Assurance Argument

Saginaw Valley State University

Review date: 4/22/2024

1 - Mission

The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

1.A - Core Component 1.A

The institution's mission is articulated publicly and operationalized throughout the institution.

1. The mission was developed through a process suited to the context of the institution.
2. The mission and related statements are current and reference the institution's emphasis on the various aspects of its mission, such as instruction, scholarship, research, application of research, creative works, clinical service, public service, economic development and religious or cultural purpose.
3. The mission and related statements identify the nature, scope and intended constituents of the higher education offerings and services the institution provides.
4. The institution's academic offerings, student support services and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.
5. The institution clearly articulates its mission through public information, such as statements of purpose, vision, values, goals, plans or institutional priorities.

Argument

1A1.

SVSU's current Mission, Vision, and Core Values were developed in 2016 by a committee charged by the President to produce a statement that accurately represented the purpose, goals, and role of the University. Composed of administrators, faculty, staff, and representatives from the Student Association, the committee sought input from a range of stakeholders including off-campus community members, and employers. The committee reviewed previous mission statements and compared the existing mission statements to the mission statements of peer institutions. These deliberations were brought before the Board of Control for consideration and approval. This process embodied SVSU's campus culture of collaboration, stakeholder inclusion, and transparency.

To operationalize the mission, vision, and core values, cross-functional committees of diverse stakeholders developed the various strategic planning documents through similar processes of dialogue and assessment. These documents were submitted to the Board of Control, who played an active role in approving the plans and reviewing the progress tied to them. SVSU contracted Dams & Associates, Inc. to serve as our Strategic Planning Consultant to facilitate the planning process along with the Special Assistant to the Executive Vice President for Administration and Business Affairs. This committee developed the university's Strategic Plan for 2016 – 2020. As a result of the pandemic and the retirement of the University President, the Board of Control extended the 2016-2020 Strategic Plan through a Resolution to Extend Strategic Plan. This extension was granted "until the new president has arrived and had time to embark on a new strategic planning initiative." The board of control appointed Dr. George Grant Jr. to serve as president effective January 1, 2023. In Fall 2023, the president charged the provost with oversight of the strategic planning process in

conjunction with the president's leadership team and, in January of 2024, SVSU selected a strategic planning consultant, and the final contract was signed in February 2024. The strategic planning committees have been developed and planning sessions have begun, including the scope and timeline for the process. The expectation is that a new strategic plan will be presented to the Board of Control for review in September or October 2024.

1A2.

SVSU's Mission/Vision and Strategic Plan are in the process of revision as indicated above. However, the current operating Mission speaks directly to institutional priorities. The Mission's promise of "transforming lives through educational excellence" recognizes the institution's central commitment to teaching, even as it expands that commitment to include "unleashing possibilities for impact in our community and worldwide." The Vision emphasizes this priority in its opening phrase: "We will be renowned for our innovative teaching, experiential learning and state of the art facilities." The Mission/Vision recognizes that scholarship, research, creative work, and various forms of public service are essential to effective collegiate teaching and to the University's broader purposes. This value is manifest in a review of General Fund Expenditures, which indicates that 65% of expenditures are for instruction, student services, and financial support.

Both the Mission and Vision address what is referenced as "dynamic partnerships" and "unleashing possibilities for impact in our community and worldwide." Such work is particularly important in terms of the University's service functions and its engagement with the broader community, embodied in SVSU's securing of the Carnegie Community Engagement Classification.

The Strategic Plan offers the best evidence for this reading of the Mission/Vision and the clearest examples of how that reading is realized in both short-term and long-term efforts. Samples of how the various institutional priorities are balanced — always focused on teaching and learning—can be seen in the current Strategic Plan Goal 1. While the Strategic Plan's ordering does not always signify prioritization, it is notable that the very first two strategies relate to ensuring enrollment and student success through retention and graduation. This goal also discusses the university's commitment to academic/professional growth for all students and a focus on excellence in teaching and scholarship.

1A3.

The Mission/Vision clearly identifies the nature and scope of SVSU's programs and services, emphasizing teaching and learning in all endeavors. Both components of the Mission/Vision focus attention on "teaching" and "learning" thus marking enrolled students as key intended constituents. The Vision encourages a wide range of people to consider themselves as potential students and broadly defines the individuals who might become its students and graduates. Some of this latitude, as stated in the Mission, is tied to the University's goal of transforming "lives through educational excellence and dynamic partnerships." Thus, while the University is to make "dynamic partnerships" within our community, the core values identify the importance of academic exploration and achievement and also a value of Diversity and Inclusion.

Also, in Goal 1 Strategy 2 of the current Strategic Plan, the strategy is to improve retention rates for "domestic and international students." In the same section of the current Strategic Plan, the University further elaborates how it intends to meet these ideals. This extension beyond its

traditionally defined region reflects both SVSU's growing sense of its place in the wider world and the fact that SVSU students increasingly come from across Michigan and from the international community. While SVSU's constituents are first and foremost enrolled students, the campus community also includes faculty, administrators, and staff. In alignment with the University's vision to serve as the "first choice for those striving for personal and professional success," the campus reaches out to alumni and a range of outside constituencies, including prospective students, regional community members, a broader general public.

1A4.

As a regional comprehensive public university and within the framework of its Mission/Vision, Core Values and Strategic Plan, SVSU makes a concerted effort to align its academic programs, student support services, and enrollment profile with its identity as an institution of access and student success, and its relationship within the region. SVSU offers traditional undergraduate degrees in arts, humanities, social sciences, physical sciences, natural sciences, mathematics, engineering, business, health sciences and human services, and education, representing diverse populations on campus and in the communities it serves. It also offers graduate degrees emphasizing professional fields of interest to the communities it serves.

This same mission-centered imperative guides the development of SVSU's support programs to ensure their alignment with SVSU's enrollment profile. SVSU's ongoing review and assessment of student support services have informed such efforts as the creation of a student success center that focuses on providing resources for students that would facilitate their success academically and socially. In addition, the university pursued and secured the TRIO-SSS grant that will facilitate academic achievement, retention, and graduation among historically underrepresented students. The Rural Pathways for Student Success grant also creates additional support for student success through the provision of support and advising that is designed to produce success for students from the rural counties we serve.

SVSU also offers a broad array of services that are consistent with the desire expressed in the mission to create "supportive environments that focus on student success." To this end, we provide services for students through our Office of Student Life, Office of Residential Life, Campus Mental Health & Wellness Center, Office of Career Services. Diversity and Inclusion is a core value of the university and as such we provide resources that address the specific needs of students given the intersections of their identity including Multicultural Student Affairs, Military Student Affairs, the Office of Accessibility Resources and Accommodations. Finally, the university is committed to ensuring "educational excellence" and to facilitate this we provide tutoring through the Gerstacker Academic Commons and Academic Advising.

SVSU has always defined itself as an institution of both opportunity and choice and the institution has framed these terms through our enrollment strategies in keeping with its Mission and Vision. Specifically, SVSU wants to provide robust access to learning, while recognizing that this approach produces an incoming student population that varies in terms of their preparation for the college experience. In addition, the pandemic has negatively impacted students' level of preparation. The university moved to a test-optional admission during COVID and subsequentially maintained this policy. However, automatic admission is granted to students with 2.75 cumulative high school GPA. Given the changes in our admissions requirement in fall of 2023 the average ACT score for FTIC was 22 and the average SAT score for FTIC was 1043. SVSU strives to offer robust student support

services to address cognitive and non-cognitive needs for all the students it enrolls.

SVSU is also committed to providing opportunities for highly talented, well-prepared students. The University provides scholarships and has initiated various distinctive programs and enrichment activities, such as the Roberts Gilbertson Fellowship Program, student/faculty research opportunities, and an expanded Honors Program to attract such students to SVSU.

1A5.

The text of the Mission/Vision statement appears in several prominent places on the university website, including some of the pages used primarily for admissions such as the Student Affairs website and Human Resources, as well as the President's page, The Mission/Vision are also reflected in the mission statements of specific units, ranging from Campus Facilities to the Carmona College of Business.

As discussed above, the Strategic Plan, along with its regular updates, progress reports, and other associated documents, serves as the central roadmap for the direction of the University. In addition to the website postings, the University shares this plan with its various internal and external constituencies through diverse venues ranging from the President's annual speech to all faculty and staff to the Commencement Program and presentations to the Board of Control. The university also maintains a newsroom website and regularly posts information on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and other social media platforms.

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1.B - Core Component 1.B

The institution's mission demonstrates commitment to the public good.

1. The institution's actions and decisions demonstrate that its educational role is to serve the public, not solely the institution or any superordinate entity.
2. The institution's educational responsibilities take primacy over other purposes, such as generating financial returns for investors, contributing to a related or parent organization, or supporting external interests.
3. The institution engages with its external constituencies and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow.

Argument

1B1.

All aspects of the Mission/Vision and the Strategic Plan center on SVSU's public obligations in the context of SVSU's identity as a public state university. Because all actions and decisions, from policymaking to budgeting, rely on the Mission/Vision and the Strategic Plan, those actions all also embody an understanding of SVSU's broad educational role. Faculty and student projects come from disciplines as disparate as chemistry and art. Student organizations also view outreach activities to the local community as critical to their individual missions. Competitively awarded funds, often made available through endowments, support student organizations' involvement in such activities. University employees and students are active in a wide range of philanthropic and civic activities, from serving on boards of various business, professional and social service organizations to engaging in numerous volunteer and charitable fundraising activities. Faculty and staff have been involved in leadership initiatives for Saginaw, Midland, Bay City, and the Great Lakes Bay Area, as well as the Community Foundations in Midland, Bay, Arenac, and Saginaw counties. In 2015, SVSU was selected by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching to receive its 2015 Community Engagement Classification, highlighting SVSU's exceptional engagement with its community.

In addition to the value SVSU provides to individuals in the region as an accredited, degree-granting institution of higher learning, the University serves the public good as a key venue for diverse programs and services available to a broad range of constituencies. Both the Mission and the Vision statements of the University are grounded in an awareness of and commitment to the communities served by the University. As a regional public university, the mission and vision focus on increasing access to higher education and raising social mobility in the local communities.

1B2.

SVSU's purpose is expressed in its Mission/Vision and its Strategic Plan. As a public state institution, it has no investors and therefore there is no need to generate financial returns for such. Because of Michigan's higher education structure, SVSU has no related or parent organizations and so no need to contribute to such. It supports no external interests that fall outside of the broad educational responsibilities described in its Mission/Vision and operationalized in its Strategic Plan.

1B3.

SVSU engages with external constituencies, including local businesses, schools, health care providers, industries, community agencies, and arts organizations, as well as the general public to fulfill its mission to serve as an educational and cultural center for the region. The institution gathers and uses input on community trends and needs from advisory boards, both at program and institutional levels, and the institution provides cultural and educational opportunities for the greater community.

Community engagement is an integral part of Saginaw Valley State University's identity and examples of the commitment the University makes to its external constituencies are plentiful. SVSU maintains a vibrant relationship with numerous public and private sector stakeholders in the Great Lakes Bay region and takes an active leadership role in building these strong ongoing relationships. The University also strives to align its Mission and resources with the needs of the region, understanding that mutual investment between the institution and the community yields long-term benefits to both.

In 2015, SVSU received the Community Engagement Classification from the Carnegie Foundation. SVSU has provided evidence that community engagement aligns with our Mission and is part of our campus culture. This unique distinction is held by less than 10% of colleges and universities nationwide and by eight of the fifteen public universities in Michigan. There are a series of community engagement activities in which the university engages including the Great Lakes Bay Regional Youth Leadership Institute, the Cardinal Kids Club, Alternative Breaks, and the Henry Marsh Institute for Public Policy to name a few.

The university has also established numerous partnerships to increase educational opportunities for employees of several healthcare systems including Covenant Health Care, Memorial Healthcare, McLaren Health Care, Ascension St. Mary's Hospital, and MyMichigan Health. Each of these partnerships were individually designed to meet the needs of the healthcare partner and the community at large. Although individually designed, the overarching goal is to improve the talent pipeline for health care delivery at the various health systems' locations in communities throughout Michigan.

The university is also engaged in creating partnerships with the Saginaw Public Schools (SPS) and has adapted the university's Accelerated Certification with Residency program to meet the unique needs of the SPS school district. This partnership, developed in an effort to help address the teacher shortage, allows for SPS to "Grow Your Own Teacher" through enrolling employees of the district into our accelerated certification program.

The University's Board of Fellows pays special attention to tracking community developments and maintaining positive relations with members of the community. This advisory group of local business and community leaders meets on campus ona regular basis with members of the university staff and faculty. It also hosts an annual breakfast for legislators from the region, giving each elected official an opportunity to speak to the campus community about priorities and concerns related to education.

The SVSU Business Excellence Centers (BEC) is a key example of how the University engages with area economic interests. These centers provide training, consulting, and research services to the Michigan business community. The BEC helps entrepreneurs and leaders with business creation, expansion, and growth, and promotes the economic wellbeing of our region. The Stevens Center for Family Business fosters the continued growth and sustenance of family-owned businesses in the

region and within the state through education, collaboration, and networking. The Dow Entrepreneurship Institute stimulates the creation of new business ventures, serves as a resource for research, and provides internships benefiting students and businesses. SVSU also houses an Independent Testing Laboratory that is ISO 17025 Certified. Its primary function is to provide regional businesses with access to the latest laboratory equipment necessary to improve existing produces and bring new products to market.

The Michigan Manufacturing Technology Center – Northeast (MMTC-NE). This is the state's manufacturing extension partnership for the northeast region that supports over 500 manufacturing companies through training and support. The Scott Carmona College of Business also hosts the Michigan Small Business Development Center (SBDC) which provides no-cost consulting, training, market research and technology commercialization services to assist Michigan businesses.

In addition to courses that support entrepreneurs and various businesses, the university offers Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI), a member-based organization that meets monthly and offers non-credit educational programs and travel opportunities (in-state, out-of-state, and international) for individuals who are fifty years and older. Currently, in its twenty-second year of operation, OLLI has more than 2000 members.

SVSU currently authorizes seventeen public school academies (PSAs) pursuant to state law. The Office of University-School Partnership implements the authorization process as well as relevant university services to individual PSAs. The SVSU Board of Control reviews and approves each school authorization contract. In addition to the legal enabling authority provided by SVSU, the University also shares extensive expertise with the teachers and administrators of the PSAs through its College of Education. The many services offered and/ or coordinated by the SVSU Office of University-School Partnership to the PSAs authorized by SVSU include professional development, certification and graduate education for teachers, and assistance with curriculum assessment.

The University also sustains its role as a regional intellectual and cultural center through public lectures, concerts, plays, and art exhibits. It also supports the Marshall Fredericks Sculpture Museum, which provides additional exhibits and programs for the public. The Marshall Fredericks Sculpture Museum, housed on the SVSU campus, has an extensive collection of plaster casts and bronze sculptures by Michigan artist, Marshall Fredericks. This museum, free to the public, also features visiting exhibits from artists of national caliber and organizes many educational and arts events.

Facilities and resources tied to these undertakings are discussed in more depth in Criterion 3, as many are critical to SVSU's educational programs. Many of the events are free to the public or charge minimal admission fees. Information regarding upcoming events are publicly available on the University website, which provides a calendar of arts and other community events along with a web-based ticket service.

While SVSU hosts far too many events to describe in this report, the following examples demonstrate that SVSU fulfills its mission to be a resource for the region and is committed to the public good.

Every year since 1993, SVSU has presented the Rhea Miller Concert Series. Nationally and internationally acclaimed musicians and ensembles perform. Past artists include such notables as the Detroit Symphony Trio, the Manhattan Piano Trio, and the Sunny Wilkinson Jazz Quintet. These concerts, made possible by an endowment from Rhea Miller, are free and open to the public.

The Dow Visiting Scholars & Artist Program Lecture Series was established in 1996 as part of the Dow Visiting Artists & Scholars endowment funded by the Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow Foundation. This program allows the university to bring visiting scholars or artists to the campus for periods ranging from a few days to a few weeks in order to expand and enrich SVSU's curricular offerings for students and cultural offerings for people of the surrounding community.

There are several endowments that allow the university to bring additional speakers to campus to share diverse views on the world. During the 2023-2024 year the university is hosting a lecture season in celebration of the 60th anniversary of the founding of the institution. This season's theme is "A Vision for the Future," in the Fall of 2023 the university hosted the Ranna Akbar Memorial Lecture on Islam and Culture was established in 2011 by Dr. Waheed Akbar in member of his wife. The Wickson Nickless Lecture was established to provide a forum to study and debate contemporary events and issues that influence business policies and behavior. This season is completed with the presentation of the Thomas and Hilda Rush Distinguished Lecture which recognizes and rewards SVSU staff and faculty members who have distinguished themselves and brought recognition to the university. The Albert J. Beutler Forum on Ethics & Practice hosted a speaker and two panel discussions in March 2024. This lecture is designed to provide an important community focal point for discussion and exploration of ethical issues. The season will close with the Field Spicer Lecture which is designed to promote interdisciplinary work that bridges health sciences, biology, engineering, and technology.

Since 2015, the university has partnered with regional businesses, chambers of commerce and community foundations to work together to sponsor the Great Lakes Bay Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration. Past speakers included Freeman A. Hrabowski III, Eric Holder, Karen S. Carter, Valerie Jarrett, Dr. Condoleezza Rice, and Melissa Harris-Perry.

The Mission Statement for the Theatre Program recognizes that "live theatrical productions provide individuals, the university community, and the community at large with opportunities for artistic and cultural growth." As such, the Theatre Department regularly offers a season of four or five productions as well as a summer season during which shows are staged in the more intimate surroundings of the Black Box Theatre. These productions are critical for theater students to practice their crafts as actors, writers, directors, and theater technicians. In addition, the University has hosted and traveled to perform at the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival Region III competition. This enterprise brings approximately 1200 visitors to campus and generates an estimated $2.8 million in economic activity for hotels, restaurants, and other businesses in the Great Lakes Bay Region each time it is hosted on our campus.

Also of note, in terms of literary offerings, the Theodore Roethke Poetry & Arts Festival is a triennial celebration of the Pulitzer-winning poet Theodore Roethke featuring various events throughout the Great Lakes Bay Region and highlighted by the awarding of the prestigious Theodore Roethke Memorial Poetry Prize.

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1.C - Core Component 1.C

The institution provides opportunities for civic engagement in a diverse, multicultural society and globally connected world, as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.

1. The institution encourages curricular or cocurricular activities that prepare students for informed citizenship and workplace success.
2. The institution's processes and activities demonstrate inclusive and equitable treatment of diverse populations.
3. The institution fosters a climate of respect among all students, faculty, staff and administrators from a range of diverse backgrounds, ideas and perspectives.

Argument

1C1.

The university engages in various co-curricular activities that prepare students for informed citizenship and workplace success. Students engage in research with faculty members through the Undergraduate Research Program (UGRP) which enhances undergraduate education through it support of student and faculty-led research partnerships. Cardinal Volunteers is an SVSU volunteer program for students who are interested in making a positive impact in the Great Lakes Bay Region. Cardinals Vote is a non-partisan initiative centered around connecting SVSU students with opportunities to engage in the democratic system through participation in the electoral process.

SVSU provides opportunities for students who are seeking specialized coursework, individual research experience, community service leadership and international travel through our Programs of Distinction, these programs include the Garber Cardinal Business Edge, the Global Foundation Scholars Program, the Honors Program, the Richard V. Wolohan Fellowship in Leadership and Service, the Botz Liberal Arts Fellowship, the Kantzler Fellows, the Roberts-Gilbertson Fellowship, and the Vitito Global Leadership Institute. Several of these include international study and travel.

Students also participate in activities directly associated with academic departments and programs. These programs are designed to help prepare students to be effective citizens and work-ready employees through experiences in and out of the classroom. These programs/activities include Moot Court, Cardinal Formula Racing, Go Baby Go project, Forensics, Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival, Pre-Health Professions, Saginaw Bay Environmental Science Institute, Alternative Breaks, Study Abroad, and Internships and Co-ops.

1C2.

SVSU has defined itself as an institution of opportunity with respect to diversity since its inception. As such, diversity is a core value in the Mission/Vision and the Strategic Plan. The University has been recognized for excellence in Diversity through the Higher Education Excellence in Diversity (HEED) Awards. The award recognizes that "SVSU has an unprecedented number of programs and initiatives in place that provide substantial opportunities for students, faculty, and staff from all underrepresented groups" and that "diversity and inclusion goals have shaped the character of this

university." The award notes the services provided to groups based on gender, race, ethnicity, veteran status, sexual orientation, and disability status. In line with its mission, the University is committed to fostering diversity in several ways, including:

- increasing the diversity of the student body, the faculty, and the staff.
- promoting curricular and co-curricular efforts that are diverse in intellectual content and approach.
- implementing academic support initiatives to increase retention among a diverse student population; and
- organizing student clubs and campus life opportunities that reflect a diverse population.

This commitment can be seen in the range and scope of activities that various units have undertaken and the outreach activities to local communities that faculty, students, and staff have organized. The university offers activities/programs and actively examines its processes to ensure equitable treatment of diverse populations.

The Office of Diversity Programs promotes and enhances a culture of inclusivity, ethical behavior, equitable treatment, equal access and equal opportunity for all community members. This office offers training, supports the professional development of the community, and monitors progress on diversity goals by publishing an annual Affirmative Action plan. This office also oversees the Office of Title IX which ensures that SVSU is committed to creating and maintaining an educational environment free from all forms of sexual misconduct.

Additional programming is provided through the Office of Multicultural Student Affairs (OMSA) which supports underrepresented students through cultural programming, academic workshops, and mentoring. The LGBTQ Pride Center, housed within OMSA, creates a safe space for students and allies to gather. The Office of Military Student Affairs is dedicated to the needs and concerns of all military-affiliated students. SVSU has been recognized as a Military Friendly School for over a decade. For the 2022-23 cycle SVSU achieved Gold Status for the first time. The Office of International Programs provides support for SVSU international students.

The University regularly assesses, tracks, and adjusts the climate as needed. To access campus climate among undergraduates, graduates, faculty, and staff, SVSU participated in a campus-wide climate survey during the fall of 2014 and 2019. This study is one part of SVSU's ongoing efforts to foster a healthy and inclusive environment for all members of the university community. SVSU is using the findings to develop new actions or initiatives or enhance existing efforts, that will improve the working, living, and learning environments here. Goal 2 of the 2016 Strategic Plan; "Our people, climate and culture transform lives" was informed by the results of the 2014 Campus Climate results and contributed to our progress.

SVSU hosts two diversity councils, the SVSU External Diversity Council, which is a 21-member advisory team made up of community leaders from our local community. The SVSU Internal Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Advisory Council is composed of 75 students, administrators, faculty, and staff. This DEI Team is charged with establishing, implementing, and tracking DE&I goals for the university.

Based on the 2021 recommendation of the internal DEI Advisory Council, the university selected Dr. Damon Williams and the Center for Strategic Diversity Leadership and Social Innovation to assist in developing a high-level understanding of the university's DEI capabilities on campus. After extensive interviews with campus stakeholders Dr. Williams and his team identified strengths and

opportunities for improvement for the university. These findings are detailed in the "DEI External Review". Action taken on the goals identified by Dr. Willams and his team are summarized on the DEI Council web page.

1C3.

To strengthen the campus community and foster a climate of respect among all students, faculty, staff, and administrators from diverse backgrounds, the campus is engaged in a broad array of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusions (DEI) initiatives. Initiating dialogue about subjects when people are reluctant to talk is critically important for personal and professional growth. Results from the 2019 Campus Climate Survey indicate that twenty percent of respondents have experienced exclusionary, intimidating, offensive, and/or hostile conduct. As a result, the university sponsors Cultural Competency Dialogues that serve as diversity workshops for the campus community. Furthermore, in 2021 the Office of Diversity Programs, the Office of the Provost, the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, and the Faculty Association sponsored a "Implicit Bias Workshop" which presented real campus scenarios and experiences, introduced DEI skills and provided opportunities for participants to practice interventions.

Other offices on campus implement programming that fosters a climate of respect for DEI. The work of SVSU Student Affairs department is grounded in four priorities that encourage respect for DEI and are aligned with the University's Strategic Goals. The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) is intentional about integrating programming around faculty development that is connected to DEI and its Core Values speak to this commitment. The Marshall Fredericks Sculpture Museum offers a diverse set of exhibitions to inform the community. Recent exhibitions at the museum have a wide variety of perspectives including Mosaic: A Collective Art Experience, Hip Hop Icons, Notes from the Quarantimes, and Harold Neal and Detroit African American Artists to name a few.

The university's climate of respect for people from diverse backgrounds, ideas and perspectives is also represented in our all university awards. These awards are given to celebrate outstanding achievement in teaching, mentoring, involvement, and employee performance. We have several internal diversity and inclusion awards including the Ruben Daniels Community Service Award, the Roosevelt Ruffin Diversity Award, the Global Diversity Award, and The Diversity Equity & Inclusion Research Award. The Global Diversity Award and The Diversity Equity & Inclusion Research Award were developed by the committee representing Goal VI (Awards received for diversity excellence) of the DEI Strategic Plan.

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1.S - Criterion 1 - Summary

The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

Summary

SVSU's current mission was developed in 2016 by a committee charged by the President to produce a statement that accurately represented the purpose, goals, and role of the University. Composed of administrators, faculty members, and representatives from the SVSU Student Association, the committee sought input from a wide range of stakeholders including off-campus community members, and employers.

To operationalize the Mission/Vision, the institution has created, implemented, and assessed periodic strategic planning documents that specify goals and actions tied to all aspects of SVSU. The current Strategic Plan defines the University's goals for and expected outcomes for issues grouped under the following five goals:

1. Goal 1: SVSU delivers high-quality academic programs that lead to student success, improved retention, and enrollment stability.
2. Goal 2: Our people, climate, and culture transform lives.
3. Goal 3: SVSU is widely known across Michigan as a sought-after institution of higher learning.
4. Goal 4: SVSU is financially robust, fosters sound business practices and is noted for operational excellence.
5. Goal 5: Our community engagement activities drive regional and institutional success both locally and worldwide.

The creation, implementation, and evaluation of these core documents involve collaboration among a large number of diverse University stakeholders. The Mission/Vision and Strategic Plans are thus widely shared with the University's various constituencies and the public. All formal University actions are tied to the Mission/Vision and the Strategic Plans. Administrative units and academic departments align their planning and assessment activities with the University Strategic Plan and the Mission/Vision statement. Because the Mission/Vision and Strategic Plans continue to identify SVSU as an institution of opportunity and choice, serving a diverse population has always been a core institutional value. SVSU thus remains committed to diversifying its faculty, staff, student body, and programs and has made considerable progress in infusing multicultural perspectives into its curricula and campus culture. Similarly, again based on the Mission/Vision and Strategic Plan, the University embraces the goal of working for the public good in the region and beyond. In January of 2024, SVSU selected a strategic planning consultant, and the final contract was signed in February 2024 (36). The strategic planning committees have been developed and planning sessions have begun, including the scope and timeline for the process. The expectation is that a new strategic plan will be presented to the Board of Control for review in September or October 2024.

Sources

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- SVSU Mission
- SVSU Strategic Plan

2 - Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

2.A - Core Component 2.A

The institution establishes and follows policies and processes to ensure fair and ethical behavior on the part of its governing board, administration, faculty and staff.

1. The institution develops and the governing board adopts the mission.
2. The institution operates with integrity in its financial, academic, human resources and auxiliary functions.

Argument

Mission

Saginaw Valley State University (SVSU) is committed to maintaining high standards for integrity and promotes ethical principles in its financial, academic, and auxiliary functions. Based on state and federal laws, the University works diligently to develop clear and fair policies in all its offices and programs and to improve the transparency of these policies and associated practices. The Board of Control, various levels of administration, faculty, and staff all have generated policies and instituted fair practices consistent with the University's mission, commitment to diversity, and public service, as well as with sound governance practices.

Policies and Governance Structures

The Board of Control operates transparently to fulfill the University's mission and goals as outlined in its bylaws. Core to board member integrity are the Conflict-of-Interest policy and procedures. Board member biographies support the qualifications and commitment to fulfill member responsibilities. Through leadership elections and regular meetings, the Board ensures it is in the best position to meet the University's needs. Additionally, the Board bylaws clearly outline areas in which the Board retains authority, and thus its role in the mission of the University.

The University also describes its specific values and missions through which it and the Board ultimately operate. The Board has maintained its commitment to operate within this framework through its regular approval of a Strategic Plan and resolution to extend the Strategic Plan. Another example of the Board fulfilling its duty to effectively adopt the mission of the University is seen through its membership in the National Association of Governing Boards.

The University Strategic Plan guides the use of the University's resources in line with institutional goals and prioritizes the funding of both continuing and new initiatives consistent with the University's mission. Routine control of financial functions of the University is delegated to the President. The Board retains authority to evaluate the Office of the President, specifically regarding resource management. Additional Board responsibilities can be found here.

Board minutes show transparency and deliberation in financial decision-making and the formation of policies related to university resources. Board of Control meetings are open to the public, and Board agendas and minutes are distributed and posted publicly and are archived and made available to the public on the library website. The University maintains an impeccable record of sound fiscal management and consistently receives top ratings from external auditors. An additional example of the Board's sound financial planning is the regular acceptance of the University's capital outlay plan.

The SVSU Operations Manual addresses several areas of sound fiscal management, including guidelines for the centralized purchasing of goods and services, the refunding of tuition, nepotism, and processes to resolve financial conflicts of interest. In support of the Board Bylaws and delegation of contracting authority, a policy statement to memorialize and communicate authorization and procedures to contract on behalf of the University was adopted on September 15, 2022.

Another area reflecting the University's financial functions is the Office of Sponsored Programs which oversees both internal and external grants and ensures they are managed appropriately. Sponsored Programs also serves as a third party to facilitate the application for, and the administration of grants received through the SVSU Foundation and other entities. The Office of Sponsored Programs provides online tools to view financial information, including fiscal year funded summary.

Regarding fundraising, the SVSU Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that oversees the cultivation of donors who contribute to the development of the University. The SVSU Foundation has established protocols for the acceptance of gifts. The Audit, Finance and Investment Committee meets quarterly to review the investments and general fiscal policy of the Foundation and its audit. The Audit, Finance, and Investment Committee operates within the Board-approved Investment Policy. SVSU Foundation Board members adhere to a conflict-of-interest policy and sign annual acknowledgments of the policy. The Foundation Board has also adopted a Whistleblower Protection Policy that provides a mechanism for the reporting of illegal activity or misuse of assets. Finally, in October 2022 the SVSU Board of Control adopted a naming policy to work in closer collaboration with the Foundation on the use of university spaces to promote private support.

To obtain maximum value from the expenditures of its funds, the University follows a well-defined set of purchasing policies, which are delineated in section 5.2-1 of the SVSU Operations Manual. The University prohibits discrimination against any vendors based on race, creed, age, sex, or national origin and does not patronize vendors known to practice discrimination. Policies also prohibit purchases where there is a conflict of interest or in response to donations or other gifts to the University. Underlying all financial activity is the commitment to ethical and transparent practice.

Academic and Student Affairs

SVSU faculty articulate and practice their commitment to academic integrity through committees and processes set forth in the Faculty Association Contract, including:

- Unitary structure of academic programs delivered on-campus and off-campus delivery sites (D 28.2, p 30);
- Ensuring proportionate involvement of part-time faculty in the approval and assessment of General Education courses (F 6.7, p. 48);
- The General Education Committee chair also reviews the schedule of all courses recommended for the purpose of maintaining the integrity of the General Education program (F 6.8, p. 48); and

- Informal and formal mechanisms to raise claims of improper faculty conduct (Articles J and K, p. 68).

The Office of Student Conduct Programs is responsible for promoting and sustaining high standards of conduct for SVSU. Resources for students and faculty are provided on the Office's website. The Office of Student Conduct utilizes the Maxent software to track student complaints, grievances, and data on student conduct. Statistics on violations and the disposition of cases to ensure that all five academic colleges are appropriately engaged in upholding academic integrity. Refer to section 2E2 for more detailed information. In addition, SVSU uses Turnitin.com for plagiarism detection and has streamlined the grade grievance procedure.

Human Resources

Policies and procedures that support anti-harassment, non-discrimination, and sexual misconduct including reporting sexual misconduct and other forms of improper behavior are set forth in the operations manual and are linked on the Human Resources Department web page. Additionally, multiple education and reporting channels are easily accessed at numerous points on the SVSU website:

- Operations Manual
- Employment Laws and Guidelines
- "Report a Bias Incident" button is at the bottom of the public facing Human Resources webpage
- HR Employee Complaint Form is accessible to employees in the SVSU portal

All report forms submitted via the website are emailed to the Director of Human Resources, who tracks all activities in connection with the reports. Data tracked by Human Resources is submitted to SVSU's insurance carrier on a bi-annual "Bordero Report" for risk management purposes.

Prevention of incidents is a key strategy. Prevention strategies include education initiatives and provision of employee support, beginning with new employees who are required to review annual notices and other SVSU policies as part of their on-boarding and the FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) Acknowledgement Form. FERPA is also reinforced through policies that are made available to both faculty and student-employees. Attendance of a New Faculty Orientation program and annual on-line training reinforces core compliance concepts. Other relevant training is offered on an ongoing basis through a variety of training resources, such as the annual Michigan University Self-Insurance Corporation ("MUSIC), which recently conducted workshops on topics including Vehicle Safety, with representatives from across campus. Other topics, such as Employee Health and Safety, have also been covered.

Recognizing the stresses of recent years and their potential adverse effects on employee wellness and behavior, the administration has placed a higher priority on mental health care. For example, in 2021 the SVSU hired the employee assistance firm Ulliance. Enhanced services through Ulliance include quarterly meetings to discuss trends in referrals and proactive strategies. Efforts to increase awareness of the program include strategically placed signage and literature across campus and referrals through the campus Mental Health and Wellness Center when faculty and staff seek assistance.

Intercollegiate Athletics

The SVSU Athletics Department takes immense pride in creating a culture of integrity and ethical behavior. Administration ensures compliance with the rules and regulations contained within the NCAA Division II Manual as well as our Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (GLIAC) Operating Codes and Bylaws, and SVSU Operations Manual. Expectations of student-athletes are set forth in the SVSU Student-Athlete Handbook.

A true sign of integrity is to do what is right, even when it is difficult and may lead to embarrassment and increased workload. In late 2017, SVSU self-reported certain violations to the NCAA relating to amateurism certification. Further review revealed some issues relating to academic certification and student-athlete transfers. SVSU athletics resolved the self-reported violations through the summary disposition process with the NCAA Committee on Infractions (COI). Through a Resolution Agreement and a four-year probationary period, SVSU implemented numerous corrective measures. These measures have ensured that the University has and will continue to conform to all NCAA regulations. In February 2023, SVSU successfully completed its obligations and was released from probation.

Student Support

SVSU is committed to creating and maintaining an educational environment that creates an inclusive and equitable campus community where people are treated with dignity and respect. We take our responsibility to track and address campus climate concerns with the goal of resolving campus concerns at the earliest opportunity possible. The Office of Diversity Programs website provides a button to "Report a Bias Incident". The bias "button" leads to a Campus Climate Incident Report Form.

Another pathway available to report inappropriate conduct is through the Office of Title IX & Diversity Programs. A link at the top of the page leads to a form used to report Sexual Misconduct. This page also provides links to numerous resources, reports, and training materials for survivors of sexual assault. More detailed information about reporting options is provided through the Reporting tab of the Office of Title IX & Diversity Programs webpage.

The provision of support to students experiencing a crisis is a critical element to operating with integrity. 24/7 resources are readily accessible through the Mental Health and Wellness Center. Any member of the University community or other interested individuals may submit a concern about a student's social and personal issues that yield additional support and resources. Cardinal Care Notes allow the University to offer students support and resources for social and personal issues that may impact their SVSU experience.

Finally, another critical area that has increased in activity and importance is the Office of Accessibility Resources and Accommodations (ARA). Steps to request academic, housing, and dining accommodations are outlined with appropriate links and are easy to find under the Accommodations tab at the top of the ARA website.

AIMS is the Accessibility Information Management System for students to help them independently coordinate their accommodations with both faculty members and the ARA staff. Through this online portal, students can request accommodation. Likewise, members of the faculty can access AIMS to upload exams, review a student's accommodation letter for their course and other communication facilitation features.

SVSU works to stay current, compliant, and effective in meeting accommodation needs on campus.

In April 2023, 24 SVSU participants from several units including Provost, Deans, ARA, Housing, General Counsel, and others participated in interactive training led by Attorneys Joshua Nolan and Izaak Orlansky, from the higher education law firm Bricker Graydon.

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2.B - Core Component 2.B

The institution presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public.

1. The institution ensures the accuracy of any representations it makes regarding academic offerings, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, governance structure and accreditation relationships.
2. The institution ensures evidence is available to support any claims it makes regarding its contributions to the educational experience through research, community engagement, experiential learning, religious or spiritual purpose and economic development.

Argument

Admissions

Information on admissions, academic offerings, and requirements, is available on SVSU's website. Admissions requirements are clearly described on the following sites: Undergraduate Admissions, Graduate Admissions and International Admissions. Admission policies are also provided in the online SVSU catalog. On the website for Undergraduate Admissions, you can find additional admissions offerings and requirements such as Military/Veteran, Dual Enrollment, Second Bachelor's, and Guest/Non-Degree Seeking.

The University reaches prospective students in various ways including in-person recruitment visits at high schools, career centers and college nights, digital marketing, print marketing, and personalized communication plans. The Admissions Office utilizes a CRM system (i.e., Slate) that allows for customized email content and text messaging to both prospective students and their parents. The University also advertises a microsite for prospective students that highlights Academic Programs, Student Life Opportunities, Housing Options, Cost, Scholarships & Financial Aid, Visit/Tour Options and Application Information. The Orientation website covers the steps for Freshman Orientation, Transfer/Non-Traditional Orientation, International Student Orientation, and Parent Orientation.

Academic Programs and Requirements

Academic program offerings and requirements are described in the undergraduate and graduate sections and are outlined on the college website. The course catalog contains comprehensive information about Saginaw Valley State University, its academic programs, and the requirements for earning bachelor's and master's degrees from SVSU. Graduation requirements are based on the regulations published in the catalog in effect when a student first registered at Saginaw Valley State University as a degree-seeking student. They may choose to follow graduation requirements in a catalog published after initial registration but must follow the entire set of graduation requirements listed in that catalog. No student may graduate under a catalog published more than six calendar years before the graduation date. If a student is to be readmitted, then they must follow all the requirements and regulations in the catalog current at the time of re-enrollment.

The approval for changes/revisions to the Course Catalog is described in the Faculty Contract articles F 4.(Curriculum/Academic Policies Committee), F5. (Graduate Committee) and F6 (General

Education Committee (GEC)). These processes are described in the Faculty Contract. The Code of Student Conduct and the Course Catalog are the primary and official sources of information about university policies and academic programs for admitted students; both are available on the University website.

Costs to Students

The Campus Financial Services Center website provides students information on Tuition and Fees. Credit hour cost is determined by course, not by a student's class standing. This website also covers Michigan Resident Tuition Fees, Non-residents, Professional Program Courses, Graduate and Doctoral Fees. Also, it lists other fees including. Application Fees, College of Arts & Behavioral Sciences Fees, College of Education Fees, College of Health & Human Services Fees, Enrollment Fee, Graduation Related Fees, Miscellaneous Fees, Off-Campus Fees, Orientation Fees, Payment Fees, and Registration & Related Fees. The Saginaw Valley State University Net Price Calculator provides an estimated cost for incoming domestic first-year students. Financial Aid provides information on Financial Literacy. In addition, the SVSU Bookstore maintains a website to which students can connect for a customized list of course materials for classes.

SVSU also provides a range of scholarships that include academic, private, transfer student, non-resident student, State of Michigan aid and more.

Faculty and Staff

SVSU maintains online directories by faculty and staff, which provides up-to-date information, including phone numbers, office numbers, e-mail addresses, title, and degrees earned. Other sources of directory information can be found for Administration Offices, Academic Department Chairs, Organizational Chart and Department Listings.

Board of Control

The Board of Control Bylaws were last approved on June 21, 2021. The Board of Control website features information on Mission, Vision and Values, Members & Bios, Meeting Schedule, Agenda & Minutes, Request to Address Board of Control– Bylaws, procedures, members of board, schedule of meetings and Board bylaws.

Accreditation Relationships

Saginaw Valley State University has been accredited by the Higher Learning Commission since April 8, 1970. The University maintains a webpage identifying all external accreditations. Additionally, programs that have earned specialized accreditations also publish that information on their department's website. One example is on the Department of Nursing website. Additionally, non-accredited programs are also assessed. A list of specialized accreditations is also made available to the public, and many accredited programs provide additional information about their accreditations.

SVSU promotes its commitment to experiential learning and community engagement, this commitment is evident through the creation of opportunities for the exploration of research, community engagement, and experiential learning.

SVSU provides many participative opportunities for students seeking specialized coursework, individual research experience, community service leadership and international travel through the

Study Abroad program. The Programs of Distinction website [2B-28] includes information about First-Year Opportunities such as the Garber Cardinal Business Edge, Global Foundation Scholars, and Wolohan Fellowship and Honors. Other participative opportunities after the first year include Beyond the First Year which inspires and challenges students to expand their educational horizons far beyond the classroom. These programs include Botz Liberal Arts Fellowship, Kantzler Fellowship, Roberts-Gilbertson Fellowship, Undergraduate Research Student Showcase, and Vitito Leadership Institute.

SVSU offers professional development courses through the Office of Professional Development (OPD). These include Michigan's Certified Public Manager Program, SVSU's OPD Business and Supervisor Training, Certification Programs, which includes Hospitality Management Certificate Program and International Tourism Certificate Program and other opportunities. Additionally, Nursing Post-Graduate Certificate Programs have been created for Dual Nursing Education/Nursing Administration, Nursing Administration Certificate, Nursing Education Certificate, Primary Care Family Nurse Practitioner, and Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Post Graduate Certificate.

SVSU students participate in volunteer experiences such as Alternative Breaks through the Office of Student Life. Additionally, SVSU has a Food Pantry and a Cardinals Clothes Closet on campus.

Students also participated in several national competitions, Moot Court, Cardinal Formula Racing Team, and National Forensic Association National Championship. SVSU is a public university and has no religious affiliations. However, SVSU does have Faith-based Registered Student Organizations.

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2.C - Core Component 2.C

The governing board of the institution is autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution in compliance with board policies and to ensure the institution's integrity.

1. The governing board is trained and knowledgeable so that it makes informed decisions with respect to the institution's financial and academic policies and practices; the board meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities.
2. The governing board's deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution.
3. The governing board reviews the reasonable and relevant interests of the institution's internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations.
4. The governing board preserves its independence from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, ownership interests or other external parties.
5. The governing board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the institution's administration and expects the institution's faculty to oversee academic matters.

Argument

SVSU is governed by an eight-member Board of Control that works with the SVSU President (who sits ex officio). As mandated by the 1963 State Constitution of Michigan, Board members are appointed by the Governor, subject to State Senate confirmation, and are predominantly from the Great Lakes Bay region. The criteria for selecting individuals for the Board may vary from state administration to administration, especially if there is a change in the controlling political party, but the eight-year terms, with two members rotating off every two years in odd-numbered years results in a diverse Board that represents the varied constituencies of the region. The diversity of the Board works to protect the body against undue influence by any political party and/or elected official and ensures that multiple perspectives are considered in decision-making. Incoming Board members undergo a thorough orientation process, including an assessment of conflict-of-interest issues, to familiarize them with Board procedures and by-laws.

Informational agenda items are presented to the full Board at the open meetings. Matters of personnel, budget, capital projects, and other substantial issues are discussed first in one of the two subcommittees (one focusing on academics, students, and personnel with the other focusing on business, finance, audit, and facilities). More recently, these subcommittees have been meeting as a committee of the whole. Once information has been presented and discussed in the subcommittee, agenda items are brought to the full Board for approval, usually at the next regular meeting. This two-phase process helps to ensure that matters are discussed in detail, questions are resolved, and the relevant interests of all constituencies are considered.

The Board's deliberations are transparent, structured, and presented for public scrutiny. Full board meetings are open to the public, except for confidential matters such as those pertaining to labor relations. The President, vice presidents, deans, and representatives of the Faculty Association, the Support Staff Association, the Police Union and Student Association regularly update the Board. Often various administrative staff, faculty, students, and public community members are present at meetings and are invited to speak to the Board formally, when appropriate. In addition, the Board regularly consults with independent auditors and legal counsel to ensure prudent oversight of

university business and planning. Such consultations keep Board members apprised of daily operations and future planning. The Board delegates most control of the day-to-day operations of the University to the President. However, it maintains authority over its statutory functions as elaborated in the Separation and Delegation/Reservation of Functions section of the Bylaws.

Informed Decisions/Legal and Fiduciary Responsibilities

The Board of Control maintains several standing committees that ensure informed decisions are made. Presently established standing committees include the Academic, Student Services and Personnel Committee and the Business, Finance, Audit and Facilities Committee . These committees ensure that the Board of Control makes well-advised decisions about financial and academic policies. The reservation of authority to the Board of Control further ensures informed decision-making and the fulfillment of responsibilities. The publicly available biographies of Board of Control members reflect their qualifications and the process through which Board of Control officers are elected ensures the most qualified and well-suited members to uphold the University's responsibilities. The regular and well-organized meeting schedule of the Board of Control is publicly posted on the Board of Control website and serves as evidence of the members' commitment to making well-informed decisions and fulfillment of responsibilities. Evidence of this can be found in the Board of Control archives on the Board of Control website.

Governing Board's Deliberations Reflect Priorities to Preserve and Enhance the Institution

Minutes of the Board of Control indicate the body's sustained and careful attention to maintaining the fiscal health of the institution and the development of programs and projects to improve the campus. Board discussions have dealt with physical improvements to campus, such as major capital projects, new buildings, exterior lighting, etc. Examples of these discussions that involve enhancing the University include energy contracting decision and banking/ATM agreements, honorary degree policy, and building naming policies. The Board also supports academic initiatives such as the Programs of Distinction. Throughout its deliberations, the Board demonstrates its awareness of, and commitment to, the University Mission/Vision, the Strategic Plan, and the Campus Master Plan.

Governing Board Reviews during its Decision-making Deliberations

Board of Control meeting schedules, agendas, and minutes are posted on the University's website. These show that the Board carries out its mandate in the areas it reserves authority with attention to its multiple constituencies and that it documents input from students, faculty, staff, and community members. The Board's agendas follow a calendar cycle but can address issues introduced by such entities as the faculty union, administration, or ad hoc committees as needed. The Board has a clear policy outlining the process for students, staff, and the public to request to speak to the Board during formal and special formal sessions.

Governing Board Independence and Autonomy

Board policies and practices promote autonomy from both outside interests and Board members' personal interests. The Board Bylaws clearly articulate the Board's conflict of interest policy. For example, Board members must refrain from voting on any matter in which they have a conflict of interest, and the same policy prohibits nepotism in Board matters and employment practices.

Governing Board's Delegation of Institutional Management

The SVSU Board of Control maintains a positive relationship with university administration and faculty, and this longstanding relationship has resulted in a culture of cooperation. The Board Bylaws also specify how the University President and the Student Association President interact with the Board, as well as the inclusion of campus and community members on special committees to advise the body. While maintaining appropriate oversight, the Board delegates the general management of the University to the President, who is elected by the Board and is designated the chief executive officer of the institution. The Board Bylaws state: "The President shall be responsible for all functions of the University, be the official medium of communication between the Board and University faculty, staff, and students, implement policies of the Board, and have authority to issue directives and executive orders not in contravention with law of the Board's by-laws and policies." Additionally, further delegation of responsibility can be seen through the University's organizational chart which reflects administration roles and reporting structures.

The Faculty Contract, approved by the Board, makes clear that faculty have a vital role in overseeing academic matters. Faculty have a major part in faculty evaluation, hiring, retention, promotion, and tenure recommendations, as discussed elsewhere in this self-study. The Contract describes processes for faculty-led development of programs and curriculum, academic policies, and departmental governance. SVSU's contractually defined curriculum development and approval process, described below, has been effective at ensuring that the institution's courses and programs are current and require levels of performance by students appropriate to the degree or certificate awarded. It has resulted in a set of strong programs with significant value to students and the region while avoiding the proliferation of under-enrolled, highly specialized programs that drain resources from the fundamental mission. Separate standing committees oversee curricula: Curriculum and Academic Policies Committee (CAPC) for academic policies and undergraduate education, Graduate Committee for graduate programs, and the undergraduate General Education Committee. Each of these standing committees includes six elected faculty, one from each of the academic units (Business and Management; Health and Human Services; Science, Engineering and Technology; Education; Arts and Humanities; and Social Sciences); the Vice President for Academic Affairs or his/her Academic designee; and one (1) Dean, Associate Dean, VPAA, or Associate VPAA, who shall serve as chair with vote.

Sources

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- 2C-02 Separation and Delegation Reservation of Function_1940592.pdf
- 2C-03 SVSU Board of Control Standing Committees_1940594.pdf
- 2C-04 Board of Control Members and Biographies_1940590.pdf
- 2C-05 Election of Board Officers_1940589.pdf
- 2C-06 Meeting Schedule Board of Control_1940591.pdf
- 2C-07 Board of Control Archives_1940587.pdf
- 2C-08 Approval of Banking ATM Agreements
- 2C-09 Honorary Degree Policy
- 2C-10 Naming of Buildings and Other Properties
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- 2C-12 Board of Control Website_1940596.pdf
- 2C-14 Appearances before the Board of Control_1940601.pdf
- 2C-15 Conflict of Interest Policy BOC_1940599.pdf
- 2C-16 Role of the President_1940598.pdf

- 2C-17 Organizational Chart
- 2C-17 Organizational Chart_1940600.pdf
- 2C-18 Standing Committees

2.D - Core Component 2.D

The institution is committed to academic freedom and freedom of expression in the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning.

Argument

Both the Bylaws of the Board of Control and the SVSU/Faculty Contract specifically articulate the University's commitment to academic freedom. One of the principal responsibilities of the Board of Control is to "preserve academic freedom". The SVSU/FA Contract, which is approved by the Board of Control, assures that faculty members have the "freedom to report the truth in" their respective disciplines, as they see it. Additionally, both the SVSU Code of Student Conduct and Student Rights and Responsibilities ensure the preservation of academic freedom for students and protect the right to peacefully assemble.

In practice, the University supports and allows the exploration of a variety of topics including through research, student-hosted events, theatre productions, museum exhibits, and musical concerts/events. The University also allows students to engage in over 150 active Registered Student Organizations with widely varying purposes and views. The University also emphasizes the importance of diversity within its promotion of freedom of expression. Both the Office of Diversity Programs and the Office of Multicultural Student Affairs provide opportunities for open engagement and expression on topics surrounding diversity. These examples reflect the University's commitment to establishing an open and accommodating environment where both students and faculty can fully participate in expressive endeavors without unnecessary constraints.

Additionally, University policies ensure content-neutral standards regarding facilities usage, revenue-producing projects for student groups, First Amendment assemblies, and network use policy. Similarly, University social media policies for official accounts and employees' personal accounts emphasize the importance of content-neutral standards in accordance with the promotion of free expression.

Sources

- 2D-01 Preserve Academic Freedom BOC
- 2D-02 Academic Freedom SVSU Faculty Contract
- 2D-03 Student Rights and Responsibilities_1940611.pdf
- 2D-04 SVSU UGRP Showcase_1940607.pdf
- 2D-05 Upcoming Events_1940608.pdf
- 2D-06 Show Schedule Theatre Department_1940603.pdf
- 2D-07 Marshall M Fredericks Sculpture Museum_1940604.pdf
- 2D-08 Current Concerts and Events Music Department_1940609.pdf
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- 2D-11 Office of Multicultural Student Affairs_1940618.pdf
- 2D-12 Facilities Use Policy_1940613.pdf

- 2D-13 Revenue Producing Projects Student Groups_1940614.pdf
- 2D-14 Use of SVSU Property for Experssive Activity_1940617.pdf
- 2D-15 Internet Network Acceptable Use Policy_1940619.pdf
- 2D-16 Official Social Media Accounts_1940616.pdf
- 2D-17 Employees Personal Use of Social Media_1940615.pdf

2.E - Core Component 2.E

The institution's policies and procedures call for responsible acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge by its faculty, staff and students.

1. Institutions supporting basic and applied research maintain professional standards and provide oversight ensuring regulatory compliance, ethical behavior and fiscal accountability.
2. The institution provides effective support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff and students.
3. The institution provides students guidance in the ethics of research and use of information resources.
4. The institution enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity.

Argument

Research

Research projects at the University are subject to review by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) or Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC), as appropriate. As stated in the IRB policies, "All research involving human subjects conducted in whole or in part by any individual acting on behalf of SVSU (e.g., full- or part-time employees, students, and volunteers) regardless of the physical location of the data collection, shall be submitted to the SVSU IRB for purposes of oversight and compliance with this policy. This requirement is binding whether the research is externally funded or not and regardless of the source of any such funding."

The IRB meets federal requirements related to membership and is composed of faculty from across the campus and community members. The IRB works to guarantee the safety and integrity of research that involves human subjects. To further its work, the IRB engaged in outreach efforts within the SVSU community to encourage the ethical conduct of human subject research while eliminating any perception that the oversight mechanisms were unduly onerous. These efforts included surveying faculty about their learning needs about IRB and providing workshops for faculty, staff, and students. In addition, the IRB website has been updated to reflect the most current Common Rule. Similarly, the IACUC policy requires "all investigators planning to utilize vertebrate animals for research or education, regardless of source of funding or format of the project submission, must submit a protocol for approval." This Committee, which is also under the supervision of the Office of Sponsored Programs, is currently revising its policies and procedures. Minutes of the IRB and IACUC demonstrate that scholars across the University utilize the oversight, consultation, and support of these bodies. Summary statistics show that the SVSU faculty and students are actively engaged in human subjects research and that there is effective oversight of this research.

The Office of Sponsored Programs oversees both internal and external grants and is responsible for research development training and review on campus. Sponsored Programs serves as a third party to facilitate the application and administration of internal grants received through the Foundation and other sources. Sponsored Programs works closely with the Provost's Office and the five college deans to establish clear guidelines and transparent procedures for internal grants such as the Faculty Research and Professional Growth grants. Information about applying for internal grants is readily

available on the Sponsored Program website. Grant applications are processed electronically through the vendor site, InfoReady Competition Space. Appropriate committees review all internal applications. The FA Contract, section D23 Grant and Research/Development addresses policies associated with Faculty Research and Professional Growth grants.

Over the past several years, Sponsored Programs has significantly expanded its role in the relationship to seeking and ensuring appropriate use of external funding. The office helps faculty and staff identify possible funding sources for various initiatives, both for individual research and more general program initiatives. It guides each Principal Investigator (PI) through the application process including internal transmittal procedures. These serve to corroborate that there is no conflict between university policies and granting agency expectations as well as document that the University is supportive of the project and any institutional obligation that may be incurred, such as release time and in-kind costs. Should a grant be secured, the Office of Sponsored Programs works with the PI to ensure that funds are expended appropriately, and the reports are submitted on schedule. Through the Controller's Office, the University has designated a special accountant to monitor grant budgets. This accountant regularly meets with each grant PI and Sponsored Program staff to monitor ongoing compliance with grant requirements and restrictions. The Office of Sponsored Programs also assists PIs (principal investigators) with the sometimes complex process of report submission that includes the appropriate documentation that goals have been met, expenditures tracked, and appropriate progress reports and final accountings submitted.

Students

As reviewed earlier in this criterion and the material below, the University employs many ways to ensure that faculty, students, and staff acquire and apply knowledge responsibly. Related to the acquisition and discovering knowledge, faculty work closely with the library and the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning to ensure that students are informed about responsible acquisition of knowledge. Additional mechanisms include maintaining IRB and IACUC protocols, defining expectations for and overseeing grant compliance. There are mechanisms through which student conduct is monitored including the academic integrity policies for students described in the Student Code of Conduct. These policies are enforced through Student Conduct Board hearings. The expectation of peer review of research and creative activities also assures that the faculty applies knowledge responsibly. Faculty and staff assist students in the responsible application of knowledge through oversight of fieldwork and community projects. Strict adherence to lab protocols through lab supervision also contributes to a culture in which students learn to apply knowledge responsibly. Finally, as with faculty research, student research, funded by entities such as the Herbert and Grace A. Dow Foundation is subject to internal review and external review when students present at peer-reviewed conferences/performances or published in peer-reviewed venues.

The Institutional Review Board provides instructions for training for faculty, staff, and students regarding proper compliance with federal laws in conducting research. Also, see below statement for ethical use of information in the academic setting.

The website for Student Rights and Responsibilities, Student Code of Conduct and SVSU's Policy Regarding Copyright provides students with information about the ethical use of information in the academic setting. According to Student Rights and Responsibilities Article 1, appropriate conditions and opportunities for learning are important measures of the quality of an educational institution. The university assumes several essential responsibilities to achieve academic excellence and to preserve the ideals of academic freedom for students. As members of the academic community students similarly accept certain responsibilities.

The Student Code of Conduct applies to all students and is enforced by the Student Conduct Programs Office. Complaints of alleged academic misconduct are resolved in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. The Student Code of Conduct outlines the process for addressing violations of the policy, potential sanctions, and the appeal process. Faculty members report students suspected of academic dishonesty to the Office of the Student Conduct Programs for a hearing. The Student Code of Conduct clearly defines academic integrity, cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized possession, or disposition of academic materials and undermining the educational process. The Academic Integrity part of the Student Code of Conduct is approved by the Faculty and Board of Control.

Sources

- 2E 14 - HHS Common Rule
- 2E-1 Institutional Review Board
- 2E-10 UGRP Funding Opportunities
- 2E-11 IRB Training
- 2E-12 Student Rights and Responsibilities
- 2E-13 Copyright Policy
- 2E-2 Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee
- 2E-3 IRB Minutes
- 2E-4 IACUC Minutes
- 2E-5 Sponsored Programs
- 2E-6 SVSU-FA Faculty Contract Section D23
- 2E-7 CETL
- 2E-8 PPC
- 2E-9 Student Code of Conduct

2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary

The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

Summary

SVSU demonstrates a firm commitment to maintaining high standards of integrity and ethical behavior across all its functions, including financial, academic, human resources, and auxiliary operations. The university, guided by its mission, develops and adopts clear and fair policies that promote transparency and fairness in governance, administration, and throughout its diverse community. The Board of Control plays a pivotal role in this framework, operating with transparency to fulfill the university's mission and goals, adopting a strategic plan, and ensuring financial integrity through sound fiscal management practices, which are supported by consistent clean audits and responsible budgeting and expenditure practices.

SVSU's governance structure is designed to preserve its autonomy, with the Board of Control making well-informed decisions that prioritize the university's integrity and interests. New board members undergo comprehensive orientation to align with institutional policies and ethical standards, ensuring a diverse and autonomous body that delegates operational decisions to the President and academic matters to faculty committees. This structure supports the university's dedication to academic freedom and integrity, with faculty having a significant role in curriculum development, assessments, and the overall academic experience.

The university upholds academic integrity and freedom, providing resources and enforcing policies related to copyright, plagiarism, and responsible conduct in research and scholarship. It fosters an environment where students and faculty can pursue truth in teaching and learning, supported by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) and Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) to ensure ethical research practices. Additionally, SVSU's transparent presentation of academic programs, requirements, and financial information ensures that students are well-informed and supported throughout their educational journey.

In summary, SVSU acts with integrity and responsibility, ensuring that its conduct across all areas is ethical and aligned with its mission. The institution's governance, academic policies, and dedication to transparency and fairness underscore its commitment to creating an inclusive and equitable campus community, where academic freedom and integrity are upheld, and where students, faculty, and staff are supported in their pursuit of excellence.

Sources

There are no sources.

3 - Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

The institution provides quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

3.A - Core Component 3.A

The rigor of the institution's academic offerings is appropriate to higher education.

1. Courses and programs are current and require levels of student performance appropriate to the credential awarded.
2. The institution articulates and differentiates learning goals for its undergraduate, graduate, post-baccalaureate, post-graduate and certificate programs.
3. The institution's program quality and learning goals are consistent across all modes of delivery and all locations (on the main campus, at additional locations, by distance delivery, as dual credit, through contractual or consortial arrangements, or any other modality).

Argument

SVSU is dedicated to ensuring that all academic offerings are appropriate for higher education and provide an appropriate amount of rigor. Consistent with its mission as a regional comprehensive university, SVSU's undergraduate programs encompass the traditional liberal arts and sciences as well as a number of professional programs. SVSU offers a limited number of interdisciplinary graduate programs, designed primarily for working adults. These are professional and applied in their orientation. In all cases, there are several processes in place to ensure that SVSU provides strong and appropriate programs at all approved locations and in all approved modalities. In addition to meeting the requirements of specialized external accreditors, the university has also developed robust internal departmental assessment protocols and General Education assessment plans that cover all its academic programs. In cases where external bodies do not provide routine external reviews, academic programs are required to undergo an external review process at least every seven years. Furthermore, some units (including engineering, computer science, business, education, public administration, and health sciences) utilize external advisory boards to ensure program quality. Details of these processes can be found in the subsequent sections.

3.A.1.

All of SVSU's degree and certificate programs require appropriate preparation and performance. In the case of undergraduate degrees, all undergraduate students have certain standards that must be met related to basic skills, general education, major requirements, upper division, GPA, and credit hours (complete list here). These requirements are listed in the Undergraduate Catalog and can only be changed through a process for curriculum and policy revision outlined in the Saginaw Valley State University-Faculty Association Contract. The Office of the Registrar ensures that all students who receive degrees meet these requirements.

Similarly, all graduate students must meet University Graduate Minimum Standards which are summarized here and listed in the Graduate Catalog along with additional program-specific

requirements. Graduate program curriculum must be approved by SVSU's Graduate Committee as per the SVSU-FA Contract with records maintained by the Office of the Registrar.

SVSU affirms the currency and appropriateness of performance levels in its courses and programs through external specialized program accreditations and a detailed curriculum processes. Specialized program accreditation provides clear evidence that those programs are current and have appropriate expectations (examples include AACSB, ABET, and Social Work). The curriculum process is the means by which programs maintain the currency of their offerings, and the process allows curricular adjustments to meet both student learning outcomes and evolving disciplinary expectations. Beyond these measures, which are discussed elsewhere in the assurance argument, SVSU evaluates the currency and appropriateness of performance levels in its courses and programs through the University's processes for annual program assessment by all academic departments; periodic external review of departments that are not subscribed to disciplinary accrediting bodies; and input from other sources, such as, when appropriate, advisory boards.

All academic departments at SVSU engage in annual program assessment, regardless of whether they have external accreditations. SVSU has developed a robust annual departmental assessment program. Examples of annual reports include Theater, Political Science, Psychology, Economics, Management and Marketing, Early Childhood Education, Teacher Education-Elementary, Public Health, Health Science, Math, Physics, and Biology. In addition to annual assessment reports, departments that do not undergo periodic external assessment must also undertake external program review at least every seven years. Examples of these 7-year assessment reports include Computer Science and Information Systems, Physics, Geography, Political Science, and Psychology. Details of this process are in Criterion 4B.

In addition to direct methods of program review and assessment, the University employs additional methods to evaluate the currency and appropriateness of its programs, including select alumni and employer survey data. When appropriate, SVSU utilizes advisory boards of regional stakeholders to provide input on curriculum, especially in relation to professional and industry standards. Representatives from fields such as engineering, criminal justice, business, and health sciences meet regularly to provide input on programs and feedback on curriculum, to assess the relevance of SVSU's curriculum to their respective fields, and to discuss the viability of new programs and their potential value to the region.

3.A.2.

It is clear from reviewing the course catalog, the annual program assessment reports, proposals submitted to the distinct undergraduate and graduate curriculum committees, and diverse other documents that SVSU differentiates learning goals for different program levels. Such differentiation is most obvious in SVSU's course numbering practices which are defined in the course catalog, and are consistent with those of many universities: lower-division courses are set at the 000-level (developmental), 100-level (freshman), or 200-level sophomore); upper-division courses are set at the 300-level (junior) or 400-level (senior); graduate courses are set at the 500-level or 600-level. To date, all Basic Skills courses are designated as 000-level or 100-level and all General Education courses as 100-level or 200-level, in keeping with the understanding that such work is foundational. Conversely, undergraduate senior seminars carry 400-level numbers. Course numbering often reflects pre-requisite requirements in consonance with the degree of complexity and specialization.

Beyond these widely distributed methods for differentiating learning experiences, it is notable that SVSU faculty must apply and be approved by both their departments and the Graduate Committee

before being allowed to teach graduate courses. Such approval considers degree and disciplinary qualifications in some depth.

A side-by-side comparison of program goals for sets of parallel graduate and undergraduate majors exemplifies how programs differentiate specific learning goals. Comparisons of the learning goals language of the Bachelor of Business Administration to the Master of Business Administration and the Bachelor of Science in Computer Science and the Master of Computer Science and Information Systems reveal a number of consistent differences. In particular, graduate programs place strong emphasis on leadership and professional skill development that builds on a richer and more complex understanding of disciplinary content; because of this, SVSU's graduate program learning goals often focus on creative problem solving, reflected in the requirements for research or field projects.

3.A.3

The University offers the vast majority of its courses on its main campus in a face-to-face format. However, there are a variety of modalities offered at the university with 11% of sections offered in a hybrid format and 16% of sections offered as online only in fall of 2023. Online courses are designated as such if 100% of the course content is offered online while hybrid courses are designated as such if more than 5 contact hours are offered online, but there is also at least one face-to-face contact hour. The definitions of modalities are defined in the SVSU-FA Contract.

The MBA, MPA, MPH, Primary Care Family Nurse Practitioner, Nurse Practitioner Psychiatric Mental Health, and Technology Learning Systems & Design are the graduate programs that are offered 100% online. All programs and courses, no matter the location or modality, undergo the same curricular approval processes. Courses presented in traditional formats in off-campus locations have the same learning goals and expected outcomes as those on the main campus, and online courses must also demonstrate equivalent learning outcomes. Full- and part-time faculty must meet the same contractually specified levels of qualifications regardless of instructional location or modality. Both full- and part-time instructors who wish to teach online must complete additional training in effective online course design and delivery. Adjunct faculty who choose to complete this training receive a stipend, while full-time faculty view it as professional development.

Similarly, the program assessment process applies to courses and programs regardless of mode of delivery or location. Departments apply learning goals program-wide, and these goals guide each program's courses and activities. Departments routinely include information on assessment of their online and hybrid courses in their annual assessment documents.

Since the beginning of online/hybrid education at SVSU, the university has required faculty training. Initially, SVSU used the Sloan Consortium's online materials, requiring each instructor who wanted to teach online to complete two courses. This training later moved to in-house training, which was sponsored by a $1.8 million grant from the Department of Education, and which provided both staffing and infrastructure for online education. We later created a position of Director of Online and Hybrid Learning (this position was later converted into that of an Instructional Designer); the first director redesigned professional development courses to better suit the needs of SVSU faculty. At the beginning of the COVID pandemic, this director and her staff trained full-time faculty to teach online using the Quality Matter Rubric and Standards. As a result of this training, 97% of all full-time faculty have been trained to teach online/hybrid courses.

Sources

- 3A Comparisong of Bachelors and Masters in Computer Information Systems
- 3A Comparison of the Bachelors of Business Administration and Masters of Business Administration
- 3A Requirements for all undergraduate and graduate degrees
- 3A-1 List Specialized Accreditations
- 3A-10 AACSB Accreditation Report
- 3A-11 ABET Accreditation Reports
- 3A-12 Social Work Accreditation Reports-compressed
- 3A-13 Theater APA Report
- 3A-14 Political Science APA Report
- 3A-15 Psychology APA Report
- 3A-16 Economics APA Report
- 3A-17 Management and Marketing APA Report
- 3A-18 Early Childhood Education APA Report
- 3A-19 Teacher Education-Elementary APA Report
- 3A-2 Program Assessment Process
- 3A-20 Public Health Major APA Report
- 3A-21 Health Science APA Report
- 3A-22 Math APA Report
- 3A-23 Physics APA Report
- 3A-24 Biology APA Report
- 3A-25 Schedule of 7 year external reviews
- 3A-26 Seven year program assessment policies and procedures-new.pdf
- 3A-27 Seven year program assessment for Computer Science and Information Systems
- 3A-28 Seven year program assessment for Physics
- 3A-29 Seven year program assessment for Geography
- 3A-3 General Education Assessment Process
- 3A-30 Seven year program assessment for Political Science
- 3A-31 Seven year program assessment for Psychology
- 3A-32 Career Services graduate outcomes from the First Destination Survey
- 3A-33 FA-SVSU Faculty Contract section F5
- 3A-34 List of course section modalities in Fall of 2023
- 3A-35 FA-SVSU Faculty Contract section D29
- 3A-36 Online and Hybrid Course Modality Training Offered by the CETL
- 3A-37 Training status of faculty scheduled to teach in W-S-S of 2024
- 3A-5 External Advisory Board Examples
- 3A-7 SVSU-FA Contract Section F4
- 3A-8 Program Specific Requirements
- 3A-9 Program specific requirements in the graduate catalog

3.B - Core Component 3.B

The institution offers programs that engage students in collecting, analyzing and communicating information; in mastering modes of intellectual inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.

1. The general education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings and degree levels of the institution. The institution articulates the purposes, content and intended learning outcomes of its undergraduate general education requirements.
2. The program of general education is grounded in a philosophy or framework developed by the institution or adopted from an established framework. It imparts broad knowledge and intellectual concepts to students and develops skills and attitudes that the institution believes every college-educated person should possess.
3. The education offered by the institution recognizes the human and cultural diversity and provides students with growth opportunities and lifelong skills to live and work in a multicultural world.
4. The faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their offerings and the institution's mission.

Argument

SVSU offers strong programs, including a General Education program appropriate to the University's mission, that are guided by philosophies centered on continuous improvement, lifelong learning, intellectual inquiry, diversity, adaptability, and preparation for leadership. Students and faculty share numerous opportunities for research and creativity in ways that serve the region's intellectual and economic needs.

3.B.1.

SVSU's General Education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings, and degree levels of the institution. There is a clear alignment between the University's mission/Vision statement and the mission of the undergraduate General Education program.

The program's ten content categories help students become more broadly knowledgeable, adaptable, and capable in their many life roles. The three overarching goals of SVSU's General Education Program are to equip students to think critically, reason logically, and communicate effectively. These widely published goals align with the Mission/Vision, provide coherence within the program, and link to the undergraduate majors. This ensures that by graduation, all students will have had opportunities to develop their insight, creativity and intellectual curiosity, and analytical and critical skills in diverse disciplinary contexts.

SVSU clearly articulates the purposes, content and intended learning outcomes of its undergraduate general education requirements in the course catalog, advising documents and diverse other venues. The cornerstones of SVSU's General Education program are the three goals of critical thinking, logical reasoning, and effective communication. The General Education program organizes approved courses in ten content categories each of which has clear objectives and learning goals and can be found in the course catalog. It is also a fundamental part of academic advising at the university. The

content categories are broadly similar to traditional liberal arts and sciences-centered models and are designed to ensure exposure to a broad range of disciplines, knowledge, forms of intellectual inquiry, and skills. Two of the courses from the ten categories must be designated communication-intensive (CI) courses; these subject-based courses teach effective communication within various disciplines building from the Basic Skills courses. Similarly, rather than being segregated in a separate category, questions tied to diversity are considered across categories within discipline-specific modalities; because of this, several of the categories have elements tied to human diversity in their governing criteria.

3.B.2.

The program is set up to be reasonably flexible: while some majors dictate which courses their students must take to satisfy General Education requirements, others leave course choice up to the students. In both cases, the GEC and the CAPC processes ensure that students have the same breadth and richness of learning experiences.

A set of processes ensures that the General Education program imparts what it promises. As delineated in the SVSU FA Contract, the General Education Committee (GEC) evaluates course proposals and oversees the approval, assessment, and renewal of courses for the program in line with the procedures and content established for the program. Please see Criterion 4B for specific details regarding this assessment process.

While the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) does not correlate directly with the goals of general education, it provides some indication regarding the impact of general education programs on student learning. SVSU has conducted NSSE surveys in 2017, 2019, and 2023. In particular, seniors, who have had the chance to complete the general education program, indicate increased levels of engagement with higher-order learning, reflective and integrative learning, and learning strategies. A complete copy of the multiyear NSSE report can be found here.

3.B.3

Diversity is an essential part of the University's mission. As discussed in Criterion 1, SVSU has worked hard to foster diversity at SVSU and has made significant progress in meeting those goals. The University works to increase the diversity of its student body, faculty, and staff through recruitment and hiring strategies and by fostering a campus climate that welcomes diverse people (see more in section 3C1.) SVSU also furthers the recognition of human and cultural diversity through its curriculum and educational programs. SVSU has long made a concerted effort to address diversity in the curriculum in several ways. Various departments have added diversity requirements to their programs. The General Education program emphasizes different kinds of diversity and is designed to develop an appreciation for diversity in each student. A complete list of General Education courses related to diversity can be found here.

The University has developed specific programs centered on diversity, such as the interdisciplinary Black Studies and International Studies majors, Gender Studies minor, an Asian Studies minor and certificate, and the International Business major. While such programs study diversity directly, most academic departments also have addressed issues of diversity in their general learning goals, curriculum, co-curricular, and extracurricular activities. The majority of departments and programs include diversity goals in their planning/assessment documents and assess such goals regularly. When departments are asked for details about how their unit supports DEI among faculty, staff, students, and within the community, all departments with the exception of one department identified

activity that indicated support. Most frequently departments indicated that DEI content was integrated/incorporated into their curriculum, others cited faculty service/professional development in DEI, and many have created DEI experiences for their students in co-curricular activities. There are a number of departments that have engaged in the community. The Theatre department engaged with a recent alumnus to secure grant funding to produce "We Hear You (WHY): Black Theatre in Saginaw" during the Spring 2022 semester. The Computer Science Information Systems (CSIS) department holds and annual event "Girls Who Code" that "enables regional K-12 female students to experience hands-on programming."

At the same time, the University has focused on providing more students with international experiences. In addition to fostering majors with more international emphasis, SVSU continues to support international experiences for students through the Study Abroad office. Prior to the pandemic, there were up to almost 250 students participating in these programs each year. Students have visited a more diverse range of sites in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, including China, Senegal, and El Salvador. In part, student interest has been driven by particular programs, such as Geography, Spanish, and International Studies, but it has also been generated by faculty experiences in these countries and by university efforts to create opportunities for faculty to visit sites well ahead of offering programs.

SVSU has earned national recognition for its commitment to diversity programming, exemplified by its prestigious Higher Education Excellence in Diversity Award. This accomplishment is a testament to the university's dedication to inclusivity, a mission deeply intertwined with its vision. In addition, SVSU's General Education Requirements (GE) emphasize the importance of preparing students to thrive in an increasingly diverse world, aligning perfectly with the university's core values.

Finally, the Office of Diversity Programs strives to "Prepare all of its students to work with, understand and appreciate the diversity of peoples and ideas that comprise and enrich American culture." To this end, this office has created a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Advisory Council with the goal of addressing the above. This council has produced a number of outcomes including a series of professional development workshops which drive the ongoing efforts to foster human and cultural diversity across campus. To develop a comprehensive and aligned DEI strategy this council has produced a DEI dashboard that will allow the university to track progress on various DEI initiatives. The university further enriches its cultural fabric through events such as the International Food Fair, Hispanic Heritage Month, Black History Month, Women's History Month, and other inclusive celebrations.

3.B.4.

SVSU primarily offers undergraduate degree programs with a small number of professional graduate programs. Its faculty contributes to scholarship, creative work, and the discovery and dissemination of knowledge within the context of heavy teaching loads and a significant commitment to undergraduate student learning. In part because of this, SVSU actively supports research opportunities for its undergraduate and graduate students and for students and faculty working collaboratively.

Some of this work is reflected in internal and external grant activity. For instance, in 2022-2023 there were 80 external grants submitted by 37 different faculty and staff with a funding rate of 66% and over $1.4 million dollars awarded. Internally, 9 projects and 6 travel grants were funded for a total of almost $50,000. Additional funding from the SVSU Foundation was also awarded in the amount of almost $100,000.

Notably, it is very common for faculty to work closely with students in these efforts. One excellent example of this is Dr. Art Martin, who was awarded the 2023 Michigan Distinguished Professor of the Year, in large part due to his success at scholarly achievements while working with students. He is an exemplar of many faculty members' sense of themselves as teacher-scholars even as the University increases its expectations for scholarly and creative achievement in its criteria for tenure, promotion, and sabbaticals.

SVSU, with funding from outside donors, supports several award programs designed to promote excellence in research and creative endeavors. Examples of university-level awards that support scholarly activity include the Earl L. Warrick Award for Excellence in Research and the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Research Award, both of which recognize the research accomplishments of faculty. Through an endowment by the Wickes Foundation, the Ruth and Ted Braun Fellowship Program was established. Each year, two faculty or staff members are selected as Braun Fellows. Each fellow receives grants totaling $37,500 ($12,500 per year) during the three-year term to further their scholarly or professional activities. Braun Fellows are expected to produce a body of professional or academic work for publication or presentation during or at the conclusion of the fellowship term. The selection is based on a competitive proposal process, and funds may be used for release time, summer stipends, travel, supplies, and student assistants. In 2023, Field/Spicer Fellowship program was created, based on the model of the Braun Fellowship program. Two awards were made to faculty for work to begin in 2024.

The Student Research and Creativity Institute (SRCI) was developed in 2005-2006 school year to provide financial support for students to pursue research or other creative endeavors above and beyond what was possible during the traditional classroom experience. In 2014, the program was enhanced by another endowment from the Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow Foundation. This program is now known as the Undergraduate Research Program (UGRP), and it supports several unique grants of more than $200,000 annually for faculty and students to pursue research. The vision of this program is to "enhance undergraduate education and further distinguish SVSU both regionally and nationally through its support of student and faculty-led research. This research granting opportunity for students has provided hundreds of thousands of dollars for student projects since its inception in 2005. There are several granting opportunities that are available through the UGRP including Michigan Space Grant, Faculty-Led, Student-Led, and the Frahm Grant. The Michigan Space Grant offers up to $4,000 for students to work with faculty on research and public service projects relevant to NASA's strategic interest. The Student-led Research grant provides students with the opportunity to conduct their own research, with the support of a faculty member. Projects can receive funding up to $5,000 for salary, as well as research materials and supplies. SVSU also supports a Mini Student-led research grant, whose purpose is to provide seed money for students to initiate their own research. This research is conducted with the support of a faculty member and projects can receive funding up to $250. The Frahm Agricultural Research Grant supports and encourages students and faculty at SVSU to engage in agricultural research to add to the archives of the Saginaw County Agricultural Society. Grant applications should not exceed $1,000. A complete list of internal grants can be found here.

The Honors Program has long fostered student scholarly and creative work. The Program requires an Honors thesis, representing original research or creative activity mentored by a faculty member. Members of the Honors Program receive financial support to defray expenses associated with the production of the thesis.

SVSU students also have a wide range of group and individual performance opportunities ranging

from informal poetry slams to theater productions tied to SVSU's work with the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival and from SVSU's participation in the National Forensic Association National Championship to student recitals.

Faculty regularly present their creative work in a range of campus and community venues. As described below, all full-time faculty are entitled to at least $1450 annually to attend national conferences or other professional development. The University supports faculty and student research through a number of channels. The Office of Sponsored Programs comprehensively helps faculty identify funding sources for scholarly and creative activities that align strategically with the University and the community it serves. The office assists faculty in navigating how to calculate costs within the University as well as with external agency frameworks and helps faculty negotiate partnerships with community entities. It has regularized procedures for internal grants such as the Faculty Research and Professional Growth Awards. It also oversees reporting and compliance processes. Sponsored Programs also provides critical training for new faculty on how to fund research and carry out projects in the context of their roles as employees of a university, which often differ significantly from those experienced as graduate students.

Endowed professors are charged with fostering high levels of research in their respective fields by garnering grant funds, establishing internal and external partnerships, and mentoring faculty. Endowed Professors are expected to publish and disseminate knowledge to the community (e.g., through seminars and partnerships) and to work with regular faculty and students on appropriate projects. The teaching load of Endowed Professors is significantly less than that of regular faculty—consistent with higher expectations for research and outreach. Endowed Professors typically work closely with Sponsored Programs to find funding for projects, with emphasis on projects that reach beyond individual research and encompass the interests and needs of other faculty in the University. For example, the H.H. Dow Endowed Chair of Chemistry has developed the multidisciplinary Saginaw Bay Environmental Sciences Institute involving students and faculty from Geography, Biology, Chemistry, and Professional Writing, as well as regional, governmental, and community agencies. This program has been successful in providing research opportunities for students and faculty while serving the needs of the region and the agencies it engages.

Sources

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- 3B-11 2020 Math 140 General Education Assessment Plan-Renewal Report
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- 3B-17 GEC Category 5 and 6 Analysis
- 3B-18 GEC Category 5 and 6 Feedback
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- 3B-2 and 1A1.1 SVSU Mission
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- 3B-22 Academic Program Assessment Report DEI question
- 3B-23 2022 newspaper article indicating funding for We Hear You
- 3B-24 2018-2019 Annual Report from the Office of Global Engagement including study abroad data
- 3B-25 SVSU's Receipt of the HEED Award
- 3B-26 About Us Section of the Office of Diversity Programs Website
- 3B-27 SVSU Diversity Dashboard
- 3B-28 2022-2023 Sponsored Programs Annual Report
- 3B-29 2023 Michigan Distinguished Professor of the Year
- 3B-3 Goal 1.4 of the SVSU Strategic Plan
- 3B-30 University-level awards
- 3B-31 Fall 2023 Department Chair Training Slides On GE Program Assessment
- 3B-32 Ruth and Ted Braun Fellowship Program Description
- 3B-33 Undergraduate Research Program Mission and Values
- 3B-34 Michigan Space Grant Consortium
- 3B-35 Student-led Research Grants
- 3B-36 UGRP Page listing all internal grants
- 3B-37 Honors Program Website
- 3B-38 Article on SVSU students attending the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival
- 3B-39 Article on SVSU students qualifying for national competitive speaking competition
- 3B-4 2023-24 Advising Guide
- 3B-40 Sponsored Programs Grants Manual
- 3B-41 Sponsored Programs Grant Writing Services and Guides
- 3B-42 Saginaw Bay Environmental Science Institute
- 3B-5 GE Student Learning Objectives by Category
- 3B-6 GEC Renewal Report Guide
- 3B-7 SVSU-FA Contract regarding the General Education Committee
- 3B-8 GEC Renewal Report Template
- 3B-9 2017 Biology 111 General Education Assessment Plan-Renewal Report

3.C - Core Component 3.C

The institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services.

1. The institution strives to ensure that the overall composition of its faculty and staff reflects human diversity as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.
2. The institution has sufficient numbers and continuity of faculty members to carry out both the classroom and the non-classroom roles of faculty, including oversight of the curriculum and expectations for student performance, assessment of student learning, and establishment of academic credentials for instructional staff.
3. All instructors are appropriately qualified, including those in dual credit, contractual and consortial offerings.
4. Instructors are evaluated regularly in accordance with established institutional policies and procedures.
5. The institution has processes and resources for assuring that instructors are current in their disciplines and adept in their teaching roles; it supports their professional development.
6. Instructors are accessible for student inquiry.
7. Staff members providing student support services, such as tutoring, financial aid advising, academic advising and cocurricular activities, are appropriately qualified, trained and supported in their professional development.

Argument

3.C.1

SVSU strives to hire a diverse faculty and staff workforce which mirrors the student population. This includes fair hiring practices that involve trained inclusion advocates to ensure that a diverse pool is recruited and treated fairly throughout the process. This is a formalized part of the search process and is supported by Human Resources which also provides support and training to ensure that diverse employees are recruited appropriately.

SVSU monitors the overall composition of faculty and staff in the Diversity Dashboard, which is based on several sources including the 2020 IPEDS. Gender data reflects a higher female percentage in the student body as compared to either faculty or staff female percentages. The racial composition of the university is close to that of the student population; however, there are proportionately fewer racial and ethnic minority employees compared to students—notably this varies from faculty to staff. In 2021, SVSU commissioned a robust assessment of faculty and staff demographic information which was put into the SVSU Affirmative Action Executive Summary: Plan Year 2021 and shared with the campus community to help guide recruiting efforts.

3.C.2.

SVSU faculty numbers and undergraduate-to-faculty ratios are well within norms for an institution of its size and character and are currently at a ratio of 15 students per faculty member. As the chart shows, the ratio has decreased from 17:1 in 2017 indicating that SVSU has sufficient numbers to support both instructional and non-classroom faculty roles. The data shows that we are maintaining

adequate staffing even as enrollment levels have changed.

It is also worth noting that, in 2023 the number of full-time instructional faculty was 264 compared to 380 part-time. This included 112 full professors, 81 associate professors, 52 assistant professors, 2 instructors, and 17 lecturers. This emphasizes the importance SVSU places on the presence of full-time faculty in the classroom. The University takes these issues so seriously that the SVSU/FA contract addresses maximum ratios for part-time to full-time faculty members; limitations on full-time faculty members outside employment; and the structure of temporary full-time appointments.

At the same time, adjunct faculty are an important part of the university community and many receive awards for service spanning 25 years or more. The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning hosts an annual awards night to celebrate these adjunct faculty. Adjunct faculty also participate in some curricular discussions, assess student learning in all cases, are often involved in more in-depth assessment conversations, and may in some cases form long-term relationships with departments.

The faculty contract assigns pertinent roles to the faculty, including responsibility for curricular activities and classroom and non-classroom activities. Faculty serve on the Curriculum and Academic Policy Committee, which oversees curricular and academic policy changes, and the General Education Committee (GEC), which oversees courses that are part of the general education program (6 faculty for GEC and Curriculum and Academic Policies Committee). Each academic program also receives release time to allocate to faculty to perform duties related to assessment of student learning and other departmental priorities. In AY 2022-2033, faculty utilized 1166.24 hours of release time to carry out duties not related to teaching. In AY 2022-2023, 79.2% of credit hours were taught by full-time faculty and 20.8% by adjunct faculty.

3.C.3.

SVSU maintains appropriate standards for all instructors of its courses, including part-time adjunct faculty, lecturers, tenure-track and tenured faculty, and endowed professors. All instructional personnel are held to the same credential standard regardless of instructional location or modality. The credentials for full-time instructors are clearly delineated in the faculty contract, which lists the qualifications at each rank.

These represent minimum qualifications; most tenure-track and tenured faculty hold terminal degrees. Faculty who are hired prior to completion of their terminal degree are normally advised that their continued employment and promotion are contingent on successful completion of that degree, normally within one or two years. Candidates for tenure-track positions who have not finished their terminal degrees can be hired as either Instructors or Assistant Professors depending on their progress toward degree completion. Adjunct faculty are qualified by degrees, experience, or both. At a bare minimum, adjunct faculty possess appropriate baccalaureate degrees—though exceptions are sometimes made for exercise activity classes such as Zumba, Yoga, etc.—and most hold advanced degrees or certificates. The Office of Human Resources validates the degrees before employees are hired.

Job descriptions for both full-time and part-time faculty are developed jointly between the administration (generally the appropriate dean) and departmental faculty. While minimum credentials are determined by the SVSU/FA contract, additional qualifications demanded by the discipline's expectations may be included to ensure adequate coverage of courses, balanced research and service, and a strong major and minor program development.

The Office of Academic Affairs, through the Faculty Qualifications Policy, ensures that standards are maintained for both new and existing faculty. Given the dynamic nature of course offerings and educational attainment, the Office of Academic affairs also maintains and updates a database of faculty and courses they are qualified to teach. The database is updated via an online form. They also conduct periodic updates and maintains a database of courses that faculty are qualified to teach.

3.C.4.

SVSU evaluates all instructional personnel regularly through well-understood processes, though these processes differ by instructor classification and bargaining unit membership (or lack thereof).

Processes for instructional personnel not in the faculty bargaining unit include:

Adjunct Faculty: Adjunct faculty are required to administer student evaluations in every class they teach. Specific instructions are provided, including the requirement that student anonymity be preserved. Student evaluations are collected in the deans' offices and shared with the adjunct faculty members as well as department chairs. Deans review these evaluations prior to sharing them with chairs. This procedure provides an opportunity for deans and chairs to offer feedback, resolve problems, and promote adjunct success. It is also a mechanism that alerts chairs to adjunct faculty who are not well-suited to the teaching environment, so that corrective action can be taken. Classroom observation and evaluative processes for adjunct faculty vary from department to department and program to program, although many programs include observations by full-time faculty that are reported to chairs or program coordinators.

Processes for instructional personnel within the faculty bargaining unit include:

Endowed Professors: The appropriate dean evaluates each endowed professor annually. A set of performance goals is established from the endowed professor's contract and specific job description. Teaching is one aspect of a larger review process that includes input from departmental and non-departmental colleagues as well as external collaborators, data from student evaluations, and examination of any innovative or new teaching materials developed. The endowed professors must submit annual performance summaries, highlighting their accomplishments. The outcome of the review process is used to establish salary increases and any contract extensions. Failure to perform in any area can result in non-renewal of contract.

Lecturers: Lecturers are evaluated in compliance with the SVSU/FA Contract. The performance expectations include teaching and departmental service. Lecturers are initially appointed to a one-year contract and then, twice subsequently, to two-year contracts. Evaluation teams - composed of three faculty members who visit classes, administer student evaluations, assess teaching effectiveness - are assigned in the first, third, and fifth year. The department provides input, and the dean reviews the team and departmental reports. Successful evaluations result in reappointment until the next review. Once lecturers have completed their fifth year they are given five-year contracts and are evaluated by their respective departments using a standard Individual Evaluation Report (IER) every five years thereafter. The quality of instruction and service also serve as the basis for salary bonuses, as outlined in the SVSU/FA Contract.

Temporary Full-Time Faculty: Temporary full-time faculty on a one-year appointment may choose a limited evaluation rather than the regular evaluation as in H 2.2 of the SVSU/FA Contract. This limited evaluation will consist of the letter normally produced for evaluation teams by the department, based primarily upon teaching and service, including, at the department's discretion,

classroom visits. The limited evaluation is to be forwarded to the dean, following the timetable established for evaluation team reports in H 2.2.3.

Tenure-Track and Tenured Faculty: SVSU is proud of its evaluation process leading to promotion and tenure. The process encompasses frequent review of teaching, scholarship, and service and provides abundant opportunities for constructive peer feedback. This process is taken very seriously by both the faculty and the administration, and it fosters both effective teaching and broader faculty success. It thus serves the faculty members, the institution, and the students. The cooperative process is clearly delineated in the SVSU/FA Contract (Article G and Article H).

For faculty hired without experience credit, written reports are provided in the first, second, and fourth (pre-tenure) year of service to the University. Those hired at the rank of instructor must be promoted to assistant professor before tenure consideration, although they have the same evaluation timeline. The reports are produced by three-member peer review teams of faculty- two of whom must be tenured, while the third must have at least two years of service - who visit classes, administer student evaluations, discuss research and service expectations, and integrate this information into a comprehensive statement of effectiveness. The team reports are required to address effectiveness of classroom teaching, scholarly or creative achievement, and service to the university and community. As required by contract, the faculty member's department also provides a written statement in each of these evaluation cycles. The appropriate dean, after studying the team report, the departmental comments, and other relevant information, provides a written evaluation.

In the pre-tenure year, the evaluation team also provides a specific recommendation regarding tenure, using the standard Individual Evaluation Report (IER), which assigns a numerical score between 1 and 10 (low to high) and includes evaluative comments on each of the three areas of evaluation (teaching, scholarly/creative activity, and service).

Throughout this period, the faculty member compiles a portfolio described in G4 of the SVSU/FA Contract and referred to as a PPC File, with the acronym standing for the Professional Practices Committee (PPC), the body that addresses questions of tenure, promotion, sabbatical, and discipline. After the faculty member's pre-tenure year - usually in the faculty member's fifth year unless experience credit has been awarded - the faculty member is considered for tenure.

PPC, composed of six elected faculty from across campus and three administrative appointees, reviews the portfolio, all team reports, and IERs submitted by the dean, the department (through the chair), and one additional IER from a non-probationary faculty member can be submitted but is not required. In their review, PPC members use the same numerical scale as the IER forms. Teaching performance is the most important factor in promotion and tenure decisions - counting as 50% of the total score. Scholarly activities and service account for the other 50%, with some flexibility in the relative weights of those two components. Inadequate performance in teaching, defined as a numerical score below 6.0, automatically precludes a positive tenure or promotion decision, as does a weighted total score below 6.0. Each PPC member scores the candidate's PPC file independently, and his/her vote is determined by the composite or teaching score, whichever is lower. A majority of positive votes is required for a positive tenure or promotion recommendation.

PPC then makes a formal recommendation on tenure to the University administration. The Board of Control is the final arbiter on all promotion and tenure applications. Candidates denied tenure after their first pre-tenure year can reapply one time in the year immediately following.

While SVSU does not have a mandatory post-tenure review process, faculty seeking promotion

(section H 1.2 (16)) must submit applications, PPC files (again, with all items listed in G4 including all student evaluation forms), and IERs to be considered; submitted IERs must reflect classroom visits within the preceding two years. Faculty seeking sabbaticals must also submit applications and complete PPC files (section M 9 16). Sabbatical and promotion recommendations are made by PPC and formalized by the Board of Control.

Under the SVSU/FA Contract, departments or deans have the authority to bring faculty (including tenured faculty) for PPC review for "Notice of discharge, …, shall be for just cause based upon repeated failure to comply with job requirements." (section H 2.3.2 of 16). This process, although implemented rarely, has been used to discipline or terminate tenured faculty members who have not maintained professional standards or competence and is thus a form of situation-specific post-tenure review.

3.C.5

SVSU has in place evaluation processes for assuring that instructors are current in their disciples and adept at their teaching roles, including professional development. New faculty begin their appointment with participation in the Faculty Summer Institute which began in 1997. This multi-day workshop supports their acclimation to the university community. Over the years, based on participant and coordinator feedback, the Institute has been continually updated. Content includes active learning strategies, best practices for teaching, professional development discussions tied to scholarship and creative work, and campus/community service. Since 2007, the Provost's Office has encouraged new faculty to participate in workshops throughout their first year of service. Workshop topics include exemplary teaching, grants, interpretation of student evaluations, and curriculum processes.

The Faculty Contract allows full-time faculty up to $1,450 per year for professional development expenses, which are most often used for conference attendance. Additional funds of $25,000 are specified in the Faculty Contract.

The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) offers professional development programs for adjunct faculty. The programs focus on technology, pedagogy, and orientation workshops. Through CETL funding, adjuncts are paid a small sum of either $50 or $100 for attendance. Faculty support for adjunct faculty travel to professional conferences tied to their teaching is also available.

The University also supports full-time faculty professional development through internal grants such as the SVSU Faculty Research Grant and the SVSU Professional Growth Grant, known informally as Unit Committee grants. These resources are allocated according to the Faculty Contract. The guidelines for submission are posted on the Sponsored Programs website. All full-time faculty may apply for these grants. Most often the grants support early career faculty since the University does not provide research start-up packages to new faculty. The funding history for the last five years has ranged from $59,287 per year up to $86,857 with release time ranging from 30 load hours up to 46 load hours.

Tenured faculty members are eligible to apply for sabbaticals every seven years. The Faculty Contract defines the selection criteria as years of service, the quality of the proposal, and the quality of teaching/research/service. Faculty submit applications for sabbatical to the PPC, which makes recommendations to the Board of Control. Most sabbaticals center on scholarship, research, or creative activities, however, some are awarded for the development of teaching materials or extensive

course re-design, consistent with the teaching mission of the University.

Several other internal grants with more specialized foci are also available. For example, an endowment from the Allen Foundation enables student/faculty research projects in health and nutrition, and the Saginaw Bay Environmental Science Institute, an internal consortium, sponsors a limited number of mini-grants for faculty whose research aligns with its mission. SVSU also recognizes excellence in teaching, research, and service through a range of awards.

The University regularly offers professional development workshops to all faculty and staff. Members of the SVSU community can find workshop details and register online. Workshops encompass technology, library, office productivity, grants, and many more workshops of interest. The Office of Diversity Programs also offers professional development workshops in such areas as diversity, inclusion, bias, hiring, and preventing sexual harassment. These workshops are available to any individual or group on campus and attendance is strongly encouraged.

3.C.6

SVSU requires that all full-time and part-time faculty keep regular office hours. The SVSU/FA Contract stipulates that all faculty members will hold a minimum of five office hours per week, which they must post. Four of those hours must be definite and posted and one hour can be set by appointment. Of the four posted hours, at least two hours will require availability in person on campus at a posted location (office, classroom, lab, library, etc). The other two posted hours can be in-person or synchronously online (meaning immediately available). Adjunct faculty members must schedule at least one office hour for each section taught, at hours convenient to their students. Most full-time and part-time faculty members go well beyond these minimums.

All full-time faculty members have private offices for meeting with students. Faculty members are generally located in close proximity to other department members and, as much as possible, in proximity to the classroom buildings where they do most of their teaching. The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) and some academic departments maintain fully equipped shared offices across campus for adjunct faculty use. These accommodations are somewhat limited in comparison to the total number of adjunct faculty but have increased dramatically over the last five years. Under the supervision of the Director of CETL, the CETL office serves as a contact point for adjuncts and students and increases adjunct faculty members' accessibility.

All full-time and part-time faculty have University email addresses, which they generally include in their syllabi. These are also available through departmental websites and the SVSU directory. University faculty make extensive use of Canvas, our learning management system, SVSU's electronic learning system, which includes message board and chat room features as well as modes for posting syllabi, assignments, and grades. Technical Services provides training to help faculty set up their courses in Canvas and additional support for problems. In the Winter semester of 2024, only around 20 course sections were operating without a Canvas course and most instructors were using more than one Canvas site during the semester.

Students also have opportunities to work with faculty outside of the classroom through the individual research and creativity projects described elsewhere in this report. Additionally, faculty interact with students through co-curricular activities such as the Formula One Race Team, Cardinal Solutions, Moot Court, Chemistry Club, Accounting Society, and Student Social Work Organization all of which have faculty advisors.

A 2023 NSSE survey found that there is a distinct difference between how first-year students and seniors experience High Impact Practices (HIP), which include service learning, learning communities, research with faculty, internships, study abroad, and culminating senior experience. Seniors have engaged in more instances of HIP than first-year students, which could be attributed to their acculturation to the expectations of the campus environment. When examining SVSU's impact in juxtaposition to the comparison groups, the data indicates that we are on par with our sister institutions when it comes to effective teaching practices. However, when reviewing Student-Faculty Interaction SVSU is consistently below the Great Lakes Public, Carnegie Class and MI Public Universities. This provides critical data when it comes to examining the intended impact versus the perceptions of students. In addition, SVSU recognizes this as an opportunity to improve and has developed a plan to address this as we examine the impact of our general education courses. A complete copy of the 2023 NSSE is available here.

3.C.7.

Hiring units (in collaboration with SVSU's Human Resources Office and Career Services Office) establish qualifications for student support service personnel including all of those noted above (2). These qualifications are consistent with typical university practices for the needs of the specific position. For example, staff members who work in the counseling office must have a counseling degree (either Social Work or Psychology) and a current license. Any staff member with the title of Librarian must hold a minimum of a Master of Library Science degree from an ALA-accredited institution.

SVSU posts all staff positions, using an online application system to ensure minimum qualifications have been met. Most full-time student services employees greatly exceed minimum qualifications. All full-time and 20+ hour/week part-time support staff and administrative professionals are eligible to participate in non-credit professional development opportunities, such as software and hardware training, and in credit-bearing courses via various tuition assistance programs. Support staff and administrative professionals, for example, are granted a 75% tuition waiver at SVSU.

Of note to this sub-criterion, most tutoring at SVSU is delivered through the peer tutoring model. The Gerstacker Academic Commons, comprised of the Center for Academic Achievement, the Math and Physics Resource Center, and the Writing Center employ student and professional tutors. The Center for Academic Achievement consolidates tutoring for biology, chemistry, economics, accounting, and the social sciences. The Writing Center works with student writers of all levels and from all disciplines. Professional faculty and staff oversee these centers and hire, train, evaluate, and provide development opportunities for qualified student tutors. These tutors are generally upper-division students who have both achieved high levels of academic success and have strong communication and interpersonal skills. All three Centers encourage their students to participate richly in disciplinary conversations. For example, the Writing Center generally has several student tutors each year who present at state and regional conferences on writing center theory and practice assistance programs.

Sources

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- 3C-12 2022-2023 Breakdown of faculty by rank and college
- 3C-13 2022-2023 Faculty Release Time
- 3C-14 2022-2023 Faculty Teaching Load
- 3C-15 Chart of minimum qualifications by rank
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- 3C-19 List of faculty qualified to teach specific courses
- 3C-2 Hiring Checklists
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- 3C-23 Faculty Summer Institute Canvas Course
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- 3C-3 What Not To Ask Candidates
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- 3C-31 Summary of activity on Canvas in Winter semester 2024
- 3C-32 Cardinal Formula Racing
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- 3C-41 Department Chair Handbook for Adjuncts
- 3C-42 NSSE Multiyear assessment of student academic challenge engagement indicators
- 3C-43 NSSE 2023 High-Impact Practices
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- 3C-5 Summary Comparison of Faculty-Staff and Students
- 3C-6 SVSU Affirmative Action Executive Summary-Plan Year 2021
- 3C-7 FacultyStudent Ratios from 2017 to 2023
- 3C-8 SVSU Common Data Set
- 3C-9 SVSU-FA Faculty Contract Section D13-D16

3.D - Core Component 3.D

The institution provides support for student learning and resources for effective teaching.

1. The institution provides student support services suited to the needs of its student populations.
2. The institution provides for learning support and preparatory instruction to address the academic needs of its students. It has a process for directing entering students to courses and programs for which the students are adequately prepared.
3. The institution provides academic advising suited to its offerings and the needs of its students.
4. The institution provides to students and instructors the infrastructure and resources necessary to support effective teaching and learning (technological infrastructure, scientific laboratories, libraries, performance spaces, clinical practice sites and museum collections, as appropriate to the institution's offerings).

Argument

3.D.1

SVSU is committed to supporting student success and, as its Quality Initiative for the Higher Learning Commission, SVSU joined the HLC Student Success Academy in 2019. For the next three years, a team of SVSU faculty and staff went through a rigorous process of data collection, analysis, and development and implementation of recommendations to enhance student success at SVSU. Full documentation of this process along with the final recommendations of the team can be found in the SVSU Student Success Plan here. While not all of the recommendations have yet been implemented, there have been several key changes that have been made to support students. These changes include:

1. The public launch of the Student Success Plan and promotion of the 6 Dimensions of Student Success at SVSU
2. The development of the Cardinal Student Success Center to provide a "one-stop shop" for students to get guidance on both academic and non-academic matters.
3. The restructuring of the Retention and Completion Council into the Student Success Advisory Council and the Student Success Program Committee
4. The expansion of programs such as CT100 from 200 to over 400 students to support first-semester freshman success
5. Funding of a Retention Specialist for First Year Programs housed in Academic Advising
6. The creation of a Multicultural Student Center
7. The successful pursuit of two major Department of Education Grants, a $1.8 million TRIO-SSS grant and a $1.2 million Rural Pathways grant

SVSU continues to attract a student population that varies widely in terms of academic preparation, economic status, and knowledge of academic conventions. To address the needs of its various student groups, the institution continues to develop existing student support services, as well as creating new ones. Students can take advantage of specific support for students of color and the LGBTQA+ community through the Office of Multicultural Student Affairs. There are services for active, reserve, and veteran service members and their dependents; and students with a wide array of disabilities through our Accessibility Resource Accommodations Office. To address student mental health concerns during and after the COVID pandemic, the Campus Mental Health and Wellness Center

was redesigned and expanded student services, such as counseling, self-help, groups, workshops, and consultation services for staff and faculty to refer students.

There are also academic resources available to students including the Testing Center on campus, located on the library's third floor since 2017, which provides testing to support student academic needs. Testing services offered include placement, make up, CLEP, software proficiency, and others. In 2023, the Testing Center was recertified by the National College Testing Association (NCTA). Testing Center proctors are NCTA certified for both in-person and online test proctoring. The Testing Center partners with the Accessibility and Resource Accommodation Office by offering two quiet testing rooms when student demand exceeds ARA space.

Students are encouraged to take advantage of SVSU's Programs of Distinction. Among the programs are Garber Cardinal Business Edge Program, Global Foundation Scholars Program, Honors Program, Wolohan Fellowship, Botz Liberal Arts Fellowship, Kantzler Fellowship, Roberts-Gilbertson Fellowship, and Vitito Leadership Institute. Each of these programs are referenced in Criterion 1C1. Students are offered specialized challenging coursework, individual research experience, community services leadership, and international travel in whatever field the student chooses to pursue.

Financial aid issues continue to be a critical support for most, if not all students. A recent example of the critical support given to students was evident during the COVID pandemic when funding available from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act, was dispensed to qualified students through the Financial Aid Office. A website was created describing the economic relief available to students and the amounts given.

The Scholarship and Financial Aid website, offers students detailed information to assist with understanding the types if financial aid available, the cost of attendance, how to apply, access to current financial forms and information to assist students with financial literacy. Students may book a phone call appointment with a Financial Services Representative for financial aid advising and other related student account questions.

Students can visit the Campus Financial Services Center or the Scholarships and Financial Aid website to investigate financial aid packages that might include a combination of scholarships, grants, loans, and work study to support educational costs. Students fill out a single electronic scholarship application that is automatically submitted for any scholarships they qualify for, based on their responses to the form's questions. The system automatically informs reviewers when there are scholarship applications to review.

3.D.2

SVSU's general admission requirements are readily available in the catalog. First Time in College (FTIC) students, under 22 years of age, are required to submit an application for admission and an official high school transcript. However, submission of ACT or SAT scores is optional for admission by may be required for direct admission into professional programs and may be used for placement purposes.

All students must complete Basic Skills requirements in Math, Reading, and Writing prior to graduation. SVSU is now test optional for placement. Requirements can be met through satisfactory sub-scores on the ACT, through placement testing, or through successful completion of Basic Skills classes. SVSU attends carefully to placement questions and provides preparatory instruction where it is needed.

To support the larger student population but especially students who are academically at-risk, the University has developed several services and programs. The Center for Academic Achievement is located on the second floor of the library under the leadership of a director who oversees the activities of the tutors in the areas of biology, chemistry, accounting, economics, social sciences, statistics, and technology to students six days each week during the academic year including evening and online hours. Individual tutoring sessions are available by appointment.

The Math and Physics Resource Center provides math and physics tutoring and placement testing for students. Both student and professional tutors are on staff to assist students with course assignments and test preparation. Faculty in the Math and Physics departments work closely with the Math and Physic Resources Center staff to ensure their services closely match the needs of course requirements. Students can take advantage of various resources available through videos, provided by the center which assists them in working through math problems.

The Writing Center has been providing assistance to student writers since 1995. The Writing Center encourages "thoughtful conversations about communication, audience, and context, toward a more equitable and inclusive social future." Students may drop in for assistance or make appointments and receive help in brainstorming ideas, understanding assignments, organizing information, developing arguments, using proper citation formats, identifying grammar and other mechanical errors, as well as expanding approaches to creative writing, and developing as critical thinkers and writers. The center also offers online tutoring sessions.

SVSU has developed a number of initiatives to assist students who are at high risk academically. Most of these programs have been implemented in the last year or two and have not been fully assessed regarding the impact on student success and retention. The King-Chavez Parks 4S Grant is awarded in the fall and provides intensive mentoring services to FTIC students who meet the following criteria: ACT score of less than 20, first generation in college, and eligible for Pell Grants. The goals of the grant are to increase the overall GPA of these students to a 2.0, to achieve a first-to-second year (fall-to-fall) persistence rate of 55% (compared to the 10% rate for this population), and to reach a six-year persistence-to-graduation rate of 40%. The Rural Pathways for Student Success is a federally funded program designed to support first-year rural college students' success. This program provides resources for students including mentoring, volunteering opportunities, and connections to faculty and staff. The goal of the project is to increase retention rates by 5%, increase bachelor's degree attainment by 2.5% and to increase the number of rural students participating in community engagement activities by 10%. The TRIO grant is targeted to 140 students who have demonstrated academic need, are first-generation students, and are low-income. The goals of this program are to increase persistence to 73%, obtain a 75% good academic standing rate, and to ensure that 32% of participants obtain a bachelor's degree within six years.

In addition to providing services to support student success in the general population and among at-risk students, the institution commits to providing opportunities for high-achieving students, through our Programs of Distinction (See 3D1). The institution includes in its Strategic Plan an entire section on programs of distinction, which are meant to encourage strong students to attend SVSU.

3.D.3.

SVSU offers academic advising through three distinct mechanisms: The Academic Advisement Center, select faculty interactions, and degree audit software. The Academic Advisement Center (AAC) is the primary source for advising and assistance for student entering the University after the enrollment process. The ACC works with conditionally admitted students with a "Retention

Specialist for First Year Programs" specific cohorts of students that include Global Foundation Scholars, Thompson Family Scholarship Program, Student Athletes, and transfer students. The AAC helps to develop academic plans, provide timely degree evaluations, and offers guidance to students in working directly with Advising staff or with Faculty based advisors. They assist students in setting education and career goals to provide appropriate referrals to those services and resources that will help them develop those goals if necessary. With the goal of helping student to stay on track or assisting students that are struggling to meet the goal of graduating and retaining within the University. Additionally, the AAC supports retention efforts with outreach to students from faculty who have concerns with students in classes, COOP/Chatbot to help provide messages and information about efforts such as priority registers dates, financial deadlines, payment deadlines, and awareness of academic and student retention programs such as open registration advising labs and advising afterhours programs.

The ACC has 11 full time staff and also utilizes peer advisors, who are trained senior level students that work to assist first year students with "first year advising" appointments. For fall of 2023/Winter 2024, ACC had 1212 freshmen student that needed to complete first year advising appointments. At the end of the Fall '23 semester, they had conducted 812 or 66.99% of these students first year advising appointments. As of March 1st, 2024, they had met with 1068, or 88.11% of the freshman class. A comprehensive assessment of the ACC can be found here.

Advising was also assessed through the NSSE survey implemented in 2023. According to the NSSE 2023 data, 53% of freshman and 44% of Seniors rate their interactions with academic advisors as a 6 or 7 where 1 = poor and 7=excellent (19). These scores reveal a somewhat lower satisfaction with the quality of advising at SVSU compared to peer institutions by both NSSE definitions and Carnegie classification.

Many departments augment the services offered by the Advisement Center; for reasons ranging from specialized accreditation to faculty choice, some departments have also implemented mandatory faculty advising for their students. For those programs, student registration is blocked until the students' faculty advisor meets with the student, approves the schedule, and unlocks the registration system.

Special advising programs are available for students interested in attending law school and medical professional schools in which specified personnel meet with students throughout their time at the University. They help students understand the procedures and requirements for applying to these professional programs.

3.D.4

SVSU's technological infrastructure, lab space, library, performance spaces, clinical practice sites, and museum collections are all appropriate to its offerings and supportive of effective teaching and learning. During the last ten years, the campus physical plant continued to develop with the renovation of the Melvin J Zahnow Library building to incorporate additional student support services, and the expansion of Curtiss Hall to provide additional space for the Scott L. Carmona College of Business. In 2024, a renovation project will begin in Brown Hall to update classrooms, laboratories, and faculty offices.

The university has 110 Standard classrooms, 35 Specially labs, 27 Computer labs, 25 Specialty

rooms, 25 Collaborative rooms, 7 Active learning classrooms. Smart podiums are located in many classroom spaces, equipped with standard technology and software such as computers, data projectors, internet access, document cameras, ECHO Appliance, and smartboards offering faculty a wide range of teaching tools.

Classroom technology, as well as technology in various conference rooms across campus, is updated following a 7-year cycle for hardware and software is updated as needed due to a feature or critical vulnerability. Needed updates for patching occur weekly. Classroom podiums are updated every five years, and the entire computer image is updated annually. There are over 1713 computers/devices available for academic purposes on campus, excluding faculty office computers. Three open labs for student use are available with 70 computers. Four labs with 164 computers are available when not in use for classes. Other technology for student use includes stand-alone computer kiosks and laptop checkouts totaling 145 devices.

SVSU provides all faculty members with office computers for instructional and research needs. In recent years, faculty office desktop computers have been replaced by laptop models to support remote work and improve cyber security concerns. Options remain to select either PCs or Macs. These computers are upgraded on a 4-year cycle. Other staff members have moved to laptop equipment as well, and individual machines are replaced or upgraded as needed.

The university supports a number of innovative spaces that are designed to assist in teaching subject matter. The Health and Human Services Simulation Center enhances experiential learning through simulated activities and teaching methodologies. The Science and Engineering labs contain well-equipped, modern, and safe environments for students including electron microscopes, thermal analysis equipment, and mass spectrometers. The University has four stages for theatrical and musical productions and lectures: the large Malcolm Field Theatre for Performing Arts, which boasts a proscenium stage with an orchestra pit and seats 524; the smaller adjacent Rhea Miller Recital Hall (28) which seats 179 on the main floor and an additional 95 in the balcony; the intimate Black Box Theatre, which has variable seating on three sides of the stage; and the Zahnow Amphitheatre, an outdoor space that is sometimes used for summer productions. The University Art Gallery (29) is directed by the SVSU Art Department and is used to showcase student and faculty exhibits.

Included in the 2024 Brown Hall renovation is the upgrading of the psychology laboratories used extensively by faculty and students to experience the latest techniques and methods of research. The laboratory facilities provide students with computer models, videotaping, group and child observation techniques, neurological assessment, and animal and human conditioning and interviewing skills.

Sources

- 3D1.1 Multicultural Student Affairs
- 3D1.2 Military Students Affairs
- 3D1.3 Accessibility Resources and Accommodations
- 3D1.4 Mental Health and Wellness
- 3D1.5 Testing Center
- 3D1.6 Programs of Distinction
- 3D1.7 CARES Act
- 3D1.8 Campus Financial Services Center
- 3D1.9 Scholarship and Financial Aid

- 3D2.10 Admissions Procedures
- 3D2.11 Basic Skills
- 3D2.12 Center for Academic Achievement
- 3D2.13 Math and Physics Resource Center
- 3D2.14 Math Homework Videos
- 3D2.15 Writing Center
- 3D2.16 King Chavez Parks Program
- 3D2.17 Rural Pathways for Student Success
- 3D3.18 Academic Advising Center
- 3D3.19 NSSE Data
- 3D3.20 Pre-Law Advising
- 3D3.21 Pre-Health Professions Advising
- 3D-30 SVSU Student Success Plan
- 3D-31 6 Dimensions of Student Success
- 3D-32 Cardinal Student Success Center
- 3D-33 Structure of Student Success at SVSU
- 3D-34 Retention Specialist for First Year Programs
- 3D-35 Multicultural Student Center
- 3D-36 TRIO
- 3D-37 Rural Pathways
- 3D-38 Academic Advisement Center Annual Report 2023-2024
- 3D4.22 Zahnow Library Renovations
- 3D4.23 Expansion of Curtiss Hall
- 3D4.24 Brown Hall Funding
- 3D4.25 Classroom Resources
- 3D4.26 Health and Human Services Simulation Center
- 3D4.27 Malcolm Field Theatre
- 3D4.28 Rhea Miller Recital Hall
- 3D4.29 University Art Department Gallery

3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary

The institution provides quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

Summary

SVSU ensures the rigor and appropriateness of its academic offerings to higher education through comprehensive assessment processes, specialized accreditation, and internal and external reviews. It mandates that undergraduate and graduate programs meet rigorous standards of student performance appropriate to the credential awarded, with specific requirements for graduation. SVSU's commitment to maintaining current and relevant courses and programs is evident through its adherence to strict guidelines, including those outlined by the university's accreditation with specialized external accreditors and its robust assessment protocols.

SVSU's programs engage students in collecting, analyzing, and communicating information, mastering modes of intellectual inquiry, and developing adaptable skills. The General Education program aligns with the mission and educational offerings, emphasizing critical thinking, logical reasoning, and effective communication. It integrates high-impact educational practices and prepares students to be effective citizens in a culturally diverse world. The General Education framework, developed by SVSU, ensures exposure to a broad range of disciplines, knowledge forms, and intellectual inquiry skills, and it includes mechanisms for continuous improvement based on assessment and feedback.

SVSU is committed to hiring a diverse faculty and staff workforce, reflecting its student population through fair hiring practices. It maintains an appropriate number of faculty members to support both instructional and non-classroom roles, with a student-to-faculty ratio that enables effective engagement and learning. All instructors, including those in dual credit, contractual, and consortial offerings, are appropriately qualified. SVSU evaluates instructors regularly according to established policies and procedures, ensuring they are current in their disciplines and adept in their teaching roles. The institution supports professional development for instructors, providing opportunities for growth and ensuring they are accessible for student inquiry. Staff members offering student support services are qualified and receive training and professional development, ensuring they can effectively support student learning and success.

SVSU provides comprehensive support for student learning and resources necessary for effective teaching. It offers student support services tailored to the needs of its student populations, including academic advising, learning support, and preparatory instruction. The institution ensures that students and instructors have access to the infrastructure and resources necessary for effective teaching and learning, such as technological infrastructure, laboratories, libraries, and performance spaces. This commitment extends to ensuring instructors are accessible for student inquiry and that students have opportunities to engage in high-impact educational practices that enhance their learning experiences.

Sources

There are no sources.

4 - Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.

4.A - Core Component 4.A

The institution ensures the quality of its educational offerings.

1. The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews and acts upon the findings.
2. The institution evaluates all the credit that it transcripts, including what it awards for experiential learning or other forms of prior learning, or relies on the evaluation of responsible third parties.
3. The institution has policies that ensure the quality of the credit it accepts in transfer.
4. The institution maintains and exercises authority over the prerequisites for courses, rigor of courses, expectations for student learning, access to learning resources, and faculty qualifications for all its programs, including dual credit programs. It ensures that its dual credit courses or programs for high school students are equivalent in learning outcomes and levels of achievement to its higher education curriculum.
5. The institution maintains specialized accreditation for its programs as appropriate to its educational purposes.
6. The institution evaluates the success of its graduates. The institution ensures that the credentials it represents as preparation for advanced study or employment accomplish these purposes. For all programs, the institution looks to indicators it deems appropriate to its mission.

Argument

4.A.1

All departments and student support offices within the Office of Academic and Student Affairs engage in an annual assessment process. These reports evaluate findings related to student learning outcomes, diversity initiatives, needs assessment, and resource requests. Departments and program coordinators submit an annual Academic Program Assessment Form to their academic dean at the end of each academic year. Student support offices also engage in this annual assessment process and submit a similar report, the Support Office Assessment & Planning Report. All annual assessment reports are submitted electronically through a Microsoft Form.

Departments and student support offices also use this annual assessment process to identify resource requests which are then considered by the appropriate dean in the context of college-level priorities. After the deans have reviewed the report, they forward a summary with resource requests to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs for final review and allocation decisions. The reports are archived for future use .

In addition to the annual assessment process, SVSU has instituted a regular cycle of external program review. This external review process has been substantially revamped based on feedback from the 2014 HLC Comprehensive Review and the 2018 mid-cycle review. For some departments and programs, external review occurs through specialized accreditation. This is discussed in Section 4.A.5. Academic departments which do not undergo specialized accreditation are now required to conduct an External Program Review every seven years. Student support offices are also now required to conduct external program reviews, and both Student Affairs and Accessibility Resources & Accommodations are currently undergoing such reviews.

The process for external review is outlined in the Academic Program Review Policies & Procedures document. First the department conducts a self-study, generally completed over two semesters . The Academic Program Review Policies & Procedures prescribes several required components of the self-study, including an examination of overall institutional support for the program's success related to items such as library resources, faculty development, student support, and distance learning. Additionally, the self-study includes a review of prior annual assessment reports with a focus on program goals and student learning outcomes, and a data-based outlook on program viability. Once the self-study is complete, the department invites an external consultant from a peer institution to review the self-study and make an on-site visit. The consultant then provides a report in response to the self-study and visit which is then added to the self-study. Finally, the department develops an action plan in response to the external consultant's report to support continuous improvement, thereby informing departmental planning and providing a framework for meeting current and aspirational goals.

SVSU is committed to acting on the findings from its regular program reviews to foster ongoing improvement. This commitment is exemplified by the incorporation of insights from external or specialized accreditation reviews into the annual Academic Program Assessment & Departmental Planning Report. In this process, departments that have undergone an external program review within the last seven years are mandated to provide an update on their action plans. This includes an analysis of whether the steps they have implemented based on review findings have yielded positive changes. This integration ensures that the results of the review are not only acknowledged but actively used to enhance departmental operations and student learning outcomes. Section 4.B provides further details about this robust cycle of continuous improvement, demonstrating the institution's proactive approach to utilizing program review findings for the enhancement of its academic programs. This process exemplifies the institution's dedication to constant evolution and improvement based on regular review outcomes.

The Associate Provost chairs the Academic Program Assessment Advisory Board and comprised of members of the faculty and administration. The Advisory Board evaluates the effectiveness of the assessment process for the university and makes revisions as appropriate. For example, it revised the Academic Program Assessment Form for the 2022/23 academic year. The Advisory Board also identifies needs and provides assessment-related professional development (e.g. training, forums, workshops) to faculty and staff.

SVSU also engages in an ongoing assessment process of student learning for its General Education program. Details are provided in section 4.B.

4.A.2

The Office of the Registrar is responsible for evaluating transcripts of SVSU students applying for

graduation to ensure all requirements are met, including Basic Skills, General Education, and other University requirements. Department chairs subsequently review the transcripts of their majors to make certain all program requirements have been met. SVSU has well-established policies for transfer credit, which are defined in the course catalog. These policies are described in 4.A.3 below. Regarding credit for experiential learning or other forms of prior learning, there are three cases for which the University has established policies:

(1) Credits earned through military training

Students with military credit can be awarded up to 62 credits based on the student's individual Joint Service Transcript (JST). SVSU continues to build a JST transfer database. As of March 2023, a total of 474 JST courses (2371 credits) have been entered into this database. [MilitaryTransferEquivalencies.03.07.24.cvs] Additionally, SVSU continues to evaluate transfer equivalencies for both Community College of the Air Force (CCAF) and DANTES Subject Standardized Tests (DSST) commonly taken by members of the military. The process for evaluating military credit is based on American Council on Education (ACE) recommendations (11) ACE Military Guide), in consultation with SVSU policies, and with approval of relevant academic department chairs. The policy is posted on the SVSU website.

(2) Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), and College-Level Examination Program (CLEP) examinations

SVSU accepts AP and IB credit from high schools, based on examination scores. Generally, a score of 3, 4, or 5 on an AP examination or a score of 4 or better on an IB (Higher Level examination) earns college credit. Students may also request credit by examination using the CLEP tests. The details on credit earned for each examination can be found on the University website.

(3) Articulation agreements with Michigan Department of Education (MDE) Career & Technical Education (CTE) and/or high school programs

SVSU has entered into a number of articulation agreements by which eligible students can apply for credit based on their experience in a CTE center/high school. Qualifying students are eligible for credits in Computer Science (CS), Computer Information Systems (CIS), Kinesiology (KINE), and Teacher Education (TE). Students submit an application including a recommendation from the CTE center/high school which is then reviewed by the relevant academic department and dean before being processed by the Registrar's Office. The details on each articulation agreement can be found on the University website.

Outside of the policies listed above, the University does not have a general practice of granting credit for experiential learning experiences. On occasion, programs waive course requirements because of prior experience, but in those cases students do not receive credit for prior learning and are still required to meet University and program credit requirements. For example, adult learners employed in the engineering field who are returning to obtain their bachelor's degree may petition to waive ME/ECE 101 "Engineering Careers and Concepts." If granted, this waiver neither grants credit for the course nor changes the credits required for graduation, but it does exempt students from the introductory course. Lastly, students may request credit by examination by arrangement with an SVSU faculty member. Students pay tuition for the course but are given an examination to demonstrate competency. This is a rare practice: perhaps one or two students per year choose this option, and those are primarily students seeking upper-level foreign language credit based on prior

knowledge .

4.A.3

The University has well-established policies for transfer credit which are defined in the course catalog. In general, the institution considers credits earned at accredited degree-granting institutions. The Office of the Registrar evaluates the nature, content, and contact hours of courses before granting credit. Credits earned at non-accredited institutions are normally not accepted, except under special circumstances, (e.g. international institutions) and then only with approval from both the registrar and the dean of the relevant college. Some examples include the Ming Chuan MBA Articulation Agreement, UADE Political Science Articulation Agreement, CCNU Early Childhood Education Articulation Agreement, Ming Chuan BBA Articulation Agreement, and SAU Graphic Design Articulation Agreement)

The University also has processes for establishing course equivalencies. Over time, the Office of the Registrar has compiled a robust online database of transfer equivalencies which is regularly maintained. The Office of the Registrar employs a transfer clerk and administrative professional staff who evaluate transcripts and assist with establishing new transfer equivalencies. The Associate Registrar also regularly provides updates to a statewide transfer hub called Michigan Transfer Network.

When a student's official transcripts are received, credits that meet existing transfer equivalencies and/or agreements are accepted and entered into the student's academic records at SVSU. If the transcript contains coursework which is not in the existing database, the Office of the Registrar sends a formal request to evaluate the transfer course for direct equivalency via email to the relevant department chair. The transfer student is asked to provide adequate materials to enable determination of appropriate equivalency. A student can also directly petition a department for evaluation of transfer credit through a Course Petition form available on the University website. Academic advisors often coach incoming students through the course petition process. The department which oversees the course or program reviews the request and supporting documents (e.g., syllabus, assignments, textbooks, etc.). After approved at the department level, the academic dean and the registrar must then give their approval. In some cases, approval is denied by the Office of the Registrar for technical reasons (e.g., the student did not receive a grade of "C" or better in the petitioned course).

In 2022 the Strategic Enrollment Management Transfer Committee created a guide titled "Undergraduate Transfer Information Guide for Department Chairs and Deans" to provide uniform guidance for department chairs and deans on evaluating transfer credit. This guide was sent to all department chairs and deans and is available on the University website. In January 2023, the Office of the Registrar provided training on evaluating transfer credit to department chairs at a Provost, Deans, and Department Chairs monthly meeting.

SVSU also has established transfer policies with in-state community colleges and participates in several articulation agreements with 2-year and 4-year institutions, including some international institutions. These agreements, together with corresponding transfer guides, are maintained by the Office of the Registrar together with the Coordinator of Transfer Student Programs & Services (a position within the Office of Admissions). These agreements are available on the University website. Transfer guides for students who intend to eventually enroll at SVSU are also available on the University website. In addition to agreements with individual institutions, SVSU participates in several transfer agreements in partnership with the Michigan Transfer Network. These agreements,

called MiTransfer Pathway Agreements, are intended to help students more simply navigate the transfer process in nine frequently chosen academic pathways (Art, Biology, Business, Communication, Criminal Justice, Exercise Science, Mechanical Engineering, Psychology, and Social Work). The details of these agreements are available on the University website.

In addition to individual course equivalencies, the University selectively transfers blocks of credits from other institutions. In the past, SVSU participated in the Michigan Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (MACRAO) consortium, which facilitated transfer of General Education courses as a block instead of as individual courses. The MACRAO agreement has been phased out and replaced with the Michigan Transfer Agreement (MTA). SVSU still honors MACRAO when it appears on a student's official transcript. The newer MTA provides transfer students an opportunity to transfer a block of courses for General Education to participating institutions. Students complete the required coursework at a participating community college which then awards an MTA stamp on the student's transcript. When received by SVSU, a transcript with MTA stamp is used to satisfy all SVSU General Education requirements with the exception of the Communication Intensive coursework. These details are published on the University website.

4.A.4

Prerequisites, rigor of courses, and expectations for student learning

Prerequisites are automatically checked when a student registers for a course, and the online registration systems blocks registration if the student has not met or is not currently enrolled in course prerequisites. In special cases, the faculty member teaching a particular course may waive the prerequisite or allow a student to be co-registered for a prerequisite. This is a manual process, requiring written approval by the instructor. Most cases are handled by email involving the student, instructor, and the Office of the Registrar. Prior to the start of each term, the Office of the Registrar evaluates prerequisites for all registered students and de-registers students who have not successfully completed the prerequisites by the end of the prior term (or received instructor permission to enroll without the pre-requisite). The only exception is at the start of the spring and summer terms; this exception arises because finals grades are not due until after the next session begins. Hence, there is very little time to verify that students enrolled in a course were successful in a prerequisite course in the previous semester. During this condensed time period, the Office of the Registrar runs targeted de-registration processes for specific majors at the request of the deans' offices.

SVSU maintains and exercises authority over prerequisites, rigor of courses, and expectations for student learning through its curriculum approval process, but also through external reviews, accreditation standards, established norms, and the student course evaluation process. Together, these processes ensure the prerequisites, course content, assignments, learning activities, assessments, course rigor and student learning expectations are designed at an appropriate level .

SVSU has a long-standing contractually-defined process for approving new courses (FA Contract Section F4), a process that takes prerequisites, course rigor, and student learning expectations into account. The Curriculum and Academic Policies Committee (CAPC) is comprised of six faculty members (representing Education, Business, Health and Human Services, Arts and Humanities, Social Sciences and Science Engineering and Technology), one student selected by the duly constituted student government, the Vice President for Academic Affairs or his/her Academic designee; and one (1) Dean, Associate Dean, VPAA, or Associate VPAA, who serves as chair with a vote. CAPC reviews and makes recommendations on all proposals dealing with any change in

existing undergraduate curriculum, including the approval of new undergraduate courses or the revision of existing ones.

Any faculty member, student, or administrative staff member may begin the approval process by proposing a new course or a course revision through the Curriculog system. The proposal requires a course description and a justification. Prerequisites, rigor of courses, and expectations for student learning are ensured at several steps in the subsequent approval process. First, the department in which the course will be housed reviews the proposal and votes to approve or deny it. In addition, the members of "affected departments" (those who teach similar courses or whose curriculum might in some way be affected by the proposed course) as well as the dean(s) of the affected departments (so-called "affected deans") review and vote. The dean from the college in which the course will be housed also reviews and votes. Each step in the process also includes the opportunity for written feedback from the reviewers, and in some cases this feedback leads to a proposal being withdrawn, or revised to meet concerns and then resubmitted. After the deans have recorded their vote, the proposal is reviewed by the CAPC members, discussed at a meeting, and voted on. Any proposals which impact General Education must also be approved in a parallel process though the General Education Committee (see General Education New Course Proposal, and General Education Modify/Delete Course Proposal Form). CAPC presents the list of proposed courses, along with the Committee votes, for approval from the full faculty at two Faculty Association Curriculum Ratification meetings per year (For example, Ratification Memo, March 2023). Prior to the approval meeting, the Faculty Association holds a separate forum for discussion of proposals as needed.

A similar review and approval process exists for graduate-level courses (FA Contract Section F 5). The Graduate Committee (GC) is comprised of six faculty members, one graduate student appointed by the Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Vice President for Academic Affairs or his/her Academic designee, and one Dean, Associate Dean, VPAA, or Associate VPAA, who serves as chair with a vote. The GC reviews and makes recommendations on all proposals dealing with any change in existing graduate curriculum, including the approval of new courses or the revision of existing ones. The GC also is responsible for "monitoring the quality of graduate programs." The process for review and approval of course additions or changes is identical to that of CAPC.

SVSU also maintains and exercises authority over the expectations for student learning by requiring that clear and measurable student learning outcomes are established for each course, program, and degree offered by the university. The annual Academic Program Assessment (APA) form described in Section 4.A.1 asks academic departments to report the student learning outcomes for each of their degree programs. The departments determine and justify the appropriate expectations based on disciplinary norms or accreditation standards. The General Education Committee exercises contractual authority over General Education courses and their student learning outcomes. See Section 4.A.1 for more detail on this process.

In addition to the internal mechanisms of the curriculum process and the annual program assessment process (see Section 4.A.1), all academic programs undergo regular external reviews that ensure ongoing assessment of course rigor and student learning expectations. See details in Section 4.A.1. Accredited academic programs are reviewed by accreditation agencies who set their own standards for course rigor and student learning expectations, and each program must demonstrate they meet those standards during the accreditation review process.

In order to gauge course rigor from the students' perspective, SVSU's student course evaluation form includes three targeted prompts: "The instructor expected me to do high-quality work," "The

instructor set high standards in this course," and "The instructor challenged me intellectually." These responses serve as one source of course rigor evidence, not only for individual faculty improvements but also for departmental assessments. As part of their mentoring process, faculty evaluation teams scrutinize these student comments and utilize them to offer constructive suggestions for course revisions. Furthermore, when faculty members apply for tenure and promotion, department colleagues review these evaluations. Evidence of inadequate course rigor can negatively impact tenure and promotion decisions. The Professional Practices and Committee also take these evaluations into account when assessing a tenure or promotion candidate's "teaching quality," wherein course rigor is a significant factor .

In essence, prerequisites, course rigor, and student learning expectations are meticulously monitored and assessed through multiple mechanisms, involving faculty, students, and administrative committees. This comprehensive approach ensures our commitment to maintain high academic standards, thereby fostering an intellectually challenging and stimulating environment for our students.

Dual credit courses/programs for high school students

Since 2011, SVSU, in conjunction with nearby community college Delta College, has hosted one dual-credit program for high school students, the Great Lakes Bay Early College. Students in this "four plus one program" (recognized by the United States Department of Education) may earn up to 60 college credits. Students take the same courses as other SVSU students, assuring that the coursework is identical in learning outcomes and levels of achievement to SVSU curriculum.

Access to learning resources

SVSU maintains and exercises authority over access to learning resources, including learning aids (both digital and physical), services (both web-based and in-person), and spaces (both virtual and physical). A summary of learning resources is listed on the SVSU website, easily reached by clicking the "Current Students" link at the top of the page. Students typically access learning resources for their courses through the Canvas learning management system which is accessed via SVSU account login. The Zahnow library is the hub for the vast majority of learning resources outside of course materials provided by faculty. In addition to its traditional physical media collections, the physical space of the library houses the Center for Academic Achievement (tutoring for business, computer science, biology, chemistry, and social sciences), the Math and Physics Resource Center (tutoring for math and physics), and the Writing Center, as well as a Research Center desk staffed by librarians. These services are collectively known as the Gerstacker Academic Commons.. The library also provides dedicated study spaces for individuals and groups, as well as access to technology such as computers and printers. In-person learning resources such as tutoring and technology require students to present and typically swipe their Student ID prior to access. Additionally, the library provides access to several online learning materials available to students through their SVSU login. Online resources, including tutoring, are also offered through platforms such as Microsoft Teams. Finally, regarding access, the Office of Accessibility Resources and Accommodations supports students with disabilities by removing barriers that might inhibit access to their educational experience.

Faculty Qualifications

The SVSU Faculty Contract (H.1.1) details the formal degree qualifications required for appointment

and promotion at each full-time rank –Instructor, Assistant, Associate, and Full. In order to ensure high quality teaching and learning in its curricula, SVSU's Faculty Teaching Qualifications Policy articulates and maintains minimum qualifications for all instructional staff in all credit-bearing classes. In most cases, a faculty member's academic preparation is the principal consideration in hiring them to teach in a particular discipline or area. In particular cases, a faculty member may be deemed qualified based on other credentials appropriate for a given course, which may include licensure/certification, awards and other recognitions, work or teaching experience in the field, and their research record. A faculty member can be qualified based on a combination of academic and other credentials. In all cases, the university follows the Higher Learning Commission's Criteria for Accreditation and Assumed Practice guidance to determine faculty qualification. The university also uses the four-digit Classification of Instructional Program (CIP) codes to determine whether an instructor's educational background is in the same discipline as the courses being taught.

The core responsibility for the verification and validation of faculty qualifications rests with the academic instructional units offering the courses in which the faculty member will teach. Verification and validations must be completed prior to the faculty member beginning instruction in the course and must be conducted for each separate course taught. Department chairs, deans, and/or program directors were asked to provide the Office of the Provost with lists of the courses each full-time and adjunct faculty member is qualified to teach. Each fall, the Office of the Provost asks every faculty member to complete an update form if the courses they are qualified to teach have changed. As part of the hiring process for adjunct faculty members, academic department chairs complete a form that attests to and provides supporting evidence of their qualifications; on this form, the department chair also indicates the specific courses that the adjunct faculty member is qualified to teach.

The Graduate Committee exercises additional authority over adjunct faculty qualifications for graduate teaching. This body receives and reviews adjunct faculty applications, including vitas and records of professional experience, to teach at the graduate level and applications for renewals of faculty graduate teaching status. Adjunct faculty may only be approved to teach graduate courses that align with their specific area of expertise or experience.

Faculty who will be teaching online or hybrid courses are required to complete one of two certification courses offered by the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL). The Designer's Course covers the pedagogy of online and hybrid course design and teaching, and it is required for any faculty member who will be the instructor of record for an online or hybrid course. The Facilitator's Course covers best practices in communicating with and providing feedback to students in an online format, and it is required for a faculty member who is interacting in some way via the LMS with students in an online course. Faculty who have completed equivalent training elsewhere or can demonstrate relevant online teaching experience can apply to be certified without taking SVSU's training course; applications are reviewed by CETL. CETL maintains a spreadsheet of faculty who have completed either training course or who have been certified through a waiver and each month the Office of the Provost runs a comparison report to flag any faculty member who has been assigned an online or hybrid course but has not been certified. CETL then reaches out to those faculty members to ensure that they complete the required training .

The offices of the Provost and Human Resources collect evidence of all faculty credentials at the time of hiring. The Office of the Provost also maintains a faculty qualifications database in Colleague that lists course, levels, and/or subjects each faculty member (full and adjunct) is qualified to teach. When courses are scheduled, Colleague flags any instructor who is not certified to teach an assigned course. At that time the department chair/program coordinator is contacted to update qualifications as

needed.

4.A.5

Saginaw Valley State University maintains ten specialized accreditations.

1. SVSU's business programs are accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business.
2. SVSU's chemistry program is approved by the American Chemical Society.
3. SVSU's electrical engineering program and mechanical engineering program are accredited by the Engineering Accreditation Commission of ABET.
4. SVSU's education programs are accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Education Preparation.
5. SVSU's English Language Program is accredited by the Commission on English Language Program Accreditation.
6. SVSU's nursing programs are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education.
7. SVSU's occupational therapy program is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education of the American Occupational Therapy Association.
8. SVSU's medical laboratory science program is accredited by the National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences.
9. SVSU's social work program is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education.
10. SVSU's music programs are accredited by the National Association of Schools of Music.

4.A.6

The offices of Career Services and Alumni Relations play a key role in evaluating the success of SVSU graduates across all programs. The offices use third party software that scrapes LinkedIn for alumni data that is then analyzed by colleges and academic programs. Career Services maintains a webpage that tracks "First Destination" data about SVSU graduates. Broken down by college, degree level, and major, the data shows most frequent employers, most attended post-graduate universities, and average salaries, as well as geographic destinations. Data is available for the graduating classes of 2019 through the present. Final Destination captures only alumni on LinkedIn, but that number is far higher than the institution was previously able to generate with surveys, so we have some confidence that the data here is representative of our graduates' success. The data reveal that of our students who graduate with a bachelor's degree, their mean salary is $48,000, that the majority are employed in the region, and that over 45% of those who pursue a post-graduate degree do so here at SVSU. Eighty-two percent are employed full-time, 13% are continuing their education, and 1% are in the military. The Alumni Relations office also hosts an alumni networking app called SVSUConnect. Although not used to formally evaluate the success of graduates, this app does provide some evidence that our graduates are employed and enjoying professional success.

At the college level, some academic departments gather evidence of their students' post-graduate successes. The Department of Political Science, for example, maintains a database identifying where its alumni are employed. Although it is not required, some academic departments report their graduates' employment information in their annual Academic Program Assessment reports under "student accomplishments." The engineering departments (Mechanical Engineering and Electrical & Computer Engineering) conduct a survey of alumni every three years as part of their accreditation requirement.

The pre-law and pre-health programs collect data about students who take the LSAT and GMAT, as well as their acceptance rates to law and medical schools. The acceptance rates indicate that our students are successfully prepared for graduate programs: in 2023, seventy-five percent of students who took the LSAT were admitted to law school; and over the past five years, the pre-health students have enjoyed high admission rates to various graduate programs: dentistry (91%), medicine (74%), optometry (100%), pharmacy (100%), physician's assistant (64%), podiatry (100%), and veterinary medicine (61%).

Some academic departments use data from licensure examinations to provide evidence that students completing degree programs at the institution meet professional standards for employment or advanced study. Licensure examination pass rates (where available) are posted on relevant department web sites. As examples, students graduating in 2023 from the Occupational Therapy Program achieved an 98% pass rate on the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy. Similarly, 92% of students from the Bachelor of Science in Nursing program passed the National Council Licensure Examination. Both pass rates are above the national average. In the College of Education, SVSU graduates have a pass rate on the Michigan Test for Teacher Certification that is above the state average.

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4.B - Core Component 4.B

The institution engages in ongoing assessment of student learning as part of its commitment to the educational outcomes of its students.

1. The institution has effective processes for assessment of student learning and for achievement of learning goals in academic and cocurricular offerings.
2. The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.
3. The institution's processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty, instructional and other relevant staff members.

Argument

4.B.1

All departments and student support offices within the Office of Academic and Student Affairs engage in an annual assessment process. The process begins with the identification of student learning outcomes. These outcomes are informed by faculty expertise, disciplinary standards, and accrediting agencies. The student learning outcomes for each academic program are clearly stated in the required annual Academic Program Assessment report. Undergraduate and graduate programs develop assessment methods to measure student learning. Departments may choose a cyclical approach to assess all learning and program goals within a reasonable time period. Departments use direct measures such as examinations, papers, original works, capstone projects, senior projects, exit exams, standardized tests, licensure exam scores, and external adjudication, as well as indirect measures such as interviews and surveys. In addition to assessing student learning outcomes, departments also record student achievements outside the classroom as evidence of their success.

As an example, in a recent APA report the Chemistry Department reported that five students presented posters at a national meeting of the American Chemistry Society (ACS), three students presented posters at a Great Lakes Beach Association conference, and several students presented posters at a virtual ACS Midland Local Section meeting. In the annual report, academic departments share their analysis of student learning data to identify strengths and challenges, make improvements, and request resources to support their efforts. The Office of Institutional Research provides departments with relevant data such as enrollments and retention rates for use in their annual analysis. Additional examples of APA reports include Theater, Political Science, Psychology, Economics, Management and Marketing, Early Childhood Education, Teacher Education-Elementary, Public Health, Health Science, Math, Physics, and Biology.

In addition to the annual assessment, departments engage in a regular cycle of external program review. This process is described in section 4.A.1. Some academic programs assess student learning outcomes in preparation for regularly scheduled reviews from specialized external accrediting bodies. See section 4.A.5 for details.

SVSU also engages in an ongoing assessment process of student learning for its General Education program. The General Education Committee (GEC) is a standing committee established through the Faculty Contract (Section F6) which is charged with assessing the overall effectiveness of the

General Education program. The GEC oversees assessment of all individual courses in the program and governs the addition and deletion of courses from various categories that comprise the program. General education consists of ten categories, each based on a main objective which is published in the course catalog. Each course must be assessed according to standardized category-specific student learning outcomes and on two of three program-wide "tripartite goals" (critical thinking, logical reasoning, and effective communication). All assessments use standardized rubrics which have been developed by faculty who teach the courses, approved by GEC, and ratified by the Faculty Association. Each course in the General Education Program is overseen by a department and/or coordinator responsible for collecting and reporting assessment data according to these rubrics. The data-collection process is laid out in course-specific assessment plans which have previously been approved by the departments and GEC.

The assessment of student learning in each General Education course follows a five-year cycle. In the first three years, student learning assessment data is collected according to the assessment plan for the course. Each course is required to collect data on all student learning outcomes for its category, as well as for one category-specific tripartite goal and a second course-specific tripartite goal chosen by the department. In the fourth year, the department submits a Course Renewal Report which must reviewed and approved by the General Education Committee. Guidelines for completing this report are shared with all departments. In the fifth year, the department is not required to collect data in order to allow time for revisions to both the course and the assessment plan. Then the cycle repeats. In the renewal reports, departments provide summarized quantitative data from their assessments and provide a narrative focused on continuous improvement. For an example of how the assessment loop works, see the recent example of the HIST100 course renewal process, which involves the department developing an assessment plan, the department reporting on its findings in a renewal report, and the GEC providing a response with recommendations.

While General Education assessment has been practiced for many years, the current process is based on the 2014 HLC Comprehensive Review. Following that review, the GEC led an overhaul of all learning outcomes in the program. A task force was created for each category, comprised of faculty from representative departments. Each task force developed two to three measurable student learning outcomes using a common four-point rubric. Similar rubrics were developed for the tripartite goals. Unlike the category-specific learning outcomes, the tripartite goals are program-wide goals. Each General Education course is also assessed on two of the three tripartite goals. One of these is category-specific (e.g. all courses in Category 1 assess critical thinking), and a second course-specific tripartite goal is chosen by the department. The category-specific tripartite goals were determined by the category-specific task forces. All of these student learning outcomes and rubrics were brought before the Faculty Association for ratification.

Following approval, new assessment plans based on the new rubrics were written by the faculty and approved by GEC. The completion of this process butted against the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, causing an additional delay in data collection for assessment . In the 2020-21 academic year, departments began collecting assessment data according to the new assessment plans. In Fall 2022, the first General Education Course Renewal Reports were submitted. The first round of reports covered Categories 5 and 6. The General Education Committee has developed a five-year cycle for renewal reports, with two categories submitting reports each year. This approach keeps the process manageable, but requires more years before renewal reports have been submitted for all courses in the program.

General Education student learning outcomes, rubrics, assessment plans, report templates, and guides

are housed in a General Education Canvas site maintained by the GEC. An online database was created for General Education assessment data submission and retrieval. This allows each department to store and access their data for future use, protecting against misplaced files and unexpected personnel changes. Since each category and tripartite goal uses a common rubric, this database will also allow GEC to assess student learning across entire categories, learning outcomes, and tripartite goals, making it possible to assess student learning in the General Education program as a whole. Since the first General Education Course Renewal Reports were submitted for Categories 5 and 6 in 2022, it will be some time before the GEC has enough data to evaluate the program more broadly. As a first step toward that evaluation, the GEC Chair and other faculty and staff participated in the 2023 Institute on General Education and Assessment. As a result of that experience, the GEC is currently gathering enrollment and other data about GE courses and planning campus-wide discussions for the next year.

Co-curricular activities are an integral part of the educational experience for many of our students, but at this point the university lacks a uniform definition and assessment process. In 2014, the division of Student Affairs was brought under the Provost with the intention of integrating the academic and co-curricular aspects of the university to positively impact student learning and success. As the 2018 HLC Assurance Argument noted, the Student Affairs office was taking the first steps to develop a culture of assessment for co-curricular student learning, and the university anticipated a unit-wide vision to unify the type, frequency, and reporting of co-curricular student learning assessment data. Unfortunately, due to Covid challenges and the loss of key personnel, that unified plan never fully materialized. Nonetheless, the Office of Student Life presents its programming as designed to support student success in the senses both of encouraging students' "leadership in our global community" and also of advancing their "success after graduation". The 2021-2022 Student Affairs Dean's Assessment and Planning Report describes a list of Student Learning Outcomes (growth in one or more of six learning domains, plus the GE tripartite goals) for the division. Also, individual units within Student Affairs have independently developed assessment processes, such as the Office of Residential Life's new co-curricular residential program, Valley Vantage, which develops students' community, empowerment, and wellbeing. The co-curricular assessment process aligned with the Six Dimensions of Student Success is now underway and can be more effectively revitalized. Student Affairs' is currently participating in NASPA Advisory Services PRACTICES Plus self-assessment and technical assistance.

Outside of the Student Affairs division, many academic departments also offer co-curricular activities and in many cases assess those in the context of their program's student learning outcomes. The annual Academic Program Assessment report includes a question asking programs to provide details about any "co-curricular activities" such as student clubs that they support. Student participation in activities such as Moot Court, Study Abroad, the Ethics Bowl, and Forensic Debate are noted by academic programs. In some cases, such as Moot Court, the co-curricular activity is connected with a scheduled course and thus has learning outcomes associated with that course. In addition, the successes of students in the program are noted in the programs' annual reports.

There are also several stand-alone co-curricular programs on campus, including – Roberts-Gilbertson Fellows, Cardinal Solutions, Vitito Fellows, Study Abroad, and Cardinal Formula Racing. Each of these programs has stated learning outcomes and provides ongoing evidence of student success, often in the reports of academic department connected with the programs or through the website. For example, as a co-curricular program in SVSU's College of Science, Engineering and Technology, Cardinal Formula Racing engages 20 to 30 engineering, business, and art students who build a race car and compete in the Formula SAE (Society of Automotive Engineers) Collegiate Design Series

(CDS) competitions. The program offers course credit options and guidance from faculty and industry advisors, and it has regularly placed in the top third of all universities in the competition. Cardinal Solutions serves the needs of non-profit, for-profit, and municipal clients through a collaborative, interdisciplinary student research and design team that functions like a consulting firm; key outcomes for students include the development of problem-solving, team work, and communication skills. Individually, a few of the kinds of co-curricular activities mentioned above engage in some kind of assessment, but the University recognizes the need to develop a shared definition of co-curricular, formal learning outcomes for these activities, and assessment methods to ensure that students are achieving the desired learning outcomes.

4.B.2

At both the academic program and the institution level, SVSU uses assessment data gained from annual academic program reports, external reviews, specialized accreditation reviews, and general education course renewal reports to improve student learning.

In their annual Academic Program Assessment reports, departments are asked to explain how they have used assessment data to improve student learning outcomes in their academic programs. Thus the institution has an expectation that all academic programs will use their analysis of assessment data to guide improvements that support student learning. In their annual report to the Provost, each dean typically summarizes the efforts to improve student learning within their college. The 2022-23 College of Health and Human Services dean's report, for example, summarizes each academic program's SLOs, notes where assessment found gaps in student learning, and outlines the steps that program is taking to improve student learning. Efforts to improve student learning take many forms: revisions of assignments in specific courses (Social Work), adoption of new pedagogical methods (Kinesiology), faculty development workshops (Occupational Therapy – norming syllabi), the development of new courses (Master of Public Health), curricular reform (Kinesiology – curriculum mapping), student support initiatives (Nursing – mentoring program), and so forth.

Seven-year external reviews and site visits for accredited academic programs generate recommendations that are then used to improve student learning. These recommendations and the corresponding planned improvement are summarized in the deans' annual report on the Academic Program assessment reports from their colleges. For example, in 2023, the Dean of the College of Education focused on that college's recent site visit conducted by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). The Dean's report summarized the college's Student Learning Outcomes and described how the accreditation review process resulted in changes made to address Areas for Improvement (AFI). As the dean noted, these AFIs are "genuinely useful in charting next steps in our continuous improvement efforts." In some cases, site visits affirm that academic programs have established robust systems for using assessment to improve student learning. For example, in 2023, the Carmona College of Business reported that their AACSB Peer Preview Team "determined that the CCB was meeting the requirement for an assessment process focused on continuous improvement." The review team noted that the CCB's Assessment of Learning standing committee collects and reports program-level student learning assessment data each year, driving continuous improvement in this area at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Individual departments rely on these external reviews to guide their curricular revisions, as can be seen with the Biology department.

The annual assessment process guides the institution in allocating resources to support improvements

in student learning because in their reports, departments are asked to tie their resource requests to their findings about student learning. The Psychology Department's 2021-22 report offers a representative example: the request for new faculty lines referenced three of the department's SLOs that its current faculty lacked the expertise to teach, and it tied its request for updated computer software to two additional SLOs that could not be met adequately with the current technology. In response two new faculty lines were authorized.

Academic programs with courses in General Education assess student learning outcomes each semester, with the expectation that the assessment will be analyzed and used to guide improvements. When a program seeks to renew a General Education course, the renewal form asks both "where students are not meeting learning objective targets" and also "How will [your assessment of student learning outcomes] impact the course going forward? Be sure to address each category-specific student learning outcome, the category-specific tripartite goal, and the course-specific tripartite goal." In their renewal application, programs describe any adjustments to teaching methods, course design, or so forth that are being made to improve student learning outcomes.

SVSU's Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) offers financial resources to support teaching innovations that address identified gaps in student learning. The Dow Professor Award and the Department Innovation Grants are initiatives aimed at faculty members and departments who have demonstrated, using data on student learning, specific learning gaps that require intervention. The Rural Pathways Faculty Learning Community grant enables departments to examine student learning assessment data and implement pedagogical changes to improve learning outcomes across multiple course sections. To measure the impact of these initiatives, all grants provided by CETL require recipients to assess the effects of their introduced innovations on student learning. This assessment helps in understanding the effectiveness of the interventions and offers insights for potential adjustments in teaching methods. By supporting these initiatives, the university commits to continuously improving the educational environment based on assessment feedback.

4.B.3

The university has structured its processes to prioritize the significant involvement of faculty and staff in the assessment of student learning. As outlined in section 4.B.1, these processes ensure a collaborative approach wherein the expertise and insights of our academic community are harnessed effectively.

A central figure in this structure is the Office of Academic Affairs, which provides clear directives on assessment processes and delineates the roles of academic program directors and department chairs. Within the framework of individual academic departments, faculty members are entrusted with the responsibility of crafting assessment methodologies that not only align with program objectives but also adhere to disciplinary benchmarks.

In instances where the university's programs align with specialized accrediting bodies, the assessment methodologies are designed to meet the specific requirements set by these entities. For example, the Social Work program designs and evaluates it field education on criteria aligned with the Social Work Competencies required by its accrediting body, the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). The university's Office of Institutional Research plays a pivotal role by furnishing relevant data and analytics as requested, thereby supporting departments in their efforts to evaluate student learning trajectories across varying durations and multiple courses. Additionally, departments, including but not limited to Communication, English, and Math, offer workshops for

adjunct faculty to train them to effectively assess student learning. This comprehensive approach is further enriched with feedback from Deans on Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs).

The revision process of the university's General Education Program SLOs and associated assessment rubrics stands as a testament to our commitment to collective participation. Spanning two years, this endeavor saw active contributions from both faculty and administrative members. The process was underpinned by research into methodologies adopted by peer institutions, thereby ensuring our practices are grounded in prevailing best practices. Workshops designed to equip faculty with skills in formulating SLOs and determining appropriate assessment techniques were organized by the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, in collaboration with the GEC. Furthermore, the development of category-specific student learning assessment rubrics was a collaborative effort, with representatives from departments contributing their expertise. These rubrics, reflecting the collective wisdom of our academic community, were subsequently endorsed through a vote by the entirety of the faculty body.

The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) provides training, consultations, and grants to support faculty in developing effective assessment processes and methodologies. The Faculty Summer Institute introduces all new full-time faculty to principles of course design and student learning assessment; participants develop SLOs and formative and summative assessments linked to those SLOs. Adjunct Faculty are offered an Orientation (twice a year) that provides an introduction to best assessment practices. Faculty who earn the required certification through CETL to teach online or hybrid courses develop SLOs and assessments that conform to the Online Learning Consortium standards for online course design (Prior to 2023, CETL used Quality Matters Standards). CETL workshops offer focused examples of good assessment practices. Grants for innovative teaching require faculty awardees to assess the impact of innovations on student learning; results are shared on campus and, in some cases, externally. CETL also stays current with evolving best practices in assessment; for example, the rise of AI technologies led to workshops and Faculty Learning Communities focused on developing new kinds of assessment.

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- 4B3.34_Adjunct Faculty Orientation 2023
- 4B3.35_Online Learning Consortium
- 4B3.36_Quality Matters Standard
- 4B3.39_2023 Faculty Learning Communities

4.C - Core Component 4.C

The institution pursues educational improvement through goals and strategies that improve retention, persistence and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs.

1. The institution has defined goals for student retention, persistence and completion that are ambitious, attainable and appropriate to its mission, student populations and educational offerings.
2. The institution collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence and completion of its programs.
3. The institution uses information on student retention, persistence and completion of programs to make improvements as warranted by the data.
4. The institution's processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing information on student retention, persistence and completion of programs reflect good practice. (Institutions are not required to use IPEDS definitions in their determination of persistence or completion rates. Institutions are encouraged to choose measures that are suitable to their student populations, but institutions are accountable for the validity of their measures.)

Argument

4.C.1

In the Strategic Plan adopted in 2016, SVSU set specific goals for retention and graduation rates. Specifically, the goal for first to second year retention was 78%, a significant increase from the earlier average of about 70%. Similarly, the goal for the six-year graduation rate was set at 45%, a significant increase from the 2009-2011 cohorts average of about 40%.

SVSU has seen significant improvements in both of these statistics. The retention rate reached 78% for the 2017 cohort of students. Since then, it has fluctuated around an average of 75%, indicating that while some success has been achieved, more work remains. The six-year graduation rate has steadily increased and for the 2017 cohort, reached 54%, well exceeding the original strategic goal. These results exceed national averages for regional comprehensive universities, which according to the American Association of State Colleges and Universities average about 71% for first to second year retention and 50% for six-year graduation. Despite this success, SVSU strives to further improve student outcomes.

The University updated its goals for retention, persistence and completion in the 2021 Strategic Enrollment Management Plan update to 78% first-to-second year retention rate (no change); 90% second-to-third year retention rate (up from 85%); 55% 6-year graduation rate (up from 45%). The Strategic Enrollment Management Council is currently in the process of updating the Enrollment Management Plan and based on relevant data on retention, persistence and graduation rates, set appropriate goals for SVSU.

As will be discussed further in section 4.C.3, the institution participated in the HLC Student Success Academy beginning in 2019 and developed a detailed Student Success plan which is designed to achieve and exceed our retention and completion goals.

4.C.2

The Office of Institutional Research (OIR) at SVSU collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence, and completion of its programs. Reports on Retention and Completion are prepared every fall semester and disseminated to the relevant departments (academic, enrollment management, communications, administration and finance, etc The OIR maintains several publicly available dashboards to summarize information such as enrollment history, degrees conferred, semester facts, and FTIC profiles, as well as the Common Data Set. Additionally, the OIR runs reports and analyzes data as requested by offices across campus and collaborates with the Provost and the Strategic Enrollment Management Council in setting ambitious and attainable goals for student retention, persistence, and completion.

Between 2019 and 2022, the Student Success Academy worked closely with the OIR to analyze data on retention, persistence, and completion to guide its work (see 4.C.3 for details). Similarly, the Strategic Enrollment Management Council has relied on OIR analysis of retention, persistence, and completion data in their planning. In addition to the basic retention, persistence, and graduation statistics, data related to student engagement and belonging is evaluated as it relates to student success. For example, as noted in the Strategic Enrollment Management Plan, "Analysis shows that student engagement in co-curricular programs has a positive impact on retention. Students who participate in one or more programs or activities, such as join a Registered Student Organization, utilize the Campus Recreation Center or attend a program in Residential Life, have higher grade point averages and are retained at the university at a higher rate when compared to students who do not engage with student affairs departments or programs. On average, the retention rate for first-year students who utilize services is 77% and 75% for students who do not. Further analysis shows that students who are highly engaged in campus activities (>10 programs per year) have a retention rate that exceeds 85%. The average GPAs are 2.92 and 2.85, respectively for participants and non-participants in student activities. For students who were highly engaged, the average GPA increased to 3.07. This clearly shows a strong correlation between student success and campus engagement.

4.C.3

In the 2018 Strategic Enrollment Management Plan a number of retention-focused committees were developed or enhanced. However, in 2019, SVSU enrolled in the HLC Student Success Academy as its Quality Initiative project. This endeavor resulted in a restructuring of the retention and student success efforts; many of the committees mentioned in the SEM plan were folded into the bigger committee. SVSU participated in the Student Success Academy from 2019-2022, a time frame that included the global pandemic. Despite that massive challenge a number of recommendations based on quantitative and qualitative factors were made and implemented.

The Student Success Plan outlines 6 dimensions of student success at SVSU: academic progress/graduation; Engagement and Belonging; Career Preparation; Student Satisfactin/Wellbeing; Academic Optimism/Self-efficacy/Personal Goal Attainment; and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion/Global Views/Citizenship. Within that framework, actions were taken to address gaps identified when analyzing quantitative and qualitative data related to student success.

On the basis of retention and persistence data, the Student Success Committee recommended revisions to academic offerings. For example, the one-credit College Transitions course (CT 100) first developed in 2015 to support a small number of conditionally admitted students was steadily expanded to include student athletes; when data showed the course's positive impact on retention, it

grew to other cohorts. At the recommendation of the Student Success Committee, in Fall of 2022 the course was open to all students and over the last two years, we have enrolled about 450 first time freshmen students per year, a significant fraction of the roughly 1300 new students. Moreover, the curriculum of CT100 is undergoing a continuous and dynamic review process. This is in recognition of the evolving needs of our student body and the crucial role the program plays in easing the transition into university life. The emphasis is on creating a curriculum that is not only academically enriching but also supportive of students' social integration and overall well-being. The curricular revisions are led by the Faculty Coordinator, the First year Retention Specialist with input from faculty teaching the course and the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (4C3_3)

Academic departments have used student retention and persistence data to guide curricular changes designed to improve student success. The English department studied factors affecting the success of first-year writing students, which led to a change in 2023 in how students are placed into the ENGL 111 Composition course. The Math department undertook a similar study of its development math courses, which led to major revisions in the developmental math offerings to differentiate the needs of students based on their major programs of study. The Biology Department has developed a Course Based Undergraduate Research Experience (CURE) to enhance laboratory and technical skills in genetic and molecular biology courses, but the techniques will be applicable across multiple biology courses. The success of these initiatives will be monitored over the next few years to determine the impact on student success.

Additionally, as SVSU attempts to enroll and retain non-traditional and returning students, the Student Success Committee noted that SVSU's academic forgiveness policy was out-of-step with other universities in the state. The punitive policy served as a barrier to re-admission for stopped-out students, as well as an obstacle to graduate studies for students who switched academic programs. As a result of this discovery, faculty proposed a revised policy which was ratified on March 21, 2024.

SVSU has actively pursued grant opportunities for programs that support the retention and persistence of students, especially those in at-risk categories. These awards are evidence of how SVSU uses the data on student learning to make improvement. In 2017 the university secured a U.S Department of Education Title III Grant worth $3 million over five years, targeting developmental program improvements, improving student communication, and introducing cost-saving measures for students. In the same year, SVSU secured a King Chavez Park (KCP) State of Michigan Grant to focus on bolstering support for first-generation and Pell Grant-eligible students, with specific goals in retention and graduation, while the Morris Hood, Jr., Educator Development (MHED) grant aims to amplify the number of underrepresented students in K-12 teacher education programs. In 2022, the university secured two additional U.S. Department of Education grants to support retention and persistence: The Rural Pathways Student Success grant and the TRIO Student Support Services grant, whose purpose is to increase the rates of academic achievement, retention, and graduation among historically underrepresented students.

In the fall of 2023, Saginaw Valley State University proudly opened the doors to the Cardinal Student Success Center a pivotal development in our continuous endeavor to enhance student success. This center is a multifaceted facility designed to centralize and streamline student success efforts. It serves a critical role in supporting various student success grants and internal programming, ensuring that our initiatives are coordinated and effective. The center offers essential office and meeting spaces for staff administering external grant programs, signifying our proactive approach to leveraging external resources for student success. In addition to supporting grant-related activities, the center is a dynamic space dedicated to specialized student success programming, particularly for special

populations. It houses supervised, general-use small group study areas that are directly linked to student support services, fostering an environment conducive to academic collaboration and peer learning. This deliberate design reflects our understanding of the importance of social belonging and its positive impact on academic achievement, as evidenced in educational research. Overall, the Cardinal Student Success Center embodies SVSU's dedication to creating social and academic spaces that facilitate meaningful student engagement and success. Its establishment marks a significant stride in reinforcing our university's mission of ensuring student success, improved retention, and enrollment stability, while also providing a nurturing environment where every student can find a sense of belonging and the resources necessary to thrive.

Sources

- 4_c1_1_StrategicPlanRetentionGoals
- 4c1_2_BoardofControlEnrollmentUpdate
- 4c1_3_AASCU_RegionalPublics
- 4c1_4_StrategicEnrollmentMgtUpdate
- 4C2_1 OIR_Office of Institutional Research
- 4C2_2 FTIC Profile
- 4C2_3_FTIC Common Data Set
- 4c2_4_2018StrategicEnrollmentManagementPlan
- 4c3_1_StudentSuccessplan
- 4C3_10 Rural Pathways
- 4C3_11_TRIO Student Support Services
- 4C3_12 CSSC Open House
- 4c3_2_CT100SEctions
- 4C3_3 CT 100 Meetings
- 4C3_4_ENGL 111 Requisite Proposal
- 4c3_4_English111Placement
- 4c3_5 Math Pilot Descriptions
- 4c3_6Biology_CURE
- 4C3_7AcademicForgiveness
- 4C3_8 Title III grant
- 4C3_9_KCP grant
- 4C3_9a Morris Hood
- Math Implementation data fall 2023
- SEM Presentation - 2018 - Deb Huntley_v2

4.S - Criterion 4 - Summary

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.

Summary

SVSU demonstrates a comprehensive commitment to enhancing teaching and learning, as well as student retention, persistence, and completion rates, in alignment with the HLC's Criterion 4 accreditation standards. Through a systematic approach involving regular program reviews, rigorous evaluation of all credited transcripts, and the implementation of policies that ensure the quality of credit acceptance, SVSU acts upon findings to foster continuous improvement across its academic and co-curricular offerings. The institution's dedication to maintaining high standards for course prerequisites, rigor, and student learning expectations is evident in its processes for approving new and revised courses, ensuring that faculty qualifications and learning resources are appropriately aligned with educational outcomes.

Furthermore, SVSU's efforts extend to the ongoing assessment of student learning, utilizing both direct and indirect measures to inform improvements in teaching strategies and program design. This is complemented by strategic initiatives aimed at enhancing retention and completion rates, including setting ambitious goals based on detailed data analysis and engaging in targeted actions to address identified gaps. By focusing on the development of a supportive and engaging learning environment, evidenced by the establishment of programs like the Cardinal Student Success Center and initiatives for non-traditional and returning students, SVSU underscores its commitment to student success and the achievement of its educational mission. These comprehensive strategies illustrate SVSU's proactive approach to meeting accreditation standards while fostering an environment that supports academic excellence and student achievement.

Sources

There are no sources.

5 - Institutional Effectiveness, Resources and Planning

The institution's resources, structures, processes and planning are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

5.A - Core Component 5.A

Through its administrative structures and collaborative processes, the institution's leadership demonstrates that it is effective and enables the institution to fulfill its mission.

1. Shared governance at the institution engages its internal constituencies—including its governing board, administration, faculty, staff and students—through planning, policies and procedures.
2. The institution's administration uses data to reach informed decisions in the best interests of the institution and its constituents.
3. The institution's administration ensures that faculty and, when appropriate, staff and students are involved in setting academic requirements, policy and processes through effective collaborative structures.

Argument

The organizational structures and institutional practices of the University ensure that its internal constituencies participate in university governance. Faculty, staff, administration, and students serve as members of standing and ad hoc committees. The Board of Control actively engages in its oversight responsibilities, and Board members are kept well-informed about the University's academic policies and employee and financial matters. The President and executive leadership team are very transparent and provide a wealth of understanding and insight in guiding SVSU.

5.A.1.

The Board of Control is the governing body of Saginaw Valley State University. The Board of Control was established when the State of Michigan ratified Act 278 of 1965 making the University a state-supported institution. The Board of Control is comprised of eight members who are appointed by the governor, subject to confirmation by the Michigan Senate. The term of office is eight years, with two members rotating off every two years in odd-numbered years. This provides an ongoing balance of experience and new perspectives. The president of the institution serves as an ex-officio member of the board without the right to vote.

The Board of Control has constitutional and statutory authority for general oversight of the University and to control and direct all expenditures from institutional funds. The Board of Control participates in the governance of the University through policies and procedures defined by their bylaws which identify the responsibilities the Board retains for itself and those responsibilities that are delegated to the University's President. For example, the Board of Control approves the University's annual general fund and auxiliary budgets and approves all capital expenditures and projects costing more than $250,000. See 2A for an overview of the fiduciary responsibilities of the

Board of Control and 5B for evidence of the Board fulfilling those responsibilities.

To facilitate their understanding of University issues, new Board members go through an orientation and receive reference materials. As noted in section 2.103, 4 of their bylaws, the Board of Control has established two standing committees that advise the president on matters under the authority of the Board. These committees meet before the scheduled Board meeting and are chaired by University Vice-Presidents. Through this committee structure Board members interact with the University administration and gain information on matters relevant to their responsibilities, which informs their advice on these issues.

The specific responsibilities for each committee follow:

- Academic, Student Services, and Personnel Committee. Chaired by the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs, this committee reviews academic issues, such as revisions and additions to academic programs, as well as considering student services matters, enrollment, items related to the University authorized charter schools and personnel concerns; and
- Business, Finance, Audit, and Facilities Committee. Chaired by the Vice President for Administration and Business Affairs, this committee focuses on matters such as the annual audit, organizational changes, technology and cyber security issues, investment practices including endowment management, budget planning and related economic trends, long-term capital planning, major construction projects, employee compensation issues, and contracts.

While there are technically two committees, they often meet as a committee of the whole due all members central role in planning and operations. Any revision to or update of the University's Strategic Plan is brought to both standing committees or the Committee of the Whole for discussion and review before consideration by the full Board. For example, the extension of the existing strategic plan was discussed at the February 14, 2022, Committee of the Whole meeting and then was approved at the May 6, 2022, Board Meeting.

The University has a long-standing practice of regularly seeking input concerning governance issues from its various internal constituent groups. The Board's meeting schedule is posted on the University website and regular formal sessions are open to the public. Searchable versions of the Board of Control minutes going back to 1965 are accessible on the University's website so everyone can see the matters being addressed by the Board. Board bylaws section 2.104 Miscellaneous, #1 states that "The Student Association President may sit at the table as an observer at all formal sessions and special formal sessions of the Board and be permitted to speak and participate in discussion with the Board on any issue." In that vein, a representative from the Student Association, the Faculty Association, the support staff union, and the police officers' union gives an update on what they have done and provides their views on university initiatives.

Board of Control members often participate in campus life. For example, they are invited and often attend major functions such as the All-University Awards Banquet, Board of Fellows events, Student Showcase, and pre-commencement activities where they meet and talk to faculty and staff. Such occasions provide them with informal opportunities to learn more about the operations and interests of the campus as a whole. The University is a member of the Association of Governing Boards, which is an American higher education association committed to the improvement of academic governing boards. Board of Control members often attend the annual national conference on trusteeship. Through both formal and informal means, the members of the Board of Control gain an understanding of the institution.

The administration models the practice of meeting regularly and sharing information. The current president is building his leadership team to allow for open communication with some decentralized decision-making that aligns with the strategic goals of the university. The President generally meets with his leadership team weekly. Some meetings have an agenda, but all include an opportunity for the leadership team to share what is happening in their area and ways the others may be able to assist. The Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs meets with the deans and directors monthly and separate meetings with the deans are held where necessary. Deans meet with department chairs, and department chairs meet with the faculty. The Academic & Student Affairs division also holds divisional meetings. The vice president for Administration & Business Affairs meets individually with directors but also meets periodically as a group. The directors then meet with their units. It is a customary practice at the University that in many of these staff meetings, the members participate in round tables in which they share information with their colleagues. This practice enables the staff members to become better informed about the important issues on campus. Decision-making occurs at each of these levels, as appropriate to the issue.

The Faculty Contract addresses various areas of shared governance. The evidence includes a summary of the various places within the contract that document shared governance. As discussed earlier, Article F of the Faculty Association contract stipulates four standing committees, the membership of which consists of faculty and administrative staff. In addition to the three curriculum committees and the Professional Practices Committee which are discussed in 5A3, faculty serve on ad hoc committees and task forces on issues of academic interest including technology, online teaching, student success, enrollment management, strategic planning, and assessment. Faculty are integral to the planning and implementation of new programs, new policies, and other new initiatives.

The University Student Handbook contains a section on Student Rights and Responsibilities. Article 2.1 stipulates students' rights to "express their views on issues of institutional policy" and says that "through membership on various standing and ad hoc committees;' "students may participate in the formulation and application of institutional policy affecting academic and student affairs." Students serve on the three curriculum committees and participate in the hiring processes for faculty and student affairs staff members. Students participate in grade grievance and student conduct hearings. Students also serve on other advisory boards and committees Students also can bring issues of concern directly to the President by scheduling an appointment with him, sharing ideas via the "Share Your Ideas" link on the Office of the President webpage, or indirectly through concerns taken to the Student Association that are then shared with the university president by the Student Association President. Student Association serves as the voice of the student body.

The University has an active student association. The Student Association Charter is approved by the association and by the SVSU Board of Control and governs the operation of the association including the various offices students can hold. Section 4 lists the activity of the association which includes "the adoption of expression of positions or opinions to be published or presented to university or governmental officials." Through the association, students can impact university policies and procedures.

As discussed in 5C, the Presidents of the Faculty Association and the Student Association - served on the Strategic Planning Leadership team. There were additional faculty representatives on most of the goal teams. Team members were encouraged to seek input from others as well.

When issues of broad concern, such as the Strategic Plan, HLC and Student Success, are under consideration, they are presented and discussed at open forums allowing input from the entire campus community. On-campus interviews for the recent athletic director and the vice presidents of

enrollment management, administration and business affairs and development positions also included open forum opportunities for the campus community to meet the candidates and provide feedback. The Faculty Association also hold open forums to seek input from internal constituents on academic matters such as the General Education curriculum, the assessment and planning policy, online/hybrid learning, and contract negotiations.

The Information Technology Department has three committees that members from the campus community participate in: Administrative Systems Committee, Business Process Improvement Group, and the Colleague Enterprise Resource Planning Committee. Each committee has explicit current members, mission/purpose documents, and agendas. These committees directly impact planning, process, and procedures by providing input on approving and prioritizing future technology related initiatives and projects, providing recommendations for process improvements, and reviewing and providing updates on upgrades to Colleague, our enterprise resource program.

The University has a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council whose mission is to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion at all levels of SVSU and continue the work brought forth to the President by faculty, staff, and students concerning racial issues at the University. The Council has seven subcommittees made up of administrators, faculty, and staff. The work of the committees has impacted planning, policies, and practices at the University and has resulted in things like the completion of a diversity inventory, new awards for faculty, staff, and students, and sending a proposal for a Black Studies major to the curriculum committee. The University also has an external diversity council that serves as supporters and community ambassadors and make recommendations to the University on how to increase connections with the minority community and other diversity and inclusion related topics.

Other examples of committees that impact planning, policies and practices include:

- Retirement Committee - The University has a retirement committee that includes the HR Director, Vice President for Administration & Business Affairs, Legal Counsel, and a faculty member. The committee meets quarterly with the University's investment advisors. The committee performs the fiduciary responsibilities for the plan and makes recommendations on plan documents and retirement plan benefit changes.
- Crisis Management Committee – Committee comprised of various staff forms recommendations for policies governing campus safety. Also discussed in 5B2.
- COVID Teams – During COVID various committees and implementation teams were formed that covered areas such as instruction, people, the student experience, facilities, technology, and the broader community. The University also created a group called NEST ambassadors where students were hired to inform the campus community of COVID related issues.

The University's Operations Manual includes operating policies and procedures that govern and guide the actions of employees, students, contractors, lessees, and visitors. The manual shows the authorizing body and the department responsible for each policy. This also shows the range of individuals involved in setting policies and practices.

The University also seeks advice from external constituents. The colleges or programs within the college have advisory boards that provide information that assists in planning. Examples of the advisory boards include the following:

- Arts & Behavior Sciences – Members of the Master of Public Administration (MPA) Advisory board are all alumni of the program. They provide real-life feedback and guidance such as

current trends in their respective organizations and insights on the educational needs of current employees.
- Scott Carmona College of Business Advisory Board – The mission and a sample agenda are attached). The list of committee members can be found at here.
- Crystal Lange College of Health & Human Services – The list of advisory board committee members can be found here.
- Science, Engineering & Technology - BS Mechanical Engineering Industry Advisory Committee

5.A.2.

The SVSU Office of Institutional Research (OIR) is the primary office responsible for providing data and reports with institutional planning, policy formation, and decision-making. The University hired a new director in the Fall of 2023. This office manages the submission of data for the various reports as required through Integrated Post-Secondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Michigan Higher Education Institutional Data Inventory (HEIDI), and Common Data Sets. These sources are referenced regularly to provide peer comparisons when evaluating tuition and rate increases, room and board fees, as well as comparing operating costs, trends, and other patterns of change.

Various statistics including the Common Data Set, longitudinal analysis of enrollment history and degrees conferred, semester fact sheets (various enrollment, institution, and student demographic information) and FTIC profiles (various enrollment and demographic information for incoming Fall semester first-time freshmen) are readily available for use on their website. The OIR also produces standard statistical reports for university and external constituencies and honors special internal or intra-campus ad hoc requests for customized data reports for a variety of university offices. Examples of standard reports include the following:

- First Majors report – shows historical enrollment by first major by college and degree level and by semester. This report is used by the administration and the academic units for planning and assessment.
- Credit hour report – shows historical credit hours by department by semester. This report is used by administration and the academic units for planning.
- FTIC-IPEDS – shows historical FTIC cohorts and applicable graduation and retention rates by race and ethnicity. This data is used for numerous decisions including merit and need based scholarship projections and student success initiatives.

In addition, on request, the OIR assists university personnel with survey research projects and coordinates with key stakeholders to assist in strategic planning and program assessment. Their data request form can be utilized to request data. The Office of Institutional Research provides data for academic units. The data includes metrics overall to determine pass rates, trends, recruitment, and retention, etc. These reports are provided upon request.

Additionally, the Office of Institutional Research assists non-academic units with evaluation of their activities. It provides data analysis assistance with reports from external sources, such as the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) report, as well as with internal surveys, such as the Student Satisfaction Survey. These surveys gage student experience with campus initiatives and help in decision making regarding current programming and future needs. The non-academic units also use a variety of other means to collect data about the effectiveness of their programs and activities. Select users can also generate financial and student data reports from Colleague, CROA (Colleague Reporting and Operational Analytics) and Informer.

The University implemented Slate, a customer relations management (CRM) system for higher education. Enrollment management administration and the Office of Admissions utilize annual/weekly/daily reports out of both the CRM and student information system to analyze current recruitment and enrollment needs. Reviews of yearly comparison data are used to indicate trends and patterns related to high school graduation rates, financial aid impact, regional and geographic locations, academic program interest, diversity enrollment and more. Academic transcripts, standardized tests and placement tests are reviewed to determine minimum admission criteria and needs for additional support measures once enrolled. A few of the report examples include the Undergrad Applied/Admitted Report, Funnel & Conversions Report and the New Enrollment Projection Report.

As discussed in 5B1, the University has just begun implementation of a new enterprise resource planning system, Workday. A primary driver of the change is to gain better access to data and reporting and to improve data governance.

The Criterion 5 committee reached out to the Director of the Academic Advising Center and requested information on the various ways the department obtains and responds to data. His response is attached here.

The University administration is committed to and uses data to reach informed decisions in the best interest of the institution and its constituents. As discussed throughout the assurance argument, the University uses data to reach informed decisions in many ways. University administration evaluates the operations of its various divisions using both internal and external data metrics. The vice presidents/leadership of each of the divisions are responsible for developing the assessment and evaluation measures that they use to determine the effectiveness of their respective divisions and how well they are meeting the goals of the Strategic Plan. As discussed in 5B2, the University updated its Strategic Plan periodically to show progress toward meeting the stated goals. These updates were presented to the Board of Control, and some remain posted on the University's Strategic Plan web page.

The academic units within the University engage in annual program assessment and planning as described in various sections of this assurance argument, particularly Criterion 4B. In their reports, each department completes a section focused on student learning outcomes, metrics used to measure the student outcomes, what the department does with the data to improve the curriculum and student learning.

The 2023 President's Report contains updates on key areas within the University, including some metrics and points of pride. It also includes updates on some outstanding achievements of faculty and students, academic partnerships, community engagement, grants, student life and business and finance.

5.A.3.

The faculty at SVSU are members of the Faculty Association. The Faculty Association meets regularly on matters that impact their members and the university. In matters relating to curriculum and academic policies, there are three academic-related standing committees: the Curriculum and Academic Policies Committee (CAPC), the Graduate Committee, and the General Education Committee, described in detail in the faculty contract. All three committees have membership composed of elected faculty, academic administrators appointed by the provost, and a student representative.

The University uses Curriculog to streamline the curriculum and policy development process. The processes are contractually defined, but the software ensures that all departments, programs, deans, and committees have access to the proposals at the appropriate times in the cycle. All departments and programs affected by program or course proposals are responsible for voting on proposals and sharing the vote and any comments or concerns. The relevant deans also vote and comment on every proposed curriculum change. After recommendation by the relevant curriculum committee, proposals are forwarded to the full faculty for discussion and formal ratification. This formal structure requires significant involvement from faculty, students, and administration on all curriculum matters.

The fourth standing committee, the Professional Practices Committee (PPC) addresses such issues as promotion, tenure, sabbatical applications, and in rare cases, discipline. This committee's membership is made up of elected faculty and administrators appointed by the provost. A typical faculty member will be evaluated three times by a total of nine different peer reviewers before tenure consideration. Departmental colleagues and deans also provide significant input at each phase of the review. Students contribute to the process through their course evaluations, which are a component of faculty PPC files. This process thus involves all the affected constituents - - faculty, administrators, and students.

The Faculty Association and the Student Association jointly submitted a CAPC proposal to modify the grade grievance process. They felt that some aspects of the grade grievance procedure were unclear to faculty and students. They proposed revisions that incorporated input from the students via the Student Association and faculty via the Faculty Association. The Faculty Association reviewed the proposed grade grievance procedure updates at their General Membership Meeting on September 9, 2021. The Faculty Association approved the grade grievance policy revisions on September 24, 2021 and the Student Association approved them on September 20, 2021. The proposal was ratified on March 3, 2024.

To accommodate circumstances generated due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the University and the Faculty Association entered a Memorandum of Understanding to allow for temporary changes to faculty working conditions and to allow temporary reduced loads. During COVID, the Faculty Association and Student Association collaborated to put on a Faculty & Student Panel Discussion to discuss and reflect on education during the pandemic. Questions were posed to faculty and students so all could gain insights on how to navigate instruction during the pandemic.

As discussed in 5B2, the Committee for Academic & Instructional Technology was formed to provide input related to instructional technology. The committee includes Academic Affairs and Information Technology administrators and faculty members from various colleges.

The University forms ad hoc committees to deal with diverse topics, including assessment, student success and retention, technology, and online and hybrid learning. Each of these committees has members that represent the faculty and the administration and, where appropriate, students.

Sources

- 2A Board of Control Responsibilities.pdf
- 5A1-01 Michigan Act 278 of 1965
- 5A1-02- Board of Control Bylaws
- 5A1-03 New Board Member Orientation
- 5A1-04 2024-2025 Board of Control Meeting Schedule

- 5A1-05 Board Committee Discussion Items
- 5A1-06 Committee of the Whole Agenda 2.14.22
- 5A1-07 Board Minutes 5.6.22
- 5A1-08 Board of Control Meeting Schedule Posted on Website
- 5A1-09 Board of Control Minutes - 1965 to Present
- 5A1-10 All Awards Banquet
- 5A1-11 Board of Fellows
- 5A1-12 Student Showcase
- 5A1-13 Organization Chart
- 5A1-14 January 22 2024 Leadership Planning Team Meeting Agenda
- 5A1-15 Sample Academic and Student Affairs Divsiional Meeting Agenda
- 5A1-16 Sample Administration and Business Affairs Division Directors Meeting Agenda
- 5A1-17 Standing Committees - Faculty Contract
- 5A1-18 Standing Committees - Website
- 5A1-19 University Student Handbook
- 5A1-20 Students Rights and Responsibilities
- 5A1-21 Grade Grievance Committee and Code of Conduct Hearing Board
- 5A1-22 Select Committees Students Serve On
- 5A1-23 Share Your Ideas
- 5A1-24 Student Association
- 5A1-25 Student Association Charter and Board Approval
- 5A1-26 Invitation to Open Forums Related to HLC
- 5A1-27 Student Success Open Forums Announcement
- 5A1-28 Sample Invitation to Open Form - Vice President of Development
- 5A1-29 Information Technology Committees
- 5A1-30 Diversity Equity and Inclusion Council Webpage
- 5A1-31 Diversity Council
- 5A1-32 Email with Retirement Committee Materials 2_20_2024
- 5A1-33 Crisis Management Executive Group Agenda August 14 2023
- 5A1-34 COVID Team Structure and NEST Ambassador Profile
- 5A1-35 Operations Manual
- 5A1-36 MPA Community Advisory Board
- 5A1-37 College of Business Advisory Board
- 5A1-38 List of Committee Members of Business Advisory Board
- 5A1-39 College of Health and Human Services Advisory Board
- 5A1-40 BS Mechanical Engineering Industry Advisory Committee
- 5A2-41 Office of Institutional Research Website
- 5A2-42 First Major Report
- 5A2-43 Fall Credit Hours 2023
- 5A2-44 FTIC IPEDS
- 5A2-45 Online Office of Institutional Research Data Request Form
- 5A2-46 National Survey of Student Engagement
- 5A2-47 Undergrad Applied_Admitted Report
- 5A2-48 Funnel Conversions
- 5A2-49 New Enrollment Projection
- 5A2-50 Academic Advising Use of Data
- 5A2-51 Strategic Plan Update - 2022 Executive Summary
- 5A2-52 Presidents Report
- 5A3-53 Faculty Association Meeting Schedule - 23-24 FA Meeting Schedule_Final - 081523

- 5A3-54 Faculty Standing Committees
- 5A3-55 General Education Committee Agendas and Minutes
- 5A3-56 Standing Committees - Faculty Contract
- 5A3-57 Ratification Memo
- 5A3-58 Student Evaluations - Faculty Contract
- 5A3-59 Redacted Faculty Association Meeting Minutes - Review of Proposed Grade Grievance Procedure Update
- 5A3-60 Redacted September 24 2021 Faculty Association Minutes Approving Grade Grievance Policy Revisions
- 5A3-61 Ratification of Student Grade Grievance Proposal
- 5A3-62 Faculty Association Memorandum of Understanding
- 5A3-63 Faculty and Student Panel Discussion Announcement and Questions

5.B - Core Component 5.B

The institution's resource base supports its educational offerings and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.

1. The institution has qualified and trained operational staff and infrastructure sufficient to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered.
2. The goals incorporated into the mission and any related statements are realistic in light of the institution's organization, resources and opportunities.
3. The institution has a well-developed process in place for budgeting and for monitoring its finances.
4. The institution's fiscal allocations ensure that its educational purposes are achieved.

Argument

SVSU has experienced enrollment declines each year since Fall 2011 (6,889 students in Fall 2023 compared to 10,790 at the high point in Fall 2011). Despite this 36% decline in enrollment, SVSU built balanced budgets each year and has funded new educational initiatives while also increasing reserves and funding deferred maintenance and capital initiatives. This has been accomplished through careful use of resources, effective business process improvements, efficiencies in staffing, energy cost savings measures, continued growth in endowments, use of grant funding and other strategic initiatives. SVSU is well-positioned to support its current programs and to maintain and strengthen them in the future.

5.B.1.

Human Resources

To ensure that SVSU has qualified and trained staff, job descriptions for new hires include minimum and preferred qualifications, faculty, administrators, and staff are provided professional development opportunities and, for administrative professional (AP) staff, annual reviews incorporate professional development goals.

SVSU has developed policies and practices governing hiring faculty and staff designed to ensure that job candidates are qualified for the position to which they apply. The Human Resources internal portal for Supervisors & Managers lists hiring procedures, including recruitment checklists. For AP positions, before a position is authorized, an appropriate position description that includes qualifications and experience requirements must be created or updated and approved. For staff positions, the hiring unit, and the Human Resources Office work collaboratively to develop a job description that includes minimum and preferred qualifications. Additional requirements for filling support staff positions are described in Article 18 Vacancies, Job Postings, Transfers and Promotions of the Support Staff Contract. SVSU uses Cornerstone's online talent management software, called Ascend at SVSU, to route the job description through the approval process to the ultimate posting of the position. Our staff have attained 519 degrees as noted here and attached: 35 associate, 263 bachelors, 185 masters, and 36 doctorate.

Hiring recommendations are made to the appropriate leadership staff for approval before any offer of

employment may be made. All applicants must pass a background check before they may be hired. These are carried out through a contract with A-check Global and include criminal, education and prior employment verification.

Goal 2.1 of the Strategic Plan is to create a culture for professional development. Funds for discipline-specific professional development for APs and support staff are budgeted at the department and division levels. Staff can attend professional conferences when it benefits the employee and the institution. In-house professional development is offered in many areas, including new employee orientation, safety, diversity, state and federal compliance, and use of select software. Other examples include annual training in Fire Safety, Safety Skills, Title IX, and the Clery Act, periodic training in areas related to Diversity Equity & Inclusion and quarterly training related to Cyber Security SVSU also does monthly phishing simulations to train staff to better identify phishing attempts.

Annual AP and support staff reviews and the faculty peer review process ensure that personnel are maintaining the skills and knowledge required for their positions. SVSU implemented Cornerstone's online talent management software, called Ascend for AP and support staff goal setting and performance management. APs and support staff members, in consultation with their supervisors, develop goals that relate to professional development and strategic initiatives. Goals are to align to SVSU or department strategic initiatives and business outcomes. The review process includes goal development, a mid-year review, and an annual review but is designed to be a fluid process where updates and modifications can be made as needs change. The President, whose performance is reviewed annually by the Board of Control, reviews his direct reports.

SVSU has been named a "Great College to Work For" for eight consecutive years, based on a survey performed by ModernThink, LLC. in 2023, SVSU was recognized in four categories: professional development, faculty experience, job satisfaction and support, and shared governance.

Fiscal Resources

Annual external financial audits, conducted to review financial operations, provide clear evidence of its sound fiscal condition. SVSU received an unmodified opinion for the audited financial statements, a No Material Weaknesses letter, and no findings or questioned costs for its federal awards audit. SVSU's financial statements for the year ended June 30, 2023, reflect a sound financial position with $138 million in cash and investments and $116.8 million in unrestricted net assets available for strategic initiatives, capital projects and academic program enhancements and the absence of unfunded liabilities for post-employment obligations. In the last decade, unrestricted net assets have grown from $47.3 million on June 30, 2013, to $116.8 million at June 30,2023. SVSU is in compliance with long-term debt covenants and is on target to reduce its outstanding debt to $44.815 million at June 30, 2027.

On an annual basis SVSU reports its Composite Financial Index (CFI), a weighted combination of the Primary Reserve Ratio, the Net Operating Revenue Ratio, the Return on Net Assets Ratio, and the Viability Ratio. The institutional Composite Financial Indicator for the years ended June 30, 2019 - 2023 were 4.58 for 2019, 4.65 for 2020, 7.01 for 2021, 4.49 for 2022 and 5.32 for 2023. These indices, which are significantly larger than the HLC above the zone threshold of 1.1 and near the fiscal year 2021-22 average composite financial index of 4.56 among public institutions, are evidence of sound financial health.

Our financial rating provides additional evidence of fiscal strength. Moody's Investors Service affirmed SVSU's Al rating with a stable outlook in February 2023. Standard and Poor's Global

Ratings reaffirmed SVSU's A long-term rating and underlying rating (SPUR) on January 10, 2023, also noting strong financial management.

SVSU's total FY 2024 budget is approximately $184 million, with a General Fund Operating budget of approximately $125.5 million. The General Fund revenue base is predominantly from tuition and fees ($84.5 million) and state appropriations ($33.9 million), with $7.1 million or 5.7% coming from investment income and other sources.

For FY2024 state appropriations increased by 5%. Due to the federal reserve increase in short term interest rates, other income also increased for FY2024. These increases helped to offset the change in net tuition due to the climbing tuition discount rate. Since SVSU has limited control over state appropriations and the federal reserve anticipates lowering short term interest rates in the near future, SVSU must carefully monitor revenue projections. SVSU remains dependent on tuition and fees. In 2004, 39% of the General Fund Revenue came from state appropriations, while 59% came from tuition and fees. For 2024, state appropriations accounted for 27% of operating revenue; 67% of the institution's funding was from tuition and fees.

SVSU has historically received a lower state appropriation per FYES than the average of the other state universities. SVSU worked with select other universities to encourage the State of Michigan to implement per student floor funding. In FY2023 SVSU received additional state appropriations related to this floor concept. Based on this, increased percentages across the board from the State and declining enrollment, SVSU's appropriations per FYES rose to $4,688 which exceeds the $4,581 received in FY2001 for the first year since that time.

SVSU charges the lowest tuition and fees at the undergraduate rate of any public university in the state at $12,240 for thirty credits. This rate is over 10% lower than the next lowest rate of $13,622 and over 21% lower than the average rate of $15,603. The State's annual funding authorization includes a tuition restraint clause. SVSU has continually stayed within the restraints for tuition/fee rate increases.

While SVSU's stated tuition rate is the lowest in the state, our net cost of attendance was not the lowest at all income levels. SVSU has continued to enhance its scholarships and financial aid programs including implementation of the Cardinal Commitment that offers free undergraduate tuition to students from families with adjustment gross annual income of $70,000 or less. Scholarships and financial aid have increased from 10.2% of the General Fund budget in FY2012 ($11,183,000 S&FA budget of $109,690,000 General Fund budget), SVSU's high enrollment year, to 19.9% for FY2024 ($24,950,000 of $125,540,000 General Fund budget).

Compensation is the largest institutional expenditure. SVSU has maintained quality benefits and managed costs through health insurance caps, salary benchmarking, and, most importantly, restrained staffing levels. SVSU offers a range of medical insurance options that faculty (negotiated), support staff (negotiated), police and AP can choose from. Cost for health insurance is split between the university and the staff. Historical pay increases have been fair but not exorbitant. Recent contract negotiations with the Faculty Associations have resulted in annual increases of 3% to 4% in salary and 2% to 3% in health care contribution caps. The current support staff contract expires in June so SVSU will begin negotiations soon.

While declining enrollment has necessitated workforce reduction, SVSU has the human resources to support its teaching mission and to maintain administrative units at the appropriate levels to meet its strategic objectives. SVSU has reduced the number of budgeted lines in the General Fund budget

from 745 in FY2015 to 676 in FY 2024. The number of budgeted lines varies from actual faculty headcount. Budgeted faculty lines declined from a high of 304 in FY2013 to 268 in FY2024. The actual number of regular faculty has only declined 12.6% from 302 in FY2012 to 264 in FY2024 despite student headcount declining by 36.2% during the same period. SVSU's ratio of all employees FTE to 100 FYES (fiscal year equated students) is 14.1 compared to 13.5 – 22.2 range of the other universities in Michigan. Despite reductions overall, SVSU has added staff lines in the General Fund where warranted to meet regulatory compliance or strategic initiatives such as the Mental Health & Wellness Center, academic advising, and enrollment management. The General Fund is also supporting the coaches for the new women's lacrosse program, aTitle IX initiative.

To balance the General Fund operating budget, SVSU cut or held constant the departmental/ divisional operating budgets in most years since FY2013 (the first year of the declining enrollment). However, limited select increases, and the flexibility to allocate funds within a division has allowed for resource allocations for strategic areas of growth. Overall, the budget has only increased 9.9% over the twelve-year period from FY2012 – FY2024. Because of cost containment and operational efficiencies, SVSU's expenditures per fiscal year equated student continue to be among the lowest among the Michigan public universities at $20,067 per FYES for FY2023 compared to a range of $19,336 to $49,493 per FYES.

SVSU Foundation – Endowment Distributions & Gifts

The SVSU Foundation is an independent corporation formed to receive funds for the sole benefit of the university. To ensure that funds are raised and used solely for that purpose, the Foundation Board of Directors includes members of the university Board of Control, officers of the university, and community representatives elected by the Foundation Board. The Foundation's annual form 990 lists its expenditures (page 10) and its primary program service accomplishments (page 2) and documents that funds were used to support Saginaw Valley State University and its educational responsibilities.

The endowment held by the Foundation has increased significantly in the last decade from $59 million as of June 30, 2013, to over $100 million on June 30, 2023. The Foundation's Audit, Finance and Investment Committee is responsible for directing investment activity related to the endowment in accordance with the SVSU Foundation investment policy. Endowment investment returns have exceeded the NACUBO-TIAA Study of Endowments 1-Year Average annual return for endowments of similar sizes in seven of the last ten years. As of December 31, 2023, the returns have also exceeded the one-year, three-year and five-year Foundation benchmark established by the committee.

The Foundation utilizes a spending policy of four percent based on a twelve-quarter average market value applied to current units. Endowment distributions were $1.6 million in FY 2013 and reached over $3.1 million in FY 2023. The $3.1 million in distributions included nearly $1.3 million for scholarship support, $1.4 million for awards and programs, and $461,000 for endowed faculty positions. Endowed programs include numerous high-value opportunities for students, including international travel and leadership programs such as Gerstacker, Kantzler, and Gilbertson/Roberts Fellows; the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute; and the Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow Student Research and Creativity Institute. Beginning in FY2015, the Foundation endowment paid a management fee to SVSU incorporated in the General Fund operating budget.

The Foundation's last major campaign was to raise funds for the College of Business expansion. The Foundation exceeded the initial campaign goal of $15 million. The campaign included 27 gifts of over $100,000 with the largest donation from an alumnus that included naming rights.

Robert & Ellen Thompson, support the Robert & Ellen Thompson Working Families Scholarship program at SVSU. Through Winter 2024, 706 SVSU students have received over $8.8 million in Thompson Working Families scholarships in addition to the university matching scholarships.

In total Foundation endowment distributions and gift support to SVSU have ranged from $2.8 - $14.6 million during the fiscal years ended 2013-2023.

Grants and Research Funding

The Sponsored Programs office oversees the grant process. To ensure that projects funded by grants support the university's mission and strategic plan, all grant applications require a transmittal form. Each signer is responsible for the project listed on the transmittal. The Sponsored Programs website includes a searchable database that lists grants by whether they were from external or internal sources. There is also an annual report on Grants, Contracts and Sponsored Research Activities that provides additional information and shows the university's strategic priorities supported by grants. Sixty-five proposals were submitted to external sources during fiscal 2022 of which 41 or 63% were funded. During FY2022 SVSU was awarded over $8.2 million for research and other projects. This excludes Title IV financial aid and the HEERF funds. For FY2022 all five colleges received external grants.

From 2020 through 2022, SVSU was allocated approximately $39.9 million of Higher Education Emergency Relief Funds (HEERF). The funds were fully expended by June 30, 2022, as follows: $16.9 million for emergency grants to students, $7.4 million for reimbursements to students and other eligible expenses and $15.6 million related to lost revenue. The majority of the lost revenue funds were added to the Capital Projects Funding Plan and are being used to fund the transition to a new enterprise resource system, Workday.

Campus Facilities Infrastructure

SVSU is situated on a 782-acre campus in the Great Lakes Bay Region within a triangle formed by Saginaw, Bay City and Midland. The campus includes 110 buildings comprising over 2.5 million square feet of space. SVSU also has a small, leased location in downtown Saginaw, Michigan which is used to host community events, training, and university-related events. Campus facilities are modern, well-maintained, and appropriate to higher education. The campus is a safe and attractive place to learn, work, and live. SVSU has thought carefully about campus development through a series of Campus Master Plans, the most recent one was done in 2012. While SVSU has made some deviations from the plan, it continues to guide the overall direction of campus development.

Goal 4.2 of the Strategic Plan (page 24) is to ensure the campus includes state-of-the-art facilities and infrastructure. While the significant growth in new facilities experienced in the late 1990 and early 2000s has lessened, SVSU continues to invest in facilities, equipment and infrastructure that meet the strategic initiatives. SVSU has developed a multi-year Capital Projects Funding Plan. This plan is reviewed with the Board of Control at their committee meetings and, per their bylaws, the Board approves all capital projects over $250,000.

A few of the recent capital projects include:

- Scott Carmona College of Business Expansion – This $20.7 million nearly 40,000 square feet addition was funded through state capital appropriations and donor gifts. The expansion includes data analytics labs and Bloomberg Trading terminals, which track stock data in real

time. Upgrades include cutting-edge equipment used by Fortune 500 companies, providing students with hands-on experience utilizing resources adapted to match global business trends. Access to tools and tech fine-tuned for the next generation strengthen an academic college already honored with an AACSB-International accreditation, a gold standard distinction earned by fewer than six percent of the world's business colleges.

- Multicultural Services Center – In support of the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion committee's goal two, the university spent $570,000 to renovate space to house the Multicultural Services Center. The new space opened in November 2021.
- Brown Hall Renovation – the State of Michigan approved a $28,845,000 ($21.8 million State capital appropriations and $7,045,000 university resources) renovation to Brown Hall. The project is through the planning stage. Renovation work is scheduled to begin in May 2024 with the building reopening in August 2025. Brown Hall hosts classrooms and faculty offices for a number of academic departments, including the psychology labs.
- Lake Huron Environmental Sciences Research Station – the State of Michigan recently approved planning authorization for this proposed $10 million project ($7.5 million State capital appropriations and $2.5 university resources) to construct a multi-purpose research facility that contains traditional, general-purpose classrooms and larger meeting spaces, along with research laboratories, and faculty offices. This capital improvement project is intended to construct the first university environmental sciences research station on Lake Huron to assist with providing data and information for various academic and research purposes.
- As part of an ongoing housing renovations plan to support the student resident experience, the university completed approximately $3.5 million University Village Phase I and $3.1 million Living Center South renovations in August 2022, and $1.8 million Tranquil Hall and $3.3 million Pine Grove Central renovations in August 2023. In addition, at the December 2023 meeting, the Board approved $2.75 million for renovations to University Village (Phase II), $2 million for the Great Lakes Dorms D & E and $525,000 for a roof for MJ Brandimore House. These projects will be completed in summer 2024. In 2024, the website Niche ranked SVSU #3 in the nation for the best college dorms (#1 public) and #1 in Michigan for the best college campus.

With consideration to the enrollment size and educational needs of the students, SVSU has shifted its emphasis from capital projects for new buildings to needed renovations that support collaborative learning environments. Deferred maintenance represents a growing claim on resources and as such, plays a significant role in the Capital Projects Funding Plan and emphasizes the need for capital reserves. Aging infrastructure, such as roofs, chillers, lighting, heating, air conditioning, electrical wiring, etc., requires considerable attention and resources and are starting to be addressed in our capital plan as mentioned.

Technology

Goal 4 of the strategic plan, strategy 2c is to review and update the Information Technology (IT) Strategic Plan on a continuous basis to ensure alignment with the strategic initiatives. The IT Services Long-Term Plan FY22-25 outlines the key areas of focus for the information technology department: student success & retention, financial stewardship & process improvement, cyber security, and people. The plan is updated to reflect progress and changing needs. The Executive Director of IT and his staff continually evaluate university systems and consider best practices.

SVSU has an Administrative Systems Committee to review and prioritize administration technology initiatives. The committee is comprised of staff throughout the university that work in administrative,

enrollment management and student service departments. Copies of a meeting agenda and notes are included for reference.

The Committee for Academic & Instructional Technology (CAIT) was formed to discuss any issues related to teaching and learning with technology, provide guidance to the Executive Director of IT and communicate with faculty regarding technology needs. The committee meets approximately monthly.

As discussed in 3.D.4, SVSU has 110 standard classrooms and numerous computer and specialty labs, specialty rooms, collaborative rooms and active learning classrooms. Classroom technology is updated following an approximately seven-year cycle for hardware and as needed for software. SVSU also supports Canvas as its electronic learning management system.

As noted in 3.A.3, SVSU offers the vast majority of its courses on its main campus in a face-to-face setting. However, during the pandemic, SVSU had to shift the majority of teaching and operations online. Faculty and staff were provided with equipment, software, and training to support the shift from in-person to online teaching and operations. As a result, as noted in 3.A.3, over 97% of full-time faculty have been trained to teach online/hybrid courses. This shift in required resources has ensured that the university is able to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered. Attached is a list of the current software, hardware and services provided by the IT department to ensure the required support. Section 3.D.4 addresses the technology provided to meet the teaching and learning needs of the faculty, staff, and students.

Goal 4, strategy 3a of the strategic plan is to "Expand and re-define the role of the Business Process Improvement Group to lead the university efforts in promotion of sound business practices and operational excellence. Samples of meeting agenda, notes and process mapping are included for reference. The committee meets with the applicable department and creates a charter that documents what the intended purpose of the review is. After the committee completes their evaluation, they provide a report with recommendations.

Information technology expansion and upgrades over the past ten years have continued. The IT Services General Fund operating budget rose almost eighty percent from 2013 to 2023 with extensive capital outlays for movement of Colleague to cloud based hosted by Ellucian, upgrades to computer labs and classrooms, routine replacement of technology for student labs and faculty offices, enhancements to campus-wide wireless access and cyber security initiatives. The budget has also supported changes in residential housing to meet the current technological needs of students.

In October 2023, SVSU signed the contract to implement Workday, a comprehensive and seamless enterprise resource planning (ERP) cloud application for finance, human resources, payroll, time tracking and end-to-end student lifecycle information systems. Planned rollout dates are April 2025 for finance and human resources and September 2027 for student applications. Workday applications are built with artificial intelligence and machine learning at the core to help organizations embrace the future of work. With Workday, SVSU will:

- Automate processes and empower faculty, staff, and students with real-time visibility of and access to data.
- Create better experiences for end-users with self-service capabilities to better manage responsibilities.
- Plan and adjust based upon evolving enrollment numbers, class availability, tuition, grants, staffing and more.

IT utilizes software to track support requests. Each person that makes a request receives a survey following completion of the support by IT. The Executive Director and his leadership team review the results to determine where improvements can be made. From the April 2023 report 90% of respondents were satisfied or extremely satisfied.

Enrollment

SVSU has created an enrollment management division. In October 2023, SVSU hired a new vice president to oversee the division which includes admissions, registrar, financial aid, institutional research, and international recruitment. The Strategic Enrollment Management Committee has been restructured and currently includes representatives from across campus. The committee is working on a final status update to the 2018 Strategic Enrollment Management Plan and is beginning work on a new plan.

SVSU implemented new Customer Relationship Management software, Slate, to enhance communication with potential students. The Admissions office continues to collaborate with University Communications to unify a university-wide social media campaign including posting engaging content, utilizing chat functions and social media monitoring. A team from University Communications, Admissions and Purchasing, collaborated on a request for proposals for a new marketing campaign. Prior to making the selection, the university worked with several focus groups made up of current SVSU students, high school students from the region as well as internal stakeholders. The "Stand Out' campaign developed by a local creative agency was the clear favorite and SVSU is in the process of implementing the new campaign.

SVSU is looking at new initiatives to expand enrollment and fill talent needs in the community via partnerships with five healthcare providers in Michigan. SVSU also entered into partnerships with five colleges in Michigan to streamline the pathway to a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree and collaborated with Saginaw Public Schools to increase the number of certified teachers in local classrooms.

In February 2023, SVSU entered a contract with ReUp education, Inc. The company reaches out to students that left SVSU prior to graduation to encourage them to return to complete their degree. They utilize predictive analytics algorithms to identify the students who have the highest likelihood of engagement, re-enrollment, and persistence. Thirty-one students were enrolled at SVSU under this program during Summer 2023, 135 in Fall 2023 and 132 in Winter 2024.

SVSU has been the host site for the Michigan FIRST Robotics State Competition since 2017 (except the COVID years). The competition brings around 5,000 students and their supporters to campus. The event provides huge awareness opportunities, specifically in school districts where we have had lower academic perception and awareness.

5.B.2.

As documented in Criterion 1, the goals of SVSU's guiding principles and Strategic Plan were developed through a process that involved input from multiple constituent groups, including faculty, staff, students, and Board of Control members. In its Strategic Plan SVSU articulates how it intends to implement the goals included in the Mission and Vision statements. The President and his staff periodically update the Board of Control on the progress SVSU is making toward meeting its Strategic Plan goals.

The Strategic Plan was originally adopted for 2016 – 2020. However, since the guiding principles remained in operation through 2022 and guided the campus through the COVID-19 pandemic, with the announcement of the president's retirement, the Board approved a resolution at its May 6, 2022 meeting to extend the current strategic plan until the new president has had time to embark on a new strategic planning initiative. SVSU has formed the strategic plan leadership team and recently hired a consulting firm to assist with the strategic planning process.

As discussed above, the institution has allocated and will continue to allocate resources in support of its fundamental mission. The Strategic Plan Initiatives chart lists some of the strategic plan initiatives incorporated into the General Fund budget and Capital Projects Funding Plan either as a base budget adjustment or one-time funding. Throughout the assessment report, we have also discussed operational and strategic initiatives incorporated into the budgets or one-time funding. A few recent examples not discussed elsewhere include:

- One of the core values is "a safe, friendly and respectful campus climate." Safety is also a top priority of the president. In keeping with this value, SVSU formed a Crisis Management Executive Group. The group is working with a consultant to develop an Emergency Operations Plan, has rolled out a safety app for the campus community, and has recommended expansion of the surveillance cameras on campus and updates to door locks.
- Goal 3, Strategy 2a is to develop tactics such as general advertising, outreach activities and public relations aimed to expose SVSU more broadly. An allocation of $700,000 for marketing has been added to the General Fund budget.
- Goal 3, Strategy 1d is to increase awareness and support for SVSU with local, state and federal officials on appropriating capital outlay and other higher education policy. In FY2022 the president approved an increase to the Government Affairs office base budget allocation from the General Fund and in FY2024 a staff position that had previously been funded through one-time dollars was incorporated into the General Fund compensation budget. As noted earlier, SVSU has received capital outlays from the State of Michigan for the College of Business expansion, Brown Hall renovations and the Lake Huron Environmental Sciences Research Station because of the work of the government affairs staff and others at the university.

As discussed above, SVSU has allocated and will continue to allocate resources in support of its mission. Despite declining enrollment, through balanced budgets and multi-year projections of reserves, SVSU has positioned itself for stability and strength to meet its strategic objectives.

5.B.3.

Budgeting Process

SVSU operates internally utilizing various funds: general fund (operations), designated fund (discretionary and other), auxiliary (student housing, dining service, bookstore, conferencing, parking), expendable restricted funds (restricted funds, endowment distributions, gifts, and grants), plant fund (capital projects and select reserves) and agency fund (fiduciary and other accounts). SVSU prepares formal budgets for the general fund and auxiliary and has a multi-year Capital Projects Funding Plan. Account managers and supervisors are responsible for the individual accounts within the designated, restricted and agency funds. Activity within the various funds is consolidated for external financial reporting purposes.

SVSU's Board of Control, after discussion with and recommendations from university administration, approves the annual operating budgets for the general fund and auxiliary operations.

It also reviews the Capital Projects Funding Plan and in accordance with the bylaws approves capital projects over $250,000. The Board's Business, Finance, Audit and Facilities Committee, or often the Committee as a Whole, consults with and advises SVSU administration at their meetings throughout the fiscal year on business and financial issues.

General Fund

Despite the annual nature of the General Fund and Auxiliary budgets, SVSU develops the budgets with a longer-term horizon in mind. Goal 4, Strategy 1 of the strategic plan is to develop flexible economic planning to accommodate the uncertain enrollment environment. The President and Administration and Business Affairs are responsible for overall budget revenue and expenditure forecasting, based on such factors as enrollment trends, anticipated state allocations, union contracts, inflation, supply chain availability, and market performance. They seek input from other members of the leadership team. As noted in 5B1 and as shown in the attached chart, the General Fund and Auxiliary have supported operations and have generated net margins in FY2014 – FY2023 that have been used for one-time allocations and strategic initiatives and have generated reserves. The General Fund budget is documented through a series of budget workpapers which are updated as follows:

Revenue:

- State appropriations – The State of Michigan operates on a September 30th fiscal year end, so they often set their budget very close to, or sometimes after, the General Fund budget is approved by the board. SVSU closely monitors the State's budget process. The Government Affairs office continually updates the President, Vice President of Administration and Business Affairs and budget office on their projections for state appropriations. In addition, the Michigan Associate of State Universities (MASU) provides updates. There are also approximately monthly meetings coordinated by MASU for the chief financial officers where these types of updates are given. Preliminary budget models consider these projections with notations as to what one-percentage differentials would mean in terms of revenue.
- Tuition & fees – the State of Michigan has instituted tuition restraint as part of its state appropriations process. University management carefully considers the tuition rate increase to recommend taking into consideration the State's tuition restraint figures, student affordability concerns and economic times. The other key driver of tuition is enrollment. Administration & Business Affairs works closely with enrollment management to determine enrollment projections (see additional information here and here). These estimates are then used to populate a tuition projection spreadsheet and the Tuition & Fee Revenue Budget Targets by Semester sheet. SVSU also has various fees. Annual communications are sent to the applicable departments each spring to determine the appropriate fee for the next academic year. Many of the fees go directly to departmental accounts to cover specific expenses rather than the General Fund. The Board annually approves the tuition and fee rates when they approve the annual General Fund budget.
- Miscellaneous Revenue – This includes indirect costs from auxiliary operations and grants, departmental charges and other fees, unrestricted gifts, investment income, and the endowment management fee from the SVSU Foundation. Each of these items is projected based on historical information and in communication with the applicable department.

Expenditures:

- Compensation, pages 4-6 of the above referenced General Fund budget documents, represents almost 63% of the expenditures in the General Fund. SVSU maintains a position control

document listing each approved line and reserves. The compensation budget is updated considering the rate increases approved in the various union contracts and in conversation with the president for the non-union groups. Other considerations are increases in minimum wage and FLSA exempt salary limits. The budget documents also consider benefit rate increases (effective in January so estimated for the budget year based on economic trends). Departments communicate through their division regarding position requests and discussions are held at the leadership team meetings as to overall availability and how best to use positions to align with strategic initiatives.

- Supplies, Material & Services, pages 7-9 of the General Fund budget documents, includes departmental operating budgets, insurance, technology, utilities, maintenance agreements, legal, marketing, and non-mandatory transfers to support discretionary funds, and operational and other strategic initiatives. As noted above, the university has made a strategic effort to increase university-supported scholarships and financial aid. Once the overall departmental budget amount is set, SVSU communicates with each division so that they can make determinations regarding allocating the budgets within their division (page 8 of the General Fund budget documents). While the budget development is centralized, the implementation of the budget is highly decentralized with the heads of units determining how to disperse funds within their respective units. Implementation of the budget is delegated to appropriate directors, deans, chairs, etc.
- Capital, page 10 of the General Fund budget documents, includes select capital allocations and the annual allocation for library acquisitions. More details regarding the allocation of the library resources can be found here. The page provides an overview of the library acquisition budget and funds spent on an annual basis by college. Many resources are multidisciplinary and spread across subject areas.

Auxiliary

The development of the Auxiliary Budget begins with collecting and reviewing current year information and information from the most recent, completed fiscal year. The data is used to help forecast revenue and expenditure activity for the fiscal year budget being developed.

Enrollment projection information is also used to help forecast housing occupancy for incoming freshman, transfer, and international students. Meal plan participation projections are developed by using current year subscription data along with projected enrollment and housing occupancy numbers. Housing room and board rates are developed after analyzing peer comparison data along with expected or realized increases in expenditures for labor, food, direct, utilities and other related operating costs. The projected occupancy and participation data along with proposed rates are entered into a model to calculate projected revenue for the fiscal year. Projections are also developed for revenue from summer student housing, conference and camp activity and investment income. Additional dining revenue from cash & credit card sales and catering activity is projected based on current year activity and other relevant information. Projected business activity for TCC & the Athletic Complex is developed within the department and incorporated into the budget. Parking revenue is estimated based on enrollment projections and historical activity.

Requests for budget modifications can be made by the departments within the Auxiliary operations. One recent example is residential life. They wanted to implement a new residential curriculum for FY2024. The director initially sought approval from their Vice President and then met with Administration & Business Affairs to review his proposal and budgetary needs and how it related to SVSU's strategic initiatives. Portions of the proposed increase were approved and incorporated into

the Auxiliary budget.

The draft budget is reviewed with the Vice President for Administration & Business Affairs and other key staff to ensure that the projected net operating margin supports the expected contribution for Auxiliaries identified in the Capital Plan. The draft Auxiliary Budget is then reviewed with the Board Committee before the resolution for formal approval.

Capital Projects Funding Plan

The Capital Projects Funding Plan is a multi-year working document that is reviewed on a regular basis with recurring feedback being given by various individuals, including those in Administration & Business Affairs and the leadership team members, who influence the plan. The plan includes anticipated resources including funding received from the General Fund and Auxiliary and other sources of funding for capital projects. The other sources will vary by year and may include capital appropriations from the State of Michigan, gifts to support capital projects and other one-time allocations. The plan also includes anticipated outflows including an annual allocation for capital projects and deferred maintenance, the intended uses by Auxiliary operations and other larger projects approved by the Board. The current plan also includes the approved use for the implementation of the new ERP system, Workday, as well as the portion of debt service that is being funded from the capital reserves.

The Director of Facilities Planning and Construction, meets regularly with the Vice President for Administration and Business Affairs to discuss current and pending projects. The Plant Fund Status Report includes all Plant Fund accounts (project accounts and select capital reserves). Most accounts are pre-funded, but some are funded at the completion of the project or fiscal year end.

Monitoring Finances

The ledger is updated weekly. All account managers and supervisors have 24-7 online access to their accounts through self-service. The online system shows all activity in the account and has drill down features. All expenditures require approval by the account manager and in some cases additional levels of approval as dictated by the Purchasing Policy. Monthly statements for procurement card purchases are reviewed by the card holder's supervisor and the Controller's office. The leadership team members and the budget office also must approve any position before it can be posted to ensure that there is a budget or sufficient funding source. Account managers and supervisors are responsible to ensure that the spending in their accounts is in accordance with university policies and does not exceed the budget allocation (General and Auxiliary) or account balance or funding source (grants, discretionary). Reminders are sent to the account managers and supervisors by the Controller.

Periodic reports are sent to select managers with multiple accounts. Mid-year General Fund review reports are sent to the divisions showing the budget to actual for the departmental operating budgets within their division. The President and Vice Presidents are responsible for the performance of their respective areas of oversight. Ultimately, the vice presidents are responsible for ensuring that their reporting units operate within allocated resources.

The Associate Vice President meets with the auxiliary team and updates the budget projections. In addition, Administration and Business Affairs leadership performs a mid-year review and presents mid-year review reports for the General Fund, Auxiliary and Capital Projects Funding Plan to the Board at the February committee meeting. Following the annual audit, the audit firm and management report to the Board committee. These updates also include key metrics including

operating cash and reserves to benchmarks.

5.B.4.

With input from many units discussed more fully in 5.B.3, global resource allocation decisions occur at the level of executive administration. The long range planning for SVSU takes place primarily in the President's leadership team, which meets approximately weekly and consists of the President, the three Vice Presidents, the Special Assistants to the President for Diversity Programs and Government Relations, the Executive Director of SVSU Foundation, the Executive Director of University Communications, the Director of Human Resources, and the Athletic Director. Historically, the President allocated resources in concert with the Executive Vice President for Administration and Business Affairs and the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs. These senior University officials had a long history of working together cooperatively to provide resources in a way that permitted SVSU to achieve its mission driven goals. The new president has created an expanded leadership team which is able to provide even more feedback on the needs of the various departments within the university. Planning and budgeting is evolving under the new leadership structure however decisions continue to consider information derived from sources such as the Campus Master Plan, SVSU Strategic Plan, and analysis of budget projections and enrollment trends, as well as needs that have been identified in all units of SVSU. These needs are determined through departmental and unit planning processes, such as the extensive academic program assessment and planning reports described in Criterion 4.

Each college is required to review their budget requests each year. This includes regular budgets for each department, college funds, etc. Additionally, each college can submit one-time budget requests. These requests are submitted to the Office of Academic Affairs for review. The colleges are notified once all have been reviewed with their budget for the new academic year.

As noted above, the institution has retained its strong focus on teaching and student needs. A comparison of actual expenditures for 2023 and 2013 shows that the percentage of the general fund that supports instruction has decreased slightly from 34% to 32% over the last ten years, and the amount spent on student services, scholarships, and academic support has risen from a total of 25% to over 36% over the same time period.

Auxiliary functions, other than Athletics, are self-supporting and provide overhead reimbursement to the General Fund. The institution does provide resources to Intercollegiate Athletics from its General Fund. Similarly, to supplement revenues, the institution provides partial support to the Marshall Fredericks Sculpture Museum (reported in various general, designated, and restricted funds), both in space and staff. However, athletics and the museum both support the more global missions of SVSU and, at 5.9% and 0.19% of the general fund budget respectively, the support provided represents a modest investment.

The centralized processes used by SVSU are an effective means by which it ensures that budget allocations are made to support goals in the Strategic Plan and keep the budget focused on the core mission of SVSU. Resource allocations are fully appropriate to the mission of the institution.

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5.C - Core Component 5.C

The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning and improvement.

1. The institution allocates its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities, including, as applicable, its comprehensive research enterprise, associated institutes and affiliated centers.
2. The institution links its processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning and budgeting.
3. The planning process encompasses the institution as a whole and considers the perspectives of internal and external constituent groups.
4. The institution plans on the basis of a sound understanding of its current capacity, including fluctuations in the institution's sources of revenue and enrollment.
5. Institutional planning anticipates evolving external factors, such as technology advancements, demographic shifts, globalization, the economy and state support.
6. The institution implements its plans to systematically improve its operations and student outcomes.

Argument

5.C.I.

SVSU's mission emphasizes academic achievement, student success, inclusivity, financial stewardship, safety, and community engagement. The allocation of major resources in the University has been a highly centralized, mission-driven process, with decisions ultimately made by the President and the leaders of each division. This process ensures that University resources are distributed in accordance with the institutional priorities. Despite twelve years of declining enrollment and the necessary expenditure adjustments due to reduced revenue, the institution has retained its strong focus on teaching and student needs. A comparison of actual expenditures for 2023 and 2013 shows that the percentage of the general fund that supports instruction has decreased slightly from 34% to 32% over the last ten years, and the amount spent on student services, scholarships, and academic support has risen from a total of 25% to over 36% over the same time period. The IPEDS Data Feedback Report for fiscal year 2022 shows that SVSU spends more for student service per FTE enrollment than the comparison group median while all other categories are slightly less, including instruction. However, SVSU does not charge any technology costs to instruction. When considering resource allocations, the distribution of funds towards academic and student support functions shows commitment to the mission and student success.

The University has aligned resources to support its mission and strategic plan as included in 5A & B. Various Strategic Plan Goal 1 strategies relate to student success including, but not limited to, strategy 2 to improve retention, persistence and graduation rates. Emphasis on student success is evident in reallocation of funds to programs that will contribute towards student success and retention, including alternative break and faculty led trips, enhancing environments for collaborative learning, peer advisors, mental health initiatives and enhanced and renewable scholarships. Aditional examples include can be seen here.

In a recent Gallup release on the state of higher education, it showed that emotional stress (69% in 2022) and cost to attend (36% in 2022) were two of the reasons students cited for why they

considered stopping out of school. In response to a growing demand for mental health services, SVSU spent $1,360,000 to renovate and create a new Mental Health & Wellness Center. The Center includes additional staff and services and access to 24/7 online assistance. SVSU also implemented a mental health training program for staff.

As noted in 5B1, SVSU continues to allocate additional resources to scholarships. Over the past few years, SVSU:

- rolled out the Cardinal Commitment which ensures free tuition for students whose families adjusted gross income is less than $70,000.
- hired Carnegie, a consulting firm, to evaluate its renewable merit-based scholarships and realigned and increased the merit amounts effective for Fall 2024 cohorts.
- in conjunction with the Thompson Foundation, expanded the Thompson Working Families Scholarship program on campus both in terms of number of student recipients and programming. Since Fall 2016, over $8.8 million of Thompson Working Families scholarships have been awarded to SVSU students. In addition, the students receive a match from SVSU of either merit or need based aid.
- Implemented emergency funds and degree completion funds through SVSU Foundation campaign initiatives.

The institution has been effective at shifting resources to meet current priorities without compromising activities in other areas. For example, Academic Affairs has reassigned faculty lines that became available due to retirements or resignations to growth areas. The resources committed to achieving the University Mission and the goals it set for itself in its Strategic Plan are significant. Evidence clearly demonstrates that SVSU takes seriously the need to align the allocation of its available resources to meet its primary mission.

SVSU provides community engagement in a directed and impactful way with the Marshall M. Fredericks – Sculpture Museum and many events open to the public in the Malcom Field Theatre. The downtown Saginaw Riverfront location also provides workshops, programs, and training in an accessible location for Saginaw residents. SVSU does not focus its resources heavily on comprehensive research enterprises, associated institutes, or affiliated centers.

5.C.2.

The processes for the assessment of student learning, planning, and budgeting in the division of Academic & Student Affairs are well defined and fully described in Criterion 4. The academic units within SVSU engage in annual program assessment and planning as described in various sections of this assurance document, particularly Criterion 4B. In their Academic Program Assessment & Departmental Planning reports, each department completes a section focused on student learning outcomes, metrics used to measure the student outcomes, and what the department does with the data to improve the curriculum and student learning. The report, including resource requests for the upcoming academic year, is forwarded to the Dean's office for review. The Dean is responsible for reviewing each departmental report in their college, for determining if the resource requests are linked to student learning outcomes, for identifying which requests they support, and for aggregating and prioritizing such requests. The requests for the upcoming year are forwarded to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost's office for review and final determination. In consultation with the deans, the provost determines which resource requests support. Requests for additional staff lines, equipment, and capital projects that directly support student learning outcomes or provide increased enrollment, receive priority. The 2021-2022 Crystal M Lange College of Health

& Human Services (HHS) as an example, has various departments complete their assessment and planning reports that are consolidated by the Dean into the overall HHS assessment and planning report. This comprehensive report includes a summary of the academic programs, a SWOT analysis, strategic priorities, and resources requests. Page 27 of 27 of the PDF summarizes the one-time funding requests and the attached email and Excel document show the ultimate approval of that request by Academic Affairs.

In addition to the internal reviews, academic programs also undergo external reviews through either external accrediting bodies or an internally managed external review process. Details of this process are explained in Criterion 4.

Each semester, the deans and the provost/VPAA review reports providing enrollment data and credit hour production by college, department, and program to anticipate how these might impact the resource requirements of each college. Within Academic Affairs, each department has a supplies and equipment budget that is used to support normal operations. Deans may reallocate those funds between departments based on needs. In addition, the Deans can use their dean's office allocation to support the departments as well as their discretionary funds. In making those decisions, deans consider the impact on teaching along with routine factors such as the size of the department and project costs. As noted earlier, requests for additional faculty and staff route to and are approved by the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost.

Academic & Student Affairs has a Support Office Assessment Report that is used by non-academic departments. The report includes the departmental goals, how the goals relate to the University strategic plan, whether the department supports experiential or service learning or community engagement opportunities for students, and diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives. The report also includes sections on feedback and assessment as well as resource requests. These reports are then reviewed and prioritized by the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost who makes the determination on funding. For 2022-2023, the library's report included filling two positions as their priority. One of the positions was the Head of Research & Instruction Services which was approved and then filled September 14, 2023.

Non-academic offices outside of Academic & Student Affairs employ a less formal approach to assessment, evaluation, planning, and budgeting. The University Strategic Plan drives planning and goal setting within the Administration and Business Affairs (ABA) division. As discussed in 5C3, each department created a mission, vision, and goals to align with SVSU's strategic plan. In addition, individual's goals are tied to the department, division, and university strategic goals. Regular meetings between the department directors and the Vice President generate decisions and actions related to policy and resources within the specific units. Although SVSU operates on an annual cycle, requests for resources and personnel within the ABA division may be made throughout the year as the needs of the unit require.

As discussed throughout this assurance argument, external reviews by consultants supplement internal processes to evaluate such efforts as the strategic use of financial aid, as discussed in 5C1. Another example, as described in 5B and 5C5, is SVSU's internal evaluation of its enterprise resource planning system, use of a consultant and ultimate transition to implement Workday. Student Life has recently started working with NASPA Advisory Services to complete a guided division-level self-assessment with the orientation meeting held January 24, 2024. The assessment covers nine areas including policy, resources, academics, compliance, technology, inclusion, community, evidence, and students. It is anticipated that the process will be completed by the end of the summer.

5.C.3.

SVSU Strategic Plan and the process used to develop it reflect the values and culture of the institution. The current Strategic Plan was coordinated by the Strategic Planning Leadership Team and developed through the work of five teams, each of which focused on one of the strategic goals. In selecting the faculty and staff to serve on these committees, SVSU made a conscious effort to create diverse committees that balanced cross-functional roles and varying levels of experience. The president of the Student Association also served on one of the teams. This approach informed the long-range planning process with deep institutional knowledge and fresh perspectives.

As noted in Criterion 1, SVSU worked with an external consultant to develop new mission and vision statements and to establish core values. The leadership team and committees then worked to develop the strategic plan to achieve the mission and vision. The current Strategic Plan was originally developed for 2016-2020. Due to COVID and then following COVID, the announcement of the retirement of the president, the Board approved extending the Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan is located on SVSU's external web page, so it is easily accessible by internal and external stakeholders. SVSU prepared an update to the Plan in 2017, 2018, 2019 and post-COVID in 2022. These reports document results and outcomes of the actions and initiatives to date. The Strategic Plan continues to serve as the principal document that specifies key institutional priorities and their connection between the mission and long-term goals of the institution.

Once SVSU's Strategic Plan was completed, it was used as the basis to connect all divisional and departmental work to the overall strategies. Individual divisions and departments created mission statements, vision, and goals. The mission, vision and goals of the departments that were in Administration & Business Affairs were displayed in their office areas at that time. SVSU-wide and departmental goals are then monitored to identify areas requiring resources needed to attain these goals.

SVSU's mission speaks to "unleashing possibilities for impact in our community." The president is an important part of achieving this so while the Board of Control utilized an external search firm to assist with developing a pool of candidates when they hired SVSU's fifth president, they also received input from the community. This was achieved through a presidential search advisory committee. The advisory committee was co-chaired by the Board of Control chair and vice chair, both of whom are alumni of the university. Other committee members included internal and external stakeholders. The advisory committee provided input to the Board through the co-chairs.

In 2012, SVSU undertook an extensive planning process to update the Campus Master Plan, which had not been done since 1996. The task force sought community input on key issues pertaining to the future development of the campus. In addition, it held open forums with the SVSU campus community and asked attendees to identify likes and dislikes about the campus-specifically, areas to be preserved, areas to be enhanced, and areas to transform. The resulting plan is a flexible document that can evolve as goals change. While some deviations from the plan have occurred, it continues to guide the overall direction of campus development.

The Information Technology department hired Moran Technology Consulting, an external consulting firm, to evaluate campus technology services. As part of their analysis, the consultants met with representatives of all campus divisions, including faculty, administrators, students, and support staff. The firm considered the views of all internal constituents in the recommendations made in the final report. As discussed in more detail in 5A1 and 5B1, since that time, the IT department has created a long-term strategic plan and has formed various committees to gain feedback from internal

stakeholders on their technology needs. In addition, members of Information Technology serve on the Committee for Academic & Instructional Technology committee as discussed in 5B2.

In addition to the ways noted above, and as discussed throughout the assurance document and in more detail in 5A1, the university considers the perspectives of internal constituent groups through involvement of administrators, faculty, staff, and students on committees, in meetings and through open forums, and surveys. SVSU also engages various external constituent groups on advisory boards and in less formal planning processes, such as discussions with members of the Board of Fellows and the Alumni Board.

5.C.4.

SVSU pays careful attention to factors that could affect the stability of the institution. For FY2023 institutional revenue (34) was comprised of the following: tuition & fees (48%), state appropriations (18%), auxiliary operations (13%), grants and contracts (10%) and other revenue (11%). SVSU endeavors to anticipate the impact of fluctuations in enrollments, which drives tuition, the university's primary revenue source, and its auxiliary operations, as well as factors impacting state support, and general economic conditions.

SVSU closely monitors several factors that impact enrollment including the number of high school graduates in the state, the FAFSA completion rates, state scholarship support for higher education and Michigan's employment outlook. Strategic Plan Goal 1, Strategy 1 is to "determine the future size of the university and determine enrollment goals for long term sustainability." The February 2022 Year-to-Date Executive Summary documents updates on that strategy. In 2017, SVSU completed a situational analysis that established a 5-year goal of stabilizing enrollments at 8,500-8,600 students and various targets that would need to be achieved to sustain at that level such as international student enrollment, size of the freshman class, transfers, and graduate enrollments. In Fall 2017 enrollment headcount was 8,662 compared to Fall 2024 headcount of 6,889. The executive summary explains some of the targets that were not achieved. As noted in 5B1, SVSU has created a new enrollment management division and has hired a vice president for enrollment management. That section documents current strategies in place. As also noted in 5B, despite declining enrollment, SVSU has managed its finances to fund new programs and initiatives, deferred maintenance, and new capital projects, and has grown its reserves. However, this is an area that will require careful attention and evaluation should the enrollment decline continue.

Despite declining enrollment, on campus housing demand has recovered post-COVID. SVSU was near capacity for Fall 2023 at 2,348 students, or just over 97% of its current occupancy capacity The university closely monitors the housing rates of other state universities, area alternative housing rates, housing applications from returning students and FTIC students to be able to modify practices as needed.

SVSU receives state appropriations, capital appropriations and other grants from the State of Michigan. As noted in 5B3 the university also closely monitors the State's fiscal policy and funding priorities. In the governor's recent State of the State address, she proposed expanding eligibility for free community college to all high school graduates in the state. This proposal could have a significant impact on enrollment at four-year higher education institutions. It is something we are monitoring closely and that our government affairs department and higher education organizations are working to modify or expand to include the first two years of college at any public higher education institution or create more flexibility of the Michigan Achievement Scholarship.

As discussed in 5B, SVSU's Sponsored Programs office monitors grant opportunities to identify opportunities that align with SVSU's strategic mission and while the amounts and sources of other income vary by year, for the current fiscal year and anticipated through at least next fiscal year, the federal reserve's monetary policy has positively impacted the university's overall revenue due to our strong cash position. As also discussed in 5B, SVSU had $116.8 million of unrestricted net position. Using Standard & Poor's computation, June 30, 2023, reserves as a percentage of operating expenses were 75% which exceeded the 2021 median for A rated public colleges and universities which was 40%. While as noted throughout the assurance document, the university has planned uses of its reserves, this is something we monitor closely.

Academic Affairs manages the scheduling of all instructional courses and labs and monitors classroom usage to ensure adequate capacity for current students and programs and future growth. As discussed in 5B1, SVSU also monitors campus facilities infrastructure, technology and faculty and staff to student ratios. Such practices, along with the effective planning and responsible budgeting discussed in 5B, reflect a sound understanding of the institution's capacity and show that SVSU considers the potential impacts of factors such as demographic and economic shifts that could impact its sources of revenue and enrollment.

5.C.5.

Technology

Recognizing that the rapidly changing technology landscape could have significant consequences for the ability of SVSU to meet its mission, the Executive Director of Information Technology and his staff spend time ensuring they are knowledgeable of emerging technology that could impact the university and its stakeholders. They attend professional development opportunities, participate in Educause Connect to engage with peers, do technical reading and discuss emerging issues with others on campus. For example, members of IT along with a few others on campus created an informal task force to discuss artificial intelligence tools and how to use them safely without putting institutional or personal information at risk.

The Information Technology Services Long-term Plan FY22-25 is a working document that is updated as new issues emerge. It includes current initiatives and topics that are emerging. Areas of focus include student success and retention, financial stewardship and process improvement, cyber security, and staff. The plan documents the combined skill set of the IT staff to easily determine where additional expertise may be needed to address emerging issues. The IT controls and compliance are considered by our external auditors as part of our annual financial statement and federal programs audits.

Identification and implementation of a new enterprise resource planning (ERP) system to reshape the way SVSU does business has been included in the IT long-term plan for some time. After a multi-year review process, as discussed in 5B1, in October 2023, the Board of Control approved the acquisition and implementation of a new ERP system, Workday. Workday, Inc. (NASDAQ: WDAY) is a leader in enterprise cloud applications for finance, human resources, and end-to-end student lifecycle information. Workday applications are built with artificial intelligence and machine learning at the core which will help SVSU embrace the future of business applications.

Realizing that most students are now digital natives, SVSU has leveraged new software to enhance their experience, including when:

- SVSU launched a new MySVSU portal which is designed to enhance communication, information-sharing and user experience for students, faculty, and staff. The new MySVSU portal is a centralized platform, offering easy access to a wide range of personalized resources that will streamline and simplify daily tasks, including coursework updates, recent emails, important announcements, event reminders, campus resources and information systems.
- Admissions implemented a new enrollment CRM tool (Slate) allowing for enhanced campaign performance that focuses on targeted messaging and a better student experience.
- In 2021 Housing implemented a new portal to allow students to do online roommate selection.

IT is embedded in almost everything that happens at SVSU, so members of the IT staff are involved in most major committees on campus and many technology initiatives have been undertaken in recent years.

Globalization

SVSU's Strategic Plan, Goal 1 includes a strategy to "leverage curricular and co-curricular opportunities to ensure that students interact with diverse populations and experience diverse cultures" The Office of International Programs (OIP) has been focusing on diversifying recruitment initiatives. SVSU currently has more than 200 international students from 46 countries. While Applyboard's recent articleshows that post-COVID visa approvals have risen to near 2016 levels, SVSU is still experiencing delays in approvals. OIP staff review the State Department website on almost a daily basis in the summer to monitor estimated wait times for visa interviews to assist international students who are trying to obtain visas. In 2012 SVSU implemented the Red & White award that is a scholarship offered to non-resident students that brings the tuition rate to near resident rates.

SVSU is a member of NAFSA: Association of International Educators which is the main association for international educators. NAFSA includes international student and scholar advising, international enrollment management, and other areas such as study abroad. OIP staff participate in the knowledge communities NASFA provides where thousands of members post on issues they are facing and provide advice to one another. The International Student Advising Network knowledge community daily digest is used to gain insight on topics discussed among the participants. OIP also monitors the federal government's broadcast messages from the Student and Exchange Visitor Program which often contain important regulatory updates with implications for international recruitment and student services.

In addition to bringing international students to SVSU, SVSU has a number of other opportunities for students to interact with diverse populations and experience diverse cultures. A few include:

- Ming Chuan University, a sister school to SVSU based in Taiwan, opened its Michigan campus on SVSU's campus in 2014. Classes in the joint venture are taught by Ming Chuan and SVSU faculty. The two universities also continued their student and faculty exchange programs. While on campus activity was suspended during COVID, in 2023 the universities extended the lease through June 30, 2026.
- In 2017, the university entered an articulation agreement where students enrolled in a cooperative SVSU-Changchun Normal University Early Childhood Education program which is approved by China's Ministry of Education have the option of transferring to SVSU.
- Two members of the OIP department created a summary of activities they are engaged in that consider globalization, many of which provide opportunities for students to experience diverse populations or diverse cultures.

Demographic Shifts & Economy

There are numerous factors that have impacted and will continue to impact enrollment at SVSU and many regional public universities. There is heightened competition for a declining pool of traditional students as the Michigan and national number of graduating high school students decline coupled with a changing attitude towards higher education. In addition, a strong labor market is driving some potential students to trade school, apprenticeships, or other employment options.

To help to mitigate the negative factors, SVSU has focused on student success and increasing its persistence and graduations rates. Our periodic updates for the Strategic Plan and specifically for Goal 1 reflect actions taken to date and future initiatives. SVSU has increased first to second-year retention rates from 70.42% in Fall 2012 to 75.36% in Fall 2024 and has increased the six-year graduation rate from 38% for the Fall 2010 cohort to 53.82% for the Fall 2017 cohort. SVSU worked with a consulting firm to do an external perception/ brand awareness survey which showed that familiarity with SVSU compared to select peers is still low. SVSU is currently rolling out a new marketing campaign, Stand Out, to increase awareness.

The State of Michigan has a campaign to increase the number of working-age adults with a skill certificate or college degree to sixty percent by 2030. One-way SVSU is addressing this is through the new contract with ReUp. As noted in 5B1, ReUp Education, Inc. reaches out to students that stopped out of SVSU prior to graduation to encourage them to return to complete their degree.

The tight employment market has also impacted SVSU's ability to hire and retain staff. With a safe and secure environment, fair salaries, and excellent benefits, as one of the larger employers in the area, SVSU was a sought-after place to work for administrative professionals and support staff before 2020. Since then, with the increased opportunities for remote work, the competition for employees in the area has now become more nationwide. Post-COVID inflation and workforce issues have also resulted in supply chain issues in some areas and an increased difficulty to fill certain student employee positions.

State Support

Please see the discussion in 5B3 and 5C4.

5.C.6. The Institution implements its plans to systematically improve its operations and student outcomes.

SVSU is committed to identifying operating areas for improvement, setting specific goals related to them, and meeting those goals over time. As discussed in 5C3, SVSU monitors its strategic plan and provides updates to the Board of Control and makes them publicly available on the strategic plan website. SVSU also created a Strategic Enrollment Management Plan in 2018. As noted in 5B1, SVSU is updating the status of that plan with explanations of progress made to date and has reorganized the Strategic Enrollment Management Committee under the leadership of the new Vice President for Enrollment Management.

In 2019, SVSU joined the Higher Learning Commission Student Success Academy. With the guidance of the Higher Learning Commission, SVSU engaged in a multiyear journey of data collection, analysis, and discussion regarding student success at SVSU. The goal was to identify barriers to student success at SVSU and to make recommendations on how to address these barriers. The culmination of the academy resulted in the creation of the SVSU Student Success Plan which

highlights the results of the data analysis that was conducted, showcases changes that were made at SVSU during the multiyear process, and provides some recommendations for moving forward. The outcome was not only actionable changes to enhance student success but also a vision for the future of student success at SVSU. In particular, the Student Success Plan outlines six dimensions of student success to help provide a strategic orientation for future programming at the university. SVSU did not wait until the conclusion of the academy and completion of the plan to implement needed changes that were identified. A few examples of improvements implemented include--development and expansion of the CT100 Transitions semester, creation of an enhanced Multicultural Services Center discussed in 5B1, and enhancements to the Mental Health & Wellness Center discussed in 5C1. SVSU initially developed the Transition Semester seminar course (CT100) to ease only conditionally admitted students transition to college. Since its inception, SVSU has expanded from about 120 students per year to 490 students in Fall 2022 and 412 students in the fall of 2023 and the course is open to any incoming freshman. A key component of this seminar is embedded student mentors who provide support to incoming freshmen. SVSU also created a Student Success Center because of the findings of the Student Success Academy team and in conjunction with the Rural Pathways grant discussed in 5B. More information on the Student Success Plan and the process can be found on the Student Success Plan web page.

SVSU demonstrates its commitment to continuous improvement in academic areas through the use of information derived from its annual departmental and division assessment and planning reports, accreditation and external program reviews (discussed in 5C2 and Criterion 4), and internal data sources. Occupational Therapy's 2021-2022 Assessment & Planning report includes information on how they are addressing suggestions for improvement. In addition, their website includes information on their graduation rates and the results of the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy Examination which shows that since 2013 98-100% of SVSU students have passed the exam within one year of graduating.

Various departments reach out to students and other stakeholders to seek input through surveys and other methods or have received recognitions that demonstrate they are fulfilling their mission. A few examples include:

Academic Advising - Two notable examples:

1. *Thompsons Working Families Scholarship Program*: In response to the development of the Coordinator of the Thompsons Scholarship Program, the department conducted a thorough student survey aimed at understanding the needs and expectations of the participants. The survey was distributed to each student in the program and sought feedback on various aspects, including their interests, preferences for Thompsons-specific volunteer opportunities, desired social events, leadership expectations, and overall expectations from the new program linked to their scholarship. This feedback has been instrumental in guiding the first-year development of the program, ensuring it aligns closely with the students' aspirations.
2. *SOAR/Orientation Assessment*: Following each Student Orientation, Advising and Registration (SOAR) event, we administer surveys to participants to gauge their satisfaction and the relevance of the information provided. Questions cover a wide spectrum, such as overall rating of SOAR, identification of their Orientation Leader, self-assessment of confidence as new students, perceived level of preparedness, and evaluation of the value taken from the various sessions attended during the day. This comprehensive feedback allows us to pinpoint the sessions that resonate the most with students. It also allows us to identify areas that may require additional attention, and continuously improve the overall effectiveness of the

orientation program.

Intercollegiate Athletics – The Athletics department encourages student athletes that leave the university before their eligibility is exhausted and graduating seniors to complete exit surveys. Information is housed in ARMS and is accessible by senior administrators.

Military Student Affairs - SVSU was awarded Veteran-Friendly Gold Level for 23-24 by Michigan Veteran Affairs Agency and was awarded Best for Vets by Military Times for 2023.

Student Association – The Student Association conducted a student opinion survey that covered various topics. They shared the information so that departments would be aware of areas for improvement.

Sources

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- 5C1-1 Distribution of General Funds GF Expenditures FY2023 vs. FY2013
- 5C1-2 IPEDS DFR Report
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- 5C1-5 Mental Health and Wellness Website
- 5C1-6 Cardinal Commitment
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- 5C2-10 Sample HHS Departmental Assessment and Planning Reports
- 5C2-11 21-22 HHS Assessment and Planning Report_updated MD 7-1-22
- 5C2-12 Academic Affairs Approval of HHS One-time Resources Request
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- 5C4-36 FAFSA Completion Rates
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- 5C4-38 Enrollment History
- 5C4-39 Housing Occupany History
- 5C4-40 Funding from the State of Michigan
- 5C4-41 Free Community College
- 5C4-42 Reserves as per of Operating Expenses
- 5C4-43 SpUtilization-23FA-GUClassrooms-0830-2200
- 5C5-44 AI Task Force - Privacy and Security Guide June 26
- 5C5-45 ITS Long Term Plan FY22-25-rev-2024-01-04
- 5C5-46 RSBOC Minutes - October
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- 5C5-48 VISA Approvals
- 5C5-49 VISA Wait Times
- 5C5-50 Red and White Award
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- 5C5-52 Broadcast Message 2401-04_ DHS Extends Special Student Relief Employment Benefits
- 5C5-53 Ming Chuan University Opens on Campus
- 5C5-54 Globalization_Notes_Kate Scott_Louise Ju Yu Chen_061323
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- 5C5-56 2022 Executive Summary
- 5C5-57 Retention and Graduation Rates
- 5C5-58 External_Perception_Research-R1-CR (1)
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- 5C6-60 Strategic Plan Web Page
- 5C6-61 Enrollment Management 2021 and 2023 updates
- 5C6-62 SVSU Student Success Plan (2-12-24)
- 5C6-63 Student Success Center
- 5C6-64 Rural Pathways for Student Success
- 5C6-65 Student Success Plan Website
- 5C6-66 OT Assessment and Planning Report
- 5C6-67 Occupational Therapy Program Outcomes
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- 5C6-69 Student-Athlete Early Exit Interview
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- 5C6-71 Military Offices Recognitions
- 5C6-72 Student Association Fall 2023 Student Survey

5.S - Criterion 5 - Summary

The institution's resources, structures, processes and planning are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

Summary

Saginaw Valley State University's resources, structures, and processes are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities. The University is in a sound financial position. While enrollment has declined over the past twelve years, careful planning and use of resources has led to a solid Higher Learning Commission's Composite Financial Index score of 5.32 for fiscal year 2023. A portion of the positive net position is due to SVSU's intentional use of the recent Higher Education Emergency Relief Funds, especially from the allowed ability to claim lost revenue that offset the decline in enrollment. SVSU's deliberate planning for how to manage expenses to focus on core functions and strategic initiatives, to navigate a declining population in the Great Lakes Bay Region, and to carefully manage use of resources have all shown positive results.

The President has been methodically focused on guiding the leadership of SVSU with recent restructuring and hires of two well qualified Vice Presidents – one for Enrollment Management and the other for Administration and Business Affairs – and is currently searching for a third for Development and will be searching for the Provost, with the incumbent agreeing to stay on until the new Provost is here and transitioned. With the leadership group taking shape, the new strategic planning has begun again in 2024 and will leverage the strengths discussed throughout this criterion. The strategic enrollment management planning has already begun utilizing data gathered for informed decisions while uncovering new ways to adjust and utilize data.

The university has a very engaged Board of Control with many connections to its history and an excitement for the future. Transparency throughout the University is prevalent in many ways, especially with unions that are partnered with to deliver instruction and overall support. With the recent University and State Capital Outlay funding authorized for renovations of an integral instructional building in Brown Hall and an innovative science station on Saginaw Bay, educational programming will continue to be on a great trajectory for the future. The facilities and award-winning residence halls are already a strength to highlight to students for instruction, research, and athletics. The authorization and funding for a new enterprise resource planning (ERP) system, Workday, has SVSU on solid footing for information systems well into the future.

Planning for the future will be a SVSU trait that is ingrained into campus culture and will prepare us, along with the many existing campus strengths, for the endeavors ahead.

Sources

There are no sources.