

Mid-Cycle Report: Snow College



**SNOW
COLLEGE**

19 August 2024

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Mission Fulfillment

Snow College is designated as a degree-granting institution of higher education (see Utah State Code [53B-1-102\(1\)\(a\)](#)) with a primary role as a community college. Snow College also fills the technical college role within its designated service area (see Utah System of Higher Education Policy [R315-5](#)). As a comprehensive community college, Snow prepares students to enter the workforce or transfer seamlessly to more advanced degree programs. Its [mission statement](#) reflects this: “Snow College continues a tradition of excellence, encourages a culture of innovation, and cultivates an atmosphere of engagement to advance students in the achievement of their educational goals.” (see NWCCU Standard 1.A.1). Fulfilling Snow’s mission is the focus of the college’s strategic planning, goal setting, and accreditation efforts.

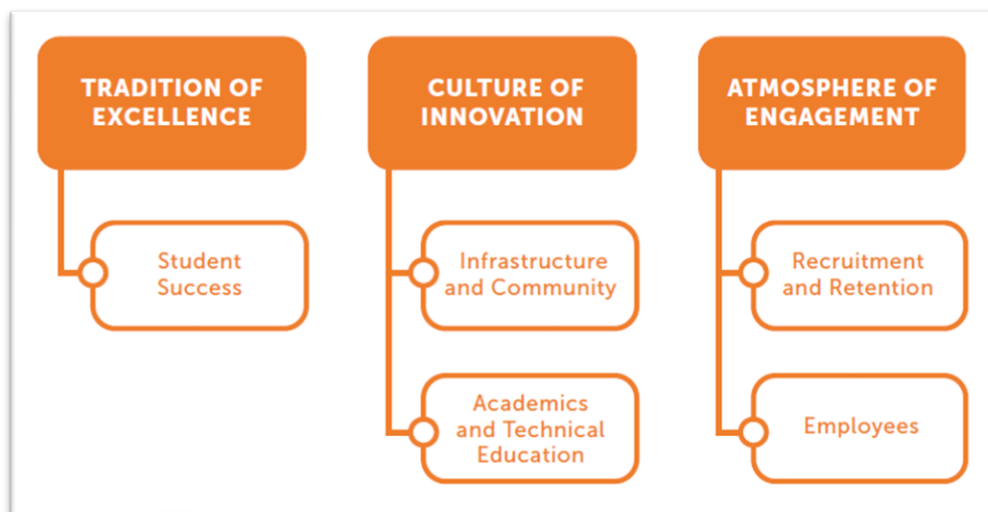
Strategic Planning

In the past fifteen years, Snow College has been guided by the results of in-depth strategic planning that engages students, faculty, staff, administrators, and community members in sustained conversations about the institutional strengths, resources, needs, and opportunities. The 2013 strategic planning process guided the college’s next five years in moving to a more integrated GE model, creating a process for developing a limited number of four-year programs, and maintaining high-quality and affordable academic offerings. The college’s most recent [strategic plan](#) (2020) continued that work and developed five strategic themes that categorize the college’s efforts to achieve a competitive advantage in the higher education space: Student Success, Academics and Technical Education, Recruitment and Retention, Employees, and Infrastructure and Community.

These strategic themes revised and expanded on the College’s previous mission-statement core themes; in other words, the current strategic themes align with the college’s mission statement while adding

specificity and enabling more developed key performance indicators (KPIs). Figure one shows the five strategic themes aligned with the three elements of the mission statement (see figure 1).

Figure 1. Mission Statement and Strategic Theme Alignment



Related to the mission and strategic themes, the Snow College Board of Trustees recently crafted an [aspirational statement](#) that Snow students should be able to “graduate debt-free, gain work experience, and develop a plan for the future.” This vision—one that has not been yet realized—is something that also guides the planning of the college. However, the student-facing aspirational statement does not replace the college’s mission statement; instead, during the 2023-2024 academic year, efforts to realize the aspirational statement were integrated into the mission-aligned strategic themes and their associated KPIs. For example, the college had a goal to reduce the number of students taking out student loans, an initiative that supported both the strategic theme of Student Retention and the aspirational statement.

Key Performance Indicators

At the beginning of President Stacey Y. McIlff’s tenure in 2023, the President’s Cabinet set goals and KPIs for the coming year that were in alignment with the strategic themes that emerged from the latest campus planning, a process President McIlff led when she was an administrator in Academic Affairs. Because the strategic plan included widespread input from campus and community stakeholders, the KPIs represented a continuation of the mission-aligned and campus-wide decision-making (see NWCCU Standard 1.B.3).

The KPIs also reflected ongoing work to operate the college following the priorities of the Utah System of Higher Education (USHE) and the oversight of and funding from the Utah Legislature. This includes a greater emphasis on distinct Growth Funding metrics and Performance Funding metrics. Growth Funding metrics provide additional institutional funding for budget-related, resident FTE growth of more than 100 compared to benchmark FTE data from 2019. For Snow College, this potentially nets an additional \$500,000 to the existing line-item budget and has shifted strategic enrollment management to focus more on resident student, full-time enrollments. The Performance Funding model considers areas of student access, timely completion, and high-yield awards for all students and underrepresented student groups. For both metrics, Snow College established five-year goals, which are part of state statute and report annual progress goals, for all students. The funding model is based on the realization of annual goals and positive progress toward five-year goals. As a result of these dynamic models, Snow College incorporated timely completions and high yield as Student Success key performance indicators and access as a Recruitment and Retention key performance indicator.

The strategic themes and KPIs were presented to the campus at back-to-school meetings in 2023 with two tools designed to enable campus-wide understanding and participation. First, a [goal and KPI scorecard](#) is publicly available and regularly updates institutional

progress. Second, staff members were asked to set and report area/individual goals that aligned with the institutional goals; Faculty were asked to do the same thing in their ongoing professional development planning and self-assessment reports. The college administration is using the same process during the 2024-2025 academic year, and KPIs are being finalized.

Accreditation and Assessment

In addition to these administrative efforts to center the institution on mission fulfillment through strategic planning, Snow College maintains an active program of assessment and accreditation work. To support this, the college reorganized the office responsible for institutional research. Instead of the institutional research office and the accreditation liaison officer (ALO) reporting to the Vice President for Financial Services, the new office of Analytics and Institutional Research has become part of Academic Affairs and reports to the chief academic officer. Also, the ALO role has been relocated to Academic Affairs and is being performed by the Associate Provost.

Additionally, to support these mission-fulfillment efforts, in June 2023, Snow College created an Accreditation Steering Committee. Chaired by the Snow College ALO and comprised of key representatives from faculty, staff, and administration, this committee provides internal leadership and support for all accreditation activities. For example, in addition to assisting with preparations for the mid-cycle report and visit, this group has a charge to become familiar with all NWCCU eligibility requirements and standards so that they can continually monitor, provide feedback, and gather evidence directed toward continual improvement.

Finally, throughout the year, Cabinet areas of Academic Affairs, Finance and Administration, Technical Education, Student Affairs, and External Affairs work to achieve specific area or smaller unit goals that drive improvement on institutional KPI progress. For example, over the past year, the Vice President for Student Affairs designed a strategic enrollment plan and instituted a Strategic Enrollment Committee to address the recruitment and retention needs. Academic Affairs designates one day each year as Assessment Day, and traditionally, faculty have used that day to understand equity gaps and to make plans to narrow them. In 2024, Assessment Day took on a different focus, and faculty wrote or updated program outcomes for every associate degree offered by Snow. Additionally, they wrote five-year assessment plans for the outcomes and will use future assessment days to conduct that assessment. These efforts by Student Affairs and Academic Affairs are emblematic of the culture of planning, assessment, and reflection at Snow College.

Student Achievement

Snow College celebrates student success and keeps this value at the center of institutional planning, budgeting, and operations. We have been pleased to be recognized for these efforts by the Aspen Institute, which named Snow College as one of 150 community colleges (out of more than a thousand) to apply for the 2025 [Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence](#). While we were not named as one of the ten finalists, Aspen’s recognition affirms our successes and provides us additional data to help us fulfill our mission more fully.

Snow College Measures of Student Achievement

Snow College uses standard metrics for student achievement, including measures of retention, persistence, graduation, and transfer, and attainment of student learning outcomes (see NWCCU Standard 1.D.2). Below are snapshots of each metric with data reaching back to pre-COVID academic years. Like all institutions, Snow is still coming to understand what happened to student learning and achievement during the pandemic and what the ongoing effects are.

Retention

See figure 2 for the Snow College’s retention metrics. This data comes from institutional data used to complete IPEDS reports, and *retention* is defined using IPEDS parameters: “A measure of the rate at which students persist in their educational program at an institution, expressed as a percentage. . . of first-time degree/certificate-seeking students from the previous fall who either re-enrolled or successfully completed their program by the current fall.” For this report, all first-time degree-seeking undergraduates (including associate-seekers and certificate-seekers) were reported. These numbers reflect both part-time and full-time students and do not exclude students typically removed for IPEDS reporting.

Figure 2. Percent of Students Retained, 2019-2023

Fall 2019 (Fall 2018 Cohort)	Fall 2020 (Fall 2019 Cohort)	Fall 2021 (Fall 2020 Cohort)	Fall 2022 (Fall 2021 Cohort)	Fall 2023 (Fall 2022 Cohort)
49%	48%	48%	46%	47%

Snow College’s retention numbers have been consistent over time; however, as noted below, the numbers are lower than some of our peer institutions, and efforts are underway to increase retention. We are also developing reporting dashboards that will integrate persistence, retention, transfer, graduation, and completion metrics into a general, public, and understandable dashboard.

Graduation and Transfer

See figure 3 for the Snow College's graduation and transfer metrics. This data comes from IPEDS reports and used IPEDS definitions: both metrics deal with "full-time and first-time degree/certificate-seeking students" who are within 150% of normal program completion.

Figure 3. Percent of Students Who Graduate or Transfer, 2019-2023

	2019 Report	2020 Report	2021 Report	2022 Report	2023 Report
Graduation	45%	43%	41%	49%	42%
Transfer	39%	39%	35%	34%	38%

In addition to these two metrics, Snow College tracks the combination of the two, which is a measure of overall student success. Knowing that students who graduate from Snow or transfer successfully are both making educational process, we are proud of the success rates, which are generally 80% or above (see figure 4).

Figure 4. Overall Student Success, 2019-2023

	2019 Report	2020 Report	2021 Report	2022 Report	2023 Report
Student Success	84%	82%	76%	83%	80%

At the same time, we would like to retain more students, lowering the numbers of students who transfer and the number of students who leave higher education; Student Affairs' [strategic enrollment plan](#) lays out strategies for these goals.

Student Learning Outcomes

Another crucial measure of student achievement is student learning outcome (SLO) attainment. Snow College has several, interwoven assessment schedules that provide opportunities to examine data on student learning and to devise strategies in response to the assessment. On a global level, Snow participates in NWCCU's seven-cycle for accreditation (individual programs do the same if they enjoy specialized accreditation). Additionally, USHE-based grouping of degrees and certificates, called R411 programs, have traditionally undergone five-year reviews by external reviewers. However, the Utah System of Higher Education (USHE) is in the process of changing this process to a seven-year cycle of assessment of all similar programs throughout the system. For example, in year one, engineering programs at all USHE schools will be reviewed together. Additionally, there will be a comprehensive, quantitative assessment of all USHE programs in the fall of 2024.

On an institutional level, Snow College assesses its general education (GE) program each spring by choosing one to three GE areas to review (see NWCCU Standards 1.B.1 and 1.C.6). Each GE area has a set of [outcomes](#) that need to be met no matter the course or prefix, and instructors design a signature assignment in the GE class that will allow the students to demonstrate their learning in each outcome. This work began in the mid-2010s, and initial assessments showed strengths: some outcomes scored 1.98, 1.70, or 2.03. (A score of 2 is the target). However, scores on other outcomes showed serious problems with SLO attainment. For example, in spring 2015, Life Science GE courses scored .37 out of 3 on an outcome related to evidence-based arguments about the effect of human activity on the earth. Similarly in spring 2017, Social Science GE courses scored .24 out of 3 on an outcome related to writing within social science disciplines.

These low scores were due largely to a mismatch of class assignments and course outcomes. The Humanities GE courses exhibited the same issues in the 2010s, but faculty did extensive work to align assignments with outcomes, and in a follow-up assessment in the spring of 2023, the courses scored between 1.82 and 2.06 on all outcomes. Such improvements are ideal, and this regular schedule of assessment with follow up work to improve teaching provides an opportunity for students to demonstrate their achievements in general education.

A related project on non-GE SLO assessment was begun in May 2024. While GE has been the subject of regular assessment for at least a decade, little had been done to assess outcomes for specific degrees and certificates. Upon inspection by Academic Affairs, some had excellent outcomes that simply needed assessment activities to be planned. Others had weak outcomes that hadn't been updated for years. Seeing this as an opportunity to improve its programs (see NWCCU Standards 1.C.2 and 1.C.3), the academic deans and the provost decided to devote the 2024 Assessment Day (held each year) program outcomes. Each department was asked to update program outcomes for each degree or certificate they offer, to establish an assessment schedule for those outcomes, and to determine the methodology that will be used to assess student learning on those outcomes. Departments will use future Assessment Days to carry out those assessment plans.

Disaggregated Achievement Measures

Snow College exists as an organization for social good, and it has an obligation to better serve all students, including students from historically marginalized backgrounds. With emerging demographic trends, it also must do this in order remain robust and responsive to the needs of the college's service region and the state. Using reported IPEDS data, Figure

5 details graduation equity gaps based on race/ethnicity and income status. Gaps are noted with shades of red in the final column of the chart.

Figure 5. Graduation Equity Gaps, 2019-2023 (largest gaps highlighted in shades of red)

	2019 Report	2020 Report	2021 Report	2022 Report	2023 Report	Five- Year Ave.
Overall Graduation	45%	43%	41%	49%	42%	44.0%
American Indian or Alaska Native	13%	23%	13%	25%	18%	18.4%
Asian	83%	60%	65%	27%	20%	51.0%
Black or African American	23%	16%	9%	21%	19%	17.6%
Hispanic/Latino	30%	36%	25%	23%	35%	29.8%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	14%	10%	22%	16%	29%	18.2%
White	48%	47%	46%	56%	44%	48.2%
Two or More Races	32%	24%	23%	26%	29%	26.8%
Pell Grant	27%	33%	44%	34%	33%	34.2%
Direct Subsidized Loan	39%	35%	35%	33%	36%	35.6%
Neither Pell nor Subsidized Loan	70%	52%	41%	64%	48%	55%

The data here is disconcerting and too common. Equity gaps exist at Snow, with the largest gaps being seen among the racial/ethnic groups least represented on campus. Smaller, but still significant gaps exist among students with lower-income backgrounds. We also know that men and first-generation students succeed at lower rates than women and students with parents who have degrees. Additional study is needed about whether gaps exist among LGBTQ students and students who are not LDS, the predominant religion in the area. (Our former Chief Diversity Officer, using anecdotal evidence, argues that religious diversity is the most salient social issue on campus.)

Snow College had been making strides in closing ethnic/racial gaps by implementing inclusive pedagogies, establishing a Diversity and Inclusion Center, devoting more scholarship money to Latino students, sponsoring a variety of clubs, and asking faculty to investigate and address equity gaps in their programs (see NWCCU Standard 1.D.3). However, those efforts have not been assessed in a systematic way. Additionally, the Utah Legislature recently passed HB 261, which limits DEI training and using public funds for student groups based solely on personal identity characteristics. At the same time, the bill allows the college to track disaggregated data and to make efforts to close equity gaps. The college is recalibrating its student success efforts to comply with state law, to help all students succeed, and to break down barriers, as identified in student success data, at the college that disproportionally affect student populations.

Comparison with Peer Institutions

Snow College also measures its performance in relation to a set of [peer institutions](#) (see NWCCU Standard 1.B.2). This list was updated in 2024 to include six regional peers and six national peers. The update has been helpful because Snow College had grown in the past twenty years to be much bigger than most of the old peer group. With the new list Snow College is near the mean and median in terms of size, revenue, and expenditures. Figure 6 lists the peers along with two key institutional metrics to use to compare the colleges to Snow, with its 6,000-student headcount and the FTE equivalent of 200 faculty members.

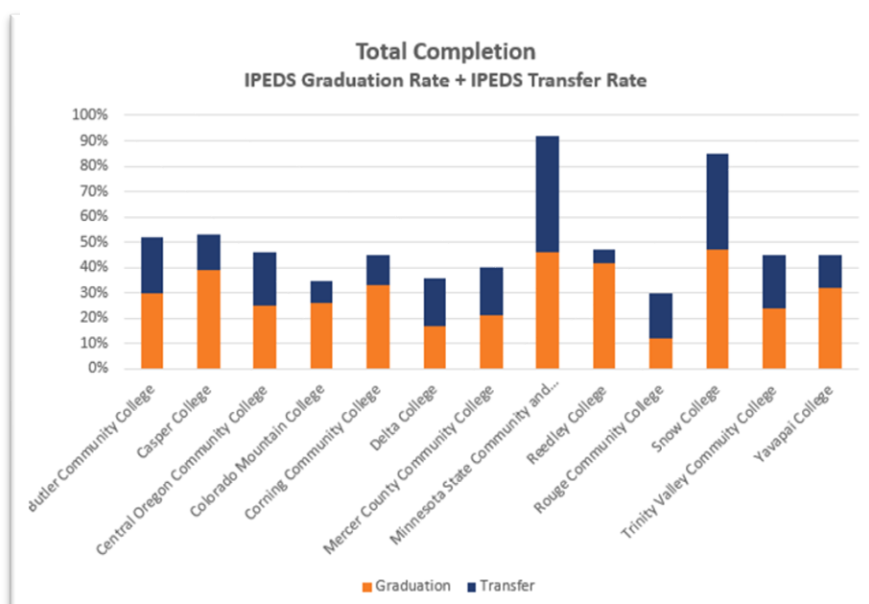
Figure 6. Regional and National Peer Institutions

Regional Peers		National Peers	
Name	Enroll. / FTE Faculty	Name	Enroll. / FTE Faculty
Casper College	3400 / 154	Butler CC	6700 / 245
Central Oregon CC	4200 / 162	Delta College	7000 / 238
Col. Mountain College	5200 / 244	Mercer County CC	5800 / 216
Reedley College	7100 / 209	Minn. State CTC	5300 / 140
Rogue CC	3400 / 144	Corning CC	3800 / 79
Yavapai College	7000 / 172	Trinity Valley CC	5400 / 180

While being near the mean and median in many categories, Snow College compares very well in student success, especially when total completions (graduation plus transfer) is considered. The chart below shows IPEDS-reported rates of graduation and transfer, and Snow ranks second among its peers (see figure 7) with 85%. Breaking down those numbers, one can see that Snow has the highest graduation rate and the second highest transfer rate.

Figure 7. Total Completion Rates among Snow College and Its Peers

Another measure of student achievement, however, shows more room for improvement. Snow College's IPEDS reported retention rate of full-time students is 47%, which is less than the average of 61% among peer institutions. This finding presents Snow College with an opportunity to devise strategies to improve its



retention rates. Some of these are found in the college's [strategic enrollment plan](#) and the development of the Student Connection Center (see below).

Finally, as noted above, Snow College was recognized as one of 150 community colleges invited to apply for the 2025 Aspen Prize. Two of its twelve peers, Minnesota State Community and Technical College and Trinity Valley Community College, were also among the 150, and all three schools were the subject of an Aspen study of success measures (see the link from [Aspen's website](#)), and this provides another opportunity for Snow to identify areas of inquiry as we consistently try to improve our student achievement measures. Figure 8 shows several Aspen data points for the three schools.

Figure 8. Aspen Metrics for Snow and Two Peer Institutions

Institution	Completers per 100 FTE	Three-Year Graduation Rate	Three-Year Graduation Rate for Students of Color	Change over Time
Snow College	67.9%	95.4%	74.4%	1.4
Minnesota State CTC	63.4%	91.3%	90.1%	4.8
Trinity Valley CC	85.4%	42.7%	50.4%	5.3

These data points pinpoint some specific questions to research. First, Trinity Valley Community College has a very high completer metric (~+20%) and a much lower graduation metric (~-50%) in comparison to Minnesota State and Snow. How does their curriculum differ from Snow's? What differences are there in student supports and other college services?

Another question is called for by looking at the lack of an equity gap in Minnesota State's three-year graduation rates. Snow College's equity gap is large in comparison (~-20%). What can Snow learn from Minnesota State about helping students of color succeed?

Finally, Aspen creates a metric, Change over Time, that is unique to their program. It measures trends in various elements related to three-year graduation rates and retention rates (see an explanation of the metric, in the context of the 2021 award process on page 3 of "[Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence](#)"). Aspen reports that the number may go as low as -12 to -15 and as high as 12 or 15. Snow performs very well generally in comparison to its peers, but its Change over Time metric is much lower than two of its highest performing peers, and the college would benefit from investigating why.

Programmatic Assessment

The strategic planning and assessment infrastructure at Snow College guides the work of faculty, staff, and administrators in many ways. Below are two examples of programs that have been improved through assessment and a focus on the college's mission and strategic themes.

Guided Pathways

Guided Pathways, also known among faculty and staff as the CIP project, is a cross-campus, collaborative initiative aimed to help students explore, choose, plan, and complete programs aligned with their career and educational goals. The project has evolved through several stages:

1. systemically examining and updating the program inventory,
2. establishing clear requirements, including major prerequisites and lower-division major courses, for traditional majors, and
3. planning, proposing, and implementing meta-majors associated with logical groups of traditional majors and with requirements aligned to those traditional majors.

The project has had positive secondary effects, and the work continues in areas highlighted in other parts of this mid-cycle report, including in communicating degree requirements more clearly to students and enabling data-driven program development.

This substantial change to Snow College's program offerings began with reflection on institutional data and strategic planning in response to external changes in student demographics and legislative funding. (see NWCCU Standard 1.B.4). This assessment revealed several challenges.

- Efforts to increase the number of concurrent enrollment students enrolling as degree-seeking students have been hampered by the perception that Snow College only offers general education courses and not more major-specific courses and pathways toward bachelor's degrees.
- Large numbers of students declare a major in General Education, which provides them no course maps with pre-major courses. This leaves the students with a less-coherent program of study and lowers the likelihood that they will find faculty mentors and advisors in disciplines they are considering. The pre-Guided Pathways baseline of students declaring General Education majors hovered around 60%.
- There are signs that Snow College's program inventory included arbitrarily created majors and associated CIP codes and that the concept of being a general education institution had gone too far, allowing for a remarkable disconnect between a student's degree and major. For example, a student could declare a major in German and complete the associate of science degree requirements despite the college not

offering a single German language course and the associate of science degree not requiring a foreign language.

- The state of Utah changed funding models to emphasize high-yield CIP code completions and short-term technical education certificates. Generic programs of study were not aligned with the new model.
- Student persistence and retention rates were too low, especially when considering underserved student populations and students who, after their first fall semester, were placed on Academic Warning. A spring 2022 survey conducted among these students and students with forty or more completed credits revealed 21% did not feel a sense of belonging on campus (n = 74 out of 354 question responses), 19% did not experience any instructor outreach (n = 71 out of 369 question responses), 41% never used Academic Advising (n = 143 out of 345 question responses), and 73% never had contact with a peer mentor (n = 287 out of 340 question responses).
- A formal Strategic Enrollment Planning process in 2022 was severely hampered by a lack of clarity on the college's program inventory and the resulting lack of data on enrollments, completions, and post-graduate outcomes broken down by program.

Starting in August 2022, a team that included the key personnel from Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, faculty leadership, and institutional research consulted the guided pathways framework to develop a model that would improve students' sense of academic belonging and success as measured by persistence, retention, timely completion, and high yield graduate rates—metrics associated with the then-current Academic Affairs Master Plan and the Hispanic/Latino Initiative as well as Snow College's Student Success and Recruitment and Retention strategic themes.

This working group cut an unwieldy program inventory list of 500+ programs to 218 degrees and certificates on the 2023-2024 program list. They also clarified and documented the degree requirements of around 65 AA/AS majors, a step that was crucial for developing aligned meta-majors. These meta-majors include Communication and Rhetoric, Life Sciences, Computer Systems and Software, Business Services, Pre-Health Professions, Education and Learning, and Visual and Performing Arts, among others. Each meta-major requires the completion of around six intentional GE credits, which serve as specific prerequisites for the majors associated with the meta. Snow College faculty identified and approved the meta-major courses and further defined the courses that fulfill the additional seven to twelve credits required for traditional majors.

The main result of this enterprise was a new approach for organizing Snow College's programs of study, allowing students to balance the exploration of different academic areas while expeditiously fulfilling their general education requirements. There are also other

benefits of this initiative such as a reduction in the number of majors (CIP codes) realistically offered by the institution; a program structure that is better suited for alignment with external reporting and funding sources such as state performance metrics and Perkins funding; better collaboration between academic and student affairs personnel; more accurate program reporting; and better internal alignment, understanding, and intentionality regarding the course-to-degree pathway and the intended CIP code.

Early collected data is promising. For the 2020-2021 academic year, Snow College's timely completion rate for all students was 62.46% and 58.20% for underrepresented students. For the 2021-22 academic year, these rates decreased to 61.53% and 58.08%, respectively. Furthermore, guided pathways have positively influenced the college's high-yield graduate goals. For the 22-23 academic year, the high-yield graduate rate for all students is 65.57% (goal = 64.4%), and for underrepresented students is 54.53% (goal = 48.6%).

Furthermore, the percent of students declaring a major in General Education is dropping from a baseline of 60% to around 35%. As the guided pathways become more institutionalized and well-known, the number of GE majors should decline further. Studies are planned to investigate the effects of having more students on specific degree pathways. Hopefully, students will have better connections with academic and faculty advisors dedicated to helping them complete their path. Better degree mapping in DegreeWorks should also enable students to see where they are on their academic pathways and explore other related pathways.

TechConnect

Another program that illustrates Snow College's culture of assessment and innovation is TechConnect, which is a project that has required cooperation from many parts of the institution. Snow College's community college role means that it has traditionally been a sending institution in transfer relationships with schools like Utah State University, Southern Utah University, and others. However, Snow's dual role as a technical college for central Utah provided the college a unique perspective on building pathways from technical to degree-granting programs. This perspective helped the college realize it could be a receiving institution as well.

Some background information is needed: since our last accreditation visit, The Utah System of Higher Education (USHE) expanded to include eight technical colleges that specialize in certificates but who cannot offer degrees. There are many articulation agreements in the state where technical education credits can be transferred into an AAS degree, but that is a terminal degree in most cases, and students often want options to continue their education. Additionally, in many places throughout the USHE system, the technical and degree-granting institutions don't collaborate a great deal.

Like Guided Pathways, TechConnect emerged out of assessment data, USHE priorities, and listening to educational partners. In conversations with leaders of the technical colleges, President Stacey McIff and her team realized that there was a deep and long-standing desire for AS pathways rather than AAS pathways. This is something that four-year universities in the state had not been able or willing to provide. In considering our internal data, it was clear the same demand existed at Snow. Students in technical education programs who completed an associate degree were four times as likely to pursue the AS over the AAS because it provided a pathway to transfer and work toward a bachelor's degree.

TechConnect is also a response to USHE-wide performance funding metrics for educational access. At Snow College and across Utah higher education generally, certain groups are underrepresented on educational pathways because of structural and other barriers. TechConnect seeks to take down barriers caused by siloed degree-granting and technical education areas. Affirming the value of a wide range of competencies and learning, TechConnect opens more educational options for technical college students, which have different demographic characteristics. See, for example, figure 9, which uses 2023-2024 [USHE demographic reports](#) and shows that three underrepresented groups (students of color, men, and older learners) are represented at technical colleges more than degree-granting institutions.

Figure 9. Educational Access for Technical College Students

	% of USHE Technical College Students	% of Snow College Students	% of USHE Degree- Granting Institution Students
Students of Color	25.96%	22.06%	27.13%
Men	59.81%	46.49%	46.56%
Older Students (25+)	33.14%	6.82%	24.56

Specifically, the percent of male students at technical colleges is 13% than at degree-granting institutions. The percent of students aged 25+ is 8% higher (and 27% higher than at Snow). Students of color are less represented in technical colleges, but the technical colleges have an almost 4% higher rate than Snow. Opening pathways from technical colleges will improve access for those students.

In the spring of 2024, Snow College rolled out the TechConnect program, including an [informational website](#). The core of the initiative is that students completing a certificate at a technical college can transfer those credits as part of the program of study for an AS at Snow College. Academic Affairs staff mapped each certificate offered at Utah's technical colleges to one of ten meta-majors. While the Guided Pathways meta-majors covered most of the certificates, two additional meta-majors were required: Transportation Technology and Engineering Technology.

Depending on the degree, the technical certificate comes in as either elective credit or major requirements, and the student then completes Snow's general education program and any other credits needed to reach the required 60 credits for an AS and/or the 15 resident credits for a Snow College associate degree. Snow assumes that there is value in considering technical education as part of an associate degree; it offers a coherent path of study, applied skills, and workplace competencies. All of these create real value for students, especially when one considers that AS electives are sometimes an eclectic collection of exploration classes and/or activity or social classes.

There is a designated TechConnect advisor to help students, and the college specifically advertises online GE pathways. While some TechConnect students will want to move to central Utah to attend Snow, up to three fourths are place-bound and need to complete the degree online. The advisor can also help students stack horizontally, potentially bundling multiple, short certificates into a pack of up to 33 credits to be added to the 27 GE credits.

Snow College is only a few months into the Tech Connect program. However, there are already some early successes that are cause for optimism. In May, the president, vice

presidents, and advising and admissions personnel completed campus visits to all eight technical colleges in the state and have built relationships with counterparts at the technical institutions. The reception on those visits was overwhelmingly positive. Additionally, the program has been publicly praised by the Commissioner of Higher Education in Utah as well as Associate Commissioners over Academic Affairs and Technical Education. The program is also proving to be popular. Twenty-eight students have registered for classes at Snow through the TechConnect program, and thirty more students are in the process of being admitted. Snow is happy with these numbers, which have all happened over the summer; more enrollments should be coming as students complete technical certificates through the traditional academic year. Finally, the first student taking the TechConnect pathway will graduate from Snow College after the fall semester. Her path to an associate degree was three semesters faster because she came to Snow with TechConnect.

Moving Forward

Because the mid-cycle accreditation review was postponed for a year, Snow College has three years before submitting its Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness Report. This section reflects on major initiatives, aligned with the college's strategic themes, that should help the college adapt, grow, and remain focused on mission fulfillment and be ready for the 2027 Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness.

Data Infrastructure

The Snow College Board of Trustees and the President's Cabinet met this summer to identify priorities for the coming year, and the first focuses more data-driven decision making at the college. For almost a decade, the college's institutional research department consisted of one person, limiting how much could be done, especially considering the growing USHE, IPEDS, and other reporting needs. Snow's data development has also been hampered by organization change. In the past three years, Snow's data and IR team has been reorganized several times moving from Academic Affairs to an Office of Institutional Effectiveness and now back to Academic Affairs. The new Office of Analytics and Institutional Research has two full-time personnel, and there are plans to hire a third person. The college recently clarified data priorities by passing a [data governance policy](#), and the recently-hired director of the office has brought energy, attention to detail, and team-building skills that will move forward Snow College's ability to make data-informed decisions (see NWCCU Standard 1.D.4).

Programs and Access

Several initiatives are emerging that will contribute to three interconnected strategic themes: Student Success, Academic and Technical Education, and Recruitment and Retention. Put another way: these initiatives are helping to shape the programs we will offer over the next five years and will expand the ways in which students find Snow College. The first of these programs, TechConnect, is underway and detailed above.

The second is prison education. One of two state correctional facilities is within Snow College's service area. Recent developments have made it feasible for Snow College to be successful in offering educational programming to the students at the prison. The first development is the possibility of offering Second Chance Pell grants. Another is the strong support from the Utah Department of Corrections (UDC) and Salt Lake Community College (SLCC), which runs a prison education program at the other state correctional facility. Both have been supportive partners in sharing expertise and making logistical suggestions.

Because Snow College is not authorized for Second Chance Pell, SLCC is hiring Snow faculty as adjuncts so that Snow can be in the prison, establish systems and protocols, and build faculty expertise. One class ran successfully in the summer, and another four will run in the fall. Snow College should have its own authorization within a year to eighteen months. The college has already entered into an agreement with UDC and has approval from NWCCU. Within the next few days, the college will submit its PEP application to the Department of Education. Along with ongoing technical education programs at the prison, the college expects 60 students by January and up to 200 when the program is fully operational and under the control of Snow College.

For the third initiative, Provost Michael Austin is organizing a working group with faculty, administration, technical education staff, Student Affairs leaders, and college marketing staff that will establish processes for evaluating the demands, costs, and feasibility of potential new academic programs. The goal of this group, which is being called informally the Program Incubator, is not to usurp the faculty role to design and review curriculum. Instead, this group will conduct analyses to determine what potential academic programs align with the college's mission and strategy. The group will also help guide the implementation of new programs as well as reorganization of existing programs. The Program Incubator will help the college align its offerings with student demand and workforce needs; it will also ensure that programs are properly distributed across academic disciplines and balance the college's degree-granting and technical education roles.

Student Retention, Recruitment, and Success

A third category of anticipated initiatives revolves around the strategic themes of Students Success and Recruitment and Retention. As noted elsewhere, Vice President Cody Branch has developed an ambitious [strategic enrollment plan](#) that will lead the college through a series of strategies to bring more students to Snow and to retain the students through the completion of their programs. Part of this plan is the development of an Office of First-Year Experience, which will, among other duties, lead the new student orientation and supervise a pilot project of student mentors (NWCCU Standard 1.D.1).

Related to this is the recent unveiling of the Student Connection Center. During the 2024 session the Utah Legislature passed a bill limiting the use of public funds for diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts. As a result, Snow College reimaged the Diversity and Inclusion Center space, staff, and mission. To increase focus on student success and individual attention for all students, a campus-wide committee proposed to the cabinet that the college open the [Student Connection Center](#) as a hub for information, resources, and

belonging on campus. Over the next few years, the college hopes that this will develop into a meaningful initiative that focuses faculty and staff even more on student needs, especially those experiencing barriers on their educational paths.

Addendum 1: Progress on Outstanding Recommendations

In addition to writing this regular mid-cycle report, Snow College would like to provide updates on the following recommendations from the Fall 2012 Mission Fulfillment and Sustainability Review and the Fall 2020 Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness Review.

Recommendation 1: Fall 2012

In the fall of 2012, Snow College completed a comprehensive evaluation of institutional effectiveness and received the following recommendation, which has been updated to reflect NWCCU's 2020 Standards.

It is recommended that Snow College continue to develop and update financial policies that are approved by its governing board regarding oversight and management of financial resources. It is recommended that the College clearly define and consistently follow its approved policies, guidelines, and processes for financial planning and budget development that include appropriate opportunities for participation by its constituencies (2020 Standards 2.E.3)

The mission of Snow College's Financial Services is to empower institutional stakeholders with accurate financial information as a means to successful student outcomes. Since the 2012 recommendation, Snow College has developed well-defined and broadly communicated financial policies as well as additional tools for budget holders.

Financial Policy Updates

The development of financial policies has consistently followed [Snow College's Policy #101 on Policy Development and Review](#), which allows for any college employee, entity, or student to develop new policies or make recommendations to existing. This process includes vice presidential-level endorsement, legal counsel review, College Council review, and 30-day draft review and comment by all college personnel—a cycle that continues until a final policy draft is approved (see NWCCU Standard 2.A.4). Final policy drafts are forwarded to the Snow College Board of Trustees for approval with the Snow College President informing the campus of the actions taken by the Board. Approved policies are organized under the respective vice presidents as the responsible office for policy, including ongoing reviews and updates.

Snow College's financial policies are no exception to this process and are publicly available on the Snow College [policy webpage](#). Policies 200-210 govern college finances generally and policies 275-285 cover fundraising and advancement activities. Each policy records the

date the policy was approved or last reviewed, the date the policy was amended, and the policy's responsible office. Browsing these policies shows ongoing work to write, amend, and ratify financial policies (see NWCCU Standard 2.E.3). For example, the following policies have been updated since 2020.

- [Purchasing Card Policy](#)
- [Cash Handling Policy](#)
- [Contracting and Signature Authority Policy](#)
- [Course Fee Policy](#)
- [Procurement Policy](#)
- [Capital Asset Policy](#)
- [Auxiliary Service Policy](#)
- [Gift Types, Terms, and Definitions](#)
- [Donor Recognition Policy](#)

As a result of this work writing, updating, and implementing financial policies, Snow College believes that it has effective financial controls and processes in place. Evidence comes of this can be found in the fact that the college's last audit had no findings.

Budget Process

The Snow College budget is set through a regular process that gives faculty and staff an opportunity to participate and to petition for ongoing resources. Early in the spring semester, employees may use a budget request form to request funding for positions, equipment, operating budgets, and other needs. Included in the request must be a justification for why the expenditure will support the college's priorities and strategic themes. One-time funding requests of \$25,000 and below can be proposed as well and can be approved by the college's Budget Task Force, which includes faculty, staff, and financial office personnel.

One exception to this process is requesting tenure-track faculty positions; these are proposed by academic deans and then ranked by the Dean's Council and Academic Affairs to ensure that faculty resources match the academic priorities of the college. This past academic year, for example, a faculty member retired from the Geology Department. Because of the prioritization of the Dean's Council, that position was moved to the Education and Family Studies Department to support emerging and planned programs in Elementary and Secondary Education.

After receiving budget proposals, the President's Cabinet holds a series of budget hearings to understand and evaluate the requests in the light of current strategic planning. For example, in setting the budget this past summer, the Cabinet prioritized \$50,000 to support

the newly formed First-Year Experience Office, a key element in student retention strategy. Because the development of more sophisticated data resources is a priority, the Cabinet also funded a new position in the Office of Analytics and Institutional Research. After the cabinet makes decisions, general budget information, detailed budget decisions, and college-related financial opportunities are discussed by the Board of Trustees' Finance and Facilities Committee and shared with the general board. The authority to approve all college budget recommendations and the annual college budget remains with the College President and Board of Trustees.

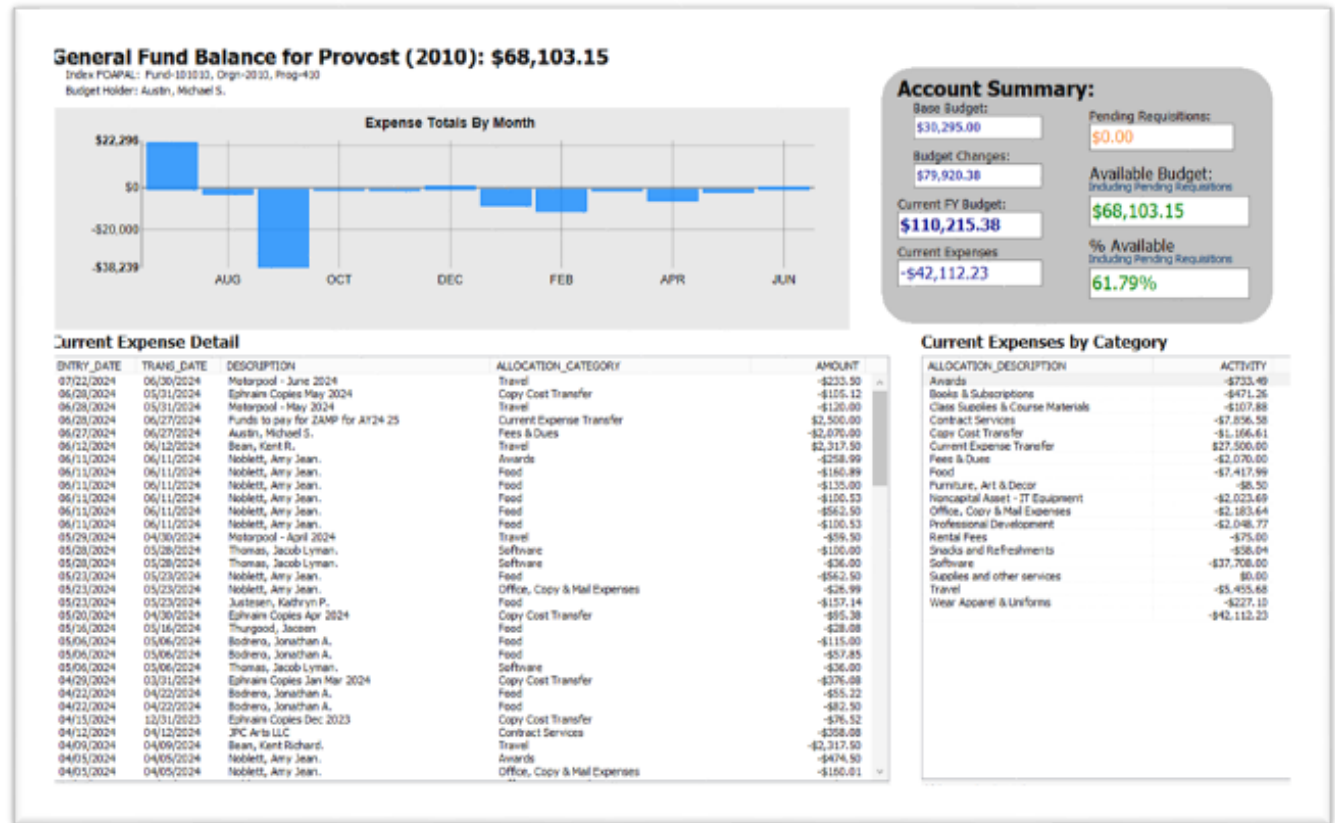
In addition to this regular process, in the Spring of 2024, the college included a separate budget-setting initiative, the [Budget Framework Project](#). Over the course of many years, department operating budgets became mismatched with actual needs, causing some areas to run excessive surpluses and others to run deficits. Additionally, equipment, software licenses, and computers were often purchased using department funds saved up over time, which could lead to confusion when department heads changed. The Budget Task Force held a series of meetings across campus, formed subcommittees with participation by faculty and staff, achieved a rebalancing of operating budgets and the centralization of budgets for higher cost items like software and equipment (see NWCCU Standard 2.E.2).

Financial Communication and Tools

Recent years have also seen the development of information and tools for financial management at Snow. Several presidential town halls openly provided to the college community outline Snow College's annual budget proposals and subsequent budget approvals, including legislative allocations (see NWCCU Standard 2.E.3). Additional financial information is also shared by Vice President of Finance and Administrative Services at every fall assembly. [Annual Financial Reports](#) prepared by independent auditors provide the college community with an analysis of the College's prior year fiscal performance (see NWCCU Standard 2.E.1). Each report outlines the College's net position and provides statements of revenues, expenses, and cash flow. Changes to the College's net position compared to the prior year are also communicated.

Individual budget holders can also access budget information at any time through a newly developed Argos dashboards. These dashboards allow budget holders to view their current expense and hourly wage current balances, percent of available funds, monthly spending amounts, and detailed check register-like transactions (see Figure 10 below). Connected directly to Snow College's Banner finance tables, dashboard data updates daily to provide each budget holder with real-time budget information. Another resource is the establishment of [financial liaisons](#) assigned to each area of the institution. The liaisons help financial managers oversee their budgets.

Figure 10. Screenshot of Budget Dashboard



Recommendation 2: Fall 2012

In the fall of 2012, Snow College completed a comprehensive evaluation of institutional effectiveness and received the following recommendation, which has been updated to reflect NWCCU's 2020 Standards.

While recognizing Snow College's purposeful, systematic, integrated, and comprehensive planning, it is recommended that this be an ongoing process leading to mission fulfillment. Implemented plans must be made available to appropriate constituencies. In addition, it is recommended that the institution's planning process continue to be broad-based and offer opportunities for input by appropriate constituencies (2020 Standards 1.B.1 and 1.B.3).

Snow College prioritizes broad-based institutional planning by actively seeking input from both internal and external stakeholders. This can be seen in the two campuswide strategic planning processes that Snow has completed since receiving this recommendation. The first was completed in the fall of 2013 and the second in 2020; both offered stakeholders on and off campus a chance to participate in charting the next five to seven years for the institution. For example, during the [2020 Strategic Planning process](#), Snow College meaningfully engaged internal and external stakeholders, including faculty, staff, students, the parents of current students, K-12 administrators and counselors, service-region civic leaders, college alumni, and business and industry partners, in discussions about the College's core values, current and future institutional challenges, and critical issues that required proactive management. The many meetings, surveys, and listening sessions resulted in more than a hundred strategies for moving the college forward (see NWCCU Standards 1.B.1 and 1.B.3).

These discussions led to goals and KPIs that have made Snow College better. For example, constituent feedback about unreliable Wi-Fi led to a goal to "invest in technology and remove technological barriers for students, faculty, and staff." One measure of doing this would be to improve network uptime to 99%. Not only was this measure achieved, but Snow's IT department has also continued to work on the goal by creating a student portal for communication and information. Another idea coming from the strategic planning process was to "develop consistent and robust online programs that allow access to program completions." Success was measured by the number of online courses peer reviewed by faculty for quality design. By April 2023, 100% of Snow's online courses benefitted from this process and were certified as having effective design.

Snow College seeks input outside of strategic planning processes. Additional surveys have solicited constituent feedback regarding the Richfield Housing Project, Learn and Work Program Improvements, and child or aging parent caretaking issues. Most recently, Snow College's master plan revision process solicited feedback from faculty, staff, and students regarding campus gathering places, critical infrastructure needs, and a wish-list for improvements. Survey results were collected by the Office of Institutional Research. A qualitative theme-analysis was conducted on each question and compiled in a comprehensive report submitted to the Vice President of Finance and Administrative Services, who shared the results with the Snow College Cabinet in July 2023.

Externally, the college establishes strong partnerships with the local community, industry leaders, alumni, and other educational institutions. They actively seek feedback and suggestions through surveys, town hall meetings, and collaborative initiatives. By involving external stakeholders, Snow College gains valuable insights into regional needs, workforce demands, and emerging trends, which inform planning efforts. For example, in response to a changing economic climate in Millard County, Snow worked with local industry leaders to develop a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) program and an Electrical Apprenticeship program. Both programs will begin in Fall 2024 and be taught in the county at a new Snow College training site. Similarly, several years ago, the Health Sector Advisory Board indicated the need for a medical assisting program to address the needs of hospitals and doctors' offices in Snow's service region. The Medical Assistant program is now up and running on both major campuses and the Nephi Learning Center. This summer, similar conversations with healthcare institutions in central Utah led the college to apply for a grant to develop a respiratory therapy program, which was funded and is being built (see the recent [press release](#)).

Furthermore, the college fosters a culture of open communication and information-sharing through various channels, such as newsletters, forums, and digital platforms. This ensures that stakeholders stay informed about the planning process and have opportunities to contribute their ideas and perspectives. Regularly, Snow College provides opportunities for planning input and feedback through the [Snow College Staff Association](#), the [Snow College Faculty Association](#), the [Faculty Senate](#), direct report conversations with area vice presidents, regularly scheduled [Town Halls](#), a [news website](#), and a [monthly newsletter](#) that includes brief survey on training topics of interest and answers to suggestions made through the [Snow College suggestion box](#).

Overall, Snow College's commitment to inclusivity and transparency in institutional planning ensures that the decisions made align with the needs and aspirations of all involved stakeholders, resulting in a stronger and more responsive educational institution.

Recommendation 1: Fall 2020

In the fall of 2020, Snow College completed its Year Seven Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness. Results from this comprehensive, virtual visit included the following recommendation:

It is recommended that Snow College provide adequate training and professional development for its advising staff to ensure consistent academic advising and support for students (Standards 2.F.2, 2.G.6, and 1.D.1).

Academic advisors who are well-trained in general academic advising skills and knowledgeable of the curriculum and program completion/graduation requirements of their assigned academic pathways play a crucial role in guiding students toward their educational goals. Since receiving this recommendation, Snow College has adopted a centralized academic advising model designed to provide comprehensive student support. This includes making organizational changes in the advising office, opening new professional development opportunities for advisors, and communicating program requirements more clearly to students.

Professional Development and Training

Snow College advising has made several important organizational and operational changes over the past four years. One of these is a reorganization of advisor assignments based on major, which has helped advisors specialize and build connections with departments and programs. Advisors are encouraged to attend monthly department meetings relevant to advisement areas, and, when space permits, advisors have offices within the academic space of their assignment. For example, an advisor for music, theater, dance, and art degrees has a home office in the Eccles Performing Arts and a workspace in the Humanities and Arts Building. An advisor for life science majors has an office in the Graham Science Center near the biology faculty. These advisors are still connected to the centralized advising system. However, the space adjustment allows them to interact regularly with the department decision makers and work closely with the faculty to ensure students get the most accurate curriculum information.

Another area of improvement is advisor caseload and assignments, which as late as 2023 stood at 540 students per advisor. Snow has lowered this ratio by restructuring some part-time positions into advising positions. For the Ephraim campus, this brings the average ratio down to 367:1. Part-time advisors are closer to 200:1 while full-time advisors are between 300:1 and 400:1, depending on which academic area they advise for. The advising office is also working on implementing new features that were recently released in Banner to reduce the time it takes to get students assigned to advisors. The system is currently in

testing, but the hope is to get a student an advisor assigned within a day or two of being admitted.

Furthermore, professional development is available to academic advisors. The Director of Academic Advising receives training on NACADA core competencies through the annual conference and provides regular training to advisors at weekly staff meetings. In addition, academic advisors attend the Utah Advising Association conference each year and are required to attend two professional development retreats each year. These meetings have included campus updates, training from other offices on referrals, and technology updates. The institution has recently increased the advising office's yearly current expense budget by \$13,600. The plan is to use these funds to take additional staff to NACADA national and regional conferences and to better the professional development retreats we have (see NWCCU Standards 2.F.2 and 2.G.6).

Snow College is proud to report that two advisors have recently been recognized for their stellar work in NACADA Region 10. Ginny Smith was awarded the certificate of merit for a two-year institution advisor in March 2024. Kelly Schoppe received this award the previous year.

Strong advisors like these and the recent innovations in advising have led to promising results. A Fall 2023 student survey of the advising experience assessed academic advisor outcomes and student satisfaction with the advising experiences. See figure 11, which provides the most recent assessment results (n = 311 students).

Figure 11. Survey of Student Experiences with Advising

Statement	% Agree and Strongly Agree	% Strongly Agree	% Agree
I'm satisfied with my advising visit.	93%	79%	14%
I received accurate information from my advisor.	94%	82%	12%
I value my relationship with my advisor.	86%	67%	19%
I know where to go to get help.	93%	77%	16%
I have developed an educational plan.	90%	65%	25%
I can interpret my DegreeWorks.	86%	56%	30%
I understand the transfer requirements for my major.	77%	48%	29%

The results show both successes and areas for improvement. Given the recommendation's note that students were not getting accurate information, we are pleased that 94% agreed or strongly agreed that they received accurate information. On the other hand, clearly more work needs to be done to help students leave feeling like they understand transfer requirements, DegreeWorks information, and their educational plan.

Information from this assessment is used in weekly staff meetings and professional development retreats to address and devise progress plans. The Academic Advising Office, under the direction of the Vice President for Student Success and Enrollment Management, remains committed to this process and will continue to expand advisor professional development and training opportunities.

Program Requirement Communication

Another area of improvement in academic advising comes from efforts to clarify the academic programs offered and their requirements and to make the information widely available to advisors, faculty, and students (see NWCCU Standard 1.D.1). This effort is another form of professional development for the advisors and will increase the effectiveness of their work with students. After completing a program inventory in the summer of 2023, Snow College has

systematically reviewed each program's requirements. This includes centralizing a repository of approved program proposals and ensuring that the program requirements are up to date and reflected in the student-facing application DegreeWorks. Finally, a partnership of Academic Affairs, Advising, the Registrar's Office, and college web developers have led to uniformly designed program pages. Linked from a [master list of programs](#), the program pages highlight the recommended degree (see figure 12). For example, while the college offers an A.A. and an A.S. in Chemistry, most students will want the A.S. at the time of

Figure 12. Program Page for Math Majors

MATHEMATICS

Mathematics is a tool to model and understand the world around us. It is used in virtually every career and is a part of our daily life. The mathematics program at Snow College not only helps those students who think they don't have a "math brain," but our skilled faculty is also well-equipped to challenge and prepare students for further education in a variety of STEM fields.

[APPLY NOW](#)

Degrees/Certificates Other Degrees & Opportunities Career & Transfer Options More Info

Mathematics, Associate of Science (AS)

Freshman (Semester 1)			Freshman (Semester 2)		
Course	Title	Credits	Course	Title	Credits
MATH 1210	Calculus I	5	MATH 1220	Calculus II	4
ENGL 1010	Introduction to Writing	3	ENGL 2010	Intermediate Writing	3
	Life Science	3	MUSC 1010	Introduction to Music	3
	American Institutions	3	PHIL 1000	Introduction to Philosophy	3
GNST 1200	Foundations	3		Electives	2
Sophomore (Semester 3)			Sophomore (Semester 4)		
Course	Title	Credits	Course	Title	Credits
MATH 2210	Calculus III	3	MATH 2270	Linear Algebra	3
MATH 3310	Discrete Mathematics	3	MATH 2280	Differential Equations	3
PHYS 2215	Physics for Scientists and Engineers I	4	PHYS 2220	Physics for Scientists and Engineers II	4
PHYS 2215	Physics for Scientists and Engineers I Lab	1	PHYS 2225	Physics for Scientists and Engineers II Lab	1
	Social and Behavior Science	3		Electives	4
	Electives	1			

Note: the information above will make a student transfer-ready for a Mathematics BS program at another school. Below are the base requirements to earn the AS in Mathematics at Snow College:

- MATH 1210 Calculus I 5 credits
- One of the following:
 - MATH 1220 Calculus II 4 credits
 - MATH 2270 Linear Algebra 3 credits

transfer). The pages also show available meta-majors or guided pathways, transfer information, career planning, and contact information for advisors.

This project has the potential to increase student success and decrease time to degree. For example, most students majoring in English in recent years have pursued an A.S. degree even though many of them will go on to earn a B.A. with its language requirement. By making the A.A. recommendation clear on the [program page](#) and empowering advisors to reference it, we anticipate that the A.S. in English trend will change. This project, along with the increased emphasis on training and professional development positions the Academic Advising well for coming years.

Recommendation 2: Fall 2020

In the fall of 2020, Snow College completed its Year Seven Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness. Results from this comprehensive, virtual visit included the following recommendation:

It is recommended that Snow College continue to develop the accelerated online program, placing greater emphasis on the central role of its faculty in establishing and delivering curricula and programs consistent with its mission, and in assessing student learning. Assure the financial sustainability of the program in its institutional planning and resource allocation (2020 Standards 2.A.4, 2.E.2, 1.C.1, 1.C.3, 1.C.5, and 1.C.8).

This recommendation concerns the accelerated online (AOL) program, an early-college, online initiative Snow College started just before the year seven accreditation visit in 2020. Beginning in the summer of 2020, Snow College partnered with Sundance Learning, a third-party online program management (OPM) company, to offer early college classes, mostly to students attending virtual high schools in Utah.

In this mid-cycle report, we focus on two developments related to the accelerated online program. First, the college implemented important improvements to the program following the accreditation visit, and these improvements have, in fact, improved the quality of all online education at Snow. Second, the college ended the program in the spring 2023; conducted a teach-out; and invited students to enroll in our traditional online classes that are designed, taught, supervised, and reviewed by Snow College faculty under the direction of the Office of Academic Affairs.

Program Improvements

This recommendation referenced NWCCU standards related to institutional decision making, financial sustainability, and student learning, the last of which was one of the main areas of focus in the post-recommendation efforts undertaken by the college. Snow College discontinued the use of Sundance grades as the instructors for the course; instead, Snow hired, with the recommendation of department chairs, adjunct faculty to teach the classes. These adjuncts were supervised by faculty member who authored the course content.

Furthermore, the problems with AOL led to faculty-driven led initiatives to improve the quality of online education in all forms, including AOL (see NWCCU Standard 1.C.5.). Recognizing that online teaching presents several unique challenges and to ensure equality of instruction, all online faculty are now required to complete online instructor training, submit a completed [Online Course Design Checklist](#), and provide peer-reviewed

endorsement for each course. The Online Course Design Checklist serves as a guide in the design and evaluation of online courses. All checklist criteria must be met before an online course is taught, which include provisions being made for faculty response to student emails within 24 hours, the grading of assignments within one week, a certain number of signature assignments, proof of substantive and meaningful interaction with students, verification of faculty and institutional technical support, and assignment of peer mentors who helps students keep pace and current in the course.

A peer observation rubric aids in the implementation and constant evaluation of online courses and instructors. Peer feedback on the rubric verifies instructor efforts to maintain high quality and rigor in their courses and provides thoughtful recommendations for improvement. Full descriptions of these steps along with recommended resources are available on [Snow College's Online Excellence](#) webpage. Furthermore, faculty leadership and the Teaching and Learning Center developed online instructor training in an asynchronous Canvas LMS course (see figure 13).

The implementation of this quality assurance process for online education has extended to courses using competency-based education (CBE). All CBE courses must complete Snow College's CBE Course Design Checklist and receive 100% peer-reviewed endorsement. In addition, Snow College implemented a course pacer system in its Canvas LMS to help CBE course students stay on time and on track.

Figure 13. Screenshot of the Online Instructor Training Course.



Because AOL was discontinued (see below), these initiatives cannot be seen implemented in the AOL classes. However, the faculty concern over the quality of AOL classes was a major motivation in the improvement on online education.

Discontinuing the Program

Ultimately the college decided to end the accelerated online program for two reasons. First, Snow College's mission to provide excellent, personalized educational offerings taught by faculty ultimately didn't align with the program.

Additionally, the program was effective in increasing the number of students at the college, but it was not sustainable financially. The original financial model suggested that Snow College needed to use waivers to make up the tuition difference for the accelerated online students. That model resulted in a net loss of tuition revenue to Snow College because of a limit on the number of in-state tuition waivers compared to other forms of financial aid. An addendum signed in spring 2021 to the original Sundance contract renegotiated the cost of instruction to mitigate the overuse of in-state tuition waivers. However, the financial costs, coupled with the concerns about the quality of the instruction continued to inform campus perspectives on the program.

With help from the Utah System of Higher Education and other parties, Snow College ended its partnership with Sundance and assumed full ownership of the program in spring 2023. Teach-out agreements were provided to all existing AOL students, who became early college students and maintained the same opportunity to take online instruction directly from Snow College. These students now pay the regular college student tuition rate and have access to Snow College's complete array of online courses, including academic pathway meta-major and major courses.

Snow College experienced a drop in online enrollment, particularly among the early college high school students formerly serviced through the Sundance partnership. However, the college's 2023 [strategic enrollment plan](#), includes plans to make up for those losses with initiatives that are more mission-aligned and financially sustainable.

Addendum 2: Institutional Report Certification Form

Accreditation Handbook

APPENDIX J: INSTITUTIONAL REPORT CERTIFICATION FORM

Please use this certification form for all institutional reports (Self-Evaluation, Annual, Mid-Cycle, PRFR, Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness, Candidacy, Ad-Hoc, or Special)



Institutional Report Certification Form

On behalf of the Institution, I certify that:

- ☐ There was broad participation/review by the campus community in the preparation of this report.
- ☐ The Institution remains in compliance with NWCCU Eligibility Requirements.
- ☐ The Institution will continue to remain in compliance throughout the duration of the institution's cycle of accreditation.

I understand that information provided in this report may affect the continued Candidacy or Accreditation of my institution. I certify that the information and data provided in the report are true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

(Name of Institution)

(Name of Chief Executive Officer)

(Signature of Chief Executive Officer)

(Date)