



**MISSISSIPPI VALLEY STATE**  
UNIVERSITY®

## **Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP)**

**Passport to Finish: Intrusive Advisement, Academic Support and Student Engagement**

**SACSCOC On-Site Visit**  
**March 6-9, 2023**

# **Passport to Finish: Intrusive Advisement, Academic Support and Student Engagement**

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
SECTION 1. TOPIC IDENTIFICATION	4
SECTION 2. INSTITUTIONAL CONSTITUENCIES	7
SECTION 3. LITERATURE REVIEW	11
SECTION 4. STUDENT OUTCOMES	17
SECTION 5. RESOURCES	28
SECTION 6. ASSESSMENT PLAN	32
CLOSING SUMMARY	52
REFERENCES	53
APPENDICES	58

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **The Quality Enhancement Plan Focus**

Passport to Finish: Intrusive Advisement, Academic Support and Student Engagement (Passport to Finish) is designed to increase retention rates of undergraduate students at Mississippi Valley State University (MVSU) by implementing enhanced academic and student support services to first-time students. This Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) will impact the University's ability to retain this subset of students from their initial enrollment through graduation.

The topic identification and selection encompass broad-based input from institutional stakeholders. The implementation process utilizes a clearly defined timeframe, a dedicated organizational budget, and an appropriate management plan.

The intended outcome of Passport to Finish is to increase student success and retention. The primary approach will be to enhance first-time students' ability to maintain good academic standing by 1) providing more centralized and coordinated academic and student support services and, 2) increasing the University's annual retention rates for first-time students across the span of their academic programs.

This QEP will enhance students' likelihood for continuous enrollment and ultimately completion of their programs of study. The following goals and objectives are aligned with the overall intended outcome to increase student success and retention.

- Goal 1: Enable students to better understand and overcome their academic deficiencies
- Goal 2: Enhance students' ability to complete their programs of study within 4 years
- Goal 3: Impact student success with non-academic retention factors
- Goal 4: Increase the retention of first-time, full-time freshmen

Overall, Passport to Finish addresses college readiness deficiencies, academic advisement, and personal growth and development to improve student success and retention.

## Passport to Finish: Intrusive Advisement, Academic Support and Student Engagement

### SECTION 1. TOPIC IDENTIFICATION

The identification and selection of the Mississippi Valley State University Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) meets the standards of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) given that it (a) has a topic identified through ongoing, comprehensive planning and evaluation processes, (b) has broad-based support of institutional constituencies, (c) focuses on improving specific student learning outcomes and/or student success, (d) commits resources to initiate, implement, and complete the QEP, and (e) includes a plan to assess achievement.

#### On-Going Planning and Evaluation

Retention was selected as the broad topic for the MVSU QEP. MVSU uses the federal definition of retention in its annual planning and evaluation processes. The U. S. Department of Education defines retention as the percentage of first-time undergraduate students who return to the same institution the following fall (U.S. Department of Education, 2022). Because several factors determine whether students return each year, this QEP is intended to identify challenges and opportunities related to student retention while presenting a plan to improve overall student success.

The identification and selection of retention as the QEP topic emerged organically as a result of a number of different planning and evaluation processes. Those processes included an intentional alignment with the strategic priorities of the Board of Trustees of Mississippi State Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL), objectives within the MVSU IHL Strategic Plan, strategic priorities and key performance indicators in the MVSU 2018-2022 Strategic Plan, strategies developed by the MVSU Strategic Enrollment Management Team, Institutional Effectiveness reporting, recent MVSU presidential mandates, and the results of a university wide QEP topic selection survey.

Student retention, an existing component of all the aforementioned planning and evaluation processes, was identified as an on-going challenge that necessitated the creation of this QEP. The related planning and evaluation processes that brought retention to the forefront are described below.

#### IHL Strategic Priorities

MVSU is a public, four-year institution governed by the IHL Board of Trustees. The board has established strategic priorities and direction for its institutions. Student retention is a key performance measure under Student Progress within the statewide goals and benchmarks (Appendix A).

MVSU aligns its programs and services to address the following IHL strategic priorities for retention.

MISSISSIPPI'S BENCHMARKS for UNIVERSITIES: UNDERGRADUATE
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- |   |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. College Readiness</li><li>2. Student Progress<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>First-year retention rate (from fall to fall) for entering full-time</b></li></ul></li></ol> |
|---|

**freshmen**

3. Student Graduation Rates
4. Graduates in High-need Disciplines
5. Cost
6. Quality of Learning Environment

MVSU IHL Strategic Goals

MVSU prepares and submits a 5-year strategic plan in June of each year. The MVSU IHL Strategic Plan includes retention as objective 2 under Goal 1 in the budgeted program for instruction. The following table outlines the most recent outcome measures, strategies, output/efficiency measures, and explanatory measures related to improving student retention.

<b>OBJECTIVE 2:</b> Increase student retention	
<b>OUTCOME MEASURE:</b>	Increased student progress toward degree attainment
<b>STRATEGY 1:</b>	Implement an aggressive student tracking system that proactively identifies and resolves students' barriers to re-enrollment
<b>OUTPUT/EFFICIENCY MEASURES:</b>	Number of first-time freshmen enrolled Number and percent of first-time freshmen returned Number of continuing students enrolled Number and percent of eligible continuing students returned Student expenditures per FTE student
<b>EXPLANATORY MEASURES:</b>	Number of students reporting personal and social barriers to retention that are beyond the control of the institution

MVSU Strategic Plan

The identification and selection of retention as the QEP topic also stems from the University's strategic goals to increase student retention and graduation rates (Appendix B. MVSU 2018-2022 Strategic Plan: Strategic Goal 1, Priority #3). Retention and graduation rates have received increased focus and attention with the initiation of the MVSU Strategic Plan in 2018. This effort aligns with the aforementioned MVSU IHL Strategic Plan and the IHL Strategic Priorities. Targets and outcomes related to student retention are reported in Table 1.1 Performance Indicators Report.

Table 1.1 Performance Indicators Report

Strategic Goal	Performance Indicators	BASELINE			TARGETS					OUTCOMES		
		2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
SG1	Enrollment: Total Headcount	2,309	2,455	2,385	2,457	2,531	2,607	2,685	2,766	2,285	2,147	2,032
SG1	Enrollment: Total FTE	1,996.60	2,123.70	2,041.70	2,102.90	2,165.90	2,230.80	2,297.70	2,366.60	1,885	1,743	1,613
SG1	Enrollment: Undergraduate	1,948	2,011	1,977	2,036	2,097	2,160	2,225	2,292	1,930	1,833	1,694
SG1	Enrollment: Undergraduate FTE	1,764.90	1,872.70	1,794.60	1,848.40	1,903.80	1,960.90	2,109.70	2,080.20	1,659	1,550	1,415
SG1	Enrollment: Dual Enrollment	159	199	247	254	262	270	278	286	244	222	277
SG1	Enrollment: Early College High School	0	0	0	26	53	83	113	143	19	24	22
SG1	Enrollment: Graduate	361	444	408	420	433	446	459	473	355	314	338
SG1	Enrollment: Graduate FTE	231.7	251	247.1	254.5	262.1	269.9	277.9	286.2	214	184	198
SG6	Enrollment: Other Race	4%	4%	4%	5%	5%	5%	6%	6%	4%	4%	4%
SG6	Employees: Other Race	11%	11%	12%	12%	13%	13%	14%	15%	9.90%	10%	8%
SG1	Degree Programs: Undergraduate	25	25	25	25	26	27	28	28	25	26	26
SG1	Degree Programs: Graduate	11	11	11	10	10	10	11	11	10	9	9
SG1	Accredited Programs	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	20	17	15	15
SG1	Faculty with Terminal Degrees	69.50%	69.80%	69.30%	70%	70%	71%	72%	72%	68.20%	68.80%	71.40%
SG1	Degrees Conferred: Undergraduate	305	322	302	311	320	329	338	347	287	246	271
SG1	Degrees Conferred: C2C	0	0	19	22	25	28	31	34	20	23	15
SG1	Degrees Conferred: Graduate	108	91	109	109	112	115	118	120	103	81	92
SG1	Retention Rate	66%	62%	61%	63%	65%	67%	69%	71%	62%	61%	63%
SG1	Graduation Rate	22%	31%	30%	33%	34%	35%	36%	37%	29%	32%	28%
SG2	Number of Online Databases	52	52	52	51	53	55	57	60	52	52	52
SG2	Student Satisfaction (Overall)	3.87/5.00	3.98/5.0	3.67/5.00	3.90/5.00	4.00/5.00	4.00/5.00	4.25/5.00	4.50/5.00	3.67/5.00	3.89/5.00	4.03/5.00
SG3	Information Literacy Sessions	15	85	22	30	35	40	45	50	25	63	36

### MVSU SET Team Strategies

MVSU established a strategic enrollment management team (SET) whose charge was to create a plan to improve the recruitment, matriculation, retention rates, and graduation rates of students (Appendix C).

### Institutional Effectiveness Reporting

MVSU uses Institutional Effectiveness reporting (Table 1.2) to evaluate progress with retention rates. These reports help the University track its progress by comparing data from measures of success including student retention.

Table 1.2 Institutional Effectiveness Report

**Link to Strategic Goals:** Student Achievement is linked to the following University Strategic Goals.

- Strategic Goal 1: Enhance and Strengthen Academics in the University
- Strategic Goal2: Create and Maintain a Modern Progressive Learner-Centered Environment

Student Achievement Indicator	Current Data	Target	Outcome
<b>Undergraduate Students</b>			
<b>Retention Rates</b>	<u>Fall 2018 Cohort</u> 62%	<u>Fall 2019 Cohort</u> 63%	<u>Fall 2019 Cohort</u> 63%
<b>Six-Year Graduation Rates</b>	<u>Fall 2013 Cohort</u> 32%	<u>Fall 2014 Cohort</u> 29%	<u>Fall 2014 Cohort</u> 28%
<b>8-year Graduation Rates</b>	<u>2011 Cohort</u> 31%	<u>2012 Cohort</u> 30%	<u>2012 Cohort</u> 30%
<b>First-Time, Full-Time</b>	31%	30%	30%
<b>Full-Time, Outcomes</b>	30%	30%	30%
<b>Pell, Full-Time Outcomes</b>	32%	30%	30%
<b>Successful Course Completion Rates</b>	<u>Fall 2019</u> 84.22%	<u>Fall 2020</u> 85%	<u>Fall 2020</u> 83.09%
	<u>Spring 2020</u> 86.13%	<u>Spring 2021</u> 85%	<u>Spring 2021</u> 83.92%
<b>Degrees Earned</b>	<u>Spring 2020</u> Undergraduate: 246	<u>Spring 2021</u> Undergraduate: 250	<u>Spring 2021</u> Undergraduate: 286
<b>Graduate School Rates</b>	<u>2019</u> 38.3%	<u>2020</u> 36%	<u>2020</u> 24.3%
<b>Developmental/Academic Support</b>			

### MVSU Presidential Mandate

Since 2019 the President has consistently highlighted and called attention to both retention and graduation rates as institutional priorities (Appendix D President's 2019 Presentation at the Annual Fall Faculty Staff Institute).

## **SECTION 2. QEP Topic Selection by Institutional Constituencies**

The QEP topic selection process also involved broad-based participation from various institutional constituencies (faculty/staff, alumni, community, and students) via a survey and focus-group discussions. Moreover, full faculty meetings and departmental faculty meetings, executive cabinet meetings, chairs and directors' meetings, and conversations with the MVSU National Alumni Association have almost inevitably included discussions focused on the need to better address student retention.

In Fall 2019, a broad-based survey (Appendix E) was developed and disseminated to various constituencies for the purpose of identifying a QEP topic. Participants were asked to identify a QEP topic from a selection of 32 topics that were drawn from current issues in higher education, MVSU's strategic priorities, and QEP topics of other institutions. They were also given the option of presenting additional topics that were not included in the prepared list.

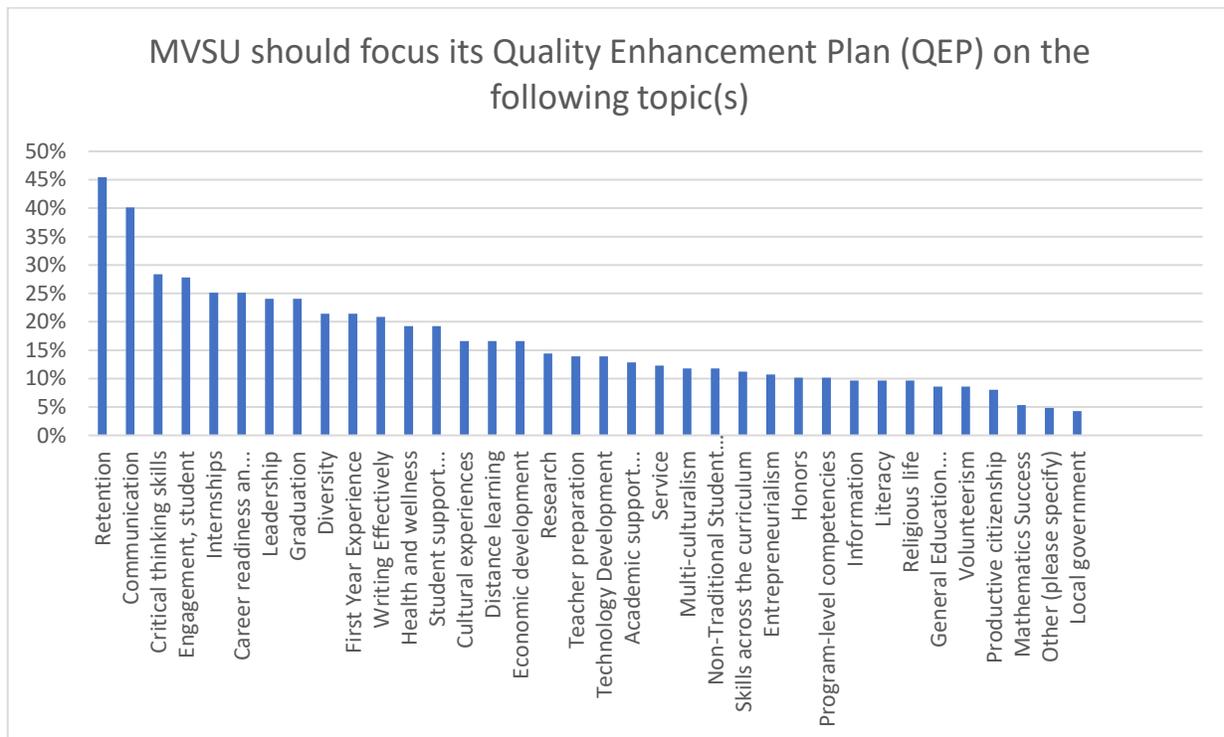
The survey was administered online and emailed to members of the MVSU community. The survey results are based on 187 respondents and as indicated in Table 1.3 staff members had the highest rate of participation (39%), followed by faculty (30%) and students (27%).

Table 1.3 QEP Topic Exploration Participants

Participant Type	Percent of Total (n= 187)
Student	27.27%
Faculty	29.95%
Staff	39.04%
Administrator (Director and Above	9.63%
Alumni	10.16%
Community Partner, Community Partner, Local Business, Government Official, or Other	1.59%

The survey results presented in Chart 1 also reveal that the largest number of participants (45%) selected retention as a QEP topic. Furthermore, three of the top topics: student engagement (27.81%), student support services (19.25%), and academic support services (12.86%) are included in this QEP as factors impacting retention.

Chart 1: QEP Topic Exploration Survey Results



### **Further Refinement of the QEP Topic**

After the broad topic of retention was identified in the QEP Topic Selection Survey, discussions around next steps were initiated and potential QEP Implementation Committee members were identified (Section 4. Resources). In addition to recruitment of committee members, faculty and staff were provided opportunities to

volunteer to serve. During Fall 2020, the representatives from various units on the campus were appointed by the President to serve on the QEP Implementation Committee (QEPIC). The QEP topic was further refined by consolidating findings from a literature review, focus group feedback, committee planning, and student feedback.

### **Literature Review**

A literature review (see Section 3) was conducted in to insure that the QEP was grounded in current research and practices related to retention and student success in higher education. Previous studies revealed a number of recurring factors that impact student success and retention, such as student initial commitment, socio-economic status, motivation, peer support, and quality of student-faculty interaction. Further studies also revealed interventions and strategies such as academic and non-academic engagement that have been successful with improving retention outcomes.

### **Focus Groups**

To ascertain increased involvement and input relative to the design and implementation of Passport to Finish, the QEPIC conducted focus group sessions for faculty and students. Each group was asked to share their perspectives about student success (See Appendices F-I). Although focus group members did not always specifically use the term “Retention” it was often implicit in the terminology used and the enumeration of factors that impact retention. For instance, faculty spoke to the importance of developing institution-wide strategies that are designed to assist students with building skills in the areas of effective notetaking, strong study-habits; character building experiences; and the use of exercises focused on self-assessments that reveal students’ academic and non-academic strengths and weaknesses (See Appendix H).

Several key take-aways emerged from the student focus group. When asked to share their thoughts on students’ success and how the University might better facilitate their ability to be successful, communications and time-management emerged as the top two issues. In terms of communications students shared the following:

- A need for greater clarity around assignments and consistency in requirements for common courses.
- A concern for over-coming language barriers between students and professors whose first language is not English.
- A need to develop active listening skills that would enhance their ability to connect with professors and others on the campus.
- Increased communication and promotion/advertising of tutorial services, WCOonline and other support services available to students.
- A need to better understand the grade posting process for mid-terms and finals.

In terms of Time-Management students shared the following:

- Some students don’t take advantage of tutorials and other services because sometimes there are conflicts with extra-curricular activities, and they haven’t figured out how to manage their time in a manner that is more balanced.
- Organizational Meeting times can conflict with class time and the professor might be a bit more accommodating if students are keeping up with their course work and the organizational meeting is important. Students need to be attentive to their schedules and make prior arrangements.

- Too many assignments due at the same time and not enough time to complete all of them (See Appendix I).

### **Committee Planning**

In addition to the use of focus groups, the QEP committee's overall plan included a range of actions that would inform development and implementation of the QEP topic of retention. Among these actions were:

1. Identification of leading and lagging Indicators of student success
2. Determination of how to collect and manage Indicator data
3. Identification of students who may be in a student-success deficit
4. Connection with and intervention for all students, especially those most at-risk
5. Continuous assessment of the interventions' outcomes

The committee also identified a set of related tasks, which included the following:

1. Compiling responses to questions presented to focus groups  
(multiple choice and open ended as well as key concepts during the sessions)
2. Consolidating information on students for improved and intentional/intrusive advisement
3. Asking faculty to adopt optional exam retake if a student attends one or two designated workshops  
(College Algebra and Physics)
4. Identifying resources for the indicators that adversely impact student success
5. Creating a timeline for implementation and a cohort
6. Implementation

### **Student Survey**

Guided by findings from relevant research (Section 3), the QEP Committee set out to identify existing efforts at MVSU that focus on retention. The committee was able to identify key service areas intended to impact on student success: Advising, Tutorial Services, Career Counseling, Financial Aid Counseling, Early Alert Monitoring Program (EMAP) workshops, EMAP lab, faculty use of GradesFirst to report students' engagement with course work, student retention workshops, and faculty advising.

To assess current student success and retention related efforts, a survey was administered (Fall 2022) to first-time students to discern their familiarity with these key academic and non-academic support services. Findings from the survey (Section 4, Tables 4.1 and 4.2) contributed to the identification of areas of concern and further refinement of the approach to the QEP.

### **SECTION 3. LITERATURE REVIEW**

Although higher education institutions have grappled with the issue of retention for more than four decades and despite the existence of a voluminous body of research on the topic, the issue continues to plague many institutions and remains a vibrant research area. It is also well established that student success requires an ability to master college level academic skills and to navigate the college environment, as well as satisfy various institutional mandates. Students must also deal with new and different expectations and interpersonal relationships (Karp, 2011). A significant amount of research has explored these and other academic factors that impact retention.

Student retention and success are commonplace concerns for most institutions of higher learning. Moreover, research indicates that the topic of student attrition or retention is integral to higher education institutions, but it is eminently intricate and onerous to predict (Burke, 2019). Furthermore, in the United States, student retention endeavors have become even more crucial due partly to declining enrollment numbers set off by soaring higher education costs (Silas, 2018). However, the student retention literature plainly indicates that student engagement during the higher education experience leads to higher student retention rates and increased institutional commitment (Banks & Dohy, 2019; Basko & McCabe, 2018; Burke, 2019; Tight, 2020). Thus, understanding student retention and engagement is the higher education institution's responsibility, and they must now devise strategies to address this issue. Student retention research indicates that some of the most successful strategies employed by institutes of higher learning that have impacted student retention rates include advising, tutoring, engagement with faculty, financial and career counseling (Banks & Dohy, 2019; Basko & McCabe, 2018; Burke, 2019; Cofer, 2019; Coleman, 2011; Scott et al., 2008; Stevens et al., 2018; Tight, 2020).

Retention is key to determining whether students finish college. The U. S. Department of Education defines retention as the percentage of first-time undergraduate students who return to the same institution the following fall (U.S. Department of Education, 2022). Several factors determine whether students return each year. Student success as it relates to these factors is necessary to improve retention rates and steer students toward finishing college.

#### **Defining Student Success**

Fishman, Ludgate & Tutak (2017) recommend that institutions develop a definition of student success in their quest to improve student success outcomes. Cuseo (2007) identifies several outcomes associated with the phrase "student success". They include student retention which is defined as college students entering and re-enrolling and continuing their undergraduate education. Academic achievement is also associated with student success and is defined as students achieving satisfactory or superior levels of academic performance in college. Both lead to educational attainment, or the completion of a college degree (Cusea, 2007).

#### **Academic Advising and Student Retention**

More recent research on advising suggests that there is a lack of clarity about the mission and goals of advising programs and that often advising is not considered to be an authentic and genuine program with an educational mission at a school (Stevens et al., 2018). Advising is based on a concern for the student's total education and academic journey, which entails teaching students how to deal with various challenges and opportunities that arise in a collegiate environment that may affect retention or graduation rates as well as how connected students feel to the university (Chen, 2012). Furthermore, students who have difficulty determining what they want to pursue academically often become indecisive and are likely to withdraw from the university (Stevens et al., 2018). Additionally, when a student is inadequately advised on an on-going basis, the student is not likely to

persist. The same is true for those who become mismatched between student interests and needs and the institutional mission, course loads, program offerings, etc. (Tinto, 2016). This is an example of where more effective advising will have a productive impact on student retention and success. Advising programs where advisors consistently utilize strengths-based conversations to allow students to make decisions regarding their major and minor choices based on the areas in which they excel can impact student persistence and retention (Banks & Dohy, 2019). Often within these types of programs, students may be required to meet with advisors before beginning their program to discuss their strengths and goals because research has shown that oftentimes changing majors hinders degree completion (Banks & Dohy, 2019; Stevens et al., 2018). Therefore, early conversations with advisors that focus on strengths may mediate against this issue.

Although academic advising varies in terms of approaches and outcomes, there has been little change in college completion rates. Joslen (2018) notes that fragmented institutional approaches to academic advising and mixed outcomes speak to the need for new and strategic approaches to academic advising management. Jolsen further argues that beyond human and non-human resources, academic advising is about building relationships with students that will assist them with achieving their academic, personal and career goals, which denotes the primacy of human interaction (p.14). Human interaction and de-fragmentation are central to the MVSU QEP. Thus, first- and second-year student advising is centralized within University College but also includes collaboration with faculty in academic departments.

### **Intrusive/Proactive Advising**

Intrusive and proactive advising has been touted as a mechanism that encompasses both academic and non-academic factors that impact retention and student success in general. Intrusive advising involves intentionality on the part of advisors, who seek out rather than wait for students to show up for advising purposes. In some instances, students are mandated to show up for advising and failure to do so might result in academic penalties (Jeschke, Johnson and Williams 2001). Intrusive /proactive advising has been viewed as a strategy to reduce student attrition owing to poor academic performance and social discontent (Schwebel, Walburn, Klyce, Jerrolds, 2012). This advising approach speaks to relationship building between students, their advisors, professors and other staff members. This approach to advising can be viewed as being more personal than professional, as it can result in the advisor becoming an active part of the students' academic and personal network.

One by-product of intrusive/proactive advising is sharing with and insisting students embrace a mind-set that compels them to complete their degree programs in a timely manner. In other words, students are advised to enroll in a minimum of 15 credits per semester as opposed to 12 credit hours, which for financial aid purposes is considered full-time enrollment. However, for the last 20 years or so, higher education institutions across the nation have developed 15 to finish initiatives as a strategy for increasing completion rates (Smith, 2017). Existing research provides evidence of the positive impact of enrollment in 15 credit hours during a student's first semester (Howard and Harrington, 2022; Belfield, Jenkins & Lahr, 2016) on retention.

### **Faculty Engagement and Student Retention**

Student retention or persistence is a common concern for university faculty members. Moreover, according to Kuley et al. (2015), faculty members have a deep-seated, far-reaching impact on student outcomes, including academic performance and student retention. Research conducted by Marra et al. (2012), indicated that if faculty purposefully promoted a welcoming environment and moved away from articulating a "survival of the fittest" attitude, they can promote success in their students and reduce attrition. However, faculty who are aloof and are seen as unwelcoming decrease students' confidence as well as their academic achievement overall and make them more likely to leave the college altogether (Vogt, 2008). Faculty engagement research indicates that student

retention rates are affected by an instructor presence, faculty members creating a sense of community in the classroom, and varying classroom activities for their students as this keeps them actively engaged not only in the classroom but at the university as well (Croxtton, 2014; Douglas et al., 2020). Furthermore, it is vital that faculty members understand their role in student retention, as it is crucial, because if faculty can provide a welcoming environment, are actively involved in student achievement, and act as professional role models, students are more likely to feel that the degree major and the institution is “for them” (Kuley et al., 2015; Miller, Rycek and Fritson, 2011).

The role of faculty in student retention is also addressed, albeit implicitly, in research that focuses on student engagement. A 2011 study by Miller et.al found that students who were more intrinsically interested in undergraduate research and internships than service learning or learning communities were motivated to work harder, persist and maintain their interest in an activity longer. Although to varying degrees, faculty involvement and encouragement are critical to undergraduate research and internships . Thus, faculty can and should foster student engagement to aid the university in increasing retention rates and improving student success.

Kuh et. Al (2008) found that African Americans benefited more than white students from increased participation in educationally purposeful activities, such as student-faculty interaction, prompt feed-back, quality of teaching and a supportive campus environment. And, although student engagement is the primary focus of this and similar research, faculty play an important role in creating an environment that facilitates student engagement.

### **Academic Success and Tutoring**

Institutional commitment to the student experience in the early stages of attendance at the university has the capability of impacting student retention and success (Linden et al., 2022). Furthermore, research indicates that students with lower grades are more likely not to be persistent in pursuing their degrees, especially when these students earn low grades at the beginning of their academic programs (Grillo & Leist, 2013). This is indicative of the pivotal role that grades play in college student retention (Akos & James, 2020). Low grades often drive course withdrawals, leaving significant cost and curricular implications for both the student and institution while fundamentally having negative consequences for second year retention (Akos & James, 2020).

Withdrawal/repeat/incomplete rates are also indicators of retention and time-to-degree. In a study at a southeastern university, Knight (1994) used the academic records of 868 bachelor’s degree recipients from 1992 to determine whether enrollment data could be used to predict student progress toward degree completion. Knight found that dropped courses, failed courses, repeated courses, and cumulative credit hours were among variables that had the greatest effect on time-to-degree. Students with few courses dropped, failed, or repeated graduated more quickly. Those with high percentages of courses dropped, failed, or repeated extended their time to graduation. For these reasons, the MVSU QEP aims to reduce DFW rates, or the percentage of courses in which students earn grades of D’s, F’, or W’s (Withdrawals).

These are significant implications for academic advisors, retention specialists, and faculty leaders. Higher education’s approach to offset these negative consequences is to offer tutoring services as a resource to students. Research has demonstrated how academic tutors play a key role in the retention of students (Douglas, 2020; Kelly & Columbus, 2020). Moreover, one-on-one tutor support embedded in subjects across an institution at scale will ensure that programs, such as those that offer tutorial support are not impacted by university budget cuts and will establish the value that they have on student success (Linden et al., 2022).

### **Non-Academic Factors**

At one point, research focused heavily on higher education institutions' use of high school GPAs, courses completed, rigor of high school curriculum and college admission test scores as predictors of first year college students' academic performance. These factors determined their academic course schedule (Tinto, 1997; Adelman, 1999; Ingram and Smith 2003) and informed retention strategies. Even so there was an understanding that non-academic factors were critical to students' academic performance. For example, B.S. Bloom (1976) posited that as much as 25% of a student's academic success is determined by nonacademic factor such as a student's attitude, motivation, level of self-confidence, willingness to do academic work, connection with others in the academic setting, willingness to seek help, and various personal factors. Similarly, Kern, Fagley and Miller's (1998), research found motivation to be more strongly correlated to attrition than to learning and study skills. They posited enhancing motivation as a mechanism for increasing retention.

### **Non-cognitive factors**

Cavigilia-Harris and Maier's (2020) examination of determinants of retention and GPA provide evidence that support earlier research which examined the impact of cognitive ability and non-cognitive factors on academic performance (Kern, Fagley & Miller, 1998). Non-cognitive factors, which include psychological factors, such as personality traits and motivation may influence academic success. Their research found a positive relationship between cognitive factors and GPA overtime, while non-cognitive factors had a robust and stronger association early on during the college years. Thus, the study suggests that policy designed to address retention should focus on building community and that for improving academic achievement should address perseverance required for building study skills in early years. Ben and Easton (2000) also posit that factors affecting retention are related to psychological processes involved in developing academic and social integration.

Boylan (2009) asserts that data on students' academic, nonacademic and personal attributes can be used to structure institutional services in a manner that best serves students. A 2010 Fowler and Boylan study of developmental education provided evidence that increases in student success and retention can be impacted by nonacademic and personal factors related to student success such as intrusive advising to treat the nonacademic and personal factors, integrating first-year transition course work, clear student guidelines, traditional developmental coursework and tutoring to address academic issues (p.2). Carter (2006) similarly found that remedial courses in language and math were positively associated with persistence. Research has also shown that many first-time college students have high expectations for performing well academically, but those expectations are not supported by their actual performance (Eagan et.al: 2015; Greenbaum: 2012). This suggests that support services can assist students who have a range of special needs. Thus, it is imperative that the university provides first-time college students with tools and strategies that facilitate the likelihood of meeting their academic expectations.

### **Other variables impacting retention**

Other variables found to impact measures of academic success/retention include race (Carter 2006;), family background (Soria and Stableton, 2012; Cavigilia-Harris and Maier, 2020), institutional factors inclusive of geographical location and local and campus culture and student engagement (van der Meer, Scott and Pratt, 2018; Lotkowski, Bobbins and Noeth, 2004; Engstrom and Tito 2008; Kramer, 2000). Cabrera, Stampen and Hansen, (1990), noted that it takes more than money to keep a student in college. It also requires student commitment, support from significant others, institutional fit, and a positive social setting for students to remain in school. The 1998 THECB annual report on higher education indicated that students who graduate from inadequately funded or low-performing high schools, have inadequate resources to pay for college or inadequate encouragement and support from family and friends, are much more likely to need greater support services if they are to succeed.

Given that a large portion of the MVSU student population faces similar challenges, relevant internal data, policies, procedures, and practices are frequently reviewed and revised to collaboratively address these kinds of barriers to student retention.

### **Financial Counseling and Student Retention**

Student academic success is generally understood to be the primary mission of institutions of higher learning, and policymakers have recently taken note of the influence that rising tuition, student debt, and financial stress may have on student persistence and performance (Britt et al., 2017). Finances are a primary factor in student success and student retention (Smith, 2021). Moreover, the low financial literacy rate of students and adults in the United States is an area of concern as studies are indicating that college students are not financially literate and lack positive financial behaviors (Jobst, 2012; Seyedian & Yi, 2011). Lack of financial literacy can lead to problems for college students and institutions. Thus, institutions of higher learning have implemented financial education programs with the notion of increasing student's financial knowledge that can lead to positive financial behaviors, reductions in financial stress, and improved student retention rates (Britt et al., 2017). Accordingly, financial counseling programs that help students increase their financial self-efficacy can be effective in increasing student financial well-being and may indirectly improve academic performance and student retention (Britt et al., 2017). Furthermore, research findings suggest that there are additional benefits of financial counseling, as it relates to student persistence. Lim et al. (2014) found that students who were aware of financial counseling services and reported higher levels of financial stress are more likely to seek financial counseling. Additionally, students who reported a higher level of financial self-efficacy are also more likely to seek financial counseling as stress increased (Lim et al., 2014). This implies that financial counseling programs are much needed interventions for colleges and universities to mitigate declining retention rates and increase student success as it relates to student withdrawal from the institution due to their lack of understanding of financial matters (Smith, 2021).

### **Career Counseling and Student Retention**

Colleges provide various types of support to students vital to student retention and student success such as academic support, social support, financial support, tutoring, first year orientation courses, career exploration courses, and formal career services (Taylor, 2019). Research indicates that participation in career services activities has a positive influence on student persistence to graduation (Hansen et al., 2017; Sang, 2015; Tinto, 2017). In fact, according to Sang (2015) 86.8% of students who use career services graduate, while only 38% do not do so. However, timing as to when to use career services is critically important as an effective support tool. Utilization must occur prior to a student struggling, because the struggle can undermine a student's inclination to persist and thus negatively impact retention rates (Tinto, 2017). Thus, many institutions offer interventions in the form of career development courses as a mechanism to influence student retention and student success.

### **Summary**

Given the body of research addressing retention, graduation, and other indicators of student success, it is evident that the most robust and potentially powerful retention efforts should be informed by both academic and non-academic factors that speak directly to the specific institution's needs and desires (one-strategy doesn't fit all). Thus, research exploring the intersectionality of academic and nonacademic predictors of success currently informs the development and implementation of programs/strategies designed to increase retention and persistence rates. The MVSU QEP, therefore is informed by research that explores relationships between academic and nonacademic factors and student success, which include college readiness, various advising

approaches, mandatory orientation and First-Year Experience, institutional guidelines, advising outreach, student engagement (academic and personal) and curricular requirements.

As indicated by the foregoing literature review, retention can be viewed as a multifaceted measure of student success. It is influenced by a plethora of factors that often are cross-cutting and not mutually exclusive. To better understand our current retention rates and to design programs/activities that produce better outcomes, we examined research that speaks to academic and non-academic factors that impact student success in general and retention in particular. Thus the MVSU QEP is informed by research that examines academic advising, student support services inclusive of tutorials, skills development workshops, financial aid and career counseling, faculty engagement and institutional culture. The QEP is comprised of each of these component parts with associated/projected student outcomes that align with some of the existing research findings.

## SECTION 4. STUDENT OUTCOMES

The intended outcome of Passport to Finish is to increase student success and retention. The primary approach will be to enhance first-time students' ability to maintain good academic standing by 1) providing more centralized and coordinated academic and student support services and, 2) increasing the University's annual retention rates for first-time students across the span of their academic programs. This outcome, along with the related goals and objectives, were informed by related survey results, trends, and student data.

To assess current retention related efforts, a survey was administered in Fall 2022 to first-time students to discern their familiarity with these key academic and non-academic support services. Findings from the survey contributed to the identification of areas of concern and further refinement of the QEP.

As indicated in Chart 4.1, the majority of respondents (52%-78%) knew about advising, tutorial services, and financial aid counseling. However, only about a third of respondents (36%) knew about career counseling services. Even when they knew about key services, very few respondents (3%-12%) reported actually using the services more than once.

Chart 4.2 indicates a similar pattern related to the Early Alert Monitoring Program (EMAP) workshops, the EMAP lab, student retention workshops, and student retention workshops. Respondents were not aware of student retention workshops (64%) but were most aware of student support services workshops (61%). Still, when students were aware of support services, they reported not using them more than once (9%-31%).

Chart 4.1: Academic Services: Knowledge and Usage  
(n=110)

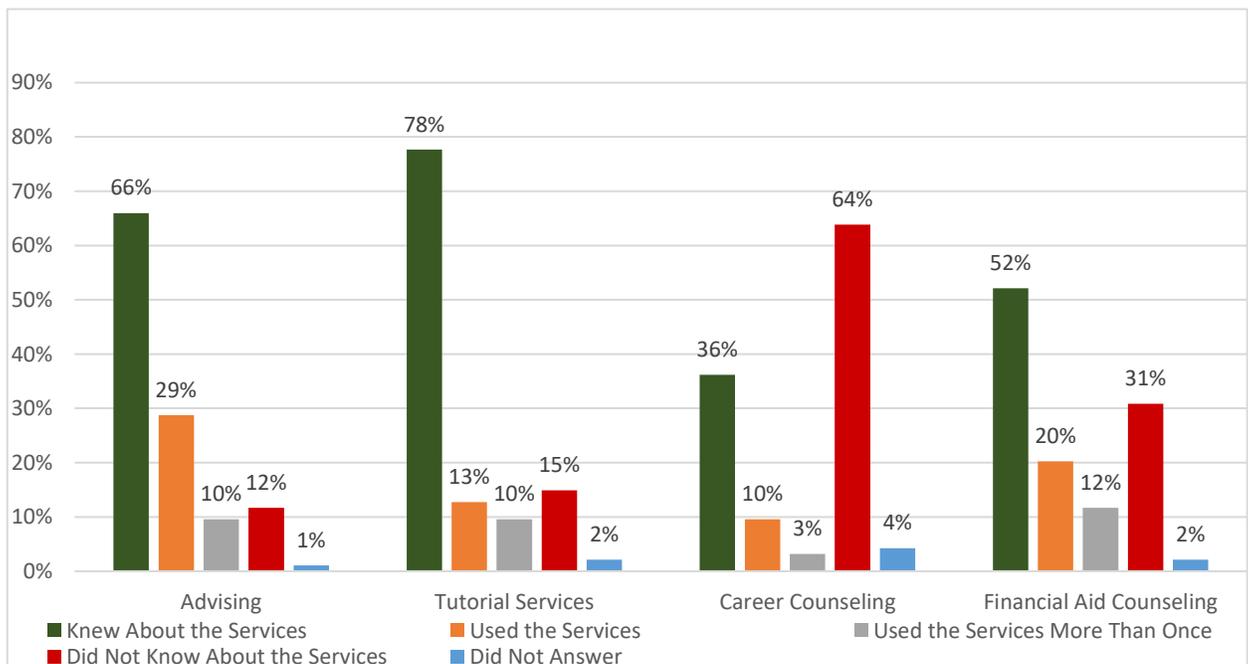
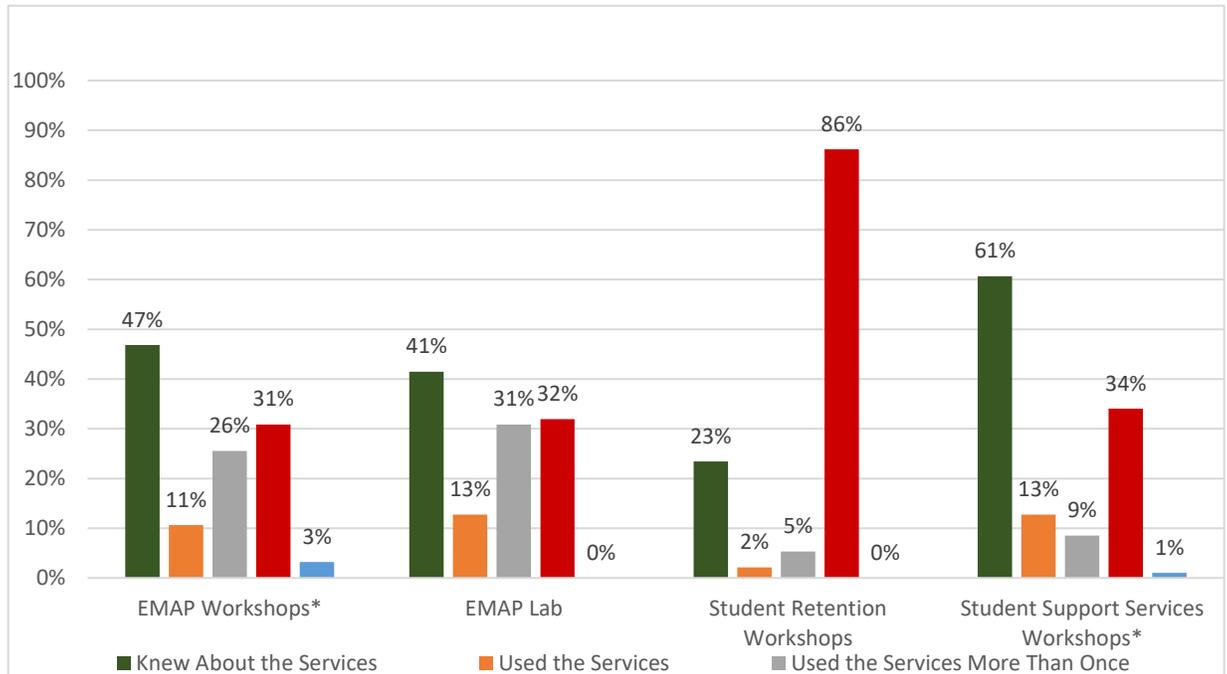


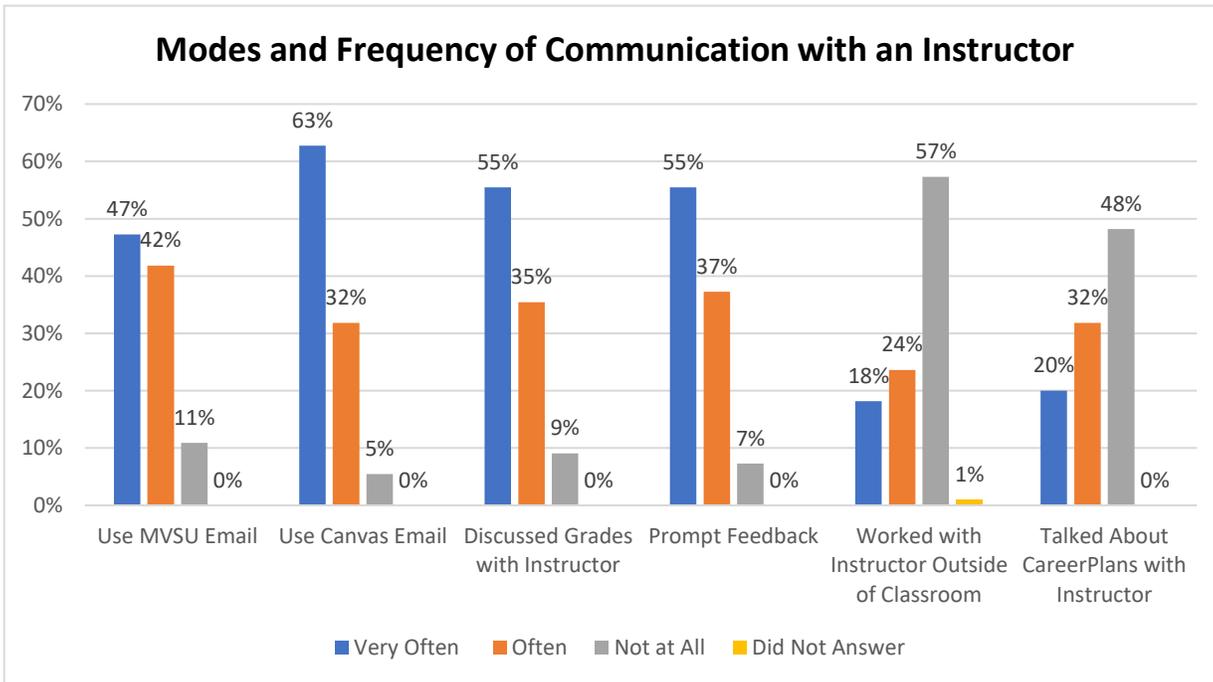
Chart 4.2: Use of Student Support Services  
(n=110)



These results provide insight into some important factors. First, students may not know that certain support services exist. Further, even when students know about key support services, they may not take advantage of them.

Chart 4.3 presents data on faculty advising in terms of the modes and amounts of communication that occur between students and faculty. Most respondents indicated they communicated with faculty using MVSU email or Canvas email often or very often (89% and 95%, respectively). When communicating with faculty 93% of respondents discussed grades. Ninety-two percent of respondents reported getting prompt feedback from their instructors, however, 57% reported not working with an instructor outside of the classroom, and 48% did not talk about career plans with faculty. This indicates that email is the mode of communication most frequently used between students and faculty. Their communication usually focuses on grades. Survey data show that student engagement with faculty outside the classroom and discussions involving career plans are lower than expected.

Chart 4.3: Communication with Instructors  
(n=110)



These findings offer opportunities for MVSU to inform students of existing services and to encourage usage of these services in its effort to improve student success and retention. MVSU believes that awareness and usage of key support programs provide a “passport to finish for its students”.

**Advising**

Advisement for first-time and transfer students includes discussions of the course schedule, with an emphasis on the University’s established 15 to Finish practice, student support services, and personal counseling. As indicated in Table 4.1, in addition to advisement and registration, advisors conduct monthly check-ins with students. Overall, advising sessions declined over the past two years indicating a need for improved monitoring of this service.

Table 4.1: University College Advisement by Academic Year

Year	Number of Students
2019-2020	763
2020-2021	603
2021-2022	112
Total	1481

Duplicate Students are Possible, Inclusive of Monthly Check-Ins, Advisement & Registration

## Tutoring Trends

At MVSU, tutoring is provided through WOnline tutoring platform, the Student Support Services program, and the math faculty. The following tutoring trends (Tables 4.2-4.6) indicate that although students have taken advantage of tutoring, there is room for improving the use of this service. This is particularly true given that the number of tutoring sessions declined over the past year and a half.

Table 4.2: Yearly WOnline Tutorials (AY-2020-2021)

<b>Fall 2020</b>		<b>Spring 2021</b>	
<b>Subject Area</b>	<b>Tutorials</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Tutorials</b>
Biology	11	Calculus	3
Calculus	7	Chemistry	8
Calculus I and II	13	College Algebra	100
Chemistry	5	College Algebra, Chemistry	1
College Algebra	21	English	23
Computer Programming I	16	History	6
English	7	Physics	1
Physics	17	Physics and Calculus	3
Physics and Chemistry	2	Accounting	8
Programming I	7	*Math & Physics	9
*Accounting	2	*Social Work	10
Survey of Computer Science	14	Writing Center	34
<b>Total</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>206</b>

\*Student Support Services

Table 4.3: Yearly WOnline Tutorials (AY-2021-2022)

<b>Fall 2021</b>		<b>Spring 2022</b>	
<b>Subject Area</b>	<b>Tutorials</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Tutorials</b>
Biology	8	Trigonometry & History	9
English	1	Social Work	17
Spanish	1	Physics and Calculus	19
Combined subjects	14	Writing Center	2
		Criminal Justice	2
		English	1
		Algebra, Accounting I	16
		trigonometry, Calculus	17
		Biology	6
		Data Processing, History, College Algebra	7

<b>Fall 2021</b>		<b>Spring 2022</b>	
<b>Subject Area</b>	<b>Tutorials</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Tutorials</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>		<b>96</b>

Table 4.4: Yearly WOnline Tutorials (Fall 2022)

<b>Fall 2022</b>	
<b>Subject Area</b>	<b>Tutorials</b>
Algebra	14
Biology	9
English	11
Physics and Calculus	6
Print Reading/CADD	5
Trigonometry, Calculus	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>46</b>

Table 4.5: Supplemental Instructions/Tutorials  
Algebra, Pre-Calculus & Calculus

	<b>Fall 2020</b>	<b>Spring 2021</b>
<b>Subject Area</b>	<b>Number of Students</b>	<b>Number of Students</b>
Algebra	13	2
Pre-Calculus & Calculus	57	28

Table 4.6: 2020-2021 Student Support Services Tutorials

<b>Subject Area</b>	<b>Number of Students</b>
College Algebra	6
Data Processing	4
English Composition	8
Gen. Psychology	1
History	5
Intro to Political Science	1
Intro to Social Work	1
Speech	2
Reading	2
Public Speaking	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>

### Credit Hours Enrolled and Earned

Circa 2015, the University began promoting degree completion in four years, which is commonly referred to as 15-to Completion. Consonant with this strategy, students were and are advised to enroll in 15-credit hours per semester. Academic Maps were updated to reflect degree completion within 4 years and are currently used

during the advisement and registration process. Tables 5a and 5b indicate mixed results. Although Table 4.7 shows that during any semester, 66% to 79% of students were enrolled in 15 or more credit hours, Table 4.8 shows that almost every semester, less than half of those students successfully completed 15 or more credit hours.

Table 4.7: First Time Freshmen Attempted Credits

		<b>Attempted Less Than 15 Credit Hours</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Attempted 15 or More Credit Hours</b>	<b>%</b>
Fall 2019	n=188	49	26.06%	139	73.94%
*Spring 2020	n=147	34	23.12%	113	76.87%
Fall 2020	n=208	71	34.14%	137	65.86%
*Spring 2021	n=152	46	30.26%	106	69.73%
Fall 2021	n=188	49	26.06%	139	73.94%
*Spring 2022	n=145	31	21.57%	114	78.62%

\*Returning students

Table 4.8: First Time Freshmen Earned Credits

		<b>Earned Less Than 15 Credit Hours</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Earned 15 or More Credit Hours</b>	<b>%</b>
Fall 2019	n=188	107	56.9%	81	43.1%
*Spring 2020	n=147	69	46.9%	78	53.1%
Fall 2020	n=208	142	68.3%	66	31.7%
*Spring 2021	n=152	91	59.8%	61	40.1%
Fall 2021	n=208	127	67.6%	61	32.5%
*Spring 2022	n=145	86	59.3%	59	40.7%

\*Returning students

## DFW Rates

DFW rates represent the percentage of courses in which students earned grades of D, F, or W (withdrawal). High DFW rates have a negative impact on student retention. Students who do not successfully complete course work risk falling behind and/or leaving school altogether.

In reference to this QEP, the DFW rates were calculated for \*selected General Education courses that are commonly taken by first-time freshmen students. From Fall 2017 to Spring 2022, DFW rates ranged from 16% to 50%. It is the intent of this QEP to reduce DFW rates and to improve the odds that students will return each semester and continue to make progress toward degree completion.

Table 4.9: DFW Rates

	<b>**DFW Rate</b>	<b>***Passing Rate</b>
Fall 2017	18%	82%
Spring 2018	24%	76%
Fall 2018	19%	81%
Spring 2019	50%	50%
Fall 2019	18%	82%
Spring 2020	17%	83%
Fall 2020	28%	72%
Spring 2021	20%	80%
Fall 2021	18%	82%
Spring 2022	16%	84%

\*Selected courses: Freshman Composition I, Freshman Composition II, Music Appreciation, Art Appreciation, General Biology I & II Zoology w/Lab, College Algebra, and Survey of Biological Science w/Lab I & II

\*\* Courses where students earned D, F, or W (withdrawal) grades

\*\*\*Courses where students earned A, B, C, or P grades

## Student Finances

Student financial health is another important factor that impacts student retention. When students cannot afford college or fail to manage their finances effectively it creates yet another obstacle for students seeking to return each year. When reviewing trend data from students' accounts, nearly 15% of first-time students carry forward uncleared balances that prevent them from registering the subsequent fall.

Table 4.10: Student Financial Data

Timeframe	Number of First-Time Freshmen	# Ineligible to Return Due to Account Balance	% Ineligible to Return Due to Account Balance
Fall 2017 to Fall 2018	405	60	14.81%
Fall 2018 to Fall 2019	380	51	13.42%
Fall 2019 to Fall 2020	333	45	13.52%
*Fall 2020 to Fall 2021	246	0	0%

\*Covid relief cleared all balances.

### Career Services

Providing students with career-related services is an important component of the student experience at MVSU. Research indicates that career services activities such as career exploration have a positive influence on student persistence. Roughly 60% of students report using career services before graduation. MVSU plans to continue use of Career Services to keep students engaged in the major areas of study and committed to academic success.

Table 4.11: Career Services Trends

	Yes	No	Total	% Yes	% No
<b>Year</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>427</b>	59%	41%
2018-2019	124	90	214	58%	42%
2019-2020	77	52	129	60%	40%
2020-2021	49	35	84	58%	42%

Use of Career Services before Graduation, Career Services Center Survey

### Student Satisfaction

Student satisfaction with the college experience can impact their decision to return the following year. Therefore, student satisfaction with key services is tracked each year. The results from the Spring 2022 Student Satisfaction Survey indicate the majority of respondents (56% to 72%) were satisfied or very satisfied with key services. The highest rated of these services was Advising and faculty office hours while the lowest rated of these services were tutoring (quality), and financial aid. This suggests room for improvement across the spectrum of key student services.

#### Spring 2022 Student Satisfaction Survey Results

Percentage of Respondents that are Satisfied or Very Satisfied

- Advising: 71.89% (n=377)
- Tutoring, Availability: 60.54% (n=375)
- Tutoring, Quality: 55.85% (n=374)
- Quality of Instruction in Major: 68.25% (n=378)
- Faculty, Office Hours: 71.43% (n=371)
- Faculty, Timely Feedback: 62.81% (n=371)

- Student Counseling: 60.85% (n=378)
- Financial Aid Services: 55.97% (n=377)
- Career Services: 68.88% (n=376)

## Retention Rates

The retention rate of first-time, full-time freshmen at MVSU has ranged from 61% to 63% over the past five years. This is significantly lower than the national average for public institutions which was around 80% in 2019. It is anticipated that COVID-related issues will lead to declines in the MVSU retention rate unless focused interventions are put into place.

Table 4.12 Retention Rates: 10-Year Trend

		RETENTION (%)			
Cohort Year	*Size of Freshmen Cohort	Retention	Retention	Retention	Retention
		2nd Year	3rd Year	4th Year	5th Year
2010	387	63%	51%	55%	18%
2011	300	60%	63%	35%	20%
2012	389	55%	41%	31%	17%
2013	459	60%	47%	42%	19%
2014	386	66%	48%	46%	17%
2015	369	62%	38%	34%	15%
2016	388	61%	45%	35%	18%
2017	402	62%	48%	35%	
2018	355	61%	49%		
2019	310	63%			
		RETENTION (#)			
Cohort Year	*Size of Freshmen Cohort	Retention	Retention	Retention	Retention
		2nd Year	3rd Year	4th Year	5th Year
2010	387	240	196	211	68
2011	300	193	205	116	66
2012	389	193	159	122	66
2013	459	217	217	193	86
2014	386	253	184	176	65
2015	369	227	139	125	54
2016	387	238	174	137	70
2017	403	250	178	141	
2018	355	217	173		
2019	310	194			

\*Cohort based on First-time, Full-Time Freshmen

As indicated by the data, retention rates are issues that deserve greater and more systematic attention. To this end, the QEP will provide students with the knowledge, skills and services that will enhance their desires and abilities to complete their degree programs. Achievement of this overarching outcome will require greater collaboration and intentionality between academic departments, enrollment management, student affairs and University College, which provides a range of student support services.

As indicated in Charts 4.1 and 4.2, there is an obvious disconnect between students' knowledge of the availability support services and usage of those services. These data indicate a need to reassess and to develop strategies that are likely to increase usage of services. Chart 4.3 indicates that students frequently communicate with faculty using email, but opportunities exist to expand their advising and interactions outside of academics.

The QEP will enhance students' likelihood for continuous enrollment and ultimately completion of their programs of study. The following goals and objectives are aligned with the overall intended outcome to increase student success and retention.

**Goal 1: Enable students to better understand and overcome their academic deficiencies**

Student support services objectives:

- Increase in the number and percentage of students utilizing professional and faculty advising services
- Increase in the number and percentage of students following academic maps
- Increase in the number and percentage of students utilizing tutoring services

**Goal 2: Enhance students' ability to complete their programs of study within 4 years**

Academic support services objectives:

- Increase the number and percentage of students enrolling in 15 hours per semester
- Increase the number and percentage of students successfully completing 15 hours per semester
- Decrease in DFW rates

**Goal 3: Impact student success with non-academic retention factors**

Student support services objectives:

- Increase the number and percentage of students successfully managing their finances
- Increase the number and percentage of students participating in career exploration and planning
- Increase student satisfaction ratings for related academic and student support services units

**Goal 4: Increase the retention of first-time, full-time freshmen**

**Student retention objective:**

- Increase retention from fall to fall

**Student Success**

Again, the intended outcome of Passport to Finish is to increase student success and retention. Student success will be defined as the attainment of student support objectives and academic support objectives associated with Goal 1, Goal 2, and Goal3. The student retention goal will be deemed successful when the target of the objective related to Goal 4 has been achieved.

## SECTION 5. RESOURCES

### Institutional Capacity

The University has provided considerable resources toward the implementation of strategies outlined in Section 6. To date, positions critical to the QEP have been restructured, faculty development activities have been realigned, and tutorials reimaged to include evening and weekend sessions. Appropriate financial resources have been earmarked for the QEP as seen in the 5-year budget in Table 5. This budget includes funds totaling almost \$500,000 dollars, which averages close to \$100,000 annually over the next 5 years. Not included in this commitment are salaries for the existing Director of Student Success and Retention, who will play a key role in assisting with the QEP implementation, facilitating peer tutoring, and providing technological support.

In this way, MVSU has committed the necessary resources to initiate, implement, and complete the QEP. In terms of initiating the QEP, staff are already in place and the budget has already been allocated to include salaries, fringe benefits, professional development, travel, supplies, equipment, and other associated costs. The QEP is also supported by the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs who reports directly to the President. This administrative oversight provides additional support for ensuring the initiation, implementation and completion of the QEP. With staffing, administrative support, and budgeting all in place, MVSU is poised to successfully complete its QEP.

### Budget

The University will commit considerable resources to development and implementation of the QEP. To date, we have restructured positions critical to the QEP and realigned faculty development activities and financial resources to contribute to student retention. Currently, the University has invested roughly \$750,000 (excluding peer tutors) in development of the QEP. Additionally, full-time faculty who have less than a full teaching load are required to devote three hours per week to the QEP tutorials and/or supplemental teaching.

Table 5: Budget

<b>Budget Items</b>	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Year 5</b>
Salaries	\$49,927	\$52,423	\$52,423	\$52,423	\$52,423
Fringe Benefits	\$20,350	\$21,441	\$21,441	\$21,441	\$21,441
Professional Development: QEP Support Staff and Faculty	\$15,000	\$25,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
Travel	\$5,000	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
Supplies	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
Equipment	\$2,000				
Other	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$97,277</b>	<b>\$113,864</b>	<b>\$93,864</b>	<b>\$93,864</b>	<b>\$93,864</b>
				<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$492,733</b>

Salaries and Fringe Benefits

The salary and fringe benefits of the QEP Director and secretarial assistance will total \$320,733.

Professional Development

Professional development training, workshops on retention related strategies will be provided for the QEP Director and QEP support staff. Faculty will also receive training related to student engagement, effective teaching strategies and advising.

Supplies

All necessary supplies related to managing the functions of the QEP will be provided in this budget. This will include typical office supplies, printing, photocopying and other identified items.

Equipment

The University currently has most of the needed equipment for managing the QEP function but anticipates the purchase of a laptop and printer for the QEP Director.

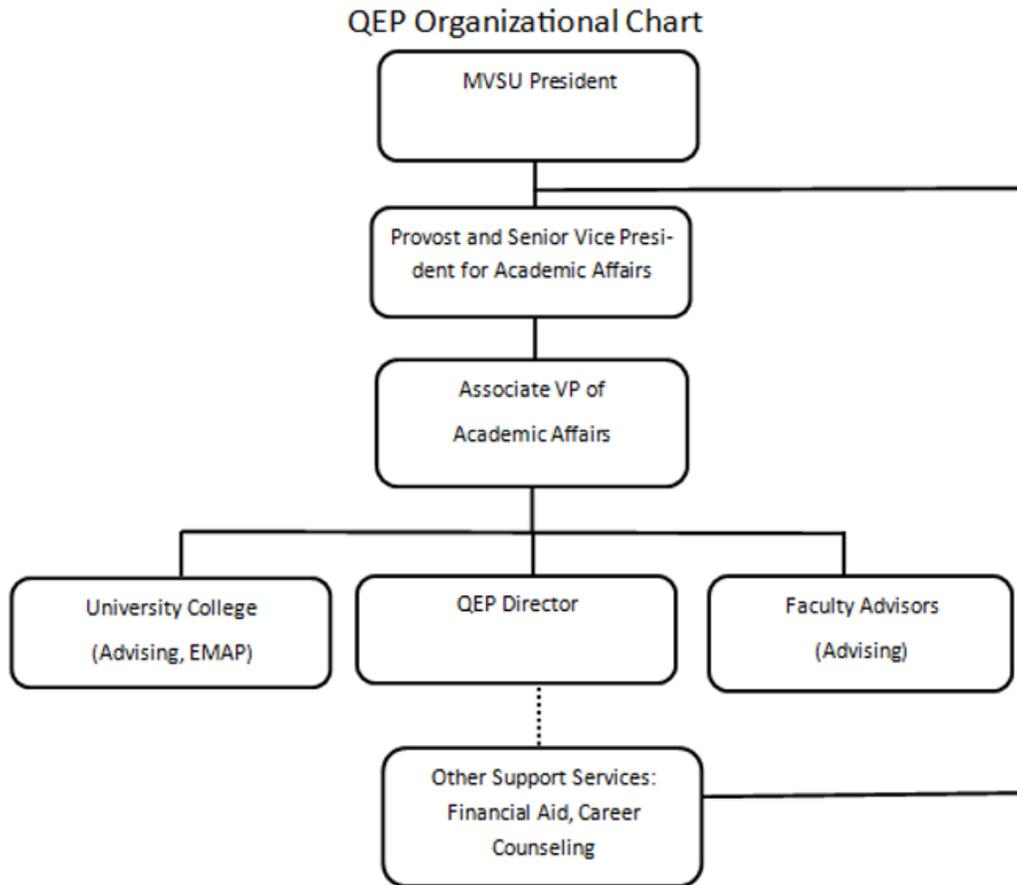
Other

Any additional costs associated with facilitating the Passport to Success will be covered by the funds in this part of the budget.

Staffing

QEP Support Staff

- QEP Director
- Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Part-Time Secretary

**Organizational Chart:****QEP Committee**

The composition of the QEP committee is driven by the need for campus-wide collaboration to effectively implement the project. Thus, in addition to the QEP Director, who has not been selected but advertised, the committee is comprised of the following individuals:

Academic Affairs: Dr. Abigail Newsome, Associate Vice-President for Academic Affairs

Student Affairs: Dr. Roshuan Bailey, Assistant Vice-President for Student Affairs

Admissions: Dr. Etosha Johnson, Director of Admissions

Financial Aid: Mrs. Deborah Banks, Acting Director of Financial Aid

University College:

Mr. Larry Kinds, Director of Developmental Studies and Academic Support

Ms. Lanette Gordon, EMAP Coordinator

LaShandar Johnson, Director of Student Success and Retention

Faculty: Mr. Antonio Brownlow, Acting Chair, Engineering Technology,

Dr. John Zheng, Chair, English and Foreign Languages

Dr. Latonya Garner-Jackson, Chair, Mathematic, Computer and Information Science

Dr. Carolyn Gordon, Acting-Chair, Mass Communication

Dr. Elina Dyo, Assistant Professor of Education

Students:

Outgoing Freshman Class Presidents

## SECTION 6. ASSESSMENT PLAN (PLANNING PHASE)

The intended outcome of Passport to Finish is to increase student success and retention. The primary approach will be to enhance first-time students' ability to maintain good academic standing by 1) providing more centralized and coordinated academic and student support services and, 2) increasing the University's annual retention rates for first-time students across the span of their academic programs. The following goals and objectives are aligned with the overall intended outcome to increase student success and retention.

### **Goal 1: Enable students to better understand and overcome their academic deficiencies**

Student support services objectives:

- Increase in the number and percentage of students utilizing professional and faculty advising services
- Increase in the number and percentage of students following academic maps
- Increase in the number and percentage of students utilizing tutoring services

### **Goal 2: Enhance students' ability to complete their programs of study within 4 years**

Academic support services objectives:

- Increase the number and percentage of students enrolling in 15 hours per semester
- Increase the number and percentage of students successfully completing 15 hours per semester
- Decrease in DFW rates

### **Goal 3: Impact student success with non-academic retention factors**

Student support services objectives:

- Increase the number and percentage of students successfully managing their finances
- Increase the number and percentage of students participating in career exploration and planning
- Increase student satisfaction ratings for related academic and student support services units

### **Goal 4: Increase the retention of first-time, full-time freshmen**

Student retention objective:

- Increase retention from fall to fall

### **Demonstrating Student Success**

Student success will be defined as the attainment of student support objectives and academic support objectives associated with Goal 1, Goal 2, and Goal 3. The student retention goal will be deemed successful if the target of the objective related to Goal 4 has been achieved.

### **Project Timeline**

2021-2022      Year 1 QEP Development

Continue to develop and refine the QEP concept; identify budget, key staff and resources for further development and implementation; conduct focus groups; conduct literature review; collect and analyze baseline data related to expected outcomes; create timeline for related interventions/services and assessments; finalize plan

2022-2023      Pilot Implementation Year

Identify pilot cohort; utilize academic maps; track usage of academic and support services (tutoring, advising, etc.); track credit hours enrolled, course outcomes, DFW rates, financial standing, and student satisfaction; make adjustments in interventions as necessary; Develop annual reporting format to share progress with the campus community (faculty, staff, students and alumni) and board of trustees

2023-2024 Year 1 Full Implementation

Identify first cohort; utilize academic maps; track usage of academic and support services (tutoring, advising, etc.); track credit hours enrolled, course outcomes, DFW rates, financial standing, and student satisfaction; make adjustments in interventions as necessary; calculate 2<sup>nd</sup> year retention rate for pilot cohort; Share annual report with the campus community (faculty, staff, students and alumni) and board of trustees

2024-2025 Year 2 Full Implementation

Identify second cohort; implement previous year's strategies and make adjustments to interventions and services as necessary. Calculate retention rates for pilot and year 1 cohorts; Share annual report with the campus community (faculty, staff, students and alumni) and board of trustees

2025-2026 Year 3 Full Implementation

Identify third cohort; implement previous year's strategies and make adjustments to interventions and services as necessary. Calculate retention rates for pilot, year 1 and year 2 cohorts; Share annual report with the campus community (faculty, staff, students and alumni) and board of trustees

2026-2027 Year 4 Full Implementation

Identify fourth cohort; implement previous year's strategies and make adjustments to interventions and services as necessary. Calculate retention rates for pilot, year 1, year 2 and year 3 cohorts; Share annual report with the campus community (faculty, staff, students and alumni) and board of trustees

2027-2028 Year 5 Full Implementation

Identify fifth cohort; implement previous year's strategies and make adjustments to interventions and services as necessary. Calculate retention rates for pilot, year 1, year 2, year 3, and year 4 cohorts; Share annual report with the campus community (faculty, staff, students and alumni) and board of trustees

### **Assessment and Evaluation**

Assessment and evaluations, both formative and summative, are critical to determining the effectiveness of the QEP. Quantitative data that allow for the identification of retention trends academic performance, and baseline

data for support services and non-academic engagement will be examined and compared to data for subsequent years. Student assessments pertaining to academic and non-academic engagement will be analyzed to determine the effectiveness of interventions on student retention and identify areas for modification and improvement. Additionally, the incorporation of teaching and learning strategies in courses associated with faculty development projects will be compared to courses not tied to faculty development to ascertain their impact on DFW rates and by extension retention rates.

### Implementation

Actual increases for each objective will be determined after reviewing trend data for retention and academic measures and baseline data for support services and other measures. The only projected decreases will be in DFW rates (the percentage of D, F, and W grades) where a decline is interpreted as a measure of student success.

Strategies, measures, and targets are provided in Tables 6.1 through 6.4.

**Table 6.1: Goal 1 Assessment**

<b>Goal 1: Enable students to better understand and overcome their academic deficiencies</b>			
<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Strategies for Improvement</b>	<b>Measures and Targets</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
Objective 1.1 Increase in the percentage of students utilizing professional and faculty advising services	Use the WOnline for advising component; Conducting advisor and faculty training	<u>Baseline</u> AY2022 data: 112 or 56% of first-time freshmen (Table 4.1)  <u>Targets:</u> Year 1: 60% Year 2: 64% Year 3: 68% Year 4: 72% Year 5: 76%	Department Chairs, Faculty & Associate VPAA Office of Faculty Development
Objective 1.2 Increase in the percentage of students following academic maps	Make academic maps available in print and online; Conducting one-on-one advising sessions students to evaluate progress toward degree using academic map; Students are classified as either on-track or not on track; Conducting advisor and faculty training; Assessing the effectiveness of professional development	<u>Baseline</u> To be established in pilot year, Fall 2022  <u>Targets:</u> Year 1: 0.5% increase Year 2: 1% increase Year 3: 1.5% increase Year 4: 2% increase Year 5: 2.5% increase	Academic Departments, Freshman & Sophomore Advisors, Associate  VPAA (Advisor & Faculty Training) QEP Director (Assessment)

<p>Objective 1.3 Increase in the percentage of students utilizing tutoring services</p>	<p>Use the WOnline tutoring component; Connecting students with face-to-face tutors; Provide training and support for tutors; Assess the effectiveness of professional development</p>	<p><u>Baseline</u> Fall 2021 data: 24 students or 12% of first-time freshmen (Table 4.3)  <u>Targets:</u> Year 1: 15% Year 2: 18% Year 3: 21% Year 4: 24% Year 5: 27%</p>	<p>Faculty/Advisors  Director of Student Support Services (Tutor Training)  QEP Director</p>
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**Table 6.2: Goal 2 Assessment**

<b>Goal 2: Enhance students' ability to complete their programs of study within 4 years</b>			
<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Strategies for Improvement</b>	<b>Measures and Targets</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
Objective 2.1 Increase the percentage of students enrolling in 15 hours per semester	Conduct one-on-one advising sessions with students to identify courses for degree completion; Prepare course schedules for students that follow academic maps; Ensure course availability to accommodate 15 credit hours;  Conduct advisor and faculty training on EMAP and other retention strategies; Send EMAP alerts if students' credit hour loads fall below 15; Assessing the effectiveness of professional development	<u>Baseline</u> Fall 2021 data: 74% of first-time freshmen (Table 4.7)  <u>Targets:</u> Year 1: 75% Year 2: 76% Year 3: 77% Year 4: 78% Year 5: 80%	Faculty Advisors, Freshman & Sophomore Advisors Advisors  Director, Emerging Scholars & Faculty Development Office  QEP Director
Objective 2.2 Increase the percentage students successfully completing 15 hours per semester	Use of the EMAP early alert system to identify students who need tutoring or advising;  Use of the WOnline tutoring component; Connecting students with face-to-face tutors;  Providing training and professional development support for tutors, advisors, and faculty;  Assess the effectiveness of professional development	<u>Baseline</u> Fall 2021 data: 33% of first-time freshmen (Table 4.8)  <u>Targets:</u> Year 1: 34% Year 2: 35% Year 3: 36% Year 4: 37% Year 5: 38%	Program Asst./Data Specialist  All Faculty & University College Staff  Director of Student Support Services & Faculty Development Office  QEP Director

<p>Objective 2.3 Decrease the *DFW rates</p>	<p>Provide professional development for faculty on strategies for improving course outcomes;  Connect students with face-to-face tutors;  Provide training and professional development support for tutors; Working with faculty to align tutoring sessions with relevant course content;  Assess the effectiveness of professional development</p>	<p><u>Baseline</u> Fall 2021 data: 18% of first-time freshmen (Table 4.9)</p> <p><u>Targets:</u> Year 1: 17.5% Year 2: 17.0% Year 3: 16.5% Year 4: 16.0% Year 5: 15.5%</p>	<p>Faculty Development Office (External Consultants)  All Faculty &amp; University College Staff  Director, Student Support Services &amp; QEP Director         QEP Director</p>
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\*DFW Rates first-year, first-time courses will be tracked starting in the fall semester for the following courses: Freshman Composition I, Freshman Composition II, Music Appreciation, Art Appreciation, General Biology I & II Zoology w/Lab, College Algebra, and Survey of Biological Science w/Lab I & II

**Table 6.3: Goal 3 Assessment**

<b>Goal 3: Impact student success with non-academic retention factors</b>			
<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Strategies for Improvement</b>	<b>Measures and Targets</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
<p>Objective 3.1 Increase the percentage of students successfully managing their finances</p>	<p>Identify students with outstanding balances; Connect students with financial aid counselors and financial management staff to create a plan to identify funding sources and manage balances;  Provide professional development to financial aid staff regarding retention strategies and the use of the EMAP system;</p>	<p><u>Baseline</u> Fall 2019 data: 86% of first-time freshmen (Table 4.10)</p> <p><u>Targets:</u> Year 1: 86.5% Year 2: 87% Year 3: 87.5% Year 4: 88% Year 5: 88.5%</p>	<p>Student Accounts &amp; Advisors       QEP Director, Financial Director, Associate VPAA, Director, Emerging Scholars    QEP Director</p>

	Assess the effectiveness of professional development		
Objective 3.2 Increase the percentage of students participating in career exploration and planning	Conduct early career counseling sessions with students to help them identify career aspirations and begin career planning; Assess the effectiveness of career services	<u>Baseline</u> Fall 2021 data: 10% of first-time freshmen using counseling services (Chart 4.1)  <u>Targets:</u> Year 1: 15% Year 2: 20% Year 3: 25% Year 4: 30% Year 5: 35%	Career Services Director QEP Director FYE Staff
Objective 3.3 Increase student satisfaction ratings for related academic and student support services units	Collect and analyze quantitative and qualitative results from annual Student Satisfaction Survey; Conduct planning sessions with relevant staff (advisors, tutors, financial aid staff, etc.) to identify challenges and solutions; Conduct focus groups with students to get clear understanding of issues; Implementing feasible suggestions from students regarding suggested improvements; Provide good customer service by resolving student issues quickly and following up when resolutions are pending; Provide customer service training to relevant staff;	<u>Baseline</u> No baseline data for first-time freshmen; To be established Fall AY2023  <u>Targets:</u> Year 1: 0.5% increase Year 2: 1% increase Year 3: 1.5% increase Year 4: 2% increase Year 5: 2.5% Increase	VP Institutional Effectiveness  QEP Director & Student Success Team  QEP Director, Director of Emerging Scholars, Associate VPAA  Department Chairs, Unit Directors, and all VPs  HR Director, VP for Enrollment Management & Student Affairs QEP Director

	Assess the effectiveness of professional development		
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**Table 6.4: Goal 4 Assessment**

<b>Goal 4: Increase the retention of first-time, full-time freshmen</b>			
<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Strategies for Improvement</b>	<b>Measures and Targets</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
Objective 4.1 Increase retention from fall to fall	<p>Use Handle Your Business Campaign to apprise students of holds on their accounts that impede pre-registration such as financial balances, clearing other Banner system account holds;</p> <p>Counsel students regarding career options and help them to align their academic plans with their career choices;</p> <p>Provide students with financial assistance in the form of retention waivers or scholarships;</p> <p>Provide Handle Your Business training and other retention related professional development to relevant staff;</p> <p>Assess the effectiveness of professional development</p>	<p><u>Baseline</u> Fall 2020 cohort retention rate: 54%</p> <p><u>Targets:</u> Year 1: 54.5% for Fall 2022 cohort Year 2: 55% for Fall 2023 cohort Year 3: 56% for Fall 2024 cohort Year 4: 56.5% for Fall 2025 cohort Year 5: 57% for Fall 2026 cohort</p>	<p>University Registrar</p> <p>Departmental Faculty/Advisors &amp; Career Services Staff</p> <p>University Advancement &amp; Office of the President</p> <p>University Registrar, QEP Director</p> <p>QEP Director</p>

The evaluation phase of the assessment process is presented in Tables 6.5 through 6.14 for the first year of implementation while Tables 6.15 through 6.23 outline the evaluation phase for years three through five. The QEP Director and QEP Committee will work with appropriate staff and offices to collect data and evaluate progress with each goal and objective.

**ASSESSMENT TIMELINE (EVALUATION PHASE)  
Year 1: 2023-2024**

**Goal 1: Enable students to better understand and overcome their academic deficiencies****Table 6.5: Objective 1.1**

<b>Objective 1.1</b> Increase in the number and percentage of students utilizing professional and faculty advising services	
<b>Target:</b> 60% of first-time freshmen	
<b>Data Collection</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Identify cohort of first-time freshmen	September 2023 February 2024
Create a Retention Milestones table	September 2023 February 2024
Pull data for numbers of students using WOnline system for advising by professional advisors	November 2023; April 2024
Pull data for numbers of students using WOnline system for advising by faculty	November 2023; April 2024
<b>Evaluation Process</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Prepare a report of findings that includes the number and percentage of students utilizing professional and faculty advising services	December 2023 and May 2024
Assess the effectiveness of training using Survey Monkey	August 2023-December 2024
Use evaluation results to develop and implement a plan to increase the usage of professional and faculty advising and training	May 2024

**Table 6.6: Objective 1.2**

<b>Objective 1.2</b> Increase in the number and percentage of students following academic maps	
<b>Targets</b> Year 1: 0.5% increase Year 2: 1% increase Year 3: 1.5% increase Year 4: 2% increase Year 5: 2.5% increase	
<b>Data Collection</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Track the availability of printed and online academic maps for each program	August 2023
Record one-on-one advising sessions with students and their academic map	August 2023 - December 2023; January 2024-May 2024
Classify students in the Retention Milestone table as either on-track with their academic maps or not on track with their academic programs	December 2023, May 2024

<b>Evaluation Process</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Calculate the number of students who received one-on-one advising using their academic maps who are on track with their degree programs	December 2023, May 2024
Assess the effectiveness of training using Survey Monkey	August 2023-December 2024
Use evaluation results to develop and implement a plan to improve training and increase the number and percentage of students using academic maps	May 2024

**Table 6.7: Objective 1.3**

<b>Objective 1.3 Increase in the number and percentage of students utilizing tutoring services</b>	
<b>Target:</b> 15% of first-time freshmen	
<b>Data Collection</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Pull reports for the WOnline tutoring component	December 2023 and May 2024
Record face-to-face tutoring sessions with students	August 2023-December 2024; January 2023 to May 2024
<b>Evaluation Process</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Prepare a report containing the number and percentage of students utilizing tutoring services	December 2023 and May 2024
Assess the effectiveness of training using Survey Monkey	August 2023-December 2024
Use evaluation results to develop and implement a plan to improve training and the number and percentage of students using tutoring services	May 2024

**Goal 2: Enhance students' ability to complete their programs of study within 4 years****Table 6.8: Objective 2.1**

<b>Objective 2.1</b> Increase the number and percentage of students enrolling in 15 hours per semester	
<b>Target:</b> 75% of first-time freshmen	
<b>Data Collection</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Run a report in the Banner system that indicates the number of credit hours attempted by each student in the cohort	September 2023 and February 2024
Mark in the Retention Milestone table each student that still has a course schedule with 15 credit hours at the end of the semester.	December 2023 and May 2024
<b>Evaluation Process</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Prepare a report of findings that includes the number and percentage of students enrolled in 15 credit hours	December 2023 and May 2024
Assess the effectiveness of training using Survey Monkey	August 2023-December 2024
Use evaluation results to develop and implement a plan to improve training and the number and percentage of students enrolled in 15 hours per semester	May 2024

**Table 6.9: Objective 2.2**

<b>Objective 2.2</b> Increase the number and percentage of students successfully completing 15 hours per semester	
<b>Target:</b> 34% of first-time freshmen	
<b>Data Collection</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Run a report in the Banner system that indicates credit hours earned by each student in the cohort	September 2023 and February 2024
Mark in the Retention Milestone table each student that still successfully completed 15 credit hours at the end of the semester.	December 2023 and May 2024
<b>Evaluation Process</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Prepare a report of findings that includes the number and percentage of students successfully completing 15 credit hours	December 2023 and May 2024
Assess the effectiveness of training using Survey Monkey	August 2023-December 2024
Use evaluation results to develop and implement a plan to improve training and the number and percentage of students successfully completing 15 credit hours per semester	May 2024

**Table 6.10: Objective 2.3**

<b>Objective 2.3</b> Decrease DFW Rates	
<b>Target:</b> 17.5% of first-time freshmen	
<b>Data Collection</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Run a report in the Banner system that provides grades for *selected first year courses	December 2023 and May 2024
<b>Evaluation Process</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Prepare a report of DFW rates for each course and overall; Compare results of courses where faculty received professional development and where faculty did not receive professional development	December 2023 and May 2024
Assess the effectiveness of training using Survey Monkey	August 2023-December 2024
Use evaluation results to develop and implement a plan to improve training and decrease the DFW rates	May 2024

\*DFW Rates first-year, first-time courses will be tracked starting in the fall semester for the following courses: Freshman Composition I, Freshman Composition II, Music Appreciation, Art Appreciation, General Biology I & II Zoology w/Lab, College Algebra, and Survey of Biological Science w/Lab I & II

### Goal 3: Impact student success with non-academic retention factors

**Table 6.11: Objective 3.1**

<b>Objective 3.1</b> Increase the number and percentage of students successfully managing their finances	
<b>Target:</b> 86.5% of first-time freshmen will have zero balances	
<b>Data Collection</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Run a report in the Banner system that indicates students with financial balances	October 2023 and March 2024
Mark in the Retention Milestone table each student that has a zero balance	December 2023 and May 2024
<b>Evaluation Process</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Prepare a report of findings that includes the number and percentage of students with zero balances	December 2023 and May 2024
Assess the effectiveness of training using Survey Monkey	August 2023-December 2024
Use evaluation results to develop and implement a plan to improve training and the number and percentage of students successfully managing their finances	May 2024

**Table 6.12: Objective 3.2**

<b>Objective 3.2</b> Increase the number and percentage of students participating in career exploration and planning	
<b>Target:</b> 15% of first-time students	
<b>Data Collection</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Request report of students who have participated in career exploration and planning from Career Services office	May 2024
Mark in the Retention Milestone table each student that has completed career exploration and planning	May 2024
<b>Evaluation Process</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Prepare a report of findings that includes the number and percentage of first-time students who have participated in career exploration and planning by the end of their first year	May 2024
Assess the effectiveness of career services using Survey Monkey	April 2024
Use evaluation results to develop and implement a plan to improve career services and the number and percentage of students participating in career exploration and planning	May 2024

**Table 6.13: Objective 3.3**

<b>Objective 3.3</b> Increase student satisfaction ratings for related academic and student support services units	
<b>Target:</b> 0.5% increase over AY2023 baseline	
<b>Data Collection</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Obtain a report of the results of the annual student satisfaction survey	June 2024
<b>Evaluation Process</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Prepare a report of findings that student satisfaction with advising, tutoring, faculty, career services, and financial aid	June 2024
Assess the effectiveness of training using Survey Monkey	August 2023-December 2024
Use evaluation results to develop and implement a plan to improve training and the level of student satisfaction with academic and student support services	May 2024

**Goal 4: Increase the retention of first-time, full-time freshmen****Table 6.14: Objective 4.1**

<b>Objective 4.1</b> Increase retention from fall to fall	
<b>Target:</b> 54.5% increase for fall 2022 cohort	
<b>Data Collection</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Obtain a report of students who have completed Handle Your Business functions (pre-registration, 15 credit hours, zero balance)	June 2024
Mark in the Retention Milestone table each student that has completed all Handle Your business functions	December 2023 and May 2024
Run a report to determine the number of students that returned the subsequent semester	September 2023 and February 2024
<b>Evaluation Process</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Calculate retention rates for the subsequent spring and fall	September 2023 and February 2024
Assess the effectiveness of training using Survey Monkey	August 2023-December 2024
Use evaluation results to develop and implement a plan to improve training and increase retention rates	May 2024

**ASSESSMENT TIMELINE (EVALUATION PHASE)**  
**Years 2-5: 2024-2025 to 2027-2028**

**Goal 1: Enable students to better understand and overcome their academic deficiencies**

**Table 6.15: Objective 1.1**

<b>Objective 1.1</b> Increase in the number and percentage of students utilizing professional and faculty advising services	
<b>Targets</b> Year 2: 64% Year 3: 68% Year 4: 72% Year 5: 76%	
<b>Data Collection</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Identify cohort of first-time freshmen	September February
Create a Retention Milestones table	September February
Pull numbers of students using WOnline system for advising by professional advisors	November; April
Pull numbers of students using WOnline system for advising by faculty	November; April
<b>Evaluation Process</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Prepare a report of findings that includes the number and percentage of students utilizing professional and faculty advising services	December and May
Assess the effectiveness of training using Survey Monkey	August-December
Use evaluation results to develop and implement a plan to increase the number and percentage of students utilizing professional and faculty advising and training	May

**Table 6.16: Objective 1.2**

<b>Objective 1.2</b> Increase in the number and percentage of students following academic maps	
<b>Targets</b> Year 2: 1% increase Year 3: 1.5% increase Year 4: 2% increase Year 5: 2.5% increase	
<b>Data Collection</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Track the availability of printed and online academic maps for each program	August

Record one-on-one advising sessions with students and their academic map	August-December January-May
Classify students in the Retention Milestone table as either on-track with their academic maps or not on track with their academic programs	December, May
<b>Evaluation Process</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Calculate the number of students who received one-on-one advising using their academic maps who are on track with their degree programs	December, May
Assess the effectiveness of training using Survey Monkey	August-December
Use evaluation results to develop and implement a plan to improve training and the number and percentage of students using academic maps	May

**Table 6.16: Objective 1.3**

<b>Objective 1.3</b> Increase in the number and percentage of students utilizing tutoring services	
<b>Targets</b> Year 2: 18% Year 3: 21% Year 4: 24% Year 5: 27%	
<b>Data Collection</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Pull reports for the WOnline tutoring component	December and May
Record face-to-face tutoring sessions with students	August-December ; January to May
<b>Evaluation Process</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Prepare are report containing the number and percentage of students utilizing tutoring services	December and May
Assess the effectiveness of training using Survey Monkey	August-December
Use evaluation results to develop and implement a plan to improve training and the number and percentage of students using tutoring services	May

**Goal 2: Enhance students' ability to complete their programs of study within 4 years****Table 6.17: Objective 2.1**

<b>Objective 2.1</b> Increase the number and percentage of students enrolling in 15 hours per semester	
<b>Targets</b> Year 2: 76% Year 3: 77% Year 4: 78% Year 5: 80%	
<b>Data Collection</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Run a report in the Banner system that indicates the number of credit hours attempted by each student in the cohort	September and February
Mark in the Retention Milestone table each student that still has a course schedule with 15 credit hours at the end of the semester.	December and May
<b>Evaluation Process</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Prepare a report of findings that includes the number and percentage of students enrolled in 15 credit hours	December and May
Assess the effectiveness of training using Survey Monkey	August-December
Use evaluation results to develop and implement a plan to improve training and the number and percentage of students enrolled in 15 hours per semester	May

**Table 6.18: Objective 2.2**

<b>Objective 2.2</b> Increase the number and percentage of students successfully completing 15 hours per semester	
<b>Targets</b> Year 2: 35% Year 3: 36% Year 4: 37% Year 5: 38%	
<b>Data Collection</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Run a report in the Banner system that indicates credit hours earned by each student in the cohort	September and February
Mark in the Retention Milestone table each student that still successfully completed 15 credit hours at the end of the semester.	December and May
<b>Evaluation Process</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Prepare a report of findings that includes the number and percentage of students successfully completing 15 credit hours	December and May
Assess the effectiveness of training using Survey Monkey	August-December

Use evaluation results to develop and implement a plan to improve training and the number and percentage of students successfully completing 15 credit hours per semester	May
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**Table 6.19: Objective 2.3**

<b>Objective 2.3</b> Decrease DFW Rates	
<b>Targets</b> Year 2: 17.0% Year 3: 16.5% Year 4: 16.0% Year 5: 15.5%	
<b>Data Collection</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Run a report in the Banner system that provides grades for *selected first year courses	December and May
<b>Evaluation Process</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Prepare a report of DFW rates for each course and overall; Compare results of courses where faculty received professional development and where faculty did not receive professional development	December and May
Assess the effectiveness of training using Survey Monkey	August-December
Use evaluation results to develop and implement a plan to improve training and decrease the DFW rates	May

\*DFW Rates first-year, first-time courses will be tracked starting in the fall semester for the following courses: Freshman Composition I, Freshman Composition II, Music Appreciation, Art Appreciation, General Biology I & II Zoology w/Lab, College Algebra, and Survey of Biological Science w/Lab I & II

**Goal 3: Impact student success with non-academic retention factors****Table 6.20: Objective 3.1**

<b>Objective 3.1</b> Increase the number and percentage of students successfully managing their finances	
<b>Targets</b> Year 2: 87% Year 3: 87.5% Year 4: 88% Year 5: 88.5%	
<b>Data Collection</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Run a report in the Banner system that indicates students with financial balances	October and March
Mark in the Retention Milestone table each student that has a zero balance	December and May
<b>Evaluation Process</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>

Prepare a report of findings that includes the number and percentage of students with zero balances	December and May
Assess the effectiveness of training using Survey Monkey	August-December
Use evaluation results to develop and implement a plan to improve training and the number and percentage of students successfully managing their finances	May

**Table 6.21: Objective 3.2**

<b>Objective 3.2</b> Increase the number and percentage of students participating in career exploration and planning	
<b>Targets</b> Year 2: 20% Year 3: 25% Year 4: 30% Year 5: 35%	
<b>Data Collection</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Request report of students who have participated in career exploration and planning from Career Services office	May
Mark in the Retention Milestone table each student that has completed career exploration and planning	May
<b>Evaluation Process</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Prepare a report of findings that includes the number and percentage of first-time students who have participated in career exploration and planning by the end of their first year	May
Assess the effectiveness of career services using Survey Monkey	April
Use evaluation results to develop and implement a plan to improve career services and the number and percentage of students participating in career exploration and planning	May

**Table 6.22: Objective 3.3**

<b>Objective 3.3</b> Increase student satisfaction ratings for related academic and student support services units	
<b>Targets</b> Year 2: 1% increase Year 3: 1.5% increase Year 4: 2% increase Year 5: 2.5% increase	
<b>Data Collection</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Obtain a report of the results of the annual student satisfaction survey	June

<b>Evaluation Process</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Prepare a report of findings that student satisfaction with advising, tutoring, faculty, career services, and financial aid	June
Assess the effectiveness of training using Survey Monkey	August-December
Use evaluation results to develop and implement a plan to improve training and increase the level of student satisfaction with academic and student support services	May

**Goal 4: Increase the retention of first-time, full-time freshmen**

**Table 6.23: Objective 4.1**

<b>Objective 4.1</b> Increase retention from fall to fall	
<b>Targets</b> Year 2: 55% for Fall 2023 cohort Year 3: 56% for Fall 2024 cohort Year 4: 56.5% for Fall 2025 cohort Year 5: 57% for Fall 2026 cohort	
<b>Data Collection</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Obtain a report of students who have completed Handle Your Business functions (pre-registration, 15 credit hours, zero balance)	June
Mark in the Retention Milestone table each student that has completed all Handle Your business functions	December and May
Run a report to determine the number of students that returned the subsequent semester	September and February
<b>Evaluation Process</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Calculate retention rates for the subsequent spring and fall	September and February
Assess the effectiveness of training using Survey Monkey	August -December
Use evaluation results to develop and implement a plan to improve training and retention rates from Fall to Fall	May

## CLOSING SUMMARY

The identification and selection of the MVSU's QEP, Passport to Finish: Intrusive Advisement, Academic Support and Student Engagement, meets SACSCOC Standard 7.2 given that it has the following components.

**MVSU has identified a topic through ongoing, comprehensive planning and evaluation processes.** The university selected student success and retention as the topic for which it intends to improve the student learning environment. MVSU used the State College Board's (IHL's) strategic priorities and goals, the MVSU strategic plan, MVSU SET Team strategies, institutional effectiveness reporting, and its own presidential mandate, all part of the University's ongoing, comprehensive planning and evaluation processes to help identify the QEP topic (See Section 1).

**The MVSU QEP topic has broad-based support of institutional constituencies.** The IHL board of trustees has set forth that retention and student success are major, ongoing strategic priorities. The MVSU President has aligned his priorities with those of the board of trustees and mandated that student retention will be the main focus for the University over the coming years. In addition, the MVSU community, which includes faculty, staff, students, alumni, and community partners, participated in selecting the QEP topic through a survey administered in Fall 2019. The topic was further refined after conducting a literature review and focus groups sessions with students and faculty. Faculty, students and the University continue to work toward informing and implementing the strategies related to the goals and objectives of the QEP

**The MVSU QEP focuses on improving student success.** The Passport to Finish: Intrusive Advisement, Academic Support and Student Engagement program is intended to improve the environment in which students engage and learn (Section 4). The plan aims to improve students' academic success by offering tutoring and increased faculty engagement to lower DFW rates; to improve student progress toward degree attainment through strategic advising using academic maps and the 15 to Finish program; to ensure students manage their finances appropriately; and to ensure students experience overall growth and development through related academic and student support services.

**MVSU commits resources to initiate, implement, and complete the QEP.** Section 5 describes these resources which include a QEP Director, support staff, professional development support for faculty and staff, and funding for travel, supplies, and equipment. The QEP also has administrative support from the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs who reports directly to the President.

**MVSU has developed a plan to assess achievement of the goals and objectives of its QEP.** Section 6 outlines the 5-year assessment plan in detail including the planning phase and the evaluation phase. The planning phase includes the identification of goals and objectives along with strategies for improvement, measures and targets, and the responsible parties for each strategy. The evaluation phase includes data collection strategies, evaluation processes and timeframes for both.

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## APPENDIX A

### IHL Strategic Priorities

#### MISSISSIPPI'S STATEWIDE GOAL FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

To make available an accessible, quality public higher education at an affordable cost that prepares Mississippians to become productive, financially self-sufficient members of society while meeting the human resource needs of Mississippi and its employers, including the creation of new jobs through the commercialization of university-based research

#### MISSISSIPPI'S BENCHMARKS for UNIVERSITIES: UNDERGRADUATE

##### College Readiness

1. Average ACT score of entering freshmen
2. Number and percentage of entering students graduating from Mississippi public high schools who are enrolled in intermediate (remedial) courses during their first year, broken out by math, English/reading, or both
3. Percentage of fall intermediate (remedial) math students completing the course within 2 years
4. Percentage of fall intermediate (remedial) English/reading students completing the course within 2 years

##### Student Progress

5. First-year retention rate (from fall to fall) for entering full-time freshmen
6. Percentage of full-time students completing 24 credit hours within one academic year
7. Percentage of part-time students completing 12 credit hours within one academic year

##### Student Graduation Rates

8. Number of undergraduate degrees awarded per 100 undergraduate full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollment
9. Student graduation rates (first-time full-time freshmen cohort students graduating within 4 years; first-time full-time freshmen cohort students graduating within 6 years; first-time full-time freshmen cohort students graduating within 8 years)
10. Number and percentage of degrees awarded to adult learners who enter college for the first time at age 23 or older
11. Percentage of state's population age 25 years and over with a bachelor's degree or higher

##### Graduates in High-need Disciplines

12. Number of graduates in high-need disciplines (i.e., science, technology, engineering, math, education, including non-teaching areas and nursing), by discipline
13. Number of graduates in teaching from Mississippi public higher educational institutions
14. Licensure exam pass rates for graduates with four-year degrees in a licensed field of study, by field of study, including the percentage of graduates in teaching who pass Praxis II

15. Percentage of graduates in high-need disciplines who enter and remain in practice in Mississippi in the high-need discipline five years and ten years following graduation, by discipline
16. Percentage of teacher candidates from Mississippi public higher educational institutions who become Mississippi public school teachers following graduation
17. Percentage of teacher candidates from Mississippi public higher educational institutions who remain teaching in Mississippi public school classrooms five and ten years following their initial hire date

**Cost:**

to students

1. Percentage of Mississippi median family income required to cover tuition and fees at Mississippi public four-year higher educational institutions
2. Dollars spent on remedial coursework
3. Average student debt on graduation

to taxpayers

1. Total cost to the state of providing remedial classes at the state's public four-year higher educational institutions
2. Total state expenditures per student

**Quality of Learning Environment**

18. Percentage of teaching faculty with terminal degrees (doctorate and first professional degrees)

**APPENDIX B**  
**MVSU STRATEGIC PLAN**

**STRATEGIC GOAL 1: Enhance and Strengthen the University's Academic Programs**

**Priority 1:**

Improve the quality and relevance of the University's academic programs

**Actions**

Assess student learning and use the outcomes to improve academic programs

Initiate program accreditation for all eligible programs within the next five years

Identify a 5-7 person external advisory board for each academic program

Perform regular, intensive program reviews at least once every five years

Infuse entrepreneurialism and globalization throughout the curriculum

Increase the use of data collected from graduates, employers, graduate and professional schools, and business and industry leaders to improve programs

Expand and strengthen alternative program delivery modalities

Evaluate and improve the University's general education program based on best practices, stakeholder input, and the unique needs of students from the Delta

**Priority 2:**

Increase enrollment through reevaluation and reconstruction of the institutional recruiting system

**Actions**

Periodically reexamine and recalibrate the institutional marketing plan

Feature and highlight institutional strengths in public forums, advertisements, and in the local media

Develop a strategic recruiting plan based upon best practices

Develop a comprehensive recruitment package with updated brochures and materials that highlight institutional strengths

Ensure that 100% of academic departments have recruiting plans for all degree programs

Establish recruitment teams that include combinations of recruiters, faculty, staff, administrators, and students

Strengthen recruiting efforts at community colleges

**Priority 3:**

**Increase student retention and graduation rates**

**Actions**

Enhance and strengthen the MVSU First Year Experience based on best practices

Evaluate and improve academic support programs connected with retention efforts

Establish a skills across the curriculum program

Establish a residential college based on best practices

Reinstitute the MVSU Honors College

**Priority 4:**

Enhance and strengthen the academic infrastructure

**Actions**

- Increase the number of full-time faculty with terminal degrees in their teaching discipline
- Increase professional development opportunities in regards to technology usage, pedagogy, and research
- Establish formal mentoring relationships between junior and senior faculty
- Enhance support for online courses and other distance education opportunities
- Develop fully online degree programs
- Establish formalized partnerships with research universities across Mississippi and the ArkLaMiss Delta

**STRATEGIC GOAL 2: Create and Maintain a Modern, Progressive, Learner-Centered Environment**

**Priority 1:**

- Strengthen the support services provided to students

**Actions**

- Increase the number of computer labs on campus
- Develop comprehensive institutional accountability systems for all departments and divisions that work directly with students
- Enhance and strengthen the career and placement functions
- Fully automate all student services in an online environment
- Develop a student support program, informed by best practices, specific to the needs of non-traditional students
- Enhance professional development opportunities for student support staff
- Conduct regular listening sessions between students and administrators
- Increase the number of grants available to graduate students
- Establish procedures requiring all students in danger of going into academic probation as well as those on academic probation to participate in University College support programs
- Develop extensive safety protocols throughout campus housing and in academic buildings
- Leverage the Mass Transportation system to provide trips for students to educational facilities, cultural events, and for departmental field trips

**Priority 2:**

- Ensure greater access to technology

**Actions**

- Ensure 100% wireless access in dormitories and academic buildings
- Increase access to online databases
- Ensure that syllabi, class offerings, and faculty bios are available online
- Develop a secure intranet system on campus
- Ensure that University Facebook, Twitter, and other social media accounts are used and maintained regularly
- Ensure that emergency, safety, and crisis management plans all integrate multiple technological elements to increase safety

**STRATEGIC GOAL 3: Transform MVSU into an Innovative Learning Organization**

**Priority 1:**

Strengthen the technological infrastructure of the campus

**Actions**

Develop and implement a strategic information technology plan

Establish a system for determining which software packages are needed across the institution

Establish a technology committee charged with identifying software, hardware, and training needs

Expand technology development opportunities for faculty, staff, and students

Design an incentive program to ensure that all IT staff engage in continuous professional development

Connect students from the Computer Science program with staff in Academic Computing to both increase manpower and provide opportunities for career planning

**Priority 2:**

Increase the prevalence and usage of information across the University

**Actions**

Develop and utilize an information repository to ensure data-driven decision-making

Create and distribute a peer institution list to all divisions and departments

Provide professional development opportunities regarding data-driven decision making

Enhance and expand the library-led learning sessions

Establish an incentive system to encourage faculty and staff to pursue advanced degrees and continuing education

**STRATEGIC GOAL 4: Position the University as a Catalyst for Revitalization in the Mississippi Delta**

**Priority 1:**

Embrace the niche of service to the underserved and underprepared

**Actions**

Increase the number and preparedness of elementary education graduates

Increase the number and preparedness of special education graduates

Reevaluate the early childhood education program and redesign based upon best practices

Increase the Praxis II pass rate

Identify loan forgiveness programs for graduating teachers within local schools

Increase formal recruiting of local students starting in elementary school

Increase teacher training activities and opportunities for continuing education credits throughout the Delta

Develop a parenting academy for parents of school-aged children

Expand non-credit bearing educational and life-enhancement opportunities

**Priority 2:**

Establish the reputation as a social change agent in the Mississippi Delta

**Actions**

Establish a Delta think-tank with participation from educators, government officials, business leaders, community leaders, students, and citizens

Develop, collaboratively, a Racial Reconciliation in the Mississippi Delta initiative  
Research, preserve, share, and celebrate the richness of the Mississippi Delta through the development of a research and cultural repository  
Conduct regular financial training seminars in collaboration with local companies  
Develop a minor and institute on entrepreneurialism in the Mississippi Delta  
Help transform Itta Bena into a true college town  
Work with foundations and educational institutions to create tangible change in regards to quality of life indicators in disadvantage communities across the Delta

**Priority 3:**

Introduce the outside world to students and residents of Delta

**Actions**

Develop a regular dialogue series that engages participants in intellectual conversations about state, national, and international issues  
Increase travel opportunities for students within and outside of the state  
Enhance and expand the study abroad program  
Develop opportunities for students to engage in research studies in areas outside the state of Mississippi  
Invite performers from around the country and the world to offer shows at MVSU or in the community  
Expand the international festivities at the University  
Establish incentives to encourage faculty to introduce multiple cultures into their classrooms

**Priority 4:**

Provide direct support and intervention to address the health crisis in this region

**Actions**

Offer health fairs on campus and in the community multiple times per year  
Establish a V-Fit program at Walmarts that provide healthy food and health related information  
Establish an institutional health and wellness program to include screenings, lifestyle education, and health related initiatives like the “Biggest Loser”  
Establish walking paths across the campus to encourage students, faculty, and staff to exercise  
Provide healthy food choices for students living on campus  
Develop a greenhouse to provide fresh fruits and vegetables to members of the community  
Establish a support system for students who are pregnant or who are already mothers  
Expand research in the Natural Sciences Department on issues of health and wellness  
Collaborate with businesses and non-profits focused on improving health outcomes in the Delta

**STRATEGIC GOAL 5: Operate as the Public Square of the Mississippi Delta**

**Priority 1:**

Engage in direct outreach to regional communities

**Actions**

Convene regular town hall meetings and community listening sessions

Connect with local governments and businesses to bring community events onto the campus  
Expand and redesign high school days based upon best practices  
Develop on-campus educational programming with the local K-12 institutions and pre-K facilities  
Increase the number of academic and recreational camps available to pre-primary, primary, and secondary students  
Offer campus sports facilities and performing arts facilities to the local communities  
Enhance and strengthen the MVSU Child Development Center, based on best practices, in order to turn it into a model and learning laboratory

**Priority 2:**

Usher the renaissance into the communities of the Mississippi Delta

**Actions**

Establish and enhance formal connections between academic departments and high schools  
Expand opportunities for GED and ACT preparation in the Delta  
Establish a homework hotline and tutors on the road program  
Adopt local schools and community teams  
Partner with local businesses to establish greater internship opportunities for students  
Increase the number of employees serving on community committees throughout the region  
Develop a partnership with the Foundation of the Mid-South

**STRATEGIC GOAL 6: Foster a culture of institutional pride**

**Priority 1:**

Deliver a comprehensive, authentic collegiate experience to students

**Actions**

Maintain a comprehensive Office of University Life and Leadership  
Increase the number of on-campus clubs (outside of standard Greek life) and activities to foster leadership, social, cultural, and economic development  
Expand operating hours of recreational facilities on campus to include nights and weekends  
Establish a shopping area on campus that caters to students  
Expand eating opportunities to include healthy restaurants  
Increase the APR rates for all sports  
Increase the number of scholarships available to student athletes  
Win or share at least 10 SWAC titles within the next five years  
Renovate the athletic facilities on campus to enhance the athlete and fan experience  
Reevaluate and ensure completion of facility renovations  
Enhance the landscaping by adding more greenery and designated gathering areas

**Priority 2:**

Enhance the public image of the University

**Actions**

Develop a strategic public relations plan  
Partner with local municipalities to develop targeted promotional and marketing campaigns  
Leverage the media capabilities available through the University radio and television mediums  
Communicate the mission and vision statements as well as the core values in published and electronic mediums  
Increase the amount of volunteerism into local communities by MVSU employees and students

**Priority 3:**

Develop a climate of connectedness and collaboration

**Actions**

Establish intra-division, intra-departmental, and intra-college workgroups  
Promote diversity across race, gender, religion, age, and sexual orientation  
Expand religious life programming  
Conduct regular listening sessions for faculty and staff  
Increase the number of team-building professional development opportunities  
Increase the amount of informal connection and interaction between senior administrators and faculty and staff  
Enhance and strengthen the University's formal recognition and reward system  
Increase alumni engagement  
Leverage support from the community

**STRATEGIC GOAL 7: Strengthen the institutional infrastructure**

**Priority 1:**

Enhance and strengthen institutional foundations

**Actions**

Align all departments, programs, and support activities with best practices within their fields  
Reevaluate and recalibrate the institutional performance evaluation system  
Update and implement the institutional internal control plan  
Develop and implement a strategic facilities development plan  
Increase the amount of customer service training available to faculty and staff  
Enhance institutional support for development of faculty scholarship, teaching, and research skills  
Develop a comprehensive Employee Assistance Program (EAP), in line with best HR practices, to assist individuals with difficulties  
Establish an Ombuds Office to hear complaints and attempt to provide remediation to issues between the University and stakeholders

**Priority 2:**

Formalize collaborative efforts across the University

**Actions**

Develop inter-division liaisons between student affairs and academic affairs, business and finance and academic affairs, and business and finance and student affairs  
Establish emergent interdepartmental committees to address campus issues

Increase the percentage of institutional committees with student members

Establish an Office of University Initiatives to operate as a strategic think tank charged with identifying best practices in colleges and universities and providing suggestions to the University community

**Priority 3:**

Develop and grow sustainable, external funding streams

**Actions**

Establish education consortia and cost-sharing agreements with institutions throughout the state

Increase alumni giving

Increase faculty and staff giving

Increase the number of corporate sponsorships and contracts

Initiate a capital campaign with significant fundraising goals

Establish trademarks for all institutional marks

## APPENDIX C

### SET Team Strategies (Introduction)

#### Mississippi Valley State University

Strategies to Ensure the University's Enrollment Health and Growth in the Face of Changing Demographics and Challenging Financial Realities for Students

Presented to President Jerryl Briggs, Sr.

By the

MVSU Strategic Enrollment Team

Dr. Thomas J. Calhoun, Jr., Chair

Mr. Kylon Alford-Windfield

Mr. Billy Benson

Dr. Sharon Freeman

Mr. Jeffrey Loggins

Dr. Abigail Newsome

Dr. Danisha Williams

Mr. Letherio Zeigler

July 31, 2021

#### Introduction

Mississippi Valley State University, like many universities around the United States, has been challenged by the confluence of declining state appropriations over time, declines in the traditional “college-going” demographic, fewer available philanthropic resources for capital projects, and increased operational costs. These challenges together paint a picture that conveys nearly constant budgetary strain on the university, leading to its inability to keep up with needed maintenance, growing scholarship resources in order to attract more students, and maintaining competitive salaries in order to attract a talented and committed employee pool.

With the exception of universities whose endowments are such that they create revenue streams that offset other shortfalls, most look at their enrollments as the most practical way to ensure that budgetary goals are met. Of course, all universities look forward to having healthy enrollments; for some, however, failure to meet enrollment goals can result in catastrophic outcomes. MVSU has been challenged with a five-year enrollment decline, a trend that is not only troublesome, but also not sustainable if the university is to remain viable.

This report is an outline of a strategic enrollment strategy for MVSU that if successfully executed over the next few years, will yield promising enrollment results, and help place the university on a firm budgetary footing. The framework for this report is a basic version of Student Life Cycle utilizing the following elements:

- o Success in Recruiting Students
- o Effectiveness in Matriculating Recruited Students
- o **Emphasis on Retaining Matriculated Students**
- o Increasing the Graduation Rates of Retained Students

As can be noted, each of the four phases of the Student Life Cycle articulates into the next phase; the approach to healthy growth and maintenance of the MVSU enrollment assumes that in each phase of the Cycle, high quality work on the part of staff and faculty, will yield high quality enrollment results. In short, it is not simply important to grow the enrollment quantitatively, but also qualitatively. Flooding the first year with large numbers of students who are unprepared to thrive at MVSU sets them up to leave without having been successful and recirculates the pressure to the Office of Admissions to again flood the subsequent incoming class. The work of managing healthy enrollment growth, therefore, is as dependent on retaining and graduating students as it is on recruiting and matriculating students.

## APPENDIX D President's Presentation at Faculty/Staff Institute



### RETENTION AND PERSISTENCE Keeping Valley in Motion!

MISSISSIPPI VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY

- Average # of new first-time freshmen for last three years = 395
- Average retention rate for the last three years = 62%
- Average # of new first-time freshmen retained to sophomores = 245
- **Average # of new first-time freshmen who did not return = 150**
- 2018-19 tuition = \$6,550
- 2018-19 average room rate = \$4,537
- 2018-19 board rate = \$3,506



### 3-Year Averages

- Tuition: 150 students X \$6,550 = \$982,500
- Room rate (50% on campus): 75 students X \$4,537 = \$340,275
- Board rate (50% on campus): 75 students X \$3,506 = \$262,950

Total Estimated lost revenue **\$1,585,725**

And, this is only our new first-time freshmen who didn't return!!



### Estimated Lost Revenue

- Our student success is the number one priority that defines what we do and who we are.
- Enrollment success are strategies and plans that address continued growth and success for our university. These strategies include:
  - Growth (recruitment);
  - Retention (first-time freshmen returning for their sophomore year); and
  - Persistence (upper-class students matriculating to graduating).



### Enrollment Success for MVSU

### Grades First

Grades First is a student success collaborative to improve student outcomes and the student experience. It is a comprehensive technology that brings together administrators, faculty, advisors, and staff to support students from enrollment to graduation and beyond.



### Strategy for Success



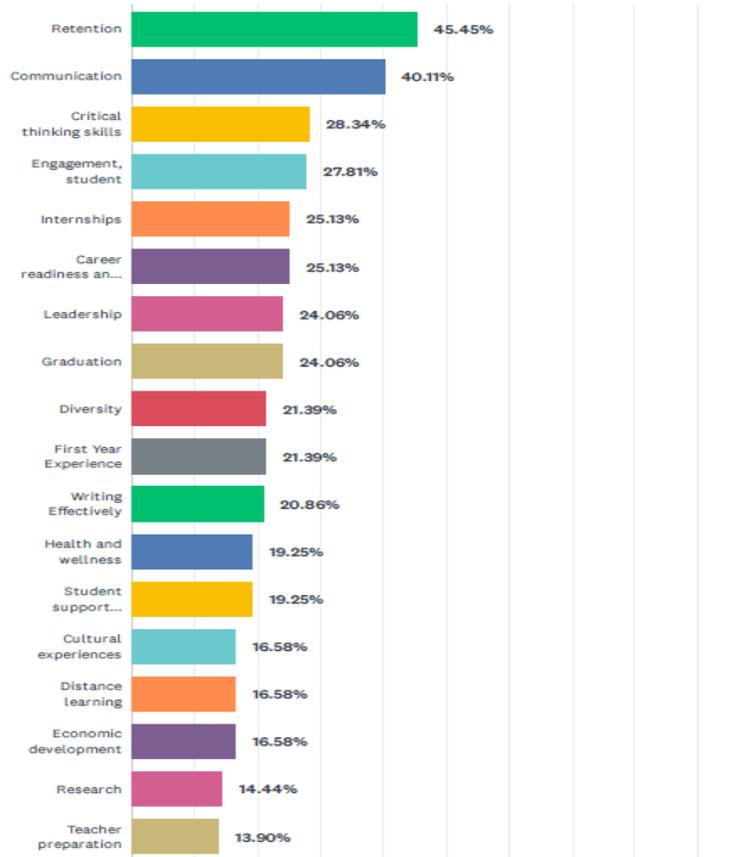
### Retention and Persistence

Office of the President

**APPENDIX E**  
**QEP Topic Exploration Survey**

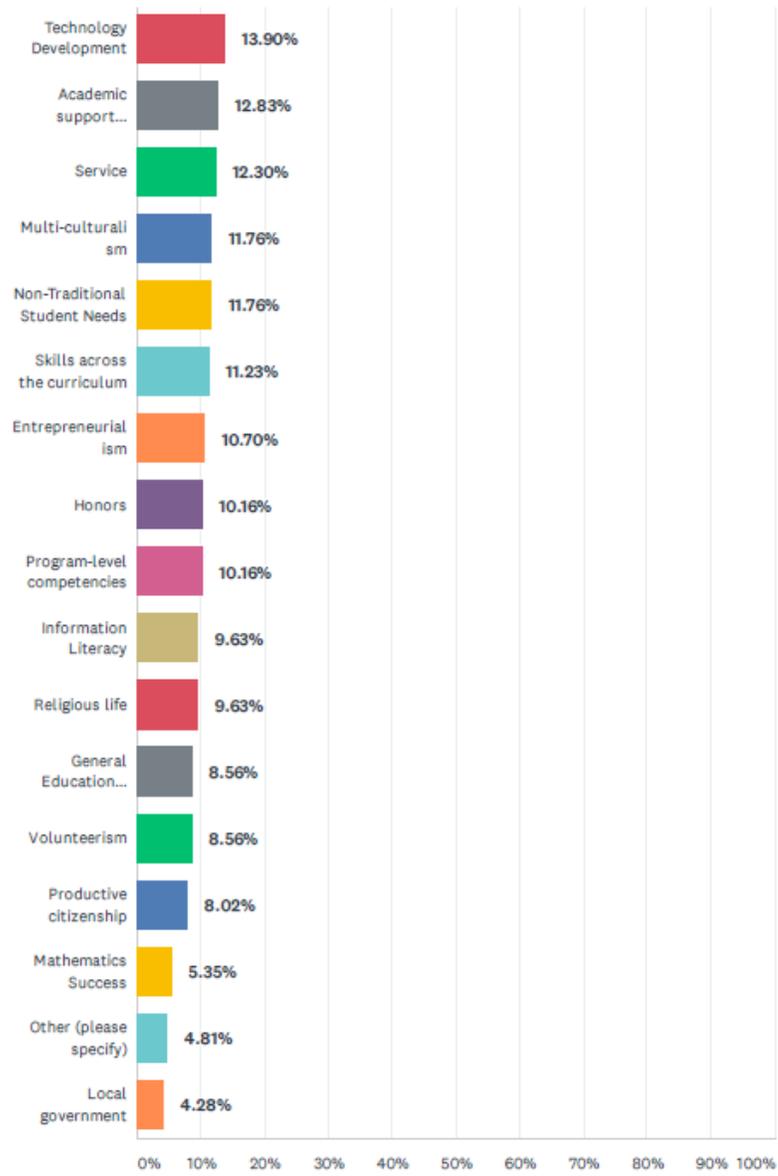
Q1 MVSU should focus its Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) on the following topic(s).

Answered: 187 Skipped: 0



1 / 5

QEP Topic Exploration: Fall 2019



## APPENDIX F

### Student Success Defined



#### #1

**Student Success**

I understand student success as a compilation of academic, social and civic goal attainment. Of course, a clear indication of student success is a great grade point average and passing percentage, but a more evolved idea of SS includes the holistic development of our students. Chickering's 7 vectors of student development speak to this in great length, noting that students are not on a timeframe or timeline when it comes to student development but more so reach milestones by constant exposure to the appropriate developmental environments. There is direct correlation between student success and student development—there can not be SS without the development of the entire student. Socially students seek a developed personality, the ability to make rational decisions and a sense of competency. There is also the point that civic involvement or becoming a productive citizen is a type of SS, I agree and think that this should be stitched into the fabric of our University's response to SS.

#### #2

**Student Success**

Students being able to progress toward their degree seamlessly is what I equate to student success. My definition of seamlessly refers to students receiving academic affairs or student affairs-related support needed to pass required courses and gain valuable career goal knowledge while earning their degree. Specifically, it is important for faculty and academic staff provides students with proper advisement, mentorship, and motivation. As it pertains to student affairs, it is important that this division also mentor and motivate students, as well as professionally advise, provide safety, living necessities.

#### #3

**Student Success**

Student success is when a student learns something and has the ability to explain, apply and integrate that knowledge. A greater student success is when the student learns something so well... that someone is willing to pay the student for that knowledge.

#### #4 Core Values

Student success means that a student excels herself in her academic endeavor. However, the academic success of a student depends not only on her own desire but also on departmental and faculty support. As far as English is concerned,

a good major should love to read and write, should love literature, should nurture herself to have an aesthetic appreciation of literature and awareness of language. To help majors to be successful, we hold lectures, readings; we encourage students to attend online / virtual readings; we encourage them to publish their writings or poems. All these can happen when a faculty or department knows how to help

As for the university, student success is the key of survival. I would suggest the reestablishment of the Honors Programs, group the quality students together and give them extra nutrition to help them grow. Honors seminar could be a good start.

#### #5

**Student Success**

Student success must be seen in a holistic way to include the following components. It would be great to create a digital

- Academic Life: GPA of >= 3.0
- Student Life: Encourage participation and leadership roles in diverse MVSU Student Life
- Internship/Co-op: Participate in Internship or co-op. Work closely with Career Service Center.
- Study Abroad and Scholarships: Apply for competitive external scholarships and encourage participation in Study Abroad programs
- Passport (Optional): Encourage students to apply for U.S. passport

It will be great to see Valley students graduate with a passport in one hand and diploma in the other in addition to have taken full advantage of our Academic, Student life and Study Abroad offerings. All in all, it helps in the overall

**#6**

**Student Success**

Student success is a priority for educational institutions. It is a concept that encompasses multiple measures of the academic achievement of students, such as graduation rate (completion rate), what students do after graduation, such as the rate at which they enroll in graduate and professional degree programs, the rate at which they obtain gainful employment, etc. Retention rate is also a measure of student success for educational institutions, especially for higher educational institutions.

For the student, student success involves the ability to graduate, ability to obtain admission into a graduate or professional degree program, the ability to obtain employment that is commensurate with his or her educational qualification, or the ability to start

**#7**

**Student Success**

**STUDENT SUCCESS**

**#8**

**Student Success**

Students being able to progress toward their degree seamlessly is what I equate to student success. My definition of seamlessly refers to students receiving academic affairs or student affairs-related support needed to pass required courses and gain valuable career goal knowledge while earning their degree. Specifically, it is important for faculty and academic staff provides students with proper advisement, mentorship, and motivation. As it pertains to student affairs, it is important that this division also mentor and motivate students, as well as

**#9**

**Student Success**

Yi defines student success as “a holistic sense of fulfillment” and is measured on “how well students are prepared to accomplish their current and future academic, personal, and professional goals through the development of knowledge, a sense of responsibility and self-reliance, and a connection to the college and wider community” and not only “good grades and steady attendance”.

Therefore, to better help with student success, faculty and advisors must “strike a balance to ensure students find purpose and fulfillment by “cultivating student’s grit and a growth mindset, striking a healthy balance between academic effort and other areas of life.” These arguments are informed by research about students’ perceptions of

**#9**

**Student Success**

The discussion above shows that student success is complex. I may not purport to create a new definition of student success, the conceptions of student success outlined by different scholars resonate with me. These conceptions build on each other, and some aspects of one mirror the other to the extent that nobody can create just one definition. Therefore I must admit that student success should be defined holistically while factoring in student characteristics. Based on the uniqueness of our institution based on the population we serve, I do not believe one size fits all in student success. We should deliberately explore other success indicators based on our student population characteristics, such as socio-economic status, family characteristics, educational characteristics of families wherever draw our student population, and geospatial characteristics that enable or inhibit our student’s success. All aspects of student success identified by others must be linked to the characteristics of our student population to build a broader definition of student success. Therefore, my conception of student success encompasses all the above.

**#10 Student Success Cinquain Poem**

**Student Success**

- Student
- Relevant, Robust
- Engaging, Collaborating, Learning
- Meaningful research informs decision-making
- Success

**Student Success Cinquain Poem**

- Student
- Relevant, Robust
- Engaging, Collaborating, Learning
- Meaningful research informs decision-making
- Success

**#11**

**Student Success**

- Graduating (obtaining a job in the field)
- Knowing the content
- Personal growth (maturity, integrity, leadership, values, time management, etc.)
- Internships
- Career Readiness (Interview Etiquette, Code Switching, etc.)

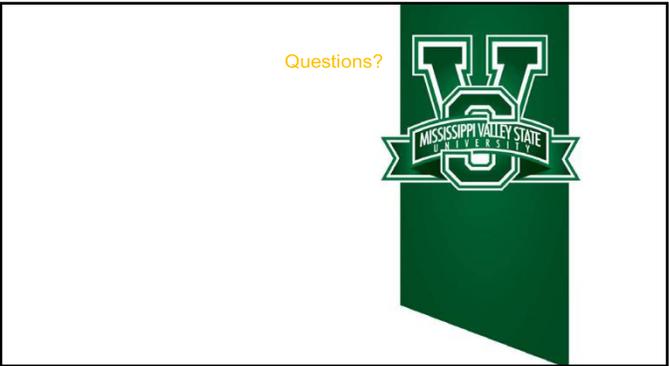
**How can we help with student success?**

Be available to discuss plans for their future

Encourage students to attend Career Services functions

Make opportunities available - send information, post

<p><b>What is Needed?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Culture change</li> <li>• Life skills/self discipline</li> <li>• Intrusive advisement</li> <li>• Faculty makeover/success</li> <li>• Who are the students?</li> <li>• Appreciation for MVSU</li> </ul>	<p><b>How?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teach history of MVSU</li> <li>• Be electronic</li> <li>• Use MVSU email</li> <li>• Redo ideology of studentspirit</li> <li>• Website issue/something to be proud</li> <li>• Onboarding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All FY</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Be accountable</li> </ul>
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## APPENDIX G

### Student Success-2021 Faculty Institute

	<p style="text-align: center;">Summer Series – Student Success</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><small>Chairs and Directors</small></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Opportunities/Re-Dos Retrospective</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update Directory/Email signatures</li> <li>• Comprehensive Exams</li> <li>• Advisement vs Registration</li> <li>• Forms and deadlines</li> <li>• Evaluations</li> <li>• Processes</li> <li>• Course schedules and Academic Maps</li> <li>• Online Courses</li> <li>• Tutorials</li> <li>• Graduation Applications</li> </ul>
1	2	3
<p style="text-align: center;">Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confusing curricula</li> <li>• Wasted transfer credits</li> <li>• Limited course availability</li> <li>• Restrictive accessibility and process issues</li> <li>• College readiness</li> <li>• Other structural/non-academic barriers             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing</li> <li>• Transportation</li> <li>• Family</li> <li>• Mental health</li> <li>• Insecurity</li> <li>• Student's sense of belonging</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">Student Success</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><small>Retention, Persistence and Graduation</small></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Questions?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What does it mean?</li> <li>• How do we measure student success?</li> <li>• What is the structure of student success?</li> </ul>
4	5	6

Your View

10

HOW DO WE MEASURE STUDENT SUCCESS?

Measurable Outcomes

11

Measurable Outcomes

**Lagging Indicators**

- Retention
- Persistence
- Graduation

**Leading Indicators**

- Gateway AND Gen Edu courses
  - D, F, W rates
- Full time continuous enrollment
- Time of Registration
- Participation in advising appointments
- Receipt/review of official transcripts
- Outcome differences between groups

12

Measurable Outcomes

**Lagging Indicators**

- Retention
- Persistence
- Graduation

**Leading Indicators**

- Transfers
- Recent High school graduates
- Emerging Scholars
- Screened in
- Student Support Utilization Services
- Individual Student Experience
- Etc.

13

WHAT IS THE STRUCTURE OF STUDENT SUCCESS?

PHILOSOPHY VS FUNCTION  
Cross-Institutional Collaboration

14

Philosophy

- Student success is everyone's responsibility.
- If everyone owns it, no one owns it.
  - Who does it?
    - We all do.
  - But how?

15

Function

- Staff, Faculty and Administrators
- University College and Departments
- Student Support Services and Departments
- Academic Computing and All

16

Staff, Faculty and Administrators

- Champions of the process
- Encouraging all to be active in student success efforts

17

University College and Departments

- Advising and Registration, Shared
  - Advising ALL FR and SO
  - Registering ALL FR and SO
- Monthly Check-ins
- Majors Fair
- Freshman Year Seminar
  - Centralized, Systematic
  - FYE Topics and Departmental Topics

18

Student Support Services and Departments

- Shared Information
  - Tutorial Services
    - Face-to-face
    - Online
    - Embedded tutors
  - Mentors
    - Alumni driven (online)
  - Incentivizing
    - Embedded in Courses

19

Privacy and Ethics

- Data Privacy
  - University communication tools
    - MVSU emails
    - Canvas communication/teaching
- FERPA
  - Student Records
- Identification Features
  - Shred Paper, do not throw in trash
  - Report computer data breaches

20

Process Mapping

Recruitment: CRM  
Admission: CRM  
Matriculation: Banner, Canvas, Advisement/Registration, Maps/Schedules, Faculty Development, Assessment Strategies, Canvas Trainings, Instructional Resources, Assessment  
Graduation: Banner, DegreeWorks

21

What Can We Do?

Staff, Faculty and Administrators

22

Faculty

- Provide /Upload Syllabus on 1st Class Day
- Provide timely feedback/response
  - Assignments
  - Quizzes/Exams
  - Emails
  - Calls
- Timely Population of Canvas LMS Classes
  - Syllabus
  - Grades
  - Modules
  - Assignments

23

Faculty

- Take Attendance
  - Face-to-face
  - Online
- Refer students to resources
  - Tutoring
  - Writing Center

24

Faculty

- Adhere to deadlines
  - Timely Reporting
    - Attendance Indicators
    - Grades
    - Problems
  - Submission of documents
    - Registration
    - Drop/Add
    - Withdrawal
    - Graduation
    - Gradebooks

25

Faculty

- Utilize GradesFirst
  - 1st missed assignment/exam
  - Missed 2 or more classes
- Make suggestions

26

Academic Affairs

- What?
- Make data driven decisions
- Streamline processes
- Trainings
- Support
  - Right is Right
  - 100%

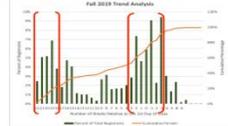
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Fall 2020 DFWs



28

Fall 2020 Registration Timeline




29

QEP

- Incentivized tutorials
  - English and Math
- FVE Seminars/Departmental Seminars
  - Common syllabus
- Advising in UC
  - FR and SO



30



31

## APPENDIX H

### Faculty Perceptions of Student Success

FACULTY No. 1
<p>Student success is preparing students to enter the workforce with the knowledge to think and solve problems critically, articulate their ideas verbally and in writing, and become life-long learners. In professional fields, this includes knowing how to navigate the professional landscape with the skills and knowledge to be impactful and successful. This includes, but is not limited to, teaching students how to study, how to retain and access information, how to write a paper, and how to make and keep a schedule. (This sounds like Grandma's recipe and metacognition). Instead of being the encyclopedia of knowledge, teacher as a facilitator points students in the right direction, teaches students to search for knowledge, and connects to dots across classes, subjects, and disciplines. Whether students have an idea of their career path or not, these skills and knowledge from our liberal arts core can help them become successful in whatever path they choose. To me, this starts with providing good customer service. All entities of the university must treat our students (customers) fairly and with respect. After all, students have options. In some cases, it is both crucial and necessary that we be available and willing to help students navigate college life and point students to resources that can benefit them. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs states students move to higher levels and reach self-actualization only when the needs of lower levels are met. Additionally, meeting students where they are requires different modes of teaching to reach visual, auditory, read/write, and kinesthetic learners and different means of assessment (project-based, video quizzes, demonstration, etc.) to move them toward critical thinking, literacy, and lifelong learning. Lastly, students need to know we care about them, their well-being, and their success.</p>
FACULTY No. 2
<p>From my perspective as an educator - rather than the student - I would say that I have been successful if at the end of my professional/educational interactions with the student, both in and out of the classroom, the student is better prepared to achieve their own goals. Ultimately, I prefer to think in terms of "Life Success" rather than "Student Success": have we equipped the student with the tools/attitudes/competencies that are going to be of service to them regardless of what they do.</p>
FACULTY No. 3

How would you define student success? Student success is defined and measured by how well students are equipped with the knowledge and relevant skills set to tackle and accomplish measurable academic, personal, and professional objectives. Students also acquire the knowledge and skills needed to participate as socially responsible and competent citizens that enable them to effect change at the college and other local and global levels/environments. The goal of student centeredness policy is student success in that all efforts by the staff, faculty, and administrators are geared towards student development and success. The road to student success entails encouraging and allowing students to engage and participate in decision making by the institution. It also enables students to be part of or spearhead the planning, implementations and assessments that occur inside and outside the classroom, including extra-curricular activities. In addition, student success is achieved through the participation of students in the decision-making process at every level of the institution. For example, at an institution that promotes student success, it is evident that students' learning and experiences are integrated in the decision-making process to allow those in power to do what is in the best interest of students, including the learning environment. When students share their experiences at the university, they also identify obstacles that may impact their academic success and work together with staff, faculty, and administrators to find effective solutions/strategies to employ the learning to benefit the student holistically. Other strategies for achieving student success include: creating ways that assist students to learn how to effectively study and take organized notes; managing their times at home, school and work; shaping their character to be successful by providing a platform where they assess themselves (e.g., examining their weaknesses, strengths, purposes and goals), providing knowledgeable, dedicated, and caring advisors (academic and non-academic), providing experiential learning activities, taking relevant notes, providing a source of engagement and appropriate resources to enable them to make the necessary connections to the real work, including solving practical problems that serve the needs of their families, peers, local and global stakeholders. At a college/university, student success looks like an apparatus that includes students, faculty, staff and administrators providing the necessary support to transform students (and other stakeholders) enabling them to conquer what they strive for in any walk of life they choose.

**APPENDIX I**  
**STUDENT FOCUS GROUP RECORDING**

Video can be viewed on-site.