

University Undergraduate Council

September 13, 2024 1:00 - 3:00 PM

Teams

Minute Attendance

Committee - Voting Members					
✓	Ladrica Menson-Furr (CAS)	✓	Trent Harper (CSD)	✓	Debra Kelly (NURS)
✓	Denis Grélé (CAS)	✓	Nichelle Robinson (COE)	✓	Candace McGowen (NURS)
✓	Kendra Murphy (CAS)	✓	Anna Falkner (COE)	✓	Joanne Gikas (CPLS)
✓	Andrew Mickelson (CAS)	✓	Amy Curry (HERFF)	✓	Sandy Guntharp (CPLS)
✓	Carmen Astorne (FCBE)	✓	Claudio Meier (HERFF)		Lori Ward (SPH)
✓	Caitlin Porter (FCBE)	✓	Larry Weiss (CHS)	✓	Ilias Kavouras (SPH)
	Jeff Black (FCBE)	✓	Melissa Puppa (CHS)	✓	Eli Jones (Faculty Senate)
✓	Lucas Charles (CCFA)	✓	Brandt Pence (CHS)		
✓	Lori Stallings (CCFA)	✓	Michael Hutchison (KWS)		
✓	Kate Roberts (CCFA)	✓	Carol Silkes (HPRM)		
Committee - Non-Voting Members					
✓	Carol Danehower (Chair)		Eric Bailey (SAS)	✓	Sofiya Dahman (Library)
	Alletha Davis (Registrar)		Dale Williams (ACC)	✓	Stormey Warren (CAS)
	Darla Keel (Registrar)		Trellis Morgan (AAN)	✓	Iulia Sacui (Lambuth)
✓	Keri Kerr (Registrar)		Sean Holden (OIR)		
✓	Victoria Tardugno (Registrar)	✓	Annorah Flanigan (SGA - Student Rep)		
	Tara Buchannon (Disabilbility Services)	✓	Melinda Jones (Un. Honors)		
Guests					
✓	Jenna Koestler (AAN)			✓	
✓	Amanda Rodino (Disability Services)				
✓	Verties Sails III (Disability Services)				
Proxies					

University Undergraduate Council

Meeting Minutes

September 13, 2024

1:00 p.m. Teams

I. Call to Order –Carol Danehower, Chair

- Meeting called to order at 1:00 pm.

II. Old Business

• Introductions

- Introduction of Michael Hutchison. He is a vice provost fellow this year for UUC management and initiative research.
- We also called role introductions for all members.

• Approval of Minutes from April and May 2024

- Moved to adjourn, seconded, and passed.

• Bylaws Revision/Update.

- Ilias Kavouras volunteered to review the bylaws.

• Microcredentials update

- We ran into some snags with financial aid reporting. We almost have this figured out. We currently have 2 areas of interest for these. **We are revising the Curriculum Proposal** in our system. We will let you know when the proposal is up.

III. Updates/Information from Support Units

• Disability Resources for Students (DRS)

- Amanda Rodino, Associate Director and Verties Sails III, Assistant Director. They presented about the types of students disability they serve and what all they offer. [Partnering with DRS website](#) and [Faculty Portal for DRS](#)

• Center for Regional Economic Enrichment (CREE)

- Tracy Robinson, Executive Director. She informed the council about the different programs that the office handles. [Center for Regional Economic Enrichment website](#)

III. 24/25 Academic Year

• Curriculum Approval Process

- Starts next month, if there are any proposals that come through the Colleges. If you need a refresher on Curriculog-now called Curriculum contact Tori Tardugno for a one on one training via email, vcrynlds@memphis.edu or you can register for a workshop/training via [Learning Curve](#).

• “AI for All” initiative, originating from Provost

- There is some funding available for course development. We need faculty with expertise/interest to contact Carol. – Take a look at the [example from Iowa State](#). Possibly have courses within minors.
- **Continued emphasis on “transfer friendly” – ongoing initiatives with community colleges and TCATs.**
- **EAB is a resource** – Log in as a partner via eab.com. UofM is a partner because we pay! I will be mentioning articles and resources periodically.

IV. Upcoming events

- THEC- Sponsored 2024 Transfer and Gen Ed Convening in Nashville, October 30. More info [here](#).
- November 6, 2:30 – 4:00 PM AI workshop/seminar from EAB (Virtual)

IV. Announcements/Reminders

- College AD/Directors sending Carol UUC proposal intentions by September 30 for planning purposes.
- The October 11th meeting, Curriculog/Curriculum deadline for proposals to be in Curriculog/Curriculum at the University level review step (proposals should have been approved at the College Dean step and at the University Undergraduate Review step in the hierarchy) is September 23rd.

Send any suggestions for October meeting. Carol will give THEC/TBR updates; CIP code change proposal process and other information at the next meeting.

- **Upcoming Meetings**

<u>Meeting</u>	<u>Curriculog Deadline</u>
10/11	9/23
11/8	10/21
12/13	11/21
1/17	12/31 clean up from previous meetings
2/14	
4/11	
5/9	

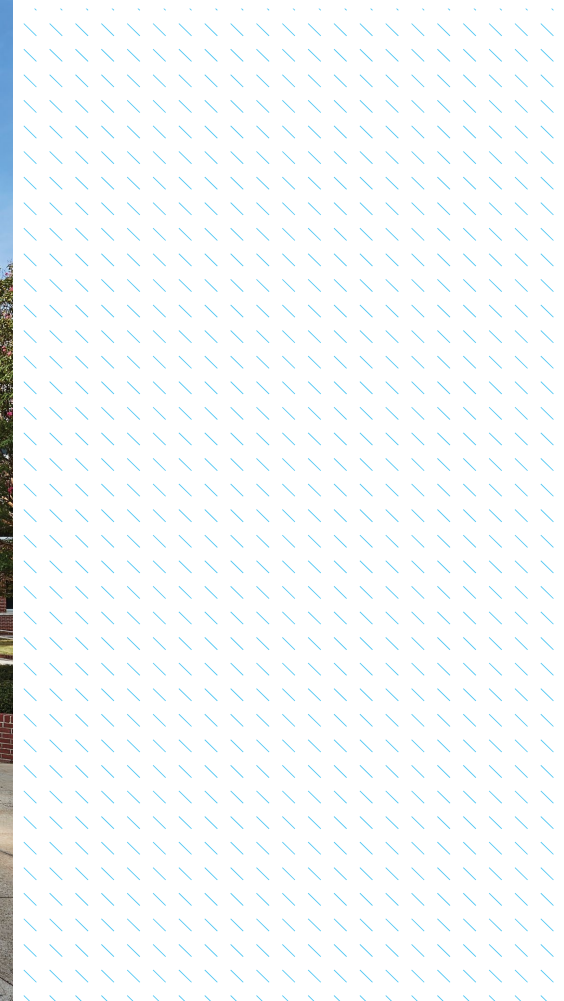
V. Adjourn

- Moved to adjourn, seconded, and passed. The meeting adjourned at 2:28 PM.

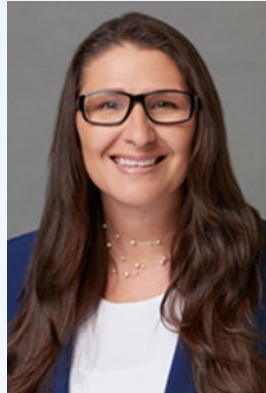


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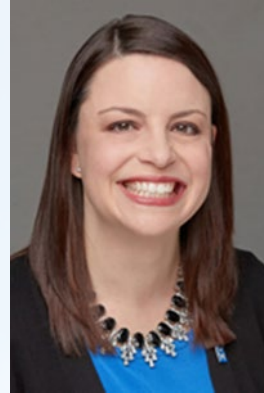
Disability Resources for Students



Disability Resources for Students Staff



Tara Buchanan
Director



Amanda Rodino
Associate Director



Verties Sails, III
Assistant Director



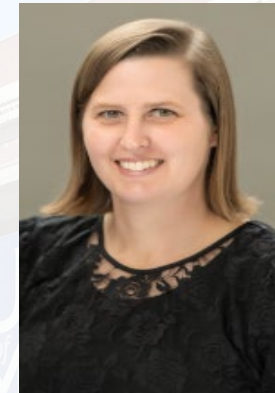
Dannise Scott
Program Coordinator



Marissa Martinez
Program Coordinator



Jaafar Al-Azzawi
Access Coordinator

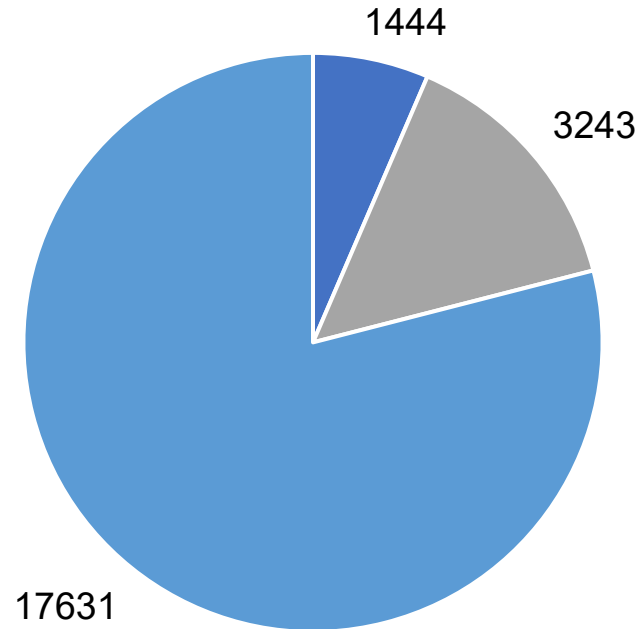


Katy Rentschler
Access Coordinator

National Data

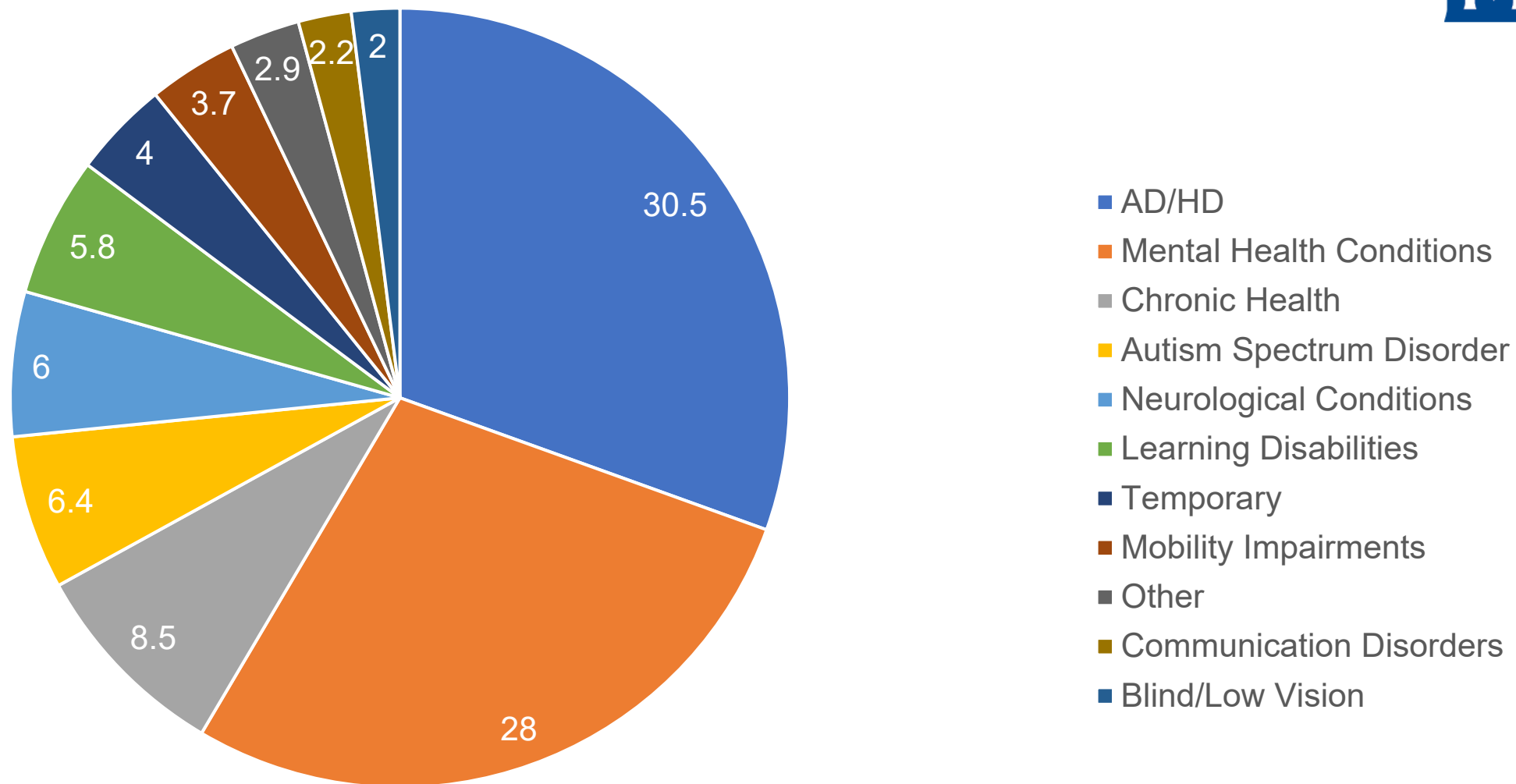


Estimated # of UofM Students with Disabilities



- # of UofM Students with Disabilities Registered with DRS
- Estimated # of UofM Students with Disabilities Not Registered with DRS
- Estimated # of UofM Students without Disabilities

Disability Category Percentages at UofM





Purpose

The purpose of Disability Resources for Students is to act as a catalyst to:

- Advocate equal access and inclusion through Universal Design of all University programs and activities and through accommodations that remove barriers to participation
- Encourage understanding of disability by educating all members of the University community
- Promote development and independence of students with disabilities

Legal Context



Americans with Disabilities (1990)
and Amendments (2008) Acts
Section 504 of the Rehabilitation
Act (1973)





Accommodations

- Accommodations are determined on an individual basis and depend on the nature and degree of the disability, the nature of the course, documentation of the disability and history of accommodations.
- The most common accommodations include exam accommodations, note taking assistance, and alternatives to print materials.
- Instructors are responsible for captioning videos, documents being accessible, etc.

Supporting Instructors



DRS provides the following supports:

- Notifies faculty of the accommodations for which a student is eligible
- Maintains an instructor portal to help faculty manage accommodations
- Offers an alternative testing service
- Provides a service to remediate inaccessible textbooks
- Offers resources, such as SensusAccess, to easily remediate inaccessible course materials
- Conducts course analyses and drafts flex plans
- Is available for consultation regarding any issues/concerns that may arise
- Advocate for better accessibility for faculty with disabilities



DRS Online Instructor Portal from Website

TAKE ACTION

[REGISTER WITH DRS](#)

[ENTER DRS ONLINE](#)

[DRS VIDEO TUTORIALS](#)

[CONTACT DRS](#)

[Home](#) > [Disability Resources for Students](#)

Welcome to DRS!



FUTURE DRS STUDENTS

Complete or update your **Student Introduction Form** and upload documentation.



CURRENT DRS STUDENTS

Login to your **DRS Online Student Portal** to:

- Request Accommodations
- Schedule Exams
- Request Alternate Formats and more



FACULTY

Login to your **DRS Online Instructor Portal** to:

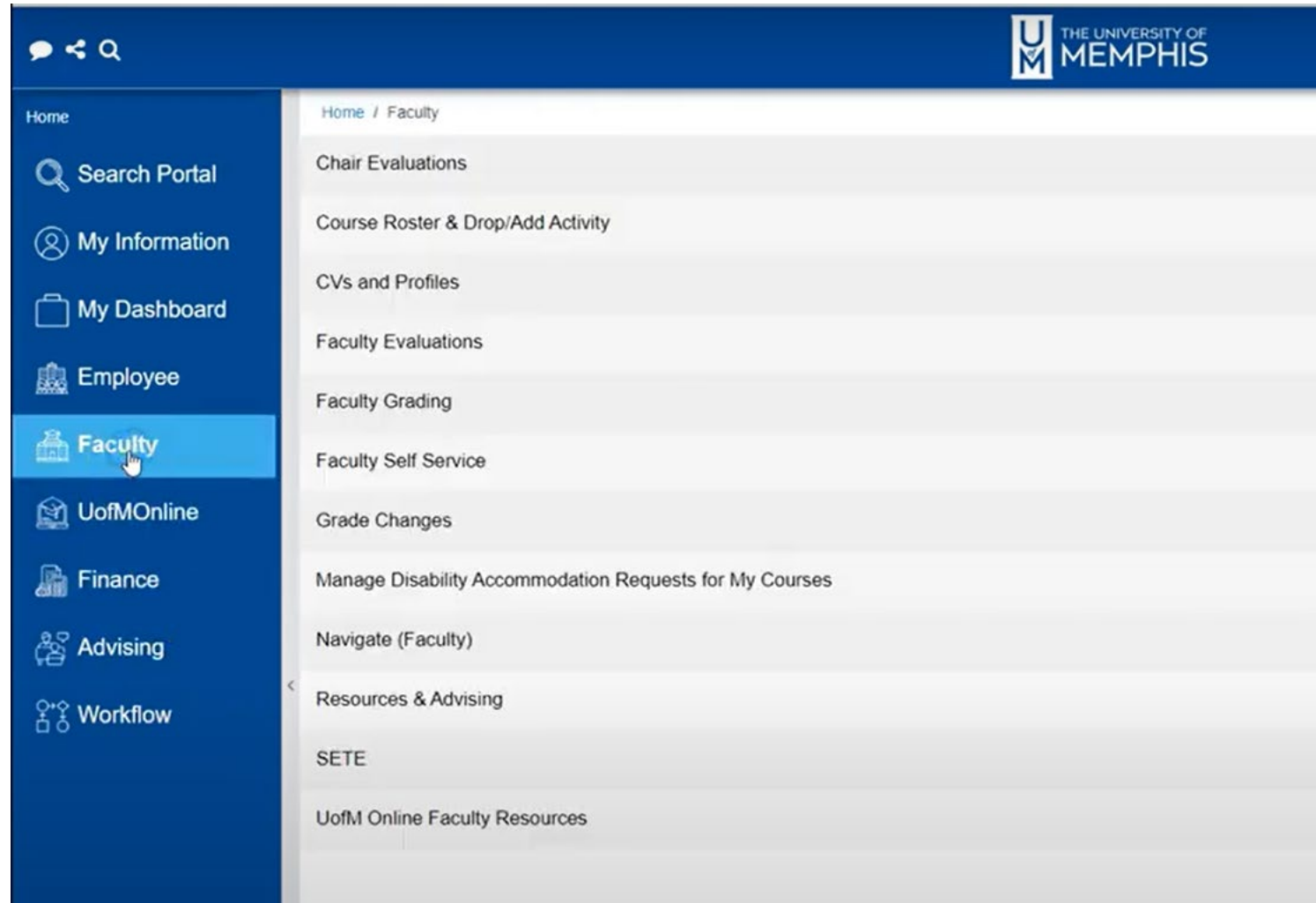
- View student accommodations
- Complete exam instructions
- Review Flexibility Plans and more



DONATE

Give to the **Susan Te Paske Accessibility Resource Fund**.

DRS Online Instructor Portal from myMemphis



DRS Online Instructor Portal Access Policy



INSTRUCTOR PORTAL

Session Extender: [Enable](#)

[HOME](#) >> INSTRUCTOR PORTAL

LOGIN AS INSTRUCTOR

BACK TO MY PROFILE >

HOME

- > [Online Services Home](#)
- > [Help](#)

SIGN OUT >

Username: arodino

ACCESS POLICY

Please read the following prior to completing the form:

By clicking on the following button, I acknowledge that I have received and understand the [University of Memphis FERPA policy](#) as it pertains to student records.

FERPA (Confidentiality Statement)

Along with the right to access the records of students comes the responsibility to maintain the rights of students particularly as outlined in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Student Records are open to members of the faculty and staff who have a legitimate need to know their contents; however, you do have a responsibility to maintain confidentiality.

Reminders:

- Please **REFRAIN** from using **SHARED (PUBLIC) COMPUTER**.
- **REMEMBER TO SIGN OUT AND CLOSE THE BROWSER COMPLETELY AFTER YOU ARE FINISHED ACCESSING THIS INFORMATION**

Important Note:

- Please **REFRAIN** from using **SHARED (PUBLIC) COMPUTER**.
- **Remember to Sign Out and Close the Browser Completely After You Are Finished Accessing This Information**

CONTINUE TO VIEW STUDENT ACCOMMODATIONS >

DRS Online Instructor Portal Overview



[BACK TO MY PROFILE >](#)

HOME

- > **Overview**
- > **Add Instructor**
- > Upload Syllabus
- > Alternative Formats
- > Alternative Testing
- > Communication Access
- > Flex Plan
- > Notetaking Services

[SIGN OUT >](#)



ANNOUNCEMENT

DRS is committed to providing inclusive learning environments. While equal access can often be achieved through course design, barriers to learning or assessment may still exist for a student with a disability. Because of the nature of a specific course or variables in teaching and assessment methods for that course, it may be necessary to adjust the accommodations for a particular class. **However, you must consult with DRS before modifying or denying a student any of their listed accommodations.**

We ask that you upload your course syllabi using the link labeled "Upload Syllabus" located in the left side navigation menu and complete Exam Instructions for any courses that may have students taking exams proctored at DRS. The Exam Instructions Form can be found by clicking on "Alternative Testing" in the left navigation menu.

If you wish to discuss the requested accommodations, please contact our office at 901-678-2880 or drs@memphis.edu.

STUDENTS WHO REQUESTED ACCOMMODATIONS

[REFINE SEARCH >](#)

Records Found: **4** (Showing: 1 - 4)

Show Per Page: **100** Page: 1

View	PDF	CRN	Subject	Course	Section	Student's Full Name	Status	Request Date	Last Updated	Alternative Formats	Alternative Testing	Communication Access	Flex Plan	Notetaking Services
View	PDF	00004	DRS	4000	004	Richard Parker	Emailed	08/12/2024	08/12/2024		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
View	PDF	00003	DRS	3000	003	Richard Parker	Emailed	08/09/2024	08/19/2024	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
View	PDF	00002	DRS	2000	002	Richard Parker	Emailed	08/08/2024	08/12/2024	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
View	PDF	00001	DRS	1000	001	Richard Parker	Emailed	06/01/2023	08/12/2024	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Questions? Concerns?

DRS@memphis.edu
901-678-2880 (Main)
731-425-1906 (Lambuth)





Center for Regional Economic Enrichment (CREE)

Tracy Robinson,
Executive Director

FINISH LINE PROGRAM

Degree completion
program for seniors
who stopped attending
before graduation

PROFESSIONAL & CONTINUING EDUCATION (PACE)

Non-Credit training

Customized training

CEU credits

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING CREDIT (ELC)

Credit for Prior Learning
(CPL)

Opportunity for students
to demonstrate learning
from outside experiences

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

GROWWTH

Keep TN Beautiful

TN Delta Alliance

FINISH LINE PROGRAM

Eligibility

- Senior standing (90 + earned credit hours, 30 or less hours to complete)
- Recent stop-out period (fall or spring semester)
- Overall and institution grade point average of 2.0
- Pursuing first bachelor's degree

1,125 graduates since fall 2013

- Average student is 36 years old with 2.6 GPA and only 14 credit hours remaining to earn degree
- 100+ students graduating per academic year
- Scholarship available for those who previously exhausted federal aid



**WE
WANT
TO HELP
YOU
FINISH
YOUR
DEGREE!**

**NOW
IS THE
TIME!**



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MEMPHIS.

LEARN MORE

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING CREDIT (ELC)

- Rebranding to Credit for Prior Learning (CPL)
- Available at undergraduate and graduate level
- Includes military credit, pre-assessed experiences, and portfolio development
- Evaluated by faculty and application to degree program determined by department



PROFESSIONAL AND CONTINUING EDUCATION



Tracy Robinson

901.678.5077

tracy.robinson@memphis.edu

www.memphis.edu/cree



2024 TRENDS IN HIGHER EDUCATION



2024 TRENDS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

- 3/ INTRODUCTION
- 4/ EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
- 5/ TREND 1: INSTITUTIONS REDUCE ENROLLMENT BARRIERS FOR A CHANGING PROSPECTIVE STUDENT DEMOGRAPHIC
- 8/ TREND 2: COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES STRATEGICALLY REFINE STUDENT SUPPORTS TO IMPROVE RETENTION
- 11/ TREND 3: CAMPUSES PROMOTE HIGH-RETURN ACADEMIC PROGRAMS THAT CONNECT STUDENT INTEREST WITH INDUSTRY NEEDS
- 14/ TREND 4: INSTITUTIONS ARTICULATE THEIR VALUE TO STUDENTS AND UNDERLINE THEIR ECONOMIC IMPACT
- 17/ TREND 5: HIGHER EDUCATION LEADERS LEAN INTO NIMBLE APPROACHES TO FINANCES AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES
- 20/ CONCLUSION
- 21/ SOURCES
- 23/ ABOUT HANOVER



INTRODUCTION

The last few years in higher education have been marked by mounting pressures and increased public scrutiny from multiple directions. Enrollment struggles, financial stressors, student support needs, free speech challenges, the dismantling of affirmative action, and the rapid expansion of artificial intelligence are testing higher education leaders in unrivaled ways. Yet, over and over again, institutions are rising to the challenge and tackling these issues head-on, rather than resting on their laurels.

In the midst of difficulty, we're seeing a new sense of innovation emerging in 2024. Colleges and universities are improving how they communicate their value, confirming their relevancy, and delivering results in today's shifting world. Institutions are refreshing their approaches to old challenges, looking for solutions to emerging issues, and prioritizing efficiencies to reach a new level of sustainability.

Hanover's **2024 Trends in Higher Education Report** highlights the sector's top priorities for the year, drawn from our higher education research and experience advising and collaborating with hundreds of institutions. The trends, recommendations, and case studies outlined in this report are intended to signal how institutional leaders can prepare for the landscape ahead and use practical, data-informed insights to fuel a renewed era of higher education success — for institutions, students, and society at large.



To see last year's trends, download **5 Higher Education Trends to Watch in 2023–24** or visit Hanover's solutions page for additional insights.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Hanover is privileged to partner closely with nearly 500 colleges and universities globally who serve a wide range of demographics and communities. Our work allows us to understand a range of perspectives and learn from the diverse experiences of our members.

In supporting our members' challenges and solutions, we have developed the 2024 Trends in Higher Education Report to illuminate the primary trends that we believe will shape higher education in the coming year.

HERE ARE FIVE TRENDS THAT WILL SHAPE HIGHER EDUCATION IN 2024

TREND 1: Institutions Reduce Enrollment Barriers for a Changing Prospective Student Demographic

What students need and expect from colleges and universities today is different than in previous decades. As such, institutions are focused on improving college access for both traditional and non-traditional students to meet more students where they are.

TREND 2: Colleges and Universities Strategically Refine Student Supports to Improve Retention

As student needs deepen and enrollments fluctuate, institutions are taking decisive, data-driven steps to help enrolled students persist and succeed with a wider array of academic, financial, and personal support.

TREND 3: Campuses Promote High-Return Academic Programs that Connect Student Interest with Industry Needs

In an ever more competitive environment, higher education institutions are gaining students' attention by connecting their interests to degrees and certificates that can promise a strong return on investment.

TREND 4: Institutions Articulate Their Value to Students and Underline Their Economic Impact

As public sentiment on higher education shifts and legislation tightens, colleges and universities are tasked with not only differentiating themselves for prospective students, but also clarifying their purpose and value in the larger community.

TREND 5: Higher Education Leaders Lean into Nimble Approaches to Finances and Organizational Structures

To adjust to new fiscal realities, institutions are nimbly leaning into innovation and change to achieve long-term institutional sustainability and success.



TREND 1: INSTITUTIONS REDUCE ENROLLMENT BARRIERS FOR A CHANGING PROSPECTIVE STUDENT DEMOGRAPHIC

What students need and expect from colleges and universities today is different than in previous decades. As such, institutions are focused on improving college access for both traditional and non-traditional students to meet more students where they are.

TREND 1: INSTITUTIONS REDUCE ENROLLMENT BARRIERS FOR A CHANGING PROSPECTIVE STUDENT DEMOGRAPHIC



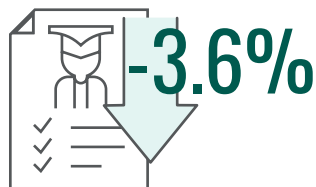
The number of students who say they're struggling academically because of pandemic-related learning loss, with Black students (29%) and men (29%) most likely to report being impacted

6 YEARS

The number of consecutive years ACT exam score averages have declined



The percentage of high school juniors and seniors with doubts about attending college who say it's because they're unsure of how to apply or enroll



The drop in first-year enrollment in fall 2023, compared to 2022

PROSPECTIVE STUDENT CONCERNS

While the cost of higher education continues to serve as the chief barrier to prospective student enrollment, other factors, such as a declining belief in students' own academic and personal readiness prevent some students from attending. Many prospective students who attended high school during the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrate increased apprehension about their ability to succeed in higher education than previous cohorts. In fact, many high school juniors and seniors report not knowing how to begin exploring college and that they're unsure if they would be accepted.

SHIFTING ADMISSION POLICIES

In the face of affordability concerns and students who feel less academically prepared — or inclined — to begin college, institutions are adapting their practices to open their doors for different demographics of prospective students. Many colleges and universities continue to reevaluate their policies and procedures to identify effective ways to reduce enrollment friction, including:

- Direct admissions
- Test-optional policies
- Tuition resets or adjustments
- Fee discounts or waivers
- Expansion of dual enrollment and credit-for-prior-learning pathways

DATA-INFORMED STRATEGIC ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT

Reducing and removing student barriers to admission and enrollment requires a strategic approach informed by data. Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) has been practiced in higher education for more than 20 years, but to increase their reach and yield, institutions must continually leverage new approaches and reevaluate their SEM plans every three to five years.

To increase student inquiries and applications, many institutions should study enrollment patterns and harness tactics such as predictive modeling and geotargeting based on demographic trends. SEM-related research should rely on both quantitative and qualitative methods to identify trends, provide context, and uncover student struggles unknown to the institution.

TAKE ACTION

To bolster your institution's ability to use data to increase access for prospective students, consider the following recommendations:

- Know your institution's current enrollment trends before setting ideal enrollment targets.
- Investigate key metrics from the last decade, including number of applications, admissions, enrollments, enrollments by major, prospective student demographics, and geographic market data.
- Survey prospective, admitted, and stop-out students regularly to learn more about their needs, barriers, and perceptions.
- Implement high-touch recruitment activities geared to targeted student populations and program-area interests.
- Use a variety of in-person and online approaches to connect prospective students to peers or faculty who can speak to overcoming enrollment or success barriers.
- Strengthen relationships with community organizations and schools in your recruiting areas to engage with more students and families who may not otherwise consider your institution.

RELATED READING

- **Drive Enrollment with Cross-Departmental Collaboration**, a guide to increasing collaboration and communication across institutional units to support enrollment growth
- **2023 National Prospective Student Survey**, a report providing important insights into high school juniors' and seniors' preferences, expectations, and barriers to college entry
- **A Tactical Guide to Graduate Student Recruitment**, a blog resource with tips to reach and enroll more graduate students
- **2023 National Admitted Student Survey**, a report analyzing student perceptions and preferences once they have been accepted to an institution



CASE WESTERN RESERVE
UNIVERSITY

SPOTLIGHT:
Case Western Reserve University

Three schools at Case Western Reserve University — the School of Law, the Weatherhead School of Management, and the School of Engineering — were interested in strengthening their post-pandemic international student enrollments. Specifically, they wanted to understand in which countries to invest their student recruitment efforts, considering key factors such as study abroad rates, income levels, and the political landscape.

Looking to identify target markets that met the needs and priorities of all three schools, they partnered with Hanover in 2023 to pinpoint how to increase international enrollment across their law, management, and engineering programs.

Hanover began with a broad approach to conduct a global market scan, followed by a robust process to identify prime target recruitment countries for each school. Together, these projects will not only extend the market research capacity of three distinct schools with diverse priorities, but also yield the data their leaders need to make decisions that will grow their shares of international students.



TREND 2: COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES STRATEGICALLY REFINE STUDENT SUPPORTS TO IMPROVE RETENTION

As student needs deepen and enrollments fluctuate, institutions are taking decisive, data-driven steps to help enrolled students persist and succeed with a wider array of academic, financial, and personal support.

TREND 2: COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES STRATEGICALLY REFINE STUDENT SUPPORTS TO IMPROVE RETENTION



63.8%

The average completion rate for traditional-aged college students in the U.S. in 2023, compared to 64% the year prior and compared to 52% of students over 24 years old



2.1%

The percentage of stop-out students who re-enrolled in 2022, down from 2.4% in 2021



4 in 5

The number of college seniors who report burnout during their undergraduate experience

INCREASED DEMAND FOR STUDENT SUPPORT

Overall retention rates in the U.S. have resumed pre-pandemic levels, yet disparities by race, age, and gender persist. And while overall undergraduate enrollment rose slightly in fall 2023, fewer first-year students enrolled. Coupled with the forecasted enrollment cliff of 2025, some institutions are starting to see signs of a shrinking recruitment pool. Together, these patterns reinforce the need for institutions to put resources toward supporting current students to help them stay enrolled.

At the same time, more students need academic, financial, and personal assistance to persist in their studies. Meeting this demand means campuses must provide a greater diversity of interventions and success initiatives, including resources to address mental health, food insecurity, housing, transportation, and career preparedness (such as mentoring, paid internships, learning communities, and leadership opportunities).

INNOVATIONS IN STUDENT RETENTION

Many campuses that are prioritizing retention efforts in 2024 are adopting strategic retention plans that establish clear goals and key performance indicators to monitor retention and completion data, both for traditional and adult student populations.

Students who may be most at risk of stopping out include first-year students, first-generation college students, low-income students, transfer students, and students of color. In addition, students who feel little sense of connectedness to an institution and those with less academic integration or lower academic efficacy are at greater risk. Designing targeted services around the needs of these populations will make the most difference in retention efforts (including interventions such as peer cohorts, mentoring, orientations, advising, and learning communities).

Notably, institutions facing political resistance or legislative bans related to DEI initiatives in some states are also pivoting to focus on student support and success programming to close opportunity gaps and increase belonging for historically marginalized student populations.



Learn how institutions are using data to reduce student attrition. Watch our prerecorded webinar, **Using Data to Prevent and Recover Stop-out College Students.**

TAKE ACTION

To accelerate student retention and prevent attrition, institutions should note the following best practices:

- Form an institution-wide retention taskforce to assess existing services and interventions, establish a strategic retention plan, and monitor performance indicators. Successful strategies often include implementing mandatory advising check points or courses and early-warning systems or best practices.
- Analyze student success and retention data to understand student-level characteristics and behaviors driving year-to-year student retention and on-time graduation using predictive modeling.
- Benchmark support services at peer institutions to understand how your institution's services compare to competitors and identify potential areas for improvement.
- Conduct regular campus climate surveys to identify student concerns and help identify student support needs or improvements.
- Increase student awareness of support services to reduce underutilization, as students are often not aware of what resources are available or don't know how to access them.

- Foster a campus culture that normalizes getting help, educates students about what various services can do for them, and encourages participation in accessible, flexible, culturally responsive programming.

RELATED READING

- **5 Student Retention Strategies Infographic**, a resource with insights into prime areas of student attrition and how to lower rates of drop-out or stop-out
- **2023 Higher Education Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Survey**, a report on national survey findings of student perspectives on diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging
- **Student Belonging: The Next DEI Frontier in Higher Education**, a blog with tips for building a sense of belonging in addition to the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion



SPOTLIGHT: Coppin State University

The leaders at Coppin State University in Maryland wanted to improve the institution's student recruitment and retention rates. They undertook a variety of focused efforts, including:

- ▶ A campuswide retention dashboard to allow staff to view head counts, graduation counts, and retention rates, filterable by degree and demographic information
- ▶ A centralized support hub for students known as the Eagle Achievement Center
- ▶ New academic programming
- ▶ In-state tuition rates for residents of more than 35 U.S. states and territories
- ▶ A re-engagement campaign for students who left the institution within the last five years
- ▶ A national brand awareness marketing campaign

Together, these strategies led to an increase in the retention of first-year students into their second year (from 66% in 2017 to 74% in 2023). Additionally, the "Reimagine Yourself at Coppin" re-engagement campaign is credited with re-enrolling 114 former students in fall 2023.



TREND 3: CAMPUSES PROMOTE HIGH-RETURN ACADEMIC PROGRAMS THAT CONNECT STUDENT INTEREST WITH INDUSTRY NEEDS

In an ever more competitive environment, higher education institutions are gaining students' attention by connecting their interests to degrees and certificates that can promise a strong return on investment.

TREND 3: CAMPUSES PROMOTE HIGH-RETURN ACADEMIC PROGRAMS THAT CONNECT STUDENT INTEREST WITH INDUSTRY NEEDS



4 in 5

The number of employers who had difficulty in finding the skilled talent they needed in 2023



45%

The percentage of companies that plan to eliminate bachelor's degree requirements for some positions in 2024



19%

The percentage of college students who are unsure what skills-based learning opportunities exist at their institution, compared to 6% of faculty

TRACKING STUDENT INTERESTS

Today's college students are increasingly concerned about connecting their education to a career and want to be assured of a favorable return on their college investment. Yet at the same time, young Gen Z adults are generally employed less than their counterparts from older generations, meaning they may be relying more on higher education to deliver career preparation experiences or skills that will translate directly into professional opportunities.

However, students aren't always aware of which majors connect to various career outcomes or which jobs will be in demand by the time they enter the workforce.

Additionally, a post-pandemic demand for flexible course delivery options persists, with 54% of all college students taking some or all courses online in 2022.

CONNECTING STUDENT DEMAND TO CAREER GUIDANCE

To recruit more students, institutions in 2024 are more closely watching and measuring students' program interests through surveys, institutional data tracking, and analyzing search engine trends. Campus units are also working together to strengthen student career guidance and better articulate how interests can be turned into tangible career outcomes. Some of these activities include:

- Revamped career advising, such as embedded coaches or learning communities within academic programs
- Increased staffing and budgets in career services areas

- Accelerated program pathways to bundle credentials that advance career preparation
- Experiential learning and research opportunities at the undergraduate level
- Mentoring and networking opportunities with employers and alumni
- Enhanced partnerships with top local and regional employers

DATA-INFORMED ACADEMIC PORTFOLIO REVIEW

Increasingly, higher education institutions are integrating labor market, employment, wage, and alumni data into the academic program planning process. Most commonly, institutions use labor market data to determine a new program's feasibility, align existing programs to market demands, understand program outcomes, and form employer partnerships.

Regular cycles of academic program portfolio reviews will help institutional leaders consistently track key metrics and assess both student demand and labor forecasts, ensuring program curricula align with employer demand and that graduates are prepared to succeed in the workforce.



Get real-time insights on student academic interests with our **Program Search Trends Dashboard**.

TREND 3: CAMPUSES PROMOTE HIGH-RETURN ACADEMIC PROGRAMS THAT CONNECT STUDENT INTEREST WITH INDUSTRY NEEDS

TAKE ACTION

To maximize career success for students and alumni, institutions should consider the following:

- Implement an academic portfolio review process that includes relevant labor data from credible sources such as federal agencies, professional associations, employers, job posting databases, and institutional surveys or interviews.
- Partner with employers in the program planning process or establish advisory boards to ensure offerings are relevant and to open up experiential learning opportunities for students.
- Investigate program search engine trends to gauge real-time interests based on monthly keyword volume. These insights can identify new program opportunities or be incorporated into strategic enrollment management planning.
- Prioritize new programs that have award gaps, which represent the difference between the number of completed degrees and certificates and the regional employer demand. This data can help to identify underserved professions in which there aren't enough graduates to fill empty positions.
- Emphasize prospective student messaging that demonstrates the concrete value of higher education such as higher lifetime earnings, job forecasts, and alumni employment data. Particularly in liberal arts disciplines, explain what soft skills students will learn that are in demand by employers.

RELATED READING

- **Step-by-Step Guide to Academic Portfolio Review**, a resource with tips to measure the value and cohesion of program offerings
- **Top 10 Degrees on the Rise in 2023**, an infographic of trending academic programs with tips to help institutions keep pace with student interest and employer demand
- **Top Career Skills for New Grads in 2023**, a resource to strengthen students' career readiness as they begin to enter the workforce
- **4 Critical Strategies for Matching Academic Programs to Student Demand**, a blog article featuring takeaways to help align your institution's programming with student demand
- **Aligning Two- and Four-Year Institutions to Meet Workforce Needs**, a prerecorded webinar with panelists sharing successful models to strengthen career-connected learning



Monroe Community College
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

SPOTLIGHT:
Monroe Community College

Monroe Community College in New York uses Department of Labor data, U.S. Census Bureau data, feedback from industry advisory boards, and survey responses from recent graduates when evaluating the viability of its career and technical education programs.

The college considers this data to assess not only whether its programs are preparing students for available jobs but also whether those jobs will offer opportunities for advancement. For example, Monroe recently closed its massage therapy program because labor market data revealed that there were not enough jobs for graduates to support the continuation of the program. However, in January 2024, it launched a phlebotomy technician microcredential to keep pace with a regional need for skilled phlebotomists.



TREND 4: INSTITUTIONS ARTICULATE THEIR VALUE TO STUDENTS AND UNDERLINE THEIR ECONOMIC IMPACT

As public sentiment on higher education shifts and legislation tightens, colleges and universities are tasked with not only differentiating themselves for prospective students, but also clarifying their purpose and value in the larger community.

TREND 4: INSTITUTIONS ARTICULATE THEIR VALUE TO STUDENTS AND UNDERLINE THEIR ECONOMIC IMPACT



66%

The percentage of Americans who believe colleges are “stuck in the past” and don’t meet current needs



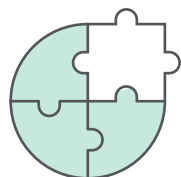
14%

The percentage of Americans who think colleges and universities provide a great deal of benefit to society overall



37%

The percentage of Americans who say state governments should have a good or great deal of influence over what’s taught in college



8 in 10

The number of employers who agree that higher education prepares graduates to succeed in the workforce

COMMUNICATING BRAND VALUE WITH DATA

Most Americans agree today that a higher education degree still holds value, but many are questioning if the return outweighs the investment. Others are skeptical about how much society benefits from higher education. While institutional reputation is often discussed in relation to national or international rankings, a college or university’s overall reputation derives from its relationships with the community it serves.

As a result, institutional leaders are emphasizing higher education’s positive impact on students and society at large in their brand messaging and marketing efforts. But delivering authentic brand value requires it to be backed by quantifiable data and demonstrable results. This involves critically evaluating strengths and weaknesses, establishing measurable goals, making data-driven decisions, and effectively sharing the results with constituents.

IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

To bolster a more positive public reputation, institutions are also increasing community partnerships, engaging in legislative advocacy, and emphasizing the shared values between their campuses and the communities they serve. Institutional partnerships are most effective

when they are ongoing and mutually beneficial, such as collaborations with relevant educational organizations, research facilities, industries, and nonprofits.

QUANTIFYING ECONOMIC IMPACT

While an overwhelming majority of students and employers still believe higher education is worth the time and cost, more institutions in 2024 are using economic impact studies not only to bolster their public reputation or anchor fundraising efforts, but also to push back against diminishing state budget allocations and legislation that limits their autonomy.

Economic impact studies typically rely on an input-output model to estimate the economic contributions of an institution to a state or region, including factors such as operating and capital expenses, workforce contributions, alumni earnings, community engagement, and business development.

TAKE ACTION

Take a more data- and research-informed approach to increasing your institution's reputation with these best practices:

- Routinely reexamine your institution's brand promise and revisit these questions to maintain internal clarity and consensus: What does our institution want to be known for? What are our target audiences looking for? How do we match up those ideas and express them as a coherent concept?
- Include community partnership goals in campus-wide and unit-specific strategic plans, with key metrics to evaluate initiatives.
- Use surveys, interviews, and evaluations to track engagement feedback.
- To begin planning for an economic impact study, first consider your institutional priorities and align the primary message, intended audiences, and key measures of analysis to those priorities. Determine the geographic scope by asking: Is there a strong preference for a particular area of analysis?

RELATED READING

- **Higher Education Brand Health 101 Guide**, a resource for monitoring and revitalizing your institution's brand
- **4 Ways to Measure Marketing Effectiveness in Higher Education**, a guide to improving your marketing strategy by assessing key metrics related to brand value, audience, messaging, and channels
- **Higher Ed Branding: 3 Tips to Bolster Your Institution's Messaging**, our blog providing tips to enhance branded messaging that resonates with students
- **Building a Cohesive Brand Identity Across the University**, a prerecorded webinar featuring tips to strengthen your brand across institutional units



SPOTLIGHT: University of Calgary

The University of Calgary's leaders were interested in gaining a current understanding of the economic, employment, and entrepreneurial contributions the university generates in the province of Alberta, Canada. To do so, they partnered with Hanover Research on an economic impact study.

Through a dual analysis of demand-side spending and supply-side outcomes, the study findings showed the university had a quantifiable annual economic impact of \$16.5 billion including:

- ▶ **\$3.2 Billion in Demand-Side Contributions:** The estimated effect of UCalgary's spending on Alberta, both in the university's initial spending (the direct effect) and the additional economic activity triggered by that initial spending (indirect and induced effects).
- ▶ **\$13.3 Billion in Supply-Side Contributions:** The estimated impact of UCalgary's academic, alumni, community engagement, and research activities on provincial businesses and communities.

While these estimates don't fully account for the total economic activity generated by its research facilities, alumni, or strategic initiatives, the study confirms the many ways that UCalgary delivers significant benefits to the people of Alberta.



TREND 5: HIGHER EDUCATION LEADERS LEAN INTO NIMBLE APPROACHES TO FINANCES AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES

To adjust to new fiscal realities, institutions are nimbly leaning into innovation and change to achieve long-term institutional sustainability and success.

TREND 5: HIGHER EDUCATION LEADERS LEAN INTO NIMBLE APPROACHES TO FINANCES AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES



83%

The percentage of college and university presidents who are confident that their institution will be financially stable over the next five years, up slightly from 2022



4%

The percentage increase in costs for colleges and universities in fiscal year 2023, compared to 5.2% in 2022 and 2.7% in 2021



585

The number of U.S. colleges and universities that closed in 2015–2021

MITIGATING RISING COSTS

Like other industries, higher education is facing rising inflation and increased economic pressures. Against a backdrop of ongoing enrollment declines and campus climate tensions, some institutions are facing steep financial pressures that require substantive changes to budgets, staffing, or organizational structures to bring revenue in line with growing expenses.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES AFFECT MORALE

With some institutions considering budget reductions, layoffs, reorganizations, and mergers in 2024, leaders must keep in mind the considerable burdens those actions can bring to a campus, affecting student and employee morale and straining relationships with the administration. Engaging in any organizational rightsizing or restructuring must be done only when longer-term enrollment or financial trends are unlikely to improve. To minimize harm to the campus climate, leaders should carefully weigh the risks and build a transparent process with sufficient time to engage multiple voices.

NEW REVENUE SOURCES

As an alternative to reducing expenditures, higher education leaders also continue to seek out new revenue-generating activities to remain competitive. Non-credit offerings such as microcredentials and professional education continue to be popular options. Additionally, grants can provide significant avenues to new funding opportunities for institutions — if the right training and support is provided. Some institutions also find success with other auxiliary opportunities such as commercial services, facility rentals, private-public partnerships, outdoor recreation, summer programs, and product sales.

Institutions should explore and evaluate a variety of alternative revenue possibilities to determine appropriate fit and feasibility. When assessing ideas, consider factors such as profitability, mission fit, initial capital requirements, administrative load, and complexity.



Get inspired by other institutions' strategies for nurturing a culture of collaboration with our prerecorded webinar, **Optimizing Cross-Departmental Collaboration**.

Sources: Inside Higher Education, Commonfund Institute, National Center for Education Statistics

TREND 5: HIGHER EDUCATION LEADERS LEAN INTO NIMBLE APPROACHES TO FINANCES AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES

TAKE ACTION

To build institutions' long-term financial and organizational health, look for solutions including:

- Establish a task force or working group to conduct an audit to identify institutional strengths, resources, and underutilized facilities that could potentially be leveraged to bring in new revenue. The group can make recommendations to create additional revenue opportunities or optimize existing programs or practices.
- If an institution is considering rightsizing or reorganizing, gathering input from the campus community is paramount. Convene a working group as early as possible to discuss the need for action and develop a collaborative plan. Aim to first evaluate administrative salaries, review personnel redundancies, and audit administrative functioning for value-added opportunities.
- When possible, incorporate organizational restructuring needs into the strategic planning process to maximize buy-in from faculty and staff and allow for restructuring efforts to be defined as a shared responsibility.

RELATED READING

- **6 Alternative Budget Models for Colleges and Universities**, a guide to the benefits and drawbacks of the six most common institutional budget models
- **4 Ways to Support Faculty-Led Higher Education Grants**, a guide to increasing campus grantseeking capacity
- **5 Trends Driving University Fundraising**, a blog with insights into donor perspectives and how to strengthen alumni giving
- **Best Practices in Administrative Structures (member-only access)**, a research brief outlining approaches to organizational structures and current restructuring best practices
- **Best Practices - Diversifying and Generating Revenue (member-only access)**, a research brief with recommendations for exploring new revenue streams



SPOTLIGHT: Bismarck State College

Bismarck State College (BSC) in North Dakota reports having two bottom lines: a mission bottom line focused on student success and a fiscal bottom line that calls for prudent financial management. The college adopted a 2022–2027 strategic plan that focuses on student success, linking talent with opportunity, fiscal stability, and communication. In addition to having a streamlined administrative structure compared to other institutions of its size, BSC aims to strategically improve its fiscal stability through five objectives:

- ▶ Increase credit hour and headcount enrollment
- ▶ Maintain a Composite Financial Index (CFI) of 1.1 or higher
- ▶ Improve fiscal efficiency via lowered unit cost and improved program vitality
- ▶ Increase grants and investments via public and private partnerships
- ▶ Optimize student affordability while maintaining campus financial health

According to President Douglas J. Jensen, “As we’ve learned through the pandemic, colleges need to remain student-centric and become increasingly nimble ... Students are changing, and institutions must change with them.”



CONCLUSION

Although higher education institutions face both emerging and long-time struggles, they are meeting the moment with a renewed sense of tenacity and an eye toward longevity. We're seeing colleges and universities forge fresh paths in 2024 to reduce student enrollment barriers, deliver stronger support to retain students, enhance the quality and relevance of academic offerings, illuminate their impressive economic impact, and rebalance their operations with agility.

Together, these trends signal a stronger outlook for higher education to capitalize on pivotal opportunities in the coming year. Indeed, institutions that focus on results will be the ones that find ways to successfully weather oncoming storms and emerge stronger on the other side, particularly if they reinforce their decisions with sound data and research.



How will your institution build resiliency now to prepare for the future?

Find out how Hanover Research can help you make future-focused decisions with tailored research and data analysis.

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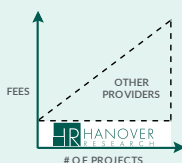
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