WILDCAT FOUNDATIONS
ENHANCING FIRST YEAR SUCCESS
# Table of Contents

Table of Contents 1  
FOREWORD 2  
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS 3  
Executive Summary & Charge to Implementation Committee 4  
INTRODUCTION 4  
OVERVIEW OF WILDCAT FOUNDATIONS PROCESS 4  
Emergent themes, subsequent strategies, and action statements 5  
Strategy One: Endorse and Disseminate Institutional First-Year Experience Philosophy, Strategies for implementation, and Action Steps 6  
Strategy Two: Development and Integration of Institution-Wide First-Year Learning Goals and Outcomes 9  
Strategy Three: Develop and Deliver Faculty Professional Development, Coordination, and Incentives 12  
NEXT STEPS 16  
Philosophy Performance Indicators 17  
Organization Dimension Report 19  
Learning Dimension Report 29  
Faculty Dimension Report 54  
Transitions Dimension Report 65  
All Students Dimension Report 86  
Diversity Dimension Report 95  
Roles and Purposes Dimension Report 105  
Improvement Dimension Report 112  
APPENDIX 128  
Student Survey Snapshot 128  
Faculty and Staff Survey Snapshot 132
FOREWORD

The University of Kentucky engaged in a year-long evidence-based evaluation process, Foundations of Excellence®, designed to enhance the institution’s undergraduate first-year experience. This evaluation process was accomplished in collaboration with the John N. Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education, a national leader in research and best practices related to the first-year undergraduate experience. The primary outcome of this project was to evaluate and create an action plan to drive improvement that aids in increasing the quality of the institution’s first-year undergraduate experience. It is our expectation that, as we collectively work to improve the first-year experience, the implementation of this action plan will parallel increased first-to-second-year retention rates, along with four-year graduation rates, and ultimately enhance student success at the flagship, land-grant institution of the Commonwealth of Kentucky.
Acknowledgements

Student success at the University of Kentucky is driven by the passion and dedication of our faculty and staff who lead, curate, and guide the undergraduate student experience. More than 200 members of our University community, including undergraduate and graduate students, participated in this year-long review process and contributed to the recommendations included within this report. Their perspectives and expertise will direct the most important aspect of our work of the first-year experience, which includes the implementation and execution of these recommendations. Included here are the names and affiliations of the Steering Committee.

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Executive Summary & Charge to Implementation Committee

INTRODUCTION

Undergraduate student success is one of the tenets of the University’s Strategic Plan for 2015-2020, with the primary objective “to provide a transformational education that promotes self-discovery, experiential learning, and life-long achievement.” The University is convinced that the first-year experience is pivotal to achieving this goal and has made significant progress in providing an infrastructure and institutional focus to advance our efforts in recruiting and retaining our first-year students. In 2016, the Provost and a team of stakeholders merged two units, Undergraduate Education and Student Affairs, in order to provide a more holistic approach to student and academic life for our undergraduate students and to facilitate our progress toward this strategic goal. With this new infrastructure in place, the new Division of Student and Academic Life joins with the combined energies of our undergraduate colleges, UK International Center, Office of Institutional Diversity, the Center for Enhanced Learning and Teaching, and the division of Enrollment Management, among others. The University now turns its focus toward efforts related to the first-year experience.

OVERVIEW OF WILDCAT FOUNDATIONS PROCESS

Over the course of the 2017-2018 academic year, more than 200 faculty, staff, and students convened to participate in the University of Kentucky’s Foundations of Excellence® project. For the purposes of University connectivity, the project was named “Wildcat Foundations” and launched in September 2017 with the identification of the Wildcat Foundations Steering Committee. The Steering Committee is comprised of key stakeholders in the University community and each member holds a unique perspective on the enhancement of the first-year experience. Chairs of each Dimension Committee (Philosophy; Faculty; Improvement; All Students; Diversity; Organization; Roles and Purposes; Transitions; and Learning) were identified among members of the Steering Committee and the greater University community.

While the Steering Committee was being formed, a committee of associate deans initiated this work by sharing the student success practices conducted within each of their colleges during their bi-monthly meetings. This information-sharing provided a wealth of information that was utilized for the Current Practice Inventory. A review of these current practices underscored the variability among UK colleges in their individual approaches to the first-year experience and student success. Additional context and support was provided by Dr. Andrew Koch, John N. Gardner Institute liaison, in his visit to the University on November 2 and 3, 2017.

A first-year student survey, authored by the John N. Gardner Institute for Undergraduate Excellence, was administered to all first-time, first-year undergraduate students via the Academic Excellence Analytics and Assessment Office. The survey was open from November 2017 through early January 2018 and received 810 responses (13.9% of the first-year undergraduate population). A similar survey of faculty and staff perceptions and interactions with the first-year experience was administered from January 2018 through February 2018. This survey received 1,179 responses (18.8% of the population surveyed).
The Wildcat Foundations program was introduced to the University community on January 19, 2018, in a University-wide Student Success Summit that featured Dr. Koch as the keynote speaker. More than 200 faculty, staff, and students attended the Summit and also attended their first Dimension Committee meetings to begin their work on that same day.

Between January 2018 and April 2018, each Dimension Committee met independently to review the Current Practices Inventory, make determinations, and finalize their respective Dimension Committee reports. Final Dimension Committee reports were submitted to Dr. Koch for review and feedback prior to a review by the Steering Committee, which met in May 2018. The Steering Committee review included more than 150 recommendations submitted by all Dimension Committees. During this meeting the Steering Committee determined the primary themes reflected in the Strategies and Recommendations for Action Steps included in this report. The final report was reviewed by the Wildcat Foundations Steering Committee and Dr. Koch for accuracy and brevity.

**Emergent themes, subsequent strategies, and action statements**

Through the work of the Dimension Committee members, Committee Co-Chairs, and Steering Committee, 157 recommendations for the improvement of the first-year experience were collapsed into five emerging themes, which were then translated into strategies and action statements. Each of these themes was reviewed through the lenses of communication, assessment, access and inclusion, and coordinated infrastructure, then reviewed and collapsed further. Two of the themes were closely related so these were combined into a single strategy. Recommendations of action steps for each of these strategies are included in the text below the strategy statement, with additional context for why each was identified. These action statements are not mandates, but are recommendations for action and opportunities to enact each strategy during the implementation and execution phase of this project.
Strategy One: Endorse and Disseminate Institutional First-Year Experience Philosophy, Strategies for implementation, and Action Steps

While a first-year experience philosophy was reviewed and developed by the Philosophy Dimension Committee, additional work defining and refining its practical impact for faculty, staff, and students is needed. Equally important for an institution such as the University of Kentucky is an intentional communication plan to disseminate the recommended strategies and action steps. The recommendations were brought forward from a representative group of faculty, staff, administrators, and students who participated in the dimension subcommittees; ultimately, the success of the first-year-experience is dependent on the participation of all campus stakeholders and community partners.

A first-year philosophy proposed by the Philosophy Dimension committee is as follows:

The University of Kentucky’s first-year experience engages students in their transition to university life by building a foundation for academic success, embracing opportunities to promote intellectual and personal growth, and fostering a sense of belonging, well-being and community. This is accomplished by connecting students, faculty and staff through curricular, co-curricular and extracurricular activities. Our first-year experience offers a balance of support and challenge that guides students to academic discovery, sources of social support, and avenues to opportunity at the University of Kentucky and beyond.

Additional work is required of the Wildcat Foundations Implementation Team to define how this philosophy will inform University-wide programming associated with first-year students. It is important to note that this philosophy is inclusive for all students and is purposefully framed with a goal of altering inequitable outcomes for vulnerable students - including those students from underrepresented populations, those who live off campus, and those who are first-generation college students. In addition, further consideration needs to be given to how buy-in will be generated among key University stakeholders in the adoption of this philosophy. A communication plan is required to disseminate this philosophy to faculty, staff, students, and families so that it is intentionally integrated through the University first-year experience. Consideration should also be given to how diversity and inclusion are reflected in this philosophy and how its ratification and implementation impacts UK’s underrepresented minority populations, first-year students who live off-campus, and those who are first-generation college students.

Specific recommendations for action steps are found below:

● Disseminate a coherent philosophy for first-year students for endorsement by campus stakeholders and integrate the shared philosophy in curricular and co-curricular first-year experiences - In the further development and refinement of UK’s first-year philosophy and the subsequent implementation, a focus which responds to the diversity of our students must be clearly emphasized and communicated to current and prospective students, families, faculty, administrators, and staff, including contract and temporary staff. It is anticipated that this philosophy will be viewed through multiple lenses which will encompass the full range of diversity across our campus and include implications for providing a successful first-year experience for all students.
Communicate the institutional philosophy and the recommended strategies and action steps to faculty and staff who are teaching, advising, and mentoring students in their first year of college - The philosophy should be widely shared with all stakeholders in a variety of ways, including but not limited to: email, websites, during new faculty orientation, new graduate student/TA orientation, UK 101 trainings, and unit and administrative meetings including those of Deans and Associate Deans, as well as college/departmental meetings.

Communication was a dominant theme throughout the Dimension Committee reports and included recommendations related to communication with faculty, staff and students and the families or guardians of first-year students. Many of the recommendations within the Dimension Reports are connected to communication of the first-year philosophy, strategies, and action steps. Multiple opportunities exist for communication to faculty and staff via orientations and regular trainings.

Recommendations related to communication to students include a desire for more streamlined messaging and to promote more awareness of the different messaging needs for specific sub-populations of students. The dissemination of information regarding how the UK Core integrates into the first-year experience was also mentioned throughout the reports. The timing and intentionality of that communication are of primary focus in relation to the admissions application and prior to the student’s arrival on campus. Organized, clear, and consistent communication should then continue through orientation, first-year advising, and throughout the initial year of study.

Specific recommendations for action steps are found below:

- **Perform a communications audit** - A communications audit should be performed by visiting all University sites (websites, publications, and social media) and completing a message analysis, through qualitative coding, measuring the overall messages we are sending with multiple parties, including parents/families. The University must evaluate all communication to ensure best practices for inclusive language. Upon completion of the audit, next steps should include:
  - **Strengthen communication strategies and materials** - Develop, as needed, new communication strategies and strengthen existing strategies and materials to be shared and disseminated among those instructors teaching first-year students, not only within units, but also across them.
  - **Differentiate communication materials** - Increase targeted/sub-population marketing and messaging. Include intentionally-curated student, faculty, and staff content with an awareness of inclusion in meaningful and authentic ways in both imagery and written word.
  - **Standardize messaging across colleges related to meetings at K Week and “see blue.” U Orientations and Merit Weekends** - During K Week, college-wide meetings are held by all undergraduate colleges on campus. Prior to this time, colleges also hold meetings with each group of students coming to Merit Weekends and “see blue.” U Orientations. The structure and content of these college-wide meetings varies greatly. It is important that each college be allowed flexibility regarding the structure and content of these college-wide meetings. However, it is also suggested that standardized messaging about the ‘roles and purposes’ of
a UK undergraduate education be included in each college-wide meeting across all departments.

- Develop branding and strategic methods for communicating UK undergraduate education ‘roles and purposes’ - Providing consistent and repetitive ‘roles and purposes’ of a UK undergraduate education across all platforms will require collaborative work across many areas of UK, including but not limited to Enrollment Management, Marketing and Communications, Residence Life, UK International Center, Living Learning Programs, Student and Academic Life, undergraduate colleges, and central and cross-campus career centers. Executing such strategic communication will require collaborative work across all levels of the UK hierarchy.

- Publish course syllabi, programs, and activities - For first-year and gateway courses, a sample syllabus should be easily available to the public and shared with incoming students. This practice would allow first-year students to view sample documents and make informed decisions regarding registration with additional support from advisors. A pilot of this practice is currently being undertaken by the University Senate. Information about programs and activities must also be easily available to students with purposeful promotion so that all students feel welcome. This communication strategy begins during admission and continues through the summer and into the first year.

Additional recommendations were suggested in reference to the parent and family relationship prior to their students’ arrival on campus and throughout their first year.

Specific recommendations for action steps are found below:

- Create a parent and family annual report and marketing campaign - Create an annual report for families describing the University’s interactions with the families of our students and to better inform the campus community about the campus and events. Within that report, include a snapshot of who UK families are.

- Produce an online pre-orientation module - Create an online module/video for families to complete/view prior to “see blue.” U Orientation events. Colleges are encouraged to work together to develop a pre-orientation online module for all incoming undergraduates to complete. The module should include common themes to assist new students in expectations about “see blue.” U Orientation and other transactional requirements as well as college-specific information, designated as individual colleges see fit.¹

¹ Module could include: 1. Purpose of higher education and mission of UK 2. College and major-specific info 3. Value of UK Core 4. Skills and career information 5. Tie University-wide tool (ex: Indigo, DISC, StrengthsFinder, Strong Interest Inventory, MBTI, etc.) and professional interpretation therein to this module and integrate throughout first year.
Strategy Two: Development and Integration of Institution-Wide First-Year Learning Goals and Outcomes

Across the Dimension Committee Reports it became evident that a focus on cohesive curriculum development - both curricular and co-curricular - is needed to further define the undergraduate first-year experience. There were many recommendations related to these Strategies and Action Steps, specifically: diversity and inclusion, career development, high-impact practices and wellness. It is recommended that the Wildcat Foundations Implementation Team utilize the insight provided and to consider if additional assessment to define Strategies and Action Steps will be required at a University-wide level.

A more intentional review of current practices - and determination of subsequent future action - is required in relation to the integration of high-impact practices specifically oriented toward the first-year student experience. Consideration should be given to determining whether these Strategies and Action Steps should be generalized for the entire first-year undergraduate student population, or if specific Strategies and Action Steps should be provided for various sub-populations. These tailored Strategies and Action Steps could address specific challenges particular student populations may face during their undergraduate experience, specifically their first year.

Specific recommendations for action steps are found below:

- **Identify and align first-year experience student learning outcomes (SLO)** - The University must explicitly identify course SLOs as first-year experience SLOs for gateway courses. Once the institution incorporates First-Year Experiences SLOs into gateway courses, the recommendation is to follow a similar assessment cycle and process already established by UK Core. Based on this centralized evaluation process conducted at the institutional level, recommendations should be provided back to departmental level.

- **Incorporate and integrate high-impact practices as part of first-year curriculum** - There is a growing recognition of the importance of high-impact practices in improving student success. High-impact practices include, for example: living in an LLP, enrolling in UK 101 (or a related college first-year course), completing an internship, completing a service-learning course, joining a student organization, participating in a common reading experience, or engaging in community service. Data suggest that these practices have the additional benefit of increasing student interactions with individuals from backgrounds and cultures different from their own while encouraging increased engagement of UK students with surrounding neighbors and communities. The following recommendations are related to high-impact practices:
  - **Standardize practices across colleges and units** - Although the University currently addresses these practices, a cohesive and coordinated assessment of each of these practices across colleges and units is needed.
  - **Produce a pedagogical inventory** - The curation of an inventory of high-impact practices and teaching wisdom coupled with dissemination of these practices for teaching first-year students could include active learning, problem-based learning, undergraduate research, and service learning.
Investigate incentivizing and promoting a goal for each student to complete at least one high-impact practice during their first year - Completion of activities could be tracked through the BBNvolved system. For example,

- Consider developing a need-based work match program with first-year students and travel abroad - Many underrepresented groups and first-generation students may not have the financial resources for travel abroad. Providing an opportunity for students to raise funds for travel through work activities has a dual benefit, as those students will be able to have a rich cultural experience and gain valuable work experience.

- Emphasize education abroad experiences for first-year students - Exposure to other cultures through immersion as a means to expand our students’ worldview has long been a University practice. Therefore, the committee recommends that the first year would be a prime opportunity for students to experience such expansion via travel, study, research, and/or internships abroad. This emphasis might also include creating section(s) of UK 101 with a short travel abroad opportunity.

• Review and expand summer preparation and programs - UK has strong and accurate analytics regarding High School Readiness Index, College Career Indicators, and Academic Preparation and Placement for potentially underprepared students. Beyond the current practices, UK needs to intentionally engage sub-populations of underprepared students before the entirety of first-year students arrive on campus. Furthermore, it is proposed that the University investigate the provision and utilization of summer services and experiences for all students, providing exploratory or engagement opportunities during the summer as well as orientation activities.

• Promote strategies and action steps that are focused on Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging - The committee recommends that the University intentionally ensure that issues of diversity in all forms are included in curricular and co-curricular experiences and activities during the first year. The following recommendations provide further clarification:
  - Develop a curricular requirement for all first-year students to be exposed to diverse ideas, worldviews, world religions and socio-economic status - Within this curriculum, students will engage with a plurality of experiences and ideas; such experiences should occur while they are receiving academic credit and when engaging in other experiences via co-curricular or extracurricular activities and programming.
  - Ensure inclusion of an intentional diversity component in all aspects of recruitment, onboarding and first-year experience - The University must show a continued commitment to diversity by infusing such awareness clearly and consistently in campus tours, Merit Weekends, “see blue.” U Orientations, Fusion, K Week, etc. This will communicate the emphasis the University places on ensuring the expansion of student worldviews and personal enlightenment during their time at UK.

There is also a desire among the committee members to determine how these strategies and action steps will be integrated into the student experience. Several recommendations include the incorporation of these Strategies and Action Steps in course expectations, UK Core curriculum, UK 101, and the reignition of the
Common Reading Experience. Recommendations also reference opportunities to embed these Action Steps in student support services, academic advising, and co-curricular programming.

Specific recommendations for action steps are found below:

- **Embed first-year learning goals into required classes** - The development of first-year learning goals and objectives should be accomplished with an awareness of embedding them within the course objectives and student learning outcomes for the required courses taken by first-year students. The implementation team is encouraged to consider whether this strategy is best accomplished by requiring all students to take a course like UK 101, or if it would be more effective to embed these into existing, first-year/gateway courses that satisfy existing program requirements. In short, the implementation team is encouraged to reimagine UK 101 in close collaboration with faculty and directors of undergraduate studies (DGS).

- **Consider the development of co-curricular transcript and certificate programs** - To encourage and reinforce the value of diversity within the student experience, the University could develop a vehicle to recognize students for their efforts outside of, and in addition to, the classroom. Two such opportunities could be a co-curricular transcript or certificate programs. The co-curricular transcript or certificate programs would document educational experiences that take place outside of the classroom, provide a more holistic view of skills and abilities, and increase a student’s marketability to prospective employers and graduate schools.

- **Promote a first-year experience culture** - It is our recommendation that the University look more closely at its high-impact traditions, both active and passive (those that students are already part of without opting in), and how it can continue such practices while communicating and acculturating new students and community members to these traditions.

- **Utilize Involvement Advisors** - Continue to utilize and assess the Involvement Advisor pilot program, which serves as a primary peer intervention for students who may be at-risk regarding a sense of belonging during the first year of their undergraduate experience. Pilot Action Steps should be reviewed and work to broaden the scope of the program’s reach.

- **Require all first-year students to register with iGrad** - Exposing first-year students to financial literacy fundamentals is critical; iGrad provides such tools for students.

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2 The former would add yet another requirement to a curriculum that many students already find difficult to complete in four years. The latter would require an analysis of the first-year curriculum of all UK students to identify a suite of courses that would ensure the exposure of all entering students to the first-year learning goals. If embedded into existing program requirements, the Action Steps will have to be sufficiently flexible and adaptable to allow their inclusion in the courses without the need for adding extra learning objectives to the courses. Models for this currently exist in BIO 148 and CHE 105, which are first-year courses taken by many students in STEM programs at UK and which are designed to promote the development of soft skills and assist with the transition from high school to college. The model of incorporating first-year learning goals into required courses within programs will require consultation with departments/programs and the provision of resources to support department/program efforts to enhance the effectiveness of their first-year/gateway courses.
Strategy Three: Develop and Deliver Faculty Professional Development, Coordination, and Incentives

Several sub-themes emerged in the review of recommendations that showcased the need to address faculty professional development and incentives related to support of the first-year experience. Based on the reports and recommendations, there are several opportunities to support existing programs and services to engage faculty and instructors in best practices in first-year pedagogy through the Center for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching (CELT).

CELT will continue support for the first-year experience through activities such as faculty learning communities and partnerships with colleges and other stakeholder units. Emphasis should be placed upon reviewing which instructors and teaching assistants are most regularly teaching first-year students and support their pedagogical training around the experience of first-year undergraduate students.

Specific recommendations for action steps are found below:

- **Increase professional development among colleagues** - Develop a mechanism at the University to support and encourage attendance at conferences, publication of research, and awareness of other institutions' practices. College leadership should be encouraged and supported to attend regional and national student success conferences. It is recommended that the Provost/Faculty Advancement/Student & Academic Life provide a pool of funding to faculty who apply for support; conferences would include, for example, CPE Student Success Summit in Spring 2018.

- **Revise new staff, teaching assistant, and faculty orientations** - The University's general education requirements (UK CORE) are often a part of the first-year experience. Therefore, it is recommended that the University include an intentional overview of the UK Core in all new faculty, staff, and teaching assistant orientation sessions to ensure that new hires are aware of the resources available on campus to support best-practices in teaching and instruction in the UK Core. Additional recommendations may include:
  - Training and orientation might include the provision of sessions for syllabi development, pedagogy related to engaged learning, and instruction for Canvas tools to support student engagement in learning (e.g. Big Blue Button, Discussion Boards, etc.).
  - An ongoing and comprehensive review of the new faculty, teaching assistant, and staff orientation curriculum should also be implemented as it relates to first-year students. A review of TA training by units with high DEW courses is particularly important.

- **Curate pedagogical engagement** - Create intentional pairings of lecturers and other instructors of first-year students in related disciplines to regularly share best practices for teaching first-year students, including: active learning, problem-based learning, undergraduate research, and service learning.

- **Provide mentorship and continued training for teaching assistants in pedagogy** - Graduate students play a large role on campus in teaching first-year students. Many do not have any teaching experience prior to acting as graduate instructors and teaching assistants at UK. The one-day training
offered by the University and/or individualized departments does not provide sufficient preparation for graduate students to take on this significant role. The University should provide additional training and support to both graduate students and departments who want to support improvement in instructor preparation. In order to build relationships and create stronger pedagogical practices, the University could intentionally pair lecturers as TA mentors.

- **Target departments with large numbers of part-time instructors** - Survey departments and utilize institutional data to identify departments with a high number of part-time instructors teaching first-year students and create ongoing professional development opportunities for this population.

As faculty more intentionally immerse themselves in an understanding of the first-year student experience, **recommendations include incentives to encourage continued engagement in this work**. Such incentives would be determined by the college and respective departments; a list of potential recommendations is included below for consideration by the administration.

**Specific recommendations for action steps are found below:**

- **Bridge the divide between pedagogy and practice** - Create a centralized website for faculty interested in connecting their central role as educators with the college life experience. Examples include opportunities for engagement via K Week, Merit Weekend, “see blue.” U Orientations, advising conferences, UK and You events, Living Learning Programs, and college-specific initiatives. Generate a system for rewarding faculty accordingly.

- **Complete an analysis of the existing reward structure to recognize instructors for first-year courses** - Lecturers teach a significant proportion of introductory-level courses included in the first-year experience. The University is encouraged to engage in a broad-based review of compensation and promotion increments (in addition of other means of recognition) for these faculty who contribute significantly to the student’s first-year experience and to the UK instructional mission.

- **Evaluate faculty participation in co-curricular events that support student success** - It is recommended that faculty and staff participation in co-curricular events that support student success be evaluated to determine if a stronger faculty and staff presence would elevate the connection between faculty, staff, and students.
Strategy Four: Review and Assess Current First-Year Practices and Creation of Assessment Best Practices

Evaluation of current practices related to the first-year experience are necessary, including the UK Core and UK 101. Both impact many facets of a student’s first-year experience, and an appropriate review of all aspects of each program should include all related parties and their connection to the established first-year philosophy, strategies, and action steps.

Specific recommendations for action steps are found below:

- **Review course evaluations** - The University should develop a pilot program with high DEW courses in which additional questions are added to the course evaluations to seek feedback from students related to pedagogy and instructional methods used to enhance engaged learning. These questions could then be analyzed to identify any trends in the data and recommendations would be generated accordingly.

- **Assess the effectiveness of the UK Core and UK 101** - This analysis should go beyond retention rates in order to assess the effectiveness of existing approaches in meeting specific objectives for first-year students. Assessment would include a review of course effectiveness in meeting established learning goals and objectives for these students. This information could then be used to inform the process of designing goals, objectives, and instructional approaches that will best serve our future first-year students.

- **Identify outstanding colleges and programs** - Identify colleges and programs excelling at promoting out-of-class interactions with faculty, upper-level students, other first-year students, college staff, etc. in order to promote best practices across the University.

- **Benchmark financial best-practices** - The committee recommends that a small committee be charged with benchmarking best practices at other institutions to ensure the financials of the first-year experience are comparable to land-grant, flagship institutions of our size.

- **Develop and implement a formalized evaluation of pedagogy** - Develop a campus-wide evaluation of pedagogy that includes data related to instructional formats (e.g. traditional lecture, seminar, blended and online learning) used in high DEW courses. Ensure that unit self-study for periodic review includes focus areas on pedagogy and instructional methods related to engaging students in learning with valid assessments to document evidence of recommended practices. Include mechanisms for regular review for continuous improvement of courses with high DEW rates.

- **Provide more fast-track/advanced placement options** - Identify ways in which our above-average students might be placed in classes that appropriately challenge them, in addition to the Honors College, fast-track WRD/CIS placement, and high school AP credit. Determine if there are other course sequences taken mostly by freshmen that could follow the fast-tracked CIS/WRD model.

Purposeful work is occurring around assessment and data-driven decision making related to the first-year experience. However this work is not standardized or communicated widely throughout the University. Additional recommendations are related to the creation or adoption of a holistic assessment and evaluation tool taken by first-year students, along with the consistent and formal sharing of analytics.
related to first-year students, specifically related to underserved populations. The priority of the below recommendations should be driven by the agreed-upon first-year strategies, action steps, and philosophy.

**Specific recommendations for action steps are found below:**

- **Standardize assessment and actionable business Intelligence** - Current program evaluation uses measurement inconsistently. The University is encouraged to provide an actionable business intelligence component in the non-academic department and program assessment guidelines and to utilize analytics to isolate the specific value added by programs and departments in relation to University Strategies. The provision of guidelines for non-academic department and program assessment could include:
  
  ○ **Program assessment to measure the overall impact on the University student learning goals depending on the nature of the program or department.**
  
  ○ **The creation of a metric for the fundamental mission of educating or assisting students in communications and/or advising to leverage technologies and surveys to ensure that the University is effectively communicating steps and requirements to create the most efficient path through UK for students.**
  
  ○ **The generation of campus stakeholder feedback to measure the awareness and recognition of programs, or, alternatively, their need for improvement.**

- **Engage in student success conversations with faculty who teach targeted courses** - Partnering with faculty who teach courses such as CHE 105, MA 109, MA 113, UK 130, PSY 100, and COM 101 in student success and support initiatives would assist with retention of first-year students. Analysis of DFWI data would result in actions such as: development and implementation of procedures for both general and targeted/ individualized resource-promotion during the first attempt at the course; individual interventions for each student who wishes to enroll for a second attempt; and use of the departmental petition system for a third attempt at a course.

- **Include additional career and/or personal assessment** - Administer some form of assessment to all first-year students and incorporate follow-up and interpretive programming associated with said assessment. Suggested examples would include StrengthsQuest, Strong Interest Inventory, DISC, etc. In addition to the assessment of all first-year students, it is recommended that these assessment results be broadly and strategically incorporated into multiple activities in which first-year students participate.

- **Incorporate analytics-informed programming and the production of data-driven targeted outreach** - Through the use of data and analytics, the University can be better informed on specific areas and sub-populations in need of targeted programming. Such populations and programs would include, for example: programs related to gender, women in STEM, underrepresented minority males, programs related to males in the College of Nursing, etc.

- **Identify strategies to collect reasons for withdrawal** - Students should be asked for reasons regarding their withdrawal from coursework and/or the University at large within the myUK portal before they will be allowed to withdraw from a course. The data provided can then be mined by departments to identify general trends as well as determine future interventions for students who wish to repeat the course at a later date.
NEXT STEPS

Following campus-wide distribution of the Wildcat Foundations final report, an implementation team will be identified. Members of the Wildcat Foundations Implementation Team will comprise faculty, staff, and students who work most directly with undergraduate first-year student success. The Wildcat Foundations Implementation Team will first review the recommendations made in the final report and will then prioritize the recommended strategies based on financial and organizational feasibility.
Foundations Institutions approach the first year in ways that are intentional and based on a philosophy/rationale of the first year that informs relevant institutional policies and practices. The philosophy/rationale is explicit, clear and easily understood, consistent with the institutional mission, widely disseminated, and, as appropriate, reflects a consensus of campus constituencies. The philosophy/rationale is also the basis for first-year organizational policies, practices, structures, leadership, department/unit philosophies, and resource allocation.

### Philosophy Dimension Committee

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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### Philosophy/Rationale

Which of the following statements best describes your campus' statement of philosophy/rationale for the first year?

- **Campus-wide philosophy statements**
  
  A written, campus-wide statement of philosophy exists, but it does not fully meet the conditions listed above.

- **Department/unit specific philosophy statements**
  
  One or more implicit philosophy/rationale statement(s) for the first year guide(s) practice in specific unit(s)/department(s).
Current situation and committee discussion notes
Best Practices and Rationale for Statement:

1. Encourages contact between students and faculty,
2. Develops reciprocity and cooperation among students,
3. Encourages active learning,
4. Gives prompt feedback,
5. Emphasizes time on task,
6. Communicates high expectations, and
7. Respects diverse talents and ways of learning.

Summary of institutional resources and evidence
Our philosophy was inspired by previous philosophies that existed in disparate places. We drew most heavily upon existing philosophies in the areas of UK 101, Academic Orientation, New Student & Family Programs, and UK Core/general education philosophies.

Current situation and committee discussion notes
Current statement: The University of Kentucky’s first-year experience engages students in their transition to university life by building a foundation for academic success, embracing opportunities to promote intellectual and personal growth, and fostering a sense of belonging, well-being and community. This is accomplished by connecting students, faculty and staff through curricular, co-curricular and extracurricular activities. Our first-year experience offers a balance of support and challenge that guides students to academic discovery, sources of social support, and avenues to opportunity at the University of Kentucky and beyond.

Current situation and committee discussion notes
The first-year philosophy statement now exists but is yet to be disseminated to the campus community at large.
Organization Dimension Report

Foundations Institutions create organizational structures and policies that provide a comprehensive, integrated, and coordinated approach to the first year. These structures and policies provide oversight and alignment of all first-year efforts. A coherent first-year experience is realized and maintained through effective partnerships among academic affairs, student affairs, and other administrative units and is enhanced by ongoing faculty and staff development activities and appropriate budgetary arrangements.

Executive Summary

The Organization Dimension committee met several times over the Spring 2018 semester. To accomplish its work, the committee broke into four groups, each reviewing different issues related to the first-year experience (FYE). In addition, the committee examined the way in which the institution structures itself, the flow and organization of communication, and the intentional or latent culture of the first-year experience through the lens of faculty and staff development. The following report is a compilation of the subcommittee work. It includes assessments of current structures and offers a set of recommendations for consideration.

In short, the institution’s current structure attendant to first-year programming is best characterized as a hybrid model, both centralized and decentralized. There are central units – primarily in Student and Academic Life and Enrollment Management – responsible for onboarding first-year students to UK, but there are also important first-year functions that reside in the academic colleges. Other units, such as the Office of Institutional Diversity, also play important roles for sub-cohorts of first-year students. To complicate matters, the hybrid or decentralized/centralized approach is mimicked across multiple platforms and issues throughout campus. For example, academic advising, career advising, first-year student recruitment, scholarships, tutoring and academic coaching, strategic communications, assessment and data analytics, to name a few, are all structured on the centralized/decentralized, hybrid continuum.

Over the last several years there have been efforts on campus to bring stronger coordination and communication among units around these student support services. The existing structure, as it relates to the first-year experience, reflects iterative decisions made over time, rather than an intentional choice to structure our collective work in the present manner. Engaging the Gardner Institute to help us think through the first-year experience was a deliberate strategy on the part of the institution to build a structure driven by an agreed-upon philosophy and hallmarked by coordination, communication, and assessment.

There are also multiple offices, programs, resources, and people across campus dedicated to facilitating the success of first-year students. A hybrid model, such as UK’s, has its benefits: encouraging experimentation, allowing for tailored interventions, and creating diverse experiences. However this model can also cause confusion, create inefficiencies, muddle the overall message, and stifle a unifying student experience. Given the overall culture at UK – and the dominant model – any future changes must preserve the autonomy of the colleges and their ability to onboard majors appropriately.

That said, there is a role for tighter centralized services. In our discussions, committee members noted that there are several functions currently housed in central units, such as Enrollment Management and Student
and Academic Life, that might be more effectively coordinated by a central unit charged with integration of the first-year experience. A philosophy expressed by one committee member and agreed to by consensus of the committee was that Enrollment Management should work with students up to their confirmation of enrollment, and that a unit which coordinates FYE activities should assume coordination of functions once students arrive including advising conferences and orientations prior to move-in. Furthermore this centralizing unit could be empowered to be a clearinghouse for all other units on campus in terms of coordinating programming, communicating to first-year students, and setting a student culture at UK.

### Organization Dimension Committee

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**Narrative of General Situation and Findings**

**PI 2.1. Description**
Currently First Year Experience (FYE) programming at the University of Kentucky is dispersed throughout different offices and programs. Potential students are recruited, accepted, and admitted through the Office of Enrollment Management, and participate in either Merit Weekend or “see blue.” U orientation programs. Upon enrolling at UK, students can participate in K Week, a welcome week program facilitated by the Student Services Center, which is housed in the Office of Student and Academic Life. The Student Services Center includes the Parent and Family Association, Off-Campus Students, First-Generation Students, and Veterans Affairs, among other sub-units. It also houses UK 101/201, the first-year academic orientation courses.

In many respects these two units - the Admissions team that mounts Merit Weekend and “see blue.” U, and the Student and Academic Life team that leads K Week and the Student Services Center - are often seen as the institution’s centralizing forces for first-year programming. However, there are several other departments and programs at UK that contribute to the “first-year experience,” notably Housing and Residence Life, Student Organizations and Activities, Fraternity and Sorority Life, Transformative Learning, Office of Institutional Diversity, Student Financial Aid, the Registrar’s Office, UK Counseling Center, Center for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching, and Student Account Services, to name a few. Furthermore, the academic colleges and their departments play a vital and central role in the first-year experience. In many cases the academic colleges also have central units that mount college-wide programming for first-year students and then deliver department-based programming and initiatives.

Given that discrete units all contribute to the overall organization of the first-year experience, our committee identified six different components of the organization and evaluated their current state while offering recommendations: (1) Communications; (2) Enrollment Management Strategy; (3) Academic Advising; (4) Traditions; (5) Faculty/Staff Culture and Development; and (6) First-Year Policies and Financial Resources. These components are integrated with the Performance Indicators for the Organization Dimension.
PI. 2.2. First-Year Students & Communications

Another complication attendant to the hybrid model is the number of communications being sent to our first-year student population from the time they confirm they are coming to UK through to the end of their first year. Given the multiple number of units that engage with these students it is not surprising that they are inundated with messaging. Over the last year there have been several attempts to determine how much information these students receive and from which units. In Summer 2017, the Office of Strategic Communications led a study with the associate deans for undergraduate programs, Enrollment Management, and Student and Academic Life and found that between May 15 and August 15 our entering first-year students received 97 communications pieces (letters, postcards, emails) from various units on campus, sometimes more than one per day. Many of these emails were information only, without calls to action or engagement mechanisms. Furthermore, our communications sub-committee also attempted to index the content.

Our overall conclusions are that there is too much information at times and it is coming from too many places. If strategic messaging can be agreed upon, then a unifying message can be communicated to our students before they come to UK. Some students report feeling overwhelmed, as well as not being able to find information they need. Taken collectively these findings suggest that any overarching or key messages are muddled at best. We recommend the identification of themes, expressed in terms like success, career ready, professional, community-oriented, etc. which might simplify websites and messaging to give students necessary information, while providing links to more information, would also be helpful.

Despite the lack of consistent messaging of key content and coordination between units, there are some strides being made within the University’s overall communication infrastructure. Within the last year a strategic communications group has been created within the Provost Office to serve all academic administrative units. This group has also deployed a campus-wide CRM system called Salesforce. Over 150 users from throughout the colleges and academic units are currently on the CRM system, with more being added daily. As more units become familiar with the system, a centralizing unit responsible for coordinating the first-year experience and setting a FYE communication calendar will be able to deploy a strategic message more easily. Another vital structural component that will enable us to coordinate and communicate more effectively is the newly created data analytics and decision support unit. Over the last year, the institution has put into place some data infrastructure (e.g., Indigo; the Tagger system; predictive modeling; combining the academic, behavioral, and wellness alert systems; etc.). These data pieces are creating capabilities for target messaging to particular sub-populations while also enabling us to target student open-and-response rates.

In addition, the University has begun pilot messaging for support services based on behavior. For example, the current pilot initiative merged the academic alert system with the behavioral alert system and added a third component, wellness alerts, to become a one-stop shop for faculty and staff to help all students, not just those in the first year. By integrating all alert “data” and merging it into our student success repository that includes a multivariate predictive retention model, the institution can identify at-risk cohorts to better implement planned interventions. For the spring of 2018 this strategy has allowed the institution to focus on the 500 first-year students who are at greater risk for not persisting. Using this database, personnel in Student and Academic Life in conjunction with the respective Colleges have provided wraparound services
for those students. Unfortunately the problem is that these efforts are happening in sub-units and there is no centralized clearinghouse to promote and educate the wider campus of these strategies.

PI2.3 Integration
In the last two years the Provost’s area has undergone a complete restructure to increase integration across issues and initiatives attendant to student success. Most notably is the integration of the divisions of Undergraduate Education and Student Affairs into a new unit – Student and Academic Life to marry the formal curriculum with the co-curriculum and the extra-curriculum. Other integration is currently underway specifically within the unit of Enrollment Management and its role in an overall institution enrollment strategy.

PI. 2.4 Effectiveness

Enrollment Management Strategy
Many issues attendant to the first-year experience are based on the composition of the first-year class. These constituent elements include the out-of-state/in-state mix, programs of study, on-campus/off-campus housing, demographics, gender split, academic preparation, socio-economic spread, and the like. Understanding how class make-up and other issues affect students is critical to creating the right structure for our institution’s first-year experience. It is also important for the faculty and staff who work with first-year students to have facility with the class profile (see the Faculty/Staff Culture and Development section below).

Over the last several months, the institution has used the “Our Path Forward” initiative to build out a comprehensive enrollment management strategy that includes partners from across campus including, but not limited to: the academic colleges, Enrollment Management, Student and Academic Life, UK International Center, Housing, UK Public Relations and Marketing, and Finance and Administration, among others. As this initiative is codified and put into practice, important structural pieces will emerge, including efforts such as a long-term strategy attendant to student academic preparation, a strategic communications calendar for recruitment (including when and how financial aid decisions are made), long-term growth goals for majors and academic areas, and a class profile to help faculty prepare their courses and discussions. Structurally we are just beginning to build out a comprehensive enrollment management strategy, so all the benefits are not yet derived. However for our purposes with first-year experience, if we recommend a structure for the FYE then we are in a strong position to help shape the enrollment management strategy conversation and plug into that structure where appropriate, as it is in the process of being built.

Academic Advising
Another area in the process of being built that has parallels to the hybrid FYE model is academic advising. Its work is roughly one year ahead of the current FYE efforts, but there are already important structural lessons. A cornerstone to the advising initiative was creating a highly coordinated and integrated advising system that reflected discipline-specific norms, but stressed standardized, shared outcomes. The initiative has attempted to leverage technology and facilitate common practices, procedures and communications so students have a seamless advising experience regardless of which college they consider, choose, or leave. Whatever structure we might recommend, it will help us to work in parallel with the central advising team, especially since there is a stated concentration on first-year advising among this group.
Traditions

One important issue that emerged from our dimension committee work was the role that traditions play in developing, or not, our overall student culture. It is our recommendation that the University look more closely at its high-impact traditions – both active and passive (those that students are a part of without having to opt-in) – and how it can continue these traditions while communicating and acclimating new students and community members to them. There is a real sense that the institution does not have, or do, enough to engender an intentional culture. The question is: how does tradition impact stakeholders, whether asking what it means to be a part of the UK community or determining how it affects the establishment of universal academic expectations.

One specific example discussed was the New Student Induction, which takes place during K Week. At the ceremony students are given a blue and white graduation tassel. The University should adopt the idea of the tassel and emphasize it throughout the college experience to infuse the object with real meaning. These tassels should be used at graduation in place of college-specific ones to create a larger sense of community and again tie back to the first-year ceremony and induction onto campus.

The effectiveness of these changes, initiatives, and efforts must be evaluated for effectiveness. A decision support unit has been created in the Provost Office that services student success initiatives and is able to coordinate assessment and effectiveness measures and enable a culture of evidence for evaluation of the effectiveness of our coordination and delivery of first-year programs and initiatives.

PI. 2.5 Faculty/Staff Culture and Development

Faculty/staff culture and development impacts the first-year student experience, and the centralized unit could alleviate concerns raised in the FYE faculty/staff survey by serving as a point of communication between varying interest groups and their respective roles related to the first-year student. For example, increased coordination and communication about campus events can positively impact first-year students.

In addition, a review of the new faculty and staff orientation curriculum should also be conducted as it relates to first-year students. Faculty and staff are integral to acclimating first-year students to the campus culture and student life. However, new faculty or staff members may be unaware of the hallmarks of the UK community and receive little to no information about these features in their new faculty/staff orientation. A new program, or at the very least written materials such as a pamphlet, should be included in these orientations to acclimate new community members to student life and traditions on campus. The staff orientation includes many healthcare employees, and there potentially should be a separate session offered to academic campus staff on student life. Additionally, information about the issues relevant to first-year students and how to best support them in their academic efforts should be included in these sessions.

The centralizing unit should also offer trainings on interacting with and supporting first-year students to faculty and staff members. Names of community members who have completed the training could be compiled in a list distributed to first-year students as a resource to answer questions. The committee has not yet identified an incentive for faculty and staff members to complete the training, but one should be provided for those who do so. The centralizing unit should also mandate all websites, etc., be updated with correct information so first-year students can navigate various channels appropriately. For example, the structure diagrams on the Provost’s website for offices that went through the restructure are still not fully updated. In addition, a dedicated website with information on the first-year experience and direct links to varying resources should be reactivated.
There may be some utility to creating an advisory council, either as a sub-committee of the current associate deans for undergraduate programs with additional members from central units or some other configuration. This advisory council could work with an assistant provost for FYE and help drive strategy, coordinate communications, and create a consistent experience for first-year students.

Pl. 2.6. First-Year Policies and Financial Resources

The Gardner Institute recommended that the Organization Dimension committee review policies and financial resources that impact first-year students. Upon review, there are few policies targeted particularly to first-year students. UK does not require first-year students to live on campus. Approximately 89% of our first-year students already live on campus, which is a similar rate for institutions that require their first-year students to reside on campus, once exceptions and appeals to the policy are taken into consideration. Given that our students reside at such a rate there has not been institutional interest to legislate such a requirement. Similarly our institution does not ban first-year students from bringing their cars to campus. Although they must park them on the perimeter of campus (e.g., stadium parking), this has not risen as a major issue.

There has been some deliberation about the immunizations required for first-year students in relation to public health welfare in the residence halls, but no decisions have been made. Of concern may be the perceived proliferation of “holds” placed on student accounts for any institutional requirement (albeit a mandatory survey, financial bill, library fine, among others). Given the institution’s stated goal of retention and graduation, the rise in placing “holds” on the students’ accounts to trigger student behaviors may be reviewed. It may prove important for us to codify what rises to the level of placing a hold and whether there are other “carrots or sticks” to implement. This, however, is not an issue limited to first-year students.

Given the highly decentralized/centralized model currently in operation, it is difficult to parse out what kind of financial resources are already allocated to the first-year experience. Even in the units that are more centrally dedicated to first-year programming, such as Undergraduate Admissions, responsible for Merit Weekend and “see blue.” U, Student and Academic Life’s unit that leads K Week and UK 101/201, and the college-based Living Learning Programs, many of these units are cross-subsidized and matrixed with other responsibilities that reside outside of the first-year experience. Unpacking those costs associated is difficult at best.

What we recommend is that a small committee be charged with benchmarking best practices regarding the financials of the first-year experience at comparable land-grant, flagship institutions of our size. We suggest the charge includes, but is not limited to, the staff-to-student ratio of centralized offices, the operating budgets of centralized offices, the number of tenure-stream faculty teaching first-year courses, the ROI on advising conferences in terms of yield, the average costs of orientation weeks, the average costs of first-year living programs, and other signature first-year programs, among other financial resource benchmarks. Upon gathering this information, we can determine a set of recommendations to zero-base budget any newly-formed unit and help other units across campus “tag” their attendant costs for the first-year experience.
Recommendations for Action

Overall the committee felt that FYE programs will benefit from centralization of FYE activities in a single administrative unit. However the committee also recognizes that many FYE activities are more effectively administered at the college or program level. For this reason, the committee recommends that one component within the proposed new structure be an Assistant Provost charged with the coordination and facilitation of FYE programs implemented at the college or program level.

In the new structure an Assistant Provost would lead the FYE unit and report to the Associate Provost for Student and Academic Life. Four Directors would report to the Assistant Provost for FYE. They will direct units for Orientation, Academic Initiatives, Parent and Family Programs, and Marketing and Communication. The functions for each area are listed. Once the functions for each department are better defined, the specific personnel required in each office and their functions could be more specifically delineated.

We realize that as this organizational structure develops it will be subject to further refinements. For example, committee members have suggested that the Center for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching (CELT) First Year Coordinator might be employed by CELT and would work with the FYE Academic Initiatives Office. Their role would be to advise on best practices related to teaching and instructing first-year students. Another position in the Academic Initiative Unit would be an Early Career Development Initiative Coordinator. Many career development initiatives would likely be very specific to the discipline. Thus the focus of this office might be to support and facilitate programs specific to different Colleges or Departments. This structure has many similarities to FYE programs at other institutions that we examined, and we believe this would serve our campus well in directing and coordinating our efforts to make the first year a successful and rewarding experience for our students.

We also recommend some of the functions that currently reside in Enrollment Management, such as Merit Weekend and “see blue.” U, be transferred over to this unit to create a one-stop shop for first-year students upon their confirmation of enrolling at UK.

The following are some additional recommendations:

1. As mentioned above, the Director of FYE services will need to play a strong role in both managing the central FYE services and in coordinating with colleges, departments, programs, and support services.

2. The FYE staff will work with “safety net” support services to better facilitate support services for first-year students with academic or personal issues. Support services could include the Disability Resource Center, the Community of Concern, Academic Ombud Services, the Counseling Center, the Vice President for Diversity, the Violence Intervention and Prevention Center, the Veterans Resource Center, and others.

3. An important factor for this unit will be outreach and education to educate and involve faculty, staff, and student organizations. “Buy-in” to the FYE programs and initiatives from members of the University community in contact with first-year students is an integral element for the success of FYE programs. These functions could be coordinated by the Academic Initiatives and Marketing and Communications offices.
4. Since this will be a new unit, it will be important to establish an ongoing assessment of the FYE programs. The specific charge will be to design assessments that measure the effectiveness of FYE programs. An assessment specialist will work with the Assistant Provost and other FYE Directors to design assessment measurements and instruments. This information will be necessary for continuous improvement of FYE programs, and to identify additional programs that may enhance FYE efforts.

5. Initiatives to facilitate early career development will be beneficial to students. Many universities offer career development services to freshmen and some of the most competitive companies expect as much. Helping students to identify career goals early helps them to be more interested in coursework and to focus more on their academic efforts.

6. There may be some utility to create an advisory council, either as a sub-committee of the current associate deans for undergraduate programs with additional members from central units or some other configuration. This advisory council will work with the assistant provost for FYE and help drive strategy, coordinate communications, and create a consistent experience.

7. The central unit should be plugged into the enrollment management strategy conversation, wherever appropriate.

8. The central unit should work in parallel with the central advising team, especially since there is a stated concentration on the first-year advising among this group.

9. It is our recommendation that the institution look more closely at its high-impact traditions – both active and passive (those that students are already part of without opting in) – and how it can continue these traditions while communicating and acclimating new students and community members to said traditions.

10. The centralized unit should serve as a point of communication between varying interest groups and their respective roles within the first-year experience.

11. A review of the new faculty and staff orientation curriculum should also be done as it relates to first-year students.

12. The centralizing unit should also offer trainings on interacting and supporting first-year students to faculty and staff members. Community members who complete the training could be compiled on a list distributed to first-year students as a resource to answer questions and would be considered “First-Year Ambassadors.”

13. The centralizing unit should work with central administration to ensure all websites, etc. be updated with correct information so first-year students can navigate various channels appropriately and utilize mobile user capability.
14. We recommend that a small committee be charged with benchmarking best practices to ensure the financials of the first-year experience are comparable to land-grant, flagship institutions of our size.

15. We recommend themes be identified so that as an institution we are intentional about the focus of our communication. For example, if our “goals” are retention, student success, graduation, etc., then how do we create those impressions through messaging before those students even arrive here? It will be important to define those messages and find ways to incorporate our “key messages” into publications/digital information coming from various places (by requiring and/or offering incentives) on and off campus.

16. Another recommendation is to require a review of all information that is being sent to these student populations to consolidate and reduce messaging.

17. We recommend that a communication audit be performed by visiting the various site (websites, publications, social media) and completing a message analysis (through qualitative coding) of what the overall messages we are sending – with multiple groups including parents/families. Benchmarking institutions would be useful throughout this process.

18. A more specific, and excellent, recommendation by a student in our group is to create a directory that would be available (and easily accessible) online that would be a list of departments/divisions, what they do and can help with, and how to contact them. This would need to be very limited information (with links to websites, of course), but a sort of “cheat sheet.”

19. Another specific recommendation is an issue with the admissions application—students are required to select a college and major early in the application, which we have concerns about because: (1) students may be undecided, and (2) students are not used to the “college” structure and may not know what “college” their major falls under.

20. The committee does not yet have an incentive for faculty and staff members to complete a training related to the first-year experience, but one should be provided for those who complete the training.
Foundations Institutions deliver intentional curricular and co-curricular learning experiences that engage students in order to develop knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors consistent with the desired outcomes of higher education and the institution’s philosophy and mission.

Whether in or out of the classroom, learning also promotes increased competence in critical thinking, ethical development, and the lifelong pursuit of knowledge.

Executive Summary

Immediately following Drew Koch’s keynote address on January 19, the Learning Dimension Team (LDT) assembled and began its work. The focus was squarely on enhancing the first-year experience in ways noted in the statement above. After two sessions which helped the LDT frame the overall challenges and opportunities, we formed sub-teams which were charged to review the current status, examine data (including those found in the Current Practices Inventory as well as some we solicited on our own), and develop recommendations for each of the six Performance Indicators (P.I.). While P.I. 3.2 (Engaging Students), 3.3 (Course Outcomes), and 3.4 (Courses with High DEW Rates) each called for identification of five “gateway” courses by a campus liaison team, that responsibility was granted to our team. Thus sub-teams 3.2, 3.3, and 3.4 met during our regular LDT session to build consensus around a set of gateway courses; as a result, they identified the following six courses: CHE 105, COM 101, MA 109, MA 113, PSY 100, and UK 130.

These courses were chosen due to their high enrollments of first-year students and high DEW rates. It was hypothesized that improvements in these courses could enhance overall first-year academic success substantially. Sub-team work proceeded both within and beyond the context of our recurring LDT meetings.

We devoted two full LDT meetings to review first and second drafts of sub-team reports, which were initially composed directly into the “notes” and “evidences” boxes available for our use on the Gardner Foundation website.

All final recommendations from each sub-team are included in their portion of this report. However, we have identified a single recommendation to “headline” in section five, below, from each of the six sub-teams [except in the case of sub-teams 3.1 (Learning Goals) and 3.3, for which recommendations were similar; thus, they “co-sponsored” overall recommendation #1]. From P.I. 3.1 and P.I. 3.3, we concluded that we have first-year learning goals in our UK Core (general education) and UK 101 (optional first-year course). Those learning goals are not specific to the first year, and are not specifically assessed for first-year students.

We recommend that a common set of first-year learning goals and objectives (FYGOs) be crafted and suggest that they be embedded into gateway courses.

For P.I. 3.2, we call for the development of a campus-wide initiative to identify, develop, implement, and assess the use of pedagogies that facilitate engaged learning activities across learning contexts (among or between courses and non-academic activities) that provide first-year students with high-impact experiences. Our sense of the status of P.I. 3.4 was that we should focus more squarely on helping high-risk students [as
identified in our own datasets-- low high school readiness index (HSRI), Pell grant, underrepresented minorities (URM), first generation, and gender (course-specific) in their first attempt in high DEW courses. In addition we have suggested some specific interventions (see text below) to enhance success for students engaged in their second attempts in a given course. For P.I. 3.5 (Placement), our team believes that the University has a good plan for placing students in suitable courses; however, we argue for an enhanced effort to assess the effectiveness of those placement strategies. Our evaluation of our work with P.I. 3.6 (Special Learning Opportunities) as an institution is that our provision of such special learning opportunities is somewhat uneven (see ratings below). Our key recommendation was that all first-year students participate in one documented high-impact practice during their first year on campus.

**Learning Dimension Committee**

<table>
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### Narrative on General Situation and Findings of the Dimension Committee

#### 3.1 Learning Goals

To what degree has the campus:

*Established common learning goals specifically for the first year?*

Medium

*Measured outcomes for common learning goals for all first-year students?*

Very Low/None

**Current situation and committee discussion notes**

There are no explicit University-wide, first-year experience goals. However, two programs currently exist that have stated goals which could be used as a starting point to develop first-year goals. One of these programs is UK Core, which is comprised of learning goals in four areas: intellectual inquiry; written, oral and visual communication; quantitative reasoning; and citizenship. UK Core’s goals are similar to and well aligned with the essential learning outcomes of the Association of American College and Universities (AAC&U). All undergraduates must fulfill the UK Core requirement in order to graduate; however, those courses are typically spread out over three or four years, and therefore no single goal or outcome is met by all students in the first year. Furthermore, many of our students come to UK with CORE requirements already met through dual-enrollment or transfer courses. The other program is UK 101, which is an optional course that is part of a program specifically designed to improve student retention by promoting the development of soft skills and the transition from high school to university life.

A third existing resource relevant to the development, implementation, and assessment of first-year learning goals is the Center for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching (CELT) at UK, which conducts workshops on teaching and learning and has sponsored events that include teaching first-year students. CELT also provides resources (with the Graduate School) for Teaching Assistants who are often utilized in UK CORE and UK 101 courses.
Summary of institutional resources and evidence

Information on the UK Core Program and the specific courses that can be used to fulfill UK Core requirements can be found here: [http://www.uky.edu/registrar/sites/www.uky.edu.registrar/files/ukcore_3.pdf](http://www.uky.edu/registrar/sites/www.uky.edu.registrar/files/ukcore_3.pdf)

The explicit UK Core learning outcomes are:

1. Students will demonstrate an understanding of and ability to employ the processes of intellectual inquiry
2. Students will demonstrate competent written, oral, and visual communication skills both as producers and consumers of information
3. Students will demonstrate an understanding of and ability to employ methods of quantitative reasoning
4. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the complexities of citizenship and the process for making informed choices as engaged citizens in a diverse, multilingual world

Details of the Association of American Colleges and Universities Essential Learning Outcomes can be found here: [https://aacu.org/leap/essential-learning-outcomes](https://aacu.org/leap/essential-learning-outcomes)

The AAC&U’s broader learning outcomes are:

1. Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World
2. Intellectual and Practical Skills
3. Personal and Social Responsibility
4. Integrative and Applied Learning

Information on UK 101 can be found here: [http://www.uky.edu/nsfp/uk101-201](http://www.uky.edu/nsfp/uk101-201)

The current, UK 101 program learning outcomes are:

1. Articulate the purpose and nature of a college education at a research university
2. Explain the purpose and goals of the University of Kentucky’s general education (UK Core) student learning outcomes
3. Apply learning strategies for achieving academic success such as study skills and information literacy
4. Locate and use designated campus resources
5. Recognize personal and social issues (e.g., alcohol, diversity, financial wellness) that first-year students often face in a college environment and be able to identify and select appropriate campus resources

Information on CELT at UK can be found here: [http://www.uky.edu/celt/](http://www.uky.edu/celt/)

We found no data from assessments regarding how well UK Core, UK 101, or the CELT programs have met their specified learning goals and objectives. The impact of UK 101 on student retention has been monitored (see evidence “UK 101 Retention Data.pdf”).
Recommendations

1. The University should identify a set of first-year learning goals and objectives (FYGOs) to be achieved by freshman during their first two semesters at UK. - The FYGOs should be consistent with the mission of this University as the state’s flagship research and teaching university and be in line with the national consensus on what constitutes a premium first-year college experience. Distilling the FYGOs from the goals of the UK Core, as well as the essential learning outcomes of the AAC&U and the goals of UK 101 seems reasonable, but care should be taken to select goals and outcomes that are achievable and assessable as natural components of the courses that students take during their first year. - High Priority

2. Assess the effectiveness of the UK Core, UK 101 and CELT in meeting their goals and objectives related to first year students. - This analysis should go beyond retention rates in order to assess the effectiveness of existing approaches in meeting specific objectives for first-year students. This information is needed to inform the process of designing goals, objectives and approaches that will best serve our future first-year students. - High Priority

3. Embed first year learning goals into required classes taken by first year students. - The FYGOs should be embedded within the courses students take during their first two semesters at UK, such that students achieve the FYGOs during the natural course of completing their first year at UK. No single course should bear the load of the FYGOs but all targeted courses should embed appropriate FYGOs within their normal curriculum. Given the diversity of degree majors at UK, this will be a challenge and require an analysis of the first-year curriculum of all UK students to identify a suite of courses that would ensure the exposure of all entering students to the FYGOs. Models for this currently exist in BIO 148 and CHE 105, which are first-year courses taken by many students in STEM programs at UK and which are designed to promote the development of soft skills and assist with the transition from high school to college. The model of incorporating first-year learning goals into required courses within programs will require consultation with departments and the provision of resources to support department/program efforts to enhance the effectiveness of their first-year/gateway courses. - High Priority (but requires completion of recommendations #1 and #2)

4. Engage CELT in the development & successful application of first year learning goals. - CELT provides a valuable resource for both the development and application phases of the first-year experience initiative. This is particularly important for support of faculty in programs and departments that are on the front line: faculty teaching students in required courses during their first year at UK. Promotion of CELT for use by faculty who teach first-year students is needed, along with mechanisms to assess the scope and effectiveness of CELT programs. - High Priority

3.2 Engaging Students

To what degree does the institution document instructional methods used in each course and evaluate their effectiveness in engaging students in learning? Low.

Current situation and committee discussion notes

Note that the Wildcat Foundations Leadership Group agreed with the decision of the Learning Dimension Team to request an alternative dataset for selection of the high DEW course cluster for the work of sub-teams 3.2, 3.3, and 3.4. While both groups agreed (nearly 100% agreement) that the failure rates for first-year students in high level courses during their first year on campus was problematic, the collective impact of focusing on this problem would be modest. Our rationale was that the “n” in such cases was very modest (a total of 31 first-year students in the 25 most impacted courses; 30 of those students had DEW outcomes—none of the courses carry 100-level designations). Note that this could be an advising issue; this could also be an issue of the rare student who simply chooses a high-level course on his/her own. We chose not to
emphasize this modest issue, in favor of the much larger overall DEW rate question. We sought out and obtained data for high first-year enrollment courses with high first-year DEW rates. Intervention for any one of the six chosen courses would have a far greater institutional impact on our first-year cohort than the entire collective of the 25 high DEW courses. See details on our course selection process immediately below.

Course selection:

1. Review of the report that focused on high DEW courses.
2. Discussion with sub-teams 3.3 and 3.4 regarding course selection; selection of courses across academic units, those that would be representative of different major pathways (i.e. MA 109 and MA 113), courses that would be classified as bottleneck to other coursework (i.e. CHE 105), courses with a large percentage of freshmen enrollment (i.e. PSY 100 and COM 101), and the inclusion of a course representative of the APP programming designed to provide additional student support (i.e. UK 130). Sub-teams agreed these selected courses were also representative of the UK Core and a typical freshman experience.

To address our question about engaging students, our sub-team brainstormed to identify possible data sources (evidence list below). We concluded that the institution does not document instructional methods used in each course to evaluate the effectiveness of engaging students in learning.

Summary of institutional resources and evidence

Institutional evidence referenced and/or reviewed:

- **Course syllabi**: Great variability exists between syllabi, even syllabi for the same course when taught by different instructors. No clear documentation of engaged learning was present. There was difficulty locating updated syllabi on departmental websites (e.g., the most up-to-date syllabus we were able to acquire for PSY 100 was from 2012).

- **Course evaluations**: Review of the questions in the University course evaluations demonstrated that the evaluations do not contain any questions related to engagement in student learning.

- **Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning**: Communication with CELT to identify resources and support for faculty resulted in a description of a collaboration called the First-Year Learning Project and Faculty Learning Communities (see evidence item 96: Learning 3.2_CELTcommunication).

- **Contact with UK Analytics**: Our sub-team was referred to Mike Rudolph, the Director of Effectiveness in the Office of Strategic Planning and Instructional Effectiveness, who communicated that there appears to be no campus-wide formal evaluation of pedagogy and andragogy. Additionally no data has been collected on traditional lecture, discussion style teaching, or flipped classroom. He said there may be data available at the department level. This led our group to look at the Educational Unit & Degree Program Self-Study Report Checklist (2016-2017).
- Educational Unit & Degree Program Self-Study Report Checklist (See evidence item 97): One of our sub-teams reviewed various sections of the self-study report expectations, searching for areas which may shed light on engaged pedagogies. Key possibilities appear to include: 1) best practices in distance learning, 2) contributions to UK Core, 3) ways in which curricula contribute to meeting student learning outcomes, 4) internships, service learning and research experiences, and 5) ways in which faculty (through their credentials) and instructional technology could enhance student learning.

Recommendations

1. **Communication plan** - Develop a strategic communication plan to ensure faculty, including adjunct faculty, and teaching assistants (i.e. all who are involved in the teaching and learning process) are aware of resources and workshops available through CELT and Transformative Learning to enhance their skill set in pedagogy and instructional methods focused on engaged learning. A communication plan might include New Employee Orientation, push notifications, targeted marketing toward instructors of high DEW courses. The university might consider providing incentives to encourage faculty/instructors/staff/TAs to participate. - High Priority

2. **Syllabi templates & availability** - Review the University Senate approved syllabus template. suggest the inclusion/focus on instructional methods related to engaging students in learning. Course syllabi for high DEW courses should be readily available for access on academic unit websites with a LinkBlue login. Course syllabi for high DEW courses should be consistent across sections offered in the same semester to facilitate a similar experience of engaged learning. - High Priority

3. **Course evaluations** - The institution should develop a pilot program with high DEW courses in which additional questions are added to the course evaluations to seek feedback from students related to pedagogy and instructional methods used to enhance engaged learning. These questions could then be analyzed by the Office of Strategic Planning and Instructional Effectiveness to identify any trends in the data. - Medium Priority

4. **TA Training** - Academic units with high DEW courses are encouraged to review current TA training to ensure the training includes strategies and instructional methods related to engaging pedagogies. - High Priority

5. **Formal evaluation of pedagogy** - Develop a campus-wide formal evaluation of pedagogy that includes data related to instructional formats used in high DEW courses (e.g. traditional lecture, seminar, blended and online learning). Ensure the unit self-study for periodic review includes focus areas on pedagogy and instructional methods related to engaging students in learning with valid assessments to document evidence of best practices. Include mechanisms for regular review for
continuous improvement of courses with high DEW rates. Provide time and space for faculty and units to reflect on these inputs. - *High Priority*

6. **Assessment of learning environments** - Complete a campus-wide assessment of learning environments, with appropriate departmental consultation, to document instructional resources and tools that enhance student engagement in learning (e.g. TEAL classrooms, laboratories, interactive learning spaces). Review class capacities, spaces, furniture, and technologies to ensure learning spaces and course enrollments do not impede active, engaged learning experiences. Ensure TEAL classrooms are being utilized by instructors to leverage instructional tools that enhance engaged learning and provide ongoing modeling and support to use these tools at capacity. Identify instructional spaces that limit active, engaged learning and develop a priority list for enhancement of these spaces. - *High Priority*

7. **New Faculty Orientation** - Include an overview of the UK Core in new faculty orientation. Ensure new hires are aware of resources available on campus to support teaching. Provide sessions for syllabi development, pedagogy related to engaged learning, and Canvas tools that support student engagement in learning (e.g. Big Blue Button, Discussion Boards). - *High Priority*

### 3.3 Course Outcomes

**To what degree does the institution document and evaluate student learning outcomes across all sections of each course? Low.**

**Current situation and committee discussion notes**

For the purposes of this report, the learning dimensions committee elected to examine the following high-enrollment first-year courses: CHE 105, COM 101, MA 109, MA 113, PSY 100, and UK 130. After an in-depth discussion, these courses were strategically selected in order to be as representative of first-year students on our campus as possible. The committee felt it valuable to include a developmental course (e.g. UK 130) as well as UK Core courses (e.g. CHE 105, COM 101, PSY 100) and pre-requisite courses (e.g. CHE 105, MA 109). The committee considered DEW rates, degree requirements, college/department, and course structure among other things when selecting these courses.

Student learning outcomes (SLOs) for each course are the same across each section of the course and are documented either on the syllabus or on Canvas. All were easily accessible via department websites of uky.edu with the noted exception of PSY 100. The responsibility of assessing SLOs lies with the department, and each department has its own assessment cycle. However, on an institutional level, there is not a formal documentation process and assessment cycle for all course SLOs.

**Summary of institutional resources and evidence**

The following data were reviewed: Sample Syllabi for six high-enrollment first-year student courses (listed above); Course Coordinators, department chairs, Office of Institutional Research, and UK's website.
Recommendations

1. **Identify First-Year Learning Goals and Objectives (FYGOs)** - Explicitly identify course SLOs as FYGOs for gateway courses. This recommendation reflects similar sentiment as 3.1 recommendations on aligning UK Core objectives with the first-year experience and incorporating UK 101 goals into gateway courses. While we recommend looking at UK Core and UK 101 current goals and objectives to guide the formation of FYGOs, those FYGOs should be designed and written with the purpose of supporting first-year students’ transition to college. We note that our thinking on this matter was consistent with sub-team 3.1, expressed above, and concur in overall recommendation one in section five. - *High Priority*

2. **Align First-Year Learning Goals and Objectives (FYGOs) and course SLOs evaluation with UK Core SLO cycle** - Once the institution incorporates First-Year Experiences SLOs into gateway courses, the recommendation is to follow a similar assessment cycle and process already established by UK Core. Based on this centralized evaluation process conducted at the institution level, recommendations should be provided back to departmental level. - *High Priority*

3. **Course syllabus available publicly** - A sample syllabus should be easily available publicly for UK Core and gateway courses. This would allow students to view and make informed decisions regarding registration. There is a pilot of this currently being undertaken by the University Senate. - *Medium Priority*

3.4 Courses with High D/Failure/Withdrawal/Incomplete (DFWI) Rates

To what degree does the institution attempt to address the causes of high DFWI rates in the courses reported in Section H of the Current Practices Inventory? High

Current situation and committee discussion notes

Note: As the courses chosen for DEW analysis (CHE 105, MA 109, MA 113, UK 130, PSY 100, and COM 101) span a wide range of academic departments and disciplines, there are likely to be some inconsistencies in how student difficulties are addressed, both between and within individual courses. Our workgroup is more familiar with current CHE 105, MA 109, and MA 113 strategies for student success and can speak to those, as well as ways our current practices can be enhanced. Our recommendations will be broad and flexible, allowing for successful adaptation within the other targeted courses (UK 130, PSY 100, and COM 101).

Existing interventions

In CHE 105, MA 109, and MA 113, instructors aggressively promote a variety of campus resources to all their students. These interventions are timed for strategic points in the semester (e.g., at opening of term, just after the first major grade, etc.). Resources we consistently offer include:

1. Instructor office hours
2. General Chemistry Learning Center (CHE tutoring)
3. Mathskeller (MA tutoring)
4. The Study (peer tutoring)
5. Online support resources
6. Attendance encouragement via participatory classroom technology (CHE)
7. Messaging to students, re: amount of study time, problem solving practice required to succeed, etc.
8. Academic Alert system (attendance and progress alerts sent to students and academic advisors)
Identified issues
Students enter CHE 105, MA 109, and MA 113 based on prior test scores in math and, for the two math courses, a combination of test scores and their high school GPA. Some of these students do not succeed in CHE or MA even when entry data indicate they should. Students who require a longer math sequence to gain eligibility for CHE 105, MA 109, or MA 113 tend to have a higher DEW risk in these courses. Being a first-year student is also a predictor of increased DEW risk in some courses. Many students ignore faculty encouragement to use campus academic support resources or wait until they are in serious academic difficulty to use these resources. Some students do not attend class regularly despite strong encouragement by faculty to attend, and their grades clearly suffer as a result. Additionally some students retake the same course several times but do not change their study habits and continue to be unsuccessful. If we had a better idea of why students withdraw and what problems they are encountering, we could better develop means to identify at-risk students and intervene with appropriate resources in a timely manner.

Summary of institutional resources and evidence
Risk factors for high DEW include: Pell Grant recipient, low High School Readiness Index (combination of ACT score and high school GPA), underrepresented minority (URM), first-generation status, and gender (varies with specific course). In nearly every case, students with these demographic risk factors showed an increase in DEW rate compared to other students.

We also reviewed DEW rates of all students when they retake the selected courses. We found that, in general, students have lower DEW rates when retaking these courses. Our data on campus resource use show that students who use academic resources regularly have higher success rates than similar students who don’t. The problem we have encountered is that many at-risk students are not taking advantage of these resources at the frequency needed to enhance their academic success. For high-DEW courses in particular, the University will need to adopt a more uniform strategy to connect high-risk students individually with these resources.

It is clear from these data that students with one or more risk factors are succeeding at lower rates than students who do not have these risk factors. Because we know that all students benefit from using campus academic resources, it is imperative that we intervene with high-risk students individually to encourage them to use these resources.

Recommendations
1. Targeted interventions for high-risk students in first attempt - At opening of term, identify students with one or more designated DEW risk factors (e.g., low HSRI, Pell Grant, URM, first generation, gender) for that particular course. Targeted outreach, either one-to-one or small-group with students, regarding resource use and success
tracking should be utilized in a form to be determined by each department. - High Priority

2. **Intervention before second attempt** - Prior to the second attempt at a course, students must either: a) complete the LASSI (learning skills inventory) and an academic coaching session (through Transformative Learning) by the last day to add a course for the semester, or b) complete a lower-level prerequisite course, or c) complete another supplemental course as determined by the academic department where the course is offered (requirement will vary by course). The department can make exceptions based on individual student circumstance. - High Priority

3. **Identify reasons for withdrawal** - Students will be asked for reason for withdrawal within the myUK portal before they will be allowed to withdraw from a course. A list of common options will be provided, as well as an “other” option to provide additional reasons. These data can then be mined by departments to identify general trends as well as future interventions for students who wish to repeat the course at a later date. - Medium Priority

4. **Retrieve data for withdrawn student** - Following student withdrawal, allow instructors to continue to view student grade data that existed prior to withdrawal in the Canvas learning system. This will supply valuable information about student progress at time of withdrawal, which can help: a) identify patterns of experienced difficulties within the course and b) create more personalized interventions for a second attempt. - Medium Priority

5. **Part-of-term course for withdrawn students (CHE 105)** - The chemistry department is considering offering a late-starting, part-of-term course for students who withdraw from CHE 105. This course would help students identify the issues they encountered in CHE 105 and spend time addressing those issues prior to a retake of 105. It would also allow students to “gain back” at least some credit hours from the CHE 105 drop. - Medium Priority

6. **Additional recommendations and summary notes** - We recommend extending student success conversations to faculty involved with the targeted courses (CHE 105, MA 109, MA 113, UK 130, PSY 100, and COM 101). Ideally the faculty for each course can analyze their DEW data and do the following: 1) Enact procedures for both general and targeted, individualized resource promotion during the first attempt at the course, 2) require individual interventions for each student who wishes to enroll for a second attempt, and 3) Introduce the departmental petition system for a third attempt at a course. Messaging regarding this resource-based success sequence should be shared with all students at the beginning of their first attempt in a course to send a strong institutional direction that they should take advantage of available resources as soon as they begin the course. - High Priority

**Note on pedagogy:** Our group expressed strong concern about “forcing” a particular pedagogical method upon individual faculty members, as this could be construed as an impingement upon the academic freedom we extend to all our faculty. Our experienced faculty have witnessed many unintended negative consequences when instructional styles have been mandated for unwilling, inflexible, or otherwise disquieted instructors. We feel it would be helpful to share examples of pedagogical strategies that have been proven to enhance student success, but faculty must ultimately be empowered to choose which teaching methods to use in
their own courses. The evidence-based intervention system described above should ensure that individual students are provided with every possible resource to support their success in a timely and individually-focused manner. We have abundant institutional resources and must make every effort to convince students to use them regularly and often.

3.5 Placement

To what degree does the campus intentionally place first-year students in appropriate courses?
n/a

To address deficiencies in academic preparation?
High

To provide sufficient academic challenge for above-average students?
High

Current situation and committee discussion notes

Addressing deficiencies in academic preparation
Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE) regulations mandate placement of students into certain courses based on their Math ACT scores. The Math Department uses the Math ACT to place entering students in a manner that is consistent with CPE regulations. While the University is required to follow CPE mandates, UK also provides students with a second recommendation that uses a math placement test, The Assessment and Learning Knowledge spaces (ALEKS) system, High School GPA and the Math ACT to score. Approximately 3500 students with Math ACT scores lower than 30 take ALEKS. The student advisors then use these placement indicators and major requirements to help students select an appropriate mathematics course. Math faculty review performance of students on a regular basis to determine if the cut scores are set appropriately and if the placement instruments are effective.

It is important to consider whether students perform well in the courses where they are placed, but also attempt to determine if students are taking preparatory courses that may not be necessary. In either situation, student credit hours may be wasted. Students are required to take a reading test (ACCUPLACER; http://www.uky.edu/app/reading) if they have an ACT Reading score 19 and below, or an SAT score below 470 in Critical Reading if taken prior to March 2016, or an SAT score below 25 on the Reading Test if taken from March 2016 forward. Depending on score, students may be placed into an APP (Academic Preparation and Placement) course. For some students with low ACT scores but higher ACCUPLACER scores the exam may allow them to bypass APP courses.

Math ACT scores and/or ALEKS scores also determine the placement of students into Chemistry (CHE) courses. The scores may also determine or influence whether a student is placed in the CHE 109/110 sequence, a two-semester series that covers the same material as the one-semester CHE 105 course. Math ACT scores also determine eligibility to enroll in Biology (BIO) classes. If a student's math ACT score does not meet requirements, they must pass MA 109 (College Algebra) as a prerequisite and CHE 105 (as a prerequisite or concurrently).
The University-wide language requirement (two semesters) is fulfilled most often by two years of foreign language taken in high school. However, students in several colleges are asked to complete a fourth semester of one language, or a third semester of one and a second semester of another. These students often prefer to take three semesters of a second language rather than testing into the third semester of a language studied in high school. As an aspirational goal, we would like to have more students arriving on campus with placement exams selected by the departments teaching languages and administered in the high schools.

Providing sufficient academic challenge for above-average students
CIS/WRD 110 and 111 are composition and communication UK Core courses required for each student and are often taken during freshman year. Students with high AP English scores, high ACT or SAT scores, or who are enrolled in the Honors College may instead take a single semester of either WRD or CIS 112. The Lewis Honors College selectively admits our best students into a program that offers small class sizes (25 or less). Students in the Honors College may opt for the Honors College Living and Learning Program (LLP) which offers more opportunities for interactions with Honors College faculty in extracurricular settings. We examined the demographics of the fall semester 2017 cohort of students enrolled in LLP’s as compared to the overall undergraduate population at UK for fall semester 2017. We did not find major differences, although the percentage of male and URM students enrolled in LLP’s was slightly higher and the percentage of first-generation students was slightly lower that the overall undergraduate population.

The Math Department provides a range of courses for entering students which can be matched to their ability. Over the past three years, entering students have taken a total of 21 different mathematics courses ranging from remedial mathematics to 400 level courses. Other students may opt into other LLP’s, which, like the Honors LLP offer specialized classes around them, and extracurricular activities under the guidance of faculty associated with that LLP. Examples include STEMcats (STEM majors), LEXEngaged (community involvement), and International Village (global community).

Of special note are the student survey responses to the Gardner Institute First-Year Student Survey for questions D003 (academic preparation/writing), OQ3, D004 (academic preparation/reading), D005 (library research skills), D006 (math skills), D007 (computing skills), all of which had to do with their preparation for their last course. Most of the students responded that their class was “about right” on all questions. However, of the remaining responses, more students fell into the “easy” and “too easy” categories than into the “difficult” and “too difficult” categories. Paradoxically, in question OQ3, which was about the amount of work involved, more students selected “more” or “much more than expected.” These findings suggest that students may feel that they are being given a lot of work to do, while not being mentally challenged in their courses. These findings may also suggest that we should focus more on making sure that average and above-average students are enrolled in classes that provide them with reasonable educational challenges.

Summary of institutional resources and evidence
At the university level, UK offers a variety of placement services; however, by necessity these services focus on individual courses and departments. Most of the placement efforts center around potential deficiencies incoming students may demonstrate, although a few of these efforts also place above-average students into higher-level or accelerated courses. For example, WRD/CIS 112 classes allow a student to finish the required UK Core composition and communication sequence (CIS/WRD 110/111) in a single semester. AP Credit may also help a student bypass a required introductory course; as in, enrolling in Calculus II or Calculus III, for example, after earning credit in introductory calculus courses.
At the department level, some departments (such as Math) track the success of placement testing into their courses.

**Recommendations**

1. **Assess effectiveness of student placement** - Evaluate performance of students in their initial course. Determine if there is agreement between placement standards and courses. Determine if instruments such as placement tests are effective. Determine if additional information is available to help correctly place students. The Departments teaching the students need to be involved in discussions about placement. - *High Priority*

2. **Find ways to provide more fast-track/advanced placement options for above-average students** - Identify ways in which our above-average students could be placed in appropriately challenging classes, in addition to the Honors College, fast-track WRD/CIS placement, and high school AP credit. Are there other course sequences taken mostly by freshmen that could follow the CIS/WRD model? - *Medium Priority*

**PI 3.6 Special Learning Opportunities**

*To what degree does the institution measure first-year students' learning outcomes for each of the following?*

- **First-Year Seminar**
  - High

- **Learning communities (can include living-learning communities)**
  - High

- **Leadership programs/courses**
  - Low

- **Service learning**
  - Low

- **Student affairs functions/initiatives other than residence life**
  - Low

- **Residence Life (if campus houses 33% or more of first-year students)**
  - Medium

- **Out-of-class activities linked to academic courses or programs**
  - Low

**Current situation and committee discussion notes**

**First-Year Seminar**

There are a variety of colleges that offer some form of first-year seminar for incoming students. Many of these are tied to the required curriculum for the degree programs offered by the colleges, including NUR 101 (Academic Orientation & Introduction to Nursing), EGR 101 (Engineering Exploration 1), GEN 100 (Issues in Agriculture, Food & Environment), and starting in fall semester 2018, HON 101 (The Individual and Society).

UK 101/201 is the university-wide seminar course and has been in existence since 1991. UK 101 is Academic Orientation for First-Year students and UK 201 is Academic Orientation for Transfer Students. Both UK 101 and 201 are one credit hour courses meeting for the first nine weeks of the semester. However students earn a letter grade in UK 101 and are graded on a pass/fail basis in UK 201. The course addresses the
important transition issues from high school to college, and the campus resources available. In fall semester 2017, 52.8% of the first-year cohort was enrolled in UK 101.

There are five stated learning outcomes for the course:

1. Articulate the purpose and nature of a college education at a research university.
2. Explain the purpose and goals of the University of Kentucky’s general education (UK Core) student learning outcomes.
3. Apply learning strategies for achieving academic success such as study skills and information literacy.
4. Locate and use designated campus resources.
5. Recognize personal and social issues (e.g., alcohol, diversity, stress) that first-year students often face in a college environment and be able to identify and select appropriate campus resources.

EGR 101 (Engineering Exploration 1) is a letter-grade one credit-hour course for incoming Engineering students. The goal is to introduce students to the engineering and computer science professions and also the corresponding degree programs offered. For EGR 101, there are four stated learning outcomes. Students will personally produce artifacts that demonstrate their engagement with the creative process. As part of this process students will:

1. Define and distinguish different approaches to “creativity” as appropriate to the disciplinary practices of engineering and computer science.
2. Apply the best practices (logic, laws, and constraints) of engineering and computer science.
3. Demonstrate the ability to critically analyze work produced by other students in this course and co-curricular events using appropriate tools.
4. Evaluate results of their own creative endeavors and, using that evaluation, reassess and refine their work.

GEN 100 (Introduction to Issues in Agriculture, Food and Environment) is a three-credit hour, letter-graded course for first semester students in the College of Agriculture, Food and Environment. The course is approved to count as a UK Core (General Education) requirement under the heading of “U.S. Citizenship.” GEN 100 has the following learning outcomes:

1. Define critical concepts related to agriculture, food, and environment.
2. Have an evidence-based discussion on key issues in agriculture, food, and environment.
3. Explain how social and technological changes in society have affected issues in agriculture, food, and environment.
4. Evaluate the emergence of multiple (and contested) positions taken on these issues.
As evidenced by these three examples, there are wide variances in the types of outcomes for first-year seminar courses depending on major. At this time there is no central entity to identify if there are areas of similarities among these courses for which the University might capitalize.

With regards to the assessment of UK 101/201, the main area of focus is student retention from year to year, comparing those who enrolled in the course to those who did not enroll in the course. With regards to the specific learning outcomes, there are assignments built into the course that measure their understanding of campus policies, use of campus resources and being able to articulate the differences between their experience in high school and experiences in college. For fall semester 2017, UK 101 had a 95% pass rate (grade of C or higher).

**Challenges** - There is a challenge regarding the classification of “first-year seminars” as there is no larger, campus-wide coordination effort currently among first-year seminar courses. Courses that are offered in various colleges are run independently and there is no identification or coordination of student learning outcomes or evaluation methods.

**Opportunities** - There are many opportunities with regards to UK 101/201 and the University. Specifically regarding assessment and student learning, there are opportunities to more closely align our curriculum to our stated learning outcomes and to measure those more fully. We have an opportunity to measure student learning simply beyond retention. There is an additional opportunity to coordinate and bridge the gap between the various first-year seminar offerings. Course coordinators could have a chance to first learn about other seminar options, and then collaborate on common goals or outcomes. The courses could strategize enrollment methods so that the most students could be served by a first-year seminar.

**Learning Communities**
The University of Kentucky offers 13 unique Living Learning Programs (LLPs) for first-year students. In all of these communities, students live with other students who share like-minded interests or similar academic majors, and 11 of 13 have connected courses. Each LLP is managed by an academic department or program on campus to offer specialized programming, interactions with UK faculty and staff, and a supportive community that focuses on student success. The Office of Residence Life collaborates with academic partners and other student success partners to aid in the management of the LLP’s and ensure collaboration. In fall semester 2016, 34.2% of first year students lived in LLPs, 54.7% lived in other on-campus housing, and 11.0% lived off campus.

Student success is measured using the same measurement tool as that used for all students in residence life, with specific target to learning and experiences in LLPs. Students are surveyed before they move in to the residence hall, midway in the semester, and at the end of the fall semester. Student retention is also tracked. Every two years, a focus groups assessment is done for each LLP. In addition, students are assessed by their individual LLP program, this assessment varies by LLP community. UK students in LLPs generally experience higher first-year retention rates (LLPs – 89.1%; Other On-Campus – 81.2%; Off-Campus – 75.6%) as well as higher GPAs (LLPs – 3.27; Other On-Campus – 3.03; Off-Campus – 2.76). LLP students generally have a higher High School Readiness Index (HSRI) score (42% of LLP students score 55 or higher on HSRI, vs. 13% of other on-campus students, and 18% of off-campus students). LLP students are generally retained at the same or higher rate than their counterparts regardless of HSRI score.
Opportunities - Residence Life does a great job bringing the communities together, and continuing this centralized support is key. More faculty involvement for each LLP is an opportunity for improvement; some LLPs are faculty-led (5 of 13) and most (11 of 13) have connected courses. Faculty leadership in LLPs is essential and the University should look into ways to incentivize faculty participation. In addition, co-curricular experiences could be enhanced by offering more opportunities for students to interact with classroom concepts in the residence halls. Residence Life is currently implementing a new residential curriculum with LLPs offering an experience that compliments this curriculum. However, this initiative is still in development. Another opportunity would be to offer connections to LLP's and connected courses for students living outside the residence hall, this could be especially beneficial for keeping students engaged beyond their first-year. Finally, University support in funding of LLP programs, common resources, and experiences would greatly aid in the mission of the LLPs.

Challenges - Since LLP programs are run by departments across campus, consistency can be a challenge in programing and outcomes. The variation of funding for LLP programs is also a problem because the funding of LLPs falls on the colleges or departments. In addition, Residence Life is still operating on the same budget for LLPs in 2001 when enrollment was just 600 students; whereas now, there are over 2,500 students enrolled.

Another challenge is a lack of consistent job expectations and payment for peer mentors. Funding shortages prevent student-staff from returning earlier and receiving better training. In addition, UK also requires peer mentors to live in the residence hall, but the institution does not pay for room expenses. Some students have had to turn down the peer-mentoring opportunities because of an inability to pay for the on-campus living requirement.

Finally, the new residence halls, although beautiful spaces, present a lot of challenges for LLP programing and developing community. With private rooms it is challenging to build community in the residence hall. The new residence halls do not offer office space for LLP program directors, moving them farther away from students. Given that all the residence halls have been all recently built, planning for LLPs in future building design will not help in this challenge, but opportunities do exist to improve the limitations of the current spaces.

Leadership Programs
Courses - There are some leadership courses available across campus including the Community and Leadership Development program within College of Agriculture, Food, and Environment, and the Leadership Certificate program through College of Education. There are no systematic measures of first-year student learning outcomes in these courses.

Programs - UK’s Office of Student Organizations and Activities does not currently offer any curricular leadership courses but it does offer a number of co-curricular programming experiences available to first-year students and at various levels of engagement, including:

- **EMPOWER**: A nine-month women’s leadership program with a fall kickoff retreat followed by monthly meetings/workshops and networking events.

- **IMPACT**: A first-year cohort-based leadership development program designed to promote community engagement and personal development and available to any student through an application process.

- **Leadership Boot Camp**: A one-day training for student organization officers.

- **Leadership Speaker Series**: Features leaders sharing their experience, knowledge, and insight with the UK community and open to all students.
- **Leadership Workshop Series**: Practical monthly workshops focused around student leadership needs, including goal setting, officer transitions, delegation, meeting management, conflict resolution, program assessment, public relations, communication styles, emotional intelligence, and StrengthsQuest. The series is open to all students.

- **LeadUK Conference**: A one-day leadership conference available for all students at UK.

- **Leadership Development Program (LDP)**: A first-year leadership program offered by Student Government that is designed to connect students with community leaders and offer opportunities for shadowing and networking with current campus leaders.

Leadership Education staff have recently established assessment practices for their programs, including measurement of learning outcomes, student competency development, and student learning experiences. Additionally, Leadership Education has formed a working group for areas doing leadership programming across campus (FSL, K Week, Career Services, UK 101, etc.) to better communicate leadership development opportunities and encourage consistency across programs, as well as identify gap areas within leadership programming. This committee has met several times and they plan to continue meeting at least once per semester moving forward.

Fraternity and Sorority Life administers Greek 101 for all new members (mostly first-year students) in the spring semester and offers opportunities for mentorship and leadership for first year students through their Junior Interfraternity Council and Junior Panhellenic Council. Similar opportunities are under development for the National Pan-Hellenic Council and United Greek Council. Each Greek organization on campus is also required to provide a new member experience, typically controlled by the national chapters, but monitored by the Fraternity and Sorority Life staff.

UK hosts Army and Air Force ROTC programs that have significant leadership components to them, including coursework (including 100-level) and leadership labs.

Residence Life also offers leadership opportunities for first-year students through residence hall councils (elected students), the Residence Hall Association (an umbrella organization for all residence hall councils), and the National Residence Hall Honorary.

**Opportunities** - Leadership Education underwent a reorganization in 2017-18 and drafted a new strategic plan with full implementation starting in 2018-19. Leadership Education has begun to implement new Leadership Competencies within the entire Dean of Students area, and potentially division-wide within the year. Baseline data has been collected for internal programs, such as EMPOWER and IMPACT, and the competencies have been woven into the new residential curriculum, UK 101 peer leader training, K Week leader training, and the Fraternity and Sorority Life officer training series for implementation and measurement in the fall 2018 semester. These competencies will provide consistency of leadership programming and measurement of learning for all leadership opportunities on campus moving forward.
Residence Life has recently developed a new Residential Curriculum (to be launched Fall 2018) which includes a focus on leadership development and involvement for first-year students. Additionally, Fraternity and Sorority Life has added a new staff member whose responsibilities include overseeing leadership development within the Fraternity and Sorority communities. These initiatives are both new, but should show significant development within the next year.

Challenges - Leadership Education staff are relatively new to the University, and require more time, planning, and energy to educate students and staff regarding the services offered. Since there are many departments doing leadership programming across campus, communication and consistency can be challenging. Leadership Education staff are working to provide more consistency through the Leadership Competency project, but with only two staff members progress can be slow.

Service Learning
UK supports service-learning courses throughout its undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs. Service-Learning and community engagement are integral parts of, and are incorporated widely into, the current UK Strategic Plan (2015-2020). Almost 100 service-learning courses were identified in a campus-wide 2017 survey and an additional 285 community-based courses. Among initiatives started in 2017 was the creation of a Service-Learning and Civic Engagement Center jointly coordinated by staff from the Office of Student Organizations and Activities (SOA) and faculty from Academic Enrichment (AE), both housed in Student and Academic Life (SAL). The Center provides resources to faculty, students, staff, and community partners to facilitate service-learning initiatives and course delivery. Specific programs targeting first-year students include the Alternative Service Break (ASB) program, experiential internship programs (EXP 396), and courses such as CIS 112 (Accelerated Composition & Communication) and SW 124 (Introduction to Social Services). Consistent measurement does not currently exist across these programs or courses.

There are no campus-wide information systems in place to track service-learning courses or activities. UK currently does not have systems in place to identify first-year students involved in service-learning or measure first-year learning outcomes associated with service-learning. Although learning outcomes are measured in individual courses, this data is not currently aggregated at the institutional level, though it could be with institutional support. Two existing sources for aggregated data are the Teacher Course Evaluations (TCEs) and the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) first-year student data.

Student Affairs Functions and Initiatives Other Than Residence Life
Students can join one or more of the 550+ student organizations that are registered with the Office of Student Organizations and Activities. They can find these organizations and opportunities on our online platform, BBNinvolved, or at the Involvement Fair that takes place in September and January.

The Office of Student Organizations and Activities offers a peer-to-peer involvement advising program for students who are interested in getting involved in campus-wide organizations but may not know how or where to start. Interested students can meet with a current student leader to learn more through an in-person appointment, phone call, or general information via email. Students may request an appointment by visiting getinvolved.uky.edu.

Other services include Academic Advisors, Career Services, Money Cats, and Transformative Learning. Academic advisors work collaboratively with students to guide each student towards educational goals that are consistent with their personal interests, values, and abilities and takes responsibility for assisting the students in making a successful transition and meeting academic program requirements. Students unsure of their major are encouraged to contact the Stuckert Career Center who can also provide a portfolio of career advising support. Money Cats is also available and is a Financial Wellness initiative geared toward engaging students in financial literacy programs and providing a place for peer mentorship. Transformative Learning is a centralized student support unit on campus that is a student’s one-stop shop for on-campus academic
resources, including Academic Preparation and Placement, The Study, Presentation UI, and Academic Coaching.

Opportunities - The Office of Student Involvement and Activities hopes to offer additional opportunities to showcase campus-wide organizations and provide more than the current one to two involvement fairs for meet and greet opportunities for organizations and students looking to get involved. All students have BBNvolved accounts which provides an opportunity for tracking event attendance and better analytics. The office is continuing to grow access to involvement advising and data collection.

Challenges - The Office of Student Organization and Activities’ online platform is primarily tracked by students’ self-reports. Registration requires a minimum of three group officers to be listed and are tracked in the system. However other members must self-report or be imported by the primary three officers to their organization’s online roster. Involvement Advising is a relatively new program, so it will take time to reach more students and educate students, faculty, and staff regarding this resource.

Residence Life
Residence Life (Res Life) tracks three learning outcomes for students. The first learning outcome is that all students (first year as well as continuing) have interaction/contact with faculty/staff outside of the classroom. They accomplish this through after office hours,’ hall-wide programming (faculty/staff participate in this), and LLP’s. Leadership Development is another product tracked by Residence Life. This is accomplished through student participation in Resident Student Associations and the NRHH-National Residence Hall Honorarium. The third outcome is Academic and Social Preparedness, which is tracked through Academic Referrals and regular connections. If a student shows risk factors (low HSRI/disengaged from community/multiple alerts), Residence Life refers the student to the four previously mentioned units on campus: Academic Advisor, Career Services, Money Cats and Transformative Learning. In addition, UK supports Resident Connections where each RA meets with all students on their floor three times a semester during critical dates such as the drop/add class period and the initial six weeks. Resident Directors (RDs) also reach out to students in crisis – either for unmet needs and/or for those students at risk for failing.

There are two student and two system assessment measures. A baseline assessment is completed prior to students moving into residence halls. At midterm, students are assessed again to see if Residence Life has successfully provided the previously mentioned opportunities. Another is a numerical tracking system through “MAXIENT” – which tracks contacts that come through the Referral Process and RD meetings, frequently used for connections and communications with at-risk students. The final measurement is more qualitative assessments which are based on conversations that RAs have with students where Residence Life staff, students, and faculty select ‘themes’ (conflict resolution, homesickness, academic anxiety) that are consistent across the residence halls and address these together.

As stated previously, Residence Life will kick off a “residential curriculum” in fall semester 2018 to promote learning within University residences. This is a new initiative to structure intentional learning opportunities and is sequenced to coincide with student movement through the residential and/or educational experience. Student learning is constructed from month-to-month and from year-to year, as each learning opportunity builds on prior experiences.
Out-of-Class Activities Linked to Academic Programs or Courses

There are no campus-wide information systems in place to track out-of-class activities which are linked to academic courses or programs. Out-of-class activities for first year students at UK may include service-learning or community-based programs within academic courses, experiential (EXP) courses, or education abroad programs, as well as internships. Some UK colleges provide orientation programs for first year students such as the College of Arts and Sciences, College of Design, and College of Fine Arts.

The Student Government Association (SGA) has developed a Leadership Development Program (LDP) for first-year students that is dedicated to building future community leaders, through networking activities, receptions, dinners, and resume workshops. Greek Life also provides opportunities for freshman to gain leadership experiences.

Several other out-of-class experiences exist, such as The Study, the centralized peer tutoring center that operates in parallel with college-specific tutoring programs (such as the General Chemistry Learning Center, or LEAP – Lab for Economics & Accounting Proficiency – at the Gatton Business College). Presentation U provides student support in communication (oral, visual, and written). The Writing Center also provides one-on-one writing support. The Center for Academic Resources and Enrichment Services (CARES) supports academic achievement among underrepresented students including a summer program, as well as workshops, counseling, study groups/tutoring, and midterm grade checks. UK’s Student Support Services (SSS) assists students who are first-generation, low-income, or have a documented disability. SSS includes tutoring, math and writing instruction, study skills classes, workshops, and podcasts. UK’s Disability Resource Center provides support services for persons with disabilities including special accommodations and consultation services.

Summary of institutional resources and evidence

1. **First-Year Seminar**
   All retention data below is from the fall semester 2016 cohort, measuring retention on a fall-to-fall basis, and measuring students who enrolled in UK 101. This data reveals:
   - Students who enrolled in UK 101 were retained at 84.1% compared to those not enrolled in the course at 82.4%.

   Retention by Demographic Data for UK 101 (all information below found in Tableau) suggest:
   - For underrepresented minority students:
     No course: 72.1% retention // Took course: 82.4% // Passed course 84.2%
   - First-generation students:
     No course: 67.7% // Took course: 72.4% // Passed course 74.3%
   - Pell-eligible students:
     No course: 76.2% // Took course: 78.2% // Passed course 80.2%

2. **Learning Communities**
   Please see LLP retention document #79.

3. **Leadership Programs and Courses**
   The Leadership Competencies documents shows the competencies the Leadership Education program will be measuring within each of their existing programs and how they will be assessed.

4. **Service-Learning**
   A new Program Director for Civic Engagement position was established to promote and facilitate new service-learning and civic-engagement initiatives on campus. New initiatives include a resource website being created, service-learning course identification (via survey), service-learning teaching resources being made available online including publication opportunities, the creation of a Kentucky-wide nonprofit database, and UK-based workshops (ServeLearnConnect.uky.edu). A pilot
program to introduce service-learning into the UK 101 optional curriculum has been approved for fall semester 2018.

5. **Student Affairs Functions and Initiatives Other Than Residence Life**

OrgSync is an online platform where students can connect to campus organizations, programs, and departments. It is home to all of our 500+ student organizations and helps them manage their organizations, while also providing an easy way for student to get connected to them.

6. **Residence Life**

Learning outcomes are measured through baseline surveys conducted prior to student move-in to residence halls, and then again at midterm of the first semester. Students are also tracked through MAXIENT which helps identify at-risk students. Qualitative assessments are also conducted through one-on-one conversations between RAs and students.

7. **Out-of-Class Activities Linked to Academic Courses or Programs**

A course catalog of community-based courses is accessible online (ServeLearnConnect.uky.edu).

**Recommendations**

1. **High-impact practice for each first-year student** - The committee strongly recommends that the University incentivize and track each first-year student to complete one high-impact practice during their first year at UK. High-impact practices could include living in an LLP, taking UK 101 (or related college first-year course), completing an internship or service-learning course, joining a student organization, or performing 20 hours of community service. Completion of activities could be tracked through BBNvolved (the planned replacement to Orgsync online May 2018). We also recommend students complete a second high-impact practice within their four years at UK, with an emphasis on participating in a second high-impact practice during their second year. - **High Priority**

2. **Add visibility to academic advisors on student involvement** - Add additional fields/tab in the SAP Advising Hub for advisors to review student involvement or participation in co-curricular programming, such as in LLPs, student organizations, fraternity/sorority life, The Study, departmental learning centers, Moneycats, etc. This information may help advisors have a more comprehensive view of their students’ involvement, and to flag students who are not involved. - **High Priority**

3. **Service-learning course tracking system** - Create an automated tracking system within the Registrar’s Office or elsewhere to track all courses as well as evaluate their effectiveness. - **High Priority**

4. **Co-Curricular Transcript** - Explore the development of a co-curricular transcript which documents students’ educational experiences that take place outside of the classroom, provides a more holistic view of a student's skills and abilities, and increases students' marketability to prospective employers and graduate schools. - **Low Priority**
Recommended Grade & Rationale

Recommended Grade: C

Rationale: While our Learning Dimension Team rated our institution “high” in Performance Indicators 3.4 and 3.5 as well as two aspects of 3.6, we rated our institution “very low” in one aspect of PI 3.1 and “low” in PI 3.2, 3.3 and in multiple aspects of 3.6.

Recommendations for Action

1. The University should identify first-year learning goals and objectives (FYGOs), embed those goals and objectives into required classes taken by first-year students, assess the effectiveness of such efforts, and engage CELT and other University resources to enrich the delivery of this approach. - The FYGOs should be consistent with the mission of this University as the state’s flagship research and teaching institution and be in line with the national consensus on what constitutes a premium first-year college experience. In distilling the FYGOs from the goals of the UK Core, the essential learning outcomes of the AAC&U and the goals of UK 101 seem reasonable. Care should be taken, however, to select goals and outcomes that are both achievable and assessable as natural components of the courses that students take during their first year. FYGOs must be embedded within multiple courses taken during their first two semesters at UK, ensuring that no one subject shoulders all the load. All targeted courses should embed the most appropriate FYGOs into their normal curriculum. Given the diversity of degree majors at UK, this will be a challenge and will require an analysis of the first-year curriculum of all UK students to identify a suite of courses that would ensure the exposure of all entering students to the FYGOs. Models for this currently exist in BIO 148 and CHE 105, which are first-year courses taken by many students in STEM programs at UK and which are designed to promote the development of soft skills and assist with the transition from high school to college. The incorporation of first-year learning goals into required courses within programs will require consultation with departments and the provision of resources to support department/program efforts to enhance the effectiveness of their first year/gateway courses. - High Priority

2. Engaged learning pedagogies - Develop a campus-wide initiative to identify, develop, implement, and assess the use of pedagogies which facilitate engaged learning activities among or between courses and non-academic activities, as well as provide first-year students with high-impact experiences. This initiative should include a review of new faculty orientations and TA training to ensure knowledge of engaged learning pedagogies are included as a focus area. Development of a strategic communication plan which ensures members of the campus community are aware of resources, workshops, training tools, etc. available through CELT, Presentation U, and Transformative Learning to enhance pedagogy and instructional methods focused on engaged learning. The University Senate-approved syllabus template should be revisited to include a focus on
high-impact experiences which supports engaged learning. A formal evaluation of engaged learning pedagogies which includes data related to instructional formats used in high DEW courses (e.g., traditional lecture, seminar, blended and online learning) should be included in unit self-study reports for continuous improvement. Develop a pilot program for course evaluations targeted high DEW courses which includes additional questions to seek feedback from students related to pedagogy and instructional methods used to enhance engaged learning. - *High Priority*

3. **Targeted intervention for high-risk students in first attempt, along with intervention before second attempt** - At the opening of term, identify students with one or more designated DEW risk factors (e.g., low HSRI, Pell Grant, URM, first generation, gender) for that particular course. Do targeted, one-to-one or small-group outreach with these students regarding resource use and success tracking (form to be determined by department). Prior to the second attempt at a course, students must either: a) complete the LASSI (learning skills inventory) and an academic coaching session (through Academic Enhancement) by the last day to add a course for the semester, b) complete a lower-level prerequisite course, or c) complete another supplemental course as determined by the academic department where the course is offered. Requirements will vary by course. The department can make exceptions based on individual student circumstance. - *High Priority*

4. **Follow up to assess effectiveness of placement** - Evaluate performance of students in their initial course. Determine if there is agreement between placement standards and courses. Determine if placement instruments (such as placement tests) are effective. Determine if additional information is available to help correctly place students. The Departments teaching the students must be involved in discussions about placement. - *High Priority*

5. **High-impact practice for each first-year student** - Strongly recommend, incentivize, and track each first-year student to complete one high-impact practice during their first year at UK. High-impact practices could include living in an LLP, taking UK 101 (or related college first-year course), completing an internship or service-learning course, joining a student organization, or performing 20 hours of community service. Completion of activities could be tracked through BBNvolved (the planned replacement to Orgsync that will be online by May 2018). We also recommend students complete a second high-impact practice within their four years at UK, with an emphasis on participating in a second high-impact practice during their second year. - *High Priority*
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>K Week and Move-in Survey Fall 2017.pdf</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>National Resource Center FYE - potential outcomes</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>National Research Center - FYE potential outcomes</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Seven Characteristics of Successful Calculus Programs</td>
<td>David Bressoud and Chris Rasmussen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Insights and recommendations from the MAA National Study of College Calculus</td>
<td>Editors: David Bressoud, Vilma Mesa, Chris Rasmussen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Mathematics placement tests and gender bias</td>
<td>Celine D'Souza Dorner and Ivan Hutton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Best Practices in the First Year _Matthews.pdf</td>
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<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>CHE 105 comparisons.pdf</td>
<td>Jesse Hedge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>DEWF comparisons.pdf</td>
<td>Jesse Hedge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61</td>
<td>Competencies Overview.pdf</td>
<td>Alli Lake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62</td>
<td>Lead Edu Overview.docx</td>
<td>Alli Lake</td>
</tr>
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<td>63</td>
<td>Leadership Education Program Learning Outcomes.docx</td>
<td>Alli Lake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64</td>
<td>Student Leadership Competencies in Leadership Education Spring 2018.docx</td>
<td>Alli Lake</td>
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<tr>
<td>73</td>
<td>coreq-report-no-gpa.pdf</td>
<td>Russell Brown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79</td>
<td>LLP retention.docx</td>
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<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>College Readiness Indicators 2017-2018</td>
<td>CPE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82</td>
<td>CELT-Chellgren-AS-First-Year Learning Project Memo.docx</td>
<td>Cara Worick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96</td>
<td>Learning3.2_CELTcommunication.pdf</td>
<td>L Henry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>97</td>
<td>PIE_PR_Educational Unit_Self-Study Checklist (references)<em>Website.FINAL</em> (1).pdf</td>
<td>UK Institutional Effectiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>98</td>
<td>UK 101 Retention Data.pdf</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>99</td>
<td>UK 101 Program Information</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>UK Core program home page</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101</td>
<td>Information on CELT at UK</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>106</td>
<td>Faculty Fellows</td>
<td>Julie Bradley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>107</td>
<td>UK 101 Retention.Subgroups.pdf</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>108</td>
<td>University of Kentucky - Dimension Report for Learning, first draft for DK review.docx</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>109</td>
<td>Does Professor Quality Matter? Evidence from Random Assignment of Students to Professors</td>
<td>Scott Carrell, James West</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>122</td>
<td>DEW Demographics from 14-17 First-Year Only GRS 041718.docx</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>123</td>
<td>APPENDIX 1 DFWI Rates for Selected Courses.docx</td>
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<tr>
<td>124</td>
<td>Cohort Demographics-F17_LLP.pdf</td>
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Foundations Institutions make the first college year a high priority for the faculty.

These institutions are characterized by a culture of faculty responsibility for the first year that is realized through high-quality instruction in first-year classes and substantial interaction between faculty and first-year students both inside and outside the classroom. This culture of responsibility is nurtured by chief academic officers, deans, and department chairs, and supported by the institutions' reward systems.

Executive Summary

As we surveyed the instructional landscape of the first-year experience at the University of Kentucky, the Faculty Dimension committee determined that the University brings considerable intentionality to the teaching of first-year students. While high-quality programs are in place at the department, college, and campus level, greater coordination among and visibility to these efforts would enhance the climate for the first-year experience and nurture our culture of shared responsibility. At a university as decentralized as UK, communication and coordination will be key to implementing the recommendations of this report. Additionally, we need to create a reward structure for faculty that reflects the value the University places on the first-year experience.

The committee considered carefully the findings of multiple sources of evidence: the Faculty Survey developed by the Gardner Institute for Undergraduate Excellence, surveys of directors of undergraduate studies and departmental chairs, and lists of first-year course instructors. While we present information from all of these sources in this report, we also carefully considered the limitations and reliability of the data. For example, faculty at the University did not play a role in developing the questions included in the Gardner Faculty Survey. The reliability and validity of these items is unknown, and at face value some of the survey items appeared to be written with language that might lead the respondent to a specific response. In addition, only 35% of the survey respondents who answered our performance indicators designated that they hold a faculty rank, while 28.1% indicated they were professional staff who have teaching responsibilities. All conclusions drawn from this survey and our additional sources of evidence need to be considered in context of these limitations and the limited time frame of this exercise.
Faculty Dimension Committee

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<tr>
<td>Kim Anderson</td>
<td>Faculty &amp; Gill Eminent Professor, Chemical and Materials Engineering, Engineering Project Coordinator</td>
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<td>Lisa Blue</td>
<td>Faculty &amp; Lecturer, Chemistry Faculty Tutor Coordinator for the General and Organic Chemistry Learning Centers, Lewis Honors College Faculty</td>
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<td>Bob Bradley</td>
<td>Associate Athletic Director of Student Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sarah Cprek</td>
<td>Faculty &amp; Lecturer, Director of Undergraduate Studies, Health, Behavior, and Society</td>
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<td>Allyson DeVito</td>
<td>Faculty &amp; Lecturer, College of Communication and Information</td>
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<td>Holly Hapke</td>
<td>Faculty &amp; Senior Lecturer, Gatton College of Business and Economics</td>
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<td>Rachel Hill</td>
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<td>Hayley Hoffman</td>
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<td>Nels Rogers</td>
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Narrative on General Situation and Findings

This section has two parts: 3.1 provides a summary of the findings and discussions for each of the four indicators provided; 3.2 provides an overall summary that integrates many of the findings from each of the sub-committees.

3.1 Summary and Findings by Performance Indicator

Our faculty dimension committee was divided into four sub-committees, each of which addressed one of the performance indicators below. This section includes a summary of the discussions and findings of each of the subcommittees. A subset of committee members offered feedback on a draft of this report and met to prioritize recommendations.

3.1.1 The Importance of the First Year – Rating 2.5 (scale of 1 to 5)
To what degree does the institution make the first year a priority for teaching assignments, for resource allocation, by rewarding high-quality instruction, by rewarding out-of-class interaction with first-year students, and by rewarding faculty excellence in advising first-year students*?

*Note: At UK, faculty are not generally involved in the advising of first-year students.

Evidence: In addition to reviewing and discussing the relevant questions from the Gardner Faculty Survey (Document 81), this subcommittee surveyed the Directors of Undergraduate Studies in the College of Arts and Sciences. This College was selected because it provides a majority of instruction for first-year students, campus wide. The Directors of Undergraduate Studies were asked to help identify courses in their programs that first-year students take, as well as what, if anything, they do to interact with students during the first semester of college (Document 112). They also provided the titles of the individuals who instruct first-year courses (Document 114). Finally, this material was supplemented with commentary and clarification from the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs, Dr. Anna Bosch.

While it would have been beneficial to survey directors of undergraduate studies from programs across campus that enroll large numbers of undergraduate students (e.g., Engineering, Agriculture, and Business), the condensed timeline of this project did not allow for that breadth of analysis. The committee kept this limitation in mind when discussing their findings.

Teaching assignments and resource allocation

Overall, there seems to be increasing value placed on teaching first-year students and intentionally advising students toward classes where they will be successful. In the College of Arts and Sciences, for example, department chairs are required to provide three things:

1. A commitment to placing their best instructors (as defined by the departmental chairs) into 100-level and/or UK Core courses. In many departments (Biology, Math, WRD), this means that dedicated teaching faculty or instructors trained in first-year teaching teach the majority of first-year students (see Document 114)
2. A list of courses/sections restricted to first-year students (e.g. a particular section of PSY 100)
3. A list of courses/sections recommended for first-year students

These lists are shared with A&S advisors prior to “see blue.” U advising conferences.

The College also collects data on first-year success rates, and on APP success rates in certain UK Core classes. From that information, the Dean’s Office develops a list of recommended courses for entering underprepared students (as defined by the students’ college readiness index), with the expectation that those students will be able to succeed in these courses. This list is shared with advisors, and advisors share it with students.

Finally, every department also submits to the College a list of one-to-three courses that they want their incoming first-year majors to take. Prior to “see blue.” U advising conferences, the College pre-schedules and cohort-schedules students into these recommended courses. In Biology, for example, as many as five courses may be cohort-scheduled; in English (which has a much more flexible curriculum) there may be only two (an English-major-targeted section of WRD 110, plus a 100-level “introduction to the English major” course for all entering first-years). Many of our entering students are cohort-scheduled into UKC 180, a
“Currents” course that links disciplinary study to current events. Students always have the option to drop pre-scheduled/ cohort-scheduled courses, but the College has found that students are usually happy to follow these recommendations.

While colleges make an intentional effort to put successful teachers into first-year courses, the strategies vary across campus. Courses aimed at first-year students in departments such as WRD and Hispanic Studies are primarily taught by graduate teaching assistants (as is true nationally in research-intensive universities). However, individual sections are capped at 23 students in WRD 110, 111, and 112. Teaching Assistants in these two areas receive pedagogical training prior to teaching these courses for the first time. Science courses tend to use graduate teaching assistants in a laboratory setting and a faculty member or instructor in “lecture” courses. Smaller departments appear to have more meaningful interactions with first-year students, perhaps attributed to the lower student to faculty ratio. Dedicated lecturers known for their teaching prowess play a significant role in instructing first-year students in some of the large departments and colleges, such as Engineering, Biology, Chemistry, and Math. Providing said lecturers for first-year courses seems to be an effective strategy; retention has been improved when faculty were hired specifically to teach first-year Engineering students. Whereas the majority of departments and colleges rely on part-time instructors, the committee stressed that those contingent faculty should be closely evaluated before re-hiring and rewarded if merited.

On the departmental level, training and coordination between course sections at the 100-level is extensive. For example, CIS and WRD instructors participate in a more involved training program before teaching first-year students. Math, Chemistry, and Biology courses are coordinated by a dedicated faculty member to ensure continuity between sections of first-year courses. However, faculty participating in the Wildcat Foundations meetings indicated that large class sizes can pose an obstacle to interacting with first-year students in a meaningful way.

**Rewarding high-quality instruction**

The Colleges and University recognize excellent teaching with individual awards to faculty and graduate students. On the university level, we award teaching prizes for various ranks and in various categories. Colleges also offer college-level teaching awards for both faculty and teaching assistants. For example, the College of Arts and Sciences has developed additional awards - Teaching Large Classes, Innovative Teaching, Excellence in Mentoring Undergraduates, and Teacher(s) of the Year - which indicate the value placed in first-year teaching. The Gatton College of Business and Economics similarly rewards excellent teaching in an annual ceremony; to our knowledge, there are currently no awards in that college specifically for teaching first-year students. However, Gatton’s Teaching Excellence Team does partner with the Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning (CELT) and offers pedagogical development for faculty throughout the year. While some colleges have rewarded the individual department’s “best teachers” with additional raises, good teaching is not systematically rewarded at the university (see recommendations). The committee stresses that structural inequalities continue to create a pay gap between lecturers and tenure-track faculty. While the working conditions and pay for full-time lecturers has improved over time, lecturers (who teach a disproportionate share of introductory-level courses) often report feeling unappreciated and unrecognized for their value to the institution. One strategy is to recognize the pivotal role played by lecturers with better pay and a larger promotional increment.

**Rewarding out-of-class interactions with students**

According to the Student Survey (question 27), 44.5 percent of students perceived that the University had not connected them with faculty members outside of class. Given the limited timeframe of the Foundations task, we cannot reach definitive conclusions regarding the validity of these results. While it is clear that students surveyed do not perceive an abundance of out-of-class contact with faculty, faculty do, to varying extents, participate in K Week, serve as faculty mentors to the LLPs, serve as faculty advisors to student organizations, and sponsor out-of-class activities in various majors. We are not aware of a structure in place
to reward faculty out-of-class interactions with students. The Faculty Survey did not include a question on this topic, so we hesitate to offer a definitive conclusion.

3.1.2 Campus Level Engagement – Rating 2.5 (scale of 1 to 5)

To what degree do senior academic leaders encourage the use of effective pedagogies, understanding campus-wide learning goals, understanding the characteristics of first year students and issues they face?

Evidence: This subcommittee reviewed relevant survey responses from the Faculty Survey (Document 112).

Strengths

The Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning (CELT) offers a significant array of workshops, academies, symposia, and faculty learning communities aimed at increasing the use of effective pedagogies in classes with high enrollment numbers of first-year students. For example, Document 82 summarizes the CELT/Chellgren/Arts and Sciences First-Year Learning Project. As part of this Project in 2015, the campus launched an annual symposium for faculty teaching first-year students and facilitated three year-long faculty learning communities that focused on themes relevant to faculty teaching first-year students. In addition, CELT offers a New Faculty Teaching Academy that includes workshops on effective pedagogical strategies and also partners with the Graduate School to offer a campus-wide orientation for new teaching assistants.

Areas for Improvement

Relevant survey responses were somewhat negative. For example, only 31% of faculty surveyed agree or strongly agree with the statement that they “understand this institution’s intended educational goals for the first year of college.” In addition, most faculty are not given information on the demographics of the students they teach, and very few of the surveyed instructors engage in professional development related to first-year experiences.

The committee discussed the current state and potential constraints of faculty engagement in university-level activities involving first-year students. They asked about the degree to which faculty participate (and are invited to participate) in such activities as Merit Weekend, “see blue.” U summer advising conferences, Preview Nights/UK and You events, and various first-year programs (e.g., work with first-generation students, tutoring and academic coaching, Living Learning Programs, college-specific student success initiatives, etc.) The general sentiment is that UK continues to embrace, perhaps unintentionally, a ‘two worlds’ model: the world of student life, and the world of classes and instruction, with faculty working predominantly in the latter with little contact with the former.

3.1.3 Unit Level Engagement – Rating 3 (scale of 1 to 5)

To what degree do unit-level administrators encourage the use of engaging pedagogies, understanding unit-level learning goals, and discipline-specific trends relating to entry-level courses?

Evidence: This sub-committee investigated the relevant Faculty Survey responses (Document #81) and survey responses from chairs of departments that teach large numbers of first-year students (Document #112).
**Strengths**

Relevant survey responses were generally favorable. Many departments at the University of Kentucky have invested significant resources in teaching first-year students. Training for first-year instructors and coordination across sections of the same course is valued in most departments. In some units, much first-year instruction is intentionally concentrated in the hands of full-time lecturers (for example, within the first-year Engineering program) and/or Special Title Series faculty. The degree to which tenure-track Regular Title Series faculty directly participate in first-year instruction varies widely across units. There is evidence in the Faculty Survey that many faculty members, instructors, and teaching assistants have been trained in the use of engaging pedagogies, and such methods are being incorporated in many departments across campus.

**Areas for Improvement**

Learning outcomes, content, and, to a certain extent, modes of instruction, should be the product of broader deliberation and agreement at the department-level, combined with evidence-based evaluation. This is beginning to happen, but a collective and recurring discussion about teaching goals and means is imperative. Departments, colleges, and the University more generally need to think/discuss/implement better ways of coping with the “research first” mentality that is understandably - and perhaps inevitably - the default setting at a research institution like UK. In part, making such improvements is a matter of making collective time to think and talk about undergraduate instruction as a foundational mission that takes everyone’s time and effort to continually improve.

First-year engagement should be a bottom-up exercise with significant support from upper-level administration. Improvements will require an intentional plan with support, evaluation, and rewards (see recommendations). If we can develop a better culture of instructional sharing at the department and college level, good ideas/best practices will percolate up. Discussions should focus locally, with dean’s offices/Student and Academic Life (SAL) helping to inventory and disseminate strong ideas and best practices, while CELT continues to do its excellent work with faculty across campus.

A good example of best practices is the first-year program in Engineering. The next steps there should focus on bringing related disciplines (Math, Chemistry, Physics) into more regular and purposeful connections. Colleges should also explore ways of encouraging more instructional dialogue across disciplines in which most learning outcomes are likely to bear a fairly close resemblance (e.g. English and History and Philosophy; Sociology and Anthropology and Geography). A robust federalism is the best way forward, but we also need to be focused on promoting instructional dialogue across disciplines/departments/colleges, as doing so is obviously beneficial.

**3.1.4 Expectations for Teaching First Year Students** – Rating 2.5 (scale of 1 to 5)

*To what degree are expectations for involvement with first-year students clearly communicated with new and continuing faculty and part-time/adjunct instructors?*

*Evidence:* This sub-committee reviewed the appropriate faculty survey responses (Document# 81) and qualitative survey results from department chairs (Document #112).
The University has made some improvements in conveying expectations for teaching first-year students. These efforts may be hampered, however, by a lack of a clear guiding philosophy for teaching first-year students.

**Strengths**
The University has conveyed the importance of submitting academic alerts and we have a new alert system in place to inform academic advisors when students are struggling. Some departments/programs (ex: CIS, WRD) have training/professional development for instructors teaching first-year students. In addition, during UK 101 orientation student demographic information is shared with instructors and the critical nature of the first year is clearly communicated.

**Areas of Improvement**
There are clear areas in need of growth. The relevant survey data are largely negative. Approximately 60% of respondents do not think expectations have been clearly conveyed in position descriptions, the hiring process, or at new faculty orientations. In addition, there is no required training or professional development (that we are aware of) for new adjunct instructors. Finally, while we have focused on issues regarding retention and high DEW rates, there has been very little communication of expectations regarding a philosophy of teaching from the top down.

This subcommittee discussed the possibility that expectations may not be being clearly communicated because there is no clear guiding philosophy. Our hope is that the Philosophy Dimension Report will provide guidance in this area. Despite a lack of guidance regarding expectations, we see evidence of great things happening “on the ground.” For example, student survey data indicates that students are largely very satisfied with their classroom experiences. We hope the best practices already being employed in many of our classrooms will be shared with members of higher administration, who can then help distribute this information across campus.

**3.2 Integrated Summary**

**Institutional Level**
Based on the Faculty Survey, faculty perceive that our institution is committed to the success and retention of new students. For example, the importance of submitting academic alerts has been clearly communicated with faculty. However, despite the visibility of the CELT/Arts and Sciences/Chellgren First-Year Learning Project, most instructors who responded to the Faculty Survey report that they do not participate in conferences or workshops focusing on the first year. Our recommendations include attention to incentivizing professional development focused on first-year instruction. Instructors who completed the Faculty Survey indicate that excellence in teaching first-year students is not rewarded by institution leaders. In addition, assessment and demographic data are largely not communicated to instructors of first-year students and many faculty do not understand the institution’s intended educational goals and philosophy for teaching first-year students. Expectations for involvement with first-year students, for the most part, are not conveyed in position descriptions, candidate interviews, or new faculty orientation.
Unit Level
Unit-level indicators are largely positive. We see evidence of great things happening in many departments across campus. For example, some units are placing their best instructors in first-year courses, and coordination and training in multi-section courses is robust. Based on the Student Survey, most students are satisfied with what happens inside the classroom. Faculty involvement with first-year students is valued by both department leaders and colleagues. Specific learning goals have been developed for many gateway courses, and there is a large degree of coordination between instructors of first-year courses.

Who is teaching our first-year students
Much of the University’s first-year instruction is concentrated in a few departments – the top three being Math (4129); Writing (2373); and Composition & Communication (1589); followed by Chemistry (2243); Biology (1965); and Psychology (1519). In many departments, teaching first-year students is intentionally concentrated in the hands of full-time lecturers (for example: in the first-year Engineering program, within Biology coursework) and/or Special Title Series faculty. The degree to which Regular Title Series faculty directly participate in first-year instruction varies widely across units. The use of part-time instructors also varies across units. For example, WRD hires four part-time instructors per year and Chemistry has five part-time instructors teaching CHE 105. Math has permanent faculty supervising most of their introductory courses, but the substantial number of students each instructor teaches hampers efforts to enact large-scale changes. Training and orientations for instructors varies across departments. Many departments are strong in this area. For example, CIS has an intensive training for instructors of their entry-level courses.

Involvement outside the classroom
The world of student life and the world of classes and instruction seem to overlap in only limited circumstances (with faculty leaders of Living Learning Communities being one example of successful overlap). In many cases, though, faculty have little contact with the world of “student life.” There is very little incentive for faculty to interact with students outside the classroom or communicate with student life staff and administrators. Our recommendations include suggestions regarding how to better bridge this divide.

Recommended Grade & Rationale
Based on our analysis of the quantitative data from the first-year survey and qualitative data collected by the committee, we conclude that the University of Kentucky is doing a slightly-above average job (Grade: B-) at cultivating a culture of faculty responsibility for first-year students both inside and outside of the classroom. Our analysis revealed that some colleges, academic departments and faculty are doing an outstanding job, while others have continued maintaining the status quo within their departments. It is the goal of this committee to offer suggestions to help raise the performance of all units so as to better mirror the successes of our best units.
Recommendations for Action

The committee offers a group of recommendations we believe will foster a culture of faculty responsibility for first-year students based on survey results, supporting evidence, and the knowledge and experiences of the committee members.

As mentioned in Section 3, our Faculty Dimension Committee was divided into four subcommittees; each investigated one performance indicator (importance of the first year, campus-level encouragement, unit-level encouragement, and expectations). Each subcommittee prioritized recommendations that addressed their performance indicator, and a subset of our committee (with representatives from each subcommittee) met to prioritize and synthesize the recommendations of each subcommittee.

1. Encourage and facilitate communication between faculty and graduate students teaching first-year students, institutional research members, and administrators

Specifically, we should:

a. Encourage pedagogical engagement

1. Facilitate conversations between instructors of first-year students (faculty, instructors, and teaching assistants) in related disciplines to regularly share best practices for teaching first-year students, including active learning, problem-based learning, undergraduate research, and service learning. Teaching assistants should be mentored beyond the training at the Graduate School’s TA orientation. Faculty in Regular Title Series that teach in higher-level classes should also be part of the broader conversation in order to connect first-year instruction to the full undergraduate experience. - High Priority

2. Continue the First-Year Learning Project with CELT, Arts and Sciences, and Chellgren and provide financial support and personnel for the continuation of the First-Year Learning Project. This would include an annual symposium dedicated toward sharing challenges and opportunities for teaching first-year students, fully-funded faculty learning communities, and dedicated workshops for instructors teaching our first-year students. - High Priority

3. Create an inventory of high-impact practices and teaching wisdom and disseminate these practices to instructors teaching first-year students, including active learning, problem-based learning, undergraduate research, and service learning to instructors of upper-level courses. - Medium Priority

4. Create a centralized website for faculty interested in bridging the gap between their central role as educators to the greater college life experience. Examples include opportunities for engagement via K-Week, Merit Weekend, “see blue.” U summer advising conferences, Preview Nights/UK and You events, Living Learning Programs, and college-specific initiatives. - Medium Priority

b. Disseminate demographic information - Develop a method of collecting and deploying demographic reports on our first-year students before entry, during the first year, and at the end of the first year to influence faculty approaches to pedagogy. Instructors should receive a “class profile” that summarizes the demographic characteristics of their students. - High Priority
c. **Develop a resource website for faculty and students** - Create a one-stop resource website that is regularly updated for faculty and students, especially so that faculty may direct students in need (i.e., financial resources, student health, medical and behavioral resources, accommodations, tutoring, campus involvement, etc.) to the appropriate resource(s) quickly and efficiently. - *Medium Priority*

2. **Support professional development opportunities for individuals who teach first-year students**
   a. **Encourage pedagogical and professional development** - Support faculty attendance at conferences, publication of research, and awareness of other institutions’ practices at UK. Create targeted professional development opportunities specifically for part-time and adjunct instructors. Efforts may include continuing the budget for faculty learning communities, offering badges or certification for completion of professional development activities, and initiating a matching travel grant fund for pedagogical and professional development activities. Develop a mechanism to facilitate sharing of knowledge gained to the larger campus community. - *High Priority*

   b. **Support graduate student training** - Graduate students play a pivotal role on campus in teaching first-year students. New initiatives from a Graduate School-CELT partnership offering more in-depth training for graduate students should be funded and encouraged. - *High Priority*

   c. **Develop a professional development repository** - Provide a centralized professional development repository for faculty to learn about and continue professional development and incorporation of “advanced topics,” e.g., service learning in first-year courses. This would include CELT, Presentation U! Faculty Fellows, college-based teaching initiatives, and others. - *Medium Priority*

3. **Recognize the important work of first-year instructors**
   a. **Faculty/instructors who teach a disproportionate share of the introductory courses should be recognized for their central contribution to the undergraduate mission** - This recognition may include the development of teaching awards for first-year student teaching and funding for professional development activities. - *High Priority*

   b. **Continue to prioritize high-quality instruction for first-year students** - This is already the case in many units across campus. - *High Priority*

   c. **Analyze the reward structure to ensure that those instructors teaching first-year students are fairly compensated** - These efforts should include an analysis of the pay scale for lecturers who teach a large number of first-year students. - *High Priority*

4. **Gather and effectively disseminate analytics related to first-year student success**
   Data must be clearly and transparently communicated to the individuals who can use such information to effect change. For example, faculty should have input into the measures and what successful outcomes related to first-year student success look like. The institution must distribute the data to key individuals in a usable form and then help the faculty address the indicators that such data provides. Invest in communicating data on student learning to faculty. Work with faculty to incorporate this information into the classroom (with incentives, not penalties). - *High Priority*
Sources of Evidence

We have collected a large amount of evidence to support this report:

1. The University-wide Faculty Survey. In document #81 below, the responses to the relevant questions from the faculty survey were gathered and summarized.
2. We surveyed directors of undergraduate studies and departmental chairs, particularly in departments that teach large numbers of first-year students. Documents #112 and #113 below summarize the results.
3. We analyzed titles and training/experience of faculty/instructors who teach the majority of our first-year students. Document #114 below is a partial list.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Doc #</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>K Week and Move-in Survey Fall 2017.pdf</td>
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<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Best Practices in the First Year _Matthews.pdf</td>
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<tr>
<td>81</td>
<td>Faculty Dimension Committee _survey results.docx</td>
<td>Jennifer Osterhage</td>
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<tr>
<td>82</td>
<td>CELT-Chellgren-AS-First-Year Learning Project Memo.docx</td>
<td>Cara Worick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>109</td>
<td>Does Professor Quality Matter? Evidence from Random Assignment of Students to Professors</td>
<td>Scott Carrell, James West</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>112</td>
<td>DUS_ Survey results.docx</td>
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<tr>
<td>113</td>
<td>Chair Qualitative Survey Results.docx</td>
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<tr>
<td>114</td>
<td>partial list of first-year course instructors.xlsx</td>
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Foundations Institutions facilitate appropriate student transitions through policies and practices that are intentional and aligned with institutional mission.

Beginning with recruitment and admissions and continuing through the first year, institutions communicate clear curricular and co-curricular expectations and provide appropriate support for educational success. They are forthright about their responsibilities to students as well as students’ responsibilities to themselves and the institution. They create and maintain curricular alignments with secondary schools and linkages with secondary school personnel, families, and other sources of support, as appropriate.

Executive Summary

The Transitions Committee met as a group six times, for two hours each time, between February 5, 2018 and March 13, 2018. We heard presentations from university colleagues on topical areas related to the assignment of the committee, as well as internally debated and discussed the findings of the student and faculty/staff surveys. The committee members reviewed the current website through the lens of a constituent group, to assess the ease of accessing clear and transparent communication. After the information was gathered and shared, the committee rated each section of this dimension utilizing a Qualtrics survey. We reviewed the findings from this assessment and discussed if we felt there were still knowledge gaps we needed to address. Finally, members of the group formed subcommittees to address each specific area for strengths, weakness, opportunities, and suggestions for improvement and recommendations. The feedback from the entire group collected during our collective meetings, and the reports of the individual subcommittees, served as the reference for the final report. Reports from the subcommittees to the co-chairs was sent March 26th and a draft report was sent to the committee in a Google document for edits to be made prior to the final draft being submitted. The final draft was again circulated for any feedback prior to submission in the Foundations system.

Transitions Dimension Committee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daphne Arnold</td>
<td>Resident Director, Residence Life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarah Ballard</td>
<td>University Advising Coordinator, Student and Academic Life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stephen Barnett</td>
<td>Associate Director, Advising Conference and Residency</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ruth Beattie</td>
<td>Associate Dean, College of Arts and Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kim Beatty</td>
<td>Freshman Counselor, CARES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dennis Bender</td>
<td>Faculty, College of Fine Arts</td>
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<td>Name</td>
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<tr>
<td>Whitney Blackburn-Lynch</td>
<td>Faculty, College of Engineering</td>
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<tr>
<td>Taylor Blair</td>
<td>Director, Visitor Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christine Blank</td>
<td>Director of Living Learning Programs, College of Arts and Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renee Bonzani</td>
<td>Faculty &amp; Lecturer, Department of Anthropology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kasey Borchardt</td>
<td>Senior Program Specialist, First-Year Experience</td>
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<tr>
<td>Christy Brady</td>
<td>Faculty &amp; Lecturer, Health Management and Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reba Carroll</td>
<td>Assistant Director, Stuckert Career Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandy Copher</td>
<td>Enrollment Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faith Cracraft</td>
<td>Academic Advisor, Gatton College of Business and Economics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matthew Deffendall</td>
<td>Major Exploratory Associate, Stuckert Career Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelley Duncklee</td>
<td>Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamie Dunn</td>
<td>Assistant Dean for Advising and Student Support, CAFE Center for Student Success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suanne Early</td>
<td>Staff, College of Communication and Information</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stephen Erena</td>
<td>Academic Advisor, College of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michelle Garth</td>
<td>Director of Admissions Operations, Enrollment Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christine Gildersleeve</td>
<td>Department Manager Associate, Department of Chemistry</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kathryn Gould</td>
<td>Care Coordinator/Crisis Clinician, Counseling Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danielle Green-Hinkle</td>
<td>Academic Advisor, Electrical and Computer Engineer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lesli Hall</td>
<td>Exploratory &amp; Pre-professional Advisor, CAFE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seth Hall</td>
<td>International Academic Coordinator, International Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carol Hanley</td>
<td>Associate Director, Ag International Programs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Christine Harper, Chair</td>
<td>Associate Provost, Enrollment Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ashley Hinton</td>
<td>Director, Wellness Programming</td>
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<tr>
<td>Micaha Hughes</td>
<td>Assistant Director of Recruitment and Female Initiatives, College of Engineering</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nicki Jenkins</td>
<td>Senior Program Specialist for the Parent and Family Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenyatta Jeter</td>
<td>Resident Director, Residence Life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashley Jones</td>
<td>Assistant Director for Student Government, Student Organizations and Activities</td>
</tr>
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<td>Jessica Jones-Bowman</td>
<td>Student Services Program Specialist, Undergraduate Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicole Keenan</td>
<td>Director of Student Success and Development, College of Pharmacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rachel Kreppert</td>
<td>Undergraduate Student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jennifer Lovely</td>
<td>Academic Advisor, Student Affairs Officer, First Year Engineering - Chemical and Materials Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martina Martin</td>
<td>Associate Director, Student Success Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicholas Nguyen</td>
<td>Lecturer, Department of Mathematics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stephanie O'Donnell</td>
<td>Resident Director, Residence Life</td>
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<tr>
<td>Laura Prather</td>
<td>Academic Advisor, Gatton College of Business and Economics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sara Price</td>
<td>Director of Transfer Admissions, Enrollment Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seth Riker</td>
<td>Marketing and Communication Manager, College of Agriculture, Food, and Environment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marcia Shrout</td>
<td>Special Initiatives, Student and Academic Support</td>
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<tr>
<td>Logan Sparks</td>
<td>Recruiter, Enrollment Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nancy Stephens, Chair</td>
<td>Associate Director, Transition and First-Year Programs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ryan Story</td>
<td>Academic Advisor, College of Communication and Information</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aaron Vaught</td>
<td>Transfer Advisor, Transfer Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shari Veil</td>
<td>Associate Dean for Undergraduate Affairs, College of Communication and Information</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Narrative on General Situation and Findings of the Dimension Committee

5.1 Communication Methods

To what degree does the institution effectively communicate the lived experience of first-year students through the following?

- **Institutional website**
  Medium

- **Online communication technologies (e.g., instant messaging, blogs, YouTube, e-mail, Facebook)**
  High

- **Admissions print materials and other media**
  Medium

- **Marketing (e.g., radio, TV, print advertisements)**
  Medium

- **Campus tours for prospective students**
  High

Current situation and committee discussion notes

The committee engaged in extensive review and exercises to analyze the effectiveness of UK’s communication of the lived experiences of first-year students. Members of the committee were asked to put themselves in the shoes of the constituent groups (prospective/applied/admitted student, family member and high school counselor) and look for information on the website to assess its accuracy and availability. This exercise uncovered a few broken hyperlinks which need to be repaired, but yielded an assessment that most information is easily accessible and comprehensible. That said, the website could benefit from better organization, subject to review. In addition, we reviewed all published and print materials disseminated through admissions and hosted an hour-long presentation from UK Strategic Communications regarding the communication flow and digital outreach to students and families. One item that came to the fore through this exercise was the importance of paying attention to the lived experiences of all students in meaningful and authentic ways. In response to these discussions we are advancing several recommendations. First, we recommend engaging those meaningful and authentic values through a review of materials destined for targeted populations. Second, another consideration for increasing inclusion is the possible use of Spanish language versions of outreach materials, particularly in certain geographic regions. This may also include parent/family interactions, by providing an opt-in for this type of communication. Third, the committee recommends a review of in-house publications for their depth and breadth of lived student experiences and to include, as well as possible, some representation of the many stories and backgrounds of our student, staff, and faculty groups.

In addition to our discussions, committee members attended tours for admitted and prospective student and provided very positive feedback. The tours included helpful and concise presentations which provided...
an overview of all specific admissions information. The tours also benefited from student guides sharing their personal experiences. Areas identified for improvement were twofold: first, to continue to emphasize the support through advising, career center, and other options when near these areas of campus; and second, to develop processes that circulate information from campus to tour guides and back in a routinized fashion so that guides have the most up-to-date information. One example is to include information about the campus-wide FYE focus to the tour script to apprise both staff, families, and prospective students about this initiative.

The committee was initially unsure about how UK markets itself, outside of general commercials during sporting events. However, presentations about the use of targeted digital ads to prospective students provided the committee with a better understanding. That said, we concluded that there is a lack of a marketing focus for certain groups and sub-populations on our campus. The University should aspire to communicate in meaningful and authentic ways, based on the needs and concerns of these groups. Questions from the committee include; How do we share information with students across different units? Do faculty and staff working directly with first-year students have access to all the information going out? Are we competing for attention or contradicting other units? This knowledge gap again highlighted the need for consistent reporting and communication. The University’s efforts are frequently not advertised broadly or throughout campus. They go unnoticed and many assume that nothing is happening. Educating the campus community about how, when, and to what populations UK’s digital marketing is being directed would positively influence this committee’s rating. This is gradually improving, but there is still overlap and therefore redundancy between departments, units, and colleges. Areas for improvement include instant messaging, which has not been a strong messaging resource despite interest from prospective and first-year students. For example, could we include more intentional messaging for sub-populations of students on campus? These specific pieces should reflect the same style/branding as our larger pieces like the viewbook and should be made accessible to recruiters and staff interacting with these groups. The following recommendation regarding a Public Relations and Marketing update speaks to this need.

Summary of institutional resources and evidence
Please see: RNL_2017_E_Expectations report_1.0.pdf; FoE Survey Data for Students; committee members attended walking tours for both admitted and prospective students; Strategic Communication Overview; review of all print material and review of website.
Recommendations

1. **Common Language** - Approach all communication from the perspective of the user/audience; evaluate all communication to ensure best practices for inclusive language - *High Priority*

2. **Admissions material** - All forms of admissions application must identify selective colleges and the specific requirements at time of applications - *High Priority*

3. **Communication differentiation** - Increase targeted/sub-population marketing and messaging, including curating student, faculty and staff content; awareness of inclusion in meaningful; and authentic ways in both imagery and written word - *High Priority*

4. **Annual Reporting** - Fall Enrollment Management campus-wide reporting annually for enrollment across campus; Public Relations and Marketing campus-wide reporting on messaging; spring Student and Academic Life campus-wide reporting on student support outcomes - *High Priority*

5.2 **Communications to Students**

*To what degree does the institution communicate effectively with first-year students about the following:*

- **Institutional mission**
  Medium

- **Institution’s academic expectations**
  Medium

- **Definitions, disciplinary processes, and consequences regarding academic integrity**
  High

- **Out-of-class engagement opportunities**
  High

- **Employment on and off campus (including advantages and disadvantages)**
  Low

- **Entry requirements for specific academic majors**
  Low

- **College costs and financial aid (during recruitment and admissions)**
  High

- **College costs and financial aid (during the first year in order to plan for subsequent years)**
  Medium
Current situation and committee discussion notes

Based on the conversations during the committee meetings on mission statement and goals, there is a lack of awareness among some group members of the actual mission of the University and how this is communicated more broadly to students, families, and community. Through additional conversation and evaluation of the website, publications, presentations and speeches presented to interested parties and constituent groups, the committee has determined that the mission of the institution is threaded through communications in an effective manner. There does not seem to be an expectation that everyone knows and understand the mission and goals verbatim, but rather an understanding of the identity, purpose and goals of the University in total. There was a vigorous conversation regarding the clarity of communication and expectations set for students, families and others in the admissions requirements, including the cost of attendance and expectations for students. Through committee discussion, members of the admissions team identified the concern that students were unaware that different colleges may have different/selective requirements and this oversight should be addressed. In some instances, the first time an applicant becomes aware that they applied to a selective college at UK is in the admission notification letter where it is explained they didn’t meet the requirements and have been placed in another college.

This gap in communication leads to unclear expectations and could obviously have a negative impact. The committee identified this communication gap as something which needs to be addresses before the next admissions cycle and across all applications. After reviewing the student survey, the committee discussed on-campus employment as a component of financial aid during the admissions process, and we reiterated the importance of adding more information about University initiatives to admissions overviews, high school visit presentations, and tours. In addition, the committee, particularly colleagues in financial aid, discussed the need to offer more fairs and information for new students on the employment options and opportunity, as well as developing a closer relationship with HR and student employment. There are structural challenges with the process and ownership of this area and recommendations would include stronger partnerships and collaboration with multiple units on campus to enhance accessibility and the quality of the student experience.

Academic integrity is an area rated lower in the staff/faculty survey, indicating an area for improvement. However, through conversation and the personal experiences of a couple advisors and deans of students, the committee felt that this was an area students were not likely to engage with in any way at transition. Each syllabus includes a statement on academic integrity, providing a clear outline of our processes and definitions. The only exceptions were instances where students find themselves in a position requiring them to review the academic integrity information. Therefore, based on recommendations that the committee received, we recommend no additional action be taken.

Areas where the University could improve included providing early communication regarding the selectivity
of colleges and majors, as well as promoting the importance of the full four-year cost of attendance and money management. Upon entry and through the process, as common in admissions, the one-year cost of attendance is shared with parents and families through presentations, publications, and information on the website. There has also been a recurring discussion on the return on investment (ROI) of a degree from UK. With members of enrollment management present for these conversations, we discussed highlighting the priority FAFSA deadline. This is especially important given that the earlier a student or family applies the more aid is available, particularly for Kentucky residents through KEES monies. We also discussed outreach to begin the conversation with parents and families earlier about the true costs of a four-year degree and planning for payment. UK has enhanced student financial interventions through the UK LEADS program to assist in financial challenges which can lead to retention issues and is also working to establish more intentional counseling and support through the Financial Wellness Office. This will assist students in planning and understanding their financial debt as well as their options for more informed decision-making. The committee suggested continued work in this area and assessment of how the interventions are currently working for students and families.

Summary of institutional resources and evidence
Please see: RNL_2017_E_Expectations report_1.0.pdf; FoE Survey Data for Students; FoE Survey Data Faculty/Staff

Recommendations

1. **Mission-Specific Messaging** - Increase the knowledge and promotion of our University mission; provide common messaging on mission and brand threaded throughout student stages - *Medium Priority*

2. **Major entry requirements** - Emphasize entry requirements for specific majors; web applications do not clearly identify "selective colleges/programs" and the requirements for entry - *High Priority*

3. **Cost of Attendance** - Costs of college after the first year; encourage conversation with students and families about a four-year "bill" and developing a plan to pay for it - *Medium Priority*

4. **Campus Employment** - Provide more discussion about on-campus employment opportunities, beginning as early as the prospective phase through admissions presentations and campus tour - *Medium Priority*

5. **Less than 24 credit-hour transfers** - Defined requirement and consistency for students with less than 24 credit hours to enable effective admissions and advising conversation with prospective students - *Low Priority*

5.3 Connections with Families

*To what degree does the campus establish connections with families of first-year students by means of:*

*Targeted communications about institutional expectations and procedures*  
Medium
Inclusion in orientation
Medium

Inclusion in other events and networks as appropriate
Medium

Current situation and committee discussion notes
The committee reviewed sample communications such the first-year family handbook and did not have significant feedback regarding targeted communications to the families of first-year students. In the Qualtrics survey of performance indicators, respondents solidly graded the University as "medium" in this area. We know that during summer “see blue.” U orientations parents and family members have the opportunity to learn about campus resources, get information on their student’s transition to college, choose from interest sessions about a variety of topics, and hear from their student’s college. During the family/guest program on the second day of orientation, they specifically hear presentations about safety, student accounts, transportation, buying books, and University Health Service. The committee spent more time discussing the different expectations families bring to orientation, specifically as they relate to advising. While families overwhelmingly participate in first-year student orientation (“see blue.” U), there is not always a family/guest program offered during transfer orientations.

Working with families of first-year students is a primary focus of the UK Parent and Family Association, and its annual end-of-year survey suggests many parents and family members are happy with its support and communications (see Q43 results below, survey respondents are mostly first-year families residing outside of Kentucky).

A disconnect appears to come from the campus community being unaware of the work of the Parent and Family Association. In addition, the student survey (Q029) indicates that students who responded to the survey believe that UK has not made their families feel part of their college experience. Since the Parent and Family Association directs its marketing efforts at parents and families, not students, it makes sense that many students would not be aware of the resources dedicated to promoting positive family involvement on
campus. A proposal out of the committee was to alert our new students about the way we connect with their families.

Staff working directly with the UK Parent and Family Association took the lead in writing recommendations in this area. These recommendations were shared with the committee electronically to allow for discussion and revision.

Summary of institutional resources and evidence

Please see: UK Parent and Family Association end-of-year survey spring 2017, FoE Survey Data for Students (Q029)

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<th>Key Text</th>
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<th>% Resp</th>
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<th>Mean</th>
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<tr>
<td>(1) Not at all</td>
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<td>(2) Slightly</td>
<td>129 (17.8%)</td>
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<td>(3) Moderately</td>
<td>216 (29.8%)</td>
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<td>(4) High</td>
<td>183 (25.3%)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) Very high</td>
<td>95 (13.1%)</td>
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Recommendations

1. **University-wide philosophy of parent/family involvement** - Articulate a university-wide philosophy and structure of parent/family involvement. Designate Parent and Family Association liaisons in each college in order to better coordinate family support and outreach across campus. This group, combined with representatives from Student and Academic Life, Enrollment Management, Philanthropy, Institutional Diversity, Auxiliary Services, International Center, etc., would meet at least once a semester and would be convened by Parent and Family Association staff. - Medium Priority

2. **Pre-orientation online module** - Create an online module/video for families to complete/view prior to orientation. - High Priority

3. **Assessment of orientation family/guest program** - Annually assess orientation (both overall and individual presentations/sessions) and host a postmortem after summer “see blue.” U's to inform future changes. - High Priority

4. **Communications audit** - Conduct an audit of all current campus communications to families. - Medium Priority

5. **Parent/family annual report** - Create an annual report on UK’s interactions with families of our students in order to better inform the campus community. Include a snapshot of who UK families are. Create a marketing campaign to let students and campus know how the Parent and Family Association works with families. - High Priority
6. **Additional assessment** - Add more questions regarding institutional expectations and procedures to the annual end-of-year Parent and Family Association survey. - *Medium Priority*

7. **Volunteer opportunities** - Create more robust volunteer opportunities for families, including working more closely with Admissions, the Stuckert Career Center, etc. - *Low Priority*

8. **College/family connections** - Encourage additional college participation during Family Weekend. Currently only a handful of colleges include programing for the families of their students that weekend. - *High Priority*

9. **Admissions application update** - Change the admissions application to allow students to share contact information for more than one family member. - *High Priority*

10. **Parent and Family Association onboarding** - Explore a change to the Parent and Family Association so that families have to opt out of receiving communications, rather than the current opt-in structure. - *High Priority*

11. **Targeted outreach** - Create targeted mailings and newsletters for specific families, including first-generation families and families of underrepresented minorities. - *High Priority*

**5.4 Communication to Others**

*To what degree does the campus communicate to the following groups their role in facilitating student success in the first year of college?*

- **Secondary school personnel**
  - Low

- **Other support networks**
  - Low

**Current situation and committee discussion notes**

Through discussion with the committee, members of Enrollment Management (EM), as well as informal feedback from high school counselors through undergraduate admissions, we found areas of opportunity to enhance messaging with these targeted groups. High school counselors (HSC) and secondary school personnel are provided updates annually through the UK EM High School Counselor Breakfasts, as well as through visits from recruitment staff and EM newsletters throughout the year. The committee felt that we can do a better job in providing the HSCs with easy-to-distribute materials for families and students. It was noted by some HSCs that direct communication with them regarding missing high school transcripts is easier than through the students, as HSCs can track information and more quickly respond. It is also noted that developing a HSC advisory board would be beneficial for everyone as changes can occur annually. This new group could provide insight and guidance on everything from current recruitment activities and publications to issues and concerns which would be helpful to the University. In order to increase our presence and engagement with this population, early outreach and enhanced communication would be useful to further developing the high school to...
college pipeline. Additional benefits include better information on college readiness, financial aid info nights, and feedback regarding parent/family programs for the University.

Summary of institutional resources and evidence
Please see: RNL_2017_E_Expectations report_1.0.pdf; FoE Survey Data for Students; FoE Survey Data Faculty/Staff

Recommendations
1. Secondary School Personnel - Update and remove all references to ‘guidance counselor’ from any current communication flow and replace with ‘school counselors’. - High Priority

2. High School Counselor Publication - For Undergraduate Admissions, develop a specific high school counselor publication for Fall 2019 -UK folder with tear off info sheet for students/families. - Medium Priority

3. High School Counselor Advisory Board - Develop a high school counselor advisory board with members from both Kentucky and out-of-state schools. - High Priority

4. Early College Outreach - Increase outreach to parents and families through early pipeline college planning and financial aid nights. Position UK as the premiere resource for Kentuckians on college planning and preparation. Work with high schools, churches and other places of worship, community members, and other organizations to promote outreach. - Medium Priority

5.5 Facilitating Student Connections
To what degree does your campus structure and implement a first year in which students establish connections with the following?

- Faculty (especially out-of-class)
  - Low

- Upper-level students
  - Low

- Other first-year students
  - Medium

- Student affairs professionals
  - Medium

- Academic support services
  - Medium

Current situation and committee discussion notes
Faculty: Committee members felt that students do not interact with faculty in the major during the first year. They questioned how many new students are in class with a faculty member in their major during the first year, especially outside a large classroom like Memorial Hall. Some colleges are better at facilitating interactions - especially outside of class - than others. The student survey ranked this as the lowest of the Making Connections questions.
Upper-level students: First-year student interaction with upper-level students seems to depend on what programs they are involved in. Theoretically, most first-year students have an RA (87% of first-year students live on campus), a K Crew welcome week leader (all new students are assigned a K Crew regardless of where they live), and potentially an assigned Living Learning Program peer mentor (35.6% of first-year students live in an LLP). Hopefully, more of these connections with take place naturally as more upper-level students return to on-campus housing. The student survey ranked this in the red, falling short of the 3.5 mean goal. UK widely refers to this group as upperclassmen, using gendered language. An alternative term like 'upper-level students' needs to be widely adopted across campus.

The experience varies for other first-year students based on housing. If they are living off campus, they are less likely to interact with other first-year students. The students who responded to the survey ranked this as near the mean goal. Opportunities to connect are built into events such as “see blue.” U orientations and K Week.
Student affairs professionals: If first-year students are enrolled in UK 101/201, they are likely interacting with student affairs professionals to a greater extent than faculty.

Academic support services: These are mentioned on campus tours, talked about during “see blue.” U orientations and K Week. Information about academic support services is also provided by academic advisors (and hopefully instructors). However, the committee suggests that additional academic advisors need to have more frequent meetings with their advisees. Academic support services were highly rated in the student survey results.

| Q028. Making Connections - As a new student, to what degree has this institution: Connected you with academic support outside the classroom (e.g., tutoring, advising)? |
|---|---|---|---|
| Key Text | N (%N) | % Resp | N | Mean | Std Dev |
| (1) Not at all | 22 (2.9%) | 92.1 % | 746 | 3.66 | 1.06 |
| (2) Slightly | 81 (10.9%) |  |
| (3) Moderately | 217 (29.1%) |  |
| (4) High | 234 (31.4%) |  |
| (5) Very high | 192 (25.7%) |  |

As the committee prepared to draft recommendations for each performance indicator, most of the concerns in this area related to faculty office hours. Ideas include creating a promotional campaign around office hours to reduce student fears and inform them of the benefits. Positive examples from other institutions were cited and a committee member suggested renaming office hours "student hours." Calling them office hours suggests that the instructor is in the office doing very important instructor things (i.e. research, grading, etc.) and students may be intimidated and not want to intrude. Calling them student hours suggests that the instructor is there for student things (i.e. to answer questions, to help with assignments, etc.). Another suggestion is to schedule block office hours at the beginning of each semester with faculty and TA in a central location other than the faculty office. Finally, the committee recommends that every undergraduate college conduct mock office hours during their K Week college meeting. Rather than advance these proposal ideas from a few members of the committee, a better plan forward seems to be to convene a broadly representative group to propose ways to improve student-faculty out-of-class interactions. This approach would hopefully create buy-in from faculty and colleges and allow for individual colleges to respond and innovate based on their unique communities and attributes.

Summary of institutional resources and evidence
FoE student survey, specifically Q028, Q025, Q026, Q027

Recommendations
1. **Identify outstanding colleges and programs** - Identify colleges and programs excelling at promoting out-of-class interactions with faculty, upper-level students, other first-year students, etc., in order to promote best practices. - High Priority

2. **Address issues of engagement with faculty** - Convene a representative group to propose ideas on how to improve student-faculty interactions outside of class. - High Priority

3. **Targeted outreach** - Continue to look for ways to use data gathered through the enrollment cycle to enhance timely and targeted outreach regarding student academic and career support. - High Priority

4. **Replace the use of “upperclassmen”** - UK widely refers to this group as upperclassmen, using gendered language. An alternative term like ‘upper-level students’ needs to be widely adopted across campus. - Medium Priority
5.6 Academic Advising

What is the overall quality of academic advising for the following tasks and in the following time periods?

In preparation for the first year of college
Selecting courses / schedule planning
High

Exploring the rationale for selection of courses
Medium

Exploring life and career goals related to higher education
Medium

In preparation for the second year of college
Selecting courses / schedule planning
High

Exploring the rationale for selection of courses
High

Reviewing academic progress to date
High

Discussing student intentions about future enrollment plans (stay, drop-out, transfer)
Medium

Current situation and committee discussion notes

Based on our meeting discussions, the committee feels that UK currently excels at:
- Helping students select courses/schedule planning (this is supported by the student survey at Q033)
- Providing tools to review academic progress (i.e. myUK GPS and AET)
- Utilizing an advisor hold
- Utilizing a system for shared notes
- Utilizing campus-wide efforts to discuss intentions

Advising is a college-level endeavor with specific required components, however each college develops their own programming. In an effort to strengthen and share practices, there are a number of interventions currently underway with results still to come. A campus-wide assessment of academic advising is being conducted and is informed by National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) core values and competencies as well as by the UK strategic plan. Surveys after orientation and Merit Weekends are assessed in order to provide feedback from individual sessions. In addition, recent advising-related orientation survey questions have been written by the University Advising Coordinator. UK’s Advising Leadership Team is transitioning to the Provost’s Committee on Advising and this new group will be coordinated by the University Director for Academic and Career Advising with representation from academic, career, and program advisors. Both the University Director and the University Advising Coordinator are new positions as of spring 2017, created to provide needed coordination, consistency, and communication across campus. The committee recognizes that there are inconsistencies in advising across colleges and current assessments will reveal what those are and which ones are driven by the different attributions and organization of the colleges themselves. This is a clear area of focus and growth for the University.
Current challenges include:
- Discovering a University-wide message
- Cohort scheduling: it takes a lot of work up front but creates more time for other priorities during orientation
- Timing and orientation schedule programming
- How to do it well and efficiently
- Training
- Resources
- Consistency

The ‘why’ of UK Core may be missing or has diminished since it was initially implemented – how much is UK Core discussed at orientation? This answer is likely different depending on the college and is an area of needed coordination and continued discussion.

The committee provides the following recommendations as well as areas that require continued exploration:
- Use of online course planning features is low for long-term planning; faculty advisors are less likely to pre-plan courses with advisees.
- Need for major templates/career four-year plans.
- How do we help students bridge college to career? The creation of the University Director for Career and Academic Advising position speaks to UK’s efforts to address this issue. Recent initiatives within the Stuckert Career Center include the implementation of the Handshake platform with a focus on onboarding new students early in their college careers. Use of Handshake will be a required assignment in UK 101 starting in fall 2018.
- Do student perceptions of their advising experiences differ from faculty/staff perceptions of student advising experiences? Assessment will begin to get at this issue.

Discussion about setting appropriate student expectations prior to orientation led to our recommendation for a pre-orientation online module. If students knew more about the advising process prior to orientation, they could come in with more realistic expectations and valuable orientation time could be used for other purposes (e.g., creating connections with other first-year students, upper-level students, resources, etc.) rather than explaining procedural things like how myUK works. If students participated in the same online module no matter which college their major is housed, we would know they received consistent information about broad topics like UK Core.

**Summary of institutional resources and evidence**

To respond to this question, the committee pulled heavily from information presented by the University Advising Coordinator.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Q033. Academic Advising - To what degree have faculty/staff advisors: Helped you select courses?</th>
<th>Key Text</th>
<th>N (%N)</th>
<th>% Resp</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std Dev</th>
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<tr>
<td>(1) Not at all</td>
<td>20 (2.8%)</td>
<td>88.0 %</td>
<td>713</td>
<td>3.84</td>
<td>1.04</td>
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<td>(2) Slightly</td>
<td>59 (8.3%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>(3) Moderately</td>
<td>155 (21.7%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>(4) High</td>
<td>258 (36.2%)</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) Very high</td>
<td>221 (31%)</td>
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</table>
Recommendations

1. **Evaluate college advising inconsistencies** - Evaluate inconsistencies in advising practices which may create student success barriers. Allow for differences in individual colleges, as long as core competencies of best practices are met. - *High Priority*

2. **Update orientation marketing language related to advising** - Change the language used in communication related to orientation; we currently use “meet your advisor,” but in some colleges, the student will meet with an academic advisor but not necessarily their assigned academic advisor. This creates an expectation that not all colleges fulfill. This issue can be remediated by using the appropriate language in pre-orientation materials. - *High Priority*

3. **Pre-orientation online module** - Colleges should work together to develop a pre-orientation online module for all incoming undergraduates to complete. The module should include common themes to assist new students in expectations about “see blue.” U (in collaboration with Orientation Office) and other transactional requirements (see below), as well as college-specific information, as individual colleges see fit.
   1. Purpose of higher education and mission of UK
   2. College and major-specific info
   3. Value of UK Core
   4. Skills v. career info
   5. Tie University Assessment Tool (Indigo, Strengths, MBTI, Strong Interest Inventory, etc.) to this module; thread throughout first year - *High Priority*

Summary of Recommendations Based on Priority Ranking

**High Priority**

- **5.1 Common Language** - Approach all communication from the perspective of the user/audience; evaluate all communication to ensure best practices for inclusive language.
- **5.1 Admissions material** - Admissions applications in all forms should identify selective colleges and the specific requirements at time of application; currently only identified on paper application.
- **5.1 Annual Reporting** - Fall Enrollment Management campus-wide reporting annually for enrollment across campus; Public Relations and Marketing campus-wide reporting on messaging; spring Student and Academic Life campus-wide reporting on student support outcomes.
- **5.2 Major entry requirements** - Emphasize entry requirements for specific majors; web applications do not clearly identify "selective colleges/programs" and the requirements for entry.
- **5.3 Pre-orientation online module** - Create an online module/video for families to complete/view prior to orientation.
- **5.3 Assessment of orientation family/guest program** - Annually assess orientation (both overall and individual. presentations/sessions) and host a postmortem after summer “see blue.” U to inform future changes.
- **5.3 Parent/family annual report** - Create an annual report on UK’s interactions with families of our students in order to better inform the campus community. Include a snapshot of who UK families are. Create a marketing campaign to let students and campus know how the Parent and Family Association works with families.
- **5.3 College/family connections** - Encourage additional college participation during Family Weekend. Currently, only a handful of colleges program for the families of their students that weekend.

- **5.3 Admissions application update** - Alter the admissions application to allow students to share contact information for more than one family member.

- **5.3 Parent and Family Association onboarding** - Explore a change to the Parent and Family Association so that families have to opt out of receiving communications, rather than the current opt-in structure.

- **5.3 Targeted outreach** - Create targeted mailings and newsletters for specific families, including first-generation families and families of underrepresented minorities.

- **5.4 Secondary School Personnel** - Update and remove all references of 'guidance counselor' from any current communication flow and replace with 'school counselors.' The school counselor professional organization changed the preferred naming from guidance to school counselors.

- **5.4 High School Counselor Advisory Board** - Develop a HSC advisory board with members from both Kentucky and out-of-state schools.

- **5.5 Identify outstanding colleges and programs** - Identify colleges and programs which excel at promoting out-of-class interactions with faculty, upper-level students, other first-year students, etc., in order to promote best practices.

- **5.5 Address issues of engagement with faculty** - Convene a representative group to propose ideas on how to improve student-faculty interactions outside of class.

- **5.5 Targeted outreach** - Continue to look for ways to use data gathered through the enrollment cycle to enhance timely and targeted outreach regarding student academic and career support.

- **5.6 Evaluate college advising inconsistencies** - Evaluate inconsistencies in advising practices which may create student success barriers. Allow for differences in individual colleges, as long as core competencies of best practices are met.

- **5.6 Update orientation marketing language related to advising** - Change the language used in communication related to orientation; we currently use "meet your advisor," but in some colleges, the student will meet with an academic advisor, not necessarily their assigned academic advisor. This creates an expectation that not all colleges fulfill. This issue can be fixed by using the right language in pre-orientation materials.

- **5.6 Pre-orientation online module** - Colleges should work together to develop a pre-orientation online module for all incoming undergraduates to complete. The module should include general common themes to assist new students in expectations about “see blue.” U (in collaboration with Orientation Office) and other transactional requirements (see below), as well as college-specific information, as individual colleges see fit.
  1. Purpose of higher education and mission of UK
  2. College and major-specific info
  3. Value of UK Core
  4. Skills v. career info
  5. Tie University Assessment Tool (Indigo, Strengths, MBTI, etc.) to this module; thread throughout first year

**Medium Priority**

- **5.1 Communication differentiation** - Increase targeted/sub-population marketing and messaging; including curating student, faculty and staff content; awareness of inclusion in meaningful and authentic ways in both imagery and written word.

- **5.1 Website** - Conduct an overall assessment of website for flexibility and ease of use, collect user (student/faculty/staff/etc.) feedback.

- **5.2 Mission-Specific Messaging** - Increase the knowledge and promotion of our University mission; provide common messaging on mission and brand threaded throughout student stages.

- **5.2 Cost of Attendance** - Costs of college after the first year; encourage conversation with students and families about a four-year "bill" and developing a plan to pay for it.
- **5.3 University-wide philosophy of parent/family involvement** - Articulate a University-wide philosophy and structure of parent/family involvement. Designate Parent and Family Association liaisons in each college in order to better coordinate family support and outreach across campus. This group, combined with representatives from Student and Academic Life, Enrollment Management, Philanthropy, Institutional Diversity, Auxiliary Services, International Center, etc., would meet at least once a semester and would be convened by Parent and Family Association staff.

- **5.3 Communications audit** - Conduct an audit of all current campus communications to families.

- **5.3 Additional assessment** - Add more questions regarding institutional expectations and procedures to the annual end-of-year Parent and Family Association survey.

- **5.4 HS Counselor Publication** - For Undergraduate Admissions, develop a specific HS Counselor publication for Fall 2018-UK folder with tear off info sheet for students/families.

- **5.4 Early College Outreach** - Increase outreach to parents and families through early pipeline college planning and financial aid nights. Position UK as the resource for Kentuckians on college planning and preparation. Work with high schools, churches and other places of worship, community members/associations, and other organizations to promote outreach.

- **5.5 Replace the use of “upperclassmen”** - UK widely refers to this group as upperclassmen, using gendered language. An alternative term like ‘upper-level students’ needs to be widely adopted across campus.

**Low Priority**

- **5.2 Campus Employment** - Provide more discussion about on-campus employment opportunities, beginning as early as prospect phase through admissions presentations and campus tour.

- **5.2 Less than 24 credit hour transfers** - Define requirements consistently for students with less than 24 credit hours to enable effective admissions and advising conversation with prospective students.

- **5.3 Volunteer opportunities** - Create more robust volunteer opportunities for families, including working more closely with Admissions, the Stuckert Career Center, etc.

**Recommended Grade & Rationale**

Recommended Grade: B

Rationale: Based on the work of the committee the data and findings suggest that we have a good foundation in the realm of communicating to first-year students, families and constituents. However, the University would be best served by ensuring a consistent feedback loop on these communications and ensuring that the wider campus community is aware and engaged in order to assure there are not gaps in our communication efforts.

**Recommendations for Action**

1. **Common Language** - Approach all communication from the perspective of the user/audience; evaluate all communication to ensure best practices for inclusive language. - **High Priority**
2. **Admissions material** - Admissions applications in all forms must identify selective colleges and the specific requirements at time of applications. - **High Priority**

3. **Communication differentiation** - Increase targeted/sub-population marketing and messaging; including curating student, faculty and staff content; awareness of inclusion in meaningful and authentic ways in both imagery and written word. - **Medium Priority**

4. **Annual Reporting** - Fall Enrollment Management campus-wide reporting annually for enrollment across campus; Public Relations and Marketing campus-wide reporting on messaging; spring Student and Academic Life campus-wide reporting on student support outcomes. - **High Priority**

5. **Website** - Conduct an overall assessment of website for flexibility and ease of use, collect user (student/faculty/staff/etc.) feedback. - **Medium Priority**

6. **Mission-Specific Messaging** - Increase the knowledge and promotion of our University mission; provide common messaging on mission and brand threaded throughout student stages. - **Medium Priority**

7. **Major entry requirements** - Emphasize entry requirements for specific majors; web applications do not clearly identify "selective colleges/programs" and the requirements for entry. - **High Priority**

8. **Cost of Attendance** - Costs of college after the first year; encourage conversation with students and families about a four-year "bill" and developing a plan to pay for it. - **Medium Priority**

9. **Campus Employment** - Provide more discussion about on-campus employment opportunities, beginning as early as prospect phase through admissions presentations and campus tour. - **Low Priority**

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11. **University-wide philosophy and coordination** - Articulate a University-wide philosophy and structure of parent/family involvement. Designate Parent and Family Association liaisons in each college in order to better coordinate family support and outreach across campus. This group, combined with representatives from Student and Academic Life, Enrollment Management, Philanthropy, Institutional Diversity, Auxiliary Services, International Center, etc., would meet at least once a semester and would be convened by Parent and Family Association staff. - **Medium Priority**

12. **Pre-orientation online module** - Create an online module/video for families to complete/view prior to orientation. - **High Priority**

13. **Assessment of orientation family/guest program** - Annually assess orientation (both overall and individual presentations/sessions) and host a postmortem after summer “see blue.” U to inform future changes. - **High Priority**

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15. **Parent/family annual report** - Create an annual report on UK’s interactions with families of our students in order to better inform the campus community. Include a snapshot of who UK families are.
16. Create a marketing campaign to let students and campus know how the Parent and Family Association works with families. - **High Priority**

17. *Additional assessment* - Add more questions regarding institutional expectations and procedures to the annual end-of-year Parent and Family Association survey. - **Medium Priority**

18. *Volunteer opportunities* - Create more robust volunteer opportunities for families, including working more closely with Admissions, the Stuckert Career Center, etc. - **Low Priority**

19. *College/family connections* - Encourage additional college participation during Family Weekend. Currently, only a handful of colleges program for the families of their students that weekend. - **High Priority**

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   5. Tie University Assessment Tool (Indigo, Strengths, MBTI, etc.) to this module; thread throughout first year - **High Priority**

### Sources of Evidence

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Doc #</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Housing Student Success - Spring 2017 update.pdf</td>
<td>Institutional Research</td>
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<td>End of Year Survey Spring 2017 (Fall 2016 Cohort).pdf</td>
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<td>Fall 2016 RSIE Survey.pdf</td>
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<td>K Week and Move-in Survey Fall 2017.pdf</td>
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<td>Best Practices in the First Year _Matthews.pdf</td>
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<td>Strategic Communication Overview</td>
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<td>Wildcat Foundations - Communication Overview</td>
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<td>RNL_2017_E_Expectations report_1.0.pdf</td>
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<td>College Readiness Indicators 2017-2018</td>
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<td>115</td>
<td>UK Parent and Family Association end of year survey spring 2017</td>
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<td>121</td>
<td>University of Kentucky - Pls for Transitions.rtf</td>
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Foundations Institutions serve all first-year students according to their varied needs.

The process of anticipating, diagnosing, and addressing needs is ongoing and subject to assessment and adjustment throughout the first year. Institutions provide services with respect for the students' abilities, backgrounds, interests, and experiences. Institutions also ensure a campus environment that is inclusive and safe for all students.

Executive Summary

The All Students Dimension Committee is comprised of thirty-two members that includes faculty, staff, and students. Dr. Sonja Feist-Price, Vice President for Institutional Diversity, and Nick Kehrwald, Dean of Students, serve as committee co-chairs. Beginning in early February, the committee convened each Friday for two-hour sessions to assess five (5) Performance Indicator areas related to the first-year student experience: Academic Needs, Social/Personal Needs; Student Experiences, Subpopulations and Physical and Psychological Safety. The Committee’s conclusions and recommendations are drawn from reviewing data related to twenty-eight (28) performance indicators.

The University’s access to expansive analytics for academic measures indicates a solid ability within the University to identify academic needs. Moreover, there has been a developing culture over the past several years of valuing data, providing/allowing access to data, and using data for action. The most wide-reaching example is the use of Tableau and the creation of shared workbooks across multiple divisions. Meeting the academic needs of all students offers an area of growth for UK, with a particular focus on academic preparedness and underprepared students.

In response to meeting the social and personal needs of individual students, the University has made progress in identifying some, but not all, social or personal needs. For example, the University has made recent investments in: (1) counseling services across campus, (2) money management, and (3) the Community of Concern, the University’s behavior intervention team. In addition, the University has launched some new/relatively new initiatives related to meeting the personal needs of students, including: alcohol and drug recovery programming, involvement advisors, and mindfulness/meditation programming. The greatest areas of growth include meeting the needs of underrepresented minority students (URM) and students with high unmet financial need. Those students should continue to be engaged in efforts focused toward various high impact practices (e.g. Living Learning Programs (LLPs), undergraduate research, etc.).

Lack of individualized attention in the classroom has been documented through survey responses as an area of concern by both faculty and students. As a consequence, the committee chose to focus on faculty
attention versus staff attention. Another factor shaping the student experience in recent years includes the absence of the Student Center, which has influenced levels of campus involvement. While the Student Activities Board, Campus Recreation, Residence Life and a broad range of campus departments offer programs and space for students, there is no singular sense of place for students. In addition, the University often falls short in capturing the needs for off-campus and non-traditional students. While efforts are being made for an inclusive campus, often it is difficult to measure the effectiveness of “inclusiveness.” The areas for greatest growth seem to include faculty engagement with students, marketing and communications of events (i.e. events calendar, institutional support in promoting events), and an institutional focus on inclusivity.

The committee affirms the phenomenal work being done within the departments and the designated space for identified demographics of students. As a University we are serving certain student subpopulations well and have increased our dedication of physical space on campus to serve those groups (e.g. LGBTQ* Resources, Violence Intervention and Prevention Center (VIP), Martin Luther King (MLK) Center, Disability Resource Center). Overall, however, the University is selectively serving some subpopulations and failing to serve “All Students.” Leaving the work to individual offices does not promote intersectionality, can potentially isolate the efforts of departments/units, and fails to holistically address student needs (e.g. academic, social, personal, financial).

Survey results suggest that students positively rated their feelings of physical safety on campus. This seems to mirror the University’s substantial investment over the past few years with updated technology, infrastructure, the LiveSafe App, and additional police officers on the University police force. Students did not rate feeling psychologically safe on campus at a high level, with forty-two percent (42%) negatively rating the degree to which they can express beliefs without concern (“Not at all or Slightly”). Therefore, our strongest recommendation is to better communicate behavioral expectations and safety to new and current students. Current efforts include passive inclusion during K-Week and are not a focus in orientation sessions.

At the conclusion of this Dimension report, there are several recommendations directly related to each of the five performance indicator areas the All Students Committee was tasked to review: Academic Needs; Social and Personal Needs; Student Experiences; Subpopulations; Physical and Psychological Safety.

**All Students Dimension Committee**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Britt Allen</td>
<td>Student Affairs Officer, Student/Academic Life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicole Blackstone</td>
<td>Undergraduate Student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justin Blevins</td>
<td>Assessment Specialist, Analytics, Assessment &amp; Decision Support</td>
</tr>
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Narrative on General Situation and Findings of the Dimension Committee

6.1: Academic Needs of Individual Students

When considering to what degree our campus identifies academic needs of individual first-year students, the committee cited many good indications of capability. Specifically discussed were: (1) the University’s access to complete and expansive analytics; (2) improvement with academic alerts and adoption of the academic alert system by faculty; (3) the ability to capture a student’s academic status in moments of time throughout the semester; (4) the “democratization” of the use of information, for example, dashboards in which everyone now has access; and, (5) a cultural shift related to the importance of data and the ability to use analytics for action.

In response to the question, to what degree does our campus address the identified needs of individual first-year students, the committee chose a ranking somewhere between “Low” and “Medium.” Addressing academic needs is on the upswing, and some measures reflect progress. Improved utilization of academic alerts by academic advisors has shown a correspondent increase in usage by students. Most colleges have improved faculty buy-in to address academic needs. For example, some faculty within the College of Arts and Sciences are tailoring needs at a student level. Unfortunately, this is not happening everywhere. Looking at the variables...
in which the University has control, we are likely rated at a “medium.” However, based on student responses in the Student Survey data, the University is not successful in setting academic expectations nor are we successful regarding expectations about communication. Information regarding academic needs is not being shared with faculty as well perhaps as it is with counselors and advisors. Committee discussion has highlighted the importance of getting information to departmental chairs and beyond. Direct communication of academic need is important for faculty buy-in and needs to be supported through the Office of Faculty Advancement and Center for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching (CELT).

6.2: Social/Personal Needs of Individual Students
In response to the question, to what degree does your campus identify the social/personal needs of the individual first-year student, the University identifies some social/personal needs better than others. Recent investments include: (1) counseling services across campus; (2) money management; and, (3) Community of Concern (behavior intervention team). In addition, the University has some new and recent initiatives related to meeting the personal needs of students, including alcohol and drug recovery programming, involvement advisors (who strategically contact students struggling with feelings of being disconnected as identified through analytics), and mindfulness/meditation programming. There are also pockets of work being conducted around a number of other issues, such as food insecurity. While some efforts are strong, the University has only recently defined the concept of “belonging,” and the data and conclusions regarding social and personal needs are not as strong.

Addressing social/personal needs is a much broader task than addressing academic needs. Historically, social needs have not been a priority for the University (see earlier statement on belonging and analytics) and, to some extent, we are still defining what those needs are. There is an ongoing divide for students from underrepresented minorities (URM) and those with unmet needs particularly regarding access to programs. Living Learning Programs (LLPs) are not economically feasible for all and the University is in the process of shifting its scholarship model to provide more need-based scholarships. The University is also instituting a two-year housing rate lock, for both new and returning students, to reduce costs for students who return to live on campus for a second year. There is also underrepresentation in some of the high impact practices, including Living Learning Programs (LLPs) and undergraduate research. The University is currently expanding resources for off-campus advising to foster a positive gain toward retention. The committee noted that, until recently, there was little being done to engage some student populations, particularly off-campus students and non-traditional students.

6.3 Student Experiences
For student experiences the committee chose to focus on individualized attention from faculty versus individualized attention from staff and concluded that the lack of individual attention from faculty is an area of concern. In a specific survey question, “to what degree does your instructor provide individualized
attention,” fifty percent (50%) of students responded that their instructor provided individualized attention either “Not at all, Seldom, or Sometimes.” In Foundations of Excellence (FoE) survey data responses from faculty/staff, forty percent (40%) ranked individualized attention given to students as “Not at all or Seldom.”

In assessing academic support outside the classroom an extensive list of resources was noted on the FoE site for student support. Academic support is mandated for those on academic probation. All first-year students are required to see an advisor ensuring students are directed toward proper resources. The Community of Concern program connects at-risk students with resources for support. That said, the number of students who would benefit from support is increasing and UK is losing more students proportionally who are bored, unchallenged, or in the mid-range academically (e.g., the University’s middle High School Readiness Index of 40-50). This indicates that the University may be falling short in the attention given to high-achieving students and those students in the middle range academically. Given recent efforts made to expand the Honors College, greater attention may need to be given to students who fall in the middle range of preparedness.

Regarding opportunities for campus involvement, the most recent data from Fall 2016 continues to show that living on campus is important to the student experience. Retention rates (Fall 2016) are 75.6 percent for off-campus students; 81.2 percent for on-campus students; and 89.1 for students in Living Learning Programs (LLPs). The lack of a Student Center has influenced campus involvement and there has been less of a sense of place for students. The Student Activities Board does a great job of offering extensive opportunities with over five hundred (500) organizations. Over 5,000 freshmen were involved in the annual “Campus Ruckus.” In addition, there are opportunities for international groups, the Martin Luther King Center; LGBTQ* Resources, and many programs through Residence Life and Campus Recreation. However the University falls short in capturing the needs and offering opportunities for non-traditional and commuter students. The greatest challenges regarding opportunities for campus involvement include the following: (1) activities being offered for all students (focusing on needs of sub populations - limited opportunities for some student identities); (2) often activities are not promoted broadly enough to all students, or are selective in their marketing efforts (not inclusive to all students); and (3) there is no central place to find accurate, timely information for events and programs on campus.

Efforts for an inclusive campus are being advanced. It is frequently difficult to know how to effectively assess “inclusiveness,” as those who host events do not analyze data by groups. A review of responses to questions related to social experiences shows percentages between fifty percent and eighty percent (50% - 80%) in some subpopulations ranking their social experiences as neutral or negative (i.e. Moderately, Slightly, Not at All). While identified subpopulations are being recruited to the University, they are entering into an environment where they report feelings of “aloneness and isolation.” Lower rankings for social experiences were generally noted in responses from International Students. When looking at students with multiple identities, they reported higher percentages of marginalization (e.g. First-Gen and URM) as found in both the Student Survey Cross Tab data and quantitative data from units who serve those subpopulations.

6.4: Subpopulations
First and foremost, the committee affirms the phenomenal work being done within the departments and designated space for the identified subpopulations – examples include: Martin Luther King Center (serving approximately 700 students), Disability Resource Center (serving approximately 400 first-year students), LGBTQ* Resources (student numbers not available), Veterans Center (serving approximately 700 students),
Honors Programs (serving approximately 450 first-year students), Robinson Scholars (serving 29 first-year students), International Studies (serving approximately 150 first-year students), Center for Academic and Enrichment Services-CARES (serving 587 first-year students), and Student Support Services (serving approximately 60 first-year students), and in many other departments at the University. Many of those programs have clearly defined and designated space, which signifies a commitment from the University.

Overall, however, UK is still serving selectively and failing to serve “All Students.” Leaving the work to individual offices does not promote intersectionality (see earlier comments related to inclusive campus environment), can potentially isolate the efforts of departments and units from others, and fails to address the totality of student needs (e.g. academic, social, personal, financial). Both faculty and staff agree that there are not enough opportunities on campus for students to interact with those different from themselves. The University must respond at an institutional level so that inclusivity and meeting student needs does not rest solely on a department/unit supporting that specific subpopulation. The Committee noted that resources need to be committed within the subpopulations of Veterans, adult students, International students, Commuter (off-campus) students, and student with disabilities.

The committee also defined five (5) additional subpopulations to assess and rank under the category of "Other"

1. Pell Eligible Students - Low
2. Appalachian Students (designated Kentucky counties only) – Very Low
3. Aging out of Foster System Students – Very Low
4. Single Parent Students – Very Low
5. Gender – (across certain programs and colleges) Very Low

Several of these initiatives appear to be small in scale, reactive, and not proactively communicated. Regarding the current Pell-eligible subpopulation, there are several new initiatives. Similarly, for Appalachian students, Foster-system students, and regarding gender, there are a few developments, but all are in the very early stages. While Appalachian students are tracked in our analytics, the data is not used for a formative purpose. At the same time UK is just beginning to assess those aging-out of foster system as a subpopulation – and intentional efforts directed to this subpopulation are very small. An additional area for programmatic growth is in the Gender subpopulation.

6.5: Physical and psychological safety
The University has invested substantial funding over the past few years to ensure campus safety with updated technology, the LiveSafe App, and additional police officers on the University police force. In assessing survey responses to questions related to campus environment and safety, seventy-six percent (76%) of students positively rated their feeling of physical safety on campus as “very high.” However, communicating with and educating students about resources in place for their safety is lacking. The University does not devote a sufficient amount of time to proactively conveying behavioral expectations for
students or proactively communicating basic safety precautions. Current efforts include passive inclusion during K-Week and are not a focus in orientation sessions.

In the Campus Environment portion of the FoE survey student responses, forty-two percent (42%) of students negatively rated the degree to which they can express beliefs without concern ("not at all or slightly"). Similar percentages are reported for exposure to hate speech or derogatory language at UK. The initiatives designed to combat some of the psychological safety concerns are reactive in nature (e.g. Bias Incident Support Services and Bias Incident Response Team). Related to physical safety, the University needs to proactively communicate its related resources and values. This performance indicator may also be served by previous recommendations related to inclusive campus environment (6.3) and helping all students (6.4).

**Recommended Grade & Rationale**

Recommended Grade: C/C-
Rationale: As a University, we are serving certain subpopulations of students well; however, while selectively serving some subpopulations, we are failing to serve all students.

**Recommendations for Action**

1. **Academic Expectations/Summer Preparedness** - UK has great analytics regarding HSRI, CCI, APP, and underprepared students overall. UK needs to intentionally engage subpopulations of underprepared students before Fall semester and arriving on campus. - **High Priority**

2. **Academic Expectations for all Students/UK 101** - Expand UK 101 concept to create a version related to a student’s discipline of study; making sure courses count for credit toward degree. - **High Priority**

3. **Expansion of the Living Learning Program Concept** - Identify ways to make LLPs economically accessible to all students who may be interested and make them more accessible to marginalized students, particularly across race/ethnicity; explore ways to give the experience of an LLP to other students; explore way to create optional LLPs based on a specific identification of individual versus discipline of study; work toward better education and communication of the benefits of living on campus. - **High Priority**

4. **Facilitate student interaction with instructors** - Work toward a solution to ensure students meet with instructors and realize the impact of this interaction. - **High Priority**

5. **Continue pilot program in Student Activities Board to create a master calendar for activities** - Create a master calendar of events and opportunities - possibly an app download that is specific to a student-created profile with predefined interests populated as opportunities based on a student’s interests. - **High Priority**
6. *Intentional communication of activities and programs* - Be broad and intentional when advertising or promoting programs so all subpopulations feel welcome, be intentional in reaching out to all groups. - *High Priority*

7. *Academic Expectations/Summer Bridge* - Increase summer bridge programs specifically in response to needs for developmental student success. - *High Priority*

8. *Educate students on campus safety resources* - Set clear expectations for what students need to know to be safe and communicate these resources and expectations. Intentional communication of safety resources throughout K-Week and Orientation sessions. - *High Priority*

9. *Invest resources in mental health and physical health of students* - Invest financial resources and educate students on available campus resources for mental and physical health, specifically the Counseling Center and University Health Services. - *High Priority*

10. *Course Expectations* - Use the first portion of a course (with high DEW rate for example) to explain what is expected of student, how to study, etc.; review course curriculum to add "how to study" aspects as part of the course curriculum. - *Medium Priority*

11. *Faculty Development/Training* - Additional training for faculty who teach first-year courses. Faculty are the cornerstone to a good first-year experience; therefore we must make sure they are informed of all the available resources for students. - *Medium Priority*

12. *Involvement Advisors* - Continue to utilize and assess the pilot program, "Involvement Advisors" and work to broaden this program. - *Medium Priority*

13. *Intentional acts of engagement with students* - Create opportunities to show that someone cares either through faculty interaction or staff interaction with each student. Invest in and develop experiences that offer a small group situation for first-year students. - *Medium Priority*

14. *Assess the "why" of students not attending programs/events* - Move forward in assessing the "why" of student non-attendance at University-sponsored programs – is it a communication issue – not aware of the event, a schedule/timing issue, an inclusion issue? - *Medium Priority*

15. *Improve resources for non-traditional and off-campus students* - Continue improving resources for non-traditional and off-campus students. - *Medium Priority*

16. *Compile helpful information from current freshmen for incoming freshmen* - Compile helpful information from current freshmen to relay to incoming freshmen – what to expect, what current freshmen, after experiencing their first year, would do differently. - *Medium Priority*

17. *Continue investing in first-year programs that are working well* - Continue investment in Honors College, LLPs, etc., and model these programs for other subpopulations. - *Medium Priority*

18. *Continue investing in designated spaces for defined subpopulations* - Continue investing in departments and units that support defined subpopulations. - *Medium Priority*

19. *Increase opportunities to create a sense of belonging for International Students* - Create opportunities for campus interaction among and with International Students. This subpopulation reported the highest percentage in feeling isolated and lacking a sense of belonging. - *Medium Priority*
20. Increase opportunities for involvement with Adult Students, Veterans, and Commuter Students - Create opportunities for engagement of adult and commuter students with the campus - ask what types of programs and events would be beneficial to their sense of belonging. - **Medium Priority**

21. Intentional marketing and communication regarding resources for Pell-eligible students. - **Medium Priority**

22. Use analytics to be informed on specific areas to deliver intentional programming - The University, through the use of data and analytics, can be better informed on specific areas and subpopulations in need of programming, for example: programs related to gender, Women in STEM; URM Males, or by discipline—for example, programs related to males in the College of Nursing. Create surveys for assessing impact of programs and initiatives. Review data currently being collected within the University that addresses the specific performance indicator areas. - **Medium Priority**

**Sources of Evidence**

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<td>11</td>
<td>K Week and Move-in Survey Fall 2017.pdf</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Student Demographics.pdf</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>UK 101 201 Presentation May 2017.pdf</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>Academic Alert Data SP 18.pdf</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>Best Practices in the First Year _Matthews.pdf</td>
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<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Wildcat Foundations - Communication Overview</td>
<td>Master Notebook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Graduating_Senior_Survey_2017.pdf</td>
<td>Institutional Research &amp; the Career Center</td>
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<td>35</td>
<td>FYSS_2017_First-Year_Transfer_Student_Survey.pdf</td>
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<td>36</td>
<td>National Survey of Student Engagement results</td>
<td>Institutional Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>NSSE18_SurveyQs_US_English.pdf</td>
<td>Institutional Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td>EOY Master Slide Deck Spring 2017.pdf</td>
<td>Blevins</td>
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<td>66</td>
<td>EOY by URM.pdf</td>
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<td>67</td>
<td>K Week Disaggregated by URM Status.pdf</td>
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<td>Fall 2016 Student Demographics GRS Cohort.pdf</td>
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<td>Overall Factors by RaceEthn, Gender, # of friends, Age.pdf</td>
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<td>76</td>
<td>Academic Advising.pdf</td>
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<td>77</td>
<td>Campus Environments (Support and Belonging).pdf</td>
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<td>78</td>
<td>Quality of Instruction (Student Survey).pdf</td>
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<td>College Readiness Indicators 2017-2018</td>
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<td>UK 101 Retention Data.pdf</td>
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<td>UK 101 Retention.Subgroups.pdf</td>
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Foundations Institutions ensure that all first-year students experience diverse ideas, worldviews, and cultures as a means of enhancing their learning and preparing them to become members of pluralistic communities.

Whatever their demographic composition, institutions structure experiences in which students interact in an open and civil community with people from backgrounds and cultures different from their own, reflect on ideas and values different from those they currently hold, and explore their own cultures and the cultures of others.

Section 1: Executive Summary

The Diversity Dimension Committee was charged with examining the status and effectiveness of the institution’s current efforts toward exposing first-year students to diverse ideas, worldviews and cultures. Specifically, the group reviewed three performance indicators (PI):

7.1 - The degree to which the institution assures that first-year students experience diverse ideas and world views through initiatives based in the curriculum and co-curricular activities.

7.2 - The degree to which the institution structures opportunities for first-year students to interact with individuals from backgrounds and cultures different from their own.

7.3 – The degree to which the institution communicates to students the standards of behavior it expects for partnerships in a diverse, open and civil campus community.

Because little pre-existing data regarding these performance indicators were available, the committee relied heavily on the first-year survey for staff, faculty and students conducted by Gardner.

For PI 7.1, most ratings by faculty, students and staff of the institution’s effectiveness of exposure of students to diverse ideas were lower than the expected goal. Faculty and staff tended to rate the University’s effectiveness in creating opportunities for students to interact with individuals from backgrounds different from their own (PI 7.2) lower than the ratings provided by the students. Similar differences were noted between faculty and staff on PI 7.3, as 68% students rated the University’s efforts in communicating behavioral expectations as being effective, while 45% of faculty and staff indicated the same rating. There was also variability among student groups, as Hispanic students provided lower ratings, while Caucasian students responded with higher ratings.

In discussing how to improve the exposure of first-year students to diverse ideas and to address the identified performance indicators, the committee developed the following recommendations:

1. Development of a curricular requirement for all first-year students to be exposed to diverse ideas, worldviews, world religions and persons from a range of socioeconomic statuses.
2. Include an intentional diversity thread in all aspects of recruitment, onboarding and throughout the first-year experience that is inclusive to both on-and-off-campus students.
3. Reinstitute the Common Reading Experience.
4. Emphasize and market education abroad to first-year students, with a need-based work match program and tie-in to UK 101.
5.Expose students to mental and physical wellness principles through consistent and accessible wellness programming, mental health first aid, and mindfulness training.
6. Require all rising freshmen to register with iGrad.
7. Provide consistently available professional education for faculty in facilitating difficult conversations.
8. Develop co-curricular transcript and certificate programs.
9. Consider ways to encourage faculty participation in key events.
10. Incorporate service-learning opportunities as part of first-year curriculum.

Diversity Dimension Committee

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Wildcat Foundations Final Report

96
**Narrative of General Situation and Findings of the Dimension Committee**

**7.1: Diverse Ideas** – *To what degree does the Institution assure that first-year students experience diverse ideas and world views through initiatives based in the curriculum, initiatives based in the co-curriculum, and initiatives integrated across the curriculum and co-curriculum?*

**Current Situation and Sources of Evidence**

The committee relied heavily on the data collected in the student and faculty/staff surveys in assessing the performance of the Institution in regard to Performance Indicator (PI) 7.1. Overall, student survey data indicated ratings below the expected goal of 3.5 in all of the areas related to exposure to diverse ideas, with the lowest rating related to exposure to world religions (2.7) and exposure to different political views (2.7). Ratings regarding exposure to world cultures (3.05) and exposure to issues related to social class/economic status (3.11), were also below the goal.

When evaluating student survey data regarding exposure to diverse thought by race, students self-identifying as Hispanic or having two or more races tended to have more negative responses, while students identifying as white tended to rate the Institution more positively. Males and international students tended to rate the Institution as being less effective in this area.

Staff survey results related to the first-year experience, curricular, and co-curricular activities were also rated below the expected goal, with only 37% responding that the University was effective in exposing students to diverse thought in curricular activities and 32.8% indicating the University was effective in their co-curricular efforts. When reviewing effectiveness ratings by college and unit, there was variability in the responses; however, all but one rated the diversity exposure and interaction first-year experience efforts below the goal mean. Faculty and staff from the President’s Office, Provost/Administration, and College of Education provided the lowest ratings.

**Opportunities and Challenges**

The data and input from stakeholders provide clear evidence regarding the need to expand efforts to expose students to diverse thoughts and beliefs in both curricular and co-curricular environments. While there are opportunities for students to be exposed to activities outside the typical environment, there is no consistent experience that requires first-year students to focus on expanding their worldview, through either curricular or co-curricular engagements. Another opportunity is that the experiences of students of different races
regarding diverse thought is inconsistent; the data clearly showed variability in the effectiveness ratings by race among respondents. The committee recognizes the challenge of increasing efforts related to expanding the worldviews of first-year students, as there are operational, psychological, financial, and political implications. Careful planning must take place throughout the implementation process of such initiatives, with a strong partnership between administration, faculty, staff, students, and community partners. It is the opinion of the committee that, if students have a set of first-year experiences that make them feel both welcome and challenged in terms of their worldview, then increased retention and belonging to the University will result. Intentional planning and implementation of such curricular and co-curricular programming will not only increase the University’s performance on target metrics, but also create more revenue, which will, in turn, offset the cost of the recommended changes.

7.1 Recommendations (Some recommendations may be in multiple PIs)
In considering the data and factors noted, the committee makes the following recommendations:

1. Development of a curricular requirement for all first-year students to be exposed to diverse ideas, worldviews, world religions and persons from a range of socioeconomic statuses - If the University is truly committed to expanding the worldviews and social enlightenment of students there must be some mandatory components wherein students can experience this exposure and these experiences while receiving academic credit. A required component would also ensure off-campus students are included accordingly.

2. Including an intentional diversity thread in all aspects of recruitment, onboarding and throughout the first-year experience - The University must show its commitment to diversity by infusing that value clearly and consistently in campus tours, Merit Weekend, “see blue.” U Summer Advising, Fusion, K-Week, etc. Demonstrating a consistent dedication to diversity from recruitment forward will communicate the emphasis and importance the University places on ensuring the expansion of student worldviews and self-enlightenment during their time at UK.

3. Reintroduce the Common Reading Experience (CRE) - The CRE offered an opportunity for all first-year students and faculty to share an experience together regarding a topic intended to challenge existing perceptions and assumptions while fostering a more expansive understanding of, and conversation about, different viewpoints.

4. Emphasize and market education abroad to first-year students - Exposure to other cultures through immersion to expand the students’ worldview has long been University practice. Recognizing this existing practice as effective, the committee felt the first year would be a prime opportunity for students to expand their perceptions of themselves and others by traveling abroad early in college experience.

5. Development of a need-based work match program with first-year students and education abroad - Many underrepresented groups and first-generation students may not have the financial resources for education abroad. Providing an opportunity for students to raise funds for travel through work
activities has a dual benefit, as these students will be able to have a rich cultural experience, gain valuable work skills, and connect with multiple departments within the University.

6. **Education abroad tie-in to UK 101** – Create a section(s) of UK 101 with a short education abroad opportunity, making sure it is marketed to first-generation and underrepresented groups.

7. **Expose students to mental and physical wellness principles through consistent and accessible wellness programming, mental health first aid, and mindfulness training** – Wellness is a vital component of self-enlightenment and it is critical that the University expose students to wellness principles, practices, and training to instill a sense of wellbeing and confidence across all student populations.

8. **Require all rising freshmen to register with iGrad** – Exposing first-year students to fundamental principles of financial literacy is critical for retention and overall success; iGrad provides tools for students to access such information.

9. **The University must be intentional about creating opportunities for off-campus student participation in all diversity-related programming** – Many students have made the intentional choice to live off campus and do so for various reasons. The University must ensure the inclusion of these students in programming to ensure they have an equal opportunity to fully participate in diversity-oriented activities.

**7.2 Interactions** - To what degree does the institution structure opportunities for first-year students to interact with individuals from backgrounds and cultures different from their own within the following categories? A) Faculty/staff at the institution; B) Other students at the institution; C) Individuals outside the institution

**Current Situation and Sources of Evidence**

In reviewing the student survey to assess the Institution’s performance in regard to Performance Indicator (PI) 7.2, several areas of note became evident. Overall student survey data indicate ratings below the expected goal of 3.5 in all of the areas related to interactions with individuals from backgrounds and cultures different from their own, with the lowest rating related to interactions with individuals from backgrounds and cultures different from their own outside of the institution (2.74). Ratings regarding interactions with faculty/staff from backgrounds and cultures different from their own were also below the goal (3.22). While the ratings for interactions with other students was very close to the goal (3.49), we examined this data in more detail, which brought forth important indicators of note. Only students identifying as non-Hispanic white had a mean above the goal; all other racial/ethnic groups were below the target and, in some cases, significantly below the target (for students from two or more races, as one example). This appears to indicate that non-Hispanic white students felt that there were opportunities for interaction with individuals from other backgrounds. The committee acknowledges that there could be differences in how students were answering and perceiving these questions. For example, a non-Hispanic white student who grew up in a county that was exclusively white may count seeing students of other racial/ethnic groups in classes as exposure, even if no meaningful interaction occurred.

**Opportunities and Challenges**

One opportunity, given the data, is that UK should define what is meant by interaction. The committee discussed presence at the same event versus an exchange of ideas in structured activities. We believe that consistent and varied exchanges of ideas would lead to more meaningful interactions. For the faculty/staff interaction, we selected the “Low” rating because, while there are some opportunities for individuals from different backgrounds to be present at the same event, there are not opportunities that really encourage meaningful exchanges between students and faculty/staff.
One challenge that needs to be considered is how to ensure significant interactions among individuals from different backgrounds and cultures in colleges/departments with lower diversity (across a variety of dimensions). Concerns include awareness of the difficulty in singling out the few colleges or departments that may be identifiable as part of the select number that, via lack of diversity across a number of dimensions, may result in the worsening of outcomes for certain underrepresented groups of students. For individuals outside the institution, programs such as Fusion and Education Abroad may provide opportunities that are not recognized by faculty, staff, or students as creating opportunities for interactions with individuals from backgrounds and cultures different from their own. Scores may be lower on this dimension due to a lack of awareness regarding the impact of these programs, among other diversity initiatives and opportunities. As a University, we need to help students recognize the variety and value of these opportunities and also ensure that students are aware of existing scholarship possibilities, in addition to creating other new programs and funding sources.

7.2 Recommendations (Some recommendations may be in multiple PIs)
In considering the data and factors noted, the committee makes the following recommendations:

1. **Reinstitute the Common Reading Experience (CRE)** – The CRE offered an opportunity for all first-year students and faculty to share an experience together regarding a topic intended to challenge people’s perceptions of diverse communities and experiences while fostering a better, and more multifaceted, understanding of different viewpoints. Reinstating the CRE would have the additional benefit of creating opportunities for faculty and students to interact in meaningful ways.

2. **Consider ways to encourage faculty participation in key events.** Concerns were also raised by the committee over current faculty participation in events. We recommend developing strategies to encourage (and perhaps incentivize) faculty/staff participation at events, and to clearly communicate this expectation to all faculty. Such communication might occur during the DOE conversation.

3. **Emphasize and market education abroad to first-year students** – Exposure to other cultures through immersion as a way of expanding students’ worldviews has long been a University practice. Recognizing this, the committee felt the first year would be a prime opportunity for students to expand their worldviews through education abroad programs. Immersive programs abroad would also create meaningful interactions with individuals from different backgrounds outside of the institution.

4. **Incorporate service-learning opportunities as part of the first-year curriculum.** There is a growing recognition of the importance of service learning opportunities to improve student success outcomes. Incorporation of service-learning into the first-year curriculum could have the additional benefit of increasing student interactions with individuals from diverse backgrounds and cultures. Meaningful and intentional service learning work also creates more engagement opportunities for UK students within our surrounding communities. Moreover, incorporating service during the first year, and doing so in a sustainable and meaningful way, creates the opportunity for a student’s community-based work to last well beyond the initial curricular requirement.
7.3 Behavior Standards – To what degree does the institution convey to students the standards of behavior it expects for partnerships in a diverse, open and civil campus community?

Current Situation and Sources of Evidence
In contrast to the responses to the other performance indicators in the dimension, 68.2% of students rated the University as conveying behavioral standards effectively or highly effectively. When disaggregated by race/ethnicity, Hispanic students rate the effectiveness lower than other identified groups. Of staff responding to the survey, 45% indicated that the University was effective or highly effective in conveying its own standard of behavior. This is a salient gap when compared to the student ratings. This difference was noted and discussed by the committee, with the group theorizing that faculty/staff have the benefit of a broader perspective and have had the opportunity to notice gaps in the information provided to first-year students.

Opportunities and Challenges
The diversity of the campus environment is both an opportunity and a challenge for many students. Oftentimes college is the first interaction between individuals from different backgrounds in terms of culture, politics, and/or socioeconomic level. This exposure can be both enlightening and frightening the first time, which can elicit a plethora of behavioral responses, not all of which are positive. The challenge for the University of Kentucky is to develop an environment that clearly communicates expectations of behavior but does not restrict the growth process for students experiencing diversity in their own individual ways. The challenge falls to faculty, staff and administrators to facilitate conversations, oftentimes uncomfortable ones, on both a micro and macro level. In response to this challenge, the University must take the responsibility to train staff/faculty/administration regarding appropriate strategies for managing these conversations in a fair and inclusive way, ensuring that a variety of experiences and views are considered and respected.

Additionally, as indicated by the survey data, there seems to be discrepancies between the views of students regarding the communication of behavioral standards and how staff/faculty feel they are expressed. Further feedback from staff regarding these potential gaps may need to be collected to better understand this scenario.

7.3 Recommendations (Some recommendations may be in multiple PIs)
It is with these considerations in mind that the committee offers the following recommendations:

1. Include an intentional diversity thread in all aspects of first-year onboarding experience - While already discussed, the emphasis on diversity must clearly be communicated to current and prospective students, parents, staff, faculty and administrators, including contract and temporary staff.

2. Provide consistently-available professional education for facilitating difficult conversations - Challenging others to alter their perspectives is no easy task, especially when trying to privilege a universally-positive experience. It is not reasonable to believe that all those who have contact with first-year students would hold the requisite skills necessary to manage these interactions. Staff and
faculty must be trained on how to model and exemplify a certain standard of behavioral expectations while facilitating a wide range of difficult conversations.

3. *Development of co-curricular transcript and certificate programs* - To encourage and reinforce the value of diversity to students, the University should develop a vehicle to recognize students for their efforts. Two such opportunities could include co-curricular transcript or certificate program to offer something concrete and tangible for completion of diversity programming and training. Students could then include this certificate/transcript on academic program applications or resumés.

**Recommended Grade & Rationale**

Recommended Grade: D

Rationale: With respect to the data collected from both the student and staff/faculty population, there were no performance indicators that provided evidence that the University was meeting its expectations of promoting diverse thought to students in their first year. Comments from committee members indicated a history of effective programs and activities, but many had fallen to the wayside due to decreasing participation and engagement. They also noted no clear commitment to adequate funding and staff resources to provide a cohesive and comprehensive plan which would ensure true exposure to a diversity of ideas and meaningful interactions with individuals from other backgrounds.

**Recommendations**

7.1 **Recommendations (Some recommendations may be in multiple PIs)**

In considering the data and factors noted, the committee makes the following recommendations:

1. *Development of a curricular requirement for all first-year students to be exposed to diverse ideas, worldviews, world religions, and persons from a range of socioeconomic statuses.* - If the University is truly committed to expanding the worldviews and social enlightenment of students there must be some mandatory components wherein students can experience this exposure and these experiences while receiving academic credit. A required component would also ensure off-campus students are included accordingly.

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2. Consider ways to encourage faculty participation in key events - Concerns were also raised by the committee over current faculty participation in events. We recommend developing strategies to encourage (and perhaps incentivize) faculty/staff participation at events, and to clearly communicate this expectation to all faculty. Such communication could come as a part of the DOE, which would require attendance at a given set of events.
3. **Emphasizing and marketing education abroad to first-year students** - Exposure to other cultures through immersion as a way of expanding students’ worldviews has long been University practice. Recognizing this, the committee felt the first year would be a prime opportunity for students to expand their worldviews through traveling abroad. Immersive programs abroad would also create meaningful interactions with individuals from different backgrounds outside of the institution.

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### 7.3 Recommendations (Some recommendations may be in multiple PIs)

It is with these considerations in mind that the committee offers the following recommendations:

1. **Include an intentional diversity thread in all aspects of first-year onboarding experience** - While already discussed, the emphasis on diversity must clearly be communicated to current and prospective students, parents, staff, faculty and administrators, including contract and temporary staff.

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### Sources of Evidence

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<td>K Week and Move-in Survey Fall 2017.pdf</td>
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<td>UK 101 Retention Data.pdf</td>
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<td>UK 101 Retention.Subgroups.pdf</td>
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Roles and Purposes Dimension Report

Foundations Institutions promote student understanding of the various roles and purposes of higher education, both for the individual and society.

These roles and purposes include knowledge acquisition for personal growth, learning to prepare for future employment, learning to become engaged citizens, and learning to serve the public good. Institutions encourage first-year students to systematically examine their motivation and goals regarding higher education in general and their own college or university. Students are exposed to the value of general education as well as to the value of more focused, in-depth study of a field or fields of knowledge (i.e., the major).

Executive Summary

The committee collected a broad-based set of evidence for the purposes of exploring how and where these roles and purposes are communicated to first-year students. There was some sentiment among committee members that this broad look at evidence may have included materials/information that does not intentionally communicate roles or purposes. The consensus of the committee was the need for the University to issue an assessment for first-year students, then develop a strategic method of communicating roles and purposes across all platforms (from high school through the first year), which should lead to branding implications for messaging roles and purposes. Additionally, there should be a purposeful exposure for all first-year students around the University’s roles and purposes when considering both curricular and co-curricular programming at the College and University level. College-level courses should be linked directly to the University branding of roles and purposes.
Section 2: Roles and Purposes dimension committee

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Narrative on General Situation and Findings of the Dimension Committee

Four roles and purposes were provided by the Gardner Institute Foundations of Excellence (FoE). They include:

1. Knowledge acquisition for personal growth
2. Learning to prepare for future employment
3. Learning to become engaged citizens
4. Learning to serve the public good

The Gardner Institute also provided two performance indicators.

1. Effectiveness of campus communication about the roles and purposes noted above
2. Campus effectiveness in providing students the opportunity to explore their own motivation for college attendance as well as the rationale for required courses and competencies

The committee collected a broad-based set of evidence for the purposes of exploring how and where these roles and purposes are communicated to first-year students. There was some sentiment among committee members that this broad look at evidence may have included materials/information that does not intentionally communicate roles or purposes. The committee in some cases felt as if we were forcing a
square peg into a round hole. Nonetheless the committee agreed that for our purposes it made sense to be overly inclusive in the evidence considered.

The committee also collected and considered a broad array of evidences as we explored the roles and purposes dimension. These evidences included the Foundations of Excellence surveys of both faculty/staff and students, materials pertaining to student recruitment, materials associated with new student orientation, UK 101 course description and syllabus, UK blueprint for student success, UK Core, and the professional judgment of the roles and purposes committee. The remainder of the narrative section of this document is organized around the questions associated with Purposes, Motivation, and Rationale as outlined in the Gardner Institute FoE.

Purposes
To what degree does the campus effectively communicate to first-year students its vision for the following purposes of higher education?

Including: knowledge acquisition for personal growth, learning to prepare for future employment, learning for engaged citizenship, and learning for serving the public good.

There is a broad array of means by which the four purposes listed above are communicated to first-year students. These opportunities begin during the recruitment process and continue throughout the first-year experience. This communication occurs through promotional materials and electronic communications during the recruitment process, and to some degree after matriculation. It occurs during Merit Weekends and “see blue.” U, and during K-Week at a variety of events, including the New Student Induction. It occurs at the university-level and at the college-level. Despite, or possibly because of, this multi-platform, multi-modal approach to communicating the purposes of higher education, it is not clear that we describe them in a systematic and effective way. Messaging pertaining to personal growth, future employment, engaged citizenship, and serving the public good does exist. Unfortunately, it seems this messaging is not delivered in a comprehensively strategic way.

Motivation
To what degree does the institution intentionally provide opportunities for first-year students to examine their personal motivation for pursuing higher education?

There is some intentionality in providing first-year students at the University of Kentucky with opportunities to examine their personal motivations for pursuing higher education. Enrollment Management and supporting offices, departments, and colleges on campus provide information as early as recruitment events for prospective students (e.g., UK and You, etc.). Merit Weekends and “see blue.” U provide programming where there are opportunities to examine personal motivation, although there is some question as to the intentionality regarding the provision of these opportunities. At college-level events and communication there are other opportunities for students to examine personal motivations through the variety of events associated with K-Week; there is, however, variation from college to college as to the associated messaging. Perhaps the most intentional institution-wide opportunity occurs during the New Student Induction Ceremony. UK 101 is a program with similar possibility for reflection; however, since all first-year students do not take UK 101 there is some limitation to the number of students who have access to this information through the course. Most colleges also provide their first-year students with
programming that exposes them to opportunities for consideration of their personal motivation for pursuing higher education. Because these opportunities are provided at the college level, as opposed to the institution level, there is, of course, variation across colleges. The UK Core might provide another opportunity for students to intentionally examine their personal motivations. All first-year students are enrolled in UK Core classes. That said, it is not clear that opportunities for examining personal motivations for pursuing higher education are embedded in the UK Core curriculum or in the individual classes.

**Rationale**

*To what degree does the campus effectively communicate its rationale for the following:* 

*Required courses (e.g., core curriculum, distribution, and general education), required competencies (e.g., library skills, computing, writing), and requirements for entry into majors?*

The UK Core encompasses the general education requirements for students at the University. This requirement consists of 30 credit hours across four competencies: intellectual inquiry, composition and communication, quantitative reasoning, and global and national citizenship. While the UK Core is clearly identified and understood to be a requirement for graduation by most first-year students, it is not clear that the rationale for the UK Core is being systematically communicated. More opportunities for articulating that philosophy should be considered. Academic advising and instruction of UK Core classes would seem to be two places where that rationale could be strategically communicated.

Another core competency required of all undergraduates at the University is the Graduation Composition and Communication Requirement (GCCR). This requirement is not typically fulfilled by students in their first year, and fulfillment of this requirement is unique to each specific major. However it does seem that there are opportunities during the first year for academic advising and instruction to lay the groundwork for clearer understanding of the rationale for the GCCR.

The requirements for entry into majors vary across colleges and majors. Some colleges on campus have selective admission criteria that must be met prior to admission to the degree program (e.g., the Gatton College of Business & Economics, the College of Engineering, the College of Health Sciences, the College of Public Health and the College of Nursing). Other colleges do not have selective admission criteria beyond University requirements. It seems that major requirements are communicated through academic advising; however, it is less clear as to whether the rationale behind these major requirements is widely communicated in an effective manner. Within the past couple of years exploratory majors were adopted by most colleges on campus. Prior to that adoption, many students who had not yet determined a major area of study were served through a centralized advising unit within Undergraduate Studies. The undergraduate education structure that included this centralized advising unit provided the potential advantage of broad-based academic advising allowing first-year students to explore a variety of majors. In contrast, the move to offering college-specific exploratory majors provides the advantage of more targeted exploration where the requirements for entry into majors can be communicated, along with their rationale.
Recommended Grade & Rationale

Recommended Grade: C-

Rationale: The rationale for our assigned grade of a C- is based on the following thoughts. There are many opportunities for communicating the roles and purposes of a higher education to first-year students and this is positive. However, the committee felt that the roles and purposes are not communicated systematically or effectively. There is no unified messaging around the roles and purposes, and there is significant variation across units as to what is communicated regarding roles and purposes and how it is done.

Too often the roles and purposes of higher education are an afterthought in communication, rather than a focal point. There is a strong need for campus-wide, community-shaped messaging that is universally communicated.

Regarding the roles and purposes noted above, our committee felt there is significant room for improvement across all four. There are pockets of excellence on campus regarding the second role and purpose, which is learning to prepare for future employment; however, our work regarding preparation for future employment is often more strongly focused on students in their junior and senior years, as opposed to first-year students.

Recommendations for Action

1. Administer some form of assessment to all first-year students. One example is StrengthsQuest. Beyond the assessment of all first-year students, it is recommended that these assessment results be broadly and strategically incorporated into multiple activities where first-year students participate (e.g., “see blue.” U Orientation, K-Week, UK 101, academic advising appointments, Residence Life, LLP’s, select UK Core classes, etc.).

2. All entering students should be exposed to the roles and purposes of higher education. Students entering as exploratory majors should be specifically and purposefully targeted. The systematic and persuasive communication of roles and purposes will benefit all students, especially our exploratory majors as they participate in the process of selecting a major.

3. Incorporate roles and purposes into the UK Core courses and look for ways to inspire interest among first-year students in the UK Core.

4. The work that the Center for Enhancement of Learning and Teaching (CELT) does is instrumental to the instruction on our campus. This unit has an influential voice and we recommend that, whenever and wherever possible, roles and purposes should become a part of the CELT messaging. CELT could be very helpful in recommending ways to incorporate roles and purposes into the UK Core courses.

5. Provide consistent and repetitive messaging regarding roles and purposes across all platforms. This will require collaborative work across many areas of UK, including Enrollment Management, Marketing and Communication, Residence Life, Student and Academic Life, Undergraduate Colleges on campus, Living Learning Programs (LLP) materials and on-campus meetings, etc. It will also require collaborative work across all levels of the UK hierarchy. Additionally, the University should consider revising the UK 101 course to more consistently and strategically incorporate roles and purposes into the UK 101 classroom and assignments.
6. The messaging around roles and purposes has branding implications that should be considered from a strategic perspective. UK Marketing and Communications should play a significant role in the strategic delivery of the branding messaging related to roles and purposes.

7. Because one of the four roles and purposes focuses on future employment, creating career exploration opportunities for all first-year students is critical. It is recommended that the Stuckert Career Center develop and deliver programming focused on career exploration that primarily targets first-year students. This programming should be developed in collaboration with existing college career services offices on campus (e.g., the Graham Office of Career Management in the Gatton College, Career Services in the College of Engineering, the College of Agriculture, Food and Environment, and the Lewis Honors College).

8. Develop messaging and programming designed to communicate roles and purposes to high school counselors. Clear messaging targeting these individuals will provide a platform for UK roles and purposes to be shared with prospective students as they contemplate their college choices.

9. Develop college-specific courses for first-year students where roles and purposes are communicated in the context of students’ majors. Colleges without a specific first-year course may want to offer their own version of UK 101, incorporating roles and purposes as well as material given to all UK 101 students.

10. The UK Core is broadly applicable to the four roles and purposes. It is not clear that this applicability is communicated or emphasized. We suggest consideration be given to communicating the relationship between the UK Core and roles and purposes.

11. Consider developing curricular and co-curricular programming that includes an emphasis on the roles and purposes.

12. During K-Week, college-wide meetings are held by all undergraduate colleges on campus. The structure and content of these college-wide meetings varies greatly. We feel it is important that each college be allowed flexibility regarding the structure and content of these college-wide meetings. At the same time, we suggest that “standardized” messaging regarding the roles and purposes of a UK undergraduate education be included in each college-wide meeting across campus.

13. Ultimately, determining the level of understanding of the roles and purposes among first-year students will require some sort of large-scale assessment.
## Sources of Evidence

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>K Week and Move-in Survey Fall 2017.pdf</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>Best Practices in the First Year _Matthews.pdf</td>
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<td>27</td>
<td>form_2017_new_student_induction_ceremony_sophomore_speaker_application.pdf</td>
<td>Nancy Stephens</td>
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<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Induction Ceremony Program 2017.pdf</td>
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<td>29</td>
<td>Induction Ceremony Timeline and Script - 2017.docx</td>
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<td>34</td>
<td>Graduating_Senior_Survey_2017.pdf</td>
<td>Institutional Research &amp; the Career Center</td>
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<td>35</td>
<td>FYSS_2017_First_Year_Transfer_Student_Survey.pdf</td>
<td>Institutional Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>National Survey of Student Engagement results</td>
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<td>37</td>
<td>NSSE18_SurveyQs_US_English.pdf</td>
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<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>K Week Notes for Roles and Dimensions Committee.docx</td>
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<td>39</td>
<td>KWEEK 2017 Mailer.pdf</td>
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<td>40</td>
<td>KWEEK 2017 Schedule Booklet.pdf</td>
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<td>41</td>
<td>Move In 2017 Mailer.pdf</td>
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<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>New Student Induction Ceremony Schedule 2017.pdf</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>Roles &amp; Purposes UKCore Document.docx</td>
<td>Troy Cooper</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Foundations Institutions conduct assessment and maintain associations with other institutions and relevant professional organizations in order to achieve ongoing first year improvement.

This assessment is specific to the first year as a unit of analysis—a distinct time period and set of experiences, academic and otherwise, in the lives of students. It is also linked systemically to the institutions’ overall assessment. Assessment results are an integral part of institutional planning, resource allocation, decision-making, and ongoing improvement of programs and policies as they affect first-year students. As part of the enhancement process and as a way to achieve ongoing improvement, institutions are familiar with current practices at other institutions as well as with research and scholarship on the first college year.

Executive Summary

The committee approached the Improvement Dimension as a meta-assessment of the University’s decision-making and assessment practices, paying particular attention to the use of the currently available data and information. Discussions amongst committee members indicated a consensus regarding the ready availability of data about our students and their success. However, the distribution and usage of that information were concerns voiced by committee members upon initial evaluation.

We selected five programs for evaluation in 9.1 (Assessment) and 9.2 (Use of Assessment) that represented different cross-sections of the student experience. For example: UK 101 and “see blue.” U Summer Advising & Merit Weekends impact a large number of first-year students. Presentation U! has a mandated assessment component for the SACS Reaffirmation of Accreditation process that could potentially serve as an example for other programs. The Living Learning Programs (LLP) on campus are often of discussion, particularly in relation to student success, when other variables (e.g. academic preparation) are considered. The Academic Preparation & Placement Program (APP) program is critical to the success of the University’s most at-risk students who did not initially meet college readiness standards in one or more areas.

The following five programs were selected for evaluation:

- UK 101 - one credit-hour ‘Introduction to UK’ course for incoming Freshmen
- Presentation U! - University’s Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP)
- Engineering LLP - Living and Learning Program for College of Engineering students
- “see blue.” U Summer Orientation & Merit Weekends - “see blue.” U orientations for incoming Freshmen in June and July and Merit Weekends for high-achieving students in March
- Academic Preparation & Placement program (APP) - a state-mandated program for those students not meeting college readiness thresholds on standardized tests
For 9.3 (Dissemination of Data), 9.4 (Understanding) and 9.5 (Strategies), we utilized the Gardner Institute Faculty/Staff Survey responses designated for the Improvement Dimension. Responses were supplemented by other sources of evidence, such as the First-Year Student Survey (FYSS), Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE) and National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE).

The committee membership predominantly represented Institutional Research, and Institutional Research and Decision Support staff, with other members including faculty, career and academic advisors and students. This broad cross-section helped to illuminate the survey results during meetings. Due to a robust analytics practice, there is a wealth of data and information at the University of Kentucky. However increased awareness, distribution, and utilization of standard assessment activities are necessary to meet the goal of leveraging this data into actionable information for campus action. Leveraging said data will be critical in working together as a cohesive enterprise to both meet the aggressive goals laid out in the University’s strategic plan and surpass the current challenges that face higher education in the state of Kentucky.

To that end, the committee recognized early the desire to develop a recommendation for standard assessment components, potentially for use across campus in non-academic departments. The goal was to develop an approach that could assist in building awareness and recognition of campus programs and their contribution to University objectives. The five-pronged approach includes:

- **Program Assessment** - to measure the overall impact on the University
- **Student Learning Outcomes/Operational Outcomes** - depending on the nature of the program or department, a metric for the fundamental mission of educating or assisting students
- **Communications/Advising** - to leverage technologies and surveys to ensure effective communication about steps and requirements to create the most efficient path through the University for students
- **Campus Stakeholder Feedback** - to measure the awareness and recognition of programs (or their need for improvement)
- **Unit-Level Strategic Contribution** - utilizing analytics to isolate the specific value added to University goals of programs and departments

Additional recommendations were primarily related to improved communication around institutional and survey data and more importantly, the implementation and evaluation of policy changes driven by the data analysis.
Narrative on General Situation and Findings of the Dimension Committee

The committee communicated with the five programs selected for review; all were cognizant of the need for assessment and had varying degrees of measures currently in place. Below is an overview of those programs:

- **UK 101** is a one credit-hour ‘Introduction to UK’ course for incoming first-year students. Students are not required to take UK 101. In 2017, 52.8% of the first-year cohort participated in UK 101. Instructors are primarily staff members; each section also has an assigned peer instructor.

- **Presentation U!** was implemented in Spring 2014 as the University's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) through the SACS COC Reaffirmation of Accreditation report. The program aims to improve student communication skills (oral, written, and visual) by offering peer tutoring services and faculty and staff development centered on the instruction of multimodal communication. A key aspect of the program is the recruitment and training of faculty fellows who are given intensive training on development of communication instructional materials, assignments, and assessments. In 2017, 8.8% of the first-year cohort utilized the tutoring services. The number of tutoring visits by students at all levels has increased by 220% between 2014 and 2017.
● The Engineering Living and Learning Program targets undergraduate students in Engineering and Computer Science Majors. The programming includes free tutoring, peer mentoring, exam reviews, workshops, social events, meeting with faculty, department chairs, and deans, and networking opportunities with professional engineers. In 2017, 11.8% of the first-year cohort were a part of the Engineering LLP.

● “see blue.” U and Merit Weekends are orientations for incoming first-year students. “see blue.” U occurs in June and July while Merit Weekends take place in March and target high-achieving students. First-year orientation provides students with an opportunity to build connections with new and current students, faculty, and staff, to gain an understanding of transition issues and appropriate resources, and to create a sense of excitement about their college choice as a continuation of the recruitment process. In 2017, 96.5% of the first-year cohort attended a “see blue.” U Orientation or Merit Weekend.

● The Academic Preparation and Placement program is a state-mandated program for those students not meeting college readiness thresholds on standardized tests. Typically, 15% to 20% of the incoming first-year class do not meet these initial college readiness thresholds on the ACT or SAT. They are provided the opportunity to demonstrate proficiency via placement exams or coursework prior to enrolling in August. Those who do not are required to take a remedial or developmental APP course in their first year. In 2017, 21.5% of the first-year cohort did not meet college readiness benchmarks.

9.1 Assessment
To what degree does each initiative include systematic assessment?

There is a great deal of inconsistency across the assessment methods and analysis among the selected programs. Given the emphasis on data-driven decision support at the University and based on conversations with individuals from these areas, administrators from each of these five programs seemed willing and eager to improve their assessment practices and would welcome more formal guidelines.

9.2 Use of Assessment
To what degree have assessment results been used to improve existing practices across the following initiatives?

The five programs selected for review were all aware of the need for assessment and willing to utilize the data and feedback they received to drive change. Nevertheless, proposed action items were less formalized and even more inconsistent than the assessment itself. The transition from analysis to action is always a difficult one, both in the infrastructure required to create an implementation plan and in the institutional commitment to a culture of evidence. However, similar to the reaction described in 9.1, there was a general acknowledgment of the need for improvement in this area and the recognition of the benefits of data informed decision making.
9.3 Dissemination of Data

To what degree does your institution routinely disseminate to faculty and staff the following first-year student data?

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very Low/None</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Very High</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demographic characteristics [1]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Academic profile of entering students</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intended majors</td>
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<td>Retention and graduation rates</td>
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</table>

The Institutional Research and Institutional Research and Decision Support staff members on the committee knew there to be an abundance of data and information on all of these first-year student characteristics. However, anecdotal evidence paired with the survey responses indicate that the communication and dissemination of this data across campus needs improvement. In addition to the resource itself, demonstrations of how the information may be applied would also be helpful to foster practical implementation. In particular, the gap between Faculty/Staff Survey Questions 094 to 096 and 101 to 102 indicates that both communication and application need improvement, but more of the focus should be on implementation and utilization of data and analysis.

9.4 Understanding

To what degree have recent assessment activities improved campus understanding of the way that the following factors impact student success?

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very Low/None</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Very High</th>
<th>N/A</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student allocation of their time</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student/student connections</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student/faculty connections</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student use of campus services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student class attendance patterns</td>
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<tr>
<td>Patterns of student involvement</td>
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Similar to the demographic information about first-year students, there is an abundance of information available to faculty and staff. However, since this data is often collected via a variety of different surveys, there is a further layer of complexity to understanding, comparing, and communicating the data to campus. Based on the results from the Faculty/Staff, Student, FYSS, FSSE and NSSE surveys, data on student time management was the most lacking. Connection information (to both fellow students and faculty) was more readily available and there was a great deal of information on student activities while on campus. The last area was aided by the recent and continued adoption of a “tagger” system to track student attendance and
participation in campus activities. Please note that these responses generally reflect the availability of information and that improvement needs to be made in the conveyance of this data in an easily consumable format.

9.5 Strategies
To what degree have the following strategies been used by your campus to improve the first year?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very Low/None</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Very High</th>
<th>N/A</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance at higher education meetings(^1) (e.g., conferences, institutes, workshops)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation in multi-campus initiatives(^2) focused on the first year</td>
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<tr>
<td>Broad campus exposure(^3) to external experts</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broad exposure to campus-based knowledge/expertise about the first year</td>
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</table>

Though these questions appear potentially self-serving coming from an external entity, the evidence provided in the Faculty/Staff Surveys all indicated the need for improvement in professional development to better serve our first-year students. Also, communication about the existing opportunities needs to be improved.

Recommended Grade & Rationale

9.1 Assessment
- UK 101 - Assessment is primarily conducted via demographic analysis to determine the course’s contribution to student success by examining the retention rate of enrolled vs. not enrolled students. The online Teacher and Course Evaluation is also used for both instructors and peer instructors. - *Medium Priority*

- Presentation U! - Three overarching learning outcomes have been developed for Presentation U! and are further clarified through 32 operational outcomes. In addition, four program outcomes have been articulated that specify deployment of program services to support the achievement of learning outcomes. A robust assessment plan has been developed for the program that includes a number of direct and indirect measures. Learning outcomes assessments include: review of student artifacts, the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA), student surveys, and collection of faculty fellow portfolios. Assessment of program outcomes consists of student enrollment in faculty fellow-taught courses, student utilization of Presentation U! tutoring services and workshops, student satisfaction surveys, faculty fellow program participation, and faculty fellow self-assessment surveys. The first student learning outcome (SLO) assessment report was submitted to the University in 2015-16. Initial findings suggest students who were enrolled in a faculty fellow-taught course had statistically significant increases in self-efficacy scores with respect to written, oral, and team communication. A report was not submitted in 2016-17 or 2017-18; however, a QEP Impact Report, which will include detailed assessment results and program improvements will be completed by the end of spring 2018. - *High Priority*
Engineering LLP - Assessment is focused on the LLP’s influence on student success and analysis is completed each year for College of Engineering LLP participants vs. non-participants and their retention rates and GPAs. Students also complete surveys to measure satisfaction with the LLP and the peer mentors. Prior research at the University also utilized social network analysis to examine the LLP’s impact on student success. - Medium Priority

“see blue.” U and Merit Weekends - Assessment is exclusively based on student survey results for both “see blue.” U orientations and Merit Weekends, along with feedback from administrators and advisers. - Low Priority

Academic Preparation and Placement program (APP) - The APP program is currently implementing a three-pronged approach to assessment, including evaluations of program metrics, course-embedded student learning outcomes (SLO) and tracking course planning data to ensure students are being advised into the proper APP courses. Student success metrics such as retention, graduation rates and subsequent course performance are measured to determine the program’s contribution to student success initiatives with our most academically at-risk students. - Medium Priority

9.2 Use of Assessment

UK 101 - Teacher and Course Evaluations, along with instructor and peer instructor feedback, have been utilized to determine curricular and training changes. A curriculum review team was convened in Spring 2017, including administrators and previous faculty. Recommendations and changes subsequent to this review were made related to course length and component sequence. In addition, collaboration with campus partners has been emphasized to provide timely information to students, based on trends and data from across campus. - Medium Priority

Presentation U! - Changes to Presentation U! have been limited to date, due to the relative newness of the program. Consistent with the University’s assessment process, data have only been collected once for each SLO during the current three-year cycle. Moreover, a number of unexpected challenges were presented when obtaining direct assessment data for the SLOs. The program is currently undergoing a period of reflection, and it is expected that possible improvements will be identified and articulated through the QEP Impact Report this spring. - Low Priority

Engineering LLP - The Engineering LLP is currently working to improve its data collection related to documentation of change resulting from findings. - Low Priority

“see blue.” U and Merit Weekends - Feedback from College administrators and advisers is acknowledged and has resulted in changes to programming. Recent examples include the move of student/family meetings with colleges to the first day of orientation and the incorporation of a student panel in the family/guest program. - Medium Priority
● Academic Preparation and Placement program (APP) - Program assessment, including student performance in subsequent courses, is monitored and has resulted in significant changes to the current placement tests. Specifically, a proctor is required for completion of the math placement test after analysis revealed inconsistent placement test scores across all standardized test score bins. In addition, the APP Faculty Advisory Board limited the number of reading and writing placement tests, based on placement test and course data. - Medium Priority

9.3 Dissemination of Data

● Demographic characteristics - Institutional Research and Advanced Analytics provides an interactive Fact Book that is available to faculty/staff across campus. Chairs and directors of undergraduate and graduate studies receive additional reports, including Tableau reports, beyond what is often shared with the public or campus as a whole. However, Faculty/Staff Survey Question 094 clearly indicates the need for better communication and application regarding these resources, with 50.9% of respondents utilizing this data not at all or slightly to influence their work with first-year students.

![Q094. Use of Assessment - To what degree has the following information directly influenced your work with first-year students? Demographic information from this institution’s databases](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Text</th>
<th>N (%)</th>
<th>% Resp</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Not at all</td>
<td>170 (28.4%)</td>
<td>44.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Slight</td>
<td>131 (25.1%)</td>
<td>21.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Moderate</td>
<td>38 (6.4%)</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) High</td>
<td>35 (5.8%)</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Very High</td>
<td>29 (4.7%)</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
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</table>

● Academic profile of entering students - As with demographic characteristics, there is a plethora of information in this area, but Faculty/Staff Survey Question 095 indicates the need for better awareness and methods of applying the data with 61.2% of respondents utilizing this data not at all or slightly to influence their work with first-year students.

![Q095. Use of Assessment - To what degree has the following information directly influenced your work with first-year students? Measures of pre-enrollment academic skills from this institution’s databases](image)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Key Text</th>
<th>N (%)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Not at all</td>
<td>513 (41.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Slight</td>
<td>504 (40.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Moderate</td>
<td>197 (16.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) High</td>
<td>87 (7.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Very High</td>
<td>47 (3.7%)</td>
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</table>

● Intended majors - As with demographic characteristics and academic profile, there is ample data on this subject. There is not a directly applicable question on the Faculty/Staff Survey, but intended major information would logically be contained in both demographic and pre-enrollment academic skill data (Questions 094 and 095). Therefore, the committee made the assumption that the influence of this data on work with first-year students would be similar.

● Retention and graduation rates - Faculty/Staff Survey Question 096 does not specifically mention retention or graduation, but academic skills after one semester or more logically relates to retention and student success. Similar to the rest of the questions in 9.3, Question 096 indicates the need for better communication and implementation with 51.9% of respondents utilizing this data not at all or slightly to influence their work with first-year students.

![Q096. Use of Assessment - To what degree has the following information directly influenced your work with first-year students? Academic skills measured after one semester/quarter or more](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Text</th>
<th>N (%)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Not at all</td>
<td>176 (34.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Slight</td>
<td>90 (17.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Moderate</td>
<td>119 (23.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) High</td>
<td>86 (16.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Vary High</td>
<td>43 (8.1%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Faculty/Staff Survey Questions 101, 102 and 103 all more directly asked respondents to assess institutional abilities related to business context, disseminating results and the usage of those results. All of these questions received higher marks than the usage questions (with all three receiving 65% or higher of responses as Fair, Good or Excellent), but still indicated the need for improvement.

9.4 Understanding

- Student allocation of their time - Faculty/Staff Survey Question 097 indicated 64.4% of respondents utilize measures of student time spent studying not at all or slightly to influence their work with first-year students. Whether this is due to a lack of data or applicability to their work is unclear. The “tagger” system and various surveys provide a great deal of data on how students spend their time on campus; however, time management and work hours were primarily limited to the FYSS. Interestingly, Faculty/Staff Survey Question 100 yielded 46.9% of respondents utilizing measures of student evaluations, assessments or feedback to highly or very highly influence their work with first-year students. Faculty and staff do appear to listen and value this information, but it is probably more useful to inform direct interactions.
Student/student Connections - Student Survey Factor 3 Questions related to new student connections to peers and returning students (025 and 026) received mean scores of 3.49 and 3.15, respectively.
● Student/faculty Connections - The Student Survey Factor 3 Question related to faculty connections (027) received a mean score of 2.75. However, Student Survey Factor 7 Question 078 received a mean score of 4.11 as to instructor availability outside of the classroom. This indicates that initial connections need improvement but availability once on campus received high marks. FSSE questions could also potentially be used to improve these connections by syncing up faculty and staff expectations.
Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE) - 2015

17. In an average 7-day week, about how many hours do you expect the typical student to spend preparing for your selected course section (studying, reading, writing, doing homework or lab work, analyzing data, rehearsing, and other academic activities)?

Response options: 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, More than 10 hours

18. In an average 7-day week, about how many hours do you think the typical student actually spends preparing for your selected course section (studying, reading, writing, doing homework or lab work, analyzing data, rehearsing, and other academic activities)?

Response options: 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, More than 10 hours

- Student use of campus services - Student Survey Factor 1 Questions related to campus services (054 and 055) received mean scores of 3.35 and 3.81. In addition, Student Survey Factor 3 and 7 Questions regarding outside of class activities also had solid scores.
Student class attendance patterns - The FYSS included questions on class attendance and there is a wide variety of Information Technology Services options for instructors wishing to track class attendance.

Patterns of student involvement - Student Survey Factor 3 Questions related to involvement (030 and 031) received mean scores of 3.56 and 3.58. The FYSS also included questions on student involvement and the “tagger” system provides a wealth of data on campus engagement.

9.5 Strategies

Attendance at higher education meetings - Faculty/Staff Survey Question 060 indicated 51.5% of respondents attending conferences or workshops at UK not at all or slightly to inform their work with first-year students. This percentage increased on Faculty/Staff Survey Question 061, with 63.4% of respondents attending national or regional conferences not at all or slightly to inform their work with first-year students. It increased yet again on Faculty/Staff Survey Question 063, with 70.1% of respondents presenting at conferences or contributing to publications not at all or slightly to inform their work with first-year students.
Participating in multi-campus initiatives focused on the first year - Faculty/Staff Survey Question 098 indicated 46.8% of respondents utilizing current practices at other institutions not at all or slightly to inform their work with first-year students.

Broad campus exposure to external or campus-based knowledge expertise about the first year - Faculty/Staff Survey Questions 062 and 099 indicated 37.8% and 41.7%, respectively, of respondents utilizing professional materials or published research not at all or slightly to inform their work with first-year students.

Recommendations for Action

1. **Standardized Assessment** - All of the programs evaluated have assessment measures in place, but approach and application are inconsistent. Provide guidelines for non-academic department and program assessment to include:
   a. Program Assessment - to measure the overall impact on the University.
   b. Student Learning Outcomes/Operational Outcomes - depending on the nature of the program or department, a metric for the fundamental mission of educating or assisting students.
   c. Communications/Advising - to leverage technologies and surveys to ensure effective communication about steps and requirements to create the most efficient path through the University for students.
   d. Campus Stakeholder feedback - to measure the awareness and recognition of programs (or their need for improvement) - *High Priority*
2. **Standardized Assessment/Actionable Business Intelligence** - While acknowledging the difficulty in disaggregating the impact of multiple programs and initiatives, propelling institutional change through data-informed analysis is the ultimate goal of assessment. To this end, it is important to provide an actionable business intelligence component in the non-academic department and program assessment guidelines.
   a. Unit Level Strategic Contribution - utilizing analytics to isolate the specific value added to University goals of programs and departments. - *High Priority*

3. **Improved Communication About First-year Student Data** - The interactive Fact Book provides the data on first-year students including demographics, entering profile, retention, and graduation rates. However, the committee has identified that this information is not widely communicated across campus. It is recommended that the information be shared through multiple modes, including active approaches. The information should be contextualized within the University, college/unit, and department-level strategic goals with demonstrated methods for impacting those goals. The Office of Undergraduate Admission has primary responsibility for communicating information about the first-year student profile data.
   The Associate Provost for Student & Academic Life has primary responsibility for sharing data and information on first-year student success including retention and graduation rates. Academic associate deans have primary responsibility for sharing this information within the academic units. - *High Priority*

4. **Survey Data Communication and Implementation Plan** - Develop a business process around survey data publication in collaboration with campus partners. Recommend institutional research and relevant campus partners provide executive summaries of survey data to share widely across campus. Work with college and departmental Tableau super users to both share data in their units and develop action plans around the findings. - *High Priority*

5. **Visiting Speaker Series** - Bring in a nationally-recognized speaker once a semester to engage faculty around issues of student success and pedagogy. - *High Priority*

6. **Funding for National/Regional Conference Attendance** - College leadership (faculty and associate deans) should be encouraged to attend regional and national conferences on student success initiatives. Recommend Provost/AE/SAL to provide pool of funding to faculty who apply for support, e.g. CPE Student Success Summit in Spring 2018. - *Medium Priority*

7. **CELT First-Year Experience Workshop Series** - Recommend the Center for Enhancement of Learning and Teaching (CELT) target pedagogical training for both new and experienced faculty to improve the first-year experience. - *High Priority*
### Sources of Evidence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Doc #</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>K Week and Move-in Survey Fall 2017.pdf</td>
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<td>Best Practices in the First Year _Matthews.pdf</td>
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<td>Relationships &amp; Capital in Living Learning Communities: A Social Network Analysis</td>
<td>Woltenberg, Leslie Nicole</td>
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<td>Carnegie Foundation Community Engagement Reclassification</td>
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<td>Improvement 9.1 and 9.2 Summaries.doc</td>
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APPENDIX

Student Survey Snapshot

D001. Academic standing:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Freshman/First-Year Student</td>
<td>708</td>
<td>87.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophomore</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

% Rep = 99.9%
N = 899

D002. Reasons for Enrollment - To what degree: Do you understand this institution’s intended learning goals for the first year of college?

- 12.7%
- 30%
- 57.3%

% Respon 1 or 2 | % Respon 3 | % Respon 4 or 5

D003. Quality of Course and Instruction: Think about the last class that you attended prior to taking this survey. Please answer the following questions based on your experiences in this course during this term.

- Is the COURSE you identified above appropriate for your level of academic preparation in writing?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Too difficult</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficult</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About right</td>
<td>483</td>
<td>68.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>16.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too easy</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

% Rep = 87.4%
N = 799
D004. Quality of Courses and Instruction Think about the last class that you attended prior to taking this survey. Please answer the following questions based on your experiences in this course during this term. - Is the COURSE you identified above appropriate for your level of academic preparation in reading?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
<th>% Resp = 87.3%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Too difficult</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficult</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About right</td>
<td>472</td>
<td>66.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>22.4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too easy</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

D005. Quality of Courses and Instruction Think about the last class that you attended prior to taking this survey. Please answer the following questions based on your experiences in this course during this term. - Is the COURSE you identified above appropriate for your level of academic preparation in library research?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
<th>% Resp = 87.2%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Too difficult</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficult</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About right</td>
<td>449</td>
<td>63.6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>19.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too easy</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

D006. Quality of Courses and Instruction Think about the last class that you attended prior to taking this survey. Please answer the following questions based on your experiences in this course during this term. - Is the COURSE you identified above appropriate for your level of academic preparation in math?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>N</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
<th>% Resp = 86.9%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Too difficult</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficult</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About right</td>
<td>356</td>
<td>51.9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>18.6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too easy</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
D007. Quality of Courses and Instruction Think about the last class that you attended prior to taking this survey. Please answer the following questions based on your experiences in this course during this term.

Is the COURSE you identified above appropriate for your level of academic preparation in computing?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Difficulty</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
<th>% Resp</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Too difficult</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>N = 704</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficult</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About right</td>
<td>479</td>
<td>68.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>16.2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too easy</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Bar chart and table data provided)
D008. Is the COURSE you identified above:

- Remedial/developmental (a course that is designed to improve skills before taking regular college courses)
  - Yes: 74 (10.5%)
  - No: 632 (90.5%)

- Honors
  - Yes: 63 (8.9%)
  - No: 640 (91.1%)

- Neither remedial/developmental nor honors
  - Yes: 140 (19.8%)
  - No: 527 (80.2%)

D009. Are you a transfer student from another college or university?

- Yes: 121 (15.0%)
- No: 686 (85.0%)

D010. What type of institution did you attend prior to coming here?

- Community College/2-year College: 52 (50.0%)
- 4-Year College/University: 52 (49.5%)
Faculty and Staff Survey Snapshot

D001. This survey focuses on this institution’s organization and delivery of the first year of college and student transfer experience. Definition of "First-Year Student": In this survey, the phrase “first-year students,” refers to students who have not achieved sophomore standing in terms of credit hours earned. The phrase, "first year of college,” encompasses this institution’s full range of activities starting with initial recruitment and admissions and continuing in and out of the classroom, until the student obtains sophomore standing. Definition of "Transfer Student": In this survey the term "transfer student(s)" refers to all degree-seeking students who enter your institution with credit from another higher education institution. This definition excludes high school students who are taking college courses and transient students (students who are seeking a degree at another institution and are taking courses, such as summer courses, at your institution). Which best describes your main work role/assignment at this institution? If you have a dual role, please choose only one.

- Faculty Member
- Administrator (e.g., Senior Leaders, Directors)
- Professional Staff (e.g., Student Affairs, Advisors)
- Graduate Student Teaching Assistant
- Technical, Clerical, Service Personnel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
<th>% Resp</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faculty Member</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>35.0%</td>
<td>99.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrator (e.g., Senior Leaders, Directors)</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Staff (e.g., Student Affairs, Advisors)</td>
<td>329</td>
<td>28.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Student Teaching Assistant</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical, Clerical, Service Personnel</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

D002. Understanding Your Role Regarding First-Year Students/Transfer Students: The purpose of this survey is to collect perceptions of this institution’s practices and policies for the delivery of the first year of college or transfer student experience from faculty and staff who have worked at this institution longer than a year and who either have working relationships with first year students and/or transfer students or have knowledge of practices and policies that impact first-year students and/or transfer students. To present questions that are appropriate for your role, please answer the following question: Have you worked at this institution for at least a year?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
<th>% Resp</th>
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<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>1010</td>
<td>88.6%</td>
<td>99.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>13.4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
D003. Do you have direct working relationships with first-year students and/or new transfer students and/or have knowledge of institutional practices and policies regarding the first year of college or transfer student experience?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choice</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
<th>% Resp</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, work with both transfer students and first-year students/freshmen or have knowledge of either group (Survey questions will be limited)</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
<td>55.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, work with transfer students/freshmen or have knowledge of first-year p.</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, work with transfer students/freshmen or have knowledge of transfer policies and practices</td>
<td>426</td>
<td>42.2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, work with both transfer students and first-year students/freshmen or have knowledge of relevant practices and policies for both</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, work with first-year students/freshmen (not transfer students) or have knowledge of first-year practices and policies</td>
<td>426</td>
<td>42.2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, work with transfer students (not first-year students) or have knowledge of transfer practices and policies</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, neither work with nor have knowledge of either group (Survey questions will be limited)</td>
<td>437</td>
<td>43.3%</td>
<td></td>
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Q004. As a person who is relatively new to this institution or has limited contact with or knowledge of first-year students/transfer students, we are interested in your general perceptions of this institution’s role in supporting these students. - To what degree does this institution: Demonstrate that the success of first-year students is an important institutional goal?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
<th>% Resp</th>
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<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Slight</td>
<td>16</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>67</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>45.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very High</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>34.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q005. As a person who is relatively new to this institution or has limited contact with or knowledge of first-year students/transfer students, we are interested in your general perceptions of this institution’s role in supporting these students. - To what degree does this institution: Demonstrate that the success of transfer students is an important institutional goal?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
<th>% Resp</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slight</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>31.2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>35.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very High</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>19.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q006. As a person who is relatively new to this institution or has limited contact with or knowledge of first-year students/transfer students, we are interested in your general perceptions of this institution’s role in supporting these students. - To what degree does this institution: Intentionally enhance students’ personal development?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
<th>% Resp</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slight</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>27.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>41.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very High</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>24.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q007. As a person who is relatively new to this institution or has limited contact with or knowledge of first-year students/transfer students, we are interested in your general perceptions of this institution’s role in supporting these students. - To what degree does this institution: Intentionally enhance student learning?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
<th>% Resp</th>
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<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slight</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>21.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>47.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very High</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>26.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Branching

**Q018.** As a person who is relatively new to this institution or has limited contact with or knowledge of first-year students/transfer students, we are interested in your general perceptions of this institution’s role in supporting these students. - To what degree does this institution improve the probability that students will re-enroll at this institution?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>N</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
<th>% Resp = 33.3%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Not at all</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>N = 392</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Slight</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
<td>Mean = 3.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Moderate</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>26.3%</td>
<td>Std Dev = 0.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. High</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Very High</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>23.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Branching

**Q009.** As a person who is relatively new to this institution or has limited contact with or knowledge of first-year students/transfer students, we are interested in your general perceptions of this institution’s role in supporting these students. - To what degree does this institution provide a high quality experience for first-year students?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
<th>% Resp = 32.2%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Not at all</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>N = 379</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Slight</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
<td>Mean = 3.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Moderate</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>21.6%</td>
<td>Std Dev = 0.03</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. High</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>44.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Very High</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>26.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Branching

**Q010.** As a person who is relatively new to this institution or has limited contact with or knowledge of first-year students/transfer students, we are interested in your general perceptions of this institution’s role in supporting these students. - To what degree does this institution provide a high quality experience for transfer students?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>N</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
<th>% Resp = 26.0%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>11</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
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<td>34</td>
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<td>3. Moderate</td>
<td>94</td>
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<td>Std Dev = 1.61</td>
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<td>116</td>
<td>37.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Very High</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>16.9%</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>