMMENDATIONS

By Fall 2015, we had improved data collection and reporting in all student services units, allowing us to reliably track trends in utilization. Opening the Writing Center and Career Services Center in 2014–15, with full-time directors to plan evidence-based programming, provided support that is particularly essential for our first-generation and under-represented students. In subsequent years, expanded staffing and new directors in the Academic Success Center (which provides tutoring) and the Academic Advising Center allowed the College to revamp New Student Orientation and implement mandatory advising, supplemental instruction, the peer Course Assistant program, and other practices that improve student success.

While we met the achievement threshold for this indicator and are pleased with students' increased utilization of services that can improve their academic outcomes, given our student population and the relatively new, fully online RN-to-BSN degree, we also acknowledge the need to improve our ability to provide academic support services online. While the support services units have piloted online options, they have varied in their success.

**Table 4B-19: Use of Academic Support Services**

	Fall 2015	Fall 2016	Fall 2017	Fall 2018
<b>% Using Services</b>	71%	78%	78%	80%

For instance, the Library has been quite effective, with the entire collection now available remotely and online assistance with research projects and other assignments available to students. Likewise, the Academic Success Center (ASC) has observed meaningful increases in the proportion of students who use Smarthinking, our contracted online tutoring platform, and is now piloting the provision of online tutoring using NSC’s own tutors and the Cranium Café platform. However, the services provided by the Writing Center and academic advising have been more difficult to translate into an online environment, though the directors continue to evaluate platforms for doing so. We also anticipate that opening residential housing on campus will increase utilization by students living on campus.

**Objective 2.2: Improve student retention and timely degree progression**

**Indicator #1: One-Year Retention Data**

**RESULTS**

The threshold of achievement for first-year to second-year retention rates is an average improvement of 1% annually. Figure 4B-9 shows one-year retention for our IPEDs cohort and for all first-year students from 2011–12 through 2017–18. Over the course of the entire accreditation cycle, NSC’s one-year retention rate for IPEDs students

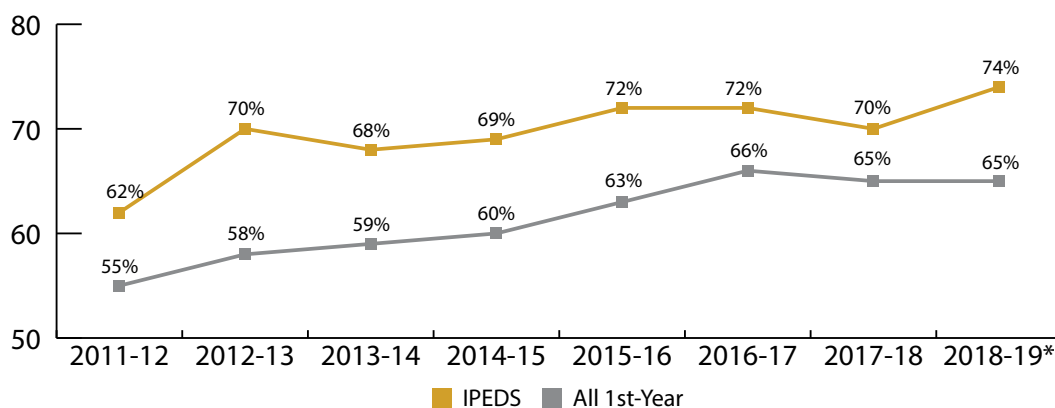
increased from 62% to 70%. As of August 2019, the 2018–19 cohort had a retention rate of 74%.

The one-year retention rates for all first-year students are somewhat lower than the rates for IPEDs students, but have also improved substantially, from 55% to 65% during the accreditation cycle.

**ANALYSIS/RECOMMENDATIONS**

We have partially achieved our retention goal for this accreditation cycle. The increase in retention rates is more erratic than a clear 1% gain each year, but overall the percentage rose eight percentage points, from 62% to 70%. We experienced an unfortunate retention decrease with the 2017 first-year cohort, which represented over a 70% enrollment increase from the preceding year—from 305 to our largest-ever entering class of 495—and severely taxed our institutional capacity. However, the 2018 cohort year, which represents our second-largest incoming IPEDs class, currently has a 74% retention rate, the highest in the College’s history. In fact, due to the many initiatives aimed at increasing first-year retention rates, from the Gateways to Completion Project to mandatory academic advising, we may be approaching a short-term ceiling effect for this metric, especially given that the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, has stabilized at slightly above this rate with a higher admission standard. Consequently, while we will continue efforts aimed at improving first-year

**Figure 4B-9: One-Year Retention Rates**





retention, campus leadership also has recognized that first-year retention efforts cannot occur in isolation from efforts to improve retention beyond the first year. Moving forward, data analysis and decisions about investments of resources will emphasize understanding what occurs after the first year and what the College can do to better support students who successfully make it through their initial year but face obstacles further along in their college careers.

**Indicator #2: Six-Year Graduation Rates**

**RESULTS**

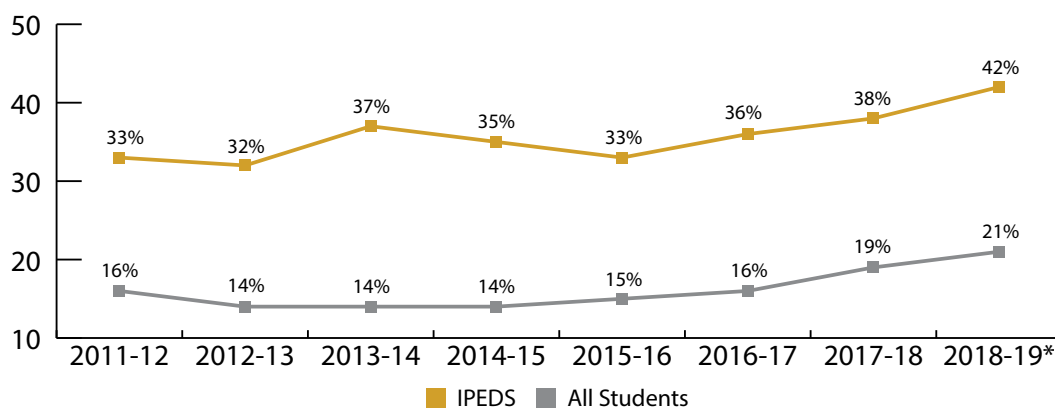
The threshold of achievement for this indicator is to see an average annual increase of 1% in the six-year graduation rate for IPEDs cohorts, a threshold we did not meet in the first half of the accreditation cycle but have met in every year from 2015–16 on (Figure 4B-10). Between 2011–12 and 2018–19, the IPEDs six-year graduation rate increased by 5%, which represents a 31% increase relative to the starting rate of 16%. Moreover, a new baseline appears to have been established in the wake of the recession at 14%, which was the graduation rate for the three years from 2012–13 through 2014–15. From that point, and including the most recent graduation rate of 21%, we observed a raw increase of 7%, or a percentage increase of 50% relative to the starting point of 14%.

**ANALYSIS/RECOMMENDATIONS**

We failed to achieve our threshold of a 1% increase in graduation rates each year, despite establishing improved graduation rates as a top priority among the College’s faculty, staff, and leadership. However, NSC has observed appreciable gains in graduation rates in more recent years. Furthermore, we anticipate continued increases based on institutional improvements (e.g., mandatory advising in the first two years; the Gateways to Completion program) that often show a delayed impact on a metric that is, essentially, six years in the making.



**Figure 4B-10: Six-Year Graduation Rates**



\*Provisional data for 2018–19.

### Indicator #3: Course Completion Rates

#### RESULTS

For this indicator, we defined “completion” as successfully passing a course, and calculated a “completion rate” as the number of courses passed divided by the total number of courses attempted. The Year One Self-Evaluation Report did not include a specific threshold of achievement, and lacking context for what would constitute an acceptable completion rate, the College simply set a goal of improving student performance over time. Across the accreditation cycle, the course completion rate slowly but steadily increased, culminating in rates of 94% and 93% for IPEDs cohorts and all students, respectively (Figure 4B-11).

To further understand student progress in this area, we examined the percentage of IPEDs students who earned at least one grade of D, F, Withdraw, or Incomplete (DFWI). This metric was not in our Year One report, but it was added because DFWI rates were later observed to be one of the best predictors of student persistence. The achievement threshold was an annual 1% drop in the percentage of students earning at least 1 DFWI grade in a given semester. According to our data, this threshold was achieved, with IPEDs students showing a decline of 32 percentage points from Fall 2011 to Fall 2018, and all students showing a decline of 13 percentage points. Relative to the starting percentage, these numbers represent decreases of 53% and 37%,

respectively (Figure 4B-12). As a result, the completion gap between these two groups closed substantially during this accreditation cycle.

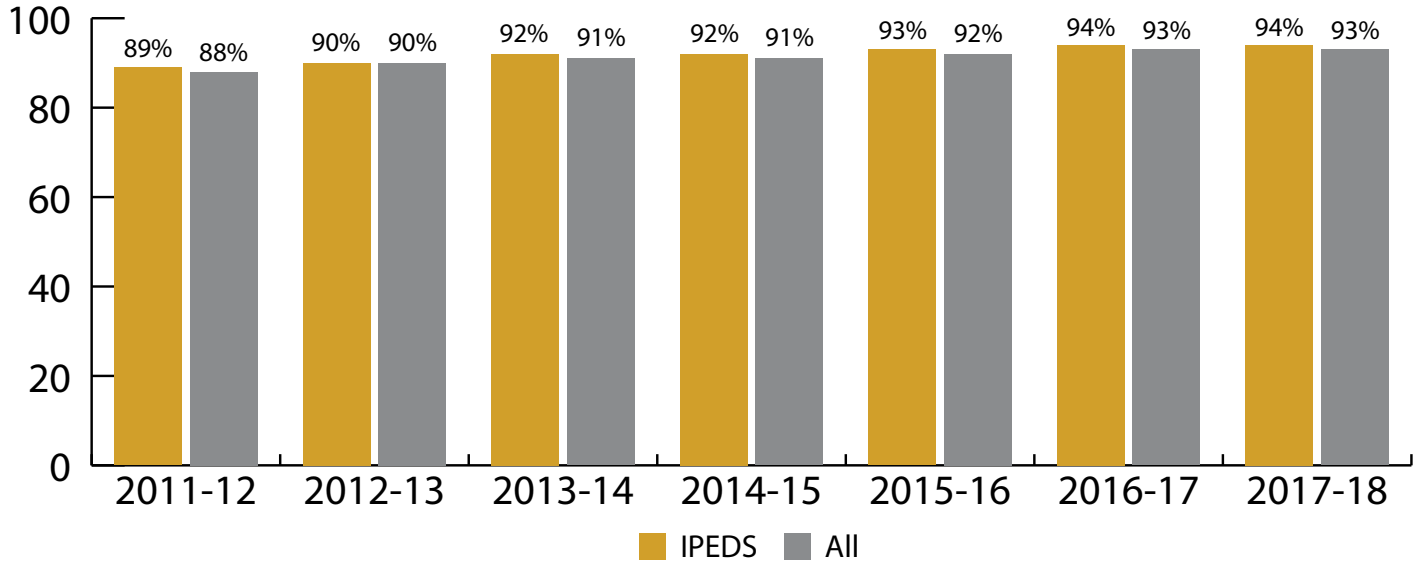
#### ANALYSIS/RECOMMENDATIONS

Entering this accreditation cycle, NSC’s academic leadership recognized that we faced challenges in the area of course completions. In Fall 2011, 60% of our IPEDs students earned at least one grade of D, F, Withdraw (W), or Incomplete (I). While the percentage was much lower among all students, 35% still received at least one DFWI grade that term.

To address this problem and achieve the improvements outlined in the results section, the College took a number of steps. This included expanded academic support services, investing in additional full-time faculty, founding a summer bridge program for underprepared students, creating the Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence, and taking part in the [Gardner Institute Gateways to Completion](#) program in 2014, which focused specifically on high-enrollment courses with high DFWI rates (see Sections 2.D.1 and 3.B.1 for details). Our experience with Gateways to Completion led to the introduction of peer Course Assistants in a number of classes with high DFWI rates. We also created three First-Year Experience Lecturer positions to teach a revamped College Success course—introduced in Fall 2017—as well as introductory courses in English, Communication, and Biology.



**Figure 4B-11: Percentage of Courses Passed**



Objective 2.3: Graduate a diverse population of students in diverse fields

**Indicator #1: Graduates by Key Demographics**

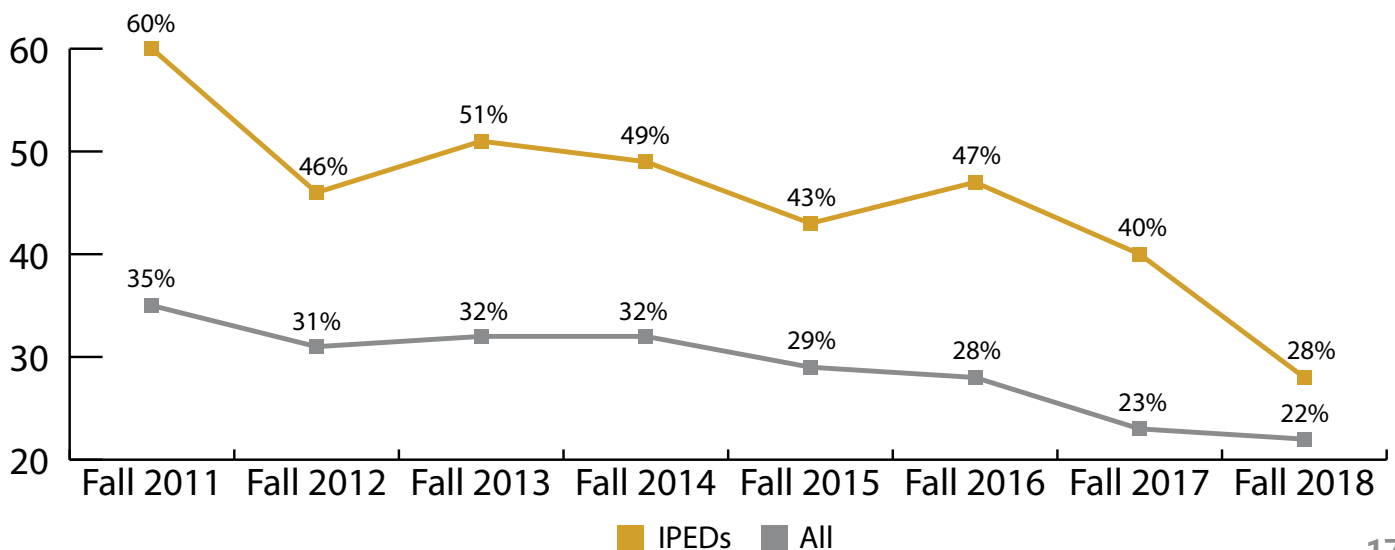
**RESULTS**

During this accreditation cycle, NSC achieved Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) status, and the student body became increasingly diverse. For Indicator #1, we set an achievement threshold of

increasing the overall number of degree completers, and number of completers from underrepresented groups, by an average of 3% annually.

The College significantly surpassed these goals for all sub-groups (Figure 4B-13). Over the full accreditation cycle, the headcount of graduates increased 110%, while the headcount of graduates from under-represented racial/ethnic backgrounds increased 162% and the headcount of first-generation graduates increased 118%.

**Figure 4B-12: Percentage of All Students Receiving 1 or More DFWI Grade**



**Figure 4B-13: Percentage Change in Graduates**

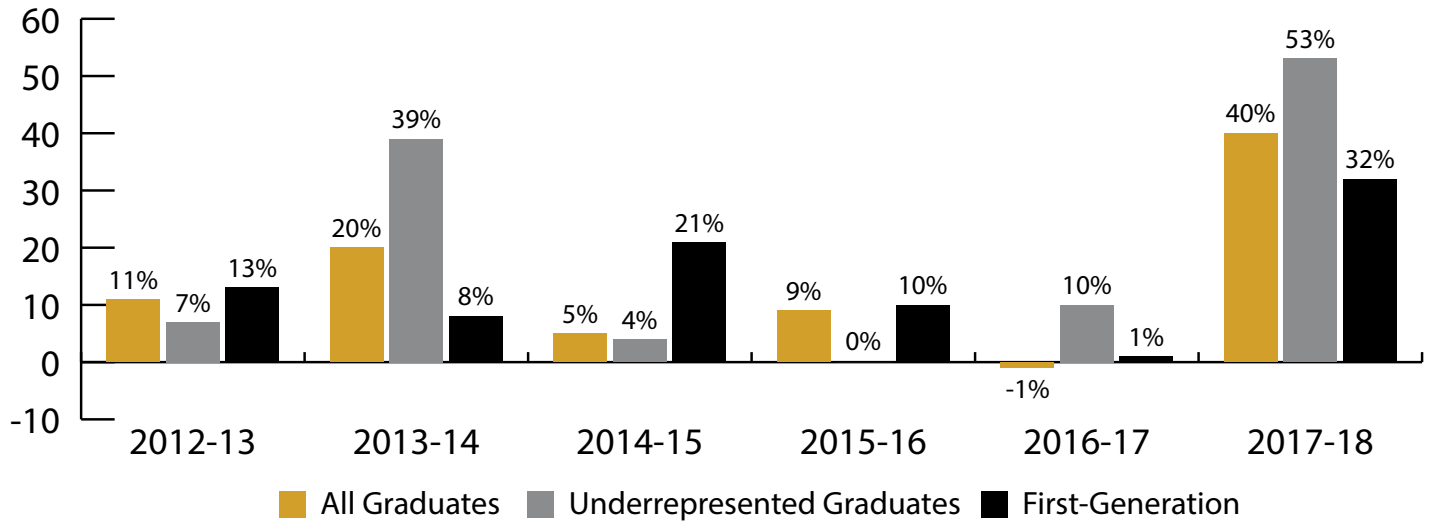


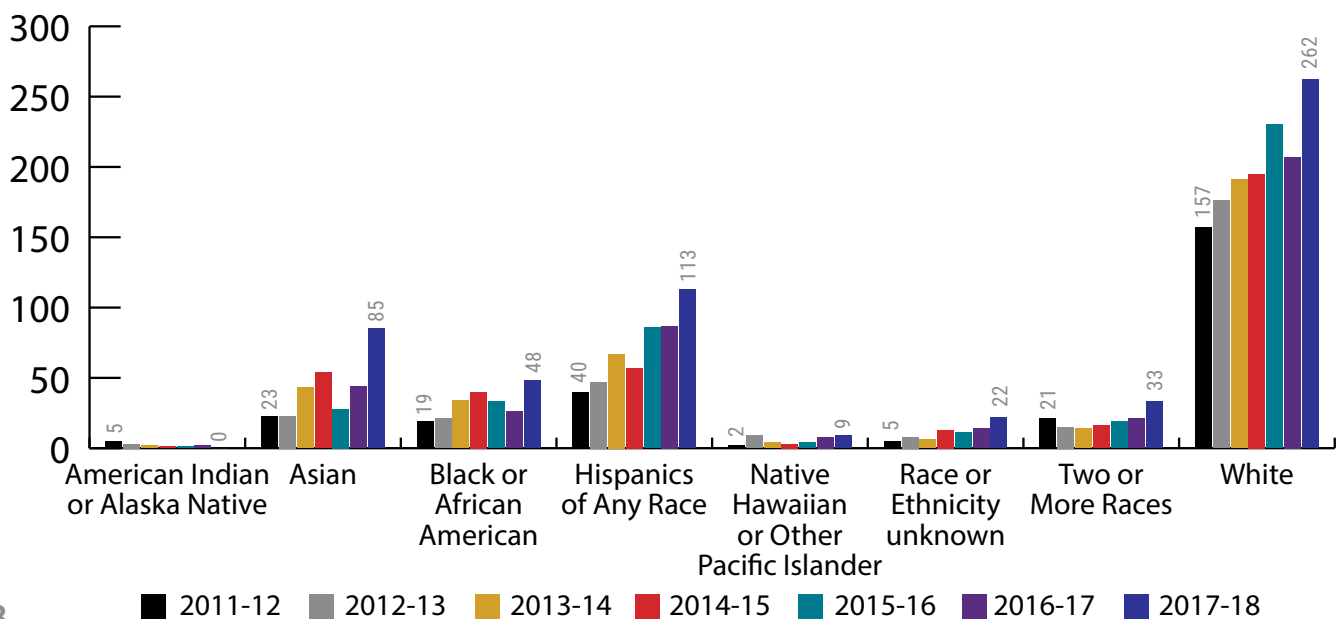
Figure 4B-14 summarizes the racial/ethnic headcount of NSC graduates, with 2011–12 and 2017–18 headcounts shown.

**ANALYSIS/RECOMMENDATIONS**

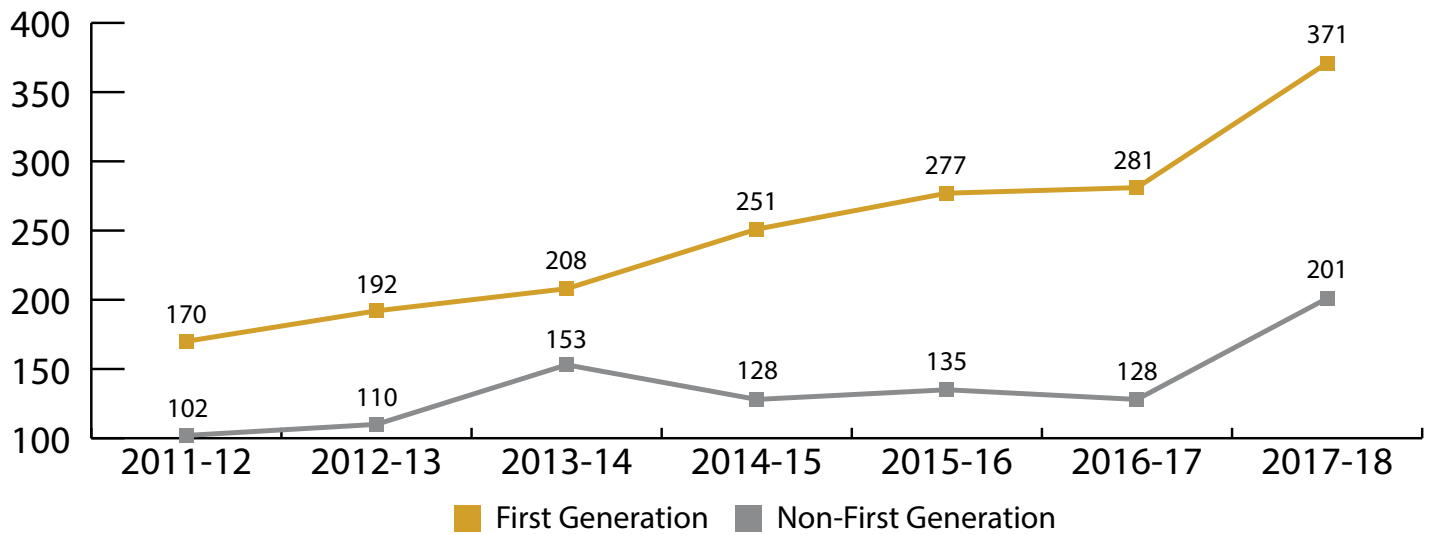
The College surpassed our achievement threshold by a fair margin for this indicator, and much of that result is attributable to our substantial enrollment growth among under-represented student populations. However, NSC also invested in

learning experiences, student support services, and programming (e.g., Nepantla; TriO-SSS) that are expected to improve the rate of graduation for these students. In fact, moving forward, this rate of success will be more of an institutional focus than the sheer number of graduates from different backgrounds, as exemplified in our 2020–2025 Institutional Strategic Plan, which identified improved graduation rates as the paramount goal of the institution.

**Figure 4B-14: Headcount of Graduates by Race/Ethnicity**



**Figure 4B-15: Headcount of First-Generation Graduates**



**Indicator #2: Graduates by Gender**

**RESULTS**

The College did not identify a specific achievement threshold for this indicator, and has not established a goal regarding the number of male and female graduates we produce. Rather, the institution is monitoring our performance in this area, with the number of female graduates (436 in 2017–18) remaining much higher than the number of male graduates (136 in the same year). Over this entire accreditation cycle, the number of female graduates increased 117%, while the number of male graduates increased 92%.

**ANALYSIS/RECOMMENDATIONS**

Women made up 76% of graduates in 2017–18, and also comprise about 75% of NSC’s overall headcount, indicating that we do not currently see a gender disparity in terms of enrollment and completion rates; regarding gender, our graduation rates match our overall student body demographics.

**Indicator #3: Students Graduated by Major**

**RESULTS**

For Indicator #3, our threshold of achievement is to increase the number of graduates in each discipline

by an average of 3% annually. The College far surpassed this goal in most programs. Figure 4B-16 provides a snapshot of the total number of students who graduated from NSC during this accreditation cycle. By far the largest number of graduates is in Nursing, a high-need profession in southern Nevada, and the facet of the College for which we are best known in the surrounding community.

For ease of reading, Figure 4B-17 shows the percentage change over the entire accreditation cycle, which demonstrates substantive gains for most programs (note: as percentages, the results are exaggerated for those with small enrollments).



## ANALYSIS/RECOMMENDATIONS

While we far exceeded the achievement threshold in most programs, Biology saw only 7% growth over the entire accreditation cycle, and three programs saw declines. In the case of Mathematics, the decrease reflects the fact that the program is new and has only produced 1 graduate. The decline in graduates in Law Enforcement reflects two factors: first, due to budget cuts during the recession, several local city governments stopped providing a tuition benefit to police officers, and consequently enrollments in the program decreased. Second, once the Criminal Justice program was established, a number of students who had been Law Enforcement majors changed majors, as Criminal Justice was their first-choice program. As a result, enrollment and graduation in Law Enforcement has decreased somewhat as they have risen in Criminal Justice, a change we expected. Finally, while we are attentive to the 13% decrease in graduates in Speech-Language Pathology, this reflects a reduction of only two students. In addition, the graduation numbers do not include our post-baccalaureate students who already have degrees in Education but enroll in Speech-Language Pathology coursework to earn an SLP endorsement from the Clark County School District, which has become a popular pathway for local educators.

## Indicator #4: Students Pursuing Post-Baccalaureate Education

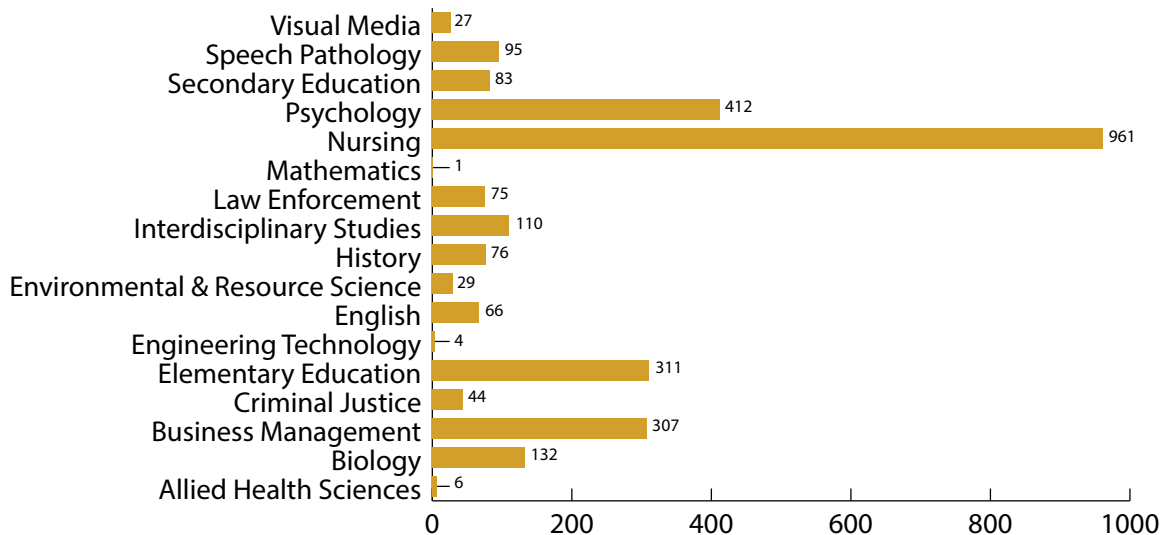
### RESULTS

From 2011 through 2018, National Student Clearinghouse data indicate that 1,324 NSC alumni entered graduate or professional programs. Our threshold for achievement is to increase the number entering graduate or professional programs by 1% annually. The College significantly surpassed this goal. Over the course of the accreditation cycle, we saw an increase of 347% in the number of alumni pursuing education beyond their baccalaureate degree.

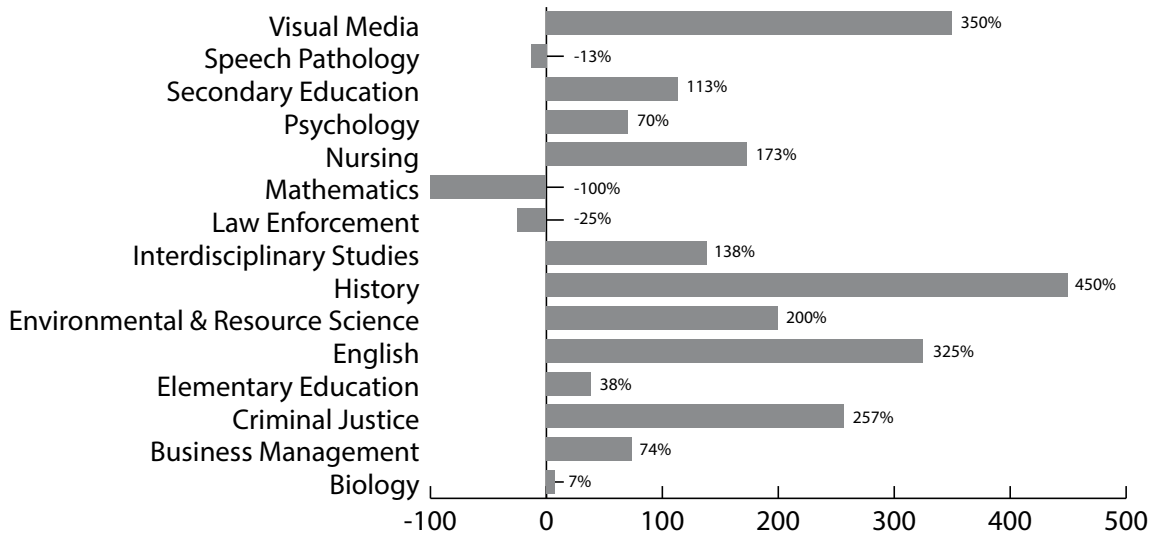
### ANALYSIS/RECOMMENDATIONS

We are pleased that more of our students are interested in pursuing additional education beyond a bachelor's degree, and that their education at NSC makes them competitive when applying to graduate and professional programs. To improve this metric further, faculty emphasize to students the importance of engaging in undergraduate research, independent study, and other academic opportunities that improve their readiness for post-baccalaureate education. Several capstone classes conclude with a poster symposium in which students present their research posters to the campus community.

Figure 4B-16: Headcount of Graduates by Major\*



**Figure 4B-17: % Change in Graduates by Major between 2011–12 and 2017–18\***



\*Includes only programs established long enough to have a graduating cohort by Spring 2018.

The Undergraduate Research and Creative Works Conference, founded in 2016, gives students an annual opportunity to submit an abstract, go through the review process, and, if selected, present a poster or paper in an environment similar to a professional conference.

Given that many of our students are first-generation and/or underrepresented at the undergraduate level, faculty and staff are highly aware of the need to provide support and guidance to those who hope to apply to graduate or professional programs. We have piloted ACE 499 (Graduate School

Preparation), a two-credit course taught by full-time instructional faculty that helps students identify a relevant program, prepare application materials, and study for required admissions exams. This course helped students develop strong applications (while helping some realize they were not ready to apply or were targeting programs that were not good fits for their career goals). We have yet to determine if this model is sustainable given our rapid growth and the need to have academic faculty teach courses in their disciplines, which could pull them away from leading a class of this nature.





### Core Theme 3: Strengthen the Community

The mission statement for Nevada State College closes with a commitment to foster “a stronger community and a better future for all of Nevada.” In many ways, this promise is the culmination of every action, decision, and investment made by the College. Our evaluation of Core Theme 3—which pledges to “Strengthen the Community”—shows that we are beginning to fulfill that promise. Perhaps most critically, Nevada State is producing more graduates than ever, and many of these alumni are either ably employed or seeking post-graduate educational opportunities. Importantly, very high proportions of our working alumni (approximately 90%) remain employed in Nevada, and large numbers of graduates are contributing to high-demand fields, particularly in the areas of nursing, education, psychology, and biology.

While much of NSC’s focus has been internally directed at institutional improvements related to the programs, learning experiences, and student support services that help produce these graduates,

the College has made significant strides in engaging the community. We surpassed our achievement thresholds for every indicator linked to community partnerships, and the College received favorable ratings from respondents on a community partner survey regarding our positive impact on the region.

Taken as a whole, Nevada State earned 9 out of 10 total points for our achievement of the indicators that support the Core Theme 3 objectives (see Table 4B-20). Admittedly, the institution’s goals for this core theme were substantially more modest than the aspirations we established for Core Themes 1 and 2, but engaging and strengthening the community is expected to be an even more prominent endeavor as the College develops additional programs, produces greater numbers of alumni, and otherwise expands our capacity to meet the needs of the region. To that end, “Community Engagement & Economic Development” is one of the five cornerstones of our 2020–2025 Strategic Plan, and an emphasis on meeting workforce needs has been an underlying consideration for both recent and forthcoming degree programs.



**Table 4B-20: Core Theme 3 Achievement Summary**

Objective	Indicator	Results	Achievement Score (out of 2)
3.1	Outbound Partnership Data	<i>Achievement Threshold</i> – 25% of faculty and staff will report engaging in at least one outbound partnership <i>Result</i> – Threshold achieved, with 62% reporting such a partnership in 2017 survey	2
	Inbound Partnership Data	<i>Achievement Threshold</i> – 25% of faculty and staff will report participating in at least one outbound partnership <i>Result</i> – Threshold achieved, with 49% reporting a relevant partnership in 2017 survey	2
3.2	First Destination Survey Data	<i>Achievement Threshold</i> – None established (however, specific targets will be identified in future strategic planning) <i>Result</i> – Generally, over 50% of graduates report being employed 6 months after graduation, with another 20-30% involved in military/volunteer service or seeking additional education	N/A
	Graduates in High Demand Fields	<i>Achievement Threshold</i> – 3% annual growth in number of graduates in high demand fields <i>Result</i> – Threshold partially achieved, with 5 of the 7 targeted programs reaching or surpassing the goal	1
	Graduates Employed in Nevada	<i>Achievement Threshold</i> – In the absence of good baseline data, the College simply aspired to have a very high proportion of graduates remain employed in Nevada <i>Result</i> – Threshold achieved, with approximately 90% of employed students working in Nevada	2
3.3	Hours Spent on Community Partnerships	<i>Achievement Threshold</i> – In the absence of good baseline data, no threshold was established <i>Result</i> – Respondents on 2017 Community Engagement Survey reported spending more hours on outbound partnerships (M = 67) than inbound partnerships (M = 33)	N/A
	Community Partner Ratings of NSC’s Impact	<i>Achievement Threshold</i> – 80% of community partners will rate NSC’s efforts as “moderately” or “very” impactful <i>Result</i> – Threshold achieved, with 83% of partners giving NSC the desired ratings on a 2018 Community Partners Survey	2
<b>OVERALL:</b>			<b>9 out of 10</b>

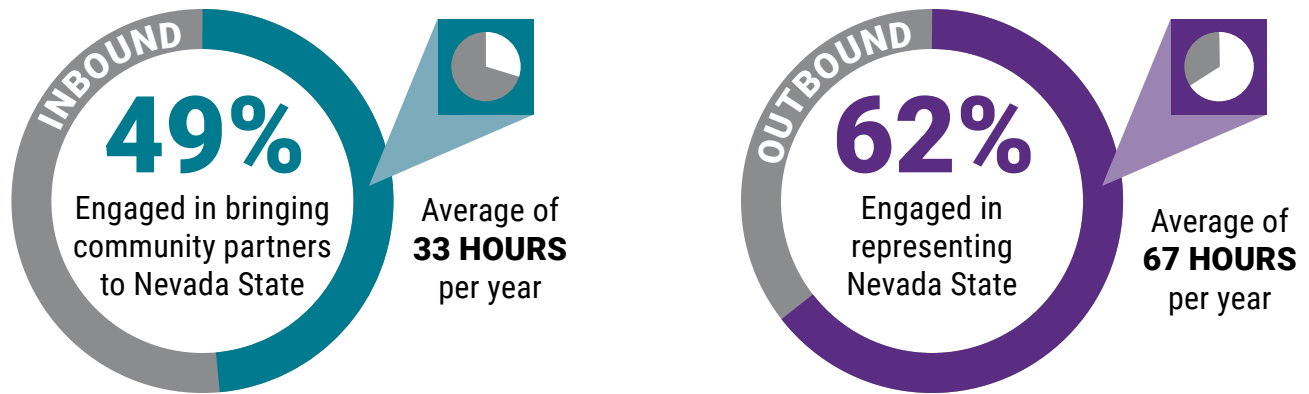
**Objective 3.1: Foster community partnerships**

The Division of College and Community Engagement is responsible for assessing the College’s level of community engagement, including active partnerships fostered by faculty, staff, and administrators. The 2017 Community Engagement Survey asked the campus community about inbound (bringing individuals to campus) and outbound (campus employees serving externally)

partnerships. Inbound partnerships most frequently involved inviting community organizations or representatives to campus to give a talk or presentation, tour campus, hold a meeting or event, or provide training.

Most community partners fall into the broad category of education. Other common categories were business/industry, advocacy/civil rights, health, and general charity/non-profit work.

**Figure 4B-18: Participation in Community Partnerships**



**Indicator #1: Outbound Partnership Data**

**RESULTS**

The achievement threshold for this indicator is that 25% of faculty and staff would report engaging in at least one outbound partnership. In the 2017 survey, this threshold was surpassed, with 62% reporting doing so (Figure 4B-18).

**Indicator #2: Inbound Partnership Data**

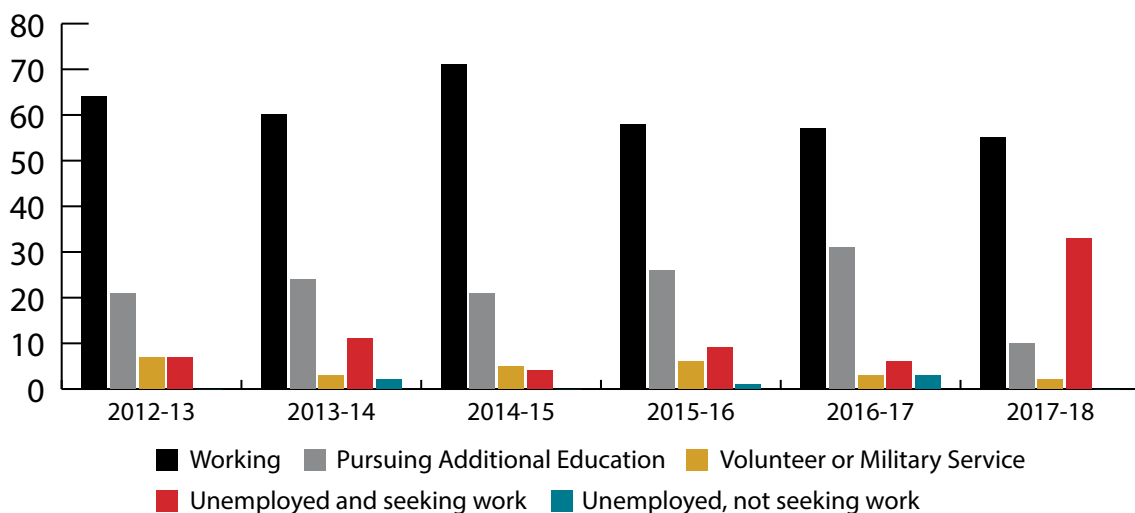
**RESULTS**

For inbound partnerships, the achievement threshold is for 25% of faculty and staff to report participating in at least one. The survey results indicate that 49% faculty and staff engaged in at least one inbound partnership (Figure 4B-18).

**ANALYSIS/RECOMMENDATIONS**

The College far exceeded our achievement thresholds for both of the indicators related to faculty and staff participation in community partnerships. Our faculty and staff are highly engaged in the community, including serving on advisory boards, overseeing internship or field placement sites, giving talks, inviting community members to campus to give guest lectures, and a variety of other activities. These forms of engagement are recognized in tenure and promotion requirements and celebrated at events such as the annual faculty and staff recognition dinner.

**Figure 4B-19: Students' Work Outcomes**



### Objective 3.2: Promote student contributions to the community

#### Indicator #1: First Destination Survey Data

##### RESULTS

In our Year 1 report, we did not establish specific achievement thresholds for this indicator. As a young institution, we simply did not have enough data on alumni—due to having relatively few alumni in 2011—to define appropriate goals. Instead, we sought to increase our outreach to recent graduates to gather the baseline data needed to establish specific achievement thresholds in the future.

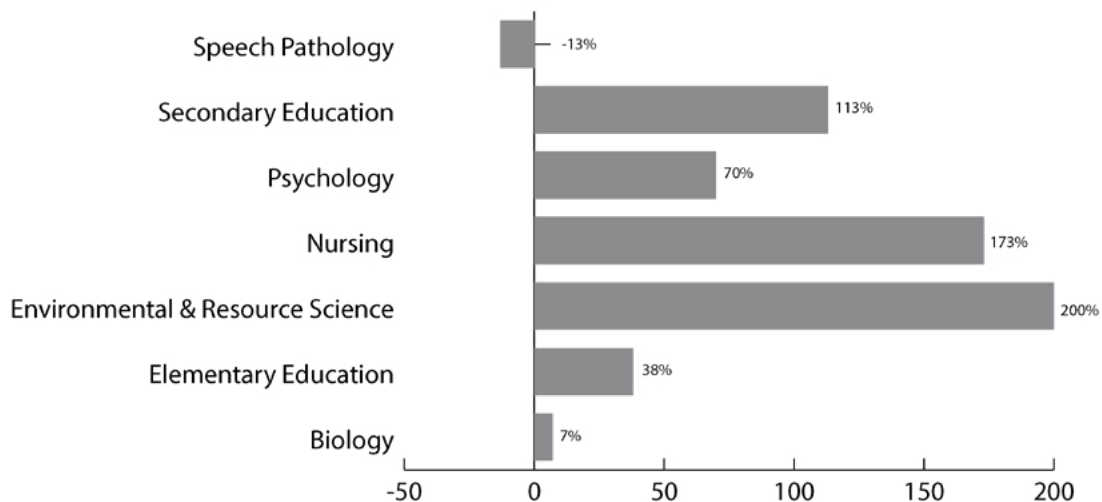
##### RESULTS

Figure 4B-19 presents alumni work outcomes six months after graduation. The proportion employed has varied across this accreditation cycle, from a low of 55% among the 2017–18 graduating class to a high of 71% among the 2014–15 graduating cohort. Looking at all possible outcomes, for each year in the accreditation cycle aside from 2017–18, 90% or more of graduates were working, engaged in volunteer or military service, pursuing additional education, or unemployed but not seeking work six months after graduation. Among those graduating in 2017–18, we saw a marked increase in the percentage unemployed but seeking work at the six-month mark.

#### ANALYSIS/RECOMMENDATIONS

Given our mission to “open the door to career success,” it is essential that our graduates gain the skills and knowledge needed to find appropriate careers after completing their degrees. Thus, we are concerned about the reported 33% unemployment rate among 2017–18 alumni, though we do acknowledge that in 2017–18, the Career Services Center began using a new employment survey service and so the 2017–18 data are not strictly comparable to data from previous years. We are not yet able to determine whether the higher level of involuntary unemployment reported by recent graduates in 2017–18 data reflects more accurate data than we were able to collect previously, indicates an actual change in our students’ success in the labor market, or is due to some other factor. The data from 2018–19 were not available at the time of writing, as we are not yet six months past the graduation date for alumni who completed their degrees in spring or summer of 2019. Once these data are available, we will have a firmer basis for interpreting the 2017–18 data and setting targets for future years.

Figure 4B-20: % Change in Graduates in High-Demand Fields from 2011–12 to 2017–18



## **Indicator #2: Graduates in High-Demand Fields**

### **RESULTS**

In its strategic directives, the Nevada System of Higher Education has identified a number of fields in which more graduates are needed to meet future demands in the Nevada economy. The threshold of achievement for this indicator is 3% annual growth in the number of graduates in these targeted fields. Figure 4B-20 shows the percentage change in these fields over the course of the accreditation cycle, with the data indicating that the threshold was achieved for 5 of the 7 identified programs.

### **ANALYSIS/RECOMMENDATIONS**

In most areas, the College significantly increased the number of graduates, contributing to meeting the needs of a diversifying economy. The level of growth was lower in Biology, and Speech-Language Pathology (SLP) saw a 13% decrease. However, SLP completion data do not include the large number of professionals who enroll in Speech-Language Pathology as post-baccalaureate students to earn endorsements from the local school district. While we are attentive to the decrease in SLP graduates, we believe that when the post-baccalaureate program and our new M.Ed. in Speech-Language Pathology are taken into account, the data will show that we are helping address the need for professionals in this high-demand field.

## **Indicator #3: Graduates Employed in Nevada**

### **RESULTS**

Consistent with our mission of contributing to the community and improving the lives of all Nevadans, we aspire to graduate a large number of students who will stay in our state, meeting the needs of our growing economy.

The Career Services Center conducts first-destination and follow-up surveys of graduates, asking about their employment situation. Based on this information, an extremely high proportion of our graduates find employment in Nevada, with generally over 90% remaining in the state, and 95% doing so in 2016–17. Only 82% reported working in Nevada in our 2017–18 assessment, but a probable explanation for this is noted in the analysis below.

### **ANALYSIS/RECOMMENDATIONS**

The lower proportion of graduates employed in Nevada in 2017–18 coincides with the first cohort completing our fully online RN-to-BSN degree through the School of Nursing. Because this program is fully online, it attracts students beyond Nevada, who are likely to accept employment outside of the state. Otherwise, the College is pleased to observe that very large percentages of our working graduates are employed in the state of Nevada, and we hope to continue this trend with new degree programs that specifically address gaps or growing needs in the workforce.

Objective 3.3: Promote faculty and staff contributions to the community

## **Indicator #1: Hours Spent on Community Partnerships**

### **RESULTS**

An achievement threshold was not established for this indicator. Respondents to the 2017 Community Engagement Survey reported spending significantly more time on outbound partnerships (mean hours = 67) than inbound ones (mean hours = 33).





## Indicator #2: Community Partners' Ratings of NSC's Impact

### RESULTS

The 2018 Community Partners Survey asked external partners to rate the College on a number of factors related to community engagement. Our threshold of achievement is that 80% of our partners would respond that NSC's efforts have been "moderately impactful" or "very impactful" on the community. We met this threshold, with 83% rating our efforts as "moderately" or "very" impactful; the majority rated NSC's community engagement as "very impactful" (Figure 4B-21).

### ANALYSIS/RECOMMENDATIONS

The College fully achieved our goal for this indicator. While our Objective 3.1 indicators allowed us to measure whether our faculty and staff are engaged in community partnerships, this indicator captures how valuable our community partners found that engagement to be. Our external partners report that we are having a meaningful impact on our community, a key accomplishment for a comprehensive state college.






### ANALYSIS/RECOMMENDATIONS

During this accreditation cycle, we lacked the context or baseline data needed to establish a meaningful threshold for the number of hours spent on community partnerships. The data collected here will help us establish a proper foundation for future thresholds.

The difference in the amount of time spent on the two types of partnerships reflects the fact that inbound partnerships may be one-off events (e.g., a community leader giving a talk) while outbound partnerships are often ongoing and require repeated follow-up (such as monitoring student internship placements), regular meetings (e.g., serving on governing boards of community non-profits or committees), or involve significant amounts of volunteering.

**Figure 4B-21: Community Partners' Ratings of NSC's Impact**

**Responses to "How would you describe the impact of NSC's engagement with the community?"**

	No impact	<b>1.92%</b>
	Slightly impactful	<b>7.69%</b>
	Moderately impactful	<b>26.92%</b>
	Very impactful	<b>55.7%</b>
	Don't know	<b>7.69%</b>





# CHAPTER FIVE

# 5 MISSION FULFILLMENT, ADAPTATION, & SUSTAINABILITY

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENT 24)

### 24. Scale and Sustainability

**The institution demonstrates that its operational scale (e.g., enrollment, human and financial resources, and institutional infrastructure) is sufficient to fulfill its mission and achieve its core themes in the present and will be sufficient to do so in the foreseeable future.**

As part of the self-evaluation process, Nevada State College reviews its resources and operations, and monitors the internal and external environment, to ensure its ongoing ability to fulfill its mission and achieve its core themes. The College has examined

student enrollment trends, human resources, financial resources (including changes to the state funding formula and legislative approvals for physical infrastructure funding), and existing infrastructure in light of our mission and objectives. Based on this evaluation and a thorough assessment of our core themes and mission fulfillment indicators, we conclude that NSC has fulfilled its mission during this accreditation cycle and can continue to do so in the foreseeable future. The self-evaluation also allowed the College to identify areas for continued process improvement and expansion of resources, which will drive our subsequent Year One report for the following accreditation cycle



## 5.A MISSION FULFILLMENT

### 5.A.1 The institution engages in regular, systematic, participatory, self-reflective, and evidence-based assessment of its accomplishments.

This Year 7 Mission Fulfillment Report has detailed the ways in which Nevada State College engages in regular, systematic, participatory, self-reflective, and evidence-based assessment of our accomplishments. This is particularly evident in our discussion of institutional planning (Standard 3) and core theme assessment (Standard 4). All of these assessment efforts ultimately contribute to our evaluation of mission fulfillment. Though core theme assessment is discussed at length in Standard 4, we also summarize how it informs our evaluation of mission fulfillment at the end of this section. The narrative and data below relate specifically to the definition of mission fulfillment and acceptable thresholds outlined in our Year One Self-Evaluation report

#### Definition of Mission Fulfillment

As stated in Section 1.A.2, the mission of Nevada State College will be fulfilled when we provide objectively-validated educational opportunities to a broad population of largely underserved students who, as a result, experience career success

and improved quality of life and who, along with our faculty, strengthen the state through civic contributions, shared knowledge, and the provision of a more diverse, competent workforce.

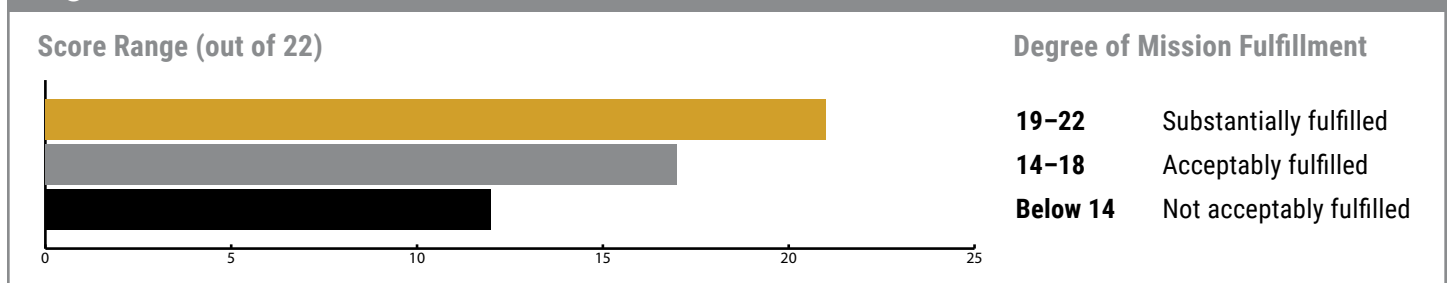
#### Acceptable Thresholds of Mission Fulfillment

To operationally define and evaluate whether the mission has been fulfilled, we identified four key elements of the mission—Excellence and Innovation in Teaching, Student Success, Educational Opportunity, and Contributions to the Community—and aligned specific measurable indicators with each element, as shown in Table 5A-1.

For each indicator, we established a quantitative threshold for success, and then, in conjunction with executive leadership, applied a rubric whereby 0 = “not fulfilled”, 1 = “partially fulfilled”, and 2 = “fulfilled.” This rubric yields a maximum total of 22 points for all 11 indicators, and we determined that a score of 19 or higher would define the threshold for “substantial” mission fulfillment.

However, owing to the significant challenges posed by the recession for a new and developing institution, we also established score ranges that reflect varying degrees of mission fulfillment, as illustrated in

**Figure 5A-1: Mission Fulfillment Thresholds**





**Table 5A-1: Mission Fulfillment Indicators**

*Excellence & Innovation in Teaching*

**1. Degree Program outcomes assessment:**

1. By the final assessment in the accreditation cycle, observe an increase of 35 percentage points in the number of students earning a rating of “proficient” or better from lower-division courses (conducted at approximately 0-30 credits earned) to upper-division courses (conducted at approximately 90-120 credits earned).
2. By the final degree program learning outcomes assessment in the accreditation cycle, at least 70% of student artifacts will be rated “proficient” or better.
3. At least 80% of NSSE respondents will continue to rate the entire educational experience as “good” or “excellent.”
4. Demonstrate a statistically significant improvement in the proportion of NSSE respondents who report participating in a high-impact practice at NSC.
5. Demonstrate a statistically significant improvement in the proportion of NSSE respondents who report that NSC emphasizes being an informed citizen “very much” or “quite a bit.”

*Student Success*

1. Increase six-year graduation numbers by an average of 1% annually, including those of key under-represented groups.
2. Increase proportion of students completing their college-level math and English requirements by the end of their first year of college.

*Educational Opportunity*

1. Continue to offer the most affordable 4-year degree programs among the primarily-baccalaureate institutions in NSHE.
2. Increase enrollment of under-represented groups, equaling or eclipsing percentages in the larger Nevada population by the end of the accreditation cycle.

*Contributions to the Community*

1. Maintain a high percentage of graduates who remain employed in Nevada.
2. Receive a mean rating of “successful” or better on NSC Community Partner Survey question about “collaborating with the community to support economic development.”

Figure 5A-1. The range for “substantial” fulfillment was selected because it reflects the achievement of over 85% of the possible points in our rubric (put differently, it could be a situation where 8 of the 11 indicators are fully achieved, and the other three are at least partially achieved). Acceptable fulfillment was operationalized by a score range where we have achieved 65% to 85% of the possible points, which was deemed to be a meaningful level of achievement, particularly given our institutional context.

### MISSION FULFILLMENT SUMMARY

Our comprehensive evaluation suggests that the College’s degree of mission fulfillment rests on the border between acceptable and substantial fulfillment, with a total score of 18 out of 22 possible points. Though NSC is committed to continual, aspirational improvement, and recognizes that noteworthy shortcomings warrant attention in the years ahead, we are proud of what the institution has accomplished during this accreditation cycle. To varying degrees, the College has made meaningful strides toward the fulfillment of all four identified elements of our mission.

In regard to “Excellence and Innovation in Teaching,” Nevada State continued to advance our goal of becoming the pre-eminent teaching institution in the region. To this end, the College orchestrated a number of systemic improvements—such as the creation of the Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence and the many instructional gains made possible by the Teaching Fellows Institute—and revamped and expanded our program of assessment, which subsequently yielded the enhancements detailed in Chapter 4 and our assessment reports.

In the realm of “Student Success,” NSC increased graduation rates by 5 percentage points during this accreditation cycle, and by 7 percentage points in the last four years, after stalling at 14% from 2012 to 2014. Importantly, given our pledge to promote the success of a diverse population of students, our

greatest advances were with historically under-represented students, whose overall graduation rate has climbed 7 percentage points since 2001 (a 54% increase). Similarly, Nevada State facilitated critical gains in the proportion of students completing their gateway math and English requirements in their first year of college, with increases of 34 percentage points for math (a 106% increase over the starting point) and 23 points for English (which marked a 56% increase from the initial rate).

The institution also paved new pathways to “Educational Opportunity” for significant numbers of students from different backgrounds. A critical consideration in this endeavor was the provision of an affordable education, and the College continued to offer the lowest tuition-per-credit rates of any primarily baccalaureate-granting institution in NSHE, and has taken measures to keep costs low, such as a reduction in the student success fee to help offset the impact of a Board-mandated tuition increase. Across the accreditation cycle, this affordable opportunity was pursued by growing numbers of under-represented groups, including an increase of 11 percentage points in racial and ethnic minorities—which surpasses the underlying growth rate in the Nevada population by 6 percentage points.

Finally, in the true spirit of a comprehensive state college, NSC alumni—and the institution itself—are exerting a positive influence on the Nevada community. The vast majority of our working graduates—typically just above 90%—remain employed in the state of Nevada, and the College is seen as a viable contributor to the local economy, with 82% of respondents on a 2018 Community Partner Survey rating NSC’s contributions to economic development as “successful” or “very successful.” Thanks to Nevada State’s continued growth, rising graduation rates, and expanding scope and quality of academic programs, we expect this positive impact to only increase in the years ahead.

Our self-evaluation also indicates several areas for critical improvement. Chief among them may be our program of assessment. Though we have worked diligently to enhance the institution’s assessment efforts, the recent and dramatic expansion in our faculty ranks gives the College an opportunity to truly excel in this capacity. Prospective improvements include the desire to assess more outcomes in a given time frame, foster a stronger culture of assessment among faculty and staff, enhance our evaluation of “value-added,” and improve the systematic alignment among student learning outcomes (SLOs), course objectives, and key assessments. The recent inclusion of SLO achievement thresholds in our 2020–2025 Strategic Plan is a critical step toward bolstering our assessment culture, and the planned overhaul of our Core Curriculum will create a blueprint for the ideal alignment among outcomes, course objectives, and assignments.

Another essential improvement would address the formality with which Nevada State pursues our strategic goals and mission fulfillment. These overarching aspirations guide our actions and resource

allocations, as detailed throughout this report, but we recognize that campus leadership can more consistently and explicitly rely on strategic goals as a roadmap for institutional decision-making. Likewise, we can improve the extent to which we regularly apprise the campus of our progress, and clearly delineate how that progress—whether it is increased retention rates or new programs and services—is tied to our strategic plan and core themes.

Taken together, our accumulating successes and areas for improvement suggest that the institution is just now beginning to realize our fuller potential. The significant challenges we faced as a new institution, perhaps none more obvious than the difficulty of building a state college with limited resources and, at the start of this accreditation cycle, just 36 full-time faculty for roughly 3,200 students, have ameliorated considerably in the last two years. The leavening of that burden, coupled with an improved understanding of what it takes to promote the success of our students, give the campus great hope that we can truly deliver on the promise for which the College was founded.



**Table 5A-2: Achievement Thresholds and Results**

Objective	Indicator	Results	Achievement Score (out of 2)
<b>Excellence &amp; Innovation in Teaching</b>	1.1 Degree program learning outcomes assessment	<i>Achievement Threshold</i> – Observe an increase of at least 35 percentage points in student performance from lower-division courses to upper-division courses  <i>Result</i> – We calculated a median improvement, across all programs, of 30%, which fell just below the threshold; however, four programs did show increases of 40% or more	1
	1.2 Degree program learning outcomes assessment	<i>Achievement Threshold</i> – By end of assessment cycle, at least 70% of artifacts will be rated proficient or better  <i>Result</i> – Across all programs, the College achieved a median proficiency rating of 62.9%, falling slightly short of the threshold; 3 of 12 academic programs under review eclipsed the threshold, an additional 5 were at 60% or higher, 1 just eclipsed 50%, and 3 programs were more than 20 percentage points below the targeted threshold	1
	1.3 NSSE item about quality of entire educational experience at NSC	<i>Achievement Threshold</i> – At least 80% of NSSE respondents will rate the entire NSC educational experience as “good” or “excellent”  <i>Result</i> – In the most recent assessment, 90% of students rated the College as “good” or “excellent”	2
	1.4 NSSE item about participation in High-Impact Practices (HIP)	<i>Achievement Threshold</i> – Demonstrate statistically significant improvement in proportion of respondents who report participating in a HIP  <i>Result</i> – Increase across accreditation cycle was significant (z = 2.99, p = .003)	2
	1.5 NSSE item about the degree to which NSC emphasizes being an informed and active citizen	<i>Achievement Threshold</i> – Demonstrate significant improvement in percentage of respondents reporting “very much” or “quite a bit” for this item  <i>Result</i> – Percentage of students responding positively increased, but result was not statistically significant	1
<b>Student Success</b>	2.1 6-year graduation rates	<i>Achievement Threshold</i> – Increase 6-year graduation rates by annual average of 1%  <i>Result</i> – Threshold partially achieved, with 5% overall increase and 7% increase for under-represented racial/ethnic groups	1
	2.2 Proportion of students completing gateway math/English by end of 1st year in college	<i>Achievement Threshold</i> – Increase percentage by 2% annually  <i>Result</i> – The threshold was achieved, with a net increase of 34 percentage points for math and 23 points for English	2
<b>Educational Opportunity</b>	3.1 Affordability of college education	<i>Achievement Threshold</i> – Offer the most affordable 4-year degree programs among the primarily-baccalaureate institutions in NSHE  <i>Result</i> – Threshold achieved, with per-credit rate roughly 30% below comparable rates at UNLV and UNR	2
	3.2 Enrollment growth of under-represented groups	<i>Achievement Threshold</i> – Increase enrollment of under-represented groups, equaling or eclipsing percentages in overall Nevada population  <i>Result</i> – Overall enrollment of under-represented racial/ethnic students increased, and continued to surpass the rates in the Nevada population by an even greater margin	2
<b>Community Contributions</b>	4.1 Graduate employment	<i>Achievement Threshold</i> – Maintain a high percentage of graduates who remain employed in Nevada  <i>Result</i> – On average, over 90% of our employed graduates are working in Nevada	2
	4.2 Community Partner Survey of economic impact	<i>Achievement Threshold</i> – Receive mean rating of “successful” on Community Partner Survey for item about supporting economic development  <i>Result</i> – 82% of respondents provided a rating of “successful” or “very successful,” resulting in an overall score that surpasses the threshold	2

**OVERALL: 18 out of 22**

**5.A.2 Based on its definition of mission fulfillment, the institution uses assessment results to make determinations of quality, effectiveness, and mission fulfillment and communicates its conclusions to appropriate constituencies and the public.**

In this section, we analyze our institutional performance on each mission fulfillment indicator, noting areas of particular success as well as domains for improvement.

**Excellence & Innovation in Teaching**

*Indicator 1.1: Observe an increase of at least 35 percentage points in the number of students earning a rating of “proficient” or better between lower-division and upper-division courses in degree outcomes assessment*

**RESULTS**

The median improvement across all assessed degree programs with measurable data was 30%. Though this result indicates that, on average, programs are strengthening student mastery of learning outcomes in the transition from lower-division to upper-division coursework, the the overall result did not surpass our achievement threshold. Consequently, this indicator is deemed to be partially fulfilled (the data and analyses are discussed in more detail in Section 4B).

**1.1: MISSION FULFILLMENT POINTS = 1**

**ANALYSIS/RECOMMENDATIONS**

The assessment of value-added is an obvious area for improvement at NSC. Existing efforts to

improve—such as the addition of lower- and upper-division assessments after years of only examining upper-level courses—have paid dividends in terms of understanding student achievement, but more methodological refinements are needed. In particular, every program needs to have viable key assessments at lower- and upper-division levels for all student learning outcomes, (several programs did not have viable assessments at the lower division level), and the objectives of these assessments need to be more tightly aligned with programmatic outcomes. However, these needed refinements, while necessary for a consistently effective assessment of value added, should not belie the achievements in this area. A number of programs facilitated noteworthy improvements in student performance, and faculty often reflected on the superior mastery of learning outcomes achieved by upper-division students.

*Indicator 1.2: By the final degree program learning outcomes assessment in the accreditation cycle, at least 70% of student artifacts will be rated “proficient” or better*

**RESULTS**

By the final assessment in the accreditation cycle, conducted in Fall 2018, the median proficiency index across all programs was 62.9%, landing just short of our target of 70% for upper-division artifacts. Three of the 12 academic programs under review achieved a proficiency index of 70%, an additional five were at 60% or higher, one just eclipsed 50%, and three programs were more than 20 percentage points below the targeted threshold. A more detailed examination of these data and their implications is provided in Section 4B.

**Table 5A-3: Summary Results for Academic Outcomes Assessment**

	2018 Assessment Results
<b>Median Improvement</b>	30%
<b>Median Proficiency Rating</b>	62.9%

## 1.2: MISSION FULFILLMENT POINTS = 1

*Indicator 1.3: At least 80% of NSSE respondents will rate their entire educational experience as “good” or “excellent”*

### RESULTS

The College significantly surpassed the achievement threshold for this mission fulfillment metric in every year of the accreditation cycle (Figure 5A-2). Across the entire timeframe, the mean percentage of respondents who gave the College a “good” or “excellent” rating was roughly 90%.

## 1.3: MISSION FULFILLMENT POINTS = 2

### ANALYSIS/RECOMMENDATIONS

The scores received by Nevada State are a likely testament to the emphasis the College places on excellent teaching, small class sizes, and high-quality student support. Moving forward, the institution may be approaching diminishing returns with efforts to continue improving this metric, so more of our focus will be directed at increasing our overall NSSE response rate (which has increased

but still has room to grow) and improving our performance on less favorably evaluated items, such as student engagement in high-impact practices.

*Indicator 1.4: Demonstrate a statistically-significant increase in the proportion of NSSE respondents who report participating in a high-impact practice at NSC*

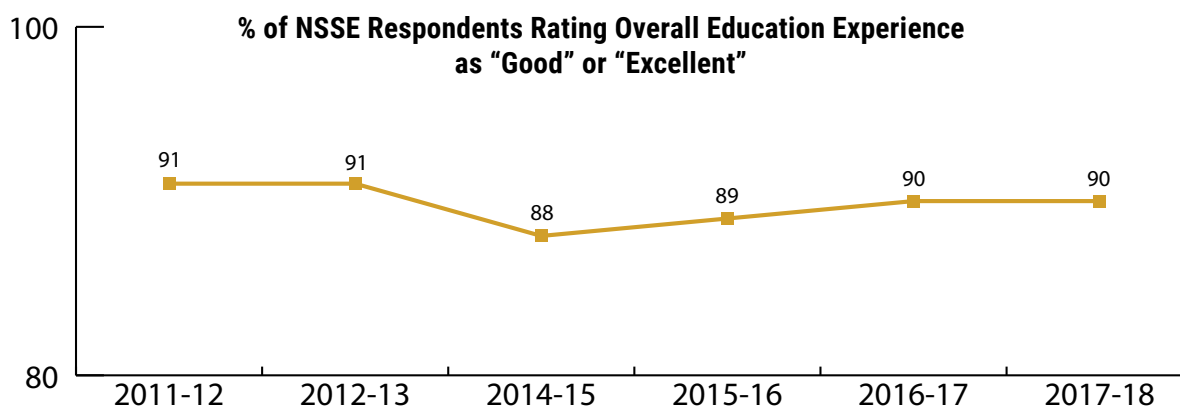
### RESULTS

NSSE computes high-impact practice (HIP) participation data differently for first-year students and seniors; first-year student data are based on responses about three HIPs, while the data for seniors are based on responses regarding six HIPs, reflecting the fact that first-year students are unlikely to have had the opportunity to engage in some experiences such as study abroad. Figure 5A-3 provides responses from NSC seniors, capturing responses to all six possible HIPs.

The increase from 2012–13 through 2017–18 was statistically significant ( $z = 2.9887$ ,  $p = .00278$ ), meeting the achievement threshold set for this metric.

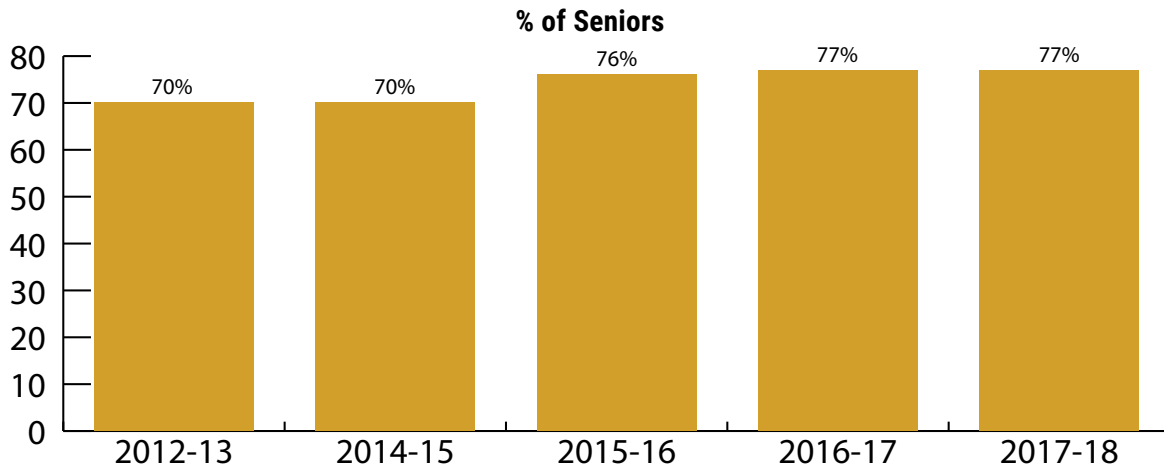
## 1.4: MISSION FULFILLMENT POINTS = 2

**Figure 5A-2: Results for NSSE\* Overall Education Experience Question**



\*NSSE was not conducted at NSC in 2013–14.

**Figure 5A-3: Results for NSSE\* High-Impact Practices Questions**



\*NSSE was not conducted at NSC in 2013–14. In 2012, NSSE removed the original question about “enriching educational experiences” and replaced it with a question about “high-impact practices.” Data for this question is available from 2012–13 onward.

**ANALYSIS/RECOMMENDATIONS**

To provide an additional assessment of our success in this area, we compared our NSSE results to other western public institutions as well as our Carnegie class (Table 5A-4). NSC’s first-year students were roughly as likely to report participating in a HIP as students from other western public institutions were, but lagged slightly behind students from other colleges in our Carnegie class. Among seniors, participation was somewhat lower relative to both groups of peer institutions.

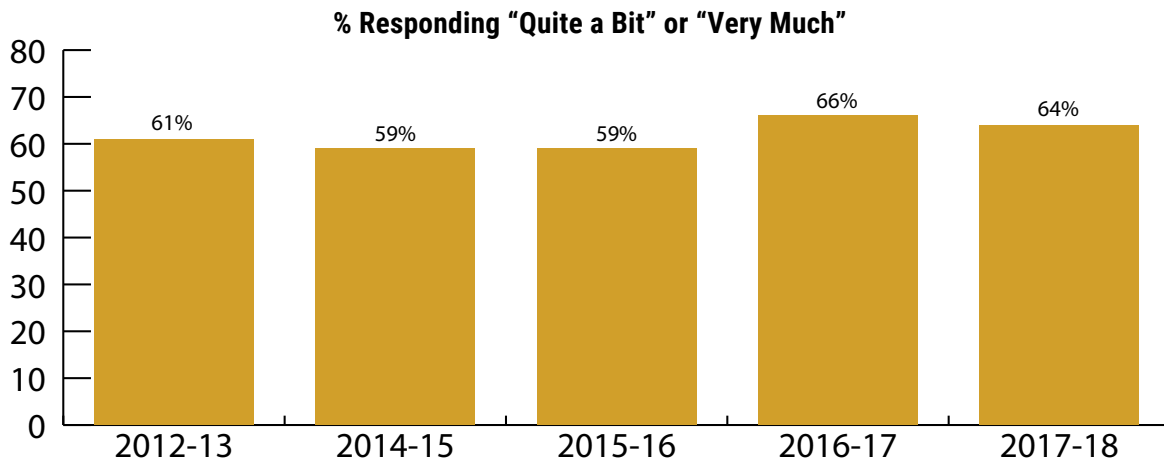
Our students’ lower participation rates, especially among seniors, may partially reflect the challenges

of regularly offering some HIPs (e.g., study abroad opportunities) as a young institution that dealt with severe budget cuts and limited staffing. In the past three years, the College has begun to expand such opportunities. For example, learning communities were largely discontinued for several years due to a lack of faculty available to take on the task of designing and teaching linked courses. With new First-Year Experience linked courses debuting in Fall 2019 and residential housing opening on campus in Fall 2020, we expect this HIP to become a more widely available option for students over the next several years.

**Table 5A-4: Comparison of High-Impact Practice Participation**

	First-Year Students			Seniors		
	NSC	Western Public	Carnegie Class	NSC	Western Public	Carnegie Class
<b>2012-13</b>	51%	57%	61%	70%	86%	86%
<b>2014-15</b>	61%	59%	65%	70%	85%	88%
<b>2015-16</b>	56%	59%	66%	76%	85%	87%
<b>2016-17</b>	58%	59%	63%	77%	86%	85%
<b>2017-18</b>	54%	58%	61%	77%	86%	85%

**Figure 5A-4: Results for NSSE Item about Being an Informed/Active Citizen**



\*NSSE was not conducted at NSC in 2013–14. In 2012, NSSE removed the original question asking students whether they “contribute to the welfare of their community” with a question asking how much their institution “emphasizes being an informed citizen.” Data for this question is available from 2012–13 onward.

The College also is attempting to make other HIPs available to students through multiple means. Grants have provided funding for students to take part in independent research projects with faculty, and several degree programs have been designed or revised to offer a culminating experience—whether a field experience course (e.g., Psychology), a capstone seminar (e.g., History, Criminal Justice), or student teaching (e.g., Education). Some programs have implemented Honors courses that require students to complete a thesis project and present it before a panel of faculty, and the 2020–2025 Strategic Plan includes an initiative to expand Honors programming on campus. Finally, efforts to improve and evaluate our program of assessment have

incorporated a structured consideration of HIPs, but with limited success to date.

We are hopeful that these efforts will increase the proportion of students who participate in a NSSE-identified HIP by their senior year.

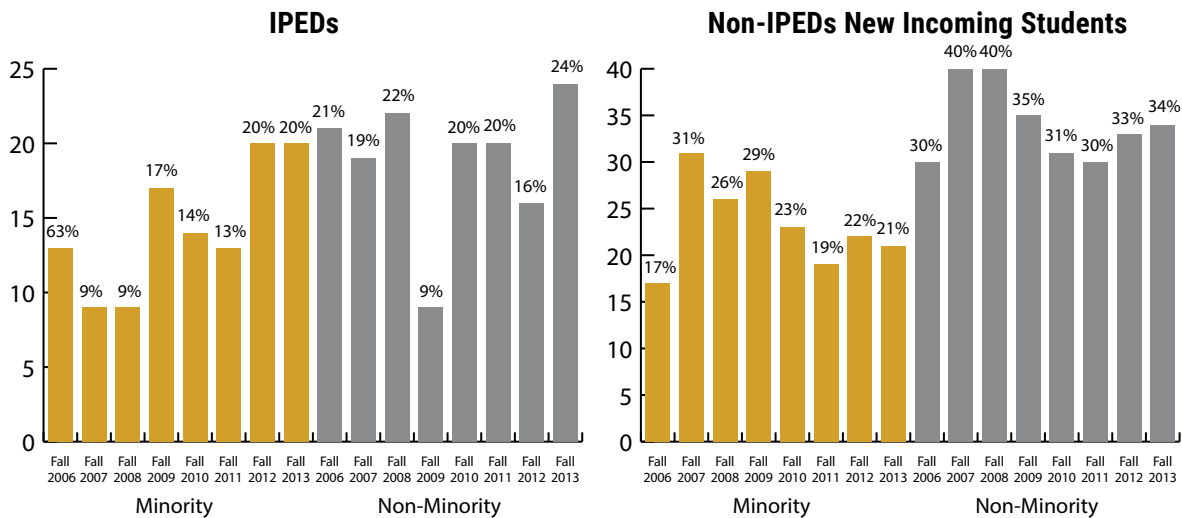
*Indicator 1.5: Demonstrate a statistically-significant increase in the proportion of NSSE respondents who report that NSC emphasizes being an informed and active citizen “quite a bit” or “very much”*

**Table 5A-5: Comparison of NSSE Active/Informed Citizen Results**

	NSC	Western Public	Carnegie Class
<b>2012-13</b>	61%	61%	57%
<b>2014-15</b>	59%	60%	55%
<b>2015-16</b>	59%	55%	57%
<b>2016-17</b>	66%	58%	59%
<b>2017-18</b>	64%	58%	60%



**Figure 5A-5: 6-Year Graduation Rates by Minority Status**



**RESULTS**

Figure 5A-5 presents the results for this NSSE question. While the proportion of students responding “quite a bit” or “very much” increased, it was not statistically significant ( $p > .05$ ).

**ANALYSIS/RECOMMENDATIONS**

Once again, to provide additional assessment we examined NSC responses in the context of NSSE comparison groups (Table 5A-5). The College performed well compared to our peers, with a similar or somewhat higher percentage of our students reporting that we emphasize active, informed citizenship.

Despite this comparatively favorable performance, our emphasis on informed citizenship will be considered in our redesign of the Core Curriculum. In exploring possible enhancements, we will account for the scores of our peer institutions to establish aspirational but realistic thresholds of achievement.

**1.5: MISSION FULFILLMENT POINTS = 1**

**Student Success**

*Indicator 2.1: Increase 6-year graduation rate by an average of 1% annually, including among under-represented groups*

**RESULTS**

As discussed in detail under Objective 2.2 in Section 4B, the graduation rates for our IPEDs cohort and all students have increased by 5 and 9 percentage points, respectively. Moreover, the increase has been even more pronounced among under-represented students, as defined by all IPEDs students other than White non-Hispanics, who showed an increase of 7 percentage points across this accreditation cycle (Figure 5A-5). Similar gains have been observed for specific populations of under-represented students, such as the jump from 12.1% to 22% for Hispanic students of any race, but we do not delve into these data in detail because the sample sizes remain too small for meaningful conclusions. For example, the 12.1% rate for Hispanic students noted above represents a tally of 4 graduates; likewise, the graduation rate for African-American IPEDs students climbed from 11.8% to 25%, but this latter number reflects the success of two students from an initial cohort of eight.

**2.1: MISSION FULFILLMENT POINTS = 1**

## ANALYSIS/RECOMMENDATIONS

The conclusions we can draw from these results, and corresponding next steps, are examined at greater length in section 4B. The continued improvement in our graduation rate is a primary focus of the College, and a range of efforts—from the implementation of new degree pathways for erstwhile pre-nursing students to the expansion of student support programs - are expected to yield positive results.

*Indicator 2.2: Increase proportion of students completing college-level math and English core curriculum requirements by the end of their first year*

## RESULTS

This metric was not established in the Year 1 Self-Evaluation Report but was added as NSHE initiatives and internal data indicated it was an appropriate measure of our mission fulfillment. At the beginning of this accreditation cycle, few students completed their college-level math or English composition requirements in their first year, and successful completion has been identified by both NSHE and Complete College America as being [positively correlated with degree attainment](#).

Guided by a new NSHE policy that encouraged timely gateway math and English completion, the math faculty at NSC revamped the content of our

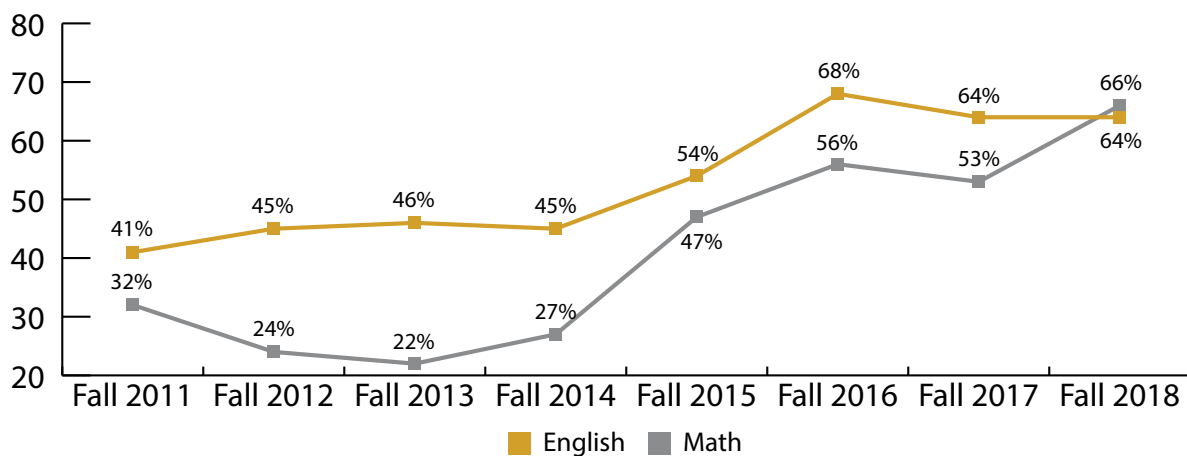
Core Curriculum math course for non-science majors to incorporate topics (e.g., statistics) that are more likely to resonate with our student population, while maintaining the rigor expected of a college-level math course. The faculty also introduced a single-semester co-requisite model that allows students to bypass traditional remediation and acquire foundational skills in an “extended” version of the course that features more contact time with instructors. As data revealed that our placement methods were potentially “under-placing” many of our students, we introduced a self-paced platform called EdReady that allows students to improve their placement from a remedial course to a co-requisite college level class or higher. In addition, NSC used block scheduling at New Student Orientation to enroll first-year students into college-level math and English composition, and English faculty revised English placement practices to pilot a recommended model of self-directed placement.

## ANALYSIS/RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of these efforts, the percentage of students completing these Core Curriculum requirements in their first year has increased dramatically, as shown in Figure 5A-6.

The data represent an increase of 56% in students completing English composition in their first year, and a 106% increase in the proportion of students

**Figure 5A-6: % of Students Completing Math and English in First Year**



completing their college-level math requirement. Moreover, we have closed the gap in completion rates of these two Core Curriculum requirements—a notable accomplishment for an institution where approximately 75% to 80% of students require remediation in math and enter the College with significant levels of math anxiety. The metric should continue to improve with the introduction of a new NSHE policy that replaces all remedial math with college-level courses (co-requisite or higher) and our ongoing participation in the Metro Momentum Pathways project with Complete College America.

**2.2: MISSION FULFILLMENT POINTS = 2**

Educational Opportunity

*Indicator 3.1: Continue to offer the most affordable 4-year degree programs among the primarily-baccalaureate institutions in NSHE*

**RESULTS**

As discussed in Section 4.B, NSC remains significantly more affordable than UNLV and UNR, the two other public institutions that offer a comprehensive set of baccalaureate degrees. In fact, for upper-division courses, NSC’s in-state tuition during much of this accreditation cycle was less than the in-state tuition at the College of Southern

Nevada, a community college in Las Vegas that offers primarily two-year associate’s degrees; as of [2019–20](#), the two rates will be the same.

**3.1: MISSION FULFILLMENT POINTS = 2**

**ANALYSIS/RECOMMENDATIONS**

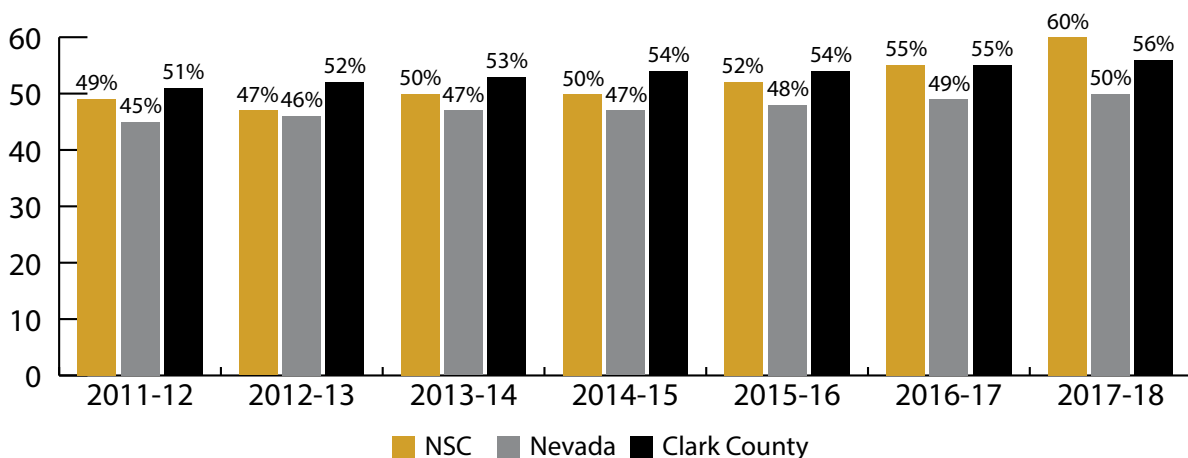
Much of our success in this regard is attributable to the nature of NSHE and our role as a middle tier institution that is expected to maintain lower costs than the universities. However, the College also has made deliberate efforts to keep costs low, such as President Patterson’s decision to reduce the student success fee in the face of a tuition increase mandated by the Board of Regents and to maintain a lower per-credit cost for upper-division courses than the area community college.

*Indicator 3.2: Increase enrollment of under-represented groups, equally or eclipsing percentages in the Nevada population by Year 5*

**RESULTS**

NSC’s mission includes educating “a diverse population of “students,” and indicator 3.2 reflects this element of our mission. Throughout this accreditation cycle, the College’s enrollment of under-represented racial/ethnic groups has surpassed their

**Figure 5A-7: Racial/Ethnic Minority Population at NSC and in Nevada (%)**



percentage in the overall state population, and since 2016–17, we have exceeded the proportion in Clark County as well (Figure 5A-7).

### 3.2: MISSION FULFILLMENT POINTS = 2

#### ANALYSIS/RECOMMENDATIONS

Nevada State’s growth in under-represented students likely stems from a greater awareness of our institutional mission. This awareness, in turn, has been promoted by numerous factors, including high-profile stories in local print and television media about diversity-oriented initiatives (e.g., Nepantla; the Title V HSI grant), recruitment efforts that highlight our commitment to under-served students, and marketing and web materials that communicate our intention to support students from all backgrounds.

#### Contributions to the Community

*Indicator 4.1: Maintain a high percentage of graduates who remain employed in Nevada*

#### RESULTS

This goal reflects our mission to contribute to “a stronger community and a better future for all of Nevada,” in part by producing graduates who meet the needs of the state’s economy. Throughout this assessment cycle, an extremely high proportion of our graduates have remained in the state (Figure 5A-8).

### 4.1: MISSION FULFILLMENT POINTS = 2

#### ANALYSIS/RECOMMENDATIONS

The proportion of graduates who remain employed in Nevada dipped somewhat in 2017–18. This may be due to the growth of our online RN-to-BSN nursing program, which attracts students who live outside of Nevada, but more data are needed to reach a definitive conclusion.

*Indicator 4.2: Receive a mean rating of “successful” or better on the NSC Community Partner Survey question about “collaborating with the community to support economic development”*

#### RESULTS

On the 2018 Community Partner Survey, “successful” was the most common rating (42%); another 40% rated the College as “very successful” (Figure 5A-9). These responses meet the achievement threshold of a mean rating of “successful” or better.

### 4.2: MISSION FULFILLMENT POINTS = 2

#### ANALYSIS/RECOMMENDATIONS

Two of NSC’s institutional cornerstones—Nursing and Education—help address significant workforce deficiencies in Nevada and ultimately are viewed as contributors to economic development in this community. The College also has endeavored to support the economy in other ways, and has closely considered workforce needs in the development of new academic programs. Most of the degrees established in the last several years, including Deaf Studies, Criminal Justice, Communication, Data Science, and the master’s degree in Speech Language Pathology, are designed to help strengthen the Nevada economy through the provision of well-educated graduates in areas of high need.



Figure 5A-8: NSC Students Employed in Nevada

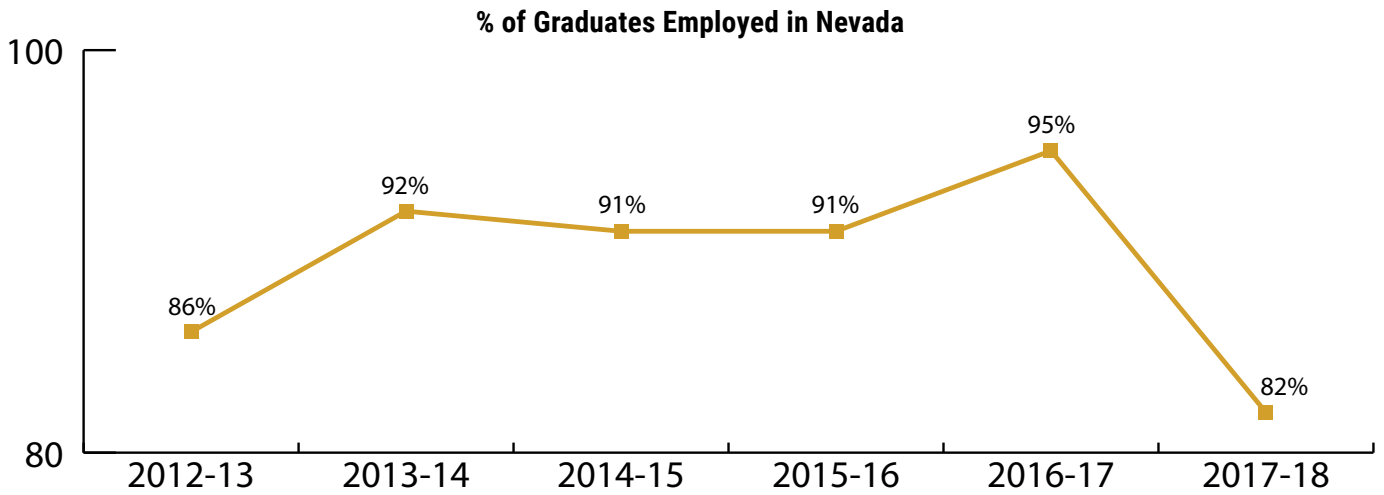
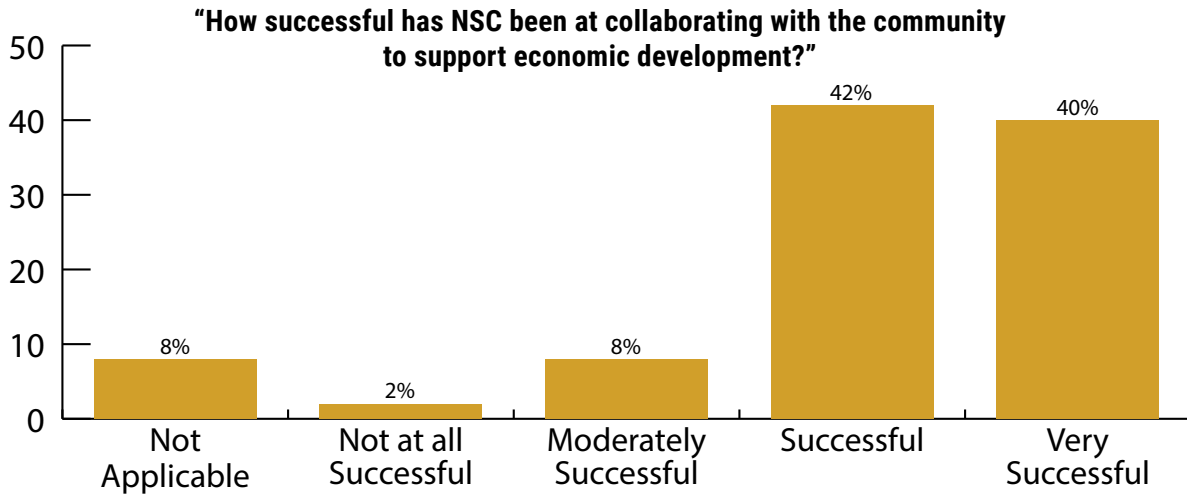


Figure 5A-9: Community Partner Ratings of NSC's Success Supporting Economic Development



## Core Theme Achievement & Mission Fulfillment

As viewed through the lens of the definition for mission fulfillment established in our Year One Self-Evaluation Report, NSC has acceptably fulfilled its mission in this accreditation cycle, and even achieved an overall score that borders on substantial fulfillment. Examined from the perspective of core theme achievement, which involves a broader array of goals and indicators, we also observed significant progress toward mission fulfillment, albeit with more room for improvement.

As Table 5A-7 indicates, the College achieved 44 of 56 possible points in our self-evaluation of our core theme achievement, with particularly strong performances for Core Theme 2 (Foster Educational Opportunity) and Core Theme 3 (Strengthen the Community). In regards to Core Theme 2, NSC invested tremendously in programs and services designed to welcome a diverse population of students to the College and guide them to degree attainment. In this accreditation cycle alone, we established the Nepantla program, the Writing Center, the TRiO Student Services program, the “Cultivating Minds” Title V program, and the Course Assistant program, while also expanding or restructuring the Academic Success Center, the advising center, and the Office of Financial Aid. These efforts, in turn, were complemented by the implementation of several Complete College America initiatives and the enhancement of key gateway courses such as our College Success class.

The positive outcomes associated with Core Theme 3 are, in some respects, a consequence of what we accomplished with Core Theme 2—as NSC students earn their degrees, they are marking contributions in high-demand fields, and the vast majority of them are doing it in Nevada. Moreover, as NSC has grown and matured, we have bolstered our ability to serve the community, forming new partnerships and hosting key community events such as the Southern Nevada Diversity Summit (which, before 2015, was not even a possibility due to inadequate facilities).

Our evaluation of Core Theme 1 (Promote Student Success) also revealed meaningful achievements, but to a somewhat lesser extent. Two of the College’s marquee programs continued to excel, as both the Nursing and Education programs exhibited strong performances on standardized indicators such as the NCLEX and Praxis II exams. Likewise, although the institution did not reach the targeted—and lofty—thresholds of achievement for all of its NSSE indicators, we earned high marks from students for quality of the entire educational experience at NSC and consistently surpassed the scores achieved by our comparison institutions in the Far West Region and our Carnegie Class.

Student learning outcomes assessment was at once an area of accomplishment and needed improvement. The accomplishments include a multitude of programmatic improvements that resulted from faculty assessment work, as well as several enhancements involving the assessment program itself, including the addition of yearly, alternating methods of assessment that are each punctuated by an annual assessment retreat. However, assessment done well is an arduous task, and the College needs to invest more time and personnel into the endeavor as our staffing improves. Several programs did not achieve our targeted proficiency index, still others failed to observe improvements from lower to upper division levels, and methodological or curricular shortcomings prevented a proper assessment in some areas. However, in this light, the process served its purpose well, shining a light on deficiencies that otherwise may have gone unnoticed and paving an initial path to promising remedies.

The same can be said of the self-evaluation process as a whole. Though the College consistently evaluates our progress toward essential goals, the formal evaluation of our core themes provided opportunities for analysis and reflection that were both deeper and more comprehensive than we would normally

conduct, and it subsequently revealed successes and opportunities for improvement that can further strengthen the institution. Based on this observation,

we are interested in the NWCCU's examination of more frequent - but less time intensive - check-ins with participating institutions.

**Table 5A-6: Core Theme Achievement Summary**

<b>Core Themes Composite Score</b>	<b>44/56</b>
<b>Core Theme 1: Promote Student Success Composite Score</b>	<b>18/26</b>
1.1 Indicator #1: Core Curriculum Assessment	1
1.1 Indicator #2: ATI Scores	2
1.1 Indicator #2: EBI Ratings	2
1.1 Indicator #3: NSSE Ratings	1
1.2 Indicator #1: NSSE Ratings	1
1.2 Indicator #2: Core Curriculum Assessment	1
1.3 Indicator #1: NCLEX Pass Rates	2
1.3 Indicator #2: Praxis Pass Rates	2
1.3 Indicator #3: Degree Program Outcomes Assessment	1
1.3 Indicator #4: NSSE Ratings	1
1.4 Indicator #1: NSSE Ratings	0
1.4 Indicator #2: Student Course Evaluation Ratings	2
1.4 Indicator #3: EBI Ratings	2
<b>Core Theme 2: Foster Education Opportunity Composite Score</b>	<b>17/20</b>
2.1 Indicator #1: Headcount Growth	2
2.1 Indicator #2: Financial Aid Awards	N/A
2.1 Indicator #3: Cost Comparison	2
2.1 Indicator #4: Satisfaction with Student Support Services	2
2.1 Indicator #5: Academic Support Services Utilization	2
2.2 Indicator #1: 1-Year Retention	1
2.2 Indicator #2: 6-Year Graduation Rate	1
2.2 Indicator #3: Course Completion	2
2.3 Indicator #1: Under-Represented Graduates	2
2.3 Indicator #2: Graduates by Gender	N/A
2.3 Indicator #3: Graduates by Major	1
2.3 Indicator #4: Post-Baccalaureate Education	2
<b>Core Theme 3: Strengthen the Community Composite Score</b>	<b>9/10</b>
3.1 Indicator #1: Outbound Partnerships	2
3.1 Indicator #2: Inbound Partnerships	2
3.2 Indicator #1: Graduates' Employment	N/A
3.2 Indicator #2: Graduates in High-Demand Fields	1
3.2 Indicator #3: Graduates Employed in Nevada	2
3.3 Indicator #1: Time Devoted to Community Partnerships	N/A
3.3 Indicator #2: Community Partner Ratings	2

## 5.B ADAPTATION & SUSTAINABILITY

**5.B.1 Within the context of its mission and characteristics, the institution evaluates regularly the adequacy of its resources, capacity, and effectiveness of operations to document its ongoing potential to fulfill its mission, accomplish its core theme objectives, and achieve the goals or intended outcomes of its programs and services, wherever offered and however delivered.**

### Evaluation of Adequacy of Resources, Capacity, and Effectiveness of Operations

The annual budget process is the most critical mechanism by which the College evaluates the adequacy of resources, capacity, and operational effectiveness. As detailed in Sections 2.F and 3.A.4, the process is comprehensive and collaborative, inviting participation from constituents across campus, and unified under a common set of principles and guidelines under the leadership of the Provost and the Senior Vice President of Finance and Business Operations. The process begins with an examination, at the division level, of capacity in terms of personnel, infrastructure (e.g., equipment, space), and operational budgets. This assessment is aided by relevant data, such as [operating budget worksheets](#) that illustrate a trajectory of expenses for the last several fiscal years as well as expenditures to date, and faculty-to-student ratios by discipline to help inform personnel decisions regarding instructional faculty. Analysis of utilization data and results from annual student services assessments provide an additional method of identifying areas in need of expansion. Division-level requests are evaluated by the campus Executive Budget Committee (EBC), which approves a final budget based on alignment with the College's mission and strategic goals (see Section 2.F.3). Through such planning and evaluation of resources, the budgeting process ensures the College has the infrastructure needed to fulfill our mission and accomplish our core theme objectives.

This process has directly contributed to a number of meaningful adjustments, including the addition of management-level employees and support staff to help guide areas and initiatives that grew in both size and complexity (e.g., the advising center, Academic Success Center, and the Office of Financial Aid), as well as the addition of new faculty in the wake of shifting circumstances, such as the need for more gateway math instructors in light of our historic growth in first-year students and a clear deficit of qualified adjunct instructors in this area.

### Financial Resources

Nevada State College submits quarterly reports regarding cash management, budget-to-actual-expenses comparisons, and budget adjustments to the Nevada Board of Regents. A qualified external auditor reviews financial statements annually, and the BoR Audit, Compliance, and Title IX Committee conducts periodic audits and reviews findings at regularly-scheduled Board meetings (see Sections 2.F.4 and 2.F.7 for details).

The new funding formula adopted by the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) (described in Section 2.F.1) provides funding based on semester completions. This formula better supports growing institutions such as Nevada State College and has significantly increased state appropriations to the College. This formula, along with a decision to tie future tuition and fee increases to the [Higher Education Price Index](#) (HEPI), will create a more predictable and appropriate operating budget, allowing for more effective planning and resource projections.

### Facilities and Equipment

The campus master plan guides development of the campus and is updated every 10 years. The recent creation of the position of Associate Vice President of Campus Infrastructure will provide additional



oversight of the facilities and capital requests planning process. The Office of Advancement coordinates carefully with the Executive Team to ensure that fundraising campaigns support the College's infrastructure needs and master planning.

The legislative capital request process offers an opportunity to request funding for significant infrastructure projects in order to support long-term campus development. In the most recent capital request cycle, NSC requested funding for an Education Building based on an analysis of space utilization, the College's mission to help fill the state's need for qualified K-12 educators, the building's alignment with strategic initiatives across campus (such as the implementation of the MEd program in Speech-Language Pathology in Fall 2019), and priorities identified in the master plan. Funding was approved in June 2019, and construction will begin in the 2019-20 academic year.

Accounting Services, with support from the Office of Information & Technology Services (ITS), oversees equipment inventory and asset management to ensure we exercise proper control over inventory and identify needed repairs and replacements. As described in Section 2.G.7, ITS also maintains and upgrades computing and telecommunication infrastructure to ensure the campus has high-quality, innovative technologies available to support our academic operations; the Technology Advisory Committee provides input into the needs of the campus community, and this feedback influences ITS planning. For example, based on input provided to ITS and conversations with NSC student leaders, the College recently committed to the creation of two additional open computer labs to provide students with better access to workstations. Computers are replaced on a five-year rolling schedule to ensure faculty, staff, and students have access to up-to-date, efficient computing resources (see Section 2.G.8).

## Strategic Enrollment

The Office of the Provost and the Senior Vice President of Finance and Business Operations regularly review information regarding the entire enrollment pipeline, from recruitment data to multi-year retention metrics, and respond accordingly. Much of the data is provided by the Office of Institutional Research, which provides insight into enrollment variables such as changes in [feeder high schools and community colleges](#), balance of transfer and first-time students, student [headcount and demographics](#), [scheduling and course capacity](#) data, and other relevant metrics (for details, see Section 4.B).

The analysis of this information facilitates increasingly accurate projections regarding enrollment counts, including first-time first-year student predictions that have been within 5% of the final total for the last two fall semesters, and contributes to a variety of adjustments aimed at institutional success. For example, shifting trends regarding incoming first-year and transfer students, such as decreases in applications from certain demographic groups, informed changes to our [2019–20 Recruitment Plan](#). Similarly, an unexpectedly large first-year class in 2017, followed by our first dip in 1-year retention rates in several years, led to efforts to manage growth—such as adjustments to our scholarship structure—that yielded a slightly smaller incoming 2018 class and a corresponding retention rate that is the highest in NSC's history. In the coming year, as the College begins the implementation of our Metro Momentum Pathways Project, the Office of the Provost will work closely with the academic schools to further improve our class offerings and schedules to give students more reliable degree pathways to graduation.

## Academic Programs

The outcomes assessment and program assessment process provides a key source of data that can

identify areas of need (e.g., more full-time faculty, updated equipment). A variety of metrics on each program, including student demographics, retention rates, and graduation rates, are available to any campus user via dashboards, providing access to information on student success.

The Chancellor requests regular reports on our efforts and initiatives related to NSHE strategic goals, including [student success](#), [closing the achievement gap](#), and [meeting workforce needs](#). The Chancellor has also directed all NSHE institutions to ensure these data are widely available, and acted upon, at the program and department level.

**5.B.2 The institution documents and evaluates regularly its cycle of planning, practices, resource allocation, application of institutional capacity, and assessment of results to ensure their adequacy, alignment, and effectiveness. It uses the results of its evaluation to make changes, as necessary, for improvement.**

Leaders at Nevada State College are committed to ongoing assessment and improvement of the College. Standard 4 provides details on the assessment of institutional effectiveness and how the results of that assessment have been used. In an effort to improve the assessment process, the Office of the Provost led an overhaul of student learning outcomes assessment procedures in 2016; as a result, academic programs created curriculum outcomes maps and five-year assessment schedules. In response to the realization that faculty needed more types of information to fully assess their programs, assessment now occurs each year, alternating between student learning outcomes assessment and broader program assessment (see Section 4.A.3).

A review of assessment efforts on campus led the Office of the Provost to identify student services as an area where more structured assessment was required. All student services units subsequently

developed measurable outcomes, with an emphasis on verifiable data and external evaluations rather than student self-reports. These units now complete annual assessments evaluating their progress toward meeting unit outcomes.

During this accreditation cycle, the budgeting process was redesigned to ensure broad campus participation and allocation of resources in alignment with our mission and objectives. Standardized forms for position and strategic initiative requests allows the Executive Budget Committee to evaluate how each request would help an individual unit, and ultimately the College, meet our objectives. As a result of an evaluation of this process, the faculty position request form was recently revised to more clearly require a thorough explanation of how the position would contribute to achievement of our core themes and strategic plan initiatives.

In response to Campus Climate Survey findings that campus constituents felt that communication within the College could be improved, the Office of the Provost introduced a twice-monthly newsletter, while the Office of Marketing & Events created a weekly electronic digest that anyone can submit announcements to in order to inform the campus community. The Provost and Executive Vice Provost also began holding “office hours” in academic buildings around campus, providing an accessible format for faculty to ask questions, bring up concerns, and make recommendations directly to these senior campus leaders. The creation of a common course schedule grid also allowed the campus to create a weekly campus-wide free hour, making it easier for faculty and staff to attend meetings, forums, and other events that connect them to the campus community and provide important information. The campus also moved policies to an online [campus policy library](#) and created a new numbering system in response to feedback that some groups were unsure where to find current versions of policies.

**5.B.3 The institution monitors its internal and external environments to identify current and emerging patterns, trends, and expectations. Through its governance system it uses those findings to assess its strategic position, define its future direction, and review and revise, as necessary, its mission, core themes, core theme objectives, goals or intended outcomes of its programs and services, and indicators of achievement.**

Nevada State College monitors its internal and external environment to identify current and emerging trends and expectations affecting higher education and the state of Nevada. As noted throughout this report, the Office of Institutional Research provides critical data regarding the “vital signs” of the campus. This information has provided the impetus for numerous changes, including efforts to expand the scope and utilization of student support services and the decision to focus more attention on credit accumulation and improved degree pathways.

The College periodically conducts a Campus Climate Survey to collect information on the experiences, attitudes, and perceptions of employees. This allows executive leaders to identify areas in which improvements may be necessary to ensure the College retains a highly-qualified, committed, and dedicated workforce. A recent, representative example is the creation of a professional “career ladder” for NSC staff that allows qualified employees to progress to higher levels of responsibility, new titles, and improved pay as part of their development at the College. Similarly, the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) data offer insights into students’ experiences at NSC, areas of concern as well as particular strengths, and changes over time.

College-wide conversations and opportunities for input include feedback sessions at annual Convocation events, strategic planning forums,

informational sessions about important campus events (e.g., a campus-wide salary study), and forums hosted by Faculty Senate, the Board of Regents, and other groups to solicit feedback and recommendations on specific issues.

Data on the external environment are used to guide academic programming and other elements of campus planning and development. Market research reports completed by an independent research firm provide information on projected demand for an academic program, likely regional competitors, and career opportunities for graduates. This information, in turn, assists deans and the Office of the Provost in the decision-making process regarding new programs or specializations. In addition, the College uses data from the [Nevada Department of Employment, Training, and Rehabilitation](#) (DETR), as well as other state government offices, to estimate future job growth in various economic sectors; this provides an estimate of local demand for graduates. An assessment of this information has guided several major institutional decisions, including the decision to establish new programs in the high-demand areas of Deaf Studies, Data Science, and our Master’s in Speech-Language Pathology. For established programs, the comprehensive 10-Year Program Review process assesses virtually every element of a program and includes external evaluations by employers or others with relevant expertise in the discipline (see Section 4.A.2). These reviews guide any curricular revisions that are needed to ensure our academic programs sufficiently prepare students with the skills and knowledge needed to achieve their future career goals.

Participation in state and national initiatives allows the College to understand national trends that are relevant to our student body and to implement innovative programs and services aimed at addressing those trends. For example, NSHE regularly engages the System institutions in discussions about effective practices, leading

to implementations such as the co-requisite math model and “15-to-Finish,” and has organized student success summits that feature presentations from national speakers on best practices. In a related sense, as a member of the initial cohort of Gateways to Completion program participants, NSC undertook a comprehensive analysis of “bottleneck” courses and developed solutions, including the Course Assistant program, that have received national recognition for their effectiveness in supporting student success (Field, 2018; Tucker et al., forthcoming).

Partnerships with other institutions in Nevada also provide opportunities for the College. Discussions with the College of Southern Nevada (CSN) and Truckee Meadows Community College (TMCC) led to the development of 3+1 degrees that fill a need for baccalaureate degree options for students with advanced technical training at the associate degree level. Assessment of data on transfer students, as well as examples of successful transfer models in other states (e.g., Valencia College), led President Patterson to identify developing a co-admission policy with CSN as a high priority for 2019-20. Similarly, conversations with the Clark County School District led to the establishment of a robust dual credit program with a number of local high schools, providing an important service for students wishing to get a head start on their general education credits and opening up recruiting pipelines for NSC.

The Community Partner Survey gathers information from community groups on the effectiveness of the College’s engagement with organizations and agencies in the Las Vegas valley. The President also regularly solicits input from community partners to evaluate how well the College is meeting their expectations and needs. President Patterson actively seeks input from external stakeholders to keep abreast of community expectations and needs, as well as perceptions of how well Nevada State College is meeting them. The President holds

forums and meetings with groups such as local business leaders, organizations representing racial and ethnic groups, non-profit agencies, and local and state government officials to ensure the College understands the perspectives of the diverse array of constituents who are served by a comprehensive state college, as well as emerging community needs that NSC can address. The Foundation Board provides an additional source of information about areas in which the College can contribute to our community and a diversifying economy. The full-time Senior Advisor for Government Relations and Community Affairs monitors activities and decisions of local, state, and national governmental bodies and conveys important emerging issues to senior leadership, which is particularly essential during legislative sessions. The Senior Advisor also plays a key role in helping the College pursue enhancement funding and other opportunities.

All of these efforts to monitor the internal and external environment, coupled with success-oriented guidance from NSHE, have enabled Nevada State College to better understand trends related to institutional success, which in turn has guided decisions regarding resource allocation, capacity expansions, and strategic goals.



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# APPENDIX A: ACRONYMS & DEFINITIONS

- **15-to-Finish:** A national initiative to encourage students to enroll in a minimum of 15 credits per semester.
- **3+1 Program:** A degree in which students complete three years of academic work at a community college and their final year at NSC.
- **AAC:** NSC's Academic Advising Center.
- **AACRAO:** American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers.
- **AAC&U:** Association of American Colleges & Universities.
- **AASCU:** American Association of State Colleges and Universities.
- **ACE:** NSC's Academic and Career Exploration course designation.
- **Accuplacer:** An exam used for initial placement of incoming first-year students into classes.
- **ADA:** Americans with Disabilities Act.
- **AFP:** Association of Fundraising Professionals.
- **AHP:** Association for Healthcare Philanthropy.
- **ALS:** NSC's Academic and Life Success course designation for college success classes that helps students master fundamental college skills.
- **ASC:** NSC's Academic Success Center. Campus tutoring center.
- **ASL:** American Sign Language.
- **ASHA:** American Speech-Language-Hearing Association.
- **ATI:** Assessment Technologies Institution. A standardized test administered nationally to nursing students.
- **BA:** Bachelor of Arts degree.
- **BAS:** Bachelor of Applied Science degree.
- **BoR:** Board of Regents. The 13 elected officials who govern the public higher education system.
- **BS:** Bachelor of Science degree.
- **CA:** Course Assistant. Peer mentors who are embedded in specific courses and provide tutoring and support for students.
- **CAA:** Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology.
- **Canvas:** The learning management system used at NSC.
- **CAS:** Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education.
- **CASE:** Council for Advancement and Support of Education.
- **CCA:** Complete College America. A national initiative to improve students' timely progression toward graduation.
- **CCAMPIS:** Child Care Access Means Parents in School. U.S. Department of Education program that offers grants to support childcare services.
- **CCC-SLP:** Certificate of Clinical Competence as a Speech-Language Pathologist.
- **CCN:** Common Course Numbering. The NSHE-wide effort to ensure consistency in course numbering.
- **CEDI:** NSC's Office of Community Engagement and Diversity Initiatives.
- **CEP:** NSC's Counseling and Educational Psychology course designation for college success classes that helps students master fundamental college skills.
- **CEU:** Continuing Education Unit.
- **CHIMERA:** Chemical Inventory Management and Reporting Application. Used to manage inventory and report hazards related to chemicals.

- **CLEP:** College Level Examination Program. A standardized exam used to determine whether students should receive college credit and advanced placement for high school coursework.
- **Clery Act:** A federal statute that requires colleges and universities that receive federal financial aid to report information about crimes in and near campus.
- **CSC:** NSC's Career Services Center.
- **CSN:** College of Southern Nevada. Community college with 3 locations in the Las Vegas valley.
- **CTLE:** NSC's Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence. Provides faculty development opportunities.
- **DACA:** Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals. An executive order that provides some protections to undocumented immigrants who were brought to the U.S. as children.
- **DAW:** NSC's Dawson building.
- **DETR:** Nevada Department of Employment, Training, and Rehabilitation. Provides economic projections related to workforce needs.
- **DFWI Rate:** Proportion of students receiving a grade of D, F, Withdrew, or Incomplete.
- **DRC:** NSC's Disability Resource Center.
- **DSST:** Credit-by-examination tests created by the Department of Defense to determine college credit equivalency for military training.
- **EAP:** Employee Assistance Program. Provides free mental health counseling for employees.
- **EBC:** NSC's Executive Budget Committee.
- **EBI:** Educational Benchmark, Inc. A standardized exit survey administered nationally to education majors.
- **ECMC:** Educational Credit Management Corporation. Offers financial literacy programming relevant to students receiving financial aid.
- **EdReady:** An online program that allows students to study and practice for math placement exams.
- **EEO:** Equal Employment Opportunity.
- **EOP:** Emergency Operations Plan.
- **ERP:** Enterprise Resource Planning. A software program for managing financial and human resources applications.
- **EvalKit:** Software program for administering student course evaluations.
- **Excelsior College Examinations:** Credit-by-examination options offered by Excelsior College and widely accepted by other higher education institutions.
- **FATV:** Financial Aid Television. A resource on financial aid topics offered through NSC's Office of Financial Aid.
- **FEMA:** Federal Emergency Management Administration. Develops standardized processes for responding to emergencies.
- **FERPA:** Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act. Regulates students' privacy rights, particular surrounding grades and disability accommodations.
- **FSCC:** NSC's Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee. Faculty body that reviews all curriculum proposals.
- **FTC:** Federal Trade Commission.
- **FTE:** Full Time Equivalent. A system of measuring student enrollment and faculty workload.
- **FY:** Fiscal Year.
- **FYE:** First-Year Experience. A set of services, programs, and courses aimed at promoting the success of first-year students.
- **G2C:** Gateways to Completion. An initiative founded by the John N. Gardner Institute to improve student success in introductory courses.

- **GAAP:** Generally Accepted Accounting Principles. National standards for recording and reporting accounting information.
- **GASP:** Governmental Accounting Standards Board.
- **GEAR UP:** U.S. Department of Education grants program that supports services for low-income middle and high school students.
- **GPA:** Grade point average.
- **HEPI:** Higher Education Price Index. A national index used to measure inflation in higher education costs.
- **HIP:** High-Impact Practice. Pedagogical techniques and experiences associated with improved student success.
- **HR:** Office of Human Resources.
- **HSI:** Hispanic-Serving Institution. Federal designation for colleges and universities that enroll a high percentage of Hispanic students (over 25% of total FTE).
- **HVAC:** Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems.
- **ICS:** Incident Command System. A standardized system used nationally to clarify roles and responsibilities during an emergency response.
- **ID:** Identification.
- **Improvement Index:** Measure of value-added in student learning between lower-division and upper-division courses within an academic program.
- **INBRE:** IDeA Networks of Biomedical Research Excellence. Provides funding to enhance research capabilities and student recruiting pipelines.
- **InstructureCon:** Annual conference held by the company that designed the Canvas Learning Management System.
- **INTASC:** Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support consortium. Organization of state and national educational agencies and organizations dedicated to teacher preparation and development.
- **IPEDs:** Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System. National database of institutional information.
- **IRB:** Institutional Review Board. Provides oversight for human subjects research.
- **ITS:** NSC's Office of Information & Technology Services. Provides technical support for office and classroom equipment.
- **LAS:** NSC's School of Liberal Arts & Sciences (also refers to the building).
- **Latinx:** A gender-neutral term for individuals of Hispanic descent.
- **LEAP:** Liberal Education and America's Promise. A national higher education initiative sponsored by the Association of American Colleges & Universities aimed at updating and revitalizing general education requirements.
- **LGBTQ+:** Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and other gender and sexual identities.
- **LMS:** Learning Management System. The platform used to create websites for each course.
- **MEd:** Master of Education degree.
- **Metro Momentum Pathways Project:** A Complete College America (CCA) initiative in three metro areas, including southern Nevada, aimed at increasing college completion rates.
- **MFA:** Master of Fine Arts degree. Considered the terminal degree in some arts disciplines.
- **MLA:** Formatting style developed by the Modern Language Association and widely used in Humanities disciplines.
- **MOU:** Memorandum of Understanding. An agreement between two institutions.
- **MSI:** Minority-Serving Institution. A federal designation for colleges and universities that meet criteria related to the proportion of their students who are from under-represented racial and ethnic backgrounds.



- **myNSC:** The centralized portal through which faculty and students access a range of resources and software applications.
- **NAC:** Nevada Administrative Code. A compendium of state policies and procedures.
- **NACADA:** National Academic Advising Association.
- **NASFAA:** National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators.
- **NASPA:** National Association of Student Personnel Administrators.
- **NCLEX:** National Council Licensure Examination. Standardized test required to become a licensed nurse.
- **Nepantla:** A program that promotes the success of low-income, under-represented, and first-generation students at NSC. Provides a summer bridge program and support throughout the year.
- **Nichols Model:** The standardized student learning outcomes assessment framework described in Nichols & Nichols (2005).
- **NIMS:** National Incident Management System. A standardized system for responding to emergency situations.
- **No-Cost Textbook Summer Institute:** NSC's annual summer program that provides structured support to faculty adopting open-access resources for their courses.
- **NSC:** Nevada State College.
- **NSE:** Nursing, Science, & Education building.
- **NSF EPSCoR:** National Science Foundation Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research. An NSC grants program for professional development and education in science and engineering.
- **NSF GEOPATHS:** National Science Foundation Directorate for Geosciences Pathways into Geoscience grants program. Funds undergraduate geosciences education.
- **NSF S-STEM MARCOS:** National Science Foundation Scholarships in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics program supported grant titled "Mentoring to Accelerate Retention and Change Outcomes in Science grants program." Supports low-income biology majors at NSC.
- **NSHE:** Nevada System of Higher Education. The system that governs all public colleges and universities in Nevada.
- **NSSA:** Nevada State Student Alliance. NSC's student government body.
- **NSSE:** National Survey of Student Engagement. A national survey of student engagement in campus life and perceptions of their educational experience.
- **NV DOE:** Nevada Department of Education.
- **NWCCU:** Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities.
- **OIR:** NSC's Office of Institutional Research.
- **P4:** Group of directors at NSC who review and develop policies.
- **PDQ:** Position Description Questionnaire. A document describing the qualifications and job duties of a position.
- **PeopleSoft:** NSC's Student Information System.
- **Portal:** NSC's centralized website where faculty and students can access resources, announcements, and key software and applications.
- **POST Certification:** Peace Officer's Standards and Training. Advanced training for police officers.
- **Praxis:** A set of exams that test the skills and content knowledge of future teachers.
- **Proficiency Index:** Percent of student artifacts in upper-division courses rated "proficient" or better in outcomes assessment.
- **RN-to-BSN:** NSC's program designed to allow Registered Nurses to pursue a baccalaureate nursing degree.

- **RSC:** NSC's Rogers Student Center, which houses some student services, the cafe, the library, and administrative offices.
- **RSS:** Raker Student Success Center. NSC's one-stop-shop for key student services.
- **SAM:** State Administrative Manual. Set of policies and procedures published by the state of Nevada.
- **SAML:** Security Assertion Markup Language. A standard for exchanging authentication and authorization data between parties.
- **Scorpion RISE:** NSC's peer mentor program for first-year students.
- **SI:** Supplemental Instruction.
- **SIS:** Student Information System. Platform for tracking student admissions, enrollment, and academic records.
- **SLO:** Student learning outcome.
- **SLP:** Speech-Language Pathology.
- **SOA:** Sarbanes-Oxley Act. Regulates accounting practices.
- **SOE:** NSC's School of Education.
- **SON:** NSC's School of Nursing.
- **SSI:** Summer Scholarship Institute. NSC's annual summer program in which faculty receive structured support on a research project.
- **STEM:** Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics.
- **Student CARE Team:** NSC's Student Concern, Assessment, Referral, and Education Team (also called The CARE Team). The behavioral intervention team for students in distress.
- **TAC:** NSC's Technology Advisory Committee. Provides feedback to ITS.
- **TESL:** Teaching English as a Second Language.
- **TFI:** Teaching Fellows Institute. NSC's annual summer program in which faculty receive structured support to improve their teaching.
- **TILT:** Transparency in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education. A framework for improving student success by ensuring the purpose and expectations of assignments are clearly understood by students.
- **Title V:** Section of the Higher Education Act that provides grant funding to institutions to improve college completion rates among Latinx students.
- **TMCC:** Truckee Meadows Community College. Community college in Reno.
- **TRiO-SSS:** TRiO-Student Support Services. A set of grants offered by the U.S. Department of Education to fund the development of support services for low-income and first-generation students.
- **UNLV:** University of Nevada, Las Vegas. PhD-granting research university.
- **UNLVOEM:** University of Nevada, Las Vegas Office of Emergency Management. Supports NSC in the development of emergency plans and procedures.
- **UNLVPD:** University of Nevada, Las Vegas Police Department. Provides campus policing services at NSC.
- **UNLVRMS:** University of Nevada, Las Vegas Risk Management Services. Office that oversees risk management and safety at UNLV and NSC.
- **UNR:** University of Nevada, Reno. PhD-granting research university.
- **URCWC:** Undergraduate Research and Creative Works Conference. Held annually at NSC.
- **WebCampus:** General term for NSC's learning management system.
- **WICHE:** Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education.
- **WSCH:** Weighted Student Credit Hours. A formula for placing additional funding weight on courses from certain disciplines.
- **Workday:** The financial and human resources software program used by NSC.

