STOCKTON UNIVERSITY

2021-2022 SELF STUDY

PRESENTED TO THE
MIDDLE STATES COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION

For the Evaluation Team Visit | March/April 2022

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In the fall of 1971, 1,000 students and 60 faculty members arrived at a new state institution of higher education in southern New Jersey. It was not a particularly auspicious beginning for Stockton State College. New buildings on the wooded main campus would not be ready until January and the first students and faculty held classes and lived together in the soon-to-be-condemned Mayflower Hotel on the then-struggling Atlantic City Boardwalk.

It was not a traditional opening, but Stockton was not intended to be a traditional college. Founded on the principles of a liberal arts education and civic and community engagement, this new college promised new opportunity in an area of the state that previously had no higher education options and high rates of poverty and unemployment.

In 2021-22 Stockton is celebrating its 50th anniversary along with its new Carnegie Classification as a Doctoral/Professional University. The University has grown tenfold, but its core values remain the same - a commitment to provide opportunities for our students and to the diverse communities in which they live.

Stockton's campus today is a visible manifestation of its mission. More than a third of undergraduates identify as students of color. Flags flying outside the Arts and Sciences building represent the Latinx, Pan-African and LGBTQ communities. The Military and Veterans Success Center and Women's, Gender and Sexuality Center provide supportive environments to study and meet. A new Multicultural Center will encourage all students to share and celebrate their heritage. A new "R" requirement ensures that all students learn about the impact of racism.

Inside the classrooms on the Galloway campus, students are preparing for jobs of the future, grounded in the critical thinking skills that will provide the flexibility to adapt to new challenges. In the new Health Sciences Center students get state-of-the-art training in the physical therapy, exercise science and simulated nursing labs. In the new Unified Science Center labs students work on research alongside professors and help raise thousands of rescued baby terrapins for release back into the environment. At the Stockton Farm, faculty work with students to research and cultivate naturally grown crops, which are then shared with students, the local food bank and the community. In the Sustainability Lab, students study the latest in energy-efficient power sources as the state prepares for off-shore wind development.

Stockton's most ambitious project is its new campus in Atlantic City. After being named an Anchor Institution by the state of New Jersey in 2016, Stockton partnered with the Atlantic City Development Corp. (AC Devco) and South Jersey Gas on the $220 million Gateway project, a monumental undertaking that local and state leaders called a turning point for Atlantic City. When the Atlantic City campus opened in fall 2018, it was not just a return to our roots; it was a commitment to the original promise of serving the entire community. As an Anchor Institution, Stockton is not just educating the next generation of community leaders but is helping lead the way to a more diverse economy that can supplement the gaming, hospitality and tourism focus

of the Jersey shore with new industries focused on innovation, climate change, and environmental sustainability.

Stockton also planned for the Atlantic City campus to be a catalyst for community engagement. One of the first actions after the campus opened was to name the Academic Center event room for Fannie Lou Hamer, the civil rights leader who spoke out against the all-white Mississippi delegation at the 1964 Democratic National Convention in Atlantic City. This room has since become a site for community group meetings and events, political candidate debates, and police procedural justice training.

Stockton's ongoing commitment to South Jersey communities begins with its youngest residents. Every year, Stockton students tutor hundreds of children in Atlantic City and Pleasantville. The GOALS GEAR UP program provides leadership training for college-bound, underrepresented high school students on Saturdays and in the summer. The Summer Youth Rowing Camp teaches teamwork and discipline. More than 1,000 students in 35 area high schools take dual-credit courses through Stockton, giving them a head start on college.

Once they arrive at Stockton, students are supported academically, socially, and emotionally. The University faculty and staff have remained flexible to meet new challenges, developing programs that support students while inspiring them to dream and grow. The Ospreys RISE initiative will encourage all students to participate in research, internships, service-learning, and experiential learning in the community. The expanded Center for Teaching and Learning Design supports faculty as they too respond to the ever-changing needs of a technology-driven society.

Stockton's growth and successes have also been recognized financially. State aid to the University has grown from $18 million in FY19 to almost $34 million in FY22. Private donors have stepped up and established new scholarship endowments specifically for underrepresented and first-generation students. In 2019, Stockton received its largest gift of $8 million from the John F. Scarpa Foundation, reflecting Mr. Scarpa's confidence in the University's mission and future.

The COVID-19 pandemic created new challenges, but also opportunities to review and renew how we serve our students, faculty, and staff. Stockton's mission, last revised in 2017, respects our original mission: "to develop engaged and effective citizens with a commitment to lifelong learning and the capacity to adapt to change in a multi-cultural, interdependent world."

Stockton is not just adapting; we are innovating, with proposals for a Coastal Resiliency Institute and Marine Science Center and academic programs that support new industries including cannabis and environmental sustainability. The University may be celebrating its first half-century, but we are also actively preparing for the next, teaching our students to be the leaders their communities will need over the next 50 years and beyond.

Overview of Findings from the Self Study
During the 2020-2021 academic year, seven Working Groups with representatives from Stockton University's faculty, staff, and Board of Trustees collaborated on this Self Study, sharing interim drafts with the entire University community and incorporating feedback. Based on the evidence contained herein, the Working Group members conclude that the University meets all Standards and Requirements for Affiliation, noting 18 opportunities for improvement and innovation:

Standard I:
- Strengthen strategic goal monitoring by linking planning to assessment web pages
- Update all levels of faculty promotion and tenure standards to include strategic priorities

Standard II:
- Strengthen recruiting and retention practices for diverse faculty and staff
- Continue providing resources to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Increase efforts of the High School Dual Credit program to recruit diverse students
- Continue focus on recruiting and retaining students from underrepresented populations

Standard III:
- Examine workload equity among faculty members across schools and programs
- Imbed diversity and inclusion in the curriculum
- Use assessment results to continue refining programs that decrease equity gaps

Standard IV:
- Continue strengthening support services and resources at all campus locations
- Re-assess systems and processes that support students' educational goals post-COVID
- Track and assess initiatives that directly impact student health, safety, and well-being

Standard V:
- Use retention and High Impact Practices (HIP) intervention results to reallocate resources
- Continue assessing General Education/Essential Learning Outcomes; refine objectives
- Retain faculty collaboration in assessing new leadership agreements, revised program assessment templates, schedules, and the Center for Teaching and Learning Design

Standard VI:
- Automate various manual processes to improve efficiencies and accuracy

Standard VII:
- Communicate clearly across groups and locations during all stages of decision-making
- Enhance inclusion of staff members in shared governance

Stockton University Institutional Profile
History, Background and Major Changes
Stockton University was founded in 1969 as part of New Jersey's public higher education system, and today offers more than 40 undergraduate degree programs as well as 19 advanced degree programs, seven certificate and preparation programs, and a range of disciplinary and

interdisciplinary minors. The main campus is in Galloway on 1,600 acres of Pinelands National Reserve in southern New Jersey. Additional satellite sites are in Hammonton, Manahawkin and Woodbine, along with a larger campus complex in Atlantic City. Roughly one-third of the student body, or a total of 3,393 students in fall 2019, live on both the Galloway and Atlantic City campuses in apartment complexes, residence halls, and affiliated properties. COVID-19 temporarily reduced that number to 2,200 in fall 2020 and 1,500 in spring 2021. By fall 2021, 2,756 students resided in these locations as the University returned to traditional occupancy.

Since opening in 1971 as a campus of 1,000 students and 60 faculty in one building on the Atlantic City Boardwalk, Stockton has grown to an institution approaching 10,000 students today: 8,392 undergraduate and 960 graduate students. Of this number, 94.5% attend full-time. Our third-semester retention rate has remained consistently in the 85% range before COVID-19. Graduation rates are also very strong: 61% four-year and 74% six-year.

Each Stockton student receives individual attention that reflects the University's strong sense of community. Stockton also takes pride in a student to faculty ratio of 17:1. The University financially supports high-impact practices such as one-on-one faculty <u>R</u>esearch, <u>I</u>nternships, <u>S</u>ervice-learning, and <u>E</u>xperiential learning, also known as "Ospreys RISE" on campus.

Stockton is among the youngest of the state's public institutions, celebrating its 50th anniversary of teaching in Academic Year (AY) 21-22. During this time, we have had the opportunity to **reflect** on the half century of rich traditions and growth that have comprised our institutional past and **recommit** to maintaining our core values which **inform** the significant, intentional choices that will determine our future path.

Evidence in this Self Study illustrates how Stockton maintains many of its founding ideals and expands educational opportunities in a context that differs from its historical landscape, addressing current challenges, chief among these:

- Out migration: New Jersey's traditional college-bound population is shrinking and the proportion of high school seniors seeking higher education out-of-state exceeds 35%.
- State demographics: future students are more diverse in ethnicity, age, and preparation.
- Challenges to the South Jersey economy: the value of higher education remains under scrutiny; the state's political and economic landscapes vary by regional geography.

Moreover, this Self Study addresses institutional reactions to major changes both within and beyond the institution, including:

- Strategic Plan 2025: Choosing Our Path
- Test-Optional Admission
- Faculty Senate and Board Resolutions supporting Social Justice
- Institutional Restructuring

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- Changes to Faculty Complement and Leadership
- Transitions among Provosts
- Atlantic City Phase II Expansion
- Increased State Funding Allocations

Stockton's Strategic Plan

Stockton's *Strategic Plan 2025: Choosing Our Path* guides our responses to the changes noted above and aligns with the state's plan, *Where Opportunity Meets Innovation: A Student-Centered Vision for New Jersey's Higher Education.* Stockton's *Strategic Plan 2025* also reflects nearly three years of institutional work and input by more than 700 campus community members and builds on the University's mission statement:

Mission: Last revised and adopted by the University's Board of Trustees in 2017, Stockton's mission is "to develop engaged and effective citizens with a commitment to lifelong learning and the capacity to adapt to change in a multi-cultural, interdependent world. As a public university, Stockton provides an environment for excellence to a diverse student body, including those from underrepresented populations, through an interdisciplinary approach to liberal arts, sciences, and professional education."

Strategic Plan 2025 focuses on six strategic priorities with 21 institutional goals. This Self Study references these priorities and related goals in the chapters herein:

Priority 1: Inclusive Student Success
1. Expand Student Health, Safety, and Well-Being
2. Cultivate an Inclusive Campus Community
3. Promote Equitable Educational Access and Academic Achievement
4. Foster Post-Graduate Success

Priority 2: Diversity and Inclusion
1. Promote and Assess an Inclusive Campus Community
2. Enhance Faculty and Staff Diversity
3. Promote and Assess Comprehensive Diversity and Inclusion Education

Priority 3: Teaching and Learning
1. Advance Academic Assessment
2. Strengthen Academic Programming
3. Embrace Diverse Teaching and Learning Styles
4. Enhance the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL)

Priority 4: Strategic Enrollment Management
1. Improve Access and Opportunity for Non-Traditional Students
2. Sustain Student Retention and Completion Rates while Keeping Stockton's Education Affordable

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3. Enhance Student Satisfaction Practices Holistically Across the Campus Community
4. Support Sustainable Enrollment

Priority 5: Financial Sustainability
1. Enhance Overall Fiscal Responsibility of University Resources
2. Develop an Updated Facilities Master Plan
3. Enhance Institutional Fundraising and Alumni Engagement Efforts

Priority 6: Campus Community, Communication, and Shared Governance
1. Strengthen Shared Governance Practices
2. Improve Institutional Communication Practices
3. Expand Campus Community Participation

Stockton University Students
As of Fall 2021, Stockton's student profile was:

- 62% female and 38% male (in terms of self-identified gender identity)
- 8,392 undergraduate students (95% full-time); 960 graduate students (44% full-time)
- 62% White, 8.9% Black, 16.3% Hispanic/Latinx, 6.8% Asian American, 3.6% Multiracial, 1% Unknown
- 97% New Jersey residents and 3% from out of state or abroad
- 363 intercollegiate student-athletes, and 282 (duplicated) registered club and intramural sports participants
- 40% Pell Grant recipients
- 51.8% first-generation (of Beginning College Student Survey respondents).

Glossary of Key Institutional Terms, Acronyms and Annotations in the Self Study
Readers of the Self Study will find the printable Institutional Terms and Acronyms useful (pages 9-10). The Self Study also aligns to the institution's goals using priority acronyms and goal numbers (ex: SEM4 = Strategic Enrollment Management Goal 4: Support Sustainable Enrollment). Similarly, throughout the Self Study, evidence is organized by standard, criteria, component, and order of appearance, including cross references. For example, where the text in Chapter I mentions "adopted the revised mission statement" the evidence applies to Standard I, Criterion 1, Components b and c, as they appear: (I.1b.1, I.1c.1). To facilitate the compliance review, Chapter II also includes a complete crosswalk of the Requirements for Affiliation that each Working Group reviewed.

Scope of Self Study: Institutional Priorities
As noted above, six institutional priorities from the University's *Strategic Plan 2025: Choosing Our Path* guided this Self Study. The six priorities incorporated many voices of students, faculty, staff, administration, alumni, board members, and community partners during the planning process. Specific examples throughout the Self Study demonstrate recent occasions when

Choosing our Path has upheld some Stockton traditions, while adapting others to our ever-changing external environment.

The Self Study team also incorporated Stockton's current admissions campaign **Choose Stockton** to thematically organize this document and to feature student voices prominently in each chapter. The Stockton University Middle States website details the composition of the Working Groups, the standards-based organization of the Self Study, and the inclusive process that the institution followed to complete this analytical work.

Impact of COVID-19
Stockton University, as did other institutions nationwide, adapted to COVID-19 state and federal guidelines and recommendations. Our faculty and students shifted to fully-online instruction in March 2020, and in AY 20-21, and instructors selected from teaching modalities that included a range of online and hybrid options, as well as limited but necessary face-to-face instruction.

All campus activity during the pandemic has been conducted in compliance with the University's campus operation planning documentation, which outlines extensive health and safety protocols for faculty, staff, and students. When the Self Study process began, masks were required in most settings, building modifications were in place to promote and enforce physical distancing, and student housing had been modified to reduce capacity. Our employees provided in-person and remote service to students, including instruction, academic advising, tutoring, financial aid, and course registration as well as tailored student services from offices such as Health and Wellness, Military & Veteran Success Center, Learning Access Program, Career Education & Development, and more. Stockton has benefitted from both state and federal aid during the pandemic.

Faculty and staff furloughs, combined with institutional budget reductions, allowed the University to end FY20 without a deficit. Equally important, while new student enrollment declined in fall 2020 and fall 2021, our overall student enrollment came within 99.7% of our revised enrollment projections.

Institutional Resources
In addition to the careful budget management outlined above, Stockton has benefitted from increased state and federal support. As part of the State of New Jersey's FY22 budget, announced in June 2021, Stockton received a record $32.7 million in state aid. This level puts Stockton in the top tier of New Jersey public senior colleges, just above the state average for direct funding as well as state-funded positions.

This includes $4.6 million to support the university's Atlantic City campus and an additional $5.9 million to bring Stockton's operating aid up to an equitable per-student amount of no less than $3,050 per full-time equivalent student. This is a 78% increase overall, up from just $18.4 million in state aid just three years ago.

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FY22 Direct State Appropriation & State-Funded Positions

Senior Public Universities	FY22 Direct State Appropriation ($000's)	FY22 State-Funded Positions
Kean University	$41,795	1,074
William Paterson University	$36,952	1,111
Stockton University	$32,658	1,069
State Average	$32,106	969
New Jersey City University	$30,924	1,129
The College of New Jersey	$30,062	859
Ramapo College of NJ	$20,244	573

1) State of New Jersey 2021-2022 Appropriations Handbook.
Source: https://www.nj.gov/treasury/omb/publications/22approp/Final.pdf
2) State of New Jersey Governor's FY2022 Budget – Detailed Budget (March 2021).
Source: https://www.nj.gov/treasury/omb/publications/22budget/pdf/FY22GBM.pdf

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During Moody's most recent review in April 2021 in advance of the sale of bonds for the Atlantic City Phase II residential project, the credit opinion contained this statement:

> Stockton's now strong leadership team has a demonstrated record over the last several years of managing large and complex initiatives with the state, which provides a solid foundation for continued growth. The successful completion of the Atlantic City campus and sizable investment at the Galloway campus underscores leadership's actively managed long-term planning approach. Development of strong budgetary policies and centralized financial monitoring has allowed the university to maintain stable fiscal operations throughout the recent expansionary period. Leadership has well-defined strategic priorities that include strengthening intergovernmental collaboration and resources, improving academic outcomes, and enhancing reporting and board engagement for greater fiscal and operating oversight.

ACADEMIC SCHOOLS

ARHU	School of Arts and Humanities
BUSN	School of Business
EDUC	School of Education
GENS	School of General Studies
HLTH	School of Health Sciences
NAMS	School of Natural Sciences and Mathematics
SOBL	School of Social and Behavioral Sciences

GENERAL STUDIES COURSE CATEGORIES

GAH	General Arts and Humanities
GEN	General Interdisciplinary Skills and Topics
GIS	General Integration and Synthesis
GNM	General Natural Sciences and Mathematics
GSS	General Social and Behavioral Sciences

GENERAL EDUCATION GOAL REQUIREMENT ATTRIBUTES

A	Arts
H	Historical Consciousness
I	Multiculturalism/International Studies
V	Ethics and Values
W1/2	Writing
Q1/2	Quantitative Reasoning
R1/2	Race and Racial Justice

ADDITIONAL ACRONYMS

AAP	Academic Achievement Programs
AC DEVCO	Atlantic City Development Corporation
ADP/PEP	American Democracy Project/Political Engagement Project
APR	Annual Program Review
BOT	Board of Trustees
BPERT	Bias Prevention Education and Review Team
BSHS	Bachelor of Science in Health Sciences
CAS	Council for Advancement of Standards
CCCSG	Campus Community, Communication, and Shared Governance
CCDIE	Committee on Campus Diversity and Inclusive Excellence
CED	Career Education & Development
CRDA	Casino Reinvestment and Development Authority
CSSE	College Survey of Student Engagement
CTLD	Center for Teaching and Learning Design
D&I	Diversity and Inclusion
DSSA	Master of Science in Data Science and Strategic Analytics
ELO	Ethics Liaison Officer
ELOs	Essential Learning Outcomes
EOF	Educational Opportunity Fund
EOF-AC	Educational Opportunity Fund-Atlantic City Campus
EPAFs	Employee Approval Forms
ePAR	Electronic Performance Assessment Review

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Printable Glossary of Acronyms in the Self Study

ESCCO	Office of Event Services and Campus Center Operations	**NTTP**	Non-Tenure Track Teaching Positions
FRC	Faculty Review Committee	**OHR**	Office of Human Resources
FRST	First-Year Studies	**OMB**	Office of Management and Budget
GOALS	Goal Oriented Advocates Leaders and Scholars	**OSC**	Office of Student Conduct
		OSI	On Sight Insight
GPC	Genocide Prevention Certificate	**PACTs**	Position Action Request Form
HECIF	Higher Education Capital Improvement Fund	**PLO**	Program Learning Outcomes
		PPR	Periodic Program Review
HEDS	Higher Education Data Sharing Consortium	**PRR**	Periodic Review Report
		RISE	Research, Internships, Service-learning, and Experiential Learning
HIPs	High Impact Practices		
IDEA	Instrument for Student Evaluation of Teachers	**QUAD**	Quantitative Reasoning Across the Disciplines
IPEDS	Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System	**SAP**	Standards for Satisfactory Academic Progress
IRB	Institutional Review Board	**SCOSA**	Stockton Center on Successful Aging
ISS	Inclusive Student Success		
ITAB	Information Technology Advisory Board	**SEM**	Strategic Enrollment Management
		SEMP	Strategic Enrollment Management Planning
ITS	Information Technology Services		
LAP	Learning Access Program	**SFT**	Stockton Federation of Teachers
LEAD	Ed.D. in Organizational Leadership	**SIRE**	Summer Intensive Research Experience
LIBA	Liberal Studies B.A.		
LIGHT	Lloyd D. Levenson Institute of Gaming, Hospitality, and Tourism	**SLOs**	Student Learning Outcomes
		SMC	Space Management Committee
MAHG	Master of Arts in Holocaust and Genocide Studies	**SoTL**	Scholarship of Teaching and Learning
MAPS	Mediation and Problem Solving	**STAR**	Student Transition, Access, and Retention
MBA	Master of Business Administration		
MBA-HAL	Master of Business Administration in Healthcare Administration and Leadership	**T&L**	Teaching and Learning
		TALONS	Transition Activity Leaders of New Students
MPH	Master of Public Health	**TREQ**	Transfer Equivalency
NARTP	National Aviation Research & Technology Park	**URM**	University Relations and Marketing
		UROC	University Restart Operations Committee
NJAC	New Jersey Athletic Conference		
NJASCU	New Jersey Association of State Colleges and Universities	**VAWA**	Violence Against Women Act
		VPAF	Vice President for Administration & Finance
NJSA	New Jersey Statutes Annotated	**WGSC**	Women's, Gender and Sexuality Center

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Standard I: Mission and Goals

I. Introduction

The first four decades of Stockton's history saw incremental and steady growth. This institutional development is evident in the 2012 Self Study, when the Board of Trustees and faculty intentionally reaffirmed the University's 1982 mission statement, noting at the time that it continued to offer a solid foundation for launching the ambitious 2010-2020 strategic planning cycle (I.1g.1).

In the last five years, however, Stockton has changed significantly. As noted in the 2017 Middle States Periodic Review Report (PRR) (I.1a.1), in 2015 Stockton transitioned its New Jersey categorization from a college to a comprehensive university, and from a single campus in the Pinelands National Reserve of Atlantic County to a State-designated Anchor Institution with locations in three New Jersey counties and commensurate, transitional strategic priorities (I.1b.2). The cumulative impact of these changes galvanized the University community to reexamine the institution's mission, considering our expanded profile and related goals for transformative growth.

The result was a multi-year, University-wide Task Force on Shared Governance, comprised of members from all University constituencies. Collectively and collaboratively, the task force reviewed documents related to the institution's history, original mission, and founding principles, with the goal of retaining relevant and essential liberal arts beliefs while adapting to current needs and changing demographics. The task force regularly posted updates on its webpage and held several town halls to share updates and engage the wider community in this important conversation (I.1a.2). In these discussions, the University community consistently reinforced enduring aspects of Stockton's institutional identity, recognizing that many students choose Stockton because of its longstanding commitment to an interdisciplinary approach to liberal arts, sciences, and professional education. (Chapter VII of this Self Study conveys additional details about how this work interacted with the University's governance structures.)

An ongoing commitment to interdisciplinarity and the liberal arts informed the task force's efforts. Its work culminated in a final report (I.1b.1, I.1c.1) that included the revised, single-paragraph mission statement that appears on page 16 of the task force report. The University's Board of Trustees, confident the proposed mission statement and guiding principle accurately preserved Stockton's traditional commitments while providing for a sharper focus on the future, adopted the revised language in July 2017 (I.1c.2).

To imbed our new mission, vision, and values within the institution's structure, University leaders launched Stockton's new strategic planning cycle to guide institutional outcomes (goals)

impacting all stakeholders (I.1a.3, I.1d.1). Throughout the following year, Stockton initially aligned five strategic priorities with the guiding principle and new mission, vision, and values documents: Inclusive Student Success (ISS), Campus Community, Communication, and Shared Governance (CCCSG), Teaching and Learning (T&L), Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM), and Financial Sustainability (FS). The University community then engaged in another multi-year, campus-wide process of discussion and refinement, with a sixth priority, Diversity and Inclusion (D&I), added to the initial five.

Relationship of Standard I to Self-Study Priorities

This first chapter of the Self Study focuses on institutional goals from the first three, mission-centric, institutional priorities: Inclusive Student Success (ISS), Diversity and Inclusion (D&I), and Teaching and Learning (T&L).

This and all subsequent chapters will illustrate how responsibility cascades throughout the institution through these goals, which guide planning, decision-making, assessment, and resource allocation decisions (I.1d.2).

II. Findings

Based on a careful review of the evidence, the Standard I Working Group finds that Stockton University meets the criteria and all components for Standard I as well as the Requirements for Affiliation 2, 7, and 10.

Even as University leaders prepared to launch the 2020-25 strategic planning cycle, Stockton's community was simultaneously closing out the last implementation and assessment phases of Stockton 2020, the strategic plan that had guided Stockton's institutional goals from 2010 to 2020. Divisional executives completed annual reports that measured the institution's progress on institutional goals comprising Stockton 2020. Deans, directors, and other managers had also aligned their annual reports to these former priorities - Learning, Engagement, Global Awareness, and Sustainability (LEGS)- that had guided the University's strategy for the past decade (I.1d.3). In addition to these regular reports, the Stockton 2020 Steering Committee also published institutional-level close-out reports, demonstrating how Stockton 2020's institutional goals supported scholarly activity and the positive assessment outcomes from the previous strategic planning cycle (I.1e.1, I.1f.1, I.1g.2, I.4.1). The intentional choice to close out Stockton 2020 with a comprehensive review of all related accomplishments represents a complete cycle of periodic assessment. The projects in these reports span scholarly and creative activity and are published prominently on our website, including assessment of each initiative (I.1e.1, I.1f.1, I.1g.2, I.4.1).

During this overlapping period between our strategic planning and MSCHE accreditation processes between 2017 and 2020, the Board of Trustees approved revisions to Policy I-12 Strategic and Annual Planning (I.1d.4). This policy specifically considers internal and external stakeholders (1.1b), sets institutional goals appropriate to higher education and aligned to our mission (I.2), and requires that unit and divisional plans and goals match the University's strategic plan and priorities (1.1d).

After a full year of University-wide meetings (I.1a.3, I.1d.1) and sometimes spirited discussions, Stockton's BOT formally endorsed Stockton *Strategic Plan 2025: Choosing Our Path* in September 2019 (I.1c.3). Ultimately, the planning teams for each of the six priorities, each led by a faculty member and administrator, established implementation goals that now guide divisional and unit planning throughout the institution (I.1d.2).

Stockton Chooses Inclusive Student Success Goals

As noted above, Stockton's top priority in this new strategic planning cycle is to promote Inclusive Student Success, pursuing four main institutional goals (I.1f.2, I.2.1, I.3.1):

1. Expand Student Health, Safety, and Well-Being: Develop a student health, safety, and well-being strategic plan.
2. Cultivate an Inclusive Campus Community: Enhance cross-divisional efforts to increase students' sense of belonging, engagement, and development.
3. Promote Equitable Educational Access and Academic Achievement: Reduce equity gaps in high-impact learning opportunities and academic achievement indicators (such as GPA, academic honors, degree completion, etc.).
4. Foster Post-Graduate Success: Increase six-month post-graduate employment and degree program enrollment rates from 82% to 85% by 2025.

Given these emphases, Student Affairs personnel are the primary leaders of initiatives to fulfill these ISS goals. As Chapters III, IV and VI illustrate in more detail, these goals also directly inform how Stockton has re-allocated resources to provide administrative, educational, and student support services consistent with our mission (I.1f.2, I.2.1, I.3.1).

Each year, the Division of Student Affairs produces an Annual Impact Report to assess progress (I.4.2, I.4.3, I.4.4) and illustrate how well the division's and units' goals align with institutional goals (I.1d and I.3). They also capture the tangible ways in which these goals are achieved as well as how they follow Stockton's mission-driven commitment to increase opportunities that include more students from underrepresented groups.

For example, the Division of Student Affairs set a unit-aligned goal to successfully apply for a second Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) program on the new Atlantic City campus. At the time, only 12 of the 57 New Jersey EOF-sponsored programs, designed to provide financial assistance and support services (e.g., counseling, tutoring, and developmental coursework) to students from educationally- and economically-disadvantaged backgrounds, were located south of Trenton, a clear gap in the southern region of the state (I.1d.5). The application was successful and helped established a second University EOF cohort in Atlantic City, growing the total number of EOF students from 85 to 135. More details about the ways in which the EOF-AC grant optimizes funding to participate in a credit-bearing pre-college summer academy, receive semesterly grants, and provide retention specialists to guide and support EOF-AC students, appear in Chapter 3 and on our website (I.3.2).

Stockton Chooses Diversity and Inclusion Goals

Stockton's diversity statement, originally drafted in 2005, has been one of several guideposts for the University's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. In fall 2017, the Chief Officer for Diversity and Inclusion, along with the University-wide Committee on Campus Diversity and Inclusive Excellence (CCDIE), reviewed and revised this statement, renaming it the Statement on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and updating its framing (I.1g.3, I.2.2). The 2017 revision forged a pathway to connecting goals and priorities to the University's diversity, equity, and inclusion aspirations with a focus on inquiry and evidence.

Stockton continued this pathway in its *Strategic Plan 2025* document, where D&I goals reflect the University's commitment to:
1. **Promote and Assess an Inclusive Campus Community:** Develop new and enhance existing programs and initiatives that contribute to an inclusive campus community.
2. **Enhance Faculty and Staff Diversity:** Build and cultivate a base of institutions (starting with minority-serving institutions) and disciplinary association caucuses to promote diversity in Stockton's faculty, managerial, and professional staff applicant pools.
3. **Promote and Assess a Comprehensive Diversity and Inclusion Education:** Develop and enhance sustainable diversity and inclusion education for the campus community to support employee and student success and belonging.

This formative work was put into action during the COVID-19 pandemic when racial inequality exacerbated by inequitable impacts of the disease increased attention to systemic racism. In response, Stockton Board of Trustees passed a resolution at its July 2020 meeting calling for an even more focused Commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Social Justice that began with reaffirmation of diversity and inclusion in Stockton's mission and included a strong commitment to funding, programs, structures, and policies aligned to those aspects of the mission (I.1c.4). Consequently, the University established the specifically-focused Office of

Diversity and Inclusion, drawn from the former Office of Institutional Diversity and Equity, to better concentrate on these three institutional goals. These areas continue to engage stakeholders from every division in planning, policy (I.1c.5, 1.1d.6), and procedural guidance (I.1d.7), related unit-level goal setting, leading and/or participating on task forces, conducting campus climate assessments, implementing projects, and developing programs that promote diversity and inclusion among students, faculty, and staff, including prospective employees (I.1g.3, I.2.2). This work is so important that the BOT read, reviewed, and accepted revisions related to this structural change in Policy I-68 during its February and May 2021 meetings (I.1c.6, 1.1d.8).

To continue providing support for developing more inclusive search and selection practices for D&I Goal 2, for example, Stockton increased funding for our Search Advocate program. Reallocated resources also supported the co-founding of a National Search Advocate Community of Practice with Oregon State University to benchmark against higher education search advocate programs across the country (I.1d.9).

The University has earned national recognition for its many successful initiatives (I.1d.10), most notably receipt, for multiple years, of the Higher Education Excellence in Diversity (HEED) award granted by *Insight in Diversity* magazine (I.1f.3). Additional evidence of impact can be found in periodic reports, the most recent of which spans 2018-2021, adjusted for COVID-19 (I.1f.4).

Additionally, Stockton views compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Rehabilitation Act (504 specifically) as part of its diversity and inclusion efforts. Since 2015, the ADA-504 Steering Committee has provided ongoing assistance to the Chief Officer/ADA-504 Coordinator in facilitating Stockton's efforts to ensure that the University's (1) living, learning and working environments are accessible to persons with disabilities, and (2) procedures, practices and plans for addressing disability issues are responsive to the current understanding of the ADA and Rehabilitation Act requirements.

In keeping with its traditional approach to implementing University-wide initiatives, Stockton's stakeholders also engaged in processes to develop a more inclusive admissions approach. The Division of Enrollment Management developed a Strategic Enrollment Plan (I.2.3) with closely-measured (I.1f.5), published goals, which led to division team members working extensively with the Faculty Senate Task Force on Test Optional Recommendations (I.1a.4). While stakeholders differed on some key aspects of the revised approach, most agreed on the importance of reducing exclusivity barriers to admission associated with standardized tests. After gathering input from multiple constituencies, Stockton's leadership implemented a fully-detailed, widely-publicized Test Optional approach (I.1f.6) to University admissions and to awarding merit scholarships. Ongoing implementation work is detailed in Chapters III and IV.

The Division of Academic Affairs has also been working steadily on developing new degree programs to align with all three D&I institutional goals. As outlined in the third strategic priority below, and in more detail in Chapter III, faculty members across schools regularly collaborate to initiate ideas for new academic programs. These proposals are subsequently vetted by the Faculty Senate, Deans Council, and Provost Council, before the Provost presents applications to the President's Cabinet and, ultimately, the Board of Trustees. If approved, proposals are then submitted to State agencies for final review. The Faculty Senate Annual Reports (I.2.4, I.3.3) summarize this process for the most recent of these new programs, among them, a major in Africana Studies, first reviewed at the Senate's December 2017 meeting and summarized in the 2017-18 Senate Annual Report (I.2.5, I.3.4).

Moreover, the Division of Facilities & Operations continuously updates the Facilities Master Plan (1.1d.11) with construction projects designed to allocate physical space that celebrates D&I Goals 1-3. These spaces include the Military and Veteran's Lounge (I.1d.12), Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Center (WGSC) Lounge (I.1d.13) and plans for a Multicultural Center (I.1d.14). The Vice President of Student Affairs currently leads a committee of diverse faculty, students, and administrators, who are collaborating with Facilities & Operations staff to develop physical and operational objectives for this latest initiative (I.3).

The President's Cabinet has been reporting regularly and publicly on each division's progress on related initiatives to dismantle injustice and strive toward racial equality (I.1f.7, I.1g.4), including these recent highlights:
- Expanding our Search Advocate program to increase equity and inclusivity in search and selection practices;
- Offering professional development in topics such as Understanding Microaggressions;
- Creating a new Academic Director of Strategic Initiatives position for AY 2020-21 dedicated to integrating instruction about race and racial discrimination throughout the curriculum;
- Establishing a new Office of Diversity and Inclusion;
- Increasing the University's knowledge of minority-serving institutions, their academic programs, and ways in which outreach and collaborations might occur;
- Administering the National Assessment of Collegiate Campus Climates (NACCC) survey;
- Revising merit scholarship award criteria to recognize and eliminate negative impacts of structurally racist components;
- Emphasizing racial justice themes in philanthropic and foundation fund-seeking; and
- Creating a statewide Diversity and Inclusion Committee of the New Jersey Athletic Conference (NJAC).

Stockton Chooses Teaching and Learning (T&L) Goals

Finally, the third mission-centric institutional priority has four related goals, all specifically focused on guiding the academic core of teaching (I.3) and scholarly activity (I.1e):

1. Advance Academic Assessment: Develop, execute, and evaluate an academic assessment plan that aligns institutional goals with program learning objectives and provides data about student outcomes.

2. Strengthen Academic Programming: Consistently review existing curricula and experiment with new academic programs to respond to emerging fields and pedagogical opportunities.

3. Embrace Diverse Teaching and Learning Styles: Diversify course delivery methods and scheduling, including online and hybrid formats, programming for summer and adult learners, and professional development opportunities, to ensure that academic offerings are broadly available to a diverse range of learners.

4. Enhance the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL): Promote a culture of teaching and learning supported by the promotion and tenure process that encourages systematic inquiry into student learning, builds an institutional resource repository, and makes inquiry findings public.

Over the years, the Division of Academic Affairs has maintained a systematic, well-understood, and well-used Academic Plan (I.1g.5). In keeping with Teaching and Learning Goal 1, faculty and staff who are responsible for academic assessment systematically retrieve their annual templates from an Academic Reporting webpage and data from a Blackboard site (I.1f.8). In accordance with the terms and conditions of 2020 Faculty Administrative Agreements, designated faculty members work directly with a Director of Academic Assessment to complete their annual reports (I.3.5). Those reports are then submitted to their school deans, who provide feedback and forward to the Provost.

To unify D&I Goal 3 with T&L Goal 1, starting in Academic Year 2020-21, academic reporting templates now also include prompts for each academic program to report their work on diversifying the curriculum and adopting more inclusive practices (I.1d.15).

In these ways, the T&L Goal 1 continues to focus on advancing continuous improvement informed by results of student learning outcomes, described in greater detail throughout Chapter V.

Guided by the institutional priorities and goals outlined in this chapter, each academic and student support program maintains its own learning outcomes to delineate a path for student success in each field of study. Specific Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs described more fully in Chapter V) are published on each academic program's website, allowing any member of the public to access links to all 160 areas of study (I.3.6).

As noted earlier, developing academic programs such as the Africana Studies major specifically to attract and include more students and faculty from diverse and underrepresented populations to the University, unifies D&I Goal 3 with T&L Goal 2: Strengthen Academic Programming. While the number of majors in this program remains modest, nine courses are being offered in the fall 2021 term, bringing opportunities to deliver this content to a much broader cross-section of students. In addition, these two goals and the Board of Trustees Resolution have inspired faculty across many academic programs to consider ways in which their curricula address and/or incorporate present-day political and/or social justice issues. In general, diversification of the curriculum intensified after summer 2020 events, with immediate responses from faculty, staff, and administrators, as updated on the President's webpage (I.1f.7, I.1g.4).

In addition, many academic program faculty members who examine annual and Periodic Program Review (formerly five-year, now PPR) results have proposed new programs and/or restructured programs based on assessment results. Chapter III provides details about the faculty-led institutional processes for developing new programs; Chapter V analyzes how each of these processes are assessed and how the results inform change; Chapter VI aligns allocations to results; and Chapter VII highlights shared governance roles in program approval.

Moreover, as T&L Goal 2 directs, Stockton faculty have developed new programs to explore emerging fields and pedagogical opportunities. Since the last PRR, the University has added six new graduate degrees, seven undergraduate programs, five new undergraduate concentrations, five new graduate concentrations, and four undergraduate minors. Additional programming is in various stages of faculty review, from redevelopment to rejection/revision (I.3.7).

In pursuing T&L Goal 3 to embrace diverse teaching and learning styles, Stockton has reorganized its formerly separate Institute for Faculty Development and Center for Learning Design. Although both entities have strengthened pedagogical practices over the past two decades, consolidating these resources into a unified Center for Teaching and Learning Design (CTLD), under the leadership of a full-time director with full-time professional staff, resulted in a swift, highly effective response to shifting course delivery modes throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. The CTLD mission document is aligned with the University mission and goals, and the annual reports measure the center's progress (I.1f.9). The Office of Global Engagement also provides faculty, staff, and students with resources to diversify teaching and learning through high-impact practices such as Study Abroad (I.1d.16).

Finally, T&L Goal 4 (advancing scholarly activity particularly focused on teaching and learning) recognizes that "faculty members bring both recognition in their respective fields and a strong commitment to teaching, informed by their research, scholarship, and creative endeavors" (I.1e.2). This goal also aligns with page 3 of University procedure (I.1e.3, I.1g.6) that requires periodic updates to our academic program (I.1e.4, I.1g.7), School (I.1e.5, I.1g.8) and University (I.1e.6, I.1g.9) standards.

Stockton also allocates resources to support both faculty and students engaged in T&L Goal 4 (I.1d.17, I.2.6). In general, all tenure-eligible faculty have access to a $1,200 Professional Development allocation within their schools every year, and pre-tenure faculty receive up to an additional $1,400 in support. Moreover, all faculty can apply to several competitive cycles of internal grants (I.1e.7). The Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP) provides staff support to help faculty with writing and managing external grants (more details in Chapter III).

COVID-19 has had broad effects on faculty professional development and engagement activities, in part due to the cancellation of research and conference travel activities and in part due to institutional fiscal constraints that suspended most Research and Professional Development. Sabbaticals, career development funds, and pre-tenured faculty funding continued through the crisis, and school-based professional development funding continued at reduced amounts. In recognition of the effects of COVID-19 on faculty reappointment, tenure and promotion, the University and the Stockton Federation of Teachers (SFT) developed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) that allowed programs to review and consider revising their Standards for Tenure and Promotion, an additional revision opportunity provided for in the institution's standing Procedure (I.1e.8). The University also reached an agreement with the faculty union to augment professional development funds for all faculty during FY22 for up to $1,500 to mitigate the impact of potential lost scholarly opportunities during COVID-19.

Opportunities for Improvement and Innovation

Based on the Standard I: Mission and Goals Working Group's analysis and evidence presented, Stockton has met this standard and plans the following improvements:

- **Strengthen strategic goal monitoring:** by linking the Strategic Planning web page to assessment web pages such as those from the President's Annual Report and the Key Performance Indicator Dashboards, stakeholders will see clearer connections.
- **Update all levels of faculty promotion and tenure standards:** program, school, and university levels of review should incorporate Inclusive Student Success, Diversity and Inclusion, and Teaching and Learning into their updated standards for reappointment, tenure, and/or promotion.

Standard II: Ethics and Integrity

I.   Introduction

Stockton University upholds the highest standards of ethics and integrity in its operations across its main campus and four instructional sites, as well as through its commitment to transparency and accountability in its institutional policies and procedures. Stockton is deeply invested in cultivating and retaining public trust and providing an inclusive, supportive environment for students, staff, and faculty. As such, the University makes a conscious effort to periodically assess all policies and procedures to ensure adherence to its high standards. Through these ongoing assessments, the University is proactive in addressing any shortcomings by implementing new approaches and procedures to ensure the University sustains a campus-wide culture valuing and upholding principles of equity, inclusion, ethics, and integrity.

Relationship of Standard II to Self-Study Priorities

Stockton's commitment to ethics and integrity is tightly linked to the success of its six strategic plan priorities. The priorities with highest relevance to Standard II are 1) Inclusive Student Success (ISS); 2) Diversity and Inclusion (D&I); 3) Teaching and Learning (T&L); and 4) Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM). This section provides a brief summary of this standard and these four priorities, with additional details and evidence in the Findings section that follows.

In summary, the University's status as an Anchor Institution for the greater southern New Jersey region is a testament to priorities ISS and D&I, as are the University's ongoing commitment to deliver affordable and accessible education for first-generation, underrepresented, and underserved student populations. Likewise, these priorities help ensure that Stockton's institutional culture respects diversity, equity, and difference (II.2). The University has also acted decisively to address concerns about diversity and inclusion, introducing new positions that increase diversity and inclusion; creating and sustaining new programming and initiatives to increase retention and academic success among its first-generation students; and creating new scholarship opportunities for underrepresented and underserved student populations, pivoting from a focus on merit-based scholarships to need-based scholarships (II.7).

Similarly, our D&I priority assures adherence to ethical policies and procedures in employment, including practices pertaining to hiring, onboarding, training, and responding to faculty and staff concerns. In these ways, Stockton consistently strives to ensure all faculty and staff feel welcome, are in possession of the means and resources necessary to succeed, have access to multiple avenues for registering concerns and/or filing grievances, and receive ethical and equity-based resolutions (II.3 and II.5).

In keeping with T&L, Stockton's diverse academic programming – its highly-interdisciplinary Schools, unique academic programs, and cutting-edge curricular offerings – engage students in a wide range of ideas, concepts, and cultures through a modern, globalized approach to liberal arts education. Stockton aligns its T&L priority to its commitments to academic and intellectual freedom (II.1). Concurrently, Stockton is fulfilling its SEM priority by increasing the number and diversity of students who have access to these opportunities for academic excellence.

Finally, the University complies with all federal, state, and Middle States Commission policies, regulations, and Requirements for Affiliation, and remains transparent and accountable in all communication, internal and external, to maintain the consistent trust of its stakeholders.

II. Findings

Based on a careful review of the evidence, the Working Group finds that Stockton University meets the criteria and all components for Standard II as well as all Requirements for Affiliation.

Stockton Chooses a Commitment to Academic Freedom (II.1)

Stockton's mission highlights the University's dedication to lifelong learning that relies on a creative, interdisciplinary approach to the liberal arts, sciences, and professional education (II.1.1, II.8b.1). To meet our mission, Stockton offers a truly unique learning atmosphere as evidenced by our intellectually expressive curriculum. For example, courses such as The Detective: Foreign Intrigues, Satire: Swift to SNL, Visions of Utopia, and Ordinary Evil demonstrate the confidence and trust placed in faculty expertise, academic freedom, and dedication to student learning.

The University's commitment to academic and intellectual freedom is codified in Article V of the statewide collective bargaining Master Agreement and has been codified in University policy since 1975 (II.1.2). Our commitment to intellectual expression has also facilitated new interdisciplinary majors such as Coastal Zone Management and minors such as Migration Studies, Cannabis Studies, and Disability Studies. The purposeful, meticulous, and collaborative crafting of curricula (detailed further in Chapter III) is another indicator of Stockton's strong commitment to academic and intellectual freedom. Faculty are empowered to design curricula using their individual expertise, and these are reviewed in meetings open to all faculty (II.1.3).

With regard to intellectual property rights, the University also has a policy on Computer Usage and Copyrights, which addresses the Acceptable Usage Standards of Computing and Communication Technology (II.1.4). All students, faculty, and staff review a copy of these standards whenever they are using protected software, files, or documents. Faculty course materials are also protected at the University. Although the Center for Teaching and Learning Design shares syllabi templates and other course resources, syllabi that individual instructors create are considered their intellectual property, Article XXXIII (II.1.5, II.1.6).

While the University affirms its dedication to the freedoms mentioned above and codified in Articles V and XXXIII of the collective bargaining Master Agreement, it is also galvanized to act when freedom of expression is misused. On November 21, 2017, the Faculty Senate discussed the ways in which an increasingly hostile national climate was impacting student behavior in the classroom. By a vote of 26 to 0, the Senate appointed a Task Force on Hate Speech in Academia to examine hate speech on campus and on social media, to research laws on the differences between free speech and hate speech, and to examine the University's existing policies and those of comparable institutions (II.1.7, II.2.1). In response, the University augmented its Bias Prevention webpage with additional resources to help the community balance the tension between the freedom of the First Amendment and the impact of hate speech (II.1.8, II.2.2).

Through its shared governance approach – specifically, the creation of, and subsequent recommendations from, another University-wide task force (the Task Force on Email Communication) – Stockton has more recently addressed mass electronic messaging across campus. Historically, the University had allowed for mass emailing of all faculty and staff with no overriding procedures concerning content or "opt out" option for faculty or staff. As such, the task force published guidelines to balance freedom of expression aimed at maintaining a climate of respect via mass email communications that are now in use under Procedure 4155 (II.1.9).

Finally, Stockton adheres to all procedures set forth by the Public Employment Relations Commission (PERC) of the State of New Jersey regarding intellectual property and scholarly works in accordance with the New Jersey Employer-Employee Relations Act and its governing regulations. Accordingly, no college or university can impose any negotiable terms and conditions without exhausting PERC's impasse procedures.

Stockton Chooses a Campus Climate of Diversity and Respect (II.2)
The University's mission affirms practices that create and sustain a community both inclusive of and committed to enhancing diversity (II.1.1, II.8b.1). The statement not only references respect for diversity along multiple registers, but also establishes: 1) firm commitments to equity; 2) the pursuit of academic and community-based policies that advance issues of environmental and social justice, cultural competency, and global-mindedness; and 3) fairness in hiring and administrative practice. Stockton's 2025 Strategic Plan also affirms the University's commitment to advance issues of diversity and inclusion by supporting an environment that is free from prejudice and discrimination at all levels, as well continually enhancing diversity and inclusion training and education for students and employees (II.1.10).

Moreover, as detailed in Chapter I, Stockton continues to post public updates on its Board of Trustees resolution, reaffirming the University's commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice (II.2.3, II.6.1). Stockton has also updated its formal Statement on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (II.2.4) and reshaped its Office of Diversity & Inclusion. The University

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currently has several D&I committees and initiatives: the 2025 Strategic Plan Diversity and Inclusion Committee (II.2.5), the ADA Act 504 Steering Committee (II.2.6), the Campus Committee on Diversity and Inclusive Excellence (II.2.7); the Culture of Respect initiative (II.2.8); the Celebrate Diversity events and programming initiatives (II.2.9); the Cultural Competence and Cultural Humility Collaborative (II.2.10); a Search Advocate Program to ensure diversity and inclusion in hiring practices (II.2.11, II.5.1); and the #StocktonVoices social media series (II.2.12).

What advice would you share with other members of the campus community who want to get involved in diversity, equity, inclusion and social justice at Stockton?

"My advice would be to start within your community. Most people think you've gotta join a big social justice organization or you're not really doing anything to make change. That's false. Start with your friends. Have the uncomfortable conversation about race and racism with your roommate or the people on your floor. Sit down and talk with your family about it. This changes the mindsets of those around you so that they can go out and have that conversation with other people they encounter."   *~Shavon, Criminal Justice '22*

Finally, to cultivate cross-divisional efforts in its ongoing attempts to address racial equity in education, the University has created two new positions – the Director of Strategic Initiatives (a one-year position in Academic Affairs) and the Director for Academic Achievement Programs (an ongoing position in Student Affairs). Chapter III details the work completed by the Director of Strategic Initiatives, and Chapter IV describes how the Director of Academic Achievement Programs is working to expand engagement opportunities for first-generation students and equitable student access to high impact practices (HIPs) as part of First Ospreys plans.

Additionally, Stockton created a Presidential Task Force on Gender-Based Violence in 2019, charged with reviewing the effectiveness of current institutional practices as well as best practices at similar institutions; using evidence-based research to recommend changes to existing University procedures; making recommendations for implementation at Stockton; examining existing programmatic initiatives and integrating training on gender-based violence; and promoting strategies for communicating changes to policies, procedures, and practices to the University community (II.2.13). The task force consists of five discrete subcommittees: Culture of Respect/Assessment/Evaluation; Education; Supportive Measures and Services; LGBTQIA+; and Title IX. Each subcommittee has a mix of faculty, staff, and student members who contribute toward meeting the subcommittees' goals. The task force delivered a second report to the President's Office in spring 2021 (II.2.14) and will conclude its work in AY 2021-22.

Campus Climate Surveys
To measure campus climate, the University developed and disseminated a Campus Climate Survey for Faculty and Staff in 2016-17 (II.2.15) and a Campus Climate Survey for Students in 2018 (II.2.16). The surveys served as the catalysts for several new programs and initiatives focused on diversity that have emerged in the last two years, referenced below.

To strengthen the groundwork for ISS Goal 1, student health and wellness plan, the University also assessed the student body in relation to the campus climate in the fall 2020 National Assessment of Collegiate Campus Climates (NACCC). The USC Race and Equity Center, which administers and evaluates the 699 responses, has provided a report that indicates a few areas where the University will follow up to strengthen inclusion. Similarly, the National Collegiate Health Assessment (Healthy Minds) from fall 2021 shows some areas for following up (II.9.1).

Diverse Student and Faculty Populations
Stockton has increased diversity in the general student body over the last several years, as Table II.2.1 demonstrates, increasing its overall diverse student percentage to 39% by fall 2021.
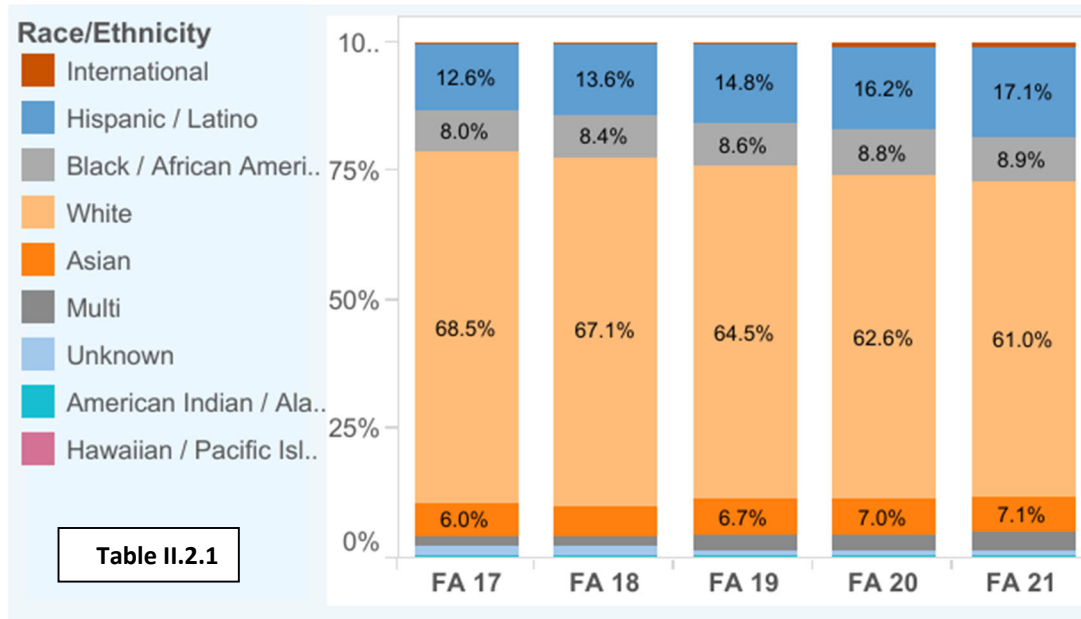
Table II.2.1

Stockton also continues to diversify its faculty, making incremental gains since fall 2018. As noted in Table II.2.2, diverse faculty numbers have increased from 106 to 107 (from 31% to 32%). The University also publishes staff and managerial data on race/ethnicity (II.2.17).

Full-Time Faculty by Gender by Race/Ethnicity

	Fall 2018			Fall 2019			Fall 2020		
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
International	7	9	16	7	9	16	6	8	14
Hispanic / Latino	7	12	19	7	12	19	6	12	18
Black / African Ameri..	13	15	28	15	16	31	15	17	32
American Indian / Ala..		1	1		1	1		1	1
Asian	22	17	39	23	17	40	22	16	38
Native Hawaiian / Pa..								1	1
White	135	102	237	143	100	243	134	94	228
Two or more races	2	1	3	2		2	2		2
Race and Eth. Unk								1	1
Grand Total	186	157	343	197	155	352	185	150	335

Table II.2.2 is a snapshot of live data that web site visitors can disaggregate by rank & tenure

At the time of this Self Study, Stockton University's Office of Development had also secured a major gift to support inclusive student success (II.2.18) and established a fund dedicated to equity (II.2.19).

Stockton Chooses Clear, Accessible Grievance Policies (II.3)
Stockton maintains grievance policies and procedures that provide students and employees appropriate mechanisms to present their concerns to the University for fair, prompt, and thorough resolution (II.3.1).

Students
Students may address complaints through several processes, including the Student Code of Conduct (II.3.2) and a Campus Hearing Board for violations of the same (II.3.3). The Campus Hearing Board has extensive procedures that allow students who have been charged with a violation to defend themselves, including levels of, and mechanisms for, appeal.

The University's Academic Honesty Policy details the policy to be followed if a student is charged with academic dishonesty (II.3.4, II.9.2). The policy also outlines a procedure by which students may appeal the charge and/or sanction, including a student's written appeal that results in an Academic Honesty Appeals Board hearing. Similarly, the University also has established a policy and procedure for students to appeal their grades (II.3.5).

Employees: Faculty and Staff
Stockton's first-line approach is to settle complaints amicably through discussions between the employee and the supervisor before engaging formal procedures for resolving grievances (II.3.6). Additionally, both students and employees can opt to work with the University's Ombuds

Office (II.3.7, II.9.3) or through the Mediation and Problem Solving (MAPS) program (II.3.8). All parties must agree to participate in either process and come to an agreement or settlement, to resolve the conflict. If no agreement or settlement can be made, student cases will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct; employees will follow the appropriate formal procedure. There is also an Employee Campus Hearing Board, charged with conducting administrative hearings for employees accused of violating the Campus Code of Conduct (II.3.9). Procedures for appealing personnel decisions are referenced in Chapter VI.

Stockton Chooses Clear Ways to Prevent Conflicts of Interest (II.4)

Stockton provides guidance for faculty and employees about how to avoid conflict of interest. As a New Jersey state institution, the University adheres to N.J.S.A. 52:13D-12, the New Jersey State Conflicts of Interest Law, and faculty and employees complete an annual disclosure form if they engage in paid activities beyond University employment.

Stockton also has numerous policies and safeguards to identify and resolve conflicts of interest. The University requires all employees and Board members to follow its Principles of Ethical Conduct (II.4.1), based on New Jersey's statutory and administrative code.

In addition, Stockton has a designated Ethics Liaison Officer (ELO), who addresses employees' ethics questions, oversees confidential ethics violation reporting, provides links to online ethics training, and supplies ethics guidelines on employees receiving gifts and any charitable and political activities in which employees are engaged (II.4.2).

Finally, academic activities include specific conflict of interest avoidance guidelines. For example, researchers must identify conflicts of interest in their Institutional Review Board (IRB) applications and IRB members must recuse themselves from reviewing applications for studies in which they have a conflict of interest (II.4.3). Similarly, Faculty Review Committee (FRC) members recuse themselves from discussing and voting on applications for tenure for faculty involved in their own programs. They are also prohibited from applying for promotion or range adjustment during and one year after completing a term on the FRC, as stated in the Procedure for Evaluation of Faculty and Library Faculty (II.4.4).

Stockton Chooses Continuous Improvement to Fair, Impartial Employment Practices (II.5)

The University emphasizes fair and impartial practices in hiring and employment and considers oversight and transparency as fundamental elements to the process. In the hiring and promotion of employees of every category, the utmost care is applied to ensure compliance with union contracts, State of New Jersey guidelines, federal laws, and equal opportunity laws and best practices. Stockton upholds a transparent system wherein its processes are clearly stated.

The inclusion of search advocates in the search procedure for Managerial and Unclassified positions adds an additional layer of impartiality and accountability (II.2.11, II.5.1). The Office of

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Human Resources has established a well-curated, public website that includes policies and procedures, including recruiting, hiring, and employment practices (II.5.2). In 2019, individuals from the Office of the Provost, the Office of Human Resources, and the former Office of Institutional Diversity and Equity collaborated to convert search process flowcharts into search Procedure 6101. Stockton's job search procedure demonstrates the University commitment to fair, equitable, and inclusive employment searches to attract diverse groups of job applicants (II.5.3).

As discussed in Chapter I, in 2020, the University President restructured the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, creating the new position of Chief Officer for Diversity and Inclusion, who oversees Diversity and Inclusion; Code of Ethics; the ADA-Rehabilitation Act Steering Committee; the Bias Prevention Education and Review Team (BPERT); and compliance with New Jersey State Ethics Commission rules and Conflicts of Interest Law. The restructuring also created the Director of Title IX and EEO Compliance to oversee Title IX; investigate complaints alleging sexual misconduct, EEO violations, and related Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) claims; and general University compliance matters. All faculty and staff are required to complete a Title IX and Sexual Harassment Prevention for Employees course through SafeColleges (II.5.4). Were a complaint to arise, the office of Equal Opportunity and Institutional Compliance follow processes established in the New Jersey Civil Service Commission's own guidance.

Stockton Chooses Truthfulness in Internal and External Communications (II.6)
Through University Relations and Marketing (URM) and the Office of Institutional Research (IR), Stockton offers full transparency and truthfulness to the public when it comes to sharing news and data. On their featured news site, URM makes it easy to access any ongoing news related to the University, as well as public relations announcements (II.6.2). URM also keeps an archive of publications, which includes publications such as the President's Annual Report and Human Resource's Annual Highlights (II.6.3). For data transparency, IR maintains all enrollment data by degree level, major, gender, race/ethnicity, degrees granted, retention rates, graduation rates, faculty trends, and many other key data points, which are available to the public (II.6.4).

For external communications, URM has directed several advertising campaigns such as Choose Stockton, which includes testimonials from actual Stockton students and why aspiring students should "Choose Stockton" (II.6.5). The Office of Admissions website contains easy-to-access links with valuable information (II.6.6). These include academic programs of study, financial aid and scholarship information, career education and development services, campus tours and open house information, honors programs (for both incoming first-year (II.6.7) and transfer students (II.6.8)), and the Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) (II.7a.1).

Stockton Chooses Affordability and Accessibility of Education (II.7)

Stockton is committed to increasing affordability and accessibility for students. Two examples of such programs are the High School Dual Credit Program (II.7a.2) and the GOALS GEAR UP Program (Goal Oriented Advocates Leaders and Scholars) (II.7a.3). The GOALS GEAR UP Program seeks to increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. The program serves over 180 students in the 7th through 12th grades from the Atlantic City and Pleasantville Public School Districts. (II.7a.4)

Table II.7.1

The Dual Credit Program offers high school students the opportunity to earn college credits that are transferable to New Jersey's public colleges and universities while still in high school. Participating students

YEAR	# of DCHS Student Enrollees[1]	# of DCHS Course Sections	# of DCHS High School Partners
2012-13	271	29	6
2013-14	419	66	12
2014-15	571	114	15
2015-16	444	81	15
2016-17	643	113	18
2017-18	870	101	20
2018-19	873	145	28
2019-20	970	159	33

*As of 6/16/20, AY21 has 24 new/approved courses, 5 new programs/areas of study, and 3 new schools.

receive a reduced tuition rate with all additional fees waived. Students eligible for free/reduced lunch earn their dual credits at no charge. As noted above in Table II.7.1, student enrollment has more than tripled from 271 in 2012-2013 to 970 in 2019-2020.

In addition to federal and state aid programs administered by the Office of Financial Aid, the Office of Admissions and the Stockton University Foundation award institutional merit- and need-based awards (II.7b.1; II.7b.2), and the University maintains a comprehensive list of financial resources for students (II.7b.3). Finally, as noted in Table II.7.2, the University has continued to increase numbers of Pell Grant recipients within the student body.

	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
Enrollment	7,062	7,240	7,516	7,539	7,714	7,808	7,854	8,275	8,604	8,846	8,392
Awarded	2,369	2,564	2,679	2,685	2,736	2,849	3,139	3,277	3,445	3,548	3,505
Percent	34%	35%	36%	36%	35%	36%	40%	40%	40%	40%	42%

Table II.7.2

Stockton Chooses Federal, State, and Commission Compliance (II.8)
Since its initial Middle States Accreditation in 1975, Stockton has maintained and documented compliance with the Commission Requirements of Affiliation, as evidenced in Table II.8.1, our Institutional Federal Compliance Report (II.8.1), and Table II.8.2. In accordance with

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II.8a, Stockton readily discloses assessment and outcome information, including institution-wide assessments such as the NSSE, graduation and retention rates, and certification and licensing board pass rates (II.8a.1).

Stockton has multiple methods of ensuring that substantive changes affecting institutional mission, goals, programs, operations, sites, and other material issues are disclosed to those affected. The Policy and Procedure Development, Review, and Approval process detailed in section II.9 below includes disclosing newly developed or changed policies and procedures, including prompt posting on Stockton's website and removal of deleted material (II.8.2). The Open Public Meetings Act provides a structure for open meetings and public dissemination of University changes and updates (II.8.3).

Crosswalk of Compliance with Commission Requirements of Affiliation

Requirement of Affiliation	Location	Documentation
1. Authorization/Licensure	Chapter II	2015 Licensure Reaffirmation (II.8b.2)
2. Operational	Chapter I	Strategic Enrollment Indicators (II.8b.3)
3. Candidate Institutions	N/A	
4. Communicate in English	All Chapters	Bulletin, Web Site, All Reports
5. Federal and State Regulations	Chapter II	Institutional Federal Compliance Report (II.8.1) and Table II.8.2 (below)
6. Commission Compliance	Chapter II	Statement of Accreditation Status (II.8b.4)
7. Mission and Goals	Chapters I, II	Mission (II.1.1, II.8b.1) and Goals (II.8b.5)
8. Evaluation of Program Outcomes	Chapter V	Educational Effectiveness Plan (II.8b.6)
9. Student Learning Programs: rigor, coherence, and assessment by level	Chapters I, III, V	List of Programs (II.8b.7), Academic Proposal Procedure (II.8b.8), Academic Reporting (II.8b.9)
10. Planning and Goals	Chapter VI	(II.8b.10)
11. Financial Resources	Chapter VI	Fiscal Affairs (II.8b.11)
12. Governance Structure	Chapter VII	(II.8b.12)
13. Governing Board	Chapter VII	(II.8b.13)
14. Accurate Information		Statement of Accreditation Status (II.8b.4)
15. Faculty	Chapter III	(II.8b.14)

Table II.8.1

Documentation of Compliance with Federal, State, and Commission Policy

Policy	Documentation Location
Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)	Student Rights Regarding Access to Student Records (II.8b.15) Process and Form for Release of Records (II.8b.16)
Minimum Standards for Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)	Satisfactory Academic Progress - Policy and Tools (II.8b.17)
Title IX	Title IX Information on Stockton Website (II.8b.18) Comprehensive Rights and Responsibilities Handout for Complainants (II.8b.19) Sexual Misconduct Procedure (II.8b.20)
Equal Opportunity and Institutional Compliance	Handout- Process for EEO Investigation (II.8b.21, II.9.12) Office of Equal Opportunity and Institutional Compliance Website (II.8b.22)
Clery Act & Crime Reporting	Clery Act Compliance (II.8b.23)
Americans with Disabilities Act	Stockton ADA-Rehabilitation Act Steering Committee Annual Report 2015-2016 (II.8b.24) Stockton ADA/504 Report- 2016-2018 (II.8b.25) Accessibility and Accommodation Website (II.8b.26)
Office of Research and Sponsored Programs	Institutional Animal Care and Use (II.8b.27) Research Compliance Policies and Procedures (II.8b.28)
Federal Trade Commission (FTC) Regulation 16 CRT Part 314	Information Security Plan (II.8b.29)
	Open Public Records Act (II.8b.30) Stockton Form for Accessing Open Records (II.8b.31)

Table II.8.2

Stockton Chooses **Periodic Assessment of Policies and Procedures (II.9)**
In 2020, the Office of the President established a Policy Management Team. Currently, the University's entire archive of nearly 300 policies and procedures remain on a three-year review cycle (II.9.4) and are updated on a centralized website (II.9.5).

The University's Internal Audit Procedures and Standards document details Stockton's internal audit process (II.9.6) and the Chief Audit Executive or designee, a role presently filled by the audit firm Baker Tilly, oversees all matters related to Internal Audit's Quality Assurance and Improvement Program (II.9.7). This process ensures adherence to best practices in risk management, control, and governance and continuous ongoing assessments of the strength, viability, and rigor of these policies and procedures (II.9.8).

The Office of Research and Sponsored Programs guarantees the University's adherence to policies on responsible conduct in research (II.9.9; II.9.10). The University maintains a

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stringent conduct code related to issues of academic integrity as well and makes certain that all faculty are familiar with the policy (II.3.4).

As described previously in this chapter, the University continually evaluates and assesses its abilities to provide an open and safe campus learning and working environment through campus climate surveys, including NACCC (II.9.1) and COVID-19 response surveys (II.2.20, II.9.11). Based on feedback from these surveys, the University strives to address concerns in a timely and transparent manner, ensuring accountability throughout the process, and revising practices, policies, and procedures, as necessary. While not an exhaustive list, the University will use these feedback mechanisms to guide changes to practices, policies, and procedures that impact grievance reporting; compliance with ethics and federal and state laws (II.8b.21, II.9.12); academic research, honesty, and integrity; and issues of equity and inclusion among faculty, staff, and students.

III. Opportunities for Improvement and Innovation

Based on the Standard II Ethics and Integrity Working Group's analysis and evidence presented, Stockton has met this standard and plans the following improvements:

- **Strengthen** recruiting and retention practices for diverse faculty and staff.
- **Continue** providing resources to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout the campus community.
- **Increase efforts of** the High School Dual Credit program to recruit diverse students by strengthening relationships with local high school partners.
- **Continue focus on recruiting and retaining students** from underrepresented populations in all majors, with particular emphasis in the STEM and Health Sciences majors; and women in the STEM and non-Nursing Health Sciences majors.

Standard III: Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience

I.   Introduction

The founders of Stockton University wanted to provide public university students with a well-rounded and personalized liberal arts experience. Although the University has grown significantly over the last five of its 50 years, and its pool of students has changed demographically, it nonetheless continues to promote success among the student body with a rigorous, cohesive set of learning experiences both in academic programs and in General Studies that are also responsive to social change and to the evolving needs of our students.

To fulfill the educational mission of the University, Stockton also offers several co-curricular learning opportunities through cross-divisional, collaborative efforts. High-impact learning opportunities, along with significant support programs and resources, serve to enrich the student experience and strive to narrow equity gaps in achievement, retention, and graduation outcomes. While the University takes pride in relatively high aggregate retention and graduation rates, it also works to decrease disparities across race and ethnicity. Specifically, with an undergraduate student body that includes a high percentage of first-generation students and a growing number of students from Underrepresented Minority groups, the University has designed additional learning experiences specifically to reduce inequities across outcomes among historically marginalized populations.

Furthermore, in its commitment to excellence, the University regularly assesses all curricular and co-curricular programs, following best practices within each area of study. Faculty and staff use these results to continuously improve the design and delivery of the student learning experience both in and out of the classroom. Using this evidence-based approach we have made significant changes over time to optimize students' learning experiences, further detailed in Chapter V.

Relationship of Standard III to Institutional Priorities

The first four institutional strategic priorities advance Stockton's educational philosophy and student learning experience: Inclusive Student Success (ISS), Diversity and Inclusion (D&I), Teaching and Learning (T&L), and Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM).

This section briefly summarizes this standard and these four priorities. To advance ISS, we seek to promote equity by focusing on reducing disparities in retention and graduation rates. Regarding D&I, faculty are revamping the curriculum to infuse greater understanding of race and racism among the student body. To enhance T&L, the University assisted faculty in using new modalities in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and has responded to strains placed on faculty in the evaluation process with a union MOA. In alignment with SEM, Stockton created new graduate and undergraduate programs (i.e. Africana Studies, Digital Studies and Computer Information Systems and Computer Science), minors (i.e. Migration and Cannabis Studies), and

five new concentrations in the MBA program, all of which respond to social and workforce changes and assist in recruiting students.
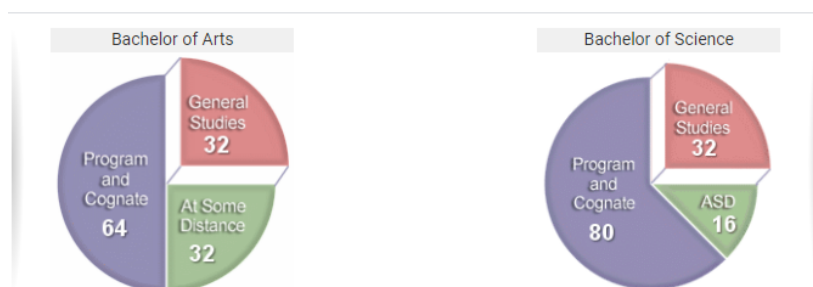
II.   Findings

Based on a careful review of the evidence, the Working Group finds that Stockton University meets the criteria and all components for Standard III as well as the Requirements for Affiliation #8, #9, #10, and #15.

General Studies: Choosing the Stockton Idea

Stockton's founding faculty and deans chose to develop a unique General Studies program. Rather than repurpose traditional "101" introductory courses, which students take before moving on to courses in their field of study, and which students frequently view as prefatory rather than part of their college experience, the designers emphasized continuity and interdisciplinarity. Believing that General Studies should represent a significant component of the University's curriculum, their design requires interdisciplinary courses that students take throughout their time at the University (III.1.1). Equally important, most faculty are involved in General Studies, with many full-time members devoting one-third of their teaching to these courses. Faculty design courses based upon interests beyond their own discipline, which makes these courses enriching and also keeps faculty excited and committed to teaching them (III.1.2, III.2.1, III.2d.1, III.5a.1). In short, faculty consistently model life-long learning to students.

These interdisciplinary offerings are organized in five categories (III.5a) – GENS (general), GAH (arts and humanities), GSS (social sciences), GNM (natural science and mathematics), GIS (integration and synthesis) – a capstone course taken in a student's junior or senior year. First-time undergraduate students are required to take one-quarter of their courses in these categories (though many students take more than the requirement), including one GENS and one GIS, and two each GAH, GSS, and GNM. Transfer students have adjusted

Bachelor of Arts — General Studies 32; Program and Cognate 64; At Some Distance 32

Bachelor of Science — General Studies 32; Program and Cognate 80; ASD 16

The 32 credits for General Studies must be taken in the following array:

8 Credits GAH	4 Credits GEN	4 Credits GIS	8 Credits GNM	8 Credits GSS
Courses in the visual and performing arts, literature, philosophy and religion.	Courses which develop skills that can be used in a variety of areas, such as writing, public speaking, and foreign languages.	Junior/Senior courses that bring views and methods of several disciplines together to examine a theme or problem.	Courses in life sciences, physical sciences, and mathematics.	Courses in social issues an problems.

requirements, but still take one quarter of their Stockton courses in General Studies. Those who take Transfer Seminars persist at higher rates (III.1.3, III.3.1).

To ensure that Stockton students achieve competency in writing and quantitative reasoning, Stockton also requires that students take a combination of courses that also carry a faculty approved W1, W2, Q1 and Q2 designation. Faculty committees and Convenors oversee W and Q courses (III.2e.1, III.5b.1). Approved W1 courses focus primarily on writing, whereas the W2 courses focus on topics across the disciplines, with a heavy emphasis on the teaching of writing. During their time at Stockton, students must pass four of these courses, at least one W1, and at least one W course at the 3000 or 4000 level. Q1 and Q2 courses follow a similar pattern, and students need three of these courses (at least one Q1 and one Q2) before graduation.

General Studies Outcomes: Students Learn at all Levels across the Curriculum

All first-year students must take a First-Year Seminar (FYS), which span four of the five "G" categories: GAH, GEN, GNM, and GSS. Students in all of these courses gain basic understanding of their topic, engage in college writing, and learn to think critically, as evidenced by annual IDEA student ratings of the FYS courses (III.5b.2*)*. Most importantly, assessment results indicate a majority of first-year students across the University achieved higher Growth Mindset scores after completing a First-Year Seminar (III.5b.3).

Similarly, all students who earn a Stockton degree must complete one General Integration and Synthesis (GIS) course that requires students to examine questions that cross disciplines, to gain reflective perspectives, and to synthesize experiences into an integrated framework, as the cross-referencing of these outcomes illustrates (III.5a.2).

During Self Study, the School of General Studies evaluated and updated its current system for annual assessment through 2024 establishing a regular calendar for student learning outcomes assessment. Of the 148 G courses offered in fall 2021, a faculty review of student learning outcomes found that students enrolled across all lower to upper division courses were meeting university expectations. Results spanned the 2.78-3.47 range as outlined on the VALUE Written Communication Skills Rubric; students enrolled across the lower division courses fell between 1.60-1.85 on the VALUE Reading Comprehension Rubric, and students in both lower and upper division courses ranged between 2.48-3.04 for Intercultural Knowledge. As noted earlier, the MOA on Convenors and increasing complexity of maintaining overlapping objectives require the University to integrate and streamline those objectives with the institution's Essential Learning Outcomes for the future (III.8.1).

Even as we streamline our objectives, faculty will also continue to routinely use annual assessment results of the Stockton General Studies curriculum for systematic, continuous improvement in these four ways:

Flexibility and responsiveness to a changing socio-economic landscape. The curriculum requires that students take courses (III.5b) with subscripts in the Arts (A), Multiculturalism/International Studies (I), Ethics and Values (V), and Historical Consciousness (H). Students can meet these requirements through the General Studies curriculum because of its flexibility. In 2021, the institution added an additional graduation requirement relating to racial issues, similar to the W1/W2 and Q1/Q2 requirements described above. More detailed information on the new race-related graduation requirement (R1/R2) is provided below, on p. 38 (III.1.4).

The possibility of creating interdisciplinary minors. Based on program assessment results such as successful course enrollments, faculty members have created and maintained many interdisciplinary minors within General Studies over the years, including Women's, Gender & Sexuality Studies, Africana Studies, Global Studies, Latin American and Caribbean Studies, Holistic Health, Migration Studies, Disability Studies, and most recently Cannabis Studies. Particularly noteworthy is the Holocaust and Genocide Studies minor, which grew out of a Jewish Studies minor and developed to such an extent that more than one-thousand students take courses in the minor each year. Another thousand students take these courses in area high schools, about a quarter of whom are earning Stockton University dual credit. According to Yad Vashem, the World Holocaust Remembrance Center in Jerusalem, Stockton's Holocaust and Genocide Studies program offers more classes than any other institution of higher education in the world (III.1.5, III.2d.2, III.5a.3).

Ability to design new majors. New majors emerge from interdisciplinary minors. In recent years, Digital Studies and Africana Studies were created from minors, while Holistic Health and Global Studies present opportunities for future growth. Stockton's longstanding Liberal Studies B.A. (LIBA) allows students to build their own curriculum, and also leads to the emergence of new majors, when many students create similar curricular plans to one another. Faculty members regularly review the LIBA program (formerly Five-Year Program Reviews, now Periodic Program Reviews) and most recently, a special Task Force of the Faculty Senate summarized the last three decades of reviews (III.5a.4).

Create an interdisciplinary landscape in the University. Since most faculty contribute to the General Studies program, there is significant interaction among faculty across programs. This allows for exploratory approaches in formal disciplines and encourages collaboration as evidenced by Stockton faculty responses as part of the Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education (COACHE) survey, where faculty rated their teaching and collaboration

among the best aspects of working at Stockton (III.2d.3). In addition, this environment creates additional opportunities. One example among many of how General Studies encourages faculty interdisciplinarity is a United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) grant (III.2a) that a professor of Mathematics secured with colleagues in Environmental Science for their work (begun in a General Studies course) on maple syrup farming in South Jersey (III.5a.5).

Undergraduate and Graduate Program Requirements
Undergraduate and graduate programs are outlined in the Stockton University Bulletin (III.1.6, III.3.2) Students track their progress toward completion using the Degree Works software tool, which provides detailed information about the courses needed to complete a chosen degree, and the alternate "What If" requirements if a student changes their major (III.3.3). Faculty preceptors (advisors) meet with students each semester to help plan the steps needed to complete their degrees in a timely fashion. Stockton is one of the few universities in the country to have a publicly-accessible "TREQ" (transfer equivalency) webpage, whereby any course taken at any other institution can automatically be included in a student's Degree Works evaluation, such as this illustrated sample for a student transferring in from a local county college (III.3.4).

Undergraduate Programs
In addition to General Studies, Stockton's faculty create and maintain innovative major and minor programs that respond to contemporary needs. Faculty follow a University procedure for planning and pre-assessing market demand, then seek multiple levels of review, revision, and approval for new and revised programs through established shared governance structures (III.2e.2). As noted in Chapter I, the University has launched 22 new programs since our 2017 PRR, including seven undergraduate majors, six graduate programs, four interdisciplinary minors, and five additional programming adaptations, such as specialized concentrations and dual-degree programs that allow all students to focus their course of study and complete combined undergraduate and graduate work at an accelerated pace, saving both time and money. Additional program initiatives are currently in progress.

Some of these developments respond to growing demands in specific fields, such as health care. The University's Health Sciences major, originally created in the 2010s in response to regional demand for health care professionals, has consistently enrolled more than 1,000 students since 2014 (III.1.7). The University also launched an Accelerated Nursing Program, a cohort-based initiative that operates year-round to address the need for skilled nurses both regionally and nationally.

Other curricular innovations result in new majors responding to emergent fields. As outlined on page 16 in Chapter I, faculty developed a new Bachelor of Science in Computer Information

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Systems and Computer Science in 2017 and a Digital Studies major in the fall of 2020. In fall 2019, Africana Studies initiated a major from what, since 1983, had been a minor at the University. With twenty faculty from a range of disciplines contributing to the program, the new major "provides the opportunity for students to study, analyze and systematically evaluate the various disciplines from an African perspective" (III.2c.1, III.5a.6). It offers five areas of concentration and includes a senior seminar and an experiential learning requirement. Africana Studies has also overseen a diverse array of University-wide co-curricular programming, including the Annual Fannie Lou Hamer Human & Civil Rights Symposium (now in its 17th year) (III.4.1) in addition to events hosted in our Anchor Institution's room named in her honor.

Faculty have also responded to contemporary issues through inventive new interdisciplinary minors that can augment students' education in any field. In 2017, Stockton launched its minor in Disability Studies to provide in-depth exploration of the field and better prepare students to work with and advocate for individuals with differences within the context of various majors (e.g., psychology, social work, health sciences, criminal justice, special education). Two years later, the University initiated a minor in Migration Studies, with a focus on migration and its impact both locally and around the world (III.1.8). That same year, as New Jersey began moving toward legalizing cannabis, the University developed a minor and online certificate program in Cannabis Studies, among the first such programs in the nation (III.1.9; III.1.10). It is now among the University's fastest-growing minors and a parallel online certificate offered through the Office of Continuing Studies has been the most popular such program for the last two years.

Graduate Programs

At the graduate level, the University has enhanced its offerings, partially due to its University Status change, as reported in the 2017 Middle States Periodic Review (III.1.11, III.6.1). New graduate programs are also outlined on page 16 in Chapter I, notably, a Master of Science in Data Science and Strategic Analytics (DSSA) launched in 2017 (III.1.12, III.6.2), a Master of Arts in Counseling (COUN) launched in 2019 (III.1.13, III.6.3), and most recently, an interdisciplinary Master of Business Administration in Healthcare Administration and Leadership (MBA-HAL), which the University initiated in 2020 (III.1.14, III.6.4).

Other programs build on existing academic areas and resources that make Stockton unique. The University houses one of the country's very few undergraduate degrees in Marine Science, as well as bachelor's degrees in Sustainability and Environmental Science. Stockton also boasts a Marine Field Station, allowing hands-on research in the region's intercoastal waterways and Atlantic seaboard, and a Coastal Research Center, which has remained a national leader in coastal research and resiliency efforts for decades. Consequently, the launch of an M.S. in Coastal Zone Management in fall 2021 is a natural extension of existing programming and the institution's proximity to a biogeography uniquely suited to this field.

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Finally, approved by the Commission to offer Distance Learning programs, the faculty has adopted online learning for selected programs, evident in the creation of specifically focused, fully online certificate and master's programs. In 2015, faculty who oversee the longstanding Master of Arts in Holocaust and Genocide Studies (MAHG) degree program developed an online Genocide Prevention Certificate (GPC) (III.1.15). Taught by MAHG faculty and international genocide prevention experts and aimed at professionals in government, the business sector, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), this international graduate certificate is the first of its kind in the world. The Stockton faculty who facilitate this program engage in the same assessment system of annual and periodic reviews as all academic programs at Stockton (III.7.1) as excerpts from their recent Periodic Program Review illustrate (III.6.5).

Graduate and undergraduate students are encouraged to pursue their passions and interests through faculty-guided and independent research. At the undergraduate level, for example, all Historical Studies students engage in a year-long capstone course, in which students write an original thesis; and, since 2019, Literature students can pursue an accelerated dual degree (4+1) program with the University's M.A. in American Studies (III.6.6). Students have showcased their research by participating in public exhibitions, such as "The Extraordinary Heroism of Ordinary People," an interactive show focusing on Leo Ullman, a South Jersey resident who was a hidden child in the Netherlands during the Holocaust (III.6.7), and "The LoBiondo Legacy: Highlights from a Lifetime of Service to South Jersey," which charts the career and life of New Jersey's U.S. Representative Frank LoBiondo (III.6.8). Additional opportunities for students on all levels to engage in similar high-impact practices appear later in this chapter.

Stockton Chooses to Decolonize the Curriculum

As referenced throughout the Self Study, the University has increased its commitment to anti-racist initiatives. Galvanized by the murder of George Floyd, demonstrations against police brutality, and a pandemic that has disproportionately affected people of color, beginning in July 2020, the Board of Trustees, Faculty Senate, Union, and a number of undergraduate and graduate programs adopted resolutions (III.5a.7). Such efforts build on previous work (III.5a.8) by faculty committed to decolonizing the curriculum by highlighting the experiences, perspectives, and modes of knowledge of non-western and non-white peoples (III.5a.9) as the focus of a Diversity Sub-Committee's work (III.5a.10). A related, cross-divisional series of online lectures initiated in fall 2020, "Community Conversations and Collective Action," drew on student and faculty knowledge, experience, and activism to promote equity and justice (III.4.2).

In Academic Year 2020-2021, the Faculty Senate reviewed, revised, and adopted a University-wide racial justice requirement in the form of a proposal for "Race/Racism Education Across the Curriculum." Approved by the Faculty Senate in March 2021, proposed revisions to the procedure will require students entering in fall 2021 to successfully complete two courses

designated as R1 and R2. One of each, R1 (focusing on race as the course subject) and R2 (with significant attention to the intersection of race and the main subject of the course), will be a graduation requirement (III.5a.11, III.5b.4). Graduate program faculty are also developing equivalent experiences for their students.

Stockton Chooses Strong Assessment Systems

As noted earlier, sustained, systematic, and useful assessment remains a critical component of academic excellence at the University, following cycles and outcomes faculty have created specifically for their programs. Faculty in all accredited programs in the Schools of Business, Education, Health Sciences, and Social & Behavioral Sciences engage in assessment aligned to each accrediting body's schedules and requirements. Faculty in all other programs engage in both annual and periodic reviews, a long-standing assessment system at Stockton University. Recent revisions shifted periodic program self-studies and external consultants from five-year reviews to six, as well as updating academic reporting templates to replace the former Stockton 2020 strategic goals with Strategic Plan 2025 ISS, D&I, and T&L priorities (see live links at III.8.2). The Provost provides assessment funds, covers all external consultant fees for periodic reviews, and maintains a dedicated Center for Teaching and Learning Design that provides extensive support to faculty (III.4.3). More details of the system and its outcomes are in Chapter V.

Faculty Qualifications and Sufficiency

As of fall 2019, 67% of courses at Stockton were taught by full-time faculty, the most among New Jersey public institutions (III.2c.2). The student-faculty ratio increased slightly while a statewide freeze on hiring temporary faculty remained in effect during COVID-19 but will return to 17:1 by the time of the Team visit. While the institutional rates reflect aggregate sufficiency, the University is gradually adjusting its former system of replacing vacancies in programs where they occurred with an approach of re-allocating lines for better balance between student enrollment and more equitable faculty sufficiency across all programs.
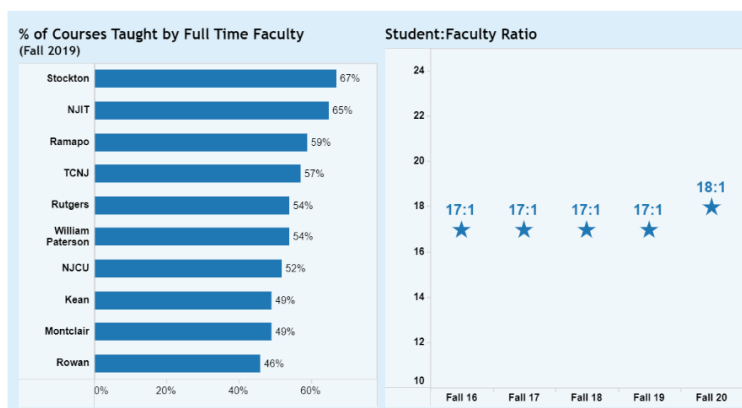
The four faculty ranks at Stockton are: instructor, assistant professor, associate professor, and professor. Of the 335 full-time faculty at all ranks, 96% (322) have their terminal degree, 93% (310) are tenured or on tenure track, and 7% (25) are not on tenure track (III.2b.1; III.2c.3).

During the 2020 statewide negotiations of the master agreement, a new type of faculty position

was recognized: Non-Tenure-Track Professional (NTTP) (III.2c.4 p. 4). Stockton further defined these positions in local negotiations (III.2c.5) and has begun encouraging many of its long-term adjunct faculty members to apply for these positions.

Stockton Faculty Choose Professional Growth and Innovation

Stockton's ongoing commitment to faculty professional development and support has been periodically restructured to align with changing faculty numbers, composition, and expectations. In October 2020, the University consolidated three earlier, affiliated structures: (1) the Institute for Faculty Development, which supported faculty from their entry into the University through tenure and promotion, 2) the Director of Academic Assessment, an administrative, then faculty (III.2d.4), now again administrative position, and 3) the former Center for Learning Design (CLD) – launched in 2018 to replace the previous Office of E-Learning and structured to promote effective pedagogy and enhance the use of technology and effective digital resources. Combined together, the expanded Center for Teaching and Learning Design (CTLD) (III.2d.5) adds "Teaching" and synthesizes all of these functions under one Executive Director who reports to the Provost and is assisted by a qualified staff and faculty fellows (III.2b.2). When the COVID-19 pandemic began, the University switched to remote delivery. The CTLD significantly enhanced its offerings, including weekly Zoom, Blackboard, and pedagogical sessions, along with one-on-one appointments to help faculty continue teaching effectively. These efforts remain in effect, both in-person and online (III.2a.1), and feature faculty exemplars in the President's annual report (III.2a.2) linking to a comprehensive annual faculty summary (III.2a.3).

The Provost provides funding every summer for faculty to engage in immersive professional development institutes and workshops (III.2d.6). For instance, in the summer of 2019, 13 faculty members attended a two-day program to implement an "Empowerment Zone" curriculum to enhance student resilience and success (III.2d.7). Other topics have included "Why the Humanities Matter," "Globalizing the Curriculum," and "Critical Thinking." This past summer, given the institution's emphasis on teaching race and racism education, institutes included "Search Advocate Training," "Practicing Anti-Racism in Writing Instruction," and "Teaching Race and Racism." Chapter V provides additional information about the results of these programs.

Stockton's Faculty Fellows initiative, which supports faculty working with peers and University administration to enhance their scholarship, teaching, and service, offers another avenue for professional development. Faculty regularly work with the Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning (SCCESL), the Stockton Center on Successful Aging (SCOSA), and the Center for Teaching and Learning Design (CTLD). Additional opportunities have also been supported by more specialized centers in the last few years, including the Lloyd D. Levenson Institute of Gaming, Hospitality, and Tourism (LIGHT). Indeed, the most recent faculty fellow

subsequently became LIGHT's director and has worked to better integrate the public-facing aspects of its work with the University's business and hospitality academic programs.

The Office of Research and Sponsored Programs publishes a monthly newsletter highlighting upcoming grant and other funding opportunities from its wide array of internal and external resources (III.2d.8). Financial support of professional development over the most recent three years reflects the impact of the pandemic on professional development activities (III.2d.9).

Internal funding is available for projects in research, planning, proposal writing, professional development, and creative work (III.2d.10). These include:

- **Research and Professional Development (R&PD) Grants (average award, $6,000):** for research, planning, proposal development in preparation for seeking outside funding.
- **Research and Professional Development Course Release Grants (average award, 1 course release)**: to support release time from teaching for projects in research, planning, proposal writing, professional development and creative work.
- **Sabbatical Leave and Subvention Funds (teaching release for 1 to 2 terms, and up to an additional $2,000):** for the purpose of pursuing substantial project to yield publishable results and/or enhance competence as a scholar or teacher.
- **Provost Opportunity Grants (up to $2,000):** Support for travel to conferences, student assistant, professional services or supplies related to scholarship and the strategic plans.

Stockton acknowledged the disruption of COVID-19 on faculty research and professional development plans with a negotiated agreement to augment funds for FY22 (V.3d.1). Stockton also offers specialized funding opportunities, including **Career Development Awards** (up to $3,000) for post-tenure faculty looking to strengthen particular skills set as recommended by the University's Grant Assessment Committee, or who wish to change emphasis or enhance their professional careers, and **Adjunct Opportunity Grants** (up to $1,000) for contingent faculty seeking to strengthen either research and teaching agendas.

Table III.2d illustrates 30 internal awards from FY19, before COVID-19 disruption.

Name of Award	Awards	School
Adjunct Faculty Opportunity Fund	7 Awards	2 SOBL 2 NAMS 1 ARHU 2 GENS
Career Development Committee Award	9 Awards	5 ARHU 1 BUSN 1 NAMS 1 SOBL
Provost Faculty Opportunities Fund	14 Awards	1 ARHU 1 BUSN 1 LIBRY 8 NAMS 3 SOBL

The office publishes annual and periodic reports as noted above, and its most recent External Awards Funds 5-Year Report highlights 59 projects, totaling $9,190,821 in FY19 (III.2d.11).

Moreover, each faculty member is provided faculty professional development funds (up to $1,200 per year for tenured faculty and an additional $1,400 for pre-tenure faculty). Funding is accessed through the Schools, allowing faculty to attend discipline-specific conferences and other professional development opportunities.

Evaluation of Faculty

The University engages in a thorough, locally-negotiated system of faculty review that aligns to written, disseminated, clear and fair Policy II-10.5, including School and Program Standards (III.2e.3; III.2e.4; III.2e.5). These and the locally-negotiated review Procedure (III.2e.5) follow a systematic calendar (III.2b.3), and now include an MOA on the impact of COVID-19 (III.2e.7).
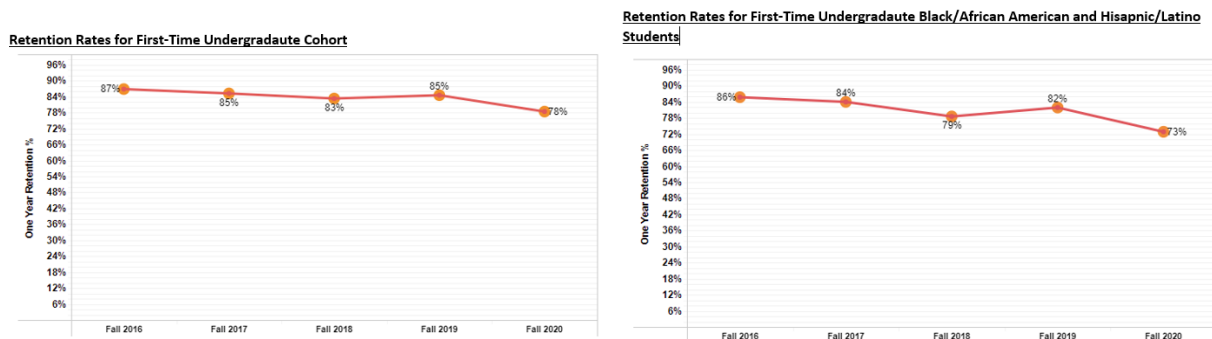
The CTLD provides support for tenure evaluation and the post-tenure review process, including teaching, scholarship, and service. At Stockton, teaching has primacy, so additional support is provided via several negotiated agreements and many resources from the CTLD Evaluation of Teaching efforts (III.2a.4, III.2e.8). These include self-reflection, peer observations, and the proprietary IDEA ratings instrument to measure students' perceptions of their learning experience based on objectives selected by individual instructors (III.2a.5).

Stockton Chooses Co-Curricular Inclusive Student Success

The University has made Inclusive Student Success (ISS) first among the six 2025 Strategic Plan priorities, recognizing that "a more diverse student body brings a broader range of academic, social, and cultural assets, challenges, and needs" (III.4.4).

While aggregate performance (pre-COVID-19) is consistently strong, the University is focused on narrowing equity gaps between all students generally, and specifically among students of color:

Table III.4.1: Retention Rates for All First-Time and for First-Time Black and Hispanic Students

Retention Rates for First-Time Undergraduate Cohort

Retention Rates for First-Time Undergraduate Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino Students

Stockton University Middle States Self Study Standard III

Graduation Rates for First-Time Cohorts

Term Multiple values

Admit Status All

Gender All

Race/Ethnicity All

Legend: 🟩 100% to 150% time (between 4 & 6 Years) 🟦 100% time (4 years)

	Fall 2011	Fall 2012	Fall 2013	Fall 2014	Fall 2015	Fall 2016	Fall 2017
Total	73%	74%	77%	74%	76%	62%	56%
Green (4-6 yr)	19%	18%	16%	15%	16%		
Blue (4 yr)	54%	57%	61%	58%	60%	62%	56%

Graduation Rates for First-Time Cohorts

Term Multiple values

Admit Status All

Gender All

Race/Ethnicity Black/African American

Legend: 🟩 100% to 150% time (between 4 & 6 Years) 🟦 100% time (4 years)

	Fall 2011	Fall 2012	Fall 2013	Fall 2014	Fall 2015	Fall 2016	Fall 2017
Total	61%	67%	65%	64%	64%	47%	43%
Green (4-6 yr)	22%	27%	20%	20%	22%		
Blue (4 yr)	39%	40%	45%	44%	42%	47%	43%

Graduation Rates for First-Time Cohorts

Term Multiple values

Admit Status All

Gender All

Race/Ethnicity Hispanic/Latino

Legend: 🟩 100% to 150% time (between 4 & 6 Years) 🟦 100% time (4 years)

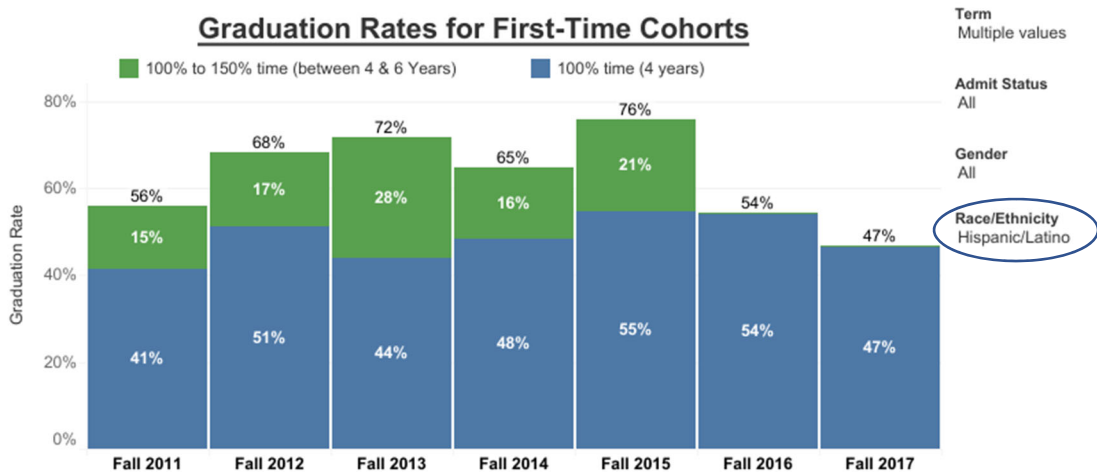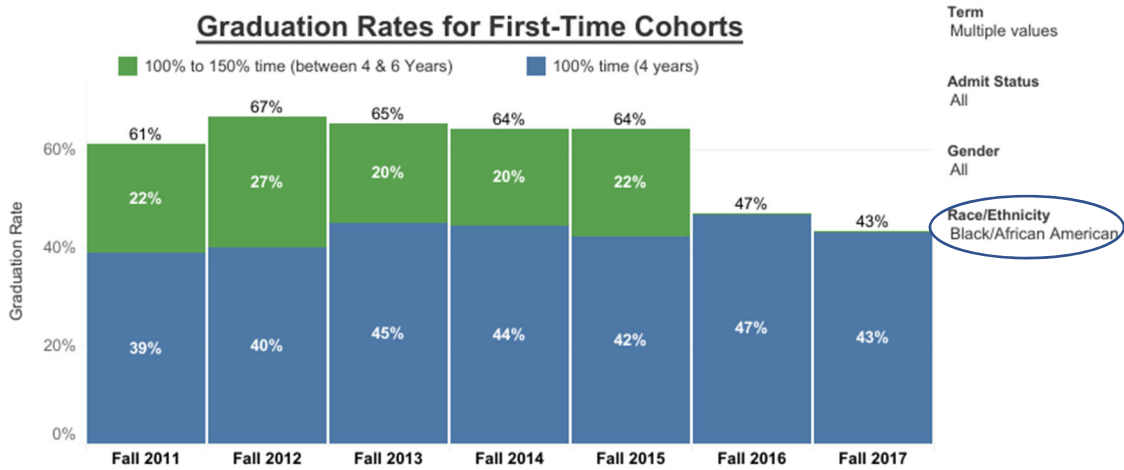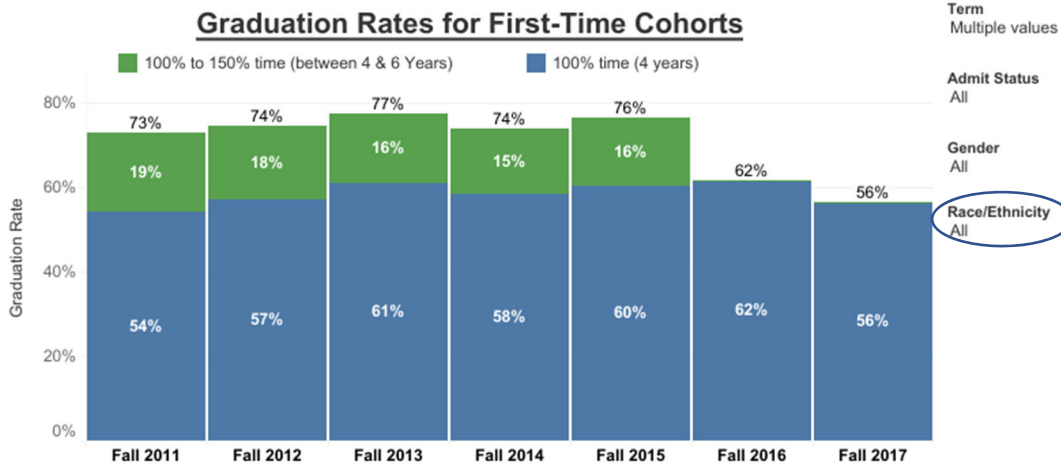|	Fall 2011	Fall 2012	Fall 2013	Fall 2014	Fall 2015	Fall 2016	Fall 2017
Total	56%	68%	72%	65%	76%	54%	47%
Green (4-6 yr)	15%	17%	28%	16%	21%		
Blue (4 yr)	41%	51%	44%	48%	55%	54%	47%

Table III.4.1: Graduation Rates for All First-Time and for First-Time Black and Hispanic Students

Stockton University Middle States Self Study Standard III

Contributions to Inclusive Student Success
Stockton's largest student support programs have existed for many years. For example, the First-Year Studies program (FRST) has consistently supported first-year students facing academic challenges associated with college readiness, as their recent Periodic Program Review documents (III.4.5). Similarly, the Learning Access Program (LAP) provides support and resources to students who need learning-based accommodations in their courses to ensure equal access for academic success (III.4.6). The recently-expanded Educational Opportunity Fund program (EOF) has always supported students who face economic and educational disadvantage, correlated to broader racial inequities in society (III.4.7). The disparities in the student success metrics above, however, have motivated the institution to develop innovative programs aimed at narrowing the gaps.

The Retention Working Group launched in spring 2019, working collaboratively with the University's Strategic Planning process, Strategic Enrollment Management Planning (SEMP) Council, Provost's Council, and the Faculty and Student Senates, established specific goals. These focus on balancing the institution's parallel aspirations of continuing to diversify the student body and reduce equity gaps. The initial version of the University's Retention Plan included seven projects launched throughout academic year 2019-2020 (III.4.8). During the writing of the Self Study, the Working Group leaders are assessing the impact of each retention strategy (III.8.3).

Co-curricular High Impact Practices (HIPs) to Advance Equitable Outcomes
In addition to the efforts of the Retention Working Group, the Division of Student Affairs now offers additional notable programs to support student progress: (1) enhanced services and resources for first-generation students, (2) increased equitable access to high-impact practices (HIPs) and (3) widespread racial justice education to support the Board of Trustee's resolution passed in July 2020.

According to Stockton's Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement (BCSSE) and National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) surveys, 55% of responding students identify as first-generation, mirroring the national 56% of undergraduates. In response, Student Affairs developed First Ospreys in the spring of 2019, creating a first-generation student code in the University's student tracking system to disaggregate retention and persistence data (III.4.9). First Ospreys also administered a First-Generation Needs Assessment in the spring of 2020, using results (III.8.3) to develop 2020-2021 learning opportunities and resources for first-generation students that directly address the identified needs. In addition to assessment information provided in Standard V, these programs have also earned a NASPA First-GEN Award (III.8.4).

In addition, as described in Chapter VI, the Division of Student Affairs received allocations in the fall of 2020 to establish the Office of Academic Achievement Programs (AAP), offering cross-

divisional learning opportunities centered on racial justice and equity and increase equitable access to high-impact practices and learning opportunities (HIPs) (III.4.10). Historically, students of color, students from low-income backgrounds, and first-generation students, are the least likely to access HIPs (Kuh, 2008), known at Stockton as Ospreys RISE (Research, Internships, Service-Learning, and Experiential Learning). AAP educates underrepresented minoritized (URM) students about HIPs, provides pathways to HIPs engagement, and celebrates the achievements of URM students involved in HIPs. Among the broad range of HIPs available at the University, is the FRST peer mentor program, which launched in 2018 to aid in the promotion of equity and student success in FRST 1000-level courses. Other examples include internships locally and in Washington D.C. through the Washington Internship Program (III.6.9), the Model UN program (III.6.10), undergraduate research opportunities, study abroad, experiential learning, service-learning, and community engagement, all detailed below.

Opportunities for students to engage in research is one of the most valuable high-impact practices for predicting student retention. Through Summer Intensive Research Experience (SIRE) courses, students engage in faculty-directed, small group research that often translates into publications, translations, and/or exhibits (III.6.11). The University also offers campus-wide initiatives to promote research and encourage undergraduate research; for example, since 1986 the Board of Trustees Fellowship for Distinguished Students has offered fellowships to support student-initiated undergraduate research and/or creative works (III.4.11, III.6.12). Students' research and presentations at conferences are supported through up to $2,000 per project funding from the Research Experience for Undergraduates and Student Request for Travel, also available to graduate students, many of who present at our Annual Day of Scholarship (III.4.12).

Additional initiatives include support for conference attendance, campus research events, global learning and civic engagement. Initially funded by a two-year Provost Diversity Grant in 2017 and 2018, the University has sponsored 23 primarily EOF students to attend the distinguished Bouchet conference at Yale University.   This initiative is now funded by the Office of Diversity and Inclusion as one of several diversity and inclusion programs. Since spring 2015, the number of students participating in international experiences has grown steadily.
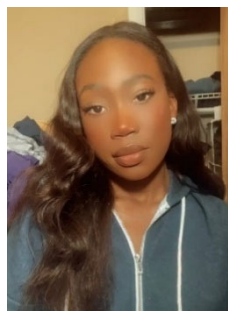
I learned about the [Yale Bouchet] conference through one of my professors, Sharon Musher. My paper was on President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's National Youth Administration founded in 1935 and intended to help teenagers and young adults who had no job or education in the Great Depression find work, pay, education and stability...Using scholarly articles and primary sources, my paper shows that the National Youth Administration helped a disproportionately low number of Black youths compared to the Black population in need. There was an extremely small support system of counselors available to help Black youth, and often the counselors could not reach all Black children.   -Ashley F-W

Stockton University Middle States Self Study Standard III

To encourage students less-often engaged in study abroad, the Office of Global Engagement has partially or fully funded 31 EOF students in study abroad programs. At the national and global level, Stockton participates in the U.S. State Department's Diplomacy Lab program, providing faculty and students opportunities to conduct research that directly informs policy (III.5a.12). Locally, faculty, staff, and students research and publish on public issues salient to New Jersey through the William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy, including the Polling Institute, which operates with a student-based interview team. The American Democracy Project/Political Engagement Project (ADP/PEP) fosters opportunities for research, public outreach, and more to foster civic education on campus. One measure that illustrates the impact of civic engagement programs is student voter registration; Stockton University student participation has increased steadily over the last four years (III.8.5).

Consequently, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, classified Stockton as a Community-Engaged Campus for the second time in January 2020 (III.4.13). This voluntary classification recognizes Stockton's contributions to service-learning, community engagement, and civic action at the local, state, and national level, led by the Center for Community Engagement and Service-Learning and numerous campus partners. Most importantly, students consistently rate the impact of their community engagement as positively impacting their growth in four Essential Learning Outcomes over the past six years (III.8.6).

III. Opportunities for Improvement and Innovation

Based on the Standard III: Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Working Group's analysis and evidence presented, Stockton has met this standard and plans the following improvements:

- **Examine workload equity among faculty members** across schools and programs.
- **Imbed diversity and inclusion in the curriculum**: identifying, adapting, and creating courses to reach this goal.
- **Use assessment results to continue refining programs that decrease equity gaps** among students.

Standard IV: Support of the Student Experience

I.   Introduction

Student success at Stockton is a University-wide undertaking and is reflected in our Guiding Principle: *Students first; vision and strategy follow*. From a prospective student and their family's first campus tour with a trained student Admissions Ambassador, to discussing degree options and possible course selections with a professional academic advisor, to meeting their assigned faculty preceptor and course professors, to the support they receive throughout their academic career and beyond as alumni, the Stockton student experience is welcoming, nurturing, and inclusive. Students have daily access to compassionate and involved staff, faculty, and administration whenever they require support. The Stockton Idea has long supported the principle that students "plant themselves and grow," as the institution promised at its founding (IV.1a.1, IV.1d.1). This student-centered focus continues to drive the efforts of all the University's offices and programs.

Relationship of Standard IV to Institutional Priorities

Two institutional strategic priorities advance Stockton's support of the student experience: priority 1, Inclusive Student Success (ISS), and priority 4, Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM).

II.   Findings

Based on a careful review of the evidence, the Standard IV Working Group finds that Stockton University meets the criteria and all components for Standard IV as well as Requirement for Affiliation 9.

After many years of continuous improvement, Stockton University is proud to showcase its transparent and systematic approach to maintaining, reviewing, and updating official University policies, including our consistently-updated Conduct Policy (IV.1a.2) and procedures such as the Campus Hearing Board approach to resolving conduct charges (IV.1a.3). Many of these directly address approaches to facilitating "the success of students whose interests, abilities, experiences, and goals provide a reasonable expectation for success and are compatible with the institutional mission" (Standard IV.1). The Working Group also reviewed many additional materials that augment these policies, giving particular attention in this chapter to those materials that align both with each criterion for Standard IV and with the two main strategic priorities: ISS and SEM.

Choose Stockton Admissions and Financial Aid: Accurate and Comprehensive Information

After launching a new strategic planning process in 2017, Stockton updated its Strategic Enrollment Management Plan (SEMP) in 2018 with ambitious goals for recruiting higher numbers of diverse first-time, transfer, and graduate students. The plan contained specific targets for each year, culminating in an overall headcount goal of 10,000 by the time of this Self Study, June 30, 2021. While the planners could not have anticipated the impact of COVID-19, the University reached a total headcount of 9,893 by the fall 2020 student census date, its highest point. Recognizing ongoing COVID-19 challenges, Stockton adjusted its enrollment plan and reached 9,352 total headcount for the fall 2021 census date (IV.1a.4).

Prior to COVID-19, the University implemented Test-Optional Admission for most undergraduate degree programs except those that require higher-level math pre-requisites, such as the B.S. in Nursing and the B.S./D.O. Accelerated Seven-Year Medical degree programs. In keeping with both ISS & SEM strategic priorities, Test-Optional Admission is intended to mitigate the well-documented equity gaps in standardized testing, reducing barriers to applicants. In lieu of SAT or ACT scores, Stockton uses Accuplacer to determine the placement and adequate preparation of first-year students. A faculty-led Task Force supported the rationale for this change prior to COVID-19, offering recommendations on pages 4-6 of a comprehensive report (IV.1b.1). Members of the Task Force who remain in leadership roles responsible to place students continue to collaborate on ways to achieve some of the recommendations.

Stockton provides clear information on our educational costs with a persistent link on our Admissions website (IV.1a.5). The University strongly promotes a flat-rate tuition option for full-time undergraduate students and a per-credit charge for part-time undergraduates and all graduate students (IV.1a.6). In addition to the financial aid detailed below, Stockton also awarded $5,020,619 in federally-appropriated CARES Act awards to 2,936 students in 2020 and continued disbursing funds under similarly funded CRRSAA and ARP relief programs (IV.1a.7, IV.1d.2).

Prior to COVID-19, the University aligned financial assistance components of SEMP noted above with the ISS and SEM strategic priorities to optimize what had previously been primarily a merit-based institutional Grant-in-Aid program. The updated plan repurposes what were very large grants for a relatively low number of high-achieving students to what are now smaller grants available for many more students overall. In addition, clear, accurate, and comprehensive financial aid information is now more readily available on the University's Admissions, Scholarships & Aid webpage. The link to Financial Aid (IV.1a.8) is located in the left navigation panel of that entire website so that prospective students are always "within 1-click" of reading the following message: "We are here to make your education affordable! At Stockton University, we believe that money should not be an obstacle in the pursuit of a quality education. We are

here to assist you in finding the best options to help you in affording the cost of your education," a high strategic priority. The Georgetown CEW Report named Stockton as a High ROI institution with a 70% Pell Graduation Rate (IV.1a.9). From there, each type of applicant (First-Year, Transfer, and Graduate) has access to a different page listing all categories of assistance available and how to apply.

The University is proud of its most recent "Stockton Promise" program, which provides 100% "gap aid" between a student's total financial resources from all other sources and the cost of tuition and fees, for full-time undergraduate, first-time or transfer students who complete a FAFSA, reside in New Jersey, and meet Adjusted Gross Income thresholds (IV.1a.10). This promise appears prominently on the University's website. Similarly, a persistent link on all undergraduate admissions pages displays additional scholarship opportunities. (IV.1a.11).

All communication to prospective students includes links to general information about payment plans (IV.1a.12) and deadlines for both payments and refunds (IV.1a.13). Personalized versions of this information are accessible to admitted students and parties to whom students grant written approval, from their password-protected goPortal (IV.1a.14). University staff engage in outreach calling and text message campaigns as deadlines approach and pass, to remind students and to offer additional support, if needed, as outlined below.

In addition to the aid described above, the Office of the Dean of Students offers emergency loans (IV.1a.15), Student Relief Funds (IV.1a.16), and food assistance (IV.1a.17). The emergency loan program allows students to take out a loan of up to $500 with no interest if paid back within 45 days. The Student Relief Fund is an emergency fund for students facing a financial crisis due to unexpected emergencies or have outstanding educational balances or needs, with minimal to no financial aid options. The Food Assistance Program allows all students access to the campus food pantries on the Galloway and Atlantic City campuses. Students who are not able to afford a meal plan will also qualify for weekly food vouchers, which give them access to meals. This additional assistance has provided holistic support for hundreds of our students (IV.1a.18).

The University also offers support programs to strengthen future prospective and current undergraduate students' skills, from entry to degree completion, targeting middle school, high school, and county college populations. The GOALS (Goal Oriented Advocates Leaders and Scholars)/GEAR UP program (IV.1b.2) aims to increase the number of low-income students prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education (IV.1b.2). The program serves over 180 students, 7th through 12th grade, from the Atlantic City and Pleasantville Public School Districts. Part of our efforts as an Anchor Institution, this Atlantic City campus program is supported by funds from the New Jersey Office of the Secretary of Higher Education, GEAR UP, the Pleasantville Public School District, the Atlantic City School District, and Stockton University.

Stockton University Middle States Self Study Standard IV

Many GOALS students are also eligible for the summer-through-completion Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) (IV.1b.3, IV.1c.1). The EOF tradition, which was expanded to align with strategic priorities ISS and SEM, draws on a tripartite vision of Dignity, Intensity, and Pride that seeks to encourage civic-mindedness and community involvement (IV.1b.10). Not surprisingly, many EOF students become active leaders on our campus and beyond (IV.1b.11).

"When I first heard about my acceptance into the EOF Program at Stockton, I had no idea how life changing the program would be. From an outsider's perspective, EOF is an educational summer program to assist low-income students financially, however, EOF is so much more. It is an opportunity to become fully acquainted with campus, staff, and faculty members prior to the start of your first year. EOF is a family, full of students from different backgrounds who are learning how to succeed together. During my time in the program, I learned about diversity, equity, and inclusion, time management skills, my general well-being and how to take care of myself while at college, and how to be the best version of myself. EOF helped me become the person I am today. This program shaped me into the leader I never dreamed I would become. From getting involved on campus as an Orientation Leader and a TALONS Mentor, to becoming TALONS Head Mentor, going to grad school and pursing my dreams of working in Student Affairs, EOF gave me the confidence to become more than my 18-year-old-self envisioned. Today, I am working as the Director of Student Organizations at a university, but my roots are buried deep within the EOF Program that Stockton continues to build upon. Dignity, intensity, and pride has been a driving force in all my accomplishments since 2011, and it will continue guiding me through my journey." ~Victoria D.

The Transfer Pathways partnership offers two ways to enter the program: students may be offered a conditional acceptance to Stockton while they work on their associate degree at one of our partner community colleges, or students who are already enrolled at a partner school can apply for conditional acceptance to Stockton while they continue working toward their associate degree (IV.1b.4). Stockton Admissions and Academic Advising staff work in conjunction with their counterpart school's advisor to help both groups choose classes and remain successful throughout the program to ensure a seamless transfer pathway from the community college to

Stockton. The University plans to return our staff to our offices on partner college campuses post-pandemic and virtual advising will return on an as-needed basis.

Under the Transfer Pathways program, students enrolled in one of our partner institutions are eligible to reside in either our Galloway or Atlantic City campus housing facilities, so that they can make use of our academic, technology, and student support services and can participate in Stockton clubs, organizations, and support programs. These programs include the First Ospreys (IV.1b.5) for first-generation degree-seekers described in Chapter III. Transfer Pathways (and all first-year students) also have access to the supportive First-Year Studies (FRST) curriculum (IV.1b.6). Transfer Pathways students also have access to our Student Success Scholars program (IV.1b.7, IV.1c.2) and the Tutoring Center (IV.1b.8) staffed by peer- and professional-learning mentors. The Learning Access Program (LAP) (IV.1b.9) serves all students with or needing documented disabilities support, including Transfer Pathways students.

If Transfer Pathways students matriculate prior to completing their associate degree, we work with the partner institution to confer that degree through reverse transfer. This program has the added benefit of making higher education more affordable. Stockton also offers up to five $2,000 annual Transfer Pathways scholarships to students who qualify. To date, 80 students remain active, 52 with Atlantic Cape Community College, and 28 with Ocean County College (IV.1b.12). Many Stockton transfer students benefit from our nationally-recognized Transfer Seminar program, recently featured at the NACADA national meeting (IV.1b.13).

Regardless of which pathway first-time students take, we use optional SAT or ACT scores or administer Accuplacer (IV.1b.14) to gauge whether they need additional support from a focused set of our FRST (First-Year Studies) courses. An interdisciplinary academic program housed within the School of General Studies, FRST offers first-year writing and math courses for all students and a subset of pre-college-level writing and math courses, along with a developmental reading course that also meets the University's first-year seminar requirement, summarized in a comprehensive periodic program review (IV.1b.15).

Finally, Stockton uses an integrative approach to student support and resources that creates safety nets. Stockton faculty, Tutoring Center staff, LAP staff, and Athletics staff meet regularly to manage first-year students facing challenges in transitioning to higher education. This team identifies students who may need additional tutoring, support, and accommodations from the programs listed above and/or gauges their need for additional financial resources, books, materials, and access to other on-campus resources, such as our Skills for Success course (IV.1b.16, IV.1c.3). This holistic team approach has allowed us to identify and support first-year students so they may successfully continue their education at Stockton.

Orientation, Advising, and Counseling Programs to Enhance Retention

In keeping with strategic priorities ISS and SEM, administrative leaders and staff from Student Affairs and Academic Affairs collaborate on New Student Orientation and Registration programming for all incoming undergraduate and graduate students (IV.1c.4). Our Transition Activity Leaders of New Students (TALONS) welcomes students by engaging them in free and open student-to-student chats, answering daily life questions about Stockton to make new students feel at home even before they reach campus (IV.1c.5). During this second pandemic year, the University has adapted Orientation to offer three formats--completely remote, hybrid, and on-campus residential experiences (IV.1c.4).

The Stockton Idea describes the ways in which our approach to academic advising is viewed as a learning experience (IV.1a.1, IV.1d.1 video Part 4). Stockton uses the term "Preceptor," another term for teacher or instructor, to refer to faculty and staff academic advisors. Students are assigned preceptors based on their major (IV.1c.6). If they are undecided, they are often assigned to First-Year Studies faculty, Tutoring Center teaching staff, or to professional staff academic advisors. Advising is immensely important at Stockton; the University dedicates two full days each mid-semester with no classes so that students can make appointments with their faculty preceptors. This approach allows students to develop relationships with faculty in their program beyond the classroom dynamic. Preceptors provide a wealth of information and guidance for their preceptees, teaching them the connections between the General Studies curriculum and their major, encouraging and/or guiding their work on faculty research or service projects, assisting them with graduate school decisions, facilitating introductions to prospective employers and community partners, and working in tandem with the Career Education & Development team, to help them with personal and professional post-graduation goals.

In order to support the growing population of college students who seek help with mental health challenges, Stockton's Counseling & Psychological Services team offers individual therapy, group counseling/support groups, and psychiatric services (IV.1c.7). Counseling staff continuously evaluate the ongoing needs of the student population to develop new programs and support groups. For example, in the spring of 2020, Counseling & Psychological Services received a request to form a support group for students identifying as asexual. Some of these students had already participated in existing counseling groups for LGTBQ students and had connected with the Women's, Gender and Sexuality Center (IV.1c.8) but did not feel existing services addressed their specific experiences. As a result, Counseling Services staff developed an asexual support group that began online in the fall of 2020 and was advertised on the website and in the Women's Gender and Sexuality Center. The group has met weekly throughout the fall 2020 semester and has consistent attendance (IV.1c.9).

The Office of Student Conduct (OSC) provides support services aimed at resolving conflicts for the campus community (IV.1c.10). In addition, the Stockton Cares Program helps students navigate crises, emergencies, and personal difficulties by coordinating resources, providing supportive measures, and planning for success on a case management basis (IV.1c.11). Case management is not therapy or counseling, but a solution-focused approach designed to assist students with a variety of needs. The case manager teaches students how to navigate various University processes and procedures, serves as an advocate when working with faculty through difficult situations, and coaches students to manage their resources to ensure success.

Finally, many of the support programs detailed above also serve to enhance retention, including EOF (IV.1b.3, IV.1c.1), Student Success Scholars (IV.1b.7, IV.1c.2), the Skills for Success course (IV.1b.16, IV.1c.3), First Ospreys (IV.1b.5), the Tutoring Center (IV.1b.8), and LAP (IV.1b.9). As noted in Chapters III and VI, the University allocated funds to the Division of Student Affairs for re-organizing and adding administrative leaders to focus on ISS & SEM goals. In collaboration with previously existing Student Affairs structures and programming, their retention efforts have expanded to enhance the student experience in many personalized initiatives (IV.1d.3).

The SEM and ISS strategic priorities also emphasize the importance of retention by strengthening support aimed specifically at degree completion and post-Stockton success. Since the 2017 PRR, Stockton's academic schools have worked closely with Center for Academic Advising (IV.1d.4) staff to replace an outdated degree evaluation system with the Degree Works planning and audit system (IV.1d.5). This powerful set of tools assists students, faculty, and staff in monitoring certificate, minor, and degree requirements. Additionally, faculty and staff have been optimizing the system's hyperlink function to share additional information with students, including optional blocks of suggested courses that make students aware of degree enhancements. For example, students who seek teacher licensure can view optional extra certifications in middle school content areas, repurposing courses required for graduation that they may be taking already. These options increase job opportunities as well.

As noted in an earlier section of this chapter, faculty preceptors and professional advisors in the Center for Academic Advising work collaboratively with the Career Education & Development team to provide a strong support network for students' success after Stockton, including semi-annual career fairs (IV.1d.6), and annual specialized Graduate School fairs, Handshake, a thriving career management platform, career competency workshops, and individualized career advising and coaching sessions.

Based on the specific SEMP goals to increase the number of new transfer students to the University, Stockton has recently augmented its already "transfer-friendly" policies and procedures on evaluation and acceptance of transfer credits. These and the policies and procedures for credits awarded through experiential learning, prior non-academic learning,

competency-based assessment, and other alternative learning approaches are published on our Procedures website (IV.2.1). Undergraduate students may transfer a maximum of 64 credits from accredited two-year institutions; those with credits from four-year institutions may transfer up to 96. Stockton also participates in the statewide Transfer Agreement (IV.1.1).

The Transfer Equivalency (TREQ) tool mentioned in Chapter III has made these determinations considerably easier (IV.2.2). Having created an expansive database with thousands of course equivalencies over the years, the Center for Academic Advising now offers prospective students a place to input their current transcript information and receive a detailed course audit for their intended major at Stockton. To help with additional questions, TREQ links students to advisor contact information. In 2020, internal reports showed that over 7,500 people have used TREQ, up from 5,000 in 2019. Additionally, this tool supports current students who opt to take classes at other New Jersey institutions in the summer. Stockton has also recently expanded military credits through ACE, optimizing a uniquely Stockton feature of the curriculum, our At-Some-Distance requirements, for degree completion (IV.2.3).

Even as the University makes steady progress on its strategic goals, it has also expanded and strengthened staff expertise in safeguarding student information. In its Information Security Plan, Stockton complies with Federal Trade Commission (FTC) regulations requiring security plans and practices that protect the confidentiality and integrity of personal information and records (IV.3.1). Information Technology Services (ITS) staff continuously monitor this plan, which covers all information systems used to process, store, transmit, retrieve, and dispose of personally identifiable and confidential information. These include data-loss prevention filters, system-level alerts to identify anomalous behavior, and an acceptable use procedure. Lastly, the plan identifies how the University responds to information system security threats.

The plan aligns with and complements three official University policies: Computing and Communication Technology Access and Use (IV.3.2), Identity Theft Prevention Program (IV.3.3), Files and Records—Review, Retention, and Retirement (IV.3.4); three official procedures: Standards for Safeguarding Customer Information (IV.3.5), Acceptable Use Standards of Computing and Communication Technology (IV.3.6), Identity Theft Prevention Program (IV.3.7); two sets of regulatory requirements: FERPA (IV.3.8), Student Privacy Rights (IV.3.9), Records Release (IV.3.10), and Guidelines for Safeguarding PI&CI from Unauthorized or Accidental Disclosure (IV.3.11); and one best practice: Preferred Name (IV.3.12). Additional information about the Information Security Plan is presented in Chapter VI.

Similarly, in full compliance with Title IX and Title IV, the University operates its Division III Athletics program under the same administrative principles and procedures that govern all co-curricular and extracurricular programs. Stockton follows the best practices guidelines for

College Admission Policies and Procedures, restricting a special admission category to no more than 10 percent of the entire incoming class who do not meet all requirements, including our EOF and Student Success Services program. Beginning with the process of selecting qualified applicants using a holistic approach, the Office of Admissions may provide an offer to any student, including athletes, in this category (IV.4.1).

Stockton Athletics & Recreation comprises several areas, including Intercollegiate (varsity) Sports, Club Sports, Intramurals, Recreation and Camps/Clinics (IV.4.2). Athletics & Recreation is regulated by the same academic, fiscal, and administrative principles and procedures that apply to all other programs and operates in accordance with the framework described by its Vision, Mission and Values (IV.4.3). Moreover, Athletics and Recreation is guided--not only in its intercollegiate sports but in all areas--by the NCAA Division III Philosophy statement (IV.4.4).

In addition, esports (IV.4.5) is a relatively new extracurricular program and Stockton has been at the forefront of this area of growth for the University and Atlantic City, reflecting the University's commitment to the development of its surrounding community (IV.4.6). The University has embraced esports, supporting both competitive and community aspects of the program by providing a variety of outlets for the students to get involved. In spring 2019, Stockton built its first esports lab, featuring top-tier gaming PCs built by student volunteers (IV.4.7), which is already ranked among the top eight teams in North America for Rocket League in the Collegiate Rocket League (CRL) (IV.4.8). In line with Stockton's commitment to public service and building community, Stockton esports, like other Athletic and student organizations, has donated funds to the local community organizations and hosts student events every year. The potential for this field continues to expand as evidenced by a recent $200,000 grant by the New Jersey Economic Development Authority to launch an Esports Innovation Center at Stockton's Atlantic City campus (IV.4.9), another aspect of our role as an Anchor Institution.

All enrolled students have a variety of opportunities to become involved in co-curricular and extracurricular activities that adhere to principles and procedures common to all Stockton programs. The Office of Student Development oversees student organizations and offers leadership education workshops and conference opportunities to students and   coordinates community service events to increase involvement with the local community (IV.4.10). Its mission and operations align with the same principles and procedures that govern all programs, following practices developed and implemented by the Student Senate (IV.4.11). Additionally, University-wide COVID-19 policies and procedures have been implemented by student organizations hosting meetings, campus events, and other extracurricular activities.

Among the several employment opportunities for student workers on campus, the Office of Event Services and Campus Center Operations (ESCCO) offers students employment opportunities designed to help offset the costs of their education, while providing valuable

career-focused experience. In addition to the staffing and upkeep of the Campus Center, ESCCO prides itself on offering career-enhancing opportunities and fostering leadership development, transferrable life skills, and personal and career development (IV.4.12).

To ensure that Stockton continues to serve students well, our administration and staff regularly review all support services delivered to our students. The University maintains a rigorous contracting process for third-party providers, such as the bookstore, dining services (IV.5.1), and shuttle bus operations between the Galloway and Atlantic City campuses and solicits multiple types of actionable student feedback, detailed in Chapter V.

Stockton also engages in systematic, periodic assessment to measure the effectiveness of programs supporting the student experience as detailed in Chapter V. Notable among these are the use of assessment results from retention pilot programs to plan for developing an even more precise project for proactively identifying students at financial risk (IV.6.1).

III.   Opportunities for Improvement and Innovation

Based on the Standard IV: Support of the Student Experience Working Group's analysis and evidence presented, Stockton has met this standard and plans the following improvements:

- **Continue strengthening support programs, and resources** at all campus locations, with a special focus on the Atlantic City Phase II expansion.
- **Re-assess systems and processes that support students' educational goals** post-COVID-19. Incorporate the positive lessons in virtual communication to enhance student access and retention.
- **Track and assess institutional initiatives that directly impact student health, safety, and well-being**, such as the NASPA Culture of Respect program, which seeks to reduce campus sexual violence.

Standard V: Educational Effectiveness

I. Introduction

This chapter analyzes the assessment processes and practices that Stockton University follows to ensure educational effectiveness in academic and co-curricular activities and presents evidence to demonstrate how faculty and staff use results of student learning assessment for continuous improvement. Faculty members and academic administrators set goals for each academic program and personnel in Student Affairs similarly align co-curricular educational goals with our mission, institutional goals, academic programs, Essential Learning Outcomes, and expectations for higher education. Our University Outcomes Alignment Map demonstrates how Stockton's educational and strategic goals align with values stated in Stockton's mission and serves as a key to the evidence provided in this chapter (V.1.1).

Relationship of Standard V to Institutional Priorities

This chapter links its analysis to our mission (V.1.2), and to all six priorities of our Strategic Plan 2025 (V.1.3): Inclusive Student Success (ISS), Diversity & Inclusion (D&I), Teaching & Learning (T&L), Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM), Financial Sustainability (FS) and Campus Community, Communication & Shared Governance (CCCSG).

II. Findings

Based on a careful review of the evidence, the Working Group finds that Stockton University meets the criteria and all components for Standard V as well as Requirements for Affiliation #8 and #9.

Many of the 21 institutional goals from the six strategic priority areas focus on educational experiences that directly relate to our Essential Learning Outcomes (ELOs), representing the educational goals common to a Stockton education (V.1.4). Stockton faculty, staff, and administrators developed ELOs after the 2012 Self Study, influenced by an AAC&U framework, to reflect the institution's unique mission and values. A variety of Stockton stakeholders from all Divisions engaged in a collaborative and iterative process over several years to refine our ELOs and develop learning maps and rubrics

1. **Adapting to Change**
2. **Communication Skills**
3. **Creativity and Innovation**
4. **Critical Thinking**
5. **Ethical Reasoning**
6. **Global Awareness**
7. **Information Literacy and Research Skills**
8. **Program Competence**
9. **Quantitative Reasoning**
10. **Teamwork and Collaboration**

connected to learning outcomes and inform curriculum maps evaluated during annual and periodic (5-7 year) review cycles, as illustrated in this excerpt from our Childhood Studies program, which aligned its SLOs to the University ELOs (V.2a.1).

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Stockton's co-curricular outcomes and ELOs also guide assessment of programming in Student Affairs (V.1.5, V.3h.1). In fact, our student Transition Activity Leaders of New Students (TALONS) take a course that aligns to both the Council for Advancement of Standards (CAS) and Stockton's ELOs (V.2b.1). In addition, as noted in Chapter III, students consistently rate the impact of their community engagement as positively impacting their growth in four Essential Learning Outcomes over the past six years (V.3a.1)

This chapter details the processes that faculty and staff follow to regularly assess university-wide institutional goals, ELOs, program learning goals, and co-curricular learning and development goals during annual and periodic (5-7 year) review cycles, conveyed in our Educational Effectiveness Plan (V.2c.1).

Stockton Chooses Continuous Improvement to its Assessment Processes
Stockton continues to improve the structures that support our assessment system in response to the 2012 MSCHE Self Study Evaluation Report (V.5.1), the 2017 Periodic Review Report (V.5.2), and our own internal processes. In 2013, the University established the Office of Academic Assessment (V.2.2, V. 5.3). The initial director, whose academic background was in Educational Psychology, was a member of Stockton's faculty since 1990, having previously served as Director of the Institute for the Study of College Teaching from 1999 to 2002 and as Director of the Institute for Faculty Development from 2006 to 2009. Under her leadership, the Office of Academic Assessment supported student-learning outcomes by providing resources for faculty and administrators to assist in the design, analysis, dissemination, and use of assessments of learning, performances, attitudes, motivations, and skills. From 2013-2017, her office published faculty-authored, faculty-read *Evidence Newsletters* (V.3f.1). The University also partnered with The Educational Testing Service (ETS) to norm instruments for measuring outcomes that align with Stockton's ELOs, for example, HEIghten for Written Communication (V.2.1, V.2a.2, V.2b.2, V.3.1).

In 2017, a faculty leadership MOA (V.2.2, V.5.3) reinforced this academic assessment position to collaborate with leaders and staff in the offices of the Provost and Institutional Research. This work continued to evolve through a combined series of internal assessments, conversations, and analyses spanning 2019-2021, during which time Stockton formally reorganized the Institute for Faculty Development, Center for Learning Design, and the academic assessment position to create a Center for Teaching & Learning Design (CTLD), which offers assessment and professional development from one source (V.3b.1, V.3d.2). As a unified center, the CTLD provides full-time dedicated staff, including an Executive Director, an administrative Director of Academic Assessment, learning designers, and several Faculty Fellows (V.3d.3). The CTLD engages in continuous assessment and uses results to improve its services (V.3c.1, V.3d.4, V.3h.2). Professional development offered by the CTLD is assessed with results used to improve

current and future professional development sessions (V.3a.2, V.3b.2, V.3d.5, V.3h.3). Additional information about the CTLD appears in Chapter III.

Throughout all three structural changes, Stockton has sustained a comprehensive system of annual and periodic assessment procedures and reporting practices (V.2c.2). As outlined in our plan, assessing Educational Effectiveness involves faculty and staff in each academic program, center/unit/institute, and school/division, reporting and reflecting on assessment results in an Annual Program Report (APR) and a scheduled Periodic Program Review (PPR) which was previously called a Five-Year Review. Some excerpts from these program reports illustrate how student learning outcomes align to career goals (V.2b.3), how faculty use results from student learning outcomes to improve student learning (V.3a.3), and how they communicate results to adjust curriculum and inform appropriate constituents (V.3b.3, V3f.14).

Academic Affairs' non-accredited programs are transitioning to a six-year periodic review cycle, and accredited programs will continue to follow their respective accreditors' periodic schedules (V.5.4). During the PPR, external consultants (or visiting accreditation teams) provide a longitudinal assessment of program efficacy. Program faculty and deans respond to that assessment, and the Office of the Provost convenes a close-the-loop meeting that lays out the next five years of annual goals (V.3c.2).

Academic offerings at Stockton are organized around degree-granting programs, augmented by other structures such as minors, concentrations (within degree programs), general education, and certificate programs. Academic program requirements and learning outcomes are well-defined and publicly available, listed in the Stockton Academic Bulletin (V.3f.2) and curriculum worksheets (V.3f.3) available on the Stockton website (V.3f.4) (click to program of interest and use curriculum tab to view worksheets). Faculty and students can monitor specific program requirements and progress through the Degree Works audit (see Chapter IV) (V.3f.5).

Academic Affairs maintains a repository of program assessment reports that will be available to the visiting team. Faculty and staff prepare these materials every year, following the schedule of periodic assessment, completing templates for letters, reports, and planning documents, and "closing the loop" after each periodic review cycle. The Standard V Working Group has compiled Appendix A to provide the team with these materials in one place (V.2.3, V.3.2). Following this comprehensive system, program faculty members conduct annual assessments of student learning outcomes like this excerpt from the Women's Gender and Sexuality Studies minor Annual Report from 2020-21 (V.2.4, V.3.3).

In advance of the visit, Appendix B contains a comprehensive example from the Bachelor of Science in Health Sciences (BSHS) non-accredited program. The complete collection of documents illustrates how the PPR (pages 1-171), combined with consultant, dean, and faculty responses (pages 172-182), Close-the-Loop Memo (pages 191-194) and two APRs thus far

(pages 195-275) focuses faculty to use assessment results for continuous improvement of educational effectiveness consistent with Stockton's mission (V.3a.4, V.3b.4, V.3c.3, V.3d.6, V.3e.1, V.3f.6). Page 80 of this Appendix also cites a scholarly presentation and published article on aligning ELOs to interprofessional collaborative practices specific to the BSHS program (V.1).

Similarly, faculty members in the Psychology program sustain an assessment committee that conducts annual and longitudinal reviews of specific student learning outcomes. The faculty used results from this Critical Thinking Assessment (V.3h.4) to consider replacing a standardized instrument with a more specifically faculty-tailored set of instruments (p. 66). Likewise, faculty in the Math program recently reviewed Praxis 2 results from the Education program and used those results to update the Math Education curriculum (V.3b.5, V.3f.7).

To request financial support for more focused or in-depth assessment initiatives, programs may apply annually to the Office of the Provost (V.3c.4, V.3e.2) for awards ranging between $1,000-$1,500. Examples of these funded assessment projects include accredited and non-accredited programs alike, such as American Studies (V.2.5), Physical Therapy (V.2c.3), Communications Disorders (V.3c.5), and Performing Arts (V.5.5).

Stockton Chooses Pedagogical Professional Development to Strengthen Learning

Faculty achieve pedagogical excellence through the support of colleagues, professional development funds, and Stockton-sponsored professional development activities (V.3d), many of which are now planned and implemented through the Center for Teaching & Learning Design (CTLD) (V.3d.7). CTLD information aligned with Standard V criteria is located in the CTLD Summary Report (V.3b.6, V.3c.6, V.3d.8, V.3e.3, V.3h.5).

Stockton also invests in professional development by funding an average of 10-12 summer institutes each year. Summer institutes offer targeted support for faculty to strengthen their pedagogical knowledge and skills on topics like Integrating Essential Learning Outcomes, Teaching and Learning with Technology, and most recently, "Teaching Race and Racism."

Faculty propose institutes, revise and implement the activities, and submit evidence of the institutes' outcomes, as exemplified in Appendix C (V.3d.9). The University also annually offers the "Stockton Institute on the Peer Evaluation of Teaching" (V.3d.10).
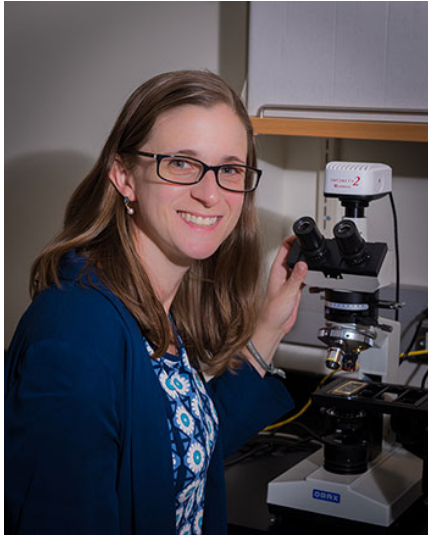
I attended the Center for Learning Design's 2019 Summer Institute, Designing an Exemplary Course. I used this professional development opportunity to align student learning outcomes with course material and include periodic assessments. I redesigned the course syllabus focused on student learning outcomes (SLOs) and alignment of content, changing the course textbook, and re-designing lecture slides to reflect the structure of the SLOs for each lecture. The students and I participated in a pilot study of the CLD's syllabus template. Student assessment of the course and syllabus design was positive, indicating high scores on items related to course organization. Students commented that "tests were fitting to the course," "feedback on exams and assignments made academic growth easy" and that learning outcomes were achieved "now I can easily identify species and know all the basics of marine science very clearly and concisely." Comparing these comments to feedback received in previous semesters demonstrated that my pedagogy and effectiveness in the classroom were enhanced by professional development.

Dr. Christine Thompson, Assistant Professor of Marine Science

Faculty like Dr. Thompson demonstrate the impact of well-designed professional development activities on course design and student learning (V.3a.2, V.3b.2, V.3d.5, V.3h.3). Additional accomplishments of Stockton faculty related to professional development activities and scholarship related to pedagogical effectiveness are discussed in Chapter III.

Stockton Chooses Comprehensive General Studies Assessment
As emphasized in Chapter III, General Studies plays a vital and central role in a Stockton education, constituting one-quarter of a student's coursework.

General Studies programs include foundational writing and quantitative reasoning courses, first-year seminar courses, interdisciplinary minors, and interdisciplinary courses addressing a liberal arts education. Such courses are aligned to specific goals (V.2a.3) mapped to our ELOs (V.1.6). As noted in Chapter III, faculty from every academic school contribute interdisciplinary General Studies courses to the "commons," reaching every student across the University. General Studies is committed to performing assessment that is driven by questions about the curriculum, student learning, teaching effectiveness, and effective processes.

The Dean of the School of General Studies and faculty who teach General Studies courses use the same annual and periodic reporting system of assessing their university-wide programs that the individual major programs of study follow. In addition, because their courses reach students throughout every school, the General Studies Dean and faculty also periodically update their own processes, as exemplified by the Quantitative Reasoning Across the Disciplines (QUAD) program in pages 5-19 of this plan (V.5.6).

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For example, like the degree-granting academic programs, the FRST program in General Studies also conducts a Periodic Program Review (PPR). As noted in Chapters III and IV, FRST is the series of courses designed specifically to support underprepared students. Faculty in this program also extend first-year-appropriate designations more generally to a range of courses offered throughout the University. In this way, all beginning students feel equally welcomed and supported by the institution, and all faculty who offer these courses share supportive pedagogical approaches. The most recent PPR for FRST uses assessment results to set annual goals for the next several years (p. 73) in areas that span student learning, pedagogy and curriculum, support services, professional development, planning and budgeting for services, informing colleagues about results improving key indicators, and implementing improvements to placement-related procedures (V.3a.5, V.3b.7, V.3c.7, V.3d.11, V.3e.4, V.3f.8, V.3g.1, V.3h.6).

Closely related to FRST is Stockton's First-Year Seminar (FYS) program, an even more specifically focused series of courses, co-curricular experiences, and support services that thrives within General Studies. As evidenced in the First-Year Seminars' most recent PPR (pages 19-25) the FYS program faculty also use results to inform every aspect of their continuous improvement planning (V.3a.6, V.3b.8, V.3c.8, V.3d.12, V.3e.5, V.3f.9, V.3g.2, V.3h.7).

During Self Study, the School of General Studies evaluated and updated its current system for annual assessment through 2024. As noted in Chapter III, the MOA on Convenors and increasing complexity of maintaining overlapping objectives require that we integrate and streamline those objectives with the University's Essential Learning Objectives for the future (V.5.7).

Finally, Chapter III noted that alumni frequently cite their General Studies courses as having defined their experiences at the University. Appendix D contains results from those alumni surveys (V.2b.4). Faculty from any academic program may use the alumni survey findings in their annual and/or periodic assessment reports, and they may also request custom surveys from the Office of Institutional Research.

Stockton Chooses Effective Planning & Budgeting to Support Student Learning
Resources for academic program development are based on needs assessments and alignment with institutional priorities. For example, pages 4-7 and the appendices a proposed Master of Public Health (MPH) program includes needs assessment data and aligns the program to institutional priorities (V.3e.6). Since our 2017 PRR, the University has systematically assessed these proposal criteria before funding each of the six new graduate degrees, seven undergraduate programs, and five undergraduate minors described in Chapter III. Also noted in Chapter III, our Holocaust and Genocide Studies minor program compiled a comprehensive assessment plan for this Self Study and included a request for assessment funding to support multiple faculty stakeholders in their proposed project (V.3b.9, V.3e.7).

Stockton's Institutional Research website publishes a variety of data measuring achievement of inclusive student success (ISS) as a priority in the 2025 Strategic Plan. Stockton measures student success by publishing key indicators like retention and graduation on our website for review by internal and external audiences (V.3f.10, V.3g.3). While Stockton University's published third-semester retention rates in the 85-87th percentile are higher than state and national averages, the University is now focused on closing gaps among results disaggregated by race/ethnicity and gender. We use results to plan and measure additional initiatives.

For example, in 2019-20, the University established a Retention Working Group that used equity gap results in retention data to fund seven pilot projects aimed at narrowing those gaps in keeping with strategic priority 1 ISS, allocating personnel, programming, and dedicated task force time to assessing the effectiveness of each targeted pilot at the time of the Self Study Retention Plan (V.3.4, V.3c.9, V.3g.4, V.3h.8) and Achievement Gaps (V.1.7, V.2b.5, V.3a.7, V.3c.10, V.3e.8, V.3g.5, V.3h.9).

As detailed in Chapters IV and VI, the Retention Plan (V.3.4, V.3c.9, V.3g.4, V.3h.8) focuses our efforts on equitable success for all students, such as persistence rates for both first-time (V.3g.6) and transfer students (V.3g.7) by race/ethnicity and gender. Stockton recognizes that retention is a lag indicator, revealing patterns that have already occurred. Consequently, this working group sought to identify lead retention indicators, or predictive sub-measures, that might pre-emptively bolster student success. A summary of key initiatives since 2018, and preliminary findings, appear in this summary (V.3c.11).

In addition to institutionally developed initiatives, Stockton administered a new survey, the National Assessment of Collegiate Campus Climates (NACCC), to gather data about undergraduate students' appraisal of institutional commitment to equity and inclusion, the extent to which students interact meaningfully with diverse others, where and what they learn about race and their feelings of readiness for citizenship in a racially diverse democracy, and other important topics (V.3g.8).

Stockton also assesses student engagement via participation in the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). The most recent 2020 NSSE data is available to internal and external constituents on the Office of Institutional Research website (V.3f.11). We review NSSE data trends annually (data available since 2001) and discuss analysis of the data to adjust funding in alignment with strategic goal ISS (V.3.5, V.3c.12, V.3e.9). Coupled with retention and completion data, Stockton has added more resources focused on narrowing student equity gaps in high-impact practices, including creating the Office of Academic Achievement detailed in Chapters IV and VI (V.3e.10). Stockton programs such as the Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) and the free 4-credit online General Studies Go Global course are initiatives assessed to increase third-semester retention and graduation rates (V.3a.8, V.3c.13, V.3e.11).

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Stockton Chooses to Assess all Aspects of the Student Learning Experience

Chapter VII (pages 93-94) provides a summary of the non-linear path Stockton followed toward expansion into Atlantic City as an Anchor Institution, which was detailed in the 2017 PRR. Nonetheless, the University analyzed assessment results from both student and faculty surveys and town hall meetings (V.3e.12) to inform planning and resource allocation for an Atlantic City campus that met expressed needs. After having added locations in Hammonton and Manahawkin, and an instructional site in Woodbine, the University learned that planning for student demand was the most efficient way to allocate resources.

The services we provide at each location also undergo annual assessment: Annual Reports available for Manahawkin (V.3a.2, V.3c.14, V.3e.13), Hammonton (V.3a.10, V.3c.15, V.3e.14), Atlantic City (V.3a.11, V.3c.16, V.3e.15), and Woodbine (V.3a.12, V.3c.17, V.3e.16) to evaluate student satisfaction with services, course demand, and third-party providers (detailed below). These reports demonstrate that each site used results to take actions such as increasing budgets for expanded academic course offerings, modifying course times, implementing "student downtime" programming, and expanding vending and food. Due to the pandemic, reports that would have been produced in spring or fall 2020 will be consolidated into post-pandemic reporting, when students will be back at those locations.

Complementary to the academic assessment processes and cycles described above, Student Affairs aligns outcomes of co-curricular activities to CAS Learning and Development Outcomes mapped to ELOs with an emphasis on Inclusive Student Success (V.1.7, V.2b.5, V.3a.7, V.3c.10, V.3e.8, V.3g.5, V.3h.9). Each department in the Division of Student Affairs also completes annual reports, including highlights of activities. These are shared with external and internal audiences in an Annual Impact Report (V.2b.6, V.2c.4). Use of standardized data from the National Peer Educator Survey assists with measuring the impact of the University's peer educator program on student success (V.2b.7,V.2c.5). Related institutional assessment data is also available to the public on the Institutional Research website (V.2c.6). As noted in Chapter III, the newly-funded Academic Achievement Programs office is designing assessments for its efforts to narrow equity gaps among students who pursue opportunities to participate in the High Impact Practices comprising Ospreys RISE (Research, Internships, Service-learning, and Experiential Learning). Our most recent four years of six-month-out alumni survey results show that graduates cite internships and experiential learning as important to their success (III.3g.9).

Moreover, Stockton regularly assesses services from third-party vendors in a variety of ways that ensure the highest-quality service to students (V.4). As noted in Chapters IV and VI, our Fiscal Affairs personnel conduct institutional review and contract assessment in compliance with state-regulatory procurement rules for Chartwells Dining Services, Allied Security, Follett's Bookstore, and Stouts Transportation. In addition, given the importance of transportation and food service amenities from our AC Survey (V.3e.12), the Chartwells Dining Services vendor at both the

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Galloway and the Atlantic City campus locations conducts continuous student satisfaction monitoring via Chattback, Instagram, Feedback Form Dine On Campus and feedback drop boxes on both campuses (V.4.1). This vendor also conducts an annual fall semester survey, administered via email and augmented by spring semester focus groups conducted by On Sight Insight (OSI), a marketing research firm Chartwells retains. The vendor shares these results with the University on an annual basis and meets as needed with the Student Senate to resolve any questions or concerns as quickly as possible (V.4.2).

Likewise, based on strong demand for transportation between campuses, (V.3e.12) our students may notify any member of the Stockton University staff of quality concerns with Stout's Transportation, which provides shuttle service between the Galloway and Atlantic City locations. Stockton's Director of Facilities Administration & Real Estate engages in continuous quality assurance as notifications arrive; most assessment loops are closed within days of notification, as this example shows (V.4.3). Similarly, our Director of Public Safety holds weekly meetings with Allied Security at the Atlantic City Campus to review quality assurance. The Atlantic City campus administrators have also conducted surveys that include student satisfaction with both Chartwells and Allied (V.4.4). Based on the success of this model, the Public Safety office will be administering a satisfaction survey focused on students' perceptions of safety.

Impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic
In keeping with our culture of assessment, Stockton University's COVID-19 response was guided by assessment data and health experts. Stockton rapidly assessed its stakeholders via Pulse surveys to students (V.3h.10), faculty (V.3h.11), and staff (V.3h.12). We also used results from school-specific surveys of Health Sciences faculty (V.3h.13) and students (V.3h.14), and from technology needs surveys (V.3h.15) to address student and institutional needs. Guided by these ongoing assessments, a university-wide committee planned and published phased-in re-opening plans for all campus locations, adjusting operations along with public health guidelines (V.3h.16).

Concurrently, civil unrest during the pandemic inspired Stockton to recommit to our efforts in addressing social justice and racial inequalities. As discussed throughout this Self Study, Stockton's ongoing efforts were strengthened by the Faculty Senate and subsequent Board of Trustees-approved resolution for renewed commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice. The resolution and ongoing use of results from faculty, staff and student responses are published on the president's webpage (V.2b.8, V.3f.12).

For example, at the time of this Self Study, faculty had approved an Academic Proposal to include race and structural racism education in all our degree programs in a manner aligned with our strategic priorities for ISS, D&I, and T&L (V.2b.9, V.3b.10, V.3h.17). Initial assessment (V.3c.18, V.3e.17) of the proposal occurred through our shared governance process (V.2a.2). Likewise, our program assessment report template now requires programs to intentionally
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consider curriculum diversification and inclusive practices as part of the annual assessment process (V.3b.11, V.5.8).

Since our Periodic Review Report, we have achieved sustained success in revising and improving our assessment practices. As described in this chapter, we have continuously improved the structures and personnel who conduct academic assessment and we have responded to assessment of the outcomes of each cycle to improve student learning, faculty teaching, co-curricular support programs, and associated resource allocations. We continue to assess and address issues of equity, recognizing that student success depends on educational experiences that support all students academically and personally as described in this Self Study report.

III.   Opportunities for Improvement and Innovation
Based on the Standard V: Educational Effectiveness Working Group's analysis and evidence presented, Stockton has met this standard and plans the following improvements:

- **Use retention and High Impact Practices (HIP) results** to adjust allocations.
- **Continue assessing General Education/ELOs** while faculty refine objectives.
- **Retain** faculty collaboration in assessing new leadership agreements, revised program assessment templates, schedules, and the expanded CTLD.

Standard VI: Planning, Resources and Institutional Improvement

I.   Introduction

Chapter VI focuses on Stockton's fifth strategic priority, Financial Sustainability (FS), balancing the short- and long-term fiscal needs of academic programs, capital and facilities, technology infrastructure, human capital, debt and expenses, student programs and services, and operations while keeping tuition affordable for students. In addition, this chapter links planning to allocations, and assessment, illustrating how maintaining FS also allows the University to re-allocate resources toward these strategic priorities: Inclusive Student Success (ISS), Diversity and Inclusion (D&I), Teaching and Learning (T&L), and Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM).

The 2017 Periodic Review Report noted the University was actively pursuing rapid growth by creating the Atlantic City campus with additional housing and an academic building. As Stockton established this location to increase access to prospective students who live or who want to live in Atlantic City, the University also began planning several specific outreach, readiness, and support programs. This chapter highlights financial support for this expansion, and projects upcoming developments.

II.   Findings

Based on a careful review of the evidence, the Working Group finds that Stockton University meets the criteria and all components for Standard VI as well as Requirements for Affiliation #10 and #11.

Stockton Chooses Clear Institutional Objectives

As described in Standard I, Stockton University prioritized its current institutional objectives during a campus-wide, multi-year strategic planning process (VI.1.1). The University's institutional objectives are clearly stated, assessed appropriately, linked to mission and goal achievement, reflect conclusions drawn from assessment results, and are used for planning and resource allocation, as depicted in our Planning Flowchart (VI.1.2).

As a public institution of higher education, Stockton is a steward of public funds, maintaining a careful balance between fiscal needs and affordable access. The University has developed a sustainable financial model that is responsible, fair, and transparent. This involves considering key components, including revenue enhancement, cost containment, multi-year financial planning, and strategic resource allocation.

Clear goals, timelines, and accountability measures continuously shape the financial plan. Rather than fiscal plans (or lack thereof) driving or constraining institutional decision-making, at Stockton, the strategic plan, its ongoing Key Performance Indicators, and related operational

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plans detailed below provide valuable information about the financial impact of decisions (VI.1.3, VI.9.1). Externally, the University continues to identify alternative revenue sources that include philanthropic giving and, where appropriate, leveraging public-private partnerships. At the same time, the University continuously improves its internal processes to ensure its financial health.

Better still, Stockton's President persistently advocated for increased statewide support, achieving success for FY22. Announced in June 2021, Stockton received a record $32.7 million in state aid for FY22. This includes $4.6 million to support the Atlantic City campus and an additional $5.9 million to bring Stockton's operating aid up to an equitable per-student amount of no less than $3,050 per full-time equivalent student. **This is a 78% increase overall**, up from just $18.4 million in state aid just three years ago.

The increase in our direct State appropriation, coupled with the increase in our approved state-funded positions in FY18 (a 40% increase from 764 to 1,069 which translates to $8+ million in savings per year) clearly suggests that New Jersey's Governor and the state legislature have confidence in Stockton and support our ongoing Atlantic City expansion as we fulfill our Anchor Institution designation.

Stockton Chooses Systematic Planning and Improvement Processes

Each year, administrative managers work with their Divisional Executives to formulate goals, evaluate existing budgets, and consider resource allocation requests for the upcoming cycle in accordance with the Strategic and Annual Planning Procedure (VI.2.1). The process known as Program Review (VI.2.2) begins late in the fall semester with Program Review Templates (VI.2.3). Divisional Executives collaborate with their divisions, schools, and departments to identify areas needing additional budget support in the upcoming fiscal year. Reasons for budgetary increase requests include, but are not limited to, implementing strategic initiatives, expanding programs, increased vendor/contractual costs, or temporary cost increases (e.g., school reaccreditation).

After Divisional Executives meet with their respective areas, they complete the Program Review Template listing requested items, budgeted amounts, and justifications. These templates are submitted to the Vice President for Administration & Finance and Chief Financial Officer (VPAF/CFO), and the Executive Director of Budget, Financial Planning and Campus Services (ED of Budget). The ED of Budget compiles the requests from each division. The President's Cabinet then reviews and discusses each division's compiled request at their Winter Retreat and determines which requests and funding amounts are endorsed. These changes may either be temporary or permanent and are reflected in the University's annual operating and capital budget. The FY21 (VI.2.4) and FY22 (VI.2.5) Program Review Requests and the FY21 and FY22 Operating and Capital Budgets (VI.3.1, VI.3.2) are available for review in the Standard VI document inventory and on the public website.

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While the University's longstanding, assessment-results-informed, transparent budgeting process has been effective, Division of Administration & Finance representatives studying trends over time noted two results from these data: 1) that expense growth risked outpacing revenue growth over time, and 2) monthly Operational & Capital Reports (VI.3.3, VI.4.1, VI.9.2) consistently indicated that some divisions/departments were chronically underfunded, while others closed each budget year with a surplus. As a result, Stockton administrators ultimately decided to implement a modified Zero-Based Budgeting (ZBB) approach. The goal was less about reducing budgets and more about reallocating existing resources to support current institutional objectives and to better align to divisional/departmental planning each year.

The Office of Budget & Financial Planning began the ZBB planning process in FY 2019 by examining other colleges and universities using this approach. Through that process, the Office elected to pilot the initiative with certain divisions and schools. Given the contractual nature of most salaried expenses, the initial ZBB process focused exclusively on non-salary expenses. The following areas volunteered to participate in ZBB in FY 2019 and developed budgets using this methodology for FY 2020 in the initial pilot year: Student Affairs, Facilities & Operations, Student Life, the School of Education, and the Budget Office itself, which prepared the FY 2020 Operating and Capital Budget that highlighted the pilot on pages 5-6 (VI.2.6, VI.3.4).

During FY 2020, Stockton began preparing for the University-wide implementation of ZBB, effective in FY 2021. To help budget managers identify budget trends over time, the Office of Budget and Financial Planning prepared templates containing the past several years of actual year-to-date expenditures for each organization (org) and account with activity for every division. The Budget Office ran small, hands-on training sessions for budget unit managers and end-users/processors in each division, school, and department (VI.2.7). At the end of the sessions, budget managers received their ZBB templates that contained account-coded rows and two columns for managers to 1) project their expenses for the remainder of the current fiscal year and 2) determine their requested budget for the next fiscal year. A vital component of the process is the required justification that appears to the right of each budgetary line-item request on the templates, as demonstrated in an example from the Orientation budget (VI.2.8). The Visiting Team will have access to dozens more completed ZBB Templates from our Standard VI Document Inventory.

During Stockton's second year of ZBB in FY 2022, the Budget Office will pilot hourly employee budgets. Volunteer budget managers in several divisions, including Student Affairs and Facilities & Operations, have worked closely with the Budget Office during FY 2021. Budget managers in all divisions submitted their FY 2022 ZBB templates through their Divisional Executive (Cabinet

members) following the planning process above during winter and early spring 2021. Iterative requests for additional information and changes took place via email between the Budget Office and each budget manager between mid-March and mid-June.

Periodic assessments of revenues and expenses published on the Budget & Financial Planning website show that the process has helped reduce costs and increase organizational efficiency by encouraging schools/divisions/departments to work together to prioritize programs and maximize resources (VI.3.3, VI.4.1, VI.9.2). Notably, during the COVID-19 pandemic, Stockton implemented additional spending cuts that ended FY20 within its adjusted budget, even after sustaining significant revenue losses and the State's elimination of the University's fourth quarter state appropriation funding.

In summary, the University has a financial planning and budgeting process that is aligned with the institution's mission and goals, is evidence-based, and is clearly linked to the institution's and units' strategic plans/objectives as evidenced by the annual Program Review process and zero-based budgeting approach described above. Additionally, the University completes an annual State Budget Request, an annual Operating and Capital Budget, and a three-year Financial Model for internal planning purposes, described below.

Stockton Chooses Integrated Planning and Budgeting Processes

Stockton University prepares and submits an annual State Budget Request (VI.3.5) to the New Jersey Office of Management and Budget (OMB) each fall. The OMB provides Stockton with a target appropriation amount for the upcoming fiscal year (request year). The University then requests additional State appropriation for new initiatives linked to the University's current strategic plans and objectives. The President's Cabinet discusses these initiatives and seeks the University President's approval. From there, the VPAF/CFO works with the ED of Budget and key contributors across campus to prepare an initiative description and impact statement and quantify the funding and position requests. Prior State Budget Request initiatives have included: Equitable Funding, Atlantic City Campus, Atlantic City Coastal Resiliency Center, Multicultural Center, and Advancing Athletic Programs. Once Stockton's request is submitted to the OMB, it is reviewed, approved, and presented to the Governor for possible inclusion in the Governor's Budget Message in February or March.

During the planning cycle described above and depicted in the (VI.1.2) Planning Flowchart, the VPAF/CFO develops overall budget strategies in consultation with the other Divisional Executives for the coming year. Once these are approved by the President and informed by whatever the New Jersey legislature and Governor agree to fund, they are presented to the Board of Trustees' Finance and Professional Services Committee before June. The VPAF/CFO

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then works again with the ED of Budget to develop the Operating and Capital Budget using the projected State Appropriation, tuition and fees, auxiliary revenue, and anticipated revenue from other sources. The President reviews the annual budget to ensure it is aligned with the annual operational and current strategic plans and presents it to the full Board of Trustees for adoption (VI.2.9, VI.3.6). The Annual Operating and Capital Budget (VI.3.1, VI.3.2, and VI.2.6, VI.3.4) serves as the controlling document for all departmental budgets.

While Financial Sustainability is the main focus of this chapter, the University's Annual Operating and Capital Budgets and annual State Budget Requests also demonstrate the University's commitment to ISS, D&I, T&L, and SEM through its allocation of financial resources to these key areas (VI.2.6, VI.3.4, VI.3.5, VI.3.1, VI.3.2).

As noted in Chapter IV, after reviewing outcomes from its former approach to distributing institutional aid to small numbers of merit-eligible students, the University has made significant reallocations aligned to ISS and SEM strategic priorities. As a result, not only has the institutional scholarship budget grown over time, but the University has intentionally shifted away from awarding primarily merit aid to awarding primarily need-based aid as outlined in our SEM Plan (VI.3.7). As detailed in Chapters I, II, III, and IV, the University has designated both operational and capital funding to D&I initiatives such as establishing a Multicultural Center and a complete restructuring with augmented personnel in both the DEI Office and in the Division of Student Affairs. Likewise, re-allocations advanced T&L with the complete restructuring and additional personnel in the Center for Teaching and Learning Design described in Chapters III and IV.

Finally, in addition to the annual State Budget Request and Operating and Capital Budget, the Stockton Office of Budget, Financial Planning, and Campus Services maintains a (VI.3.8) Multi-Year Financial Model forthcoming. This model is based on the current fiscal year's operating budget and incorporates various revenue and expense assumptions. Revenue assumptions include enrollment, tuition and fee rates, housing occupancy, housing rent rates, and annual State direct and central appropriations. Expense assumptions include salary and benefit increases, anticipated organizational changes, increases related to contract escalation and inflation, new program initiative funding, and annual debt service. Maintaining and monitoring a multi-year financial model helps ensure the long-term financial sustainability of the institution.

This careful attention to integrated planning and budget processes enables Stockton to maintain the fiscal and human resources and the physical and technical infrastructure necessary to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered.

Stockton Chooses Responsible Fiscal Resource Allocation

Stockton's plan for fiscal resources reflects the University's mission, vision, and goals (VI.4.2), as well as its commitment to academic excellence, inclusivity and diversity, and student engagement. The plan is assessed periodically throughout the fiscal year to ensure adequate support of the University's operations.

To fund operations, the University receives revenues from various sources, including tuition and fees, grants and contracts, auxiliary services (housing), State of New Jersey appropriations (direct and central), and investment income. These revenue sources are utilized to cover expenses incurred to support operations. Salary and benefits of faculty and staff are the University's most significant operating expense (representing almost 71% of total operating expenses). Fiscal resources are assessed daily, weekly, and monthly by the VPAF/CFO and the ED of Budget (VI.3.3, VI.4.1, VI.9.2). Forecasts are updated whenever actual year-to-date revenue and expenses are inconsistent with the original adopted operating budget. If the proposed adjustments forecast a revenue shortfall, the VPAF/CFO works collaboratively with the ED of Budget and counterpart budget managers to re-adjust other areas as needed. These updates are reviewed with the Finance and Professional Services Committee of the University's Board of Trustees during the July, September, December, February, and May meetings (VI.4.3, VI.8.1). Copies of the VPAF/CFO's reports to the Finance and Professional Services Committee for FY 2021 and FY 2020 (VI.4.4), the Monthly Operating and Capital Budget reports for FY 2021 and FY 2020 (VI.3.3, VI.4.1, VI.9.2), the Daily Cash Reports (VI.4.5) and Cash Forecast (VI.4.6) are in the Standard VI Document Inventory.

Stockton Chooses Qualified, Effective Human Resources

Tightly linked to fiscal resources are Stockton's University's human resources. Leaders in this area are helping Stockton advance equity and inclusion on campus through hiring and campus training programs, as well as supporting University operations. To address campus training, the University provides students, faculty, and staff with access to the SafeColleges online training system, now part of a more extensive collection of training options (VI.4.7). In addition to the role that our Office of Human Resources (OHR) plays in assuring clear assignment of responsibility, OHR also played a central role in organizing a campus-wide Lactation Room Advisory Committee in 2016 to collaborate with key stakeholders and Facilities & Operations. To meet the needs of employees, students, and visitors, and ensure Stockton complied with Section 4207 of the 2010 Affordable Care Act (ACA), which revised the Fair Labor Standards Act, their efforts resulted in renovating and building new dedicated lactation spaces throughout the main Galloway campus and Atlantic City campus, where the Women's, Gender & Sexuality Center (VI.4.8) personnel promote access to these (VI.4.9).

All Chapters in the Self Study reference the impact of Stockton's July 2020 Board of Trustees resolution that reinforces its "Commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Social Justice at

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Stockton" and positions the University to be a leader on these issues (VI.4.10). To strengthen the human resources focused on these commitments, the University funded a new Director of Strategic Initiatives position within the Office of the Provost (VI.1.4, VI.4.11). A founding Professor of Africana Studies and Communication Studies agreed to serve in this director role for one year, during which she has reviewed and assessed University operations to determine how best to incorporate diversity and inclusion and eliminate bias to help dismantle practices that foster the achievement gap historically experienced by students of color. As noted earlier, the University also added a new Chief Officer for Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and Compliance position within the Office of Equal Opportunity and Institutional Compliance (VI.4.12) as part of Stockton's Response to Racial Justice Concerns (VI.1.4, VI.4.11).

As the University's enrollment has increased, its number of full-time faculty has changed accordingly (VI.4.13). Faculty qualifications are also strong: 97% of the University's full-time teaching faculty cohort are tenured or on tenure track, and 96% held either a doctoral degree or the highest professional, terminal degree in their discipline. With the exception of a statewide agreement to freeze temporary hires during COVID-19, we've maintained a 17:1 ratio that will stabilize in 2021-22. This student-to-faculty ratio clearly demonstrates Stockton's commitment to academic operations and student-centered classrooms.

	2016-2017	**2017-2018**	**2018-2019**	**2019-2020**	**2020-2021**
Full-time Faculty (Fall)	320	330	343	352	335
% Tenured or Tenure Track	96%	93%	90%	89%	97%
Total Undergraduates	7,854	8,275	8,604	8,893	8,846
Student to Faculty Ratio (Fall) (Undergraduate)	17:1	17:1	17:1	17:1	18:1

Based on the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) Data Feedback Report 2021, the University appears adequately staffed compared to 29 peer institutions (VI.4.14). Stockton's total full-time equivalent staff for fall 2020 of 1,249 (latest available IPEDS data) exceeds our peer institutions' average full-time equivalent staff by more than 261.

The University's employees work in any of five distinct campus locations: Galloway, Atlantic City, Hammonton, Manahawkin, and Woodbine. Now spanning three counties in its region, 50 years after opening in 1971, Stockton University remains the only comprehensive college or university in southeastern New Jersey.

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Stockton Chooses Comprehensive Physical Resources

Stockton serves one of the most economically-disadvantaged regions of New Jersey. Since 2006, the poverty rate in Atlantic City has jumped from 23% to 37% such that more than one in three residents lives below federal poverty levels. This directly shapes incoming Stockton students' experiences as eighty-eight (88%) percent receive financial aid, and 40% qualify for Pell Grants.

Such trends only grew after 2008, when Atlantic City was shaken by a series of casino closures, culminating in the loss of five casino hotels by 2016, the same year that the State of New Jersey designated Stockton as an Anchor Institution for the City. One year later, Stockton broke ground on Phase I of its Atlantic City campus, which opened in fall 2018. Stockton AC is the most visible manifestation of the University's commitment to regional and economic development (VI.4.15).

Phase I of Stockton AC was made possible through a public-private partnership with Atlantic City Development Corporation (AC Devco), a non-profit modeled from the New Brunswick Development Corporation (DEVCO), which expanded Rutgers' New Brunswick campus. Funding sources for Phase I included $50.6 million in bonds from the Atlantic County Improvement Authority from proceeds of almost $70 million in tax credits issued by the N.J. Economic Development Authority, $22 million from a Capital Improvement Fund grant awarded in July 2016 by the N.J. Secretary of Higher Education, an $8.3 million contribution from South Jersey Gas, $2.1 million in developer's equity, and $18 million from Stockton, along with $77.3 million in Atlantic County Improvement Authority revenue bonds secured by lease payments from the University.

In October 2020, the University broke ground for a second residence hall that will house an additional 416 students with expected completion in 2023, nearly doubling Stockton's capacity and bringing the number of students living in Atlantic City campus housing to just under 1,000. (VI.4.16). Phase II is supported by a $10 million loan from the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority and another $59.3 million in tax-exempt bonds issued by the Atlantic County Improvement Authority.

While most recent media attention focuses on the University's expansion outside of main campus, it is important to note that the Galloway campus has also experienced significant growth. The Academic Quad, which was nearly complete at the time of our PRR in 2017, opened in 2018, adding the Unified Science Center 2, a three-story building with classrooms and research labs for various disciplines in the sciences, a vivarium, a large greenhouse, a multipurpose room, and faculty offices; as well as the John F. Scarpa Health Sciences Center, with a state-of-the-art simulation suite that offers specialized clinical experiences to students

majoring in health-related disciplines. Both buildings were supported by financing through the Building Our Future Bond Act, which New Jersey voters overwhelmingly approved in 2012 (VI.4.17).

Additional expansion occurred at Stockton's other satellite locations. The instructional site in Manahawkin expanded in January 2018 to meet growing demand in Ocean County, providing the accelerated nursing program with an additional 7,915 square-foot space (VI.4). Hammonton hosts both the M.S. in Data Science and Strategic Analytics and M.A. in Counseling programs and Stockton's New Jersey Child Welfare Education Institute, Murphy Writing, and one external tenant—the South Jersey Cultural Alliance. Woodbine offers courses in General Studies and operates the Sam Azeez Museum of Woodbine Heritage, which supports programming in Jewish Studies and Migration with local K-12 schools.

Through high school, my plans never included leaving my hometown of Atlantic City. I was set in stone that Stockton was the only school I wanted to attend, especially because of its new Atlantic City campus. The Engelberg Leadership Scholarship Program allowed me to live at the Atlantic City residence hall, where I made four more close friends and finally had the true college experience (VI.4.18). –Elena, Class of 2022

Although the University's physical infrastructure is adequate to support current and immediate future operations, Stockton continuously studies space needs through the University's Space Management Committee (SMC) (VI.4.19). The SMC, co-chaired by the VP of Facilities & Operations and the Chief Planning Officer, reviews and makes recommendations regarding requests that involve significant alterations, major re-assignments, or functional changes in space owned or controlled by the University. The SMC includes representatives from all University divisions, including faculty, staff, and students. Some examples of space modifications the SMC has approved are new dedicated space for the Women's, Gender and Sexuality Center, expansion of the Military and Veteran Resource Center, and creation of a dedicated space for Stockton's eSports program.
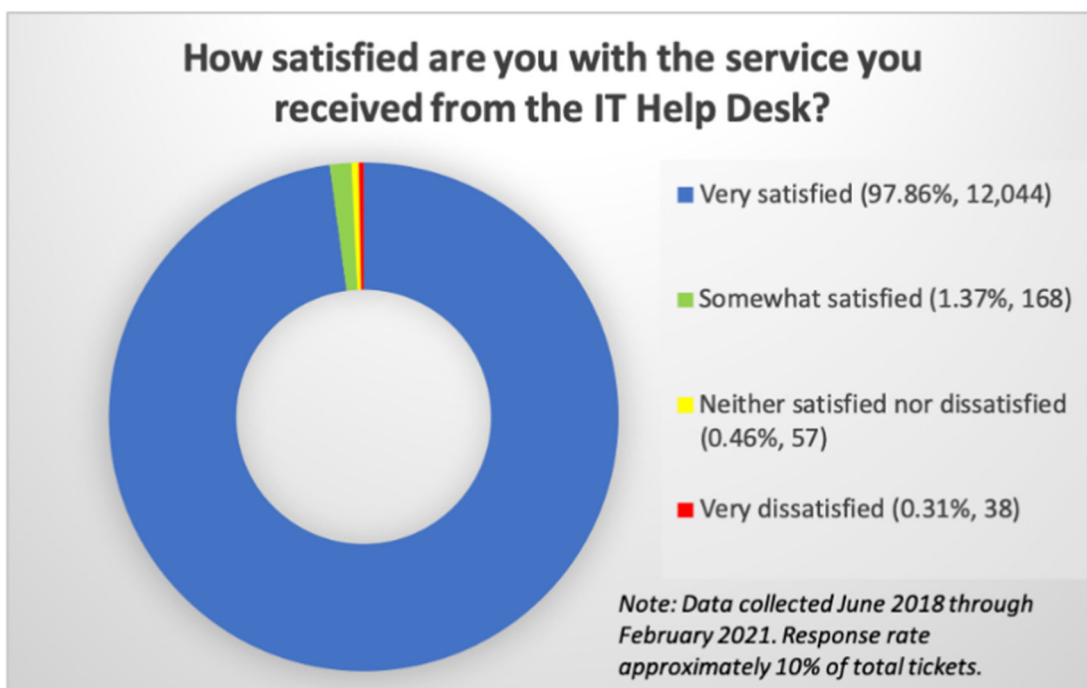
Stockton Chooses Integrated Information Technology Resources

Just as ongoing improvements to physical facilities remain vital to accommodate strategic growth, improvements to technology are tightly integrated with crucial activities that uphold the University's mission and enable our stakeholders to achieve strategically prioritized goals. Information Technology Services (ITS) supports a complex, multi-site technological infrastructure, the majority of which enriches learning, working, and living on campus. The University selects, deploys, and uses technology carefully, assuring alignment with institutional and strategic goals (VI.4.20, VI.6.1).

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The Information Technology Advisory Board (ITAB) is a visionary planning board that advises the Chief Information Officer, and other senior officers at Stockton University as appropriate, on all aspects of computing, information management, and communication technology (VI.4.21). ITAB strives to promote a culture of innovation, flexibility, integrity, and unity while committing the ITS team to service goals that support the entire institution. ITAB promotes an environment for the infusion and utilization of appropriate technology to enhance instruction. Additionally, ITAB supports ITS' commitment to first-rate customer service and end-user satisfaction.

The ITS Help Desk responds to over 35,000 requests from students, staff, and faculty each year with a customer satisfaction rating of over 99%.

How satisfied are you with the service you received from the IT Help Desk?

- Very satisfied (97.86%, 12,044)
- Somewhat satisfied (1.37%, 168)
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (0.46%, 57)
- Very dissatisfied (0.31%, 38)

Note: Data collected June 2018 through February 2021. Response rate approximately 10% of total tickets.

As noted in Chapter IV, Federal Trade Commission (FTC) Regulation 16 CRT Part 314 requires financial institutions (including institutions that participate in the processing of financial loans, such as colleges and universities) to have a security plan that protects the confidentiality and integrity of personal information. The purpose of the Stockton University Information Security Plan (VI.4.22, VI.6.2) is to reaffirm the safeguards established by the University to secure its administrative information systems against unauthorized use, intrusion, or other security risks. These systems store, transmit, retrieve, process and dispose of nonpublic financial, confidential, personally identifiable, trusted, or otherwise protected information. Appropriate safeguards are taken to ensure the integrity and reliability of the University's institutional data resources.

Offices maintaining institutional data on PCs are responsible for establishing and following appropriate data security practices. All backup media containing confidential or sensitive data must be stored in a physically secured area or encrypted using a strong password or key. ITS is responsible for safeguarding institutional data on the University's central computing facilities (VI.4.20, VI.6.1). Systems containing confidential or sensitive information require users to authenticate themselves using industry-accepted account and password authentication methods. Access to systems and/or data is granted by the relevant data owner, and by proxy, any delegated data custodian. Security controls are evaluated, and the information security team conducts user access reviews at the request of relevant data owners/custodians and periodically as part of ongoing operational security initiatives. The transmission of confidential or sensitive data over the internet to web-based applications or servers must utilize trusted communication protocols, such as TLS. These safeguards became critical when most faculty, staff, and students transitioned to remote learning and working during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Enhancing equity through access to remote learning for all our students during the COVID-19 pandemic has tested the University's technical resources like never before, and students, faculty, and staff stepped up to the challenge with relative ease. ITS tracked over 450 devices loaned out over the past year, including laptops, document cameras, and MiFi devices using their Help Desk ticketing system (VI.4.23, VI.6.3). The technical infrastructure on campus, along with computing and communications, allowed us to successfully support the operations of the University wherever and however programs were delivered.

Stockton Chooses Clear Decision-Making Processes
The rapid response to the pandemic would not have been possible without well-established, clear decision-making processes that were already in place. In this strategic cycle, Stockton renewed its commitment to the role of shared governance as its sixth priority in the 2025 Strategic Plan (VI.5.1). This priority functions through existing structures that foster active collaboration, transparency, accountability, understanding, compromise, and mutual respect. In keeping with the mission statement and strategic priorities, University leadership carefully considers all recommendations from shared governance structures and processes detailed in Chapter VII. These are part of the decision-making process that continues to balance the financial needs of academic programs, capital and facilities, technology infrastructure, human capital, debt and expenses, student programs and services, and operations while keeping tuition affordable.

At the heart of the University's decision-making and commitment to advancing its mission is the President, who has, as noted at the outset of this chapter, successfully advocated for increased state appropriations, improved campus capacity, advanced University recognition and reputation, increased institutional giving, rededicated institutional commitment to shared governance and transparency, and the development of stronger community and regional relationships. Working alongside the President to provide information about the fiscal impact of
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decisions is the VPAF/CFO, who is responsible for planning, directing, and monitoring all the financial activities of the University. Their vision of **financial sustainability** (VI.4.2, VI.5.2) is part of the **Strategic Plan 2025** and is bolstered by Stockton's shared governance through the combined efforts of multiple entities, including the Board of Trustees, Deans' Council, Faculty Senate, Student Senate, Faculty and Staff Unions, Provost's Council, President's Cabinet, the Stockton University Foundation and the Foundation Board, and Stockton Affiliated Services and the Stockton Affiliated Services Board. (**Taskforce on Shared Governance (VI.5.3**); **Student Senate Resolution SP19-002 (VI.5.4**); **Taskforce on Shared Governance Final Report (VI.5.5**); **Faculty Senate Resolution: Shared Governance Notification Form (VI.5.6**)).

All of Stockton's institutional resources are utilized in a manner that maximizes the University's ability to respond decisively to external conditions. The University reacted swiftly in minimizing the unprecedented disruption to student learning and its fiscal resources induced by the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, in response to social justice-related issues nationwide, the University proactively reassessed all its internal practices from equal opportunity employment to bias-free curriculum development. The University increased need-based institutional resources commensurate with growth in the Pell-eligible population (see Chapter II, page 28). It has used its institutional resources to create several offices designed following the University's mission and vision statements and pledge to support the surrounding community.

Stockton Chooses Long- and Short-Term Facilities, Infrastructure, and Technology Planning

As noted in relation to the adequacy of facilities in section VI.4 above, the University has comprehensive planning for facilities, infrastructure, and technology that includes consideration of sustainability and deferred maintenance linked to the institution's strategic and financial planning processes.

In 1990 and 2010, the then-Richard Stockton College of New Jersey established a Facilities Master Plan to forecast the level of campus activity using student enrollment and facility needs projected well into 2030. These previous Master Plans included collaboration with the New Jersey Pinelands Commission. The 2020 Facilities Master Plan (VI.6.4) is a result of the University's collaborative effort and input from the Pinelands Commission to develop a comprehensive, forward-thinking, environmentally responsible, and academically responsive approach to Stockton's facility development initiatives. Updating the Facilities Master Plan is one of the Financial Sustainability implementation goals of Stockton's Strategic Plan 2025 (VI.1.5, VI.6.5). The update includes all campus locations in Galloway, Atlantic City, Manahawkin, Woodbine, Hammonton, and Nacote Creek and is based on the core principles of financial and environmental sustainability, beautification of the campuses, and commitment to continuously addressing deferred maintenance.

The 2020 Facilities Master Plan (VI.6.6) deals less with the timing of the implementation of facilities; instead, it focuses on the necessity for facilities that support Stockton's current and future needs, complies with a recently completed threatened and endangered species wetlands identification study, and fulfills the University Mission Statement's intentions (VI.1.6, VI.6.7). Its goal is to balance the concerns of each of these areas of interest, while supporting the University's ability to meet its academic goals and objectives and maintaining its respect for the surrounding environment.

The 2020 Facilities Master Plan provides a comprehensive overview of existing University properties, the annual capital budget planning process, and master planning. It is a long-term plan and as such anticipates development into the next decade (VI.6.6). For example, master planning for the future of the Galloway campus with input from the Athletic Facilities Task Force on immediate and future needs includes an eventual Sports Center expansion and North Athletic Campus fieldhouse and pavilion, plus a parking garage structure, fourth Academic Quad building, Campus Center expansion, and residential building improvements (VI.6.8). Master planning for the future of the Atlantic City campus includes an Academic Center expansion, a second residential complex (already in process), a mixed-use residential/commercial/retail complex, and an Atlantic City Coastal Resiliency Institute and Marine Science Center (VI.6.9).

As indicated earlier in section VI.3 of this chapter, the University is required to submit a Capital Budget request for each fiscal year to the State of New Jersey, specifically the New Jersey Commission on Capital Budgeting and Planning. The University's process in documenting the Capital Budget Request for each fiscal year is a community-wide, shared process that commences annually in July (VI.6.10). Members of the various committees, including the Space Management Committee, the President's Cabinet, and the Board of Trustees – Building & Grounds Committee, participate in various aspects of the process.

The overall Capital Budget Request includes various projects in response to developing University programs, including academics, student affairs, enrollment management, athletics, etc. Also included in the Capital Budget process is a detailed analysis of deferred maintenance projects prepared by the Division of Facilities & Operations. The most recent State submission was for FY22 (VI.6.10). Various aspects of this FY 2022 request stemmed from the preceding 2020 Facilities Master Plan.

The FY 2022 Capital Budget Request identified capital priorities totaling $597,241,177 (VI.6.10). Of this amount, the University requested $447,930,883 in new State capital funding to support various projects. These funds do not include resources available through existing state capital bond programs, such as the Higher Education Capital Improvement Fund (HECIF). The State funding request does, however, include funds for auxiliary enterprises, which traditionally have been institutionally funded.

Referenced earlier in section VI.3 of this chapter, the Annual Capital Budget is analyzed and scrutinized by the Division of Facilities & Operations to determine the highest priority of new, deferred maintenance, and health/safety/ADA projects. These projects are reviewed with the Cabinet multiple times throughout the year and ultimately approved by the Board of Trustees. In a typical year, the University budgets approximately $10 million for capital projects.

Finally, the Information Technology Strategic Plan includes seven specific goals (VI.4.20, VI.6.1). Goal #4 is to support financial sustainability by enhancing the protection of institutional and user data. Key strategies identified included reducing risk by enabling user participation in training and sense of ownership, implementing technical and behavioral controls to protect institutional and user data, implementing technical best practices to ensure business continuity and disaster recovery, prioritizing the identification of security vulnerabilities, identifying and adopting industry standards and best practices to mitigate security risks, identifying systems for user authentication and authorization, ensuring account provisioning and de-provisioning, and implementing security standards and controls for server, network devices, and workstations.

The Information Technology Strategic Plan (VI.4.20, VI.6.1) analyzed for this chapter and the Information Security Plan (VI.4.22, VI.6.2) analyzed for Chapter IV outline the practices to be followed in the event of a disaster or sustained system failure that renders the University's computing and communication facilities totally or partially offline for some time, preventing the University from meeting essential educational, fiscal, or employer responsibilities. Additionally, this plan describes the preventative measures needed to protect critical computing and communication resources to avert disaster and describes test procedures to assure disaster preparedness.

The University maintains a variety of remote connectivity solutions to support asynchronous and remote work. A remote administration tool (Screen Connect) is used by University personnel to provide remote support and administration to University constituents (VI.4.23, VI.6.3). Virtual Desktop Infrastructure provides access to virtualized desktops that remotely connect users to resources, including internal data shares, my documents folders, and applications that are not generally accessible. VPN accounts are provided to users with special remote connectivity requirements and are using institutionally issued/managed devices. The University also issues communication devices (MiFi, cellphone, etc.) to authorized employees for conducting business while out of the office.

The University revised its Instructional Continuity Planning – Contingency Planning Materials in March 2020 to address the pressing concerns of transitioning the faculty, staff, and students to an online environment (VI.6.11). To support the transition, the University allocated funds for ITS to purchase a University-wide Zoom subscription that continues to be an invaluable resource for campus events, meetings, and classes. This tool will remain helpful in hybrid situations where some participants may be present on one or another campus location while others are off

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campus. Support for remote operations continues to evolve with on-campus dedicated computer labs that were converted to virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI) hubs. These allow remote connections to campus resources and software from anywhere off-campus. The strength of the original plans allows ITS to prioritize making more remote access to resources previously only accessed on campus to ensure continuity during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Stockton Chooses Rigorous Internal and External Independent Audits

During the pandemic, these secure, remote connections were particularly instrumental for the University to engage in its annual audit processes. As referenced in the University's By-Laws, one of the Board of Trustee's standing committees is the Audit Committee (VI.7.1), which encourages good stewardship of the University's finances and supports the Board in overseeing the University's financial practices, auditing process, and internal controls. An important role of the Audit Committee entails supervising internal and external audit functions including regulatory compliance, such as the review of the University's IRS forms 990s (VI.7.2, VI.8.2,). The Audit Committee meets at least twice a year with the external auditors. As a standard practice, the internal auditors attend all Audit Committee meetings.

As evidence of Stockton's financial integrity and stability, the University undergoes an objective, independent examination of its financial records. This annual external audit includes requirements for audit of federal award expenditures in accordance with Uniform Guidance and State of New Jersey award expenditures per the State of New Jersey Department of Treasury Circular 2015-08. Stockton has consistently received unqualified (unmodified) audits indicating compliance with generally accepted accounting principles.

According to New Jersey State College Contract Law, Stockton and its component units are required to request a proposal for audit and tax services every three years. The current contract was awarded to Grant Thornton for FY20 and included two one-year extensions. The selection of the firm is vetted by the University, component unit management and Audit Committee members. Each year a pre-audit planning meeting is scheduled for the audit firm to present the audit timeline, scope, and significant areas of audit focus. Typical audit focus areas include tuition revenue, auxiliary revenue, and related receivables and deferred revenue; grant revenue and related receivables; management override of controls; State appropriations; accrued postretirement benefit obligations; accounting estimates; financial statement disclosures; and compliance with Uniform Guidance. A post-audit meeting completes the audit cycle with the firm delivering its audit results and opinion to the University Audit Committee and the component unit committee members. In a typical year, draft financials are provided to the State of New Jersey the first week of October, with final audited financials submitted at the end of October. Copies of the three most recent University audits are available on the website (VI.7.2, VI.8.2). Grant Thornton's audit planning and final presentations as well as uniform guidance statements are available for review in the document inventory (VI.8.3, VI.8.4).

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In addition to the external audit, Stockton University's internal audit function is documented in Policy File Number VI-89 (VI.8.5), which evaluates and improves the effectiveness of the institution's risk management, control, and governance processes. At least annually, an internal audit plan is submitted to the Audit Committee for review and approval. This consists of a work schedule, as well as budget and resource requirements for the next fiscal/calendar year, and a written report is prepared following each internal audit and communicated to the Audit Committee. The internal audit report includes background, objectives and scope, approach, strengths, detailed observations, and enhancement opportunities. The report also includes management's response and corrective action taken or to be taken regarding the specific observations and recommendations. The Internal Audit Committee is responsible for appropriate follow-up on engagement observations and recommendations.

Stockton has outsourced the role of Chief Audit Executive to public accounting and advisory firm Baker Tilly Virchow Krause, LLP (Baker Tilly), which ensures the internal audit function also remains objective and independent. The Chief Audit Executive, a CPA, and partner with Baker Tilly, is not an employee of Stockton University; their only business relationship with Stockton is through the internal audit outsourcing arrangement that Stockton enters into with Baker Tilly.

Stockton Chooses Integrated Planning, Allocation, and Effectiveness Systems
Finally, the University assesses effectiveness of planning, resource allocation, institutional renewal processes, and availability of resources. In alignment with each strategic goal, annual operating (functional) plans include regular reviews of assessment results (VI.9.3). For example, multiple campus stakeholders receive daily enrollment reports via email, and each semester these results are published on the Key Performance Indicators dashboards (VI.1.3, VI.9.1). As noted earlier in this chapter, monthly budget reports and quarterly Finance & Professional Services Committee reports also provide regular assessment for informing budget reallocation and adjustment decisions (VI.9.4). Finally, annual audits and the periodic ratings reviews from Moody's and Fitch also provide external assessment by independent auditors/evaluators (VI.9.5).

Summary Areas of Strength and Best Practice
Increased State Support
Stockton's state appropriation held steady from FY 2017 to FY 2019 at $18.4 million. In FY 2020, due to the coronavirus pandemic, the University saw a slight decline in its appropriation; however, the State has restored and increased Stockton's operating appropriation for FY 2021 and FY 2022. The FY 2022 appropriation of $32.7 million includes $17.9 million in base appropriation, $5.9 million in additional appropriation (to bring Stockton's operating aid up to an equitable per-student amount of no less than $3,050 per full-time equivalent student), $4.6 million in special purpose funding for Atlantic City, and $4.3 million in outcomes-based funding. This **$14.3 million increase** can be directly attributed to relentless advocating on behalf of the

University at the State level for equitable funding and support of Stockton's expansion into Atlantic City. This increase in appropriation is a testimony to the State's support of Stockton's recent institutional growth.

The University's State of New Jersey fringe benefits **increased $11.1 million** or 52% from $21.3 million in FY 2016 to $32.4 million in FY 2020. It is important to note the University's state-funded positions increased from 764 lines in FY 2017 to 1,069 lines in FY 2018. In FY 2020, the value of a line was approximately $30,300. Therefore, the value of the additional 305 lines is more than $9.2 million. This is yet another example of the University's success attributed to advocating at the State level for additional University support.

Completion of the 2020 Facilities Master Plan

The 2020 Facility Master Plan, described above, was reviewed and approved by the Stockton University Board of Trustees at the September 23, 2020 board meeting.

University-Wide Implementation of Zero-Based Budgeting

As previously described, the University successfully implemented Zero-Based Budgeting in FY21. As a result, the University has witnessed some cost reductions. More importantly, divisions have reallocated their budgets between organizations to meet their strategic goals and programmatic needs. The process has also increased organizational efficiency by encouraging schools, divisions, and departments to work together to actively prioritize programs and maximize resources.

Response to COVID-19 Financial Challenges

COVID-19 profoundly affected Stockton University and its students during the spring 2020 term. When the pandemic escalated in mid-March, the University quickly moved to remote learning, necessitating investments in instructional technology and online training. The campus closed to all but essential workers, as well as just over 100 students, including international students unable to return home and others who faced housing insecurity. By the beginning of April, the institution had shifted all summer teaching online.

While necessary, these decisions compromised Stockton's FY20 budget in significant ways that fall into three broad categories: 1) housing and meal plan refunds; 2) lost credit and non-credit tuition revenue; and 3) lost facility rental/auxiliary activity revenue. Refunds and credits for room, board, and transportation resulted in a net loss of $6.3 million. An additional $527,000 was lost in tuition dollars from students who withdrew from the term when instruction went online after March 25. Another $218,000 was lost from canceled non-credit-bearing and professional development programming. Finally, canceled facility rentals and auxiliary services, including fundraising events, athletic events, cultural, arts and theatre performances, and summer and athletic camps and activities, cost the University another $696,000.

Beyond these shortfalls, the campus incurred expenses directly related to its COVID-19 response, including technology outlays, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) purchases, and expanded maintenance and cleaning services.

In early May 2020, Stockton's fiscal plight was further exacerbated by $6.9 million in cuts from the State of New Jersey--a nearly 30% reduction in the institution's entire FY20 state appropriation. This included a 50% cut in the University's remaining FY 2020 operating funds totaling $3 million, an additional $3.7 million loss of the University's remaining legislative add-on funds, and a 50% cut in the University's final outcomes-based funding installment of $185,300. Several state and county-funded initiatives were also eliminated, primarily in K-12 professional development, causing lost revenue of another $597,000.

Fortunately, Stockton received both Federal and State Coronavirus Relief Funding (VI.4.24). In addition to the relief funding, the University made significant cuts to the FY 2020 and FY 2021 operating and capital budgets. Further, the University implemented a hiring freeze, a rigorous expenditure pre-approval process, and a union-negotiated furlough program. These efforts have allowed the University to generate an operating surplus in FY 2020 and FY 2021 despite significant lost revenue and increased spending due to mitigating and responding to COVID-19.

III.   Opportunities for Improvement and Innovation
Based on the Standard VI: Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement Working Group's analysis and evidence presented, Stockton has met this standard and plans the following improvements:

- **Automate various manual processes** to improve efficiencies and accuracy.

Standard VII: Governance, Leadership, and Administration

I.   Introduction

As a public, regional university dedicated to emphasizing the liberal arts within our professional programs, Stockton University has a clearly articulated, transparent, multi-layered governance framework, composed of the Board of Trustees (BOT), an accomplished chief executive officer, a strong and independent faculty governance model, a solid administrative structure, and an engaged Student Senate that allows it to advance the mission, vision, and goals of the University.

Relationship of Standard VII to Institutional Priorities

This chapter analyzes the role of shared governance structures during a five-year period of rapid change. As noted in earlier chapters, Stockton has undergone significant transformation, in name, size, and composition in the years immediately leading up to and after our 2017 PRR. At times, the pace or the manner of these changes resulted in miscommunications or disagreements among stakeholders. Consequently, as the institution was concluding its multi-year, university-wide strategic planning process, we solidified a sixth priority, Campus Community, Communication, and Shared Governance (CCCSG) to pursue goals aligned with our stated values of "Integrity and Respect" and "Shared Governance." This chapter focuses on that goal, presenting evidence of alignment with Standard VII.

II.   Findings

Based on a careful review of the evidence, the Standard VII Working Group finds that Stockton University meets the criteria and all components for Standard VII as well as Requirements for Affiliation 12, 13, and 14.

Stockton University Policy I-5 requires a "well-defined organizational structure" (VII.4a.1). At the time of this Self Study, this includes the President's Office; Division of Academic Affairs; Division of Student Affairs; Division of Facilities & Operations; Personnel, Labor, and Government Relations; Division of Administration & Finance; Information Technology; and Enrollment Management. To provide transparency to internal and external stakeholders, organizational charts are regularly updated and stored on the Office of Human Resources website (VII.1.1, VII.3d.1, VII.4a.2).

As detailed in Chapter VI, qualified administrators and staff provide sufficient assistance, technology, and information systems for divisions to measure, adjust, and achieve their goals, facilitating high levels of performance for faculty, staff, and students (VII.4d.1).

Members of Stockton's governance structures play important roles in the assessment and planning activities within each division, as described in Chapters V and VI. For example, during the period of this Self Study, members of the Faculty Senate and University administrators have

reviewed and updated the University procedures (VII.5.1) by which faculty propose new academic programs or make revisions to existing programs as well as the ways in which programs conduct annual and periodic reviews (VII.5.2). The highest level of approval in this procedure is the President's Cabinet, since the Board of Trustees confines its role in Policy I-9 (VII.1.2, VII.2a.1, VII.2c.1, VII.2d.1, VII.2e.1, VII.2f.1, VII.3a.1) to approving policies, not procedures. The University publishes charges, members, and materials for broader university-wide committees on its website (VII.4e.1).

Strategic Plan 2025: Choosing Our Path
As described in earlier chapters, the University engaged in a strategic planning process spanning 2017-2020 that established six areas of focus to guide operational goals and corresponding allocation requests throughout the institution (VII.3c.1, VII.4f.1). The strategic planning process included significant stakeholder input, solidified in its sixth priority: Campus Community, Communication, & Shared Governance (CCCSG).

Specifically recognizing CCCSG as a priority signals the University's firm commitment to continuing its long-standing tradition of engaging as many stakeholders as possible in institutional discussions. For example, the University's governance bodies participated in completing and approving an updated Facilities Master Plan in 2020, reinforcing a model of stakeholder engagement that results in stronger planning and development of campus spaces (VII.4e.2, VII.4f.2). Similarly, as noted in Chapter VI, a standing Space Management Committee includes administrator, faculty, and staff representatives to evaluate facilities space proposals (VII.4e.3).

A key element of the strategic planning process was the use of assessment data, such as the SWOT analyses the university considered (VII.4f.3). Institutional data were intentionally included in campus workshops and conversations to identify the six areas of focus, each with a set of measurable implementation strategies and tactics (VII.4f.3). For example, based on assessment results that showed a gap in the engagement of minority students in high-impact practices (HIPs), members of the University community created Goal 3--to reduce equity gaps in high-impact learning practices—to implement Priority I: Inclusive Student Success. As noted in Chapters IV and VI, the University made allocations to fund new positions in the Division of Student Affairs to achieve this goal.

Stockton University Board of Trustees
The Stockton Board of Trustee's legal governing authority is established by statute: "The board of trustees of a State college shall have general supervision over and shall be vested with the conduct of the college" (VII.1.3). This statute cross-references compliance with the New Jersey Conflicts of Interest Law (VII.2b.1). The Board and all University employees abide by the Policy I-50 Code of Ethics (VII.2h.1). By State law, trustees must submit forms related to Executive Orders,

such as an Outside Employment Questionnaire and an Executive Order 64 Conflicts of Interest Form (VII.2b.2, VII.2g.1, VII.2h.2, VII.3b.1).

The bylaws contained in Stockton Policy I-9 establish the composition and governing rules for the Board (VII.1.2, VII.2a.1, VII.2c.1, VII.2d.1, VII.2e.1, VII.2f.1, VII.3a.1). It has the responsibility to:

- Determine the educational curriculum and program of the institution.
- Determine policies for the organization, administration, and development of the institution.
- Study the educational and financial needs of the institution.
- Establish tuition and fees paid by students.
- Acquire and accept as gift real property and other forms of real estate.
- Award contracts and enter into agreements for the purchase of lands, buildings, equipment, materials, and supplies.
- Confer diplomas, certificates, and degrees.
- Appoint, determine compensation, and regularly review the President of the University.
- Borrow money for the needs of the institution.

The Board is composed of 15 members, the majority of whom are New Jersey citizens with significant success and experience in their fields, including auditing, business and investment management, entrepreneurship, grant management, higher education, and various legal areas (VII.2b.3). The public members serve six-year terms. The Board also includes two student trustees, elected by the student body. One serves as a voting member and the other as a student trustee alternate (non-voting member) with terms of two years each. Finally, the President of the University also serves as a non-voting member (VII.1.2, VII.2a.1, VII.2c.1, VII.2d.1, VII.2e.1, VII.2f.1, VII.3a.1). In December 2020, the Board approved increasing its membership to 15, to diversify the voices and perspectives brought to bear on the issues it must consider. Four (4) board nominees were approved by the N.J. Legislature and sworn in during the May 2021 meeting. The Board is governed by New Jersey laws that provide transparency by giving notice of open meetings and public tuition hearings to the community (VII.2a.2, VII.2a.3).

The Board has eight committees, composed of trustees, administrators, deans, faculty, and student senators. These committees are the Executive, Compensation, Nomination, and Governance Committee; Academic Affairs and Planning Committee; Audit Committee; Building and Grounds Committee; Development Committee; Finance and Professional Services Committee; Investment Committee; and the Student Success Committee. Each report out to the full board, as these minutes illustrate (VII.2a.4, VII.2c.2, VII.2d.2, VII.2e.2, VII.2i.1). Each committee chair works with a Divisional Executive to determine the work of the committee, and the

Divisional Executive carries out the work of the committee so that Board members do not interfere with the day-to-day workings of the institution (VII.2a.4, VII.2c.2, VII.2d.2, VII.2e.2, VII.2i.1). The Audit Committee is responsible for the regular review of institutional policies and procedures as well as audits of its finances (VII.2a.4, VII.2c.2, VII.2d.2, VII.2e.2, VII.2i.1). The Board Finance and Professional Services Committee is also tasked with ensuring the University's fiscal health, and for reviewing bid waivers, monthly operational states, tuition, and fees, as well as the annual budget (described in Chapter VI) before it is released to the community (VII.2a.4, VII.2c.2, VII.2d.2, VII.2e.2, VII.2i.1). In general, committees bring voting items to the full Board, such as the formal endorsement of this Self Study, offered by the Chair of the Executive, Compensation and Nomination, and Governance Committee (VII.2g.2).

When appointed or elected (student trustees), all trustees must participate in an orientation that provides a foundation for understanding the role of the Board at the University (VII.2b.2, VII.2g.1, VII.2h.2, VII.3b.1). Trustees regularly participate in training related to best practices of governance, using the New Jersey State College/University "Trustees' Reference Guide" (6th Edition). They are also members of the New Jersey Association of State Colleges and Universities (VII.2b.2, VII.2g.1, VII.2h.2, VII.3b.1) and the Association of Governing Boards.

President of Stockton University
The President has clearly articulated powers that include fundraising, development, long-range planning, promotion and dismissal of all faculty and staff members, and control and supervision of all buildings, grounds, equipment, and expenditures (VII.1.4). The President can create interim appointments, pending Board approval at the next scheduled meeting (VII.2i.2). The President has also established a Cabinet that meets regularly with senior-level staff, faculty leadership, and academic deans.

Stockton's President, Dr. Harvey Kesselman, has a unique role in the University's history: he was among the first cohort of students to attend Stockton in fall 1971, and he has been influential in the University's growth ever since. During his time as a senior administrator at Stockton, Dr. Kesselman has served as the Vice President for Student Affairs, Interim Vice President for Administration and Finance, Dean of the School of Education, and Provost and Executive Vice President. Dr. Kesselman currently serves as the Chair of the New Jersey Presidents' Council (VII.3b.2). He also serves on the New Jersey Association of State Colleges and Universities (NJASCU) board of directors (VII.3b.3). The President possesses the credentials necessary to lead the University (VII.3b.4) and is evaluated annually by the Board's Executive Committee or by an independent evaluator (VII.2f.2, VII.5.3). The President meets with faculty and staff annually at the Fall Faculty Conference and each spring semester with the Faculty Assembly (VII.4e.4).

As documented in Chapter II, the President's Office established a regular schedule of review to systematically evaluate all University policies and procedures every three years and implement

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changes where appropriate (VII.2f.2, VII.5.3). Overall, this office maintains the capacity to autonomously develop and implement institutional plans that identify and allocate resources (VII.3c.2). For example, as detailed in Chapter VI, the President approved FS strategic goal 1 to enhance overall fiscal responsibility, which resulted in an institution-wide shift to a modified zero-based budgeting approach. This new initiative was officially rolled out to the entire university in FY 2021, where the focus was on non-salary budgets. In FY 2022, the University maintained its concentration on non-salary budgets, while piloting hourly wage ZBBs. For FY 2023, Stockton will shift its attention to hourly budgets as part of the University-wide initiative. Through the implementation of zero-based budgeting, Stockton experienced many benefits and improvements, such as enhanced communication within each division, opportunities to examine and review individual expenditure requests, reallocation of funds to better support University priorities, improved alignment of budgets to meeting programmatic needs within resource allocation, and in some cases recognized budget reductions and savings.

Staff
An experienced and capable staff serve in a clear organizational structure composed of managers, professional staff members of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), classified and confidential staff members of the Communication Workers of America (CWA), skilled staff members of the International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE), and unions representing law enforcement (VII.1.1, VII.3d.1, VII.4a.2). The CWA and IFPTE Master Agreements specify terms, conditions, titles, corresponding job descriptions, and salaries (VII.1.5). Credentials for CWA and IFPTE members are governed by the State of New Jersey Civil Service Commission (VII.1.6, VII.4c.1). The Council of New Jersey State College Locals, AFL-CIO Full-Time/Part-Time Master Agreement specifies the terms and conditions of staff employment, (VII.1.7, VII.3c.3), as well as a salary guide. AFT generalized professional staff job descriptions are published on the website (VII.4c.2). Most AFT professional staff are members of Stockton Federation of Teachers (SFT) Local 2275. Staff members participate in specific shared governance processes, serving on various Board committees, University committees, and task forces throughout the institution. Members of the University community continue to review the extent to which staff members can participate more broadly and effectively in shared governance. Managers are at-will employees, have varying roles, and provide a depth of academic and administrative experience to the institution (VII.4a.3, VII.4b.1, VII.4c.3).

Stockton is committed to fair, equitable, and inclusive job searches, as evidenced by the University procedure for hiring (VII.3c.4) and a requirement for Search Advocates (VII.3c.5), as described in Chapter I. Search Advocates are involved early in the process and are full voting members on search committees. The hiring process occasionally requires balancing this procedure for lengthy search processes with the use of very specific criteria for Job Search Waivers, noted in section IX of the procedure (VII.3c.4). All classified position descriptions for any job search require a specific educational background and years of experience based upon the

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New Jersey Civil Service Commission (VII.4b.2, VII.4c.4). All job postings at the University have required years of experience and educational requirements specific to the role of the position at the University, as well as access to the person's credentials (VII.4b.3, VII.4c.5, VII.4a.3, VII.4b.1, VII.4c.3, VII.4b.4, VII.4c.6).

Managers are evaluated at least annually through an established process with multiple levels of review (VII.3c.6). More than 100 AFT staff are assessed annually, and reappointments are for one year, three years, or five years, based on successful performance after a specified period of time has passed (VII.3c.7) or on optional performance-based promotion (VII.3c.8). The CWA staff participate in an annual state-mandated ePAR review, where performance is evaluated in stages throughout the year (VII.3c.9, VII.3c.10).

Stockton University Faculty
Stockton University has a very engaged faculty who are regularly involved in the shared governance of the institution. The faculty has two representative bodies, the Faculty Assembly, which includes all faculty, as members, and the Faculty Senate, which has faculty-elected representatives. The Faculty Senate serves as the faculty's representative body to provide input to the University's proposed and/or revised policies, procedures, and major initiatives. For example, the Senate reviewed and ultimately endorsed this Self Study (VII.1.8). The Senate is governed by a Constitution that details its composition, including the ex officio role of union designees (VII.1.9). The Senate interacts with the larger Faculty Assembly and represents the Assembly members' interests (VII.1.10). The Senate is comprised of elected School Senators (one per school) and At-Large Senators (VII.1.10). The number of At-Large Senators is tied to the number of Faculty Assembly members--one senator per 10 faculty members, with an attempt to have at least 10% of the Senate comprised of untenured faculty members (VII.1.10). The Stockton Federation of Teachers (SFT) Local 2275 President or a designee serves as a member of the Senate Executive Committee, SFT representatives serve as members of each Senate standing committee, and the Senate President appoints an adjunct instructor as a non-voting liaison to the Senate as members of each Senate standing committee, and the Senate President appoints an adjunct instructor as a non-voting liaison to the Senate.

The Senate has eight established standing committees and can create task forces established for one academic year and extended as needed (VII.1.11). Each standing committee includes undergraduate and graduate student representation and an administrator who serves as an ex-officio member. Examples of recent task forces are detailed below. As part of the governance process, Faculty Senate leaders typically meet with the President, Provost, and Cabinet, once a month. In addition, the administration and Faculty Senate leadership also consult between scheduled meetings for matters needing immediate attention.

As noted above, most faculty are members of SFT Local 2275. A statewide Full-Time/Part-Time Master Agreement, a statewide Adjunct Master Agreement, and local agreements determine the terms and conditions of their employment as members of the University community (VII.1.7, VII.3c.3). Most University-wide committees and task forces include specifically designated SFT representatives.

Students

Students have an active role in the University's governance, not only through their membership on the Board of Trustees but also in an active Student Senate and other student organizations. The Student Senate is governed by its Constitution, which establishes the Senate's composition and role (VII.1.12, VII.4e.5). The Student Senate is comprised of 23 students elected in the spring semester and four new students (freshmen or transfer) selected in the fall semester. The Senate has five established committees, oversees the student activity budget, and meets publicly (VII.1.12, VII.4e.5). This budget for clubs and organizations is more than $900,000 each year. Student Senators serve as members of various Board committees and graduate students are active members in Student Senate. For example, the Student Vice President in 2019-2020 and the Board Student Representative in 2018-2019 were graduate students. Additionally, a Graduate Student Council serves as the primary oversight body for graduate student organizations. In April 2019, the student government passed a resolution reaffirming its commitment to shared governance through a resolution (VII.4e.6). Additionally, the Student Senate and the Faculty Senate frequently work together, offering support for each other through written resolutions. Administration frequently meets with Student Senate officers, including monthly meetings of the Student President and Vice President with the University President, Provost, and Vice Presidents. Student Senators are included in many university-wide committees; for example, the Student Government Affairs Representative serves on the William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy Steering Committee, which oversees activities of the Center in the areas of civic engagement, polling, and policy research (VII.4e.7).

In addition to Student Senate, students also participate in shared governance through student organizations that regularly participate in university-wide committees and other processes. For example, students can serve as Transition Activity Leaders of New Students (TALONS), which includes participation in shared governance on first-year initiatives, placement, registration, and orientation. The former First-Year Experience Council concluded in 2020 with the retirement of its administrative leader, reflected in the most recent Stockton First-Year Seminar Handbook for Faculty (VII.4e.8). TALONS are now in the Student Transition Programs office (VII.4e.9).

University Constituents

The University community consists of its faculty, students, alumni, administration, and the surrounding community. Multiple University groups include, and benefit from, the expertise and

perspectives of community members. Some examples include the Stockton University Foundation Board, the Stockton Center for Community Engagement and Service-Learning, the Lloyd D. Levenson Institute of Gaming, Hospitality, and Tourism (LIGHT) Advisory Board, the National Aviation Research & Technology Park (NARTP) Board, the Noyes Museum of Art Board, the Sara and Sam Schoffer Holocaust Resource Center Executive Committee, the Stockton Center on Successful Aging (SCOSA) Center and Advisory Board, and the William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy Steering Committee. Additionally, the Stockton University Foundation is governed by a Board of Directors who lend their expertise to support the philanthropic needs of the University (VII.4c.7). These bodies promote and encourage community members' participation and affirm Stockton's commitment to shared governance and transparency.

Significant Changes to the University: Recommitting to Shared Governance
The University has experienced significant changes in the five years since the Periodic Review Report (PRR). As previously mentioned, the institution's governance structure reinforces stated values of integrity and respect and shared governance among its faculty, students, and staff.

As summarized in the PRR and in Chapter I, the change from college to university began with shared governance from 2013-2015. Following this lengthy process, the Richard Stockton College of New Jersey officially became Stockton University in February 2015. This process included an acknowledgment of social justice as well, when the name change dropped "Richard" as the named slaveholding member of the influential New Jersey Stockton family. Discussions around the original namesake of the College as well as broader social justice concerns on campus continued in 2017 with Student Senate, Faculty Senate, and administration (pages 1-3), (VII.4e.10, VII.5.4,). Changes in response to these issues included updates to the Campus Code of Conduct, the development of a new "Bias Free" initiative, and the selection of a new location for a bust of Richard Stockton (VII.4e.11, VII.5.5). In addition, a task force to reconsider the Stockton name itself was forming while this Self Study was underway (VII.4e.10, VII.5.4).

Just prior to finalizing university status, Stockton encountered significant hurdles in shared governance. In December 2014, Stockton's former president planned to develop the Showboat Casino and Hotel property as a University facility in Atlantic City; however, due to conflicting legal covenants, Stockton could not use the building. The University leadership gave insufficient notice to its community that the Showboat could not be used as intended and had not adequately included or notified shared governance structures in decisions about the purchase. The Faculty Senate held a Vote of No Confidence in its then-president and, during the process, he requested a medical leave. In April 2015, then-Acting President Kesselman created a Task Force on Shared Governance, composed of Board members, faculty, students, and administrators that was charged with engaging all constituencies in best practices of shared

governance, reviewing the current state of shared governance, and developing effective communication strategies to reach all levels of the institution.

On September 1, 2015, the Board accepted the former president's resignation and named Dr. Kesselman Interim President, after which the University sold Showboat. That same month, the Board released an investigative report on the failures that concluded with the sale of the property in January 2016 (VII.2a.5, VII.5.6).

Shared Governance Task Force members used results of student and faculty surveys to identify key recommendations (VII.4e.12, VII.5.7). For example, COACHE results on pages 71-72 were higher than benchmark institutions, and internal faculty survey results agreed that shared governance on academic matters was effective. However, internal faculty results on page 65 expressed lower ratings on other decision-making. Importantly, 80% of staff "were not clear about how governance is shared at Stockton; nor do they believe that Stockton's system of shared governance is inclusive of staff" (page 6). In May 2016, the task force recommended improvements for shared governance that encompassed changes at every University level (VII.4e.12, VII.5.7). These activities were intended to lay the groundwork for meaningful participation by all constituencies, including on the question of expansion in Atlantic City.

In 2016, President Kesselman created a task force to review all aspects of expanding to Atlantic City. The residential complex was built as a private-public partnership in conjunction with Atlantic City Development Corp. (AC DEVCO), South Jersey Industries, the Casino Reinvestment and Development Authority (CRDA), Atlantic County Improvement Authority, the City of Atlantic City, N.J. Economic Development Authority, and the State of New Jersey. The primary committee tasked with the Atlantic City expansion was composed of Board members, faculty, administrators, Student Senators, and community members. Additionally, three sub-committees reviewed specific areas related to academics, facility management and usage, and the student experience. Altogether, Stockton University, AC DEVCO, South Jersey Industries, CRDA, Atlantic County Improvement Authority, the City of Atlantic City, the N.J. Economic Development Authority, and the State of New Jersey collaborated on this critical expansion project. The University also established an Atlantic City Operations group that worked not only to establish the new academic and residential buildings but to also collaborate with the Atlantic City community. The University also created Chief Operating and Chief Academic Officer, Atlantic City Campus positions to play leading roles for the campus as an Anchor Institution.

But other challenges in governance unfortunately persisted. As noted earlier, the process of adopting the Strategic Plan 2025: Choosing Our Path with a final priority on Community, Communication, & Shared Governance posed challenges for shared governance. The process of

creating the strategic plan began with an external consulting firm for initial surveys and was shaped by ongoing internal dialogues. The process then expanded to include key stakeholders, with planning committees broadly representing the campus community. In preparation for the implementation phase, the Provost held a series of day-long sessions in the summer of 2019 with administration, faculty, staff, and students. As the community entered the implementation phases of Strategic Plan 2025 in fall 2019, there was strong disagreement around an administrative proposal to reorganize schools within Academic Affairs that coincided with an expiring faculty leadership agreement. These disagreements culminated in the Faculty Senate passing a Declaration of Declining Confidence in the then-provost in November 2019 (VII.4e.13). By January 2020, the Provost transitioned to a full-time faculty position and by December 2020, the President charged a search committee with a diverse group of University-wide constituents to carry out a national search, which yielded a successful candidate whose term began on July 1, 2021 (VII.4e.14).

The CCCSG implementation team also played a key role in the development and adoption of a new email communication policy in 2020 that marked a significant change to University operations, as explained in Standard II. The new "University Mass Email Guidelines" reflected an active shared governance process, which included key stakeholders empowered with shaping the final policy and implementation. This change achieved one of the CCCSG implementation goals, to "Improve Institutional Communication Practices" (VII.4f.4).

The clarification of shared governance structures became evident in consultations around "test optional" for admissions, as noted in Standards I, III, and VI. The makeup of the task force, its process, and the final report benefitted greatly from the involvement and input of key stakeholders, but some members felt that decisions outpaced the process (VII.4e.15, VII.4f.5, VII.5.8). For example, the task force identified resource needs and several options for timelines to successfully implement a new "test optional" policy that included adequate testing facilities (i.e., a Testing Center), piloting alternative assessments for placing students in appropriate classes, and adequate staffing. While there were varying views about implementation timing on the task force, the University expedited "test optional" to remove barriers for underrepresented students, a top strategic goal, as noted in Chapter I.

Self-Assessment Through Shared Governance
Stockton regularly initiates self-assessment by creating task forces to explore important topics-- such as shared governance; sexual and gender-based violence; diversity, equity, and inclusion; athletic and wellness facilities; and faculty leadership positions. The University also uses surveys,

town halls, focus groups, and other tools to incorporate the voices of its stakeholders. Standard II identifies some examples of self-assessment efforts. Here we expand on several.

A notable example in which self-assessment through shared governance led to operational changes was a campus-wide survey on recreation, athletic, and wellness facilities conducted in January 2020 by a Task Force on Athletic Facilities (VII.4f.6). Input from stakeholders and recommendations from this task force shaped the process and were explicitly incorporated into the new Facilities Master Plan (VII.4e.2, VII.4f.2). Another example is the joint administration-union Faculty Leadership Task Force that issued a series of recommendations in 2020 after a two-year process that included a campus-wide survey, informal interviews, data gathering from Institutional Research, focus groups, and town halls to solicit faculty input (VII.4e.16). Almost all of the recommendations were subsequently implemented through collective bargaining in late 2020 with a series of new agreements on faculty leadership positions that reflect significant change for Academic Affairs (VII.3c.11, VII.4f.7). For example, the nomenclature of titles for faculty leaders has been revised for the first time in over a decade; the issue of titles for faculty leaders as "program coordinators" or "program chairs" were one of several contentious debates among faculty that was resolved through this process.

The Governance Structure Responding to a Changing Society
Within the last year, the University responded to the COVID-19 global pandemic and local and national calls to dismantle systemic racism. Cooperation across the institution has allowed it to respond rapidly to these changing dynamics, while providing a safe and supportive environment.

The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on higher education. As detailed in Chapter VI, Stockton University engaged and adapted its emergency response plans to quickly shift to remote operations. Stockton's success was possible through a dedicated faculty and the technological infrastructure established by Information Technology Services (ITS) (VII.4d.2). ITS worked with faculty, students, and staff to provide the technology for operational continuity.

Stockton established a University Restart Operations Committee (UROC) whose charge was to "research, analyze, prepare, and recommend a set of operating principles to guide the University's launch of the 2020-2021 academic year and to be in compliance with all federal, state, and local health, safety, and education guidelines."

UROC was originally composed of five teams: an Umbrella Committee, Academic Affairs, Facilities, Athletics and Events, Health Safety and Communication, and Student Affairs (VII.3c.12, VII.4e.17, VII.4f.4). Each team included faculty, students, and staff who regularly reviewed all aspects of campus life related to the COVID-19 virus and submitted recommendations to division heads and the President's Cabinet. Subcommittees completed their service at the end of the fall 2020 semester and the Umbrella Committee became the primary shared governance

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body, continuing to meet and issue recommendations for navigating the pandemic under a new name, the University Resilience Operations Committee (UROC). For example, in November 2020, the Umbrella Committee partnered with the Student Senate to distribute a Higher Education Data Sharing Consortium (HEDS) survey to solicit student feedback on the University's progress in responding to COVID-19. Academic Affairs and Student Affairs leaders are using those results to inform ongoing decisions (VII.5.9). Additionally, UROC surveyed faculty and staff concerning the University's operational response to COVID-19 and used the results to shape ongoing, meaningful dialogue about the institution and the perceived roles of its constituencies (VII.5.10).

During an unprecedented time, the University responded to the pandemic using a flexible governance structure that ensured most of its constituents had a voice. For example, when the University made changes to housing, the academic calendar, and student employment practices and policies, the Student Senate was not fully included in the process. Similarly, when all staff were ordered to be present on campus in the fall semester, academic deans and faculty with tenure advocated for a de-densification plan (VII.4e.18). The President and his Cabinet responded to these concerns with a plan for de-densification until a vaccine was widely available, demonstrating a commitment to improved communication for a more inclusive decision-making process, and support for the HEDS survey mentioned earlier (VII.4e.19).

In June of 2020, CWA entered into a Memorandum of Agreement with the State of New Jersey that enabled state colleges and universities to implement furloughs and defer salary increases in order to avoid layoffs that may have resulted from immediate financial challenges presented by the pandemic (VII.1.13). Immediately after, the Council of New Jersey State Colleges and Locals AFT/AFT-CIO and the State of New Jersey signed a similar Memorandum of Agreement on "Job Protection" that allowed state colleges and universities to do the same for this group of employees (i.e., implement furloughs and defer salary increases to avoid layoffs) (VII.1.14). Later in the summer of 2021, President Kesselman and multiple unions reached a local "goodwill" Memorandum of Understanding that recognized the collective sacrifices by employees during the height of the pandemic and granted additional benefits for employees in 2021-2022 (VII.1.15)

During that same time, the nation experienced widespread protests over the killing of African-Americans by police in our country. As a recurring theme of this Self Study, those events also profoundly impacted Stockton. In June 2020, the Faculty Assembly passed a resolution expressing its solidarity with the Black Lives Matter Movement and calling for changes at the institution (VII.4e.20). At its July 2020 meeting, the Board approved a resolution that reinforced its commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice at Stockton University, as recorded in the minutes approved at the September meeting (VII.2a.6). Administratively, in response to these ongoing issues of race and racism, the University created two new positions outlined in Chapters I, II, and VI: Chief Officer of Equal Opportunity and Institutional Compliance, and, within the Provost's office, the Director of Strategic Initiatives.

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Analysis & Summary

Stockton follows a clear governance structure composed of the Board of Trustees and administrative staff, faculty and other staff members, students, and campus community members. Campus constituencies are interrelated, and most of their work does not happen in silos, as many decisions by one constituency can profoundly impact others. The members of each constituency are guided by regularly reviewed, clear governance policies and procedures, and have engaged in processes to ensure that these remain an institutional CCCSG priority.

Since the PRR in 2017, Stockton's physical presence and facilities have grown significantly, with the addition of multiple buildings in Atlantic City, 15.4 miles from Galloway. This growth in Atlantic City has required considerable planning and resources to provide students, faculty, and staff with transportation, food, and parking. Additionally, Stockton has facilities in Manahawkin, Hammonton, and Woodbine, which are 24.2 miles, 18.8 miles, and 30.4 miles respectively away from Galloway. While Stockton has been able to allocate resources to support this significant expansion, those processes have not been without recent challenges to collaboration among faculty, staff, and students. For example, there is a rich history of collaboration in the University's past on environmental and sustainability issues, and faculty were consulted on various efforts related to facilities, from water quality to building design (e.g., photovoltaic projects, campus geothermal system, the campus' first carbon inventory, a solar thermal system for residence life, etc.). The nature of collaboration and consultation with faculty and staff continues to evolve as the University has expanded and decision-making has become more variegated and complex. For example, faculty and staff representation has expanded into essential areas such as student enrollment and success (Strategic Enrollment Management Planning Council, Retention Working Group), academics (Faculty Leadership Task Force, Presidential Task Force on Reinventing the School of Business) and campus facilities and operations (Space Management Committee, University Resilience Operations Committee, Facilities Master Plan, and Athletics Task Force) to name just a few. Collaboration among administrators, faculty, staff, and students is an ongoing, iterative process in a larger university setting and Stockton is well-positioned to continue strengthening its shared-governance efforts in the future.

In the last two years, staff have shown an interest in creating a formal representative body to ensure that staff voices are included in the shared governance of Stockton University. Dr. Kesselman, President of Stockton University, supported discussions of a representative body, during a University discussion regarding the University's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. More recently, staff have met with the faculty senate leadership to begin the process of formalizing a representative body (VII.5.11).

The University will continue prioritizing shared governance, and input by stakeholders, in line with CCCSG. This entails adapting administrative decisions to reflect the input of those

stakeholders, and in this way, assuring the authenticity of shared governance. Stockton continues to improve communication among faculty, staff and students at the University's various sites and facilities to ensure they are (and feel) included in the University community.

III.   Opportunities for Improvement and Innovation

Based on the Standard VII: Governance, Leadership, and Administration Working Group's analysis and evidence presented, Stockton has met his standard and plans the following improvements:

- **Communicate clearly across groups and locations during all stages** of decision-making.
- **Enhance inclusion of staff members** in shared governance.